

## Design process



These characters were created before the storyboard. I must admit that when I started to research for the kind of characters that I wanted, I didn't have a clear picture of what I really wanted. I was looking for out-of-proportion figures; I knew that I have to show a difference of physicality between the two characters, but they should be part of the same world. I also wanted the Flying Girl to have more of a teenage look, because I want this movie to speak to teenagers. They should see themselves reflected in this character.

In my storyboard, the flying woman is drawn all in black, and I feel that I like this costume more. It feels like it belongs to the set that I created, instead of this red t-shirt and blue jeans. However, I am scared that it won't talk to the kind of audience that I want.

I also feel very happy with the ballerina rendering. I feel that it is very true to the idea that I had of her in my head, and it feels like she belongs to the world that I created.

One of the things that I wanted to do in this independent study was to work more and experiment with Photoshop. I am not very good rendering by hand, and I felt that this was my chance to keep playing with this program. It took so much longer than rendering by hand probably takes. However, I know that I am happier with the results than I would be if these were made entirely by hand.





To draw the characters, I started to do a quick sketch of the position and general physical characteristics of the character. Then I took a photo of it and I used it as a base to work in Photoshop where I could add more physical characteristics to their bodies as well as a background.

For set and lights, I used the same process. It is easier to put the general idea on paper first using all the research.





Rendering the set was very hard, mainly because I had no idea of how a film set or a stop-motion set looks. It took a lot of time and many videos to figure out how my set should be constructed. I knew that I wanted to have deepness and that I don't have very much space to do a very elaborate set. Most of the sets are very 2D, made out of cardboard otherwise they are too complex and expensive.

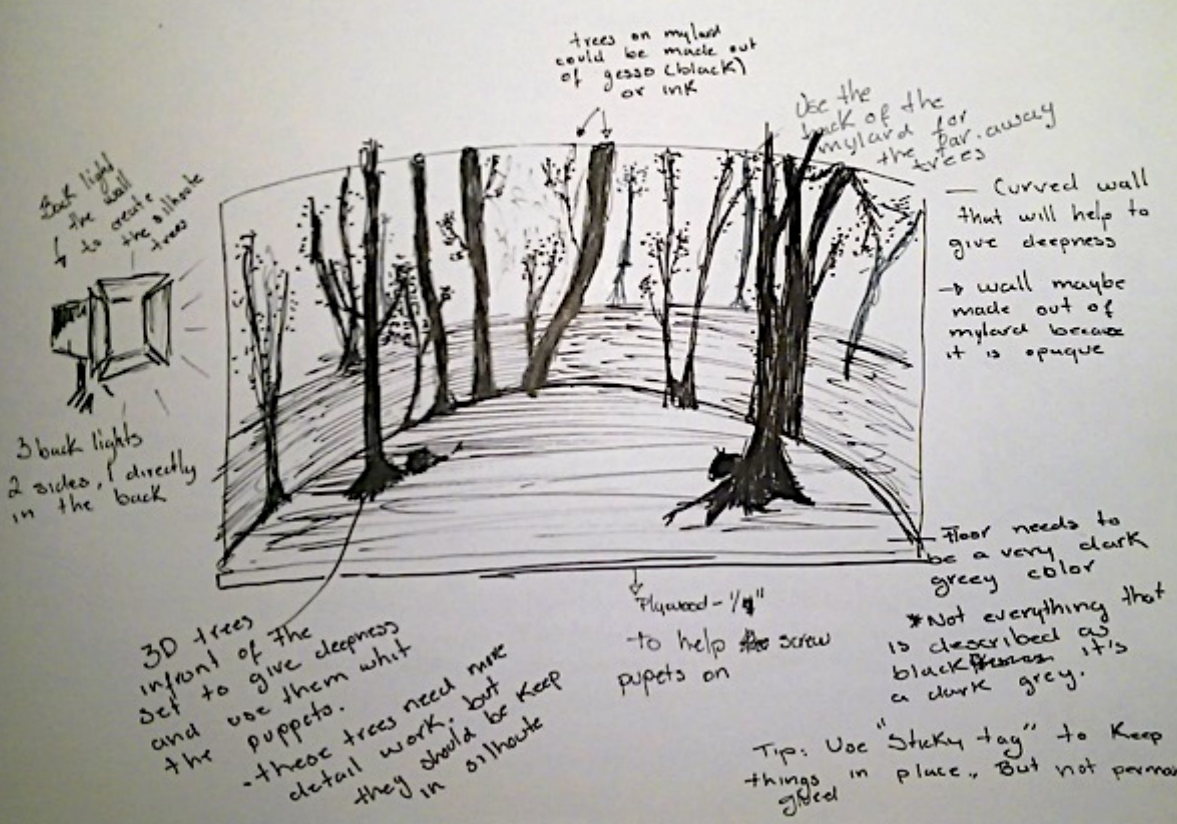
With my knowledge in theatre I came up with the idea of using black gesso on Mylar and backlight to help the set to have deepness. Also, I want to add two or three 3D trees to give the option to hide the puppets behind the trees. This should also help the set to not be flat. Movie sets have one to three walls; the decision of how many walls to put will affect the freedom to shoot. Generally, people who only had one wall would have a green wall. This is very helpful in stop motion, because the camera can be stationary all the time but the green wall helps to cheat the movement of the camera.

My film's biggest challenge is that one of my puppets flies. Right now there is a scene where the puppet is seen flying in the sky. Generally, most flying scenes are shot with a green wall, which could be an option for me. However I should consider the time that it takes figuring out how to design with and for a green wall versus implementing another method of shooting.

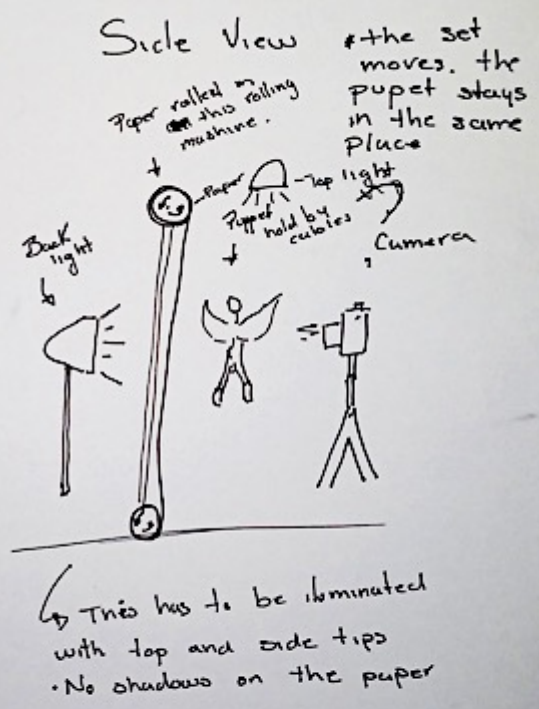
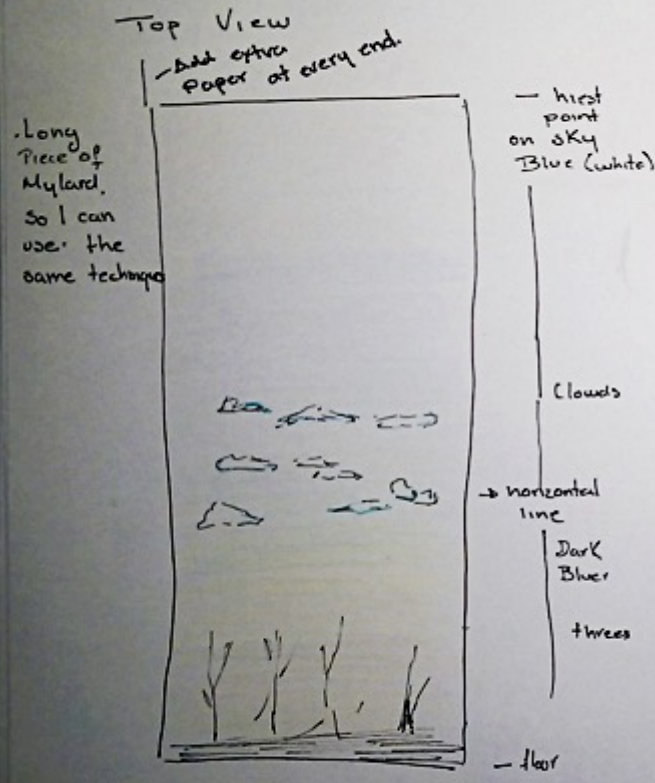
I designed another option to use instead of a green screen. The principle is the same: using a piece of Mylar and backlighting it. However, this piece of Mylar would be attached to two rolls that would allow me to move it up and down to pretend that the Flying Girl is descending from the sky. So the set moves, but the camera and puppet stay in the same position giving the illusion of the movement of flight. In theory my sets should work.

# Set + light.

\* Hide the supports for the mylar in the trees.



# Flying Scene Set.





Lighting was another aspect of design to research for. Most of the movies use simple washes created by powerful house fixtures like desk lamps. The most common combination is two side lights with one each side, and one top light. Some others use two side lights and a back light to have depth. Shadows are very important on some occasions; when you have a flat right behind the character or a green wall. Or they can be not important at all because they could in some cases be cut from the frame.

Flashlights and lasers are used for special effects. Turning them on in one frame and off in the next one could help to show an explosion or lightning. Black, blue and red flashlights are used to enhance the set colors.

Top View

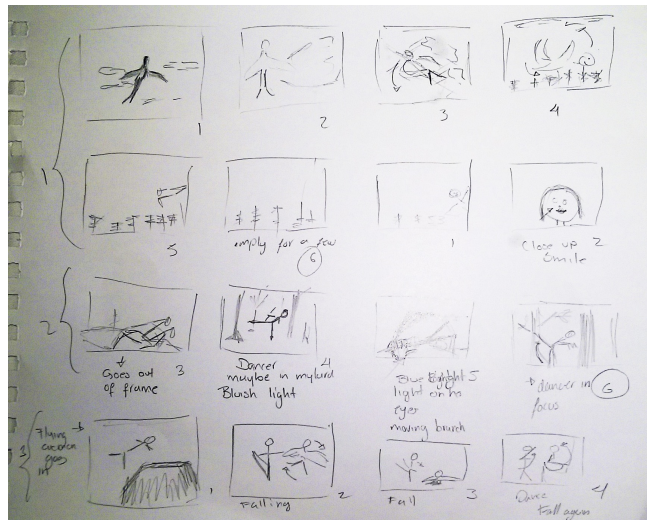
Lights will be adjusted according to the light fixture that I can use.

- \* We may need a cooler fixture for front lights and a warmer light in the back
- \* have some flashlights with black lights could bring a cool effect
- \* Reveal light bulbs are recommended for "day" light.

Tip → flash lights are good to create special effects

The storyboard was very hard to make, mainly because I didn't want it to look flat with only one camera angle. Thinking about camera angles was something new. For some reason, it was a little bit hard to find information about how to make storyboards by hand. There are some applications online that help to create very easy but generic storyboards. However, I couldn't find one that was free, and they are so generic that they could have been seen as a totally different concept. I could have showed a storyboard with a very different aesthetic to what I want for this movie.

It was helpful for me to make a very casual storyboard, to help to think out my ideas, and then edit it as I was making the more professional one.



The storyboard doesn't need to be a piece of art, but it needs to communicate the idea of the general look and the camera angle. I guess that I took this very literally, when at the beginning of my storyboard the design was very simple. However, as I continued creating it, I had the need to put more information and the aesthetic became more complicated, but allowed me to put more information. I didn't have time to redo the first part of my storyboard, I will do this after the project is done. However, I think that in general the storyboard shares the general idea of my movie.