

NIMONA





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WINONA



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art by

nd stevenson



I didn't know what Nimona was going to be when I started it.

Nimona was pink because I could only find a pink pen the day I started sketching her. She lived in a medieval future because I liked drawing knights but not horses, laser cannons but not spaceships. Her first transformation was going to be into a T. rex, but sharks were easier to draw; and the shark had boobs because it was 5 a.m. and my life was falling apart and that meant it was objectively the funniest joke in the world. Even her name just kind of...happened, a result of writing down the first syllables that came to mind and telling myself I'd come up with a real name later.

Years later, I would find myself in the front row of a Blue Sky screening room surrounded by some of the greatest artists in animation as a gorgeously rendered 20-foot-tall concept painting of Shark-Nimona loomed over me, and all I could think was: how in the absolute **** did I get here?!

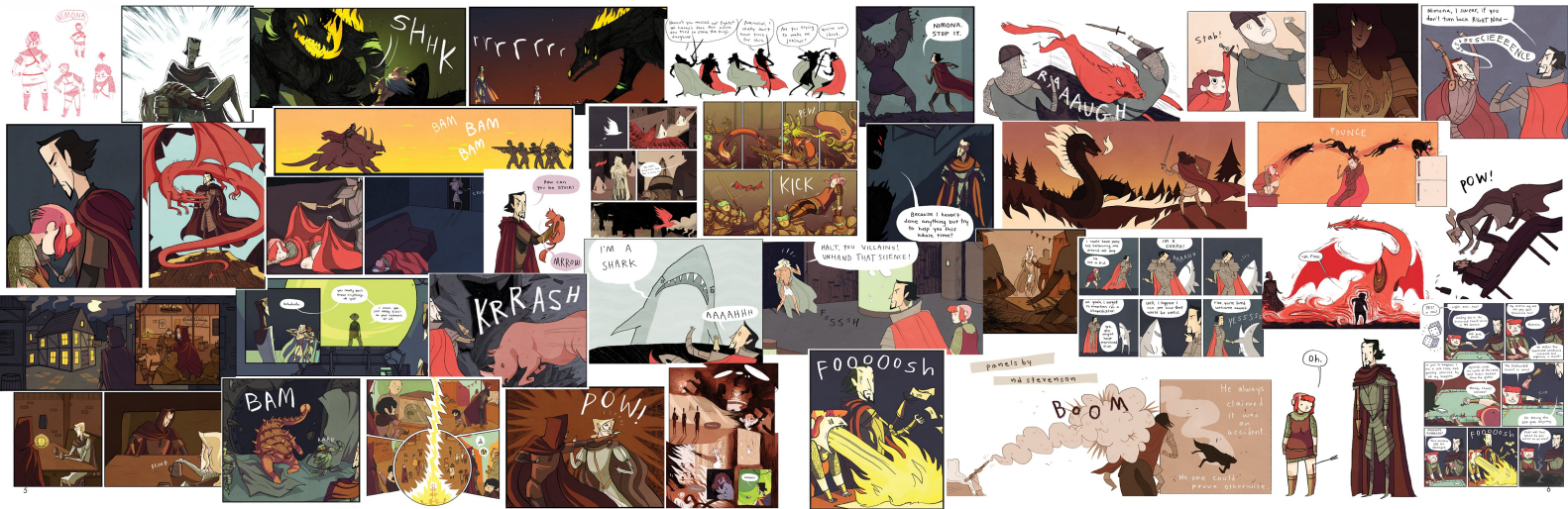
I've never stopped asking myself that question, even though I know perfectly well the answer is "a bunch of really smart, really talented, really metal people refused to stop fighting for this movie even as the world seemed to be actively plotting to make sure it never saw the light of day."

There are so many fingerprints on this movie. So many people around the world brought a piece of themselves to Nimona's story, and their love and passion shines through in every frame. I am so, so glad that you're about to appreciate their work in this book the way it deserves.

Nimona sprang into existence when I needed her most — a scream into the void, and a hope for a happier ending.

I think we got there in the end.

Bla-bla-bla, victoire!
- ND Stevenson



FOREWORD

BY NICK BRUNO & TROY QUANE

NIMONA is about a shapeshifting "monster" who befriends the disgraced Knight sworn to destroy her. While the film itself is an action-packed adventure comedy set in the wildly imaginative medieval future, what we love most about it is that at its heart, it's a story about acceptance. A movie about being seen for who you truly are and a love letter to all those who've ever shared that universal feeling of being misunderstood or like an outsider trying to fit in.

After a long journey, full of unexpected twists and unforeseen turns, we are all so excited to finally be able to share the art that gave this film life. The result of two studios, full of tremendous artists, coming together and sharing their own personal stories and incredible talent hoping we could help others find their own acceptance in the world.

If you take anything away from this book, we hope you'll see that by pencil, brush or stylus, all of our artists flexed the most creative muscle of all -- their heart.

We believe that when making a film, we have a responsibility to say something important. For us our message was simple: GET TO KNOW PEOPLE. Look beyond the labels others have created. By forming our own opinions and questioning the opinions that came before, we can see others for their authentic selves. That's all any of us could ever want.

That is the spirit of *Nimona*.

With Love,
Nick & Troy




Kingdom

Blessed by beauty and harmony in equal measure. Verily did the people live in the embrace of Blue Seas, tilling the good earth, harvesting the bounties of their animated labor.



Plenty and good fortune was theirs, but the simple glories of togetherness and community was the true reward.

The people resisted the wickedness that thrived in other Kingdoms, living in virtue, practicing kindness. Of renown for a kingdom where lives were valued, stories were told, and beauty was made.



Donstrous
dareness can
even befall the
Innocent and
Undeserving.
Gore who
know aught of the cravenness
and wickedness that dwell in the
shadow of the castle. Yea, even
the Hart's tappiest of places can
harbor the most pitiless cruelty.



scroll: aidan sugano
marble: tyler carter







wood: assaf horowitz

scroll: aidan sugano



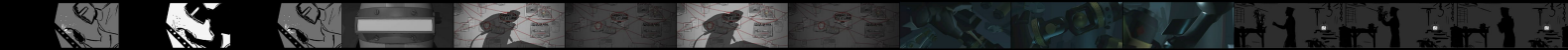
... a knight who might not be right.



they're gonna love you.



like i do.

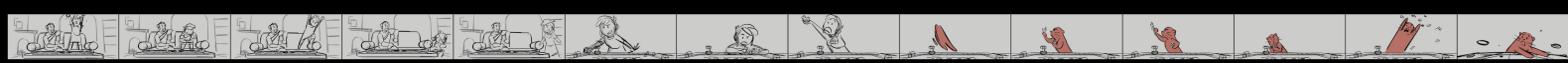
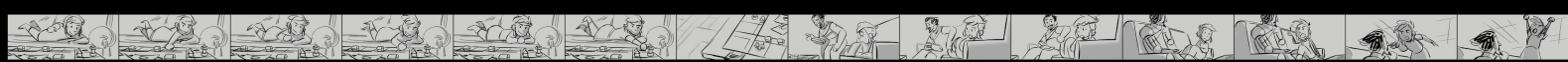


the name's NIMONA.

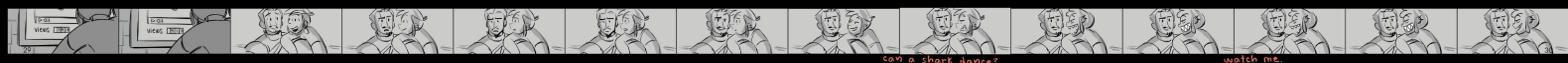
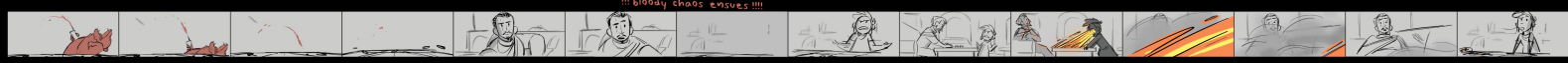
did they let you keep the old one????







!!! bloody chaos ensues !!!!



can a shark dance?

watch me.

boards :

estaban bravo, jony chandra

dason park

john kim, warren leonhardt



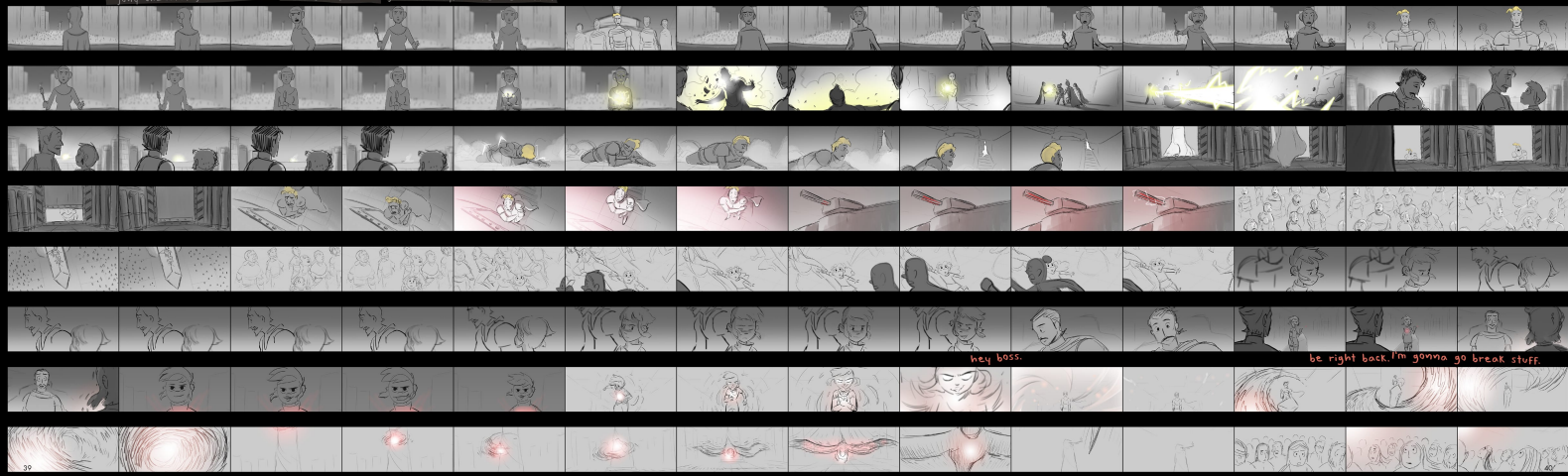
boards:

estoban bravo, jony chandra

dason park

john kim, warren leonhardt

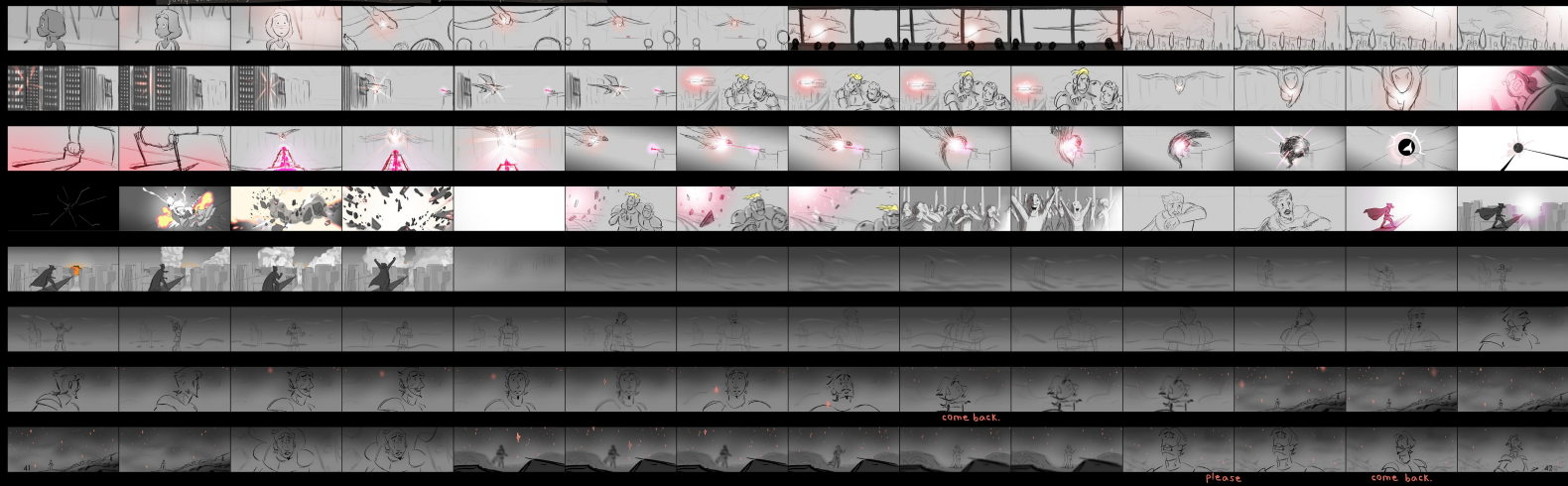




hey boss.

be right back. i'm gonna go break stuff.

board: jony chandra, john kim, estaban bravo, jess stanley, warren leonhardt, allen zhang, travis blaise



come back.

please

come back.

boards:

jony chanara, john kim

estaban bravo

jess stanley, warren leonhardt

allen thang, travis blaise



When Goldenloin looks up, he sees something that brings him
awe.

Others look, approach, and then we see what they see:

OUTSIDE THE WALL - It's beautiful.

There was nothing to fear.

Our theme is about perception, expectation and acceptance. Every visual choice on the film was designed to reinforce these concepts. We specifically chose a look that allowed us to play with the conventions associated with classic, 2D, Fantasy animation in order to hold up a mirror to the medieval thinking that exists in our world, so we could destroy it and remake it into something completely and utterly itself. Our visuals play with juxtaposition and contrast. Classic, princess fairytale versus gritty, futuristic dystopia. Truth versus expectation. Light versus dark. I am this, not that.

"True acceptance is seeing someone for who they are, not what we think they are."

Using this theme as our guide, we looked to two iconic, Golden Age artists to help define those conventions: Eyvind Earle and Charley Harper. And after extensive analysis, we adapted and translated some of their tenets into a rich, cinematic, 3D universe of our film.



DESIGN

Fundamental Principles

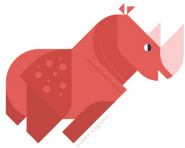
In order to be specific about how we stylized our forms, we relied on three fundamental approaches layered on top of each other:



EDITORIALIZATION

The removal of unnecessary detail to simplify a subject to its base icon.

We reduced everything down to the specific, unique icon of that object. This was done to visually reinforce the theme by reducing everything down to the perception or the expectation of that specific thing.



STYLIZATION

The application of a specific visual language and set of principles in a design.

Our style, at its core, evolved from the work of Charley Harper and Eyvind Earle and interpreted some of their visual tenets into the dimensional world of the moving, performing cinematic space.



CARICATURIZATION

The identification and exaggeration of iconic characteristics of a subject.

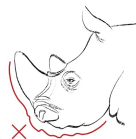
And lastly, to reinforce the depth of the performance through the designs, we made sure to exaggerate the designs and leaned into the classic principles of animation.



DESIGN

Law of Simplicity

This rule governed every visual choice we made. It applied to all aspects of the film: line, form, design, color, light, materials, etc. Bold visual choices were made bolder. Subtler choices were made so subtle they were only felt or removed entirely. For example, if something felt close to a straight line, we made it into a graphic straight line. If something felt like it could be simplified into a simple geometric curve, we did so. Hard edges became harder. Soft edges were softened to the verge of perception or removed.



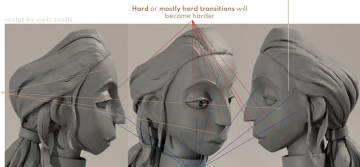
Note: There will be a few specific times when the core idea is not related to the subject itself, but is a story-driven element. This will be noted when it occurs.

THE LAW OF SIMPLICITY

To create an icon, reduce an element to the simplest, clearest expression of its base concept.

PLANARITY

Geometry was designed purposely to reinforce lighting. Planes were emphasized and art directed to create appealing light shapes so our lighting style could work easier out of the box without sacrificing design or performance.



Hard or mostly hard transitions will become harder

SPECIAL CASE
Semi-hard transitions in rare occasions where neither a hard nor soft edge was applicable, we used a semi-hard geometric transition.

Make soft transitions extremely soft or remove them entirely and simplify the shape overall!



Heavily reduce or remove occlusion and form shaping lights entirely

Harden terminators on key light edges

Broaden ambient fill lights until the gradient cannot be seen but only felt

For materials with specularly, we styled the approach to create a simplified hard-edged spec. (see marks and specularly)

When applicable, we utilized atmospheric environmental lights to globally create simple light gradients over both the character and the set.



DESIGN

Global Design Language

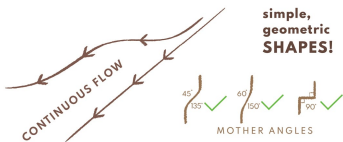
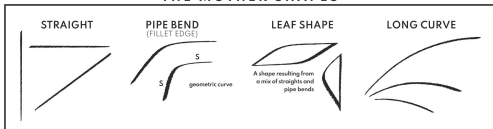
Here is the cheat sheet for most of the tenets for the visual language of Nimona.



BIG
MEDIUM
small



THE MOTHER SHAPES



simple, geometric SHAPES!



DESIGN

Group Specific Design Dialects



THE INSTITUTE

The language of the Institute is designed to be perfect, geometric, rigid, structured and inorganic. It emphasizes verticality and an airy, ethereal and divine voice. It personifies the glorious savior, the protector and the white knight. Gleaming metal, white polished marble, ornate patterning and gold everywhere you look. All Institute-related elements adhered strictly to the design tenets below.



DOMINANT ANGLES



ICON: SWORD



SYMMETRY



NIMONA

The language of Nimona was designed to showcase her voice. It is spontaneous, organic, charmingly imperfect and fluid. It emphasizes rhythm and movement and embraces the specific nuances that come together to create the unique whole. Tactile, handmade textiles, chaotic, asymmetrical layering and grouping and bold juxtaposition define the language of Nimona.



THE SPEEDFORM CURVE



FLOW PUSHES DOWN & OUT (like them)

ICON: FLAME



THE ORGANIC GRID



FEEL THE WEIGHT



ASYMMETRY



DIAGONALS



DOMINANT SHAPES





DESIGN

The Grid in 3D

One of the most important tenets we borrowed from our reference material was the use of grids in our foundational language. This was a tricky visual tenet because what can work beautifully in static, two-dimensions can be tricky to translate in dynamic, deforming three-dimensional objects. To effectively translate the grid into three dimensions, we thought of it as a lattice. This applied to both rigid, geometric grids and looser, more organic grids. We used the application rules on this page to preserve the integrity of the grid in the various situations encountered on the film.



research by addina sargano

THE GRID ON MATERIALS

Placing the grid in materials was a great way of having the grid felt. See the MATERIALS section for more detail.

Utilize hard landmarks where applicable

For objects that had a mix of deformation areas and hard static areas (characters, organic elements, etc...), we applied the grid to the static landmarks. Then, even if the object deformed and changed, the fixed landmarks still aligned regardless of situation. For example, on a character's face we applied the grid to the hard landmarks: temples, hairlines, ears, jawline, nose, cheekbones, facial hair, etc.



research by blairnash studios



drawovers by andax segana

ON OBJECTS THAT DEFORM, CHANGE OR MOVE

Design for the rest pose

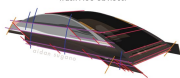
There was no way to truly maintain the grid in motion without dramatically limiting performance. However, we learned that by designing the grid to be present in rest poses, the character could align with the grid, then move through extreme deformations and come to rest back at the next key pose. For example, on a plant, the wind might blow it and characters might push it aside, but it will always come back to the rest pose aligned with the grid.



design by katy we

ON STATIC OBJECTS

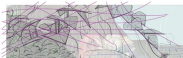
Static objects were much easier to apply the grid to (hard surface objects, set pieces, buildings, vehicles, props, matte paintings, etc...). The trick with this was that we had to make sure there was enough complexity so the grid wasn't too obvious.



andax segana

Utilize the organic grid

Rhythms, lines of action and flow lines (even in motion) were used to convey the less rigid organic grid.



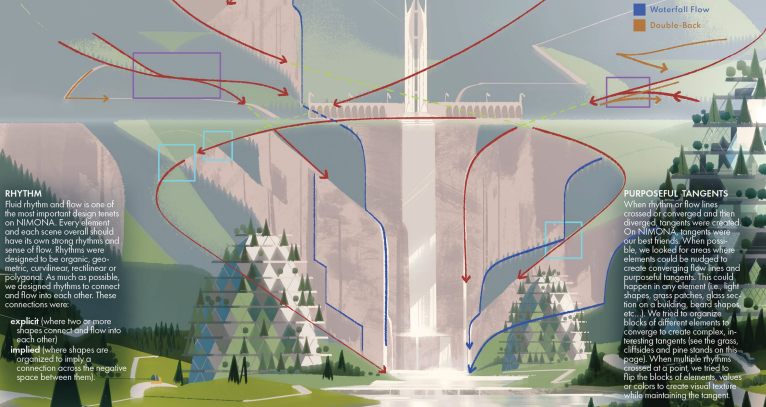
drawover by assaf harowitz

sculpt by vicki wells



DESIGN

Rhythms and Tangents



PURPOSEFUL TANGENTS

When rhythm or flow lines crossed or converged and then diverged, tangents were created. On NIMONA, tangents were our best friends. When possible, we looked for areas where elements could be nudged to create converging flow lines and purposeful tangents. This could happen in any element (i.e., light shapes, grass patches, glass section on a building, beard shapes, etc...). We tried to organize blocks of different elements to converge to create complex, interesting tangents (see the grass, cliffsides and pine stands on this page). When multiple rhythms crossed at a point, we tried to flip the blocks of elements, values or colors to create visual texture while maintaining the tangent.

RHYTHM

Fluid rhythm and flow is one of the most important design tenets on NIMONA. Every element and each scene overall should have its own strong rhythms and sense of flow. Rhythms were designed to be organic, geometric, curvilinear, rectilinear or polygonal. As much as possible, we designed rhythms to connect and flow into each other. These connections were:

explicit (where two or more shapes connect and flow into each other)

implied (where shapes are organized to imply a connection across the negative space between them).



CHARACTER

Level Of Style

To reinforce our visual metaphor of perception and expectation, we organized everything so the closer you got to something, the more you saw and understood, and as you moved away, the more the object became an icon and the expectation of the object.

As any object receded from camera, its Level of Style (LOS) changed and details were simplified or stripped away (including geometric detail, material complexity, lighting complexity, etc...)

LOS 0 Extreme Closeup
-higher contrast of skin micro detail

LOS 1 Default
-base materials
-normal light styling
-no reduction of details

LOS 2 Reduced OI
-remove/filter out subtle details
-remove occlusion

LOS 3 Reduced O2
-simplified/reduced detail
-dot eyes, no eye whites
-simplified silhouette
-scaled up textures
-limited color complexity
-no occlusion

approximate
on-screen scale

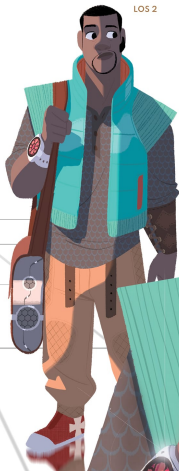
LOS 4 Sprite
(not pictured)
-graphic geometric sprite
-no eyes
-simplified performance
-simplified lighting (lit or not)

53



LOS 3

LOS 2



LOS 1

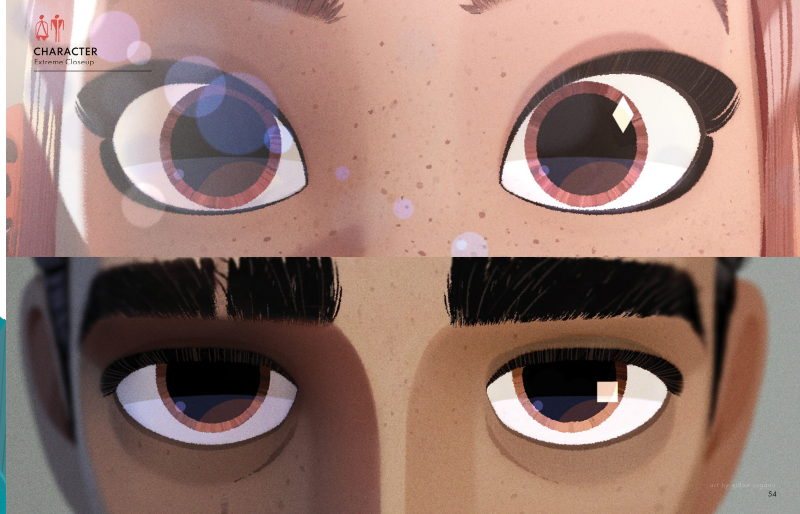


designs by jill turley



CHARACTER

Extreme Closeup



Character

The goal of every character designer is to visualize the abstract and highly subjective personality that lives within the minds of multiple people - directors, producers, production designers, and many others - all of whom have different ideas of who this character is and what they look like. It is always a challenging process. On the film, we needed to find a balance between the iconic design from the graphic novel and the style-driven changes chosen to reinforce the theme of the film. To accomplish this, we leaned into classic visual fundamentals and built a simple shape language based on the visual tropes of hero and villain.

moment painting by

aidan sugano



These were some of the earliest explorations of Nimona. At first, we explored a much more direct translation of the design from the graphic novel, but with a more traditionally stylized 3D look.



early explorations
by sang jun lee



These drawings were some of the first to help unlock the design of the character, but since the story was still going through large changes, her personality was still in flux.



early explorations
by shiyoon kim



SARD OFF!!
YE SILKSNATCHING
SCOBBERLOTCHER
OF A
RUTTISH
FOPDOODLE!!



And these were
the drawings
that finally
started to bring
the character
together in look
and personality.



...and then we ...



PF
POOM!



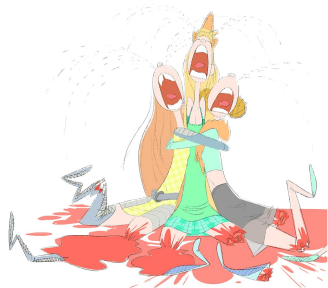
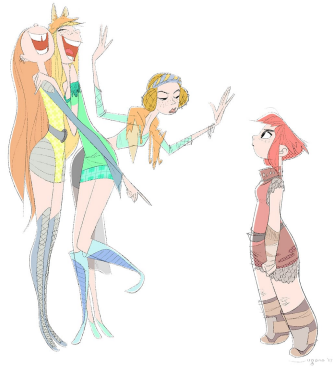
MUAHAHAHAHA!!



early explorations

by aidan sugano





early explorations

by aidan sugano

expressions by

bj crawford



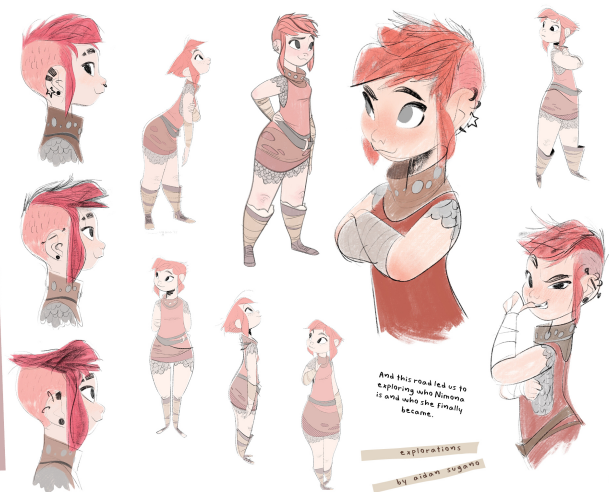
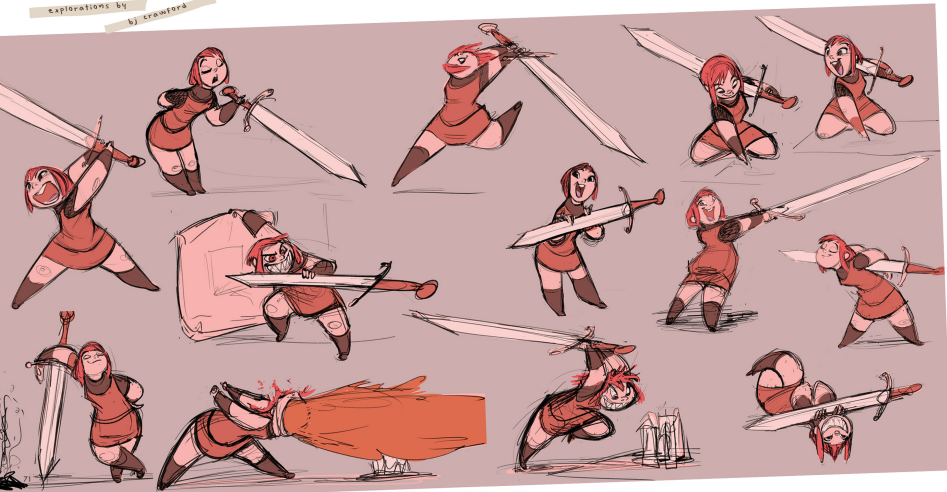
expressions by

aidan sugano



sculpt by

vicki saulls



And this road led us to
exploring who Nimona
is and who she finally
became.

SHO

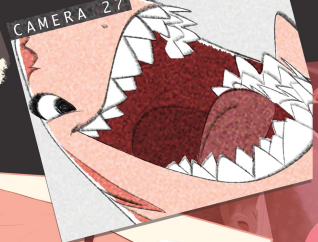
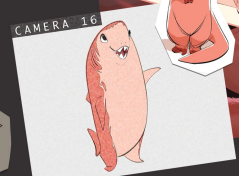


I'm a Lot of THINGS



RAARRR

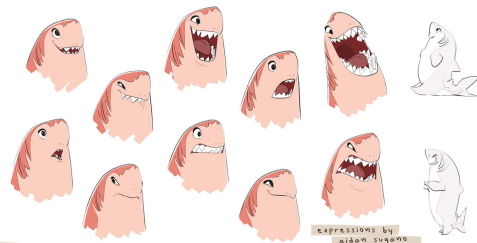
All of Nimona's shape-shifts were designed to be expressions of the specific emotional state she was in at that moment.



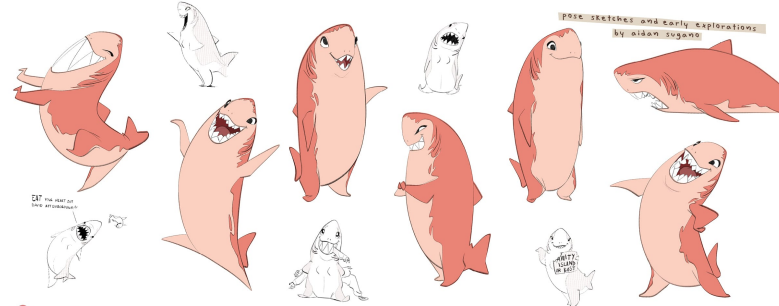
moment painting by
aidan sugano
jen kager
cristin mckee
elena ortega

character sketches
by aidan sugano

color callout by
mike lee



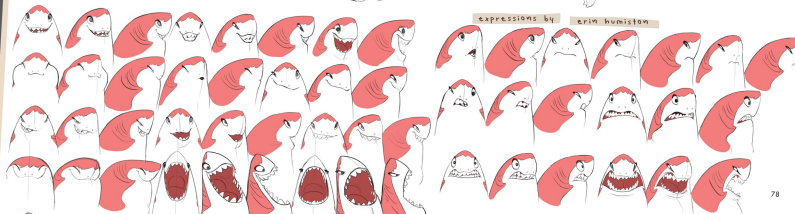
expressions by
aidan sugano



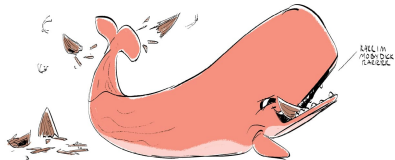
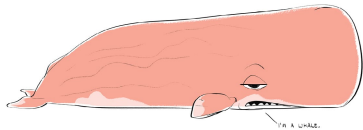
pose sketches and early explorations
by aidan sugano



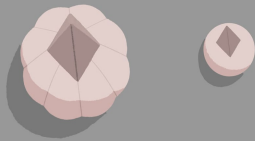
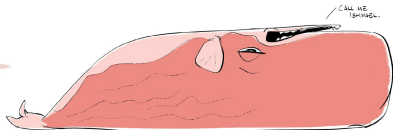
materials render: bluesky studios



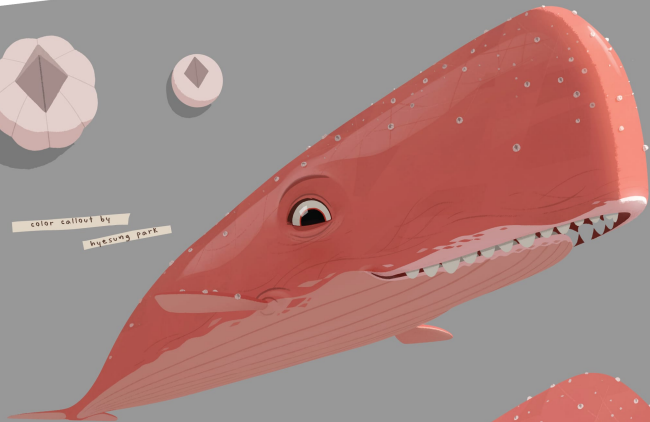
expressions by
erin humiston



explorations by
aidan sugano



color callout by
hyesung park

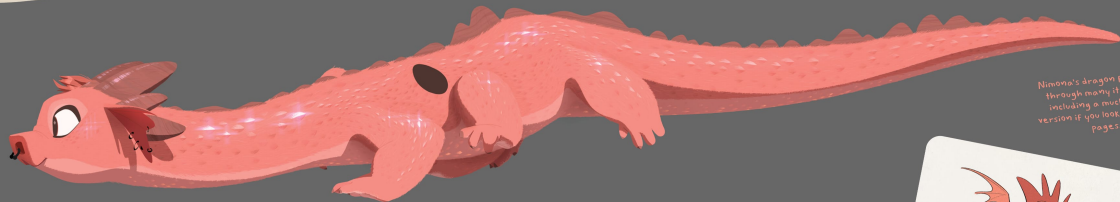




run cycle by

louis jones

color callout by
aidan sugano



Nimona's dragon form went through many iterations, including a much darker version if you look back a few pages.



explorations by

jose manuel fernandez oli and aidan sugano



expressions by

erin humiston

color callout by
mike lee

design by

jose manuel fernandez oli



moment painting by

assaf herowitz



explorations by



jose manuel fernandez oli

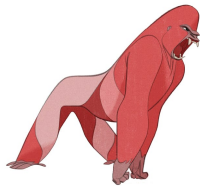


color callout by

aidan sugano



10



13



12



11



explorations by

aidan sugano



out of picture explorations by
jose manuel fernandez oli

There were a BUNCH of shape-shifts that existed in different versions of the film but never made it into the final version. One of the team favorites was the amazing gnomes by Oli.

How does the eye move?

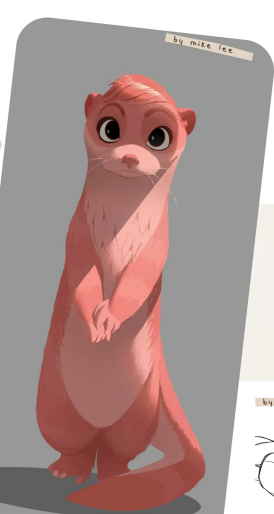
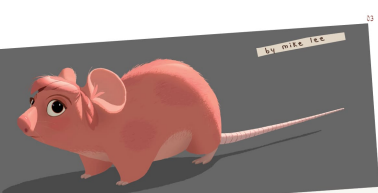
How did the eye move on the dragon?

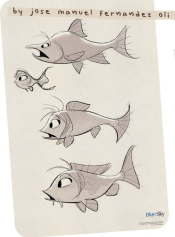
Double the eye

Refracting the light

The light

Cartilage like hair





sculpt by Vicki Sauls



explorations by Aidan Sugano



explorations by Aidan Sugano



designs by José Manuel Fernández Oli

sketch by Aidan Sugano



In one version of the film, hulked out into a version much closer to that of the graphic novel. Her shoulder scale mail became spikes. Her hairstyle changed. And there was even talk of it going purple like in the novel.



model by Adam McMahon



flycups

simplify



greenP



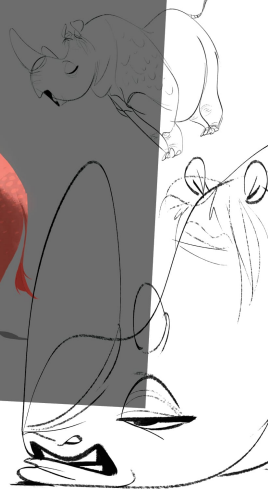
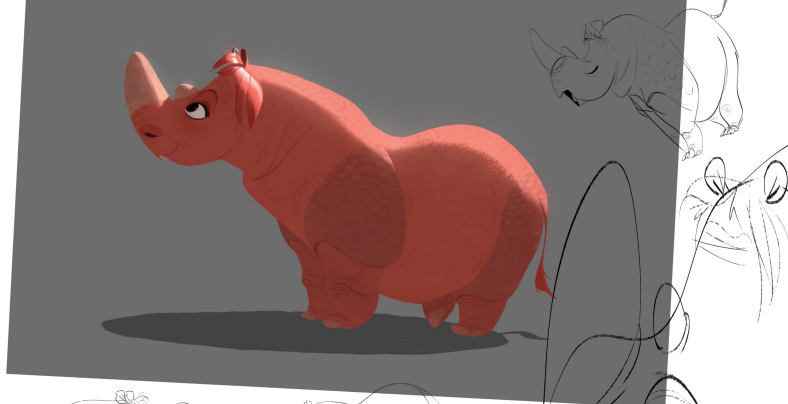
simplify round out





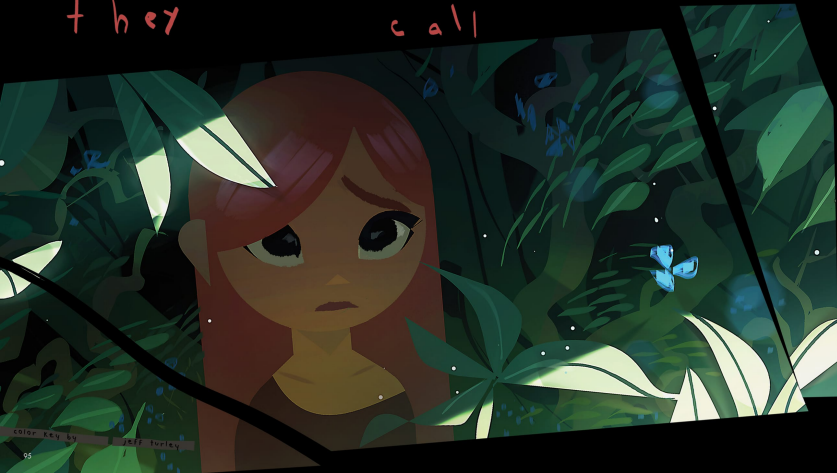
explorations by

aidan sugano



they

call



me

a

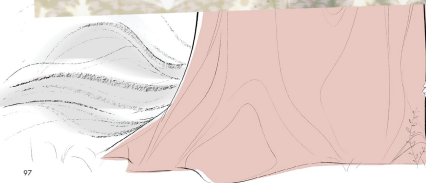
monster



color key by JEFF TURLEY

color key by JEFF TURLEY

moment painting by jeff turley



i made things... change



explorations by aidan sugano



explorations by lisa keane

sculpt by vicki saulls



color callout hyesung park





Framed



Stalwart, kinda rigid, no-nonsense, but honest, dedicated and genuinely good-hearted with the noblest of intentions. Ballister's shape became the shield. Everything was based around the rectilinear language. We made his language simple, grounded and rigidly adhered to the square grid. At least until he meets Nimona...

~~BALLISTER~~
~~BLACKHEART~~

NIMONA

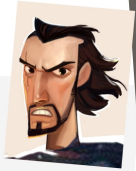
moment painting by
jeff turley
typography by aidan sugano



Ballister went through many iterations before he became the character in the film - in design, personality, age and race.



early explorations
by sang jun lee



early exploration
by aidan sugano



early explorations
by jose manuel fernandez oli



early explorations

by minkyu lee





early exploration

by aidan sugano

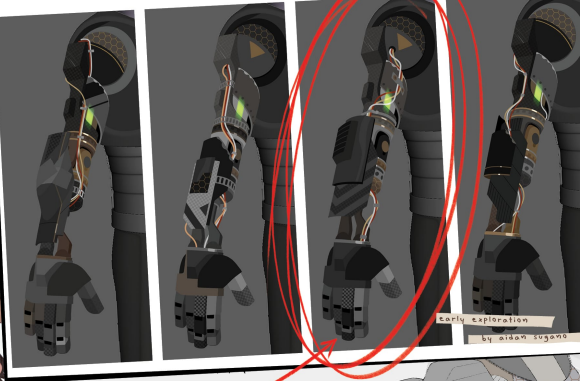


Ballister's arm and armor were two of the most complicated assets on the film. The team had to design the mechanics to be functionally correct but as performance-friendly as possible.

early exploration
by ash taurp

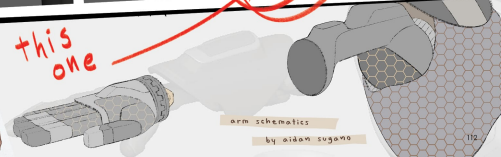


early exploration
by jose manuel fernandez oli



early exploration
by aidan sugano

this one



arm schematics
by aidan sugano

color callout by
mike lee



explorations by
annlyn huang



explorations by
annlyn huang



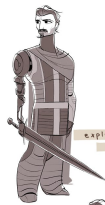
young ballister



by crystal kung



explorations by
aidan sugano



VILLAIN

MONSTER



moment painting by jeff turley



exploration by
aidan sugano



explorations by
aidan sugano

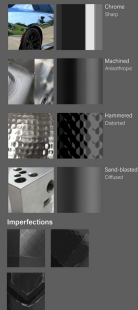


These expressions that BT did were pivotal to discovering the appeal of the character. He pushed the size of his mustache and lowered his nose, and all of a sudden, Ballister appeared.

expressions by
bj crowford



expressions by
bj crowford



assaf horowitz
aidan sugano



jeff turley

paintover: aidan sugano
render: blue sky studios



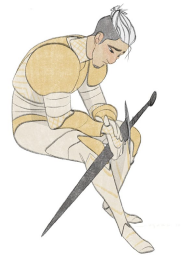
GOLDENLOIN

knight

noble lineage

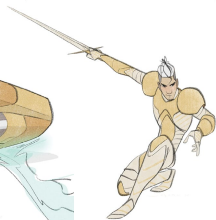
hero of the realm.

art by
bj crowford and aidan sugano



sketches by

aidan sugano



color callout by

aidan sugano





all sketches by
bj crawford



explorations by
shiyoon kim

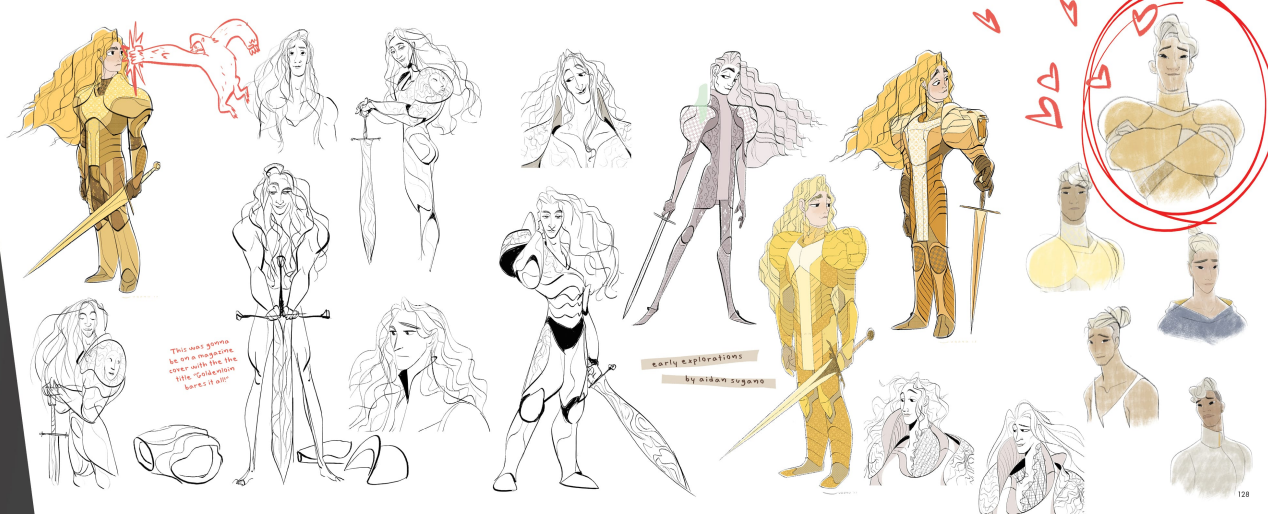


Originally Galadriel was also designed to be a starker transition from the graphic novel, referencing the big hair and big pointy ears to evoke Galadriel, Eowyn, Merry, Pippin and Peter Jackson. But his character wasn't landing right. So we took a different swing and focused on a character who knew the experience and burden of living under the expectations of others.



explorations by
minkyu lee



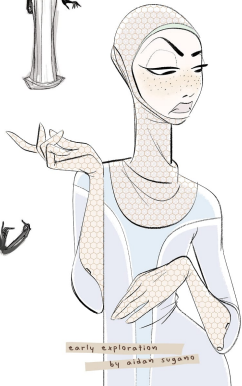




shoe explorations
by aidan sugano



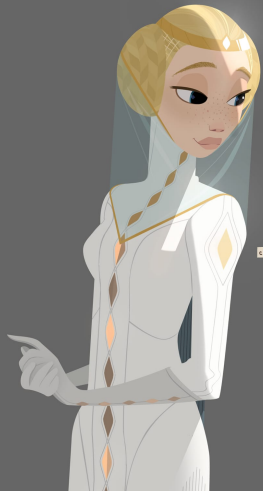
early explorations
by minkyu lee



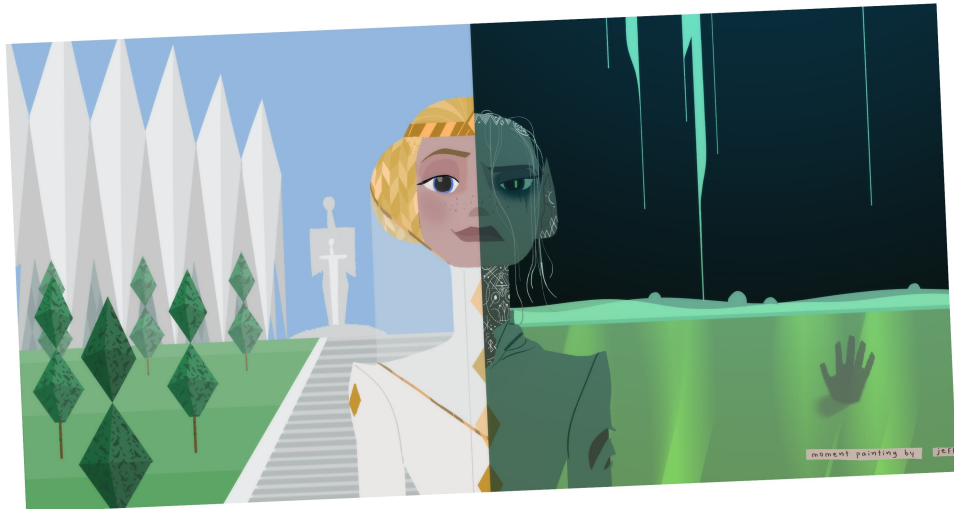
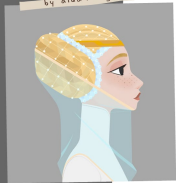
early exploration
by aidan sugano



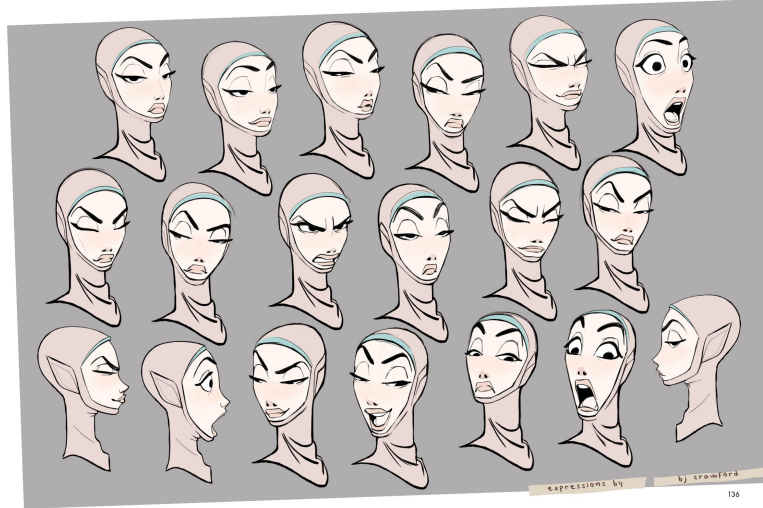
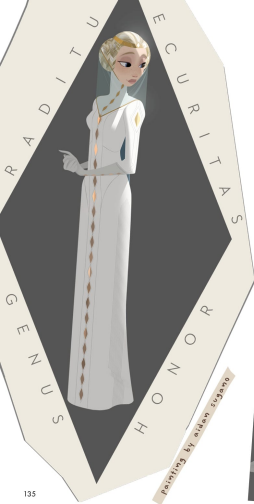
early explorations
by minkyu lee



character color callouts
by aidan sugano



moment painting by jeff turley



glor eth.

moment painting by jeff turley



color key by jeff turley



moment painting by jeff turley

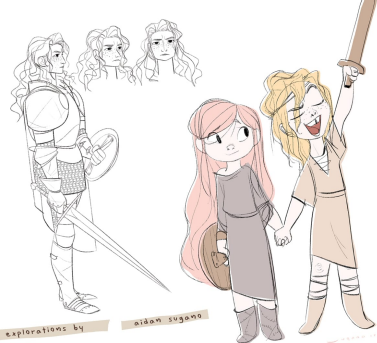
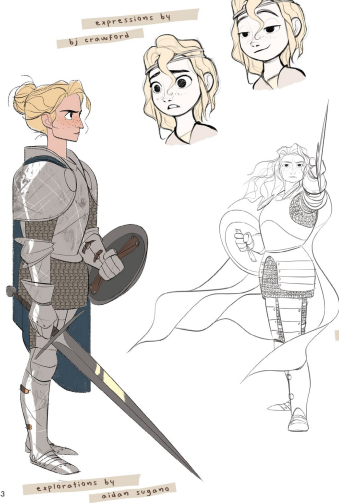


early explorations
by minkyu lee



early explorations
by annlyn huang

early explorations
by minkyu lee





design by aidan sugano

render by dneq

designs by aidan sugano

turn by aidan sugano

graphics by valerie kao



render by dneq

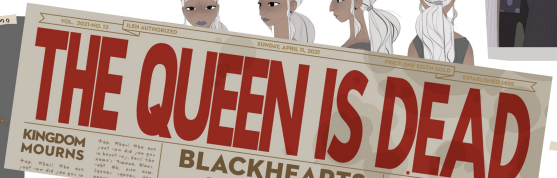
render by dneq

graphics by aidan sugano
valerie kao

QUEEN



145



graphics by aidan sugano



146



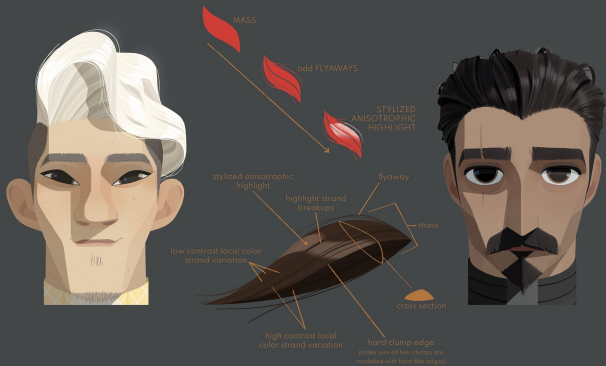
CHARACTER

Hair

Due to its high density of detail, hair was one of the most complicated aspects of our show. Motion on hair, like everything on our show, had to feel naturalistic and maintain the fluid rhythm and flow.

In order to stylize it correctly, we broke it down into a collection of a few simple shapes grouped together instead of individual strands. We focused on organizing things based on big, medium and small and utilized hand-drawn animation principles to create masses with a few flyaways that broke apart and then joined back together. To simplify the look but still have it feel like hair, we dramatically reduced occlusion and purposefully designed the local color variations to make up for the lack of dimensional detail (as can be seen in the breakdown to the right).

Reference Earl Oliver Hurst



art by aash borwara, aidan sugano, and jeff turley

HAIR SHINE:

design by
jeff turley

drawovers by
aidan sugano



groom by
sheldon chow

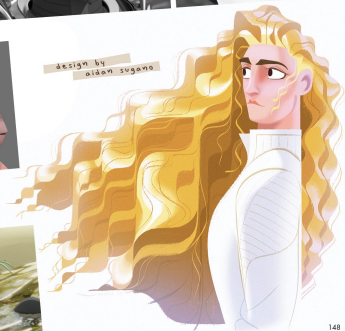
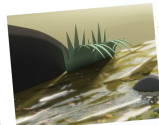
model by
ian burkard



design by
aidan sugano



hair highlight dev
nathan zechner





DESIGN

Translating the Source

The world of NIMONA is a futuristic one stuck in a medieval mindset. As such, every element needed to be derived from the medieval vernacular. It also needed to feel different from our world, which also evolved from the medieval world. We used these two approaches to address each design challenge.

MEDIEVAL SILHOUETTE, CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

We took a medieval design or silhouette and constructed it in the contemporary vernacular. We did things like updated the materials, construction techniques, function, etc... but we also made sure to retain the overall intention of the original source materials. We thought of it as the modern reimagining approach.

CONTEMPORARY DESIGN USING MEDIEVAL ELEMENTS

We also took a medieval element, technique and/or principle and deconstructed it to use it in a new, contemporary way.

MEDIEVAL SILHOUETTE, CONTEMPORARY DESIGN



CONTEMPORARY DESIGN USING MEDIEVAL ELEMENTS



Take the quilting on a gambeson...

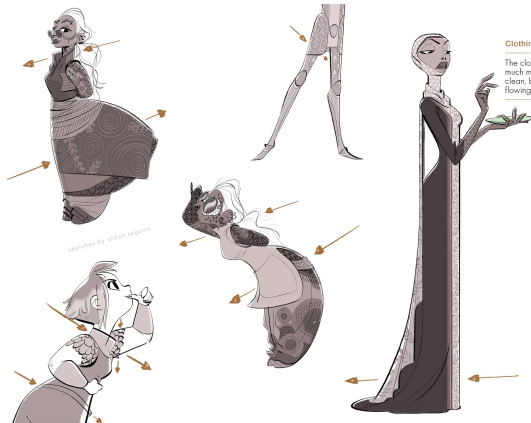
...and use it in a modern way



BIASING CLOTH

Reinforce The Flow

Always bias cloth to one side. Add weight, flow or wind to the motivated side, and a clean line to the other.



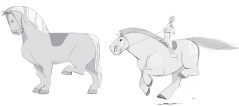
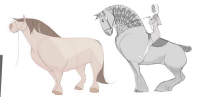
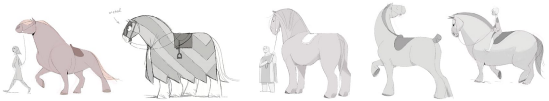
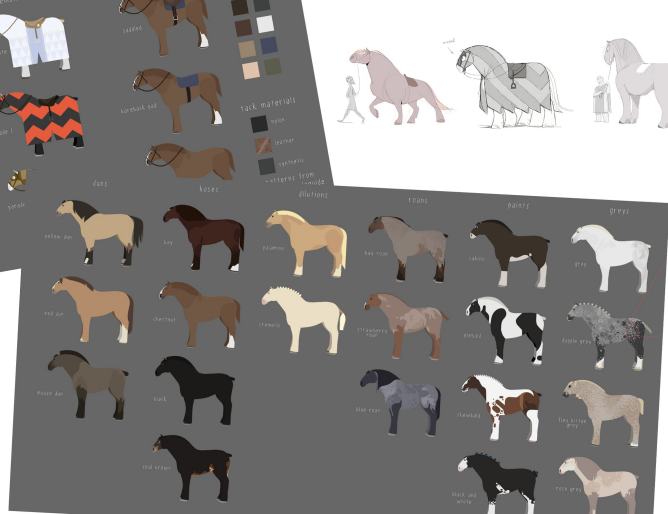
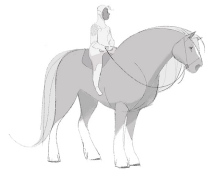
Clothing Of The Institute

The clothing of the Institute is much more fitted, tight and clean, but should still bias the flowing parts.

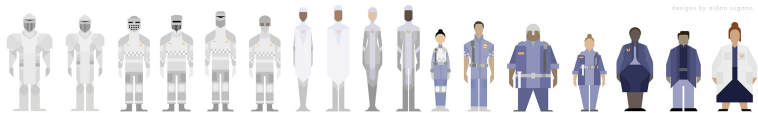




color by
aidan sugano



explorations by
annlyn huang



designs by aidan sugano



SAMPLE COLOR VARIATION

Colors should follow the rules for each class in a simple, reduced way.

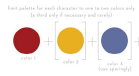




PALETTE

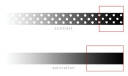


single
bold
traditional
with
basic



limit palette for each character to one to two colors only
(a third only if necessary and useful)

color 1
color 2
color 3
(use sparingly)



textures

RULES

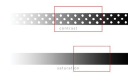


PALETTE



1-4 color palettes
contemporary
modern

closer to the middle end
of the spectrum than the magical



textures

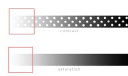
RULES



PALETTES



lofted
natural dyes only
not dirty but warm



textures

RULES

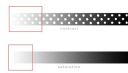


PALETTES



NO blue or neutral grey
(blue is complimentary here, neutrals do not have the
right to wear Institute colors)

One subtle purple item on each man attire as a class
marker

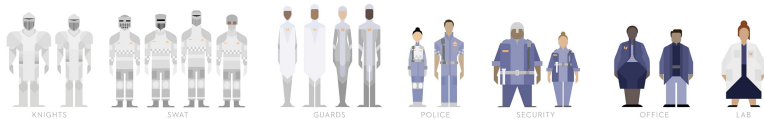


textures

RULES

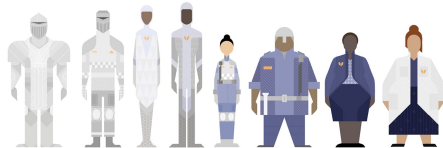


designs by aidan sugano, anlyn heang and katy wu

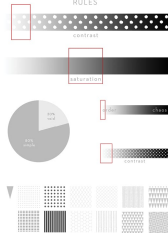


the facade of the white knight VALUE being behind the veil of tradition

PALETTE



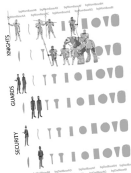
RULES



generate
based on the grid
high risk

HEART | BG Character Matrix

MEDIEVAL VILLAGE



bluesky studios



LABTECHS



Next to day one, it was day two, we knew that the background characters were going to play a huge role in the film. They would be the silent art expression in making our culture. They would be necessary in making our world as a huge opportunity to reinforce our theme. Since society puts people into classes as a way to define them, we utilized medieval simplicity to define them. We utilized distinct facial features and social roles to create visually distinct classes to reflect the concepts of perception and acceptance. But in order to do this, we needed to create a larger, more diverse crowd than we had ever had access to. Like the world we live in, we needed every single character we could get. Every character needed to feel like they had a rich story. We needed Bolivar and Nimona to blend in, not stand out. So the brilliant minds at Blue Sky Studios completely redesigned the process of creating our characters and put together a system that could create a vast, unlimited amount of variety and specificity. DNEG then leveraged all that system and created into the final film.

Beards / Mustaches



Mature Hairline



- annlyn huang
- dan seddon
- Varun Nair
- Jose Manuel Fernandez Oli
- Aidan Sugano
- Jason Sadler





dneg animation

ONEG

mobility
working

ONEG

citizen
working

ONEG

nonCitizen
working

ONEG

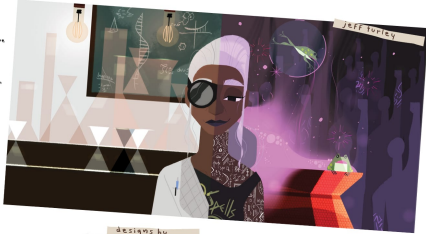
Institute
working

ONEG

medivals
working



For a long time, the character of Meredith Grey was in the film. She started many different functions. At one point, she had a magical van that was bigger on the inside. In another, she was covered from head to toe in magical letters. And in another, she was the head of a vast underground society, called the Silver Society, comprised of all the magical creatures forced into hiding by the Institute. Ultimately, the story went in a different direction, but her design and model were so beloved that she wasn't lost but repurposed into The Queen.



jeff turley



designs by

minkyu lee



026

MOBILE UNIT
CARTON UNIT
MOUNTED
ON THE WALL



vicki saulis



designs by

aidan sugano

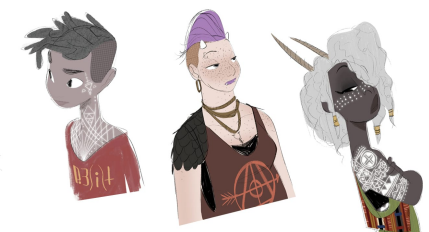


moment painting by

jeff turley



aidan sugano



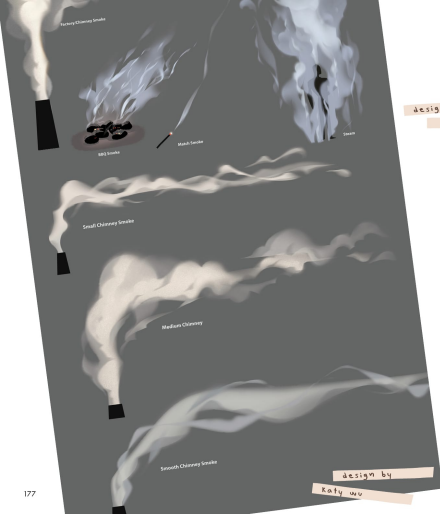
designs by
annlyn huang



designs by

aidan sugano





designs by
Kevin Yang

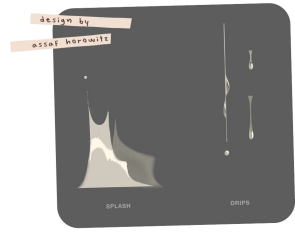


design by
Katy Wu

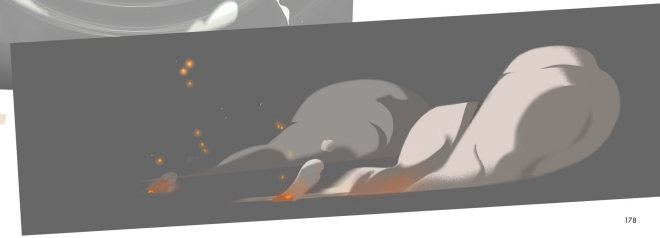
FX

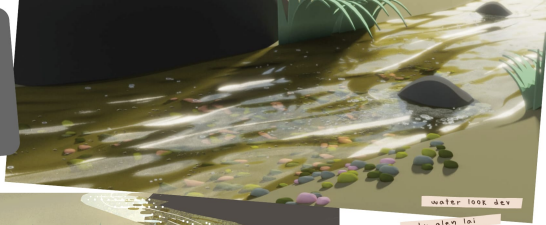
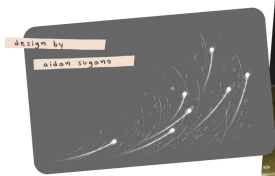
Consistency was key to this project. This meant that every single element that we created on screen needed to feel like it seamlessly fit into the visual style so that nothing drew you out of the world, and this included one of the most complicated areas of the film effects. Every single visual effect on this film had to be reimagined through the lens of the style – both in the way it looked and the way it moved. Rain, smoke, dust, debris, ripples, explosions all needed to be designed to follow the visual rules we had set. Rain, for example, became dashed lines. Smoke became simple graphic shapes that undulated and flowed naturally. And Nimona's shape-shifting effects were designed to reinforce the emotion she was feeling at the moment of transformation.

designs by
Kevin Yang

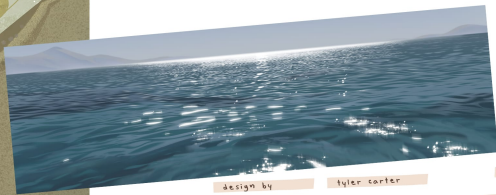
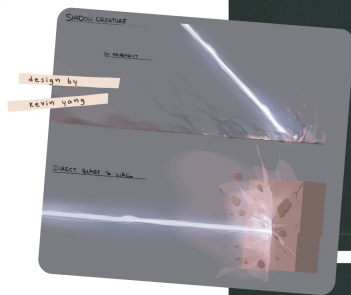


design by
Assaf Horowitz



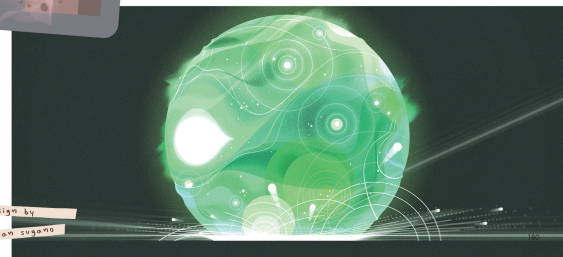
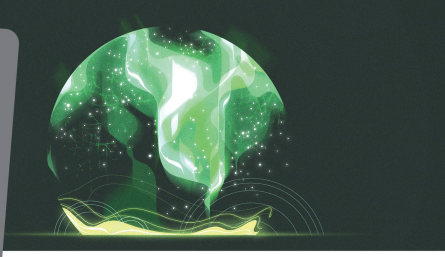


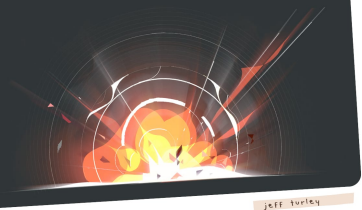
water look dev
by allen lai



design by
tyler carter

design by
aidan sugano

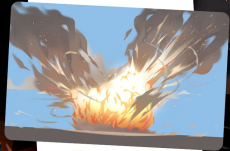




jeff turley



assaf horowitz



Katy wu



Medium Sized Explosion



Small Sparks

Flame

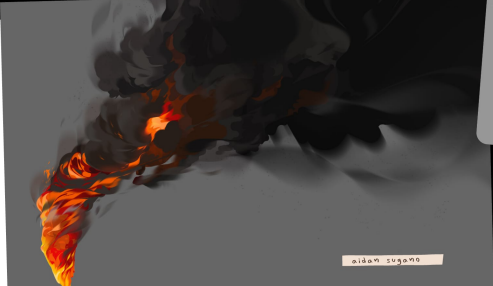


the straw roof burning off.

shes the roof.

the house.

assaf horowitz



aidan sugano



Kevin yang



Large Explosion

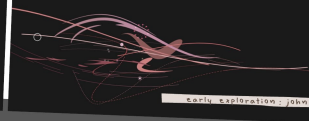
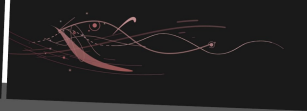
Car For Scale



Katy wu

181
spot where the windows and door are located.

As the fire flows upward, it leaves a black smoke.



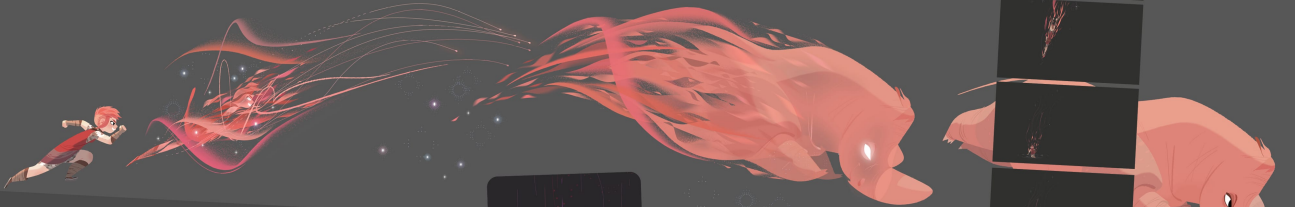
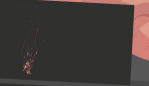
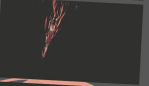
early exploration: john koltai



fx designs by
Kevin yang

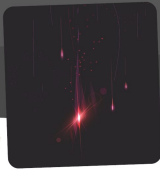


fx designs by
Kevin yang



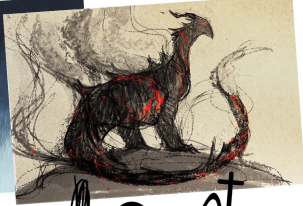
early exploration: aidan sugano

aidan sugano

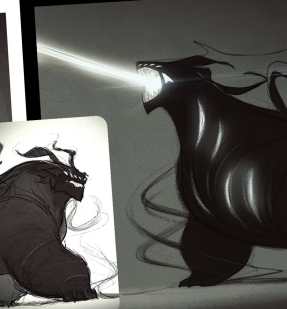




Jose Manuel Fernandez Oli



Jose Manuel Fernandez Oli



EARLY EXPLORATIONS



Jose Manuel Fernandez Oli

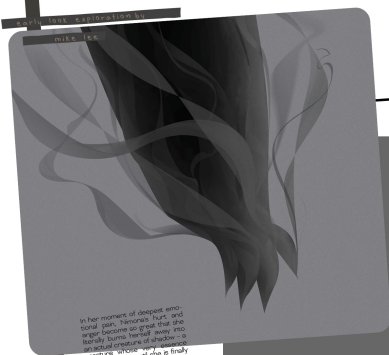


Jose Manuel Fernandez Oli





early look exploration by Mike Lee



early look exploration by Mike Lee

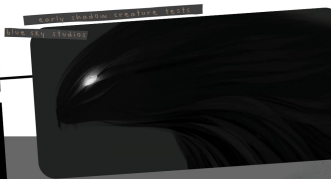
In her moment of deepest emotional pain, Nimon's hurt and anger become so great that she literally burns herself away - a creature whose very essence consumes light until she is finally seen and becomes the opposite. She becomes light. She becomes acceptance. And she becomes a literal sun that burns right to day. This idea was born in the graphic novel and grew to be the culmination of the entire lighting theory of the film. This character also represented a huge stylistic and technical challenge. Not only did we have to figure out how smoke was to look and perform in our style, but we also had to make sure it reinforced the emotional performance that we needed from the character.

smoke render exploration: Aidan Sugano



Jeremy Lazare

Jeremy Lazare



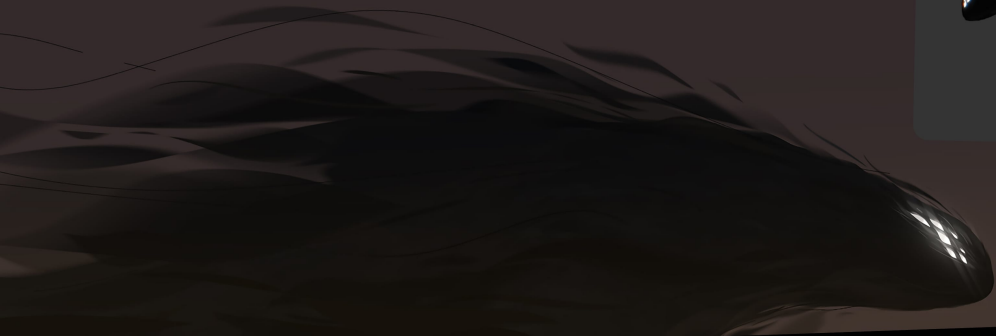
early shadow creature tests Blue Sky Studios



early shadow creature tests Blue Sky Studios



design by aidan sugano

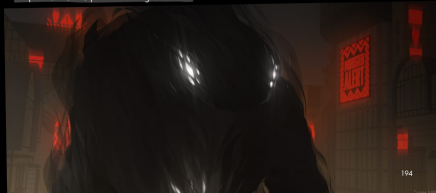


look dev test by dneg animation



paintover by aidan sugano

render by dneg animation



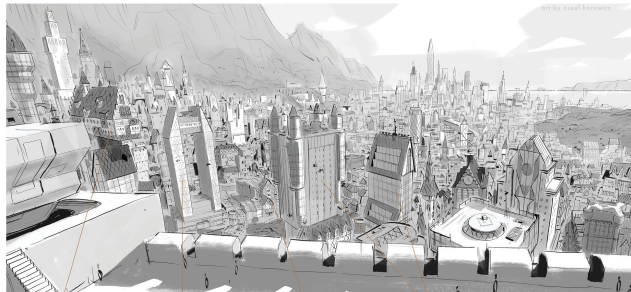


ENVIRONMENT

A Dark Reflection

Mixing the design languages of medieval and future can present some interesting challenges. We do not want our world to feel like a caricature or a pun. At the same time we need it to be both a mirror of our world and feel different and separate. However, our world evolved from the medieval and still retains heavy influences, especially in regards to architecture. So how do we differentiate our world?

From an application standpoint, it is easy to push the futuristic and make it feel unique. It is hard, however, to do the same with the medieval language and not have it feel too much like our world or like a caricature. When designing a world based on a mix of these two contrasting ideas, focus on the classic adage "form follows function." What is this, what is it for? Focus on purpose first, then use the approaches here to help with appearance.



art by ossal korowitz

SCALE IT UP

Take an architectural element, scale it up, turn it into a building itself (e.g. take an arch and turn it into a skyscraper).

MODERN LOOK, MEDIEVAL TECHNIQUE

Modern look or design built with medieval or traditional techniques, materials and functions. They would have gotten really good with these materials and the techniques of utilizing them (e.g. a skyscraper made of half timber).

HOLDOVER, REVIVAL

An outdated look or technique that has persisted to the present day or an old-fashioned look that has returned to popularity because of current trends, but with a modern twist (e.g., a cruck house housing development).

MEDIEVAL LOOK, MODERN TECHNIQUE

Medieval look and/or silhouette with modern techniques, materials or function (e.g. a castle made of glass and steel).

SHOWCASE AND REFLECT (not pictured)

Show off the glory of the past without detracting from it. Place the old against or within a modern setting that shows off the old or make modern elements more subtle (e.g. The Hancock Tower in Boston).



ENVIRONMENT

Urban Morphology

While we are creating a fantasy world designed on the themes of the film, it still needs to feel like a real place. It needs to be a place that can continue on without our characters. It should be rich and genuine with purpose and story behind everything. It should feel like a place that people have lived in and died in for generations. It should not feel overly designed or perfect.

To accomplish this, pay attention to these high-level concepts:

-Age and Time

-Locale

-Culture

AGE AND TIME

It is very important that we make sure to showcase time in our world choices. This is a cloistered world that has lived in its bubble for millennia. Everything has been built on what came before. It has a history. The past is important. The passage of time is important.



art by gideon wagner

Organic City Layout

Leveraging off of medieval city organization, our city was not designed. It grew organically. Some areas were laid out purposefully (new developments or strict Institute developments) but most grew organically over time based on the needs of the population. It is not Manhattan. It is London, Rome, Prague, Venice. It has older, tight, meandering, overhanging streets, wide, newer central avenues, specific neighborhoods for specific functions and classes, older parts, newer parts, etc.

Variety in Dressing

To help showcase the passage of time, leverage off variety in visual trends. For example:

- variety of artistic substyles within a medium (multiple styles of statuary, painting, pop art, graffiti, etc...)

- variety of architectural styles and trends (modern, baroque, brutalist, etc...)

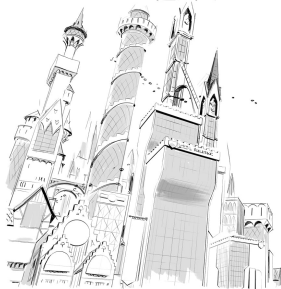
- variety of building age and wear (old, new, run-down, pristine, etc...)

Note: Any substyle still needs to be designed within the global design language. Be conscious of this so as to not water down the look.

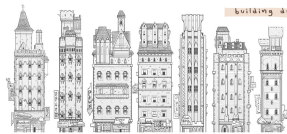
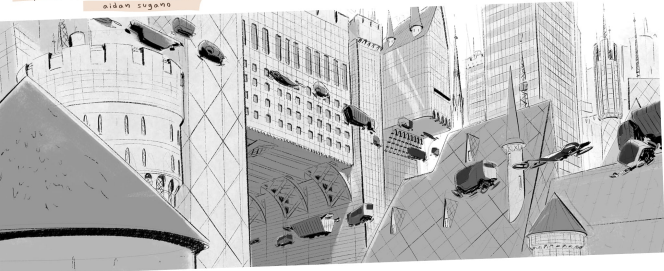
VISIT
THE KINGDOM!
FOOD, FUN +
MEDIEVAL
THINKING!



city explorations by
assaf horowitz



city exploration by
aidan sugano



building designs by

Kevin yang



nash dunnigan



city explorations by

assaf horowitz



COLOR

GLORODOME DISTRICT

Airy whites, warm greys and golden yellows. A shimmering fortress of glass and steel that dissolves into the pristine blue expanse. The palette of the district cements this area as a constant beacon of light and security.



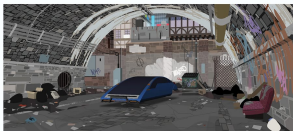
COLOR

CENTRAL AVENUE

Contemporary and modern. Grounded in stone and wood, masonry and half timber. The palette of the majority of the city should reflect the epitome of the balance between modern and medieval.



Dark and damp. Soot and grime. It is a dim warren of medieval materials, outdated tech and claustrophobic gloom. The weather and wear of the centuries have rubbed the stones, wood and bricks raw.





MATERIALS

DANKS

Dark and damp. Soot and grime. It is a dim warren of medieval materials, outdated tech and claustrophobic gloom. The weather and wear of the centuries have rubbed the stones, wood and bricks raw.

weathered
sooty
worn
dirty
aged
damp
stratified



designs by aidan sugano, assaf horowitz, kevin yang, james gilleard, ron defelice, crystal kung and valerie kao



MATERIALS

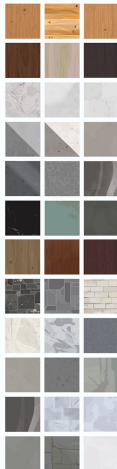
GENERAL CITY

Clean, warm, stone. Shining glass. Bright painted timber. This is a welcoming place that is well maintained and taken care of. A place that values the past and embraces the conveniences and technology of the present.

contemporary
bright
clean
warm
new
simple
maintained



designs by aidan sugano, assaf horowitz, kevin yang, james gilleard, ron defelice, crystal kung and valerie kao





ENVIRONMENT

Urban Morphology

While we are creating a fantasy world designed on the themes of the film, it still needs to feel like a real place. It needs to be a place that can continue on without our characters. It should be rich and genuine with purpose and story behind everything. It should feel like a place that people have lived in and died in for generations. It should not feel overly designed or perfect.

To accomplish this, pay attention to these high-level conceits:

- Age and Time
- Locale
- Culture

CULTURE

The culture of our world should be rich, distinct and present everywhere. Rigid social rules dictate where and how each of those groups live and the visual language of each. Neighborhoods and shared spaces have specific accessibility rules. They have maintained traditional and at times archaic customs, practices, rules, professions and infrastructural needs. Look for places in the city to organically and visually instill this worldbuilding.



ENVIRONMENT

Urban Morphology

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To accomplish this, pay attention to these high-level conceits:

- Age and Time
- Locale
- Culture

LOCALE

While this place is completely fictional, it carries a strong importance on place. This kingdom is a defining feature of its culture and the people who live there. It needs to be a character in and of itself. Here are some fundamental conceits that help define what that character is.



Topography

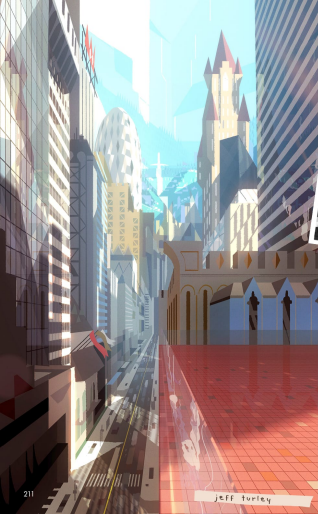
For the majority of the kingdom's history, there were no large-scale earthworks. The built environment, with a few exceptions, utilizes the existing landscape. As such, the terrain of the overall city is varied. It has hills, valleys, dips and rises. The city was then built to work with these geographic features with the one exception being the main avenues.

Space

Space within the walls is expensive and limited, so every inch is used. Due to the fixed border, expansion and growth mainly happen vertically, not horizontally. Land is at a premium and airspace is used creatively. For example, leverage off the medieval trend of having upper stories step out and overhang the street, even for skyscrapers. Tunnels and roads can go through buildings, and since we have flying carriages, passages can be cut through upper stories as well.

Vernacular Architecture

In our case, our vernacular borrows heavily from a wide range of medieval styles mixed with the futuristic and contemporary. Half-timber and glass skyscraper, circular stone keep and brick housing project.



JEFF TURLEY

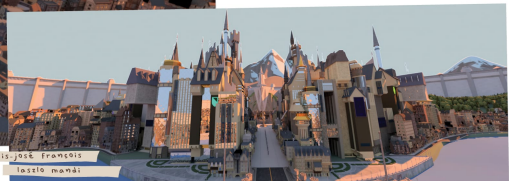
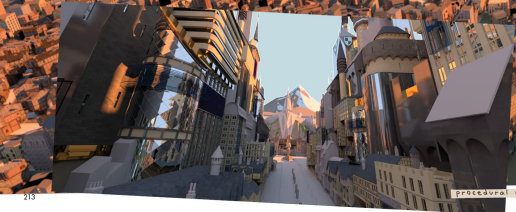
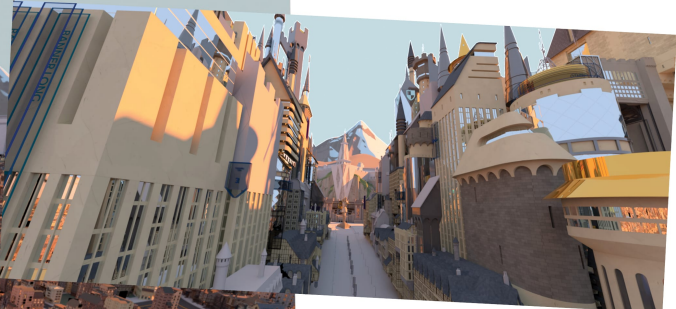
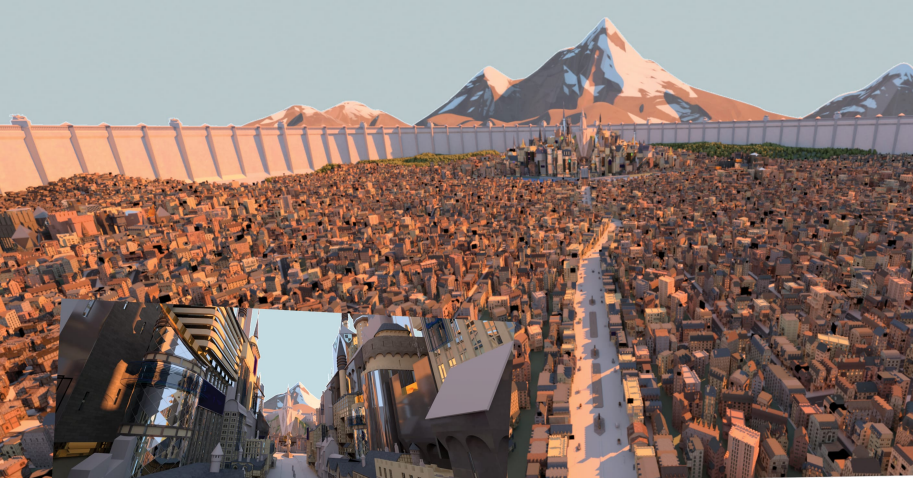


EXPLORATIONS BY
JAMES GILLEARD

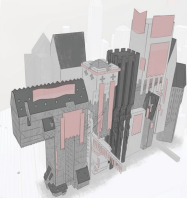
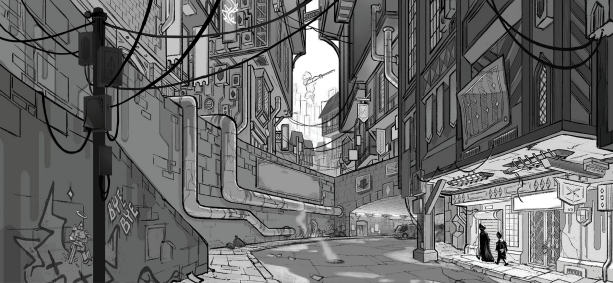


MOMENT PAINTING

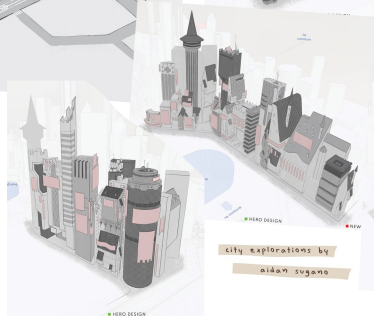
BY JEFF TURLEY



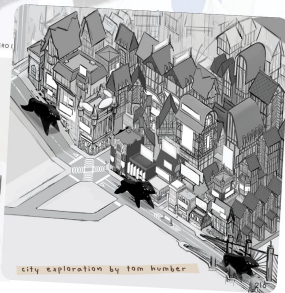
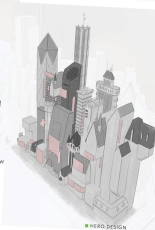
procedural city created by Kristof Kiraly matt saaler anthony cabula denis-josé françois
marco manzini pietro materossi lasslo manai



city explorations by tom humber



city explorations by
aidan sugano



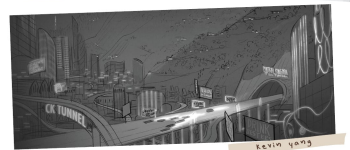
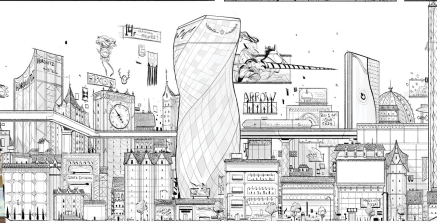
city exploration by tom humber



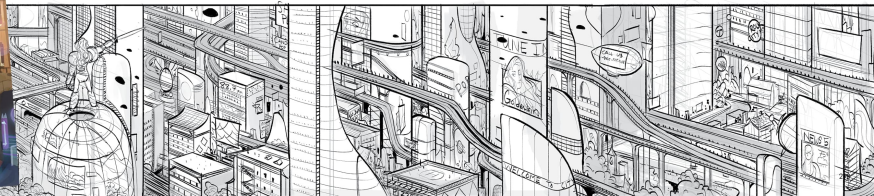
Katy wu



remi salman



Kevin yang





assaf horowitz



assaf horowitz



assaf horowitz



assaf horowitz



scott caple



jeff turley



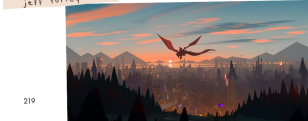
tyler carter



scott caple



tyler carter



tyler carter



assaf horowitz



WELCOME

design by
assaf horowitz
crystal kung

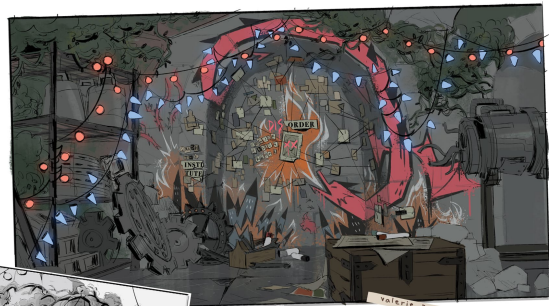
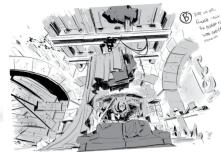
color callout
by peter nguyen

render: dneg

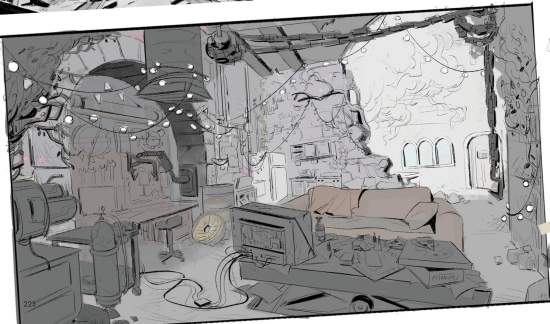
design
by valerie koo

concept drawings

by assaf horowitz



valerie kao

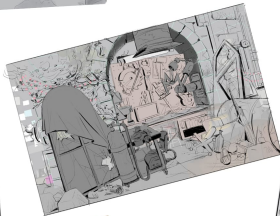


concept

drawings

by

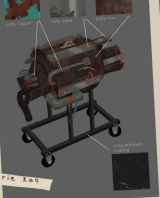
valerie kao



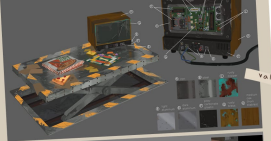


color callout

by valerie kao



valerie kao



valerie kao



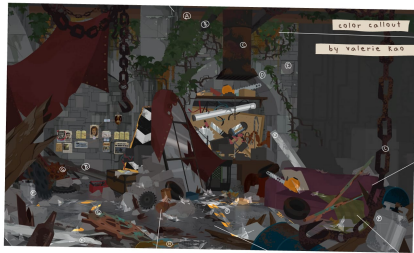
peter nguyen



valerie kao



peter nguyen



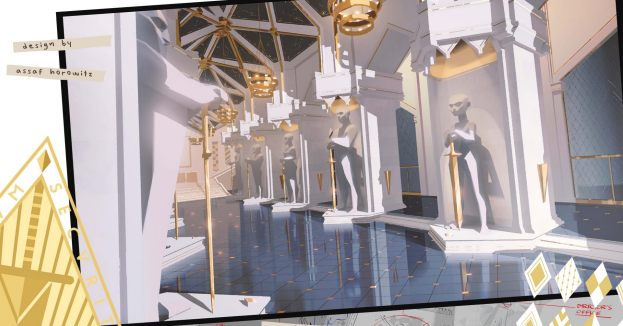
color callout
by valerie kao



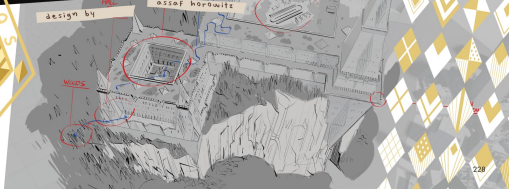
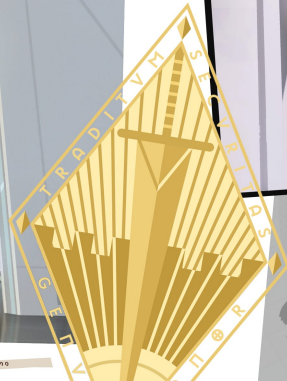
color callout
by valerie kao



design by tyler carter



design by
assaf horowitz



design by
assaf horowitz

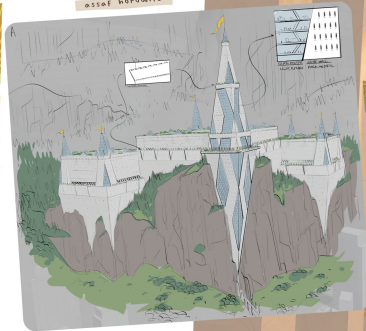


design by assaf horowitz



design by tyler carter

design by
assaf horowitz



graphic : aidan sugano





design by assaf horowitz



design by assaf horowitz



design by



Kevin yang

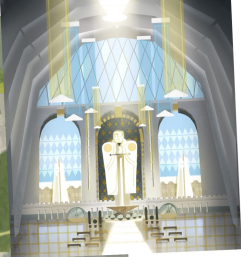
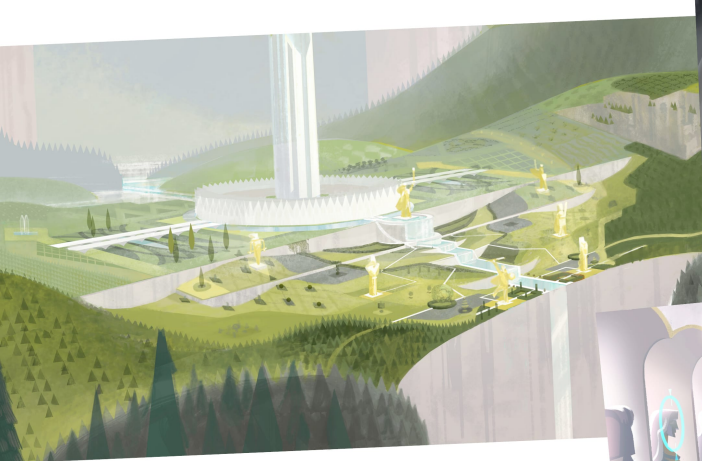


color callouts
by peter nguyen



design by assaf horowitz





early explorations by

Katy Wu



early exploration by greg couch



design by

Katy Wu



designs by

greg couch

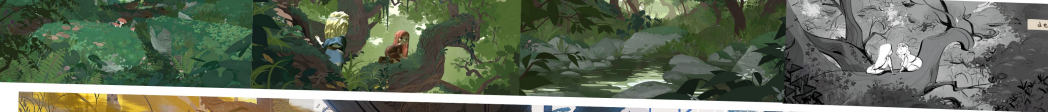
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moment

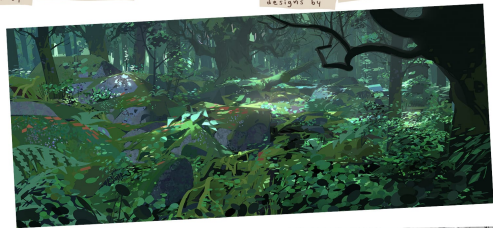
by assaf horowitz

236

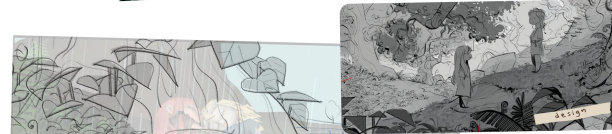


designs by valerie koo

designs by assaf horowitz



moment
by jeff turley



design
by crystal kung

drawover
by assaf horowitz

past well



designs
by valerie kao



designs by
assaf horowitz

designs
by valerie kao



designs by
assaf horowitz



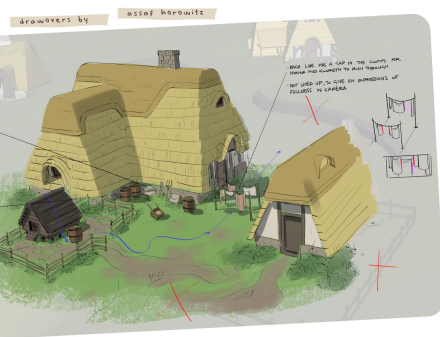
dead
fern

primrose
(minus
flower)

clo

butter
(minus
flower)

designs
by valerie kao



Plants on Roof

dandelionMedA (w/o flowers)



grass + dandelionMedA puffs



Grass Construction

Grass base (darker at roots)

Feels airy and transparent



Blades of grass (3 color: thick/short and longer/widths)



Combine blades and base to have most of the blades the bottom fade into the



Ivy Plant

Leaves always point down

Ground Plants

Clovers



hostas (large, med, small)

buttercupMedA



hyssops (large, med, small)



dandelionMedA

242



Rocks



Light speckled Rock with contour lines



Dark speckled Rock



ENVIRONMENT

Designing Nature

When editorializing and stylizing nature, the goal is to design the icon. Identify the key traits that make up that object. Remove all unnecessary detail to create the simplest expression of that object. Organize it in regards to the visual language of NIMONA. Below are some of the key areas to pay attention to:

LOCAL COLOR

What are the basic colors that make up that object? How much color nuance do you really need to accurately depict it without making it overly complex? Do you need to push or pull any of the colors or values to keep it reading clearly?

SHAPE

Identify the minimal number of different shapes needed to convey that object.

GESTURE AND RHYTHM

How are all the elements that make up that object organized? Is there an overall gesture to the entire object? What about each element that makes it up? Make sure to utilize straights versus curves, and strong rhythms.

REPETITION

When possible, organize the elements to adhere to an organic or geometric pattern. Is there a natural pattern that object inherently has anyway? Can that be utilized, caricatured or amplified?

Reference Charley Harper



End Result

The resulting design should feel more clear and plant-like than the photo can depict, because you are showcasing only its iconic features.



ENVIRONMENT

Grass and Foliage

Areas with a high amount of detail, especially high organic detail, can very quickly break the stylistic cohesion of the frame. To maintain the simple, illustrative quality that defines our look, utilize the guidelines below:

- Color and Value Grouping Based on Lighting
- Detail and Occlusion Management
- Breakaways and Transition Element
- Variety
- Big, Medium, Small
- Silhouette
- Naturalistic Motion
- Rich Variety in Dressing

Reference Eyvind Earle's background paintings from *Sleeping Beauty*



Reduced or removed occlusion

Limited number of transition/breakaway elements to define the plant but avoid unnecessary detail (individual pieces can break off from the main form)

photo by sidas segona

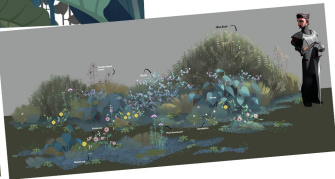
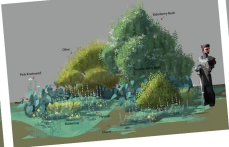
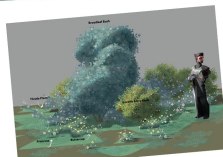
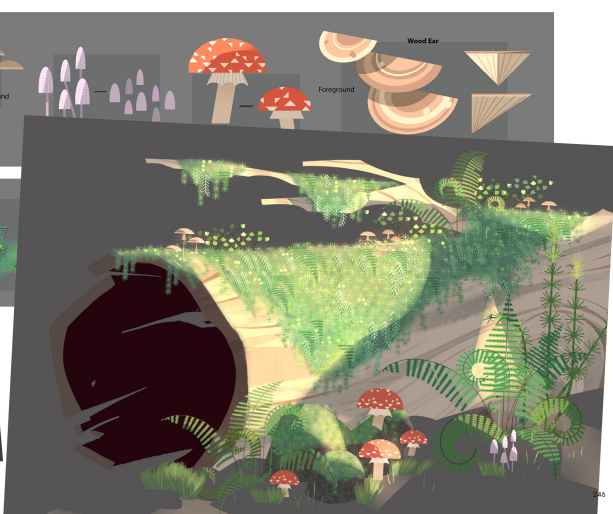
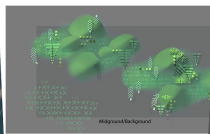
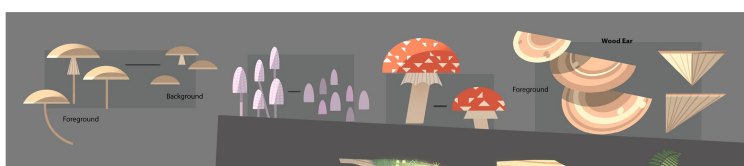


Simple color and value grouping

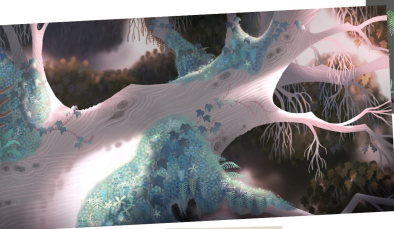
Extremely subtle hue and value variety within groupings

Distinct edge silhouette between light groups

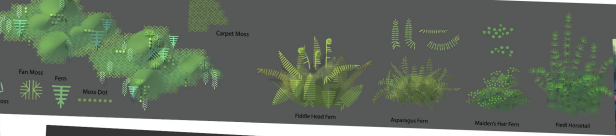
Accent Detail: Designed and placed in a specific way to help maintain visual complexity and harken to the decorative foliage used in medieval tapestries



designs
by Katy Wu



designs by Katy wu



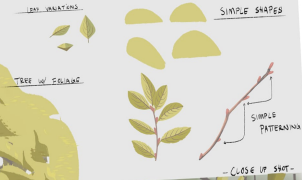
designs by Katy wu



designs by Katy wu



designs by assaf horowitz



designs by kevin yang



Kingdom City



design by assaf horowitz



design by valerie rao



designs by kevin yang



ENVIRONMENT
Skies

Like everything else, our skies need to be handled within our film style. The shape and form language needs to be handled in a graphic and illustrative hand, while the lighting and color should be approached in a nuanced and naturalistic way.



ENVIRONMENT

A Culture of Fear

Every aspect of this world and its culture has been permeated with the myth of Gloreth and steeped in an undercurrent of fear. Deep at its heart, our society is an oppressive society veiled behind the glory and benevolence of heroes. As such, elements of this ideology need to be seen and felt in all aspects of our environment. There are two foundational areas where these can be expressed:

INFRASTRUCTURAL

This is institutional, state-sponsored propaganda within the built environment that was intentionally designed to showcase these ideals.

-signage, banners, posters, flyers, pamphlets, literature -sculpture and statuary, architectural elements, reliefs

SOCIOCULTURAL

This is how the ideology and beliefs have permeated into and precipitated out of the masses.

-pop culture, media, entertainment, music, art, graffiti, merchandising, advertising -mannerisms, colloquialisms, social interactions, etc....

To the right are the four pivotal messages that need to be conveyed:



sculpture design asset korwitz

KNIGHTS SLAYING MONSTERS = GLORIOUS

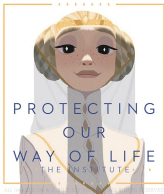
Knights are our athletes, our celebrities, our heroes. They are looked up to, admired and are who every child aspires to be. They are our protectors. They kill that which we fear most and that act of destruction is noble and glorious.

art by sofaria leo



MONSTERS ARE A CONSTANT THREAT

It needs to feel real, serious, scary and ever present. In actuality, there has not been a monster attack since the first, so the fear and belief of the possibility is the only thing keeping the populace in check.



art by aidan sugano

THE INSTITUTE IS OUR PROTECTOR

We keep you safe. We are your heroes. We are proud of our glorious past. It is tradition that keeps us safe. If you break tradition, the kingdom will fall, and we will all be lost to monsters (must feel benevolent, not openly oppressive).

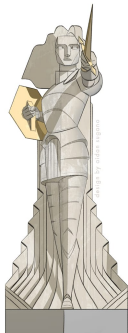


image by aidan sugano

GLORETH IS OUR SAVIOR

Harken to how religious art and iconography were used in medieval society (Gloreth=Christ figure, knights=saints, Institute=church). Gloreth's image should be on everything: iconography, imagery, sculpture, etc....



magazine cover: aidan sugano



MONSTER ALERT

OUR HEROES

MONSTER ALERT

MONSTER KILLER



**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING
SLAY SOMETHING**

SEE SOMETHING

SLAY SOMETHING

SLAY YOUR THIRST

ALERT

MONSTER ALERT

- JOHAN ABERG
- TANIA HINES
- PATRICK PHOENIX
- SAMUEL BERNALDO LOPES
- PABLO MADRASA
- PAUL ROBERTS
- MARINA HATAGOMA
- ANDRÉ SILLA
- SILVIA SUGANT
- KATY MA
- PETER NGUYEN

"FAST"

KEEPING YOU SAFE



DOM BREWERY

CRISPY ENEMIES

- John Miller
- Laura Jones
- Patricia Brown
- Daniel Williams
- Paul Roberts
- Margaret Thompson
- Emily White
- Alexander Taylor
- Elizabeth King
- Peter Green
- Katherine Lee
- James Hall
- Emily Chen

CIN

UNCLE JIM'S PIZZA

NEVER DIES

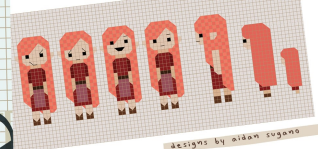
TACOTED'S

COMMITTATION

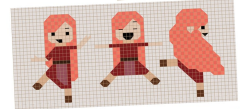
OF THE REALM

EAST

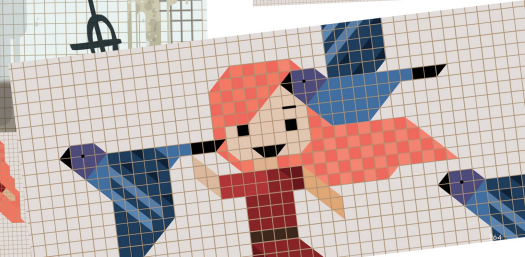
BARTER



designs by aidan sugano



test frames by denis-josé François



Matte painting

digital MATTE

matte painting : sara olivera diaz



matte painting : wookee lee



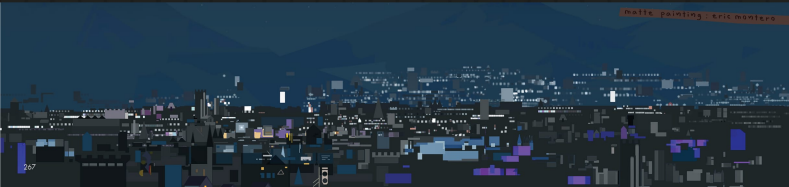
matte painting : virginie degorgue
mountains : eric montero, maxime darlois, nathan huges

Matte painting on NIMONA was an extra challenge. The whole team had to learn how to paint on style in order to seamlessly meld the 3D assets with the background and harken to the reference.

PAINTING



matte painting : yegesh bhagane, virginie dequique



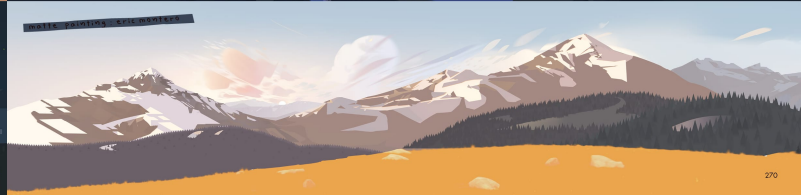
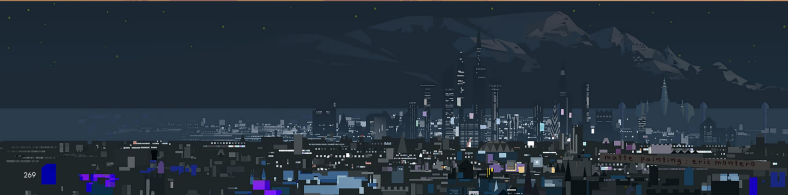
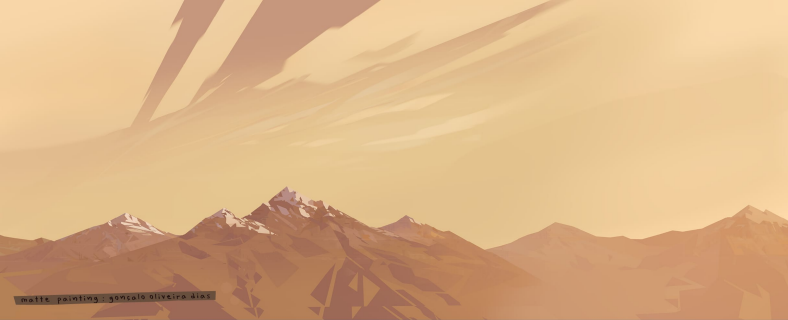
matte painting : eric montero

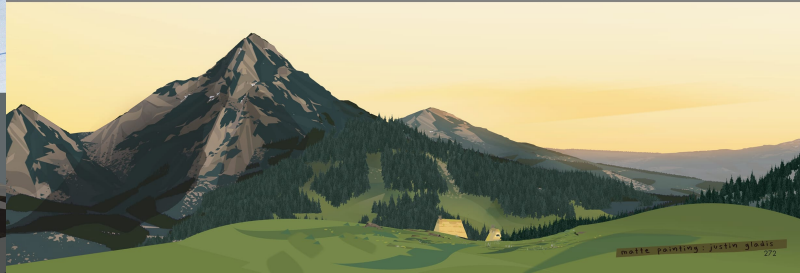
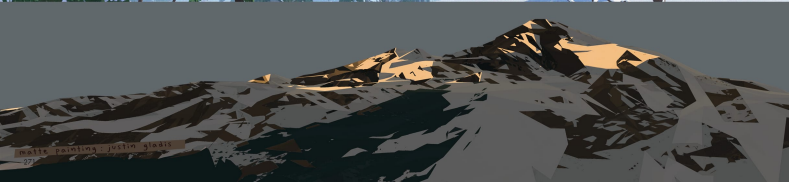
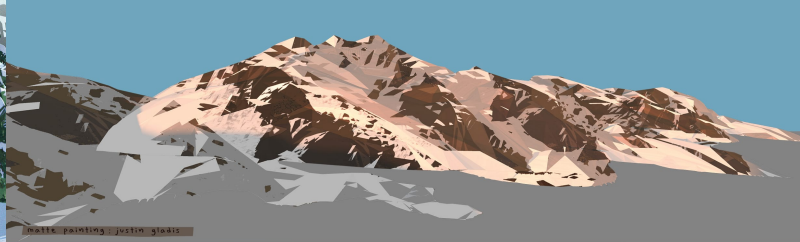


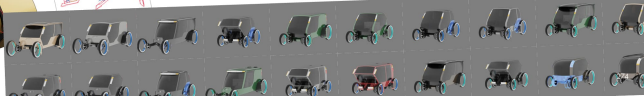
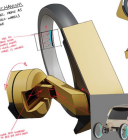
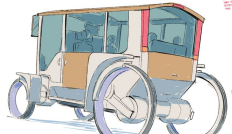
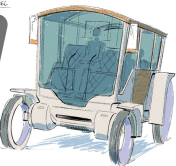
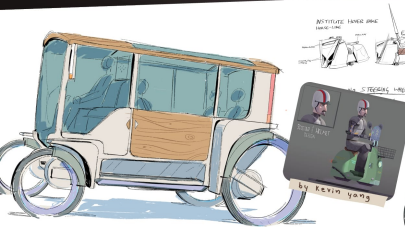
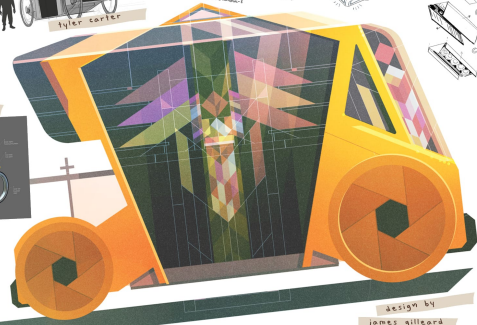
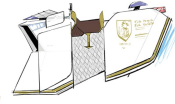
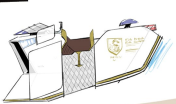
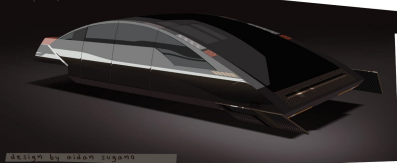
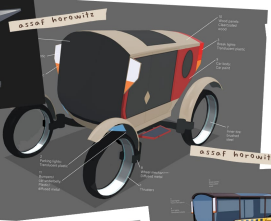
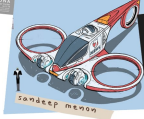
matte painting : eric montero



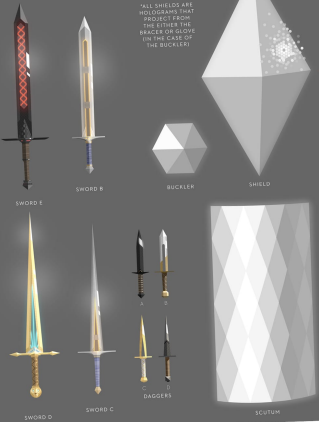
matte painting : woohex lee



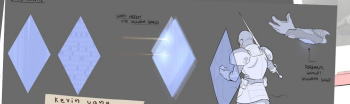
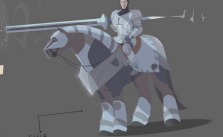
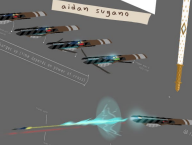
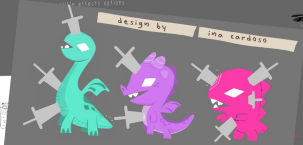
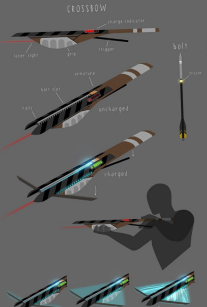




ALL SHIELDS ARE HOLOGRAMS THAT PROJECT FROM THE EITHER THE BRACER OR GLOVE (IN THE CASE OF THE BUCKLER)

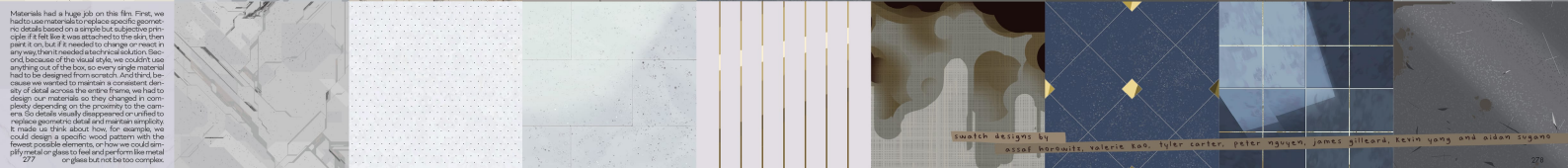


color by aidan sugano





MATERIALS



Materials had a huge job on this film. First, we had to use materials to replace specific geometric details based on a simple but subjective principle: if it felt like it was attached to the skin, then paint it on, but if it needed to change or react in any way, then it needed a technical solution. Second, because of the visual style, we couldn't use anything out of the box, so every single material had to be designed from scratch. And third, because we wanted to maintain a consistent density of detail across the entire frame, we had to design our materials so they changed in complexity depending on the proximity to the camera. So details visually disappeared or unified to replace geometric detail and maintain simplicity. It made us think about how, for example, we could design a specific wood pattern with the fewest possible elements, or how we could simplify metal or glass to feel and perform like metal or glass but not be too complex.

swatch designs by
assaf horowitz, valerie kao, tyler carter, peter nguyen, james gilleard, kevin yang and aidan sugano



MATERIALS

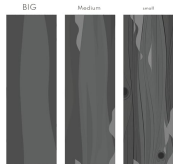
Overview

In our look, materials, textures and patterns all function in the same way and can all be thought of interchangeably. They will be flat, graphic and deliberate with no physical textural detail or bump whatsoever. Materials have been purposefully designed to replace a certain amount of geometric detail. As such, geometric form and painted materials will need to work together to account for the lack of textural nuance and avoid materials that feel 'painted on.' Due to the breadth of stylization on our film, we will not have the ability to leverage off out-of-the-box or naturalistic materials, so every material, texture and pattern must be designed in our style with no exceptions.

Our materials will be designed using these three fundamental elements:

- Shape
- Color
- Line

For further reference, look to any work by Charley Harper and the style analysis at the beginning of this guide.



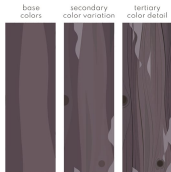
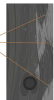
designs by asaf horowitz

Shape

First, identify the iconic shapes that define that material. Organize shapes based on big, medium and small.

Hierarchy is very important to our design language, so the largest, boldest shapes should be put down first, then medium-sized, more subtle shapes and finally the small details that define the texture or pattern.

The small details can also be used to graphically soften a border between shapes.

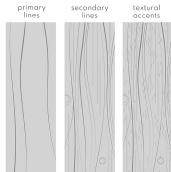


Color

Colors and values should feel rich and overall naturalistic. However, they will need to be abstracted and stylized slightly to make sure the graphic read is maintained and there is clear separation between shapes. Temperature and hue can also be utilized to add nuance and subtlety without breaking value structures or making things feel monochromatic.

Try to limit the number of colors to just enough to create subtlety and nuance, but not too much that they create false gradients or feel realistically complex.

Establish a clear color and value hierarchy that utilizes natural eye filtering to reinforce LOS.



Line

Line is an extremely important aspect of our materials. It should be used to replace any thin visual elements or material details like cracks, striations, strands, fibers, etc...

Try to maintain a good hierarchy (thick, medium, thin) of line weights. Also try to organize your lines to reinforce the rhythms and balance out the other details. Like the other elements, make sure to put in just enough lines to define the material and create subtlety, but not too many to make a busy or overly complicated design.



MATERIALS

Detail Filtering (LOS)

Materials will also have to be designed with LOS (Level of Style) in mind and will take advantage of the natural filtering of the human eye.

Organize the values, colors and sizes of material elements with a purposeful hierarchy so that details disappear or unify into one color as they recede.

Utilize the Law of Simplicity here as well. Try to exaggerate or reduce values and colors so they can group accordingly.



Utilize the **Squint Test** to check if your materials are simplifying correctly. Squint down at your designs. Can you read the simple stylized shapes still or is there too much subtlety, nuance, edge breakup, fine details, etc...? Are the values or colors balanced enough to give you multiple levels of detail reads or do they need to be tweaked? Is there enough subtlety in the temperature ranges?



MATERIALS

Geometric v. "Painted" Detail

Even though our style is designed to look flat and simple, that does not mean it should feel or be built that way. Geometric complexity and subtlety still need to exist but in a simplified and caricatured way. Materials and form need to be designed in tandem to provide just enough detail to define the object but not too much to break the look. Motion and lighting will also reveal and imply much of this geometric detail, so be conscious to not add too little or too much.

When deciding what should be modeled detail and what should be painted material detail, utilize the **Law of Simplicity**. Ask yourself:

As a camera passes over, how much geometric detail do you need to give the impression of that object?

Do we need to perceive dimension or form, or can that detail live in the painted material?

Does that object need geometric details for our simplified lighting to catch?

A simple way to think of this is:

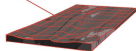
If it feels like it could be a texture or painted on, paint it on.

If not, simplify the geometric detail.

MG

Medium form details filter out (cracks and subtler plane changes). The majority of geometric detail will be felt more than seen, especially in motion.

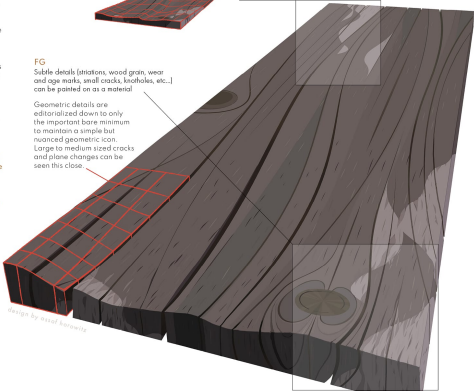
Materials play a larger role in conveying the visual interest and information at this distance.



FG

Subtle details (striations, wood grain, wear and age marks, small cracks, knotholes, etc...) can be painted on as a material

Geometric details are editorialized down to only the important bare minimum to maintain a simple but nuanced geometric icon. Large to medium sized cracks and plane changes can be seen this close.



design by essel karawitz

BG

Geometric detail, except the very large, filters out completely. Materials filter and simplify. Color, value and shape define the object.

render by blue sky studios



A Case Study: Cobblestones

As the camera passes over the cobblestones, even in albedo or flat lit settings with all occlusion removed, you will perceive form. You will feel how the silhouette changes, how textures wrap and travel over the form, how larger cuts or edges change angle, etc... In this case, a reduced amount of that geometric detail is needed and flattening out all form is inappropriate.

However, small cracks, color differentiations, striations, grit, etc., all can be painted on because even in our world, those details would feel baked in to some degree.

Our approach to lighting and look on this film will flatten out the majority of the geometric detail, but that detail will still be perceived, so avoid flattening out too much prematurely. Otherwise, our environments will tend to feel too flat, low poly and gamey.



MATERIALS

Material v. Object Pattern

Since the look of NIMONA treats screen space as an illustration rather than a snapshot or a 3D world, patterns exist not only on objects but in the entire frame using objects. As such, there are a few different ways to think about creating patterns on NIMONA:

MATERIAL PATTERNS: Materials, textures and patterns that exist on objects which are designed to function as materials in our flat style. These include prints on fabrics, cloth types and textures, metal scratches, skin detail, hair strand details, hair patterns on animals, textures on leaves, bark, stone, wood, concrete, marble, etc...

OBJECT PATTERNS: The organic or geometric organization of individual elements, objects or groups of objects in a purposeful arrangement that reflects our design language. This can include how dressing is arranged, how elements within a set are laid out, the organization of leaves on a plant, individual plants in a group, how trees are placed, how buildings are grouped, how clumps of hairs are organized on a head, etc.

Maintain a good balance of complex and subtle materials to areas of visual rest



COMPLEX MATERIALS



SUBTLE MATERIALS



VISUAL REST

The ratio of material complexity will be based on group association

MATERIAL PATTERNS



OBJECT PATTERNS

This can also apply to lost and found elements like snow patches that give the impression of a stand of trees.

When applicable, dress objects in a consistent pattern or along a grid.



Both of these reference images are good examples of using repeating motifs to create a screen-space pattern.





MATERIALS

Reflection and Specularity

Metals, reflections and specularity are among the most important elements to the NIMONA look. Caricature the natural properties to create the stylized look. To maintain consistency, we will be limiting the types of specularity to:

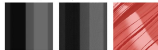
HARD SPEC

chrome, glass, high gloss materials, reflective surfaces



SEMI-HARD SPEC

brushed metals, semi-glass materials, anisotropic materials



DIFFUSE

default for everything else: matte metals, skin, cloth, wood, etc...

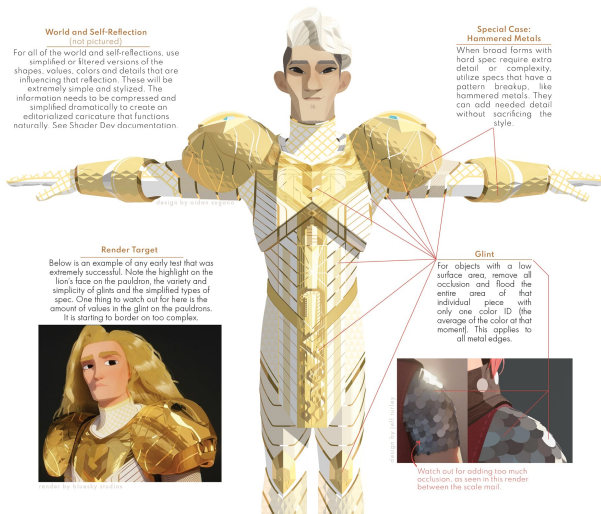


Everything on this film uses those three types. Extra details (etched lines, rust, dirt, etc...) can be added, but the base properties must stay the same.

swatches by aidan segano and assal horowitz

World and Self-Reflection *(not pictured)*

For all of the world and self-reflections, use simplified or filtered versions of the shapes, values, colors and details that are influencing that reflection. These will be extremely simple and stylized. The information needs to be compressed and simplified dramatically to create an editorialized caricature that functions naturally. See Shader Dev documentation.



design by aidan segano

Render Target

Below is an example of any early test that was extremely successful. Note the highlight on the lion's face on the pauldron, the variety and simplicity of glints and the simplified types of spec. One thing to watch out for here is the amount of values in the glint on the pauldrons. It is starting to border on too complex.



render by blue sky studios

Special Case: Hammered Metals

When broad forms with hard spec require extra detail or complexity, utilize specs that have a pattern breakup, like hammered metals. They can add needed detail without sacrificing the style.

Glint

For objects with a low surface area, remove all occlusion and flood the entire area of that individual piece with only one color ID (the average of the color at that moment). This applies to all metal edges.



design by matt neuber

Watch out for adding too much occlusion, as seen in this render between the scale mail.



early metal look development

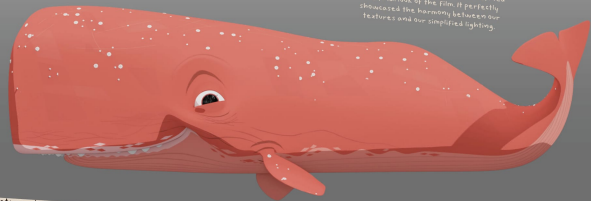
blue sky studios



This test blew people's minds. It was where we finally cracked the look and execution of metal in our style.

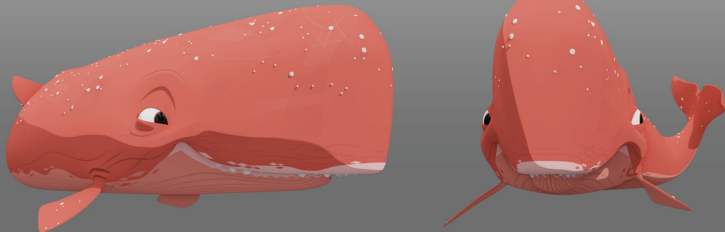
So much of the look of the film was due to the early shader and lighting development done by Angel Camacho, Matt Hornback, Adam King, Dan McCann, Esther Offertaler, Emily Yo and Nathan Zeichner.

This was one of the tests that defined the final look of the film. It perfectly showcased the harmony between our textures and our simplified lighting.



early look of picture dev

blue sky studios



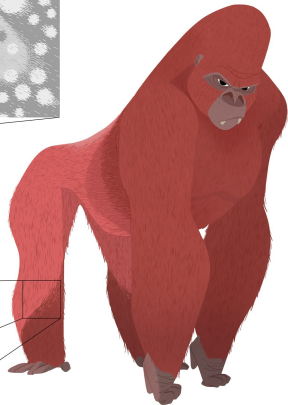
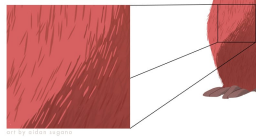
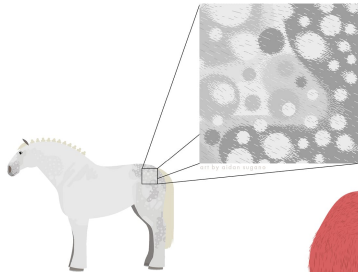
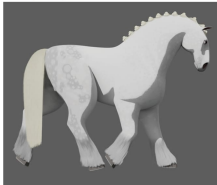
MATERIALS

Transition Areas

There will be no true soft edges or gradients in materials or color. When encountering edges or transition areas that would naturally be soft, utilize graphic micro detail, color and value to create a stylized transition.

Be aware of accidentally creating false or perceived gradients by adding too much micro detail and/or too much color or value variety. Try to maintain the graphic read by adding just enough detail that it hints at a transition, but not so much that colors visually mix.

render by blue sky studios





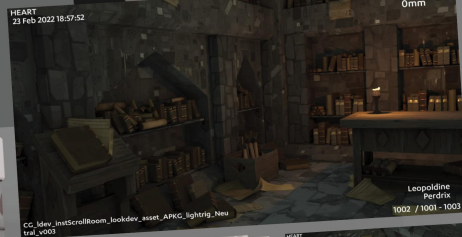
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taly uv
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e_slap_trainingMonsterA



HEART
23 Feb 2022 18:57:52



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Leopoldine
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Omm

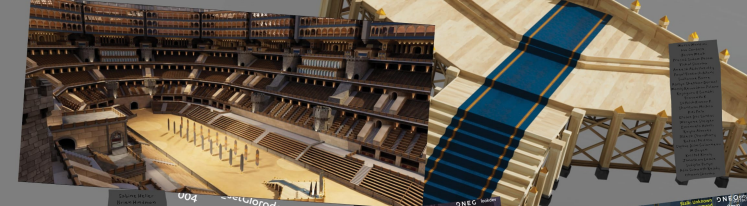


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tral_v003

Leopoldine
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1002 / 1001 - 1003

Omm



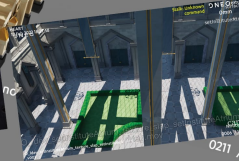
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C_favoral_v003



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C_favoral_v003

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292



203

v_slap_disheveled_v006

Updated

Saline Miller
Brian Williams
Markham DeLorenzo
Ethan Steinlager
Dan McCann
Katie Yi
Angel Casadeja
Amanda King
Matt McManis

204

Updated disheveled

blackheart d

2420-SA
blackheart_lookdev_slap_disheveled_C_v003 Added micro detail

294



black

Sakina Miller
Evan Winters
Richard DeLorenzo
Ethan Phillips
Dan MacCarroll
Emily W
Angela Calabrese
Adam King
Matti Morsicato

ONE
Per
nimonaWolf
Surfacing/Color
Jan 28

Color Development
Annie Kelly
Cristina Delle
Christina Eberhart
Diana D'Alagni
Ethan
Morgan W. Brown
Drew Finkler
Devin LaRocca
D. Kim
Nora Thomas
Rachael
Sara Zuckerman

nimonaRhino
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increased saturat

Color Development
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Christina Eberhart
Diana D'Alagni
Ethan
Morgan W. Brown
Drew Finkler
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D. Kim
Nora Thomas
Rachael
Sara Zuckerman

albedo_v004



COLOR

The Institute

Each major location will have a specific color theme. The four major locations are:

- Medieval Village
- The Noble Kingdom
- The Institute
- The Peasant World

THE INSTITUTE - The Institute is the power and control in the city. The protectors. They use the myth of Gloreth and the fear of monsters to impose their masked totalitarian regime on the populace. The colors should reflect the image they create of themselves: stable, strong and benevolent. Utilizing a classic palette reserved for the hero, they position the Institute as the shining gold savior. The white knight. White, gold and dark royal blues make up their main color palette. They also accent with green to harken to the idyllic, pastoral past. Their palette is heavily biased toward the high key value range, and the color design of Institute-related areas is clean, spartan and sterile.



THE INSTITUTE



art by jill rayley



COLOR

Character-Driven Color

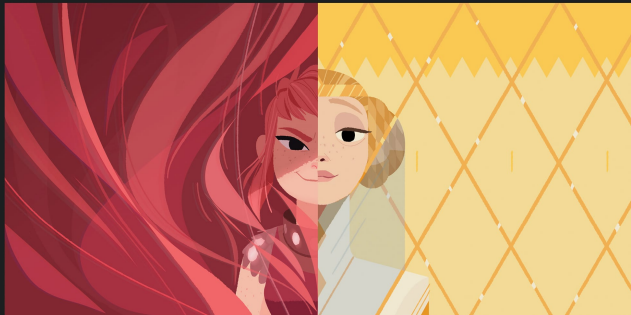
There are two colors on our film that are associated with specific ideologies. Based on their presence or level of influence in a specific shot, these colors will be more or less prevalent. This rule, with a few exceptions, should be used subtly but can affect lighting choices, local color or even dressing choices.

SALMON PINK

Nimona - her ideology, acceptance, plurality, fluidity, freedom and change.

GOLD

The Institute - their ideology, nonacceptance, rigid social rules, historical/medieval thinking and control.



artwork painting by sofia rigoni



COLOR

Medieval Village

Each major location will have a specific color theme. The four major locations are:

- Medieval Village
- The Noble Kingdom
- The Institute
- The Peasant World

MEDIEVAL VILLAGE - Nestled in the mountains, the old village is lush, green, pastoral and idyllic.

Peace - The medieval village that Nimona and Glareth grew up in is filled with patchworks of warm farmsteads, old grey stone, thatched roofs and rolling fields of verdant grass. Waterfalls feed the tranquil river that meanders through the village center.

Fear - The colors change to analogous hues dominated by reds. The shadows are deep and pernicious like the fear.



COLOR

The Noble Kingdom

THE NOBLE KINGDOM - The pristine utopia. A thriving modern-medieval metropolis. It bleeds wealth, prosperity and opportunity... as long as you are nobility or at least a citizen.



COLOR

The Peasant World

THE PEASANT WORLD - Reserved for peasants and noncitizens, it is older, run-down and more akin to the medieval cities of the past. Its colors are more muted colors and earth tones.





LIGHTING

Lens Effects

To reinforce the camera naturalism and visual thematic, utilize lens effects like light leak, spectral leak, bokeh, burns and flares. Like everything else in our film, make sure all lens effects are designed within our style.

Make sure to have the shapes that are being used align with the specific ideology that has the power in that scene. For example, if the Institute's ideology of nonacceptance has the power in the scene, then all of the bokeh shapes will be diamonds.

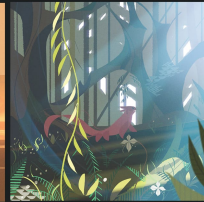
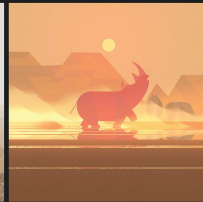
renders by dsag animation



LIGHTING

Naturalism

Lighting on Nimona should be treated naturalistically. Since our designs are so simple, graphic and flat, we will want to balance that out by utilizing naturalistic lighting and real-world camera techniques. The goal is to create a sensitive, sophisticated frame that feels similarly photographic and nuanced when compared to an actual photograph.



art by jill tarley



In these five frames, you can see how a graphic, stylistic approach in design is paired with naturalistic lighting. The result is a balance of the two that brings them into an imaginative but tangible and sensitive reality.

Cinematic reference to check out:

- *Enchanted Labs*, *The Tree of Life*



LIGHTING

Light to Rainforce Theme

Light on our film represents acceptance. The way it interacts with our characters, its intensity, the amount, the quality and its use as a compositional framing device all contribute to what is being said about those characters' relationships with acceptance at that moment. It can also represent exposure and be used to out or reveal a character and give them nowhere to hide.

Conversely, shadow represents nonacceptance. With shadow, we can drive characters into hiding and force them to suppress their true selves.

This is the biggest visual thematic for our show.

moment painting by jeff reley



For more information, see the Composition section of this guide.

art by aidan sugano

...and when they give

up
with
acceptance

entirely





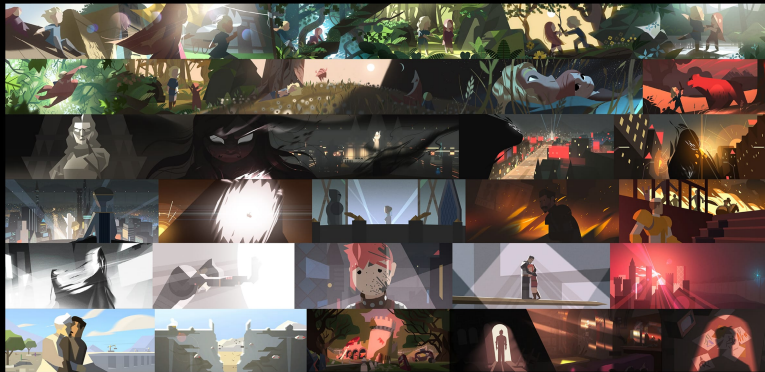
COLOR

Chromatic Aberration

When Nimona's philosophy is at its most intense, she will literally be affecting the quality of light being captured by the lens. Shatter the frame into the full range of prismatic color by using chromatic aberration to emphasize when her ideology is at its most extreme moments.







colorscript by
jeff turley, peter nguyen, ron defelice and aidan sugano



INTO LIGHT, INTO SHADOW moving in or out of light

COMPOSITION

Light in our film represents acceptance and exposure of one's true self. Shadow represents non-acceptance and concealment. Every choice in our film needs to purposefully reflect how the characters are navigating in regard to those ideals. This can be seen in how we utilize our lighting, how we compose with light, the intensity of our lights and even the act of moving our characters into or out of light. Below are a few examples of how this concept applies when light interacts with our characters:

Our characters can be:



entirely in

partially in



stepping into



kissed by a little...

...or a lot



stepping out of
317

entirely out of

final frames by deag animation



INTO LIGHT, INTO SHADOW moving in or out of light

COMPOSITION

Light in our film represents acceptance and exposure of one's true self. Shadow represents non-acceptance and concealment. Every choice in our film needs to purposefully reflect how the characters are navigating in regard to those ideals. This can be seen in how we utilize our lighting, how we compose with light, the intensity of our lights and even the act of moving our characters into or out of light. Below are a few examples of how this concept applies when light interacts with our characters:

Our characters can be:



stuck between

isolated by



moving in and out of



revealed, exposed or outed by

hiding from



grouped in or grouped out of

turning away from

separated by



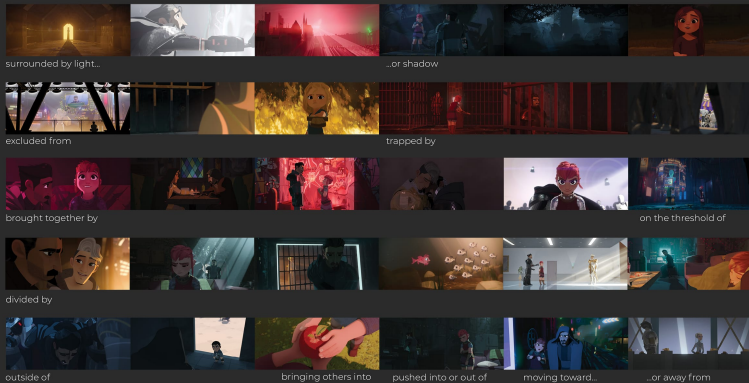
INTO LIGHT, INTO SHADOW

framing against light or shadow

COMPOSITION

Utilize graphic compositional blocks or elements of light and shadow to further illustrate the theme. Based on the emotional and psychological purpose of the shot, characters can be staged and/or framed within, without, on the edge or moving through these elements. Below are a few examples of how this concept applies when our characters are composed in relation to light:

Our characters can be:



Real frames by daag animation

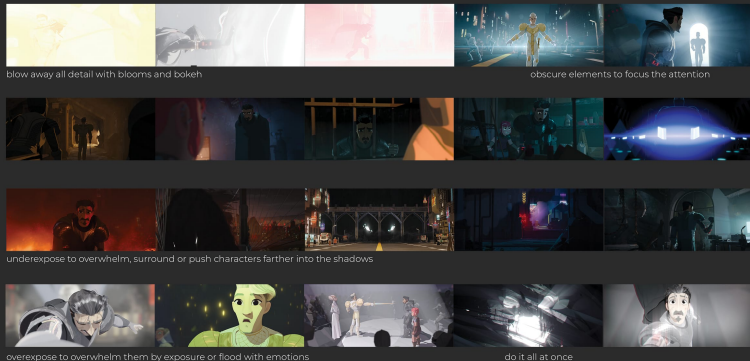


INTO LIGHT, INTO SHADOW

obscuring or revealing with intensity

COMPOSITION

Intensity and exposure can also be utilized to reinforce the characters' relationships to acceptance. Blow out lights when characters are overwhelmed by acceptance. Dim shadows to black when they are being suppressed. Reduce lighting to the extremes in extreme situations and blow away detail to enhance the psychological state of our characters.





paintover: aidan sugano

renders: aneg animation



The final look of Nimona was truly the sum of every single person's contribution. Every single department from every stage of the production had to work together and approach their portion with all parts of the pipeline in mind. For example, our models were designed so the forms gave us appealing light shapes out of the box, so that even when they moved and deformed, they held up. Then rigging had to create shapes that preserved the design idea. Animation had to create not only appealing, emotive performances, but also had to make sure those shapes we built in were preserved. Materials had to reinforce those shapes and add subtlety and richness. And finally, lighting and compositing removed all occlusion (and even things that could be perceived as occlusion or soft shading) to let the underlying work shine through and preserve the look. Every single person was recognizing, breaking and reconstructing all the conventional wisdom and tools to achieve this one goal.



moment painting jeff turley



these are some of the earliest look of picture tests done on the project going back as far as 2017 at bluesky studios.



STUDIO ++

DIFFUSE FALLOFF

GAIN + CLAMP



WHICH ONE IS THE PAINTING???



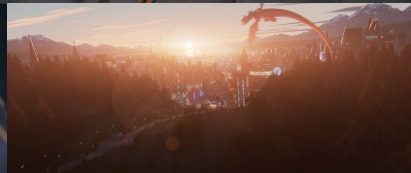
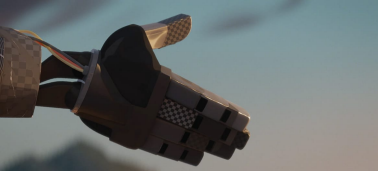
early look of picture development
blue sky studios



early look of picture development

blue sky studios







LIGHTING

Areas of Focus

These are the major areas of focus that define the look on NIMONA.

- Graphic Key Light
- Simplified Occlusion
- Creaselines
- Simplified Specularity
- Shape-Driven Eye Dings
- Stylized Hair Specularity
- Subsurface
- Broken Edge
- Bloom



GRAPHIC KEY LIGHT



Key Light

All key lights should have a hard, stylized terminator without any gradation. Where applicable, a textured, broken or stylized edge can be used to indicate a specific material. However, this should be used very sparingly and will be called out in these specific cases.

The one exception to this rule is skin, which will have a clamped, tight gradient to reduce the 'bailing' caused by deformations.



Cast Shadow Line

All cast shadow lines (with a few exceptions) must stay razor-sharp without any dither or gradation.

art by jeff turley and aidan segano



LIGHTING

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SIMPLIFIED OCCLUSION

Simplified Occlusion

The goal on Nimona is to maintain the flat, graphic, 2D look. Soft edges can quickly break the style and push the look into the more traditional 3D zone. As such, occlusion needs to be handled carefully, purposefully and sparingly. Occlusion and form shading should at all times be:

- extremely subtle**
- felt, not seen**
- controllable** (so it can be tailored to the specific lighting situation but not exceed the maximum amount)

Occlusion Removal

There will also be cases where we will need to **remove or mask out the occlusion entirely from certain objects** to maintain the correct density of detail in the overall frame. A good example would be Nimona's earrings, which are thin enough to need all occlusion removed except potentially in extreme closeups.



LIGHTING

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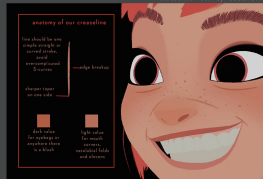
CREASELINES



Creaselines

Since we are reducing occlusion across the film, creaselines will be used to replace the occlusion information in deformations and support the subtlety in facial performances. Each set of creaselines will be tailored to the nuances of each character's needs. See creaseline drawovers for more information.

creaseline tech by adam berry



art by jell terley and aides sugano

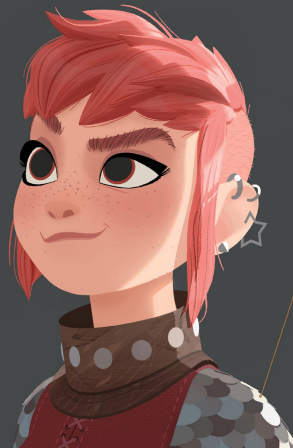


LIGHTING

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SIMPLIFIED SPECULARITY

Simplified Specularity

For reflective surfaces with small surface area (scale mail, rivets, studs, metal edges, etc...), the entire shape is flooded with the solid color and value of the reflected light that is occurring in that instance. All world reflections, soft edges and occlusion have been removed. These simplified "glints" would be turning on and off and changing based on the real lighting information in order to maintain the naturalistic properties of the light and material but in a simplified, caricatured way.

For the most part, this is independent of the actual shape of the reflective object. For example, Nimona's earring is simplified to a solid flat color for the base metal and the stylized highlight. All geometric modeling has been removed.

For more information, see [Reflection and Specularity](#)



LIGHTING

Areas of Focus

These are the major areas of focus that define the look on NIMONA.

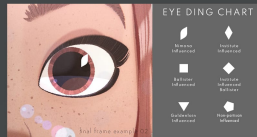
- Graphic Key Light
- Simplified Occlusion
- Creaselines
- Simplified Specularity
- Shape-Driven Eye Dings**
- Stylized Hair Specularity
- Subsurface
- Broken Edge
- Bloom



SHAPE-DRIVEN EYE DINGS

Shape-Driven Eye Dings

Eye dings should be hard-edged, simple, geometric shapes without any soft edges or gradients. Avoid using circles. Only utilize polygonal shapes. Try to choose a shape that reinforces the power dynamic of that scene. For example, if the Institute is controlling the scene, utilize diamonds. If Ballister is in control, utilize squares.



art by jeff reilly and sidan sugano



LIGHTING

Areas of Focus

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- Graphic Key Light
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- Creaselines
- Simplified Specularity
- Shape-Driven Eye Dings
- Stylized Hair Specularity**
- Subsurface
- Broken Edge
- Bloom

Limited Sources

There should be no more than two anisotropic highlights total. In this case, there is one related to the key and one related to the fill. Be aware of balancing intensities as well. One highlight for the most part should be stronger than the other.

STYLIZED HAIR SPECULARITY



Anisotropic Specularity

Anisotropic hair highlights will also be handled using a graphic approach but should be driven naturally by the actual light.



simple, gestural path
(highlight can deviate slightly in position on separate hair clumps but needs to maintain the overall trend)

soft, dithered edge
(farthest from light source)

hard edge
(closest to light source)



strand breaks
(to hint at and define strand and clump detail)



render by blue sky studios
RENDER



paintover by aida sugano
TARGET PAINTOVER



LOOK
Sample Frames



render by blue sky studios
RENDER



LOOK
Sample Frames



paintover by aidan eggano
TARGET PAINTOVER

exploration: minkyu lee



exploration: jeff turley



exploration: aidan sugano



sculpt by vicki saulls



paintover: aidan sugano



early look of picture development

blue sky studios



ballister was key to breaking the look of the film. From the process of his design, we learned that the look would only be successful if we took a holistic approach to every part of the pipeline.



LIGHTING

Soft Edges

Soft edges are one of the most delicate elements to handle. If used too heavily, they can quickly break and water down the look. If used too little, things will start to feel cheap, gamey and simplistic.

Here again utilize the Law of Simplicity. Soft edges are either semi-hard or extremely subtle and so broad they can only be felt. Below are some examples of how and where they are used.

SOFT EDGES

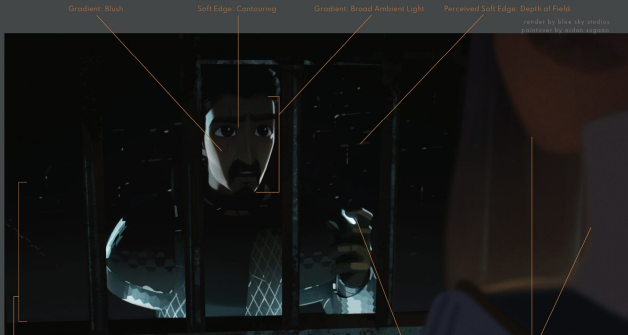
(semi-hard)
skin lighting, painted
contouring (flat subtle color
shape with soft edges),
semi-hard spec

PERCEIVED SOFT EDGES

motion blur, depth of field

GRADIENTS

(subtle, soft and broad)
atmospheric lighting or haze,
blooms, blishes, subsurface,
broad subtle ambient lights



Gradient: Atmospheric Haze
(across the entire bottom of the frame and over Ballister)

SPECIAL NOTE:

Motion blur and depth of field have an inverse relationship to occlusion. As you ramp up depth of field or motion blur, ramp down the amount of occlusion from the default film amount.

Gradient: Bloom

Perceived Soft Edges: Depth of Field



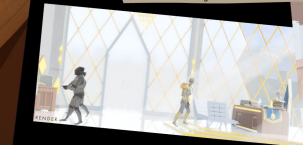
paintover: aidan sugano

render: dney animation

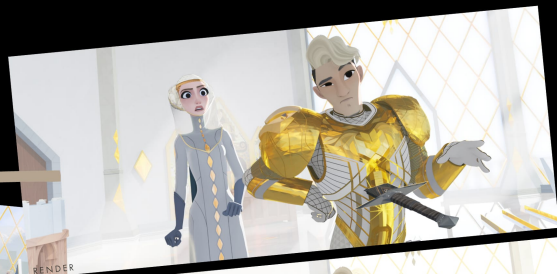


paintovers: aidan sugano

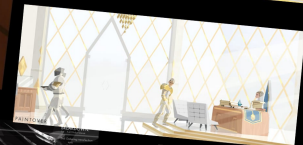
render: dneg animation



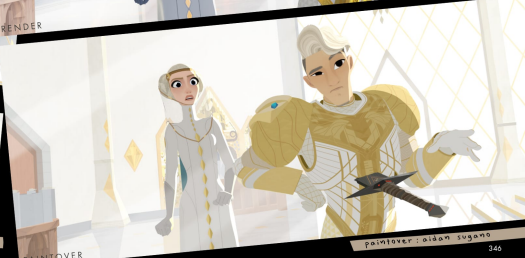
renders: dneg animation



RENDER



paintover: aidan sugano



PAINTOVER

paintover: aidan sugano



paintovers: aidan sugano

render: dneg animation

paintovers: aidan sugano

render: dneg animation



2330_0180.1078

- PICTURE INTEGRATION**
- 1. reduce complexity
 - 2. avoid unnecessary rendering detail
 - 3. avoid unnecessary work in low priority
 - 4. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 5. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 6. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 7. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 8. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 9. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 10. avoid rendering what you don't need
- PICTURE INTEGRATION**
- 11. avoid unnecessary rendering detail
 - 12. avoid unnecessary work in low priority
 - 13. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 14. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 15. avoid rendering what you don't need
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 - 18. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 19. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 20. avoid rendering what you don't need
- PICTURE INTEGRATION**
- 21. avoid unnecessary rendering detail
 - 22. avoid unnecessary work in low priority
 - 23. avoid rendering what you don't need
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 - 30. avoid rendering what you don't need
- PICTURE INTEGRATION**
- 31. avoid unnecessary rendering detail
 - 32. avoid unnecessary work in low priority
 - 33. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 34. avoid rendering what you don't need
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 - 36. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 37. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 38. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 39. avoid rendering what you don't need
 - 40. avoid rendering what you don't need



EXAMPLE FRAME : BASE PAINTOVER
mid, hard/soft mix, divided

TARGET

paintovers: aidan sugano

render: dneg animation



render : aneg animation

RENDER



paintovers : aidan sugano

349



render : aneg animation

EXAMPLE FRAME : PAINTOVER TARGET
light, ambient, sterile

350





Imagine standing amidst a collective of creative punk-rock souls, all united in the quest for originality, innovation and progress. Each page of this book you turn echoes the fervor that birthed this cinematic masterpiece, from the vision of ND Stevenson – the spark of this charming tale – to the first iteration of the script, and finally to the breathtaking scenes that ignite curiosity in the hearts of us all. As you flip through this book, allow the surge of unstoppable creativity to inspire you, elevate your spirits and rekindle your passion for the craft. This is exactly how we felt as we all worked day and night to breathe life into this special tale, surrounded by the finest artists and visionaries a film could ever boast. We aimed to distill the essence of the film into this book, allowing you an all-encompassing view of our creative experience. Immerse yourself in the magic of this captivating film we are immensely proud to present, a film that took a left turn after the three stars and headed straight into magical mayhem – Nimona!

Jeff Turley
08.18.23

Thank you. I hope you enjoyed our film and all the work and thought that went into it. This project has, for me, like many others, been an intense labor of love. It is a testament to the indomitable tenacity and staggering passion of the people who have poured their time, hearts and ingenuity into it at every stage of its journey. I hope I was able to help shepherd that collective vision and do justice to everyone's generous contributions. This has been one of the most humbling experiences of my career, and I am so grateful to have been a small part of it.

Aidan Sugano
08.18.23

special thanks:

- Rob Baird
- Haley Brooks Pascarella
- Erin Burbridge
- Ashley Calle
- Roberto Calvo
- Emily Chekmeyan
- Chris Corabi
- Erin Cracker
- Kaitlyn Czepiga
- Megyn Ellison
- Nathan Gary
- Chris Gonzalez
- Anthony Kemp
- Andrew Millstein
- Olivier Mouroux
- Patrick Osborne
- Erica Pulcini
- Karen Ryan
- Damen Saunders
- Daniella Scaramfino
- Steve Schwartz
- Cindy Slattery
- Randy Trager
- Jamie Truong
- Julie Tustin
- Julie Zackary



