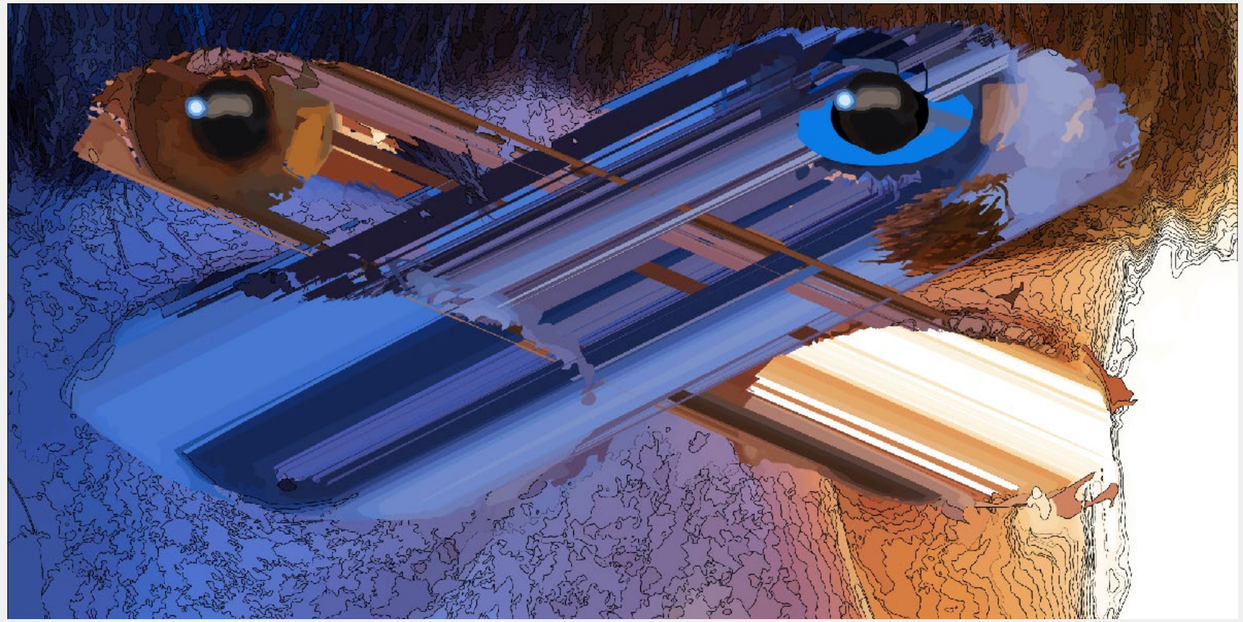
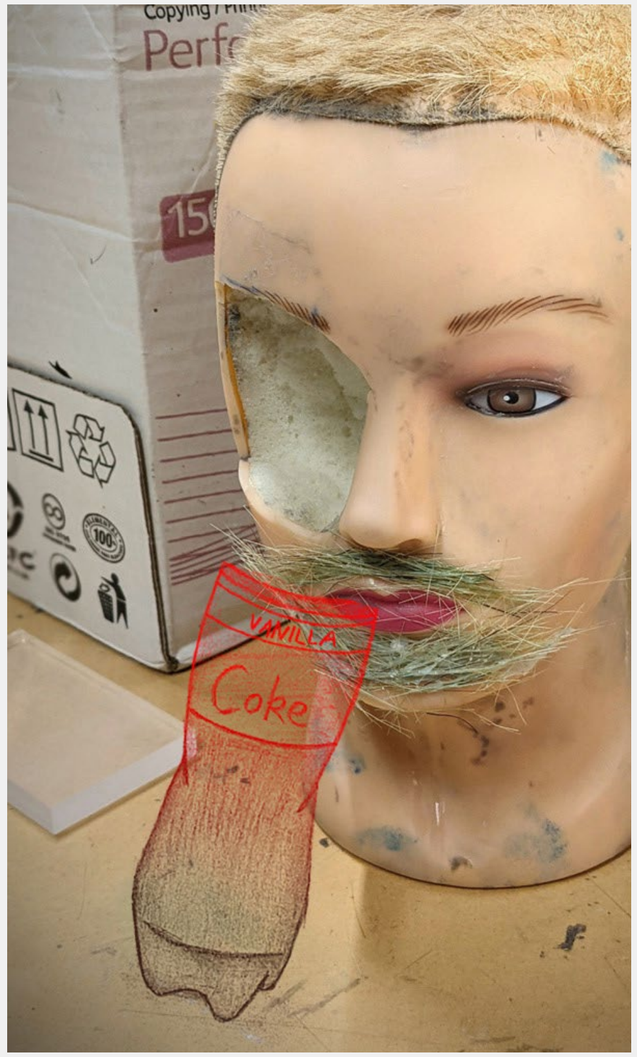
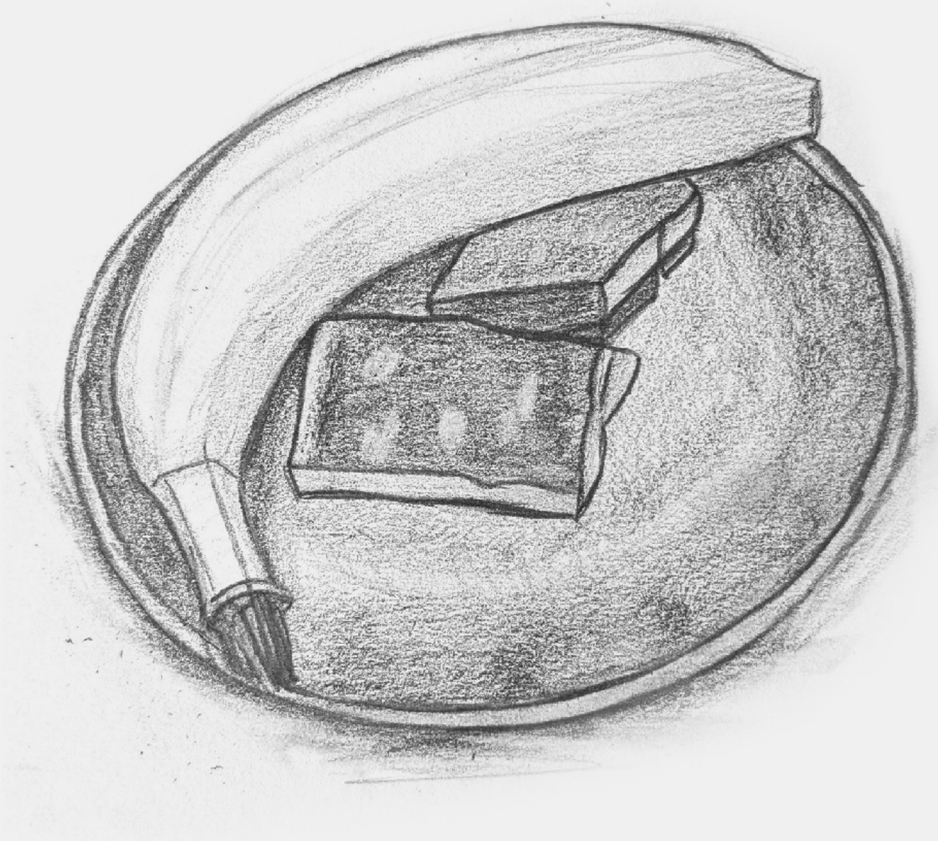
Adobe Illustrator Image Tracing

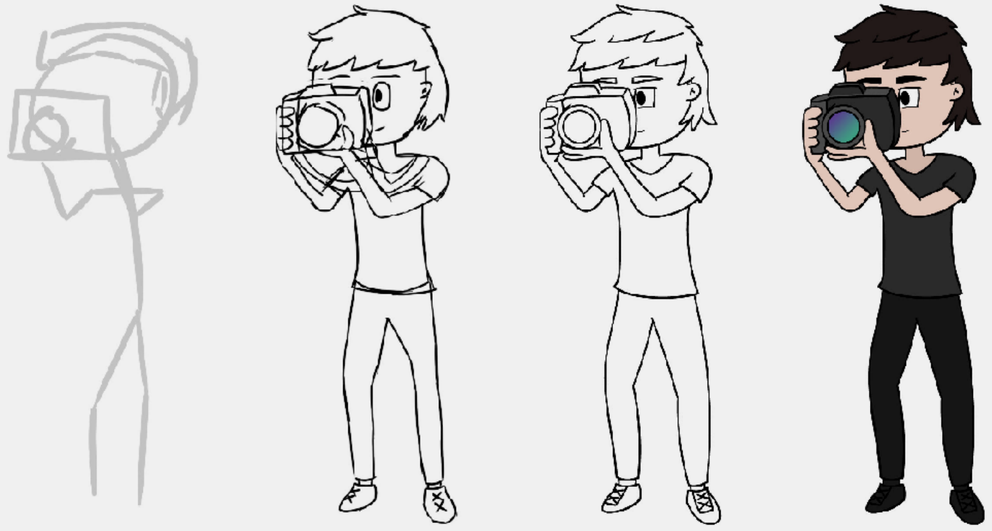


Alpha Masking

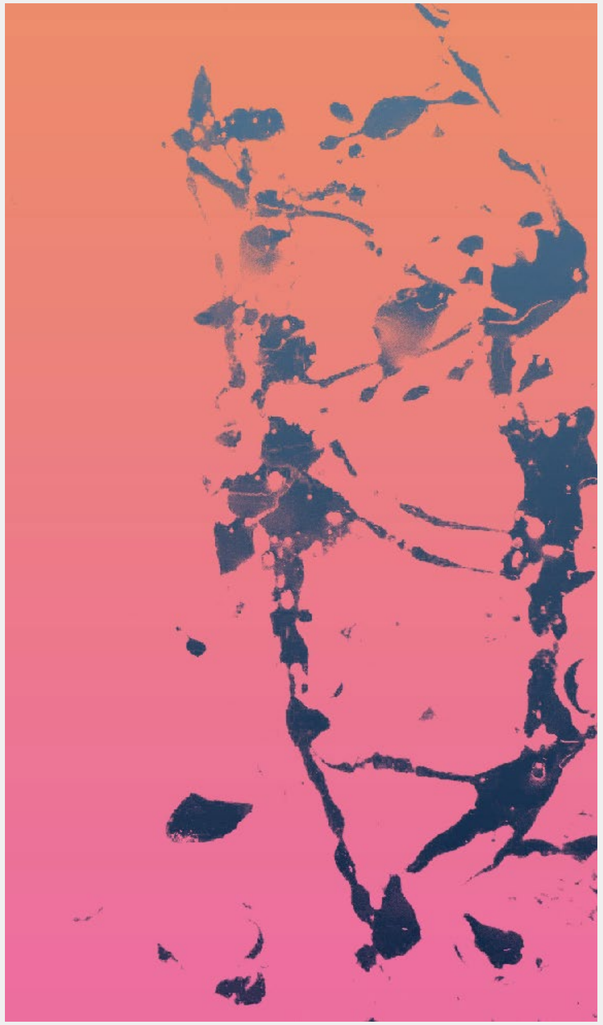


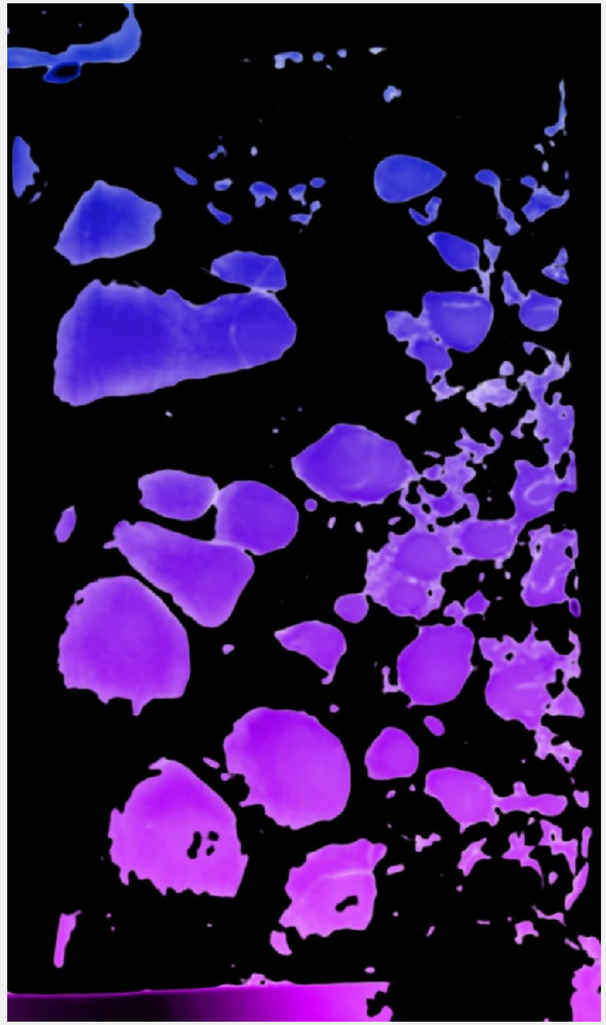


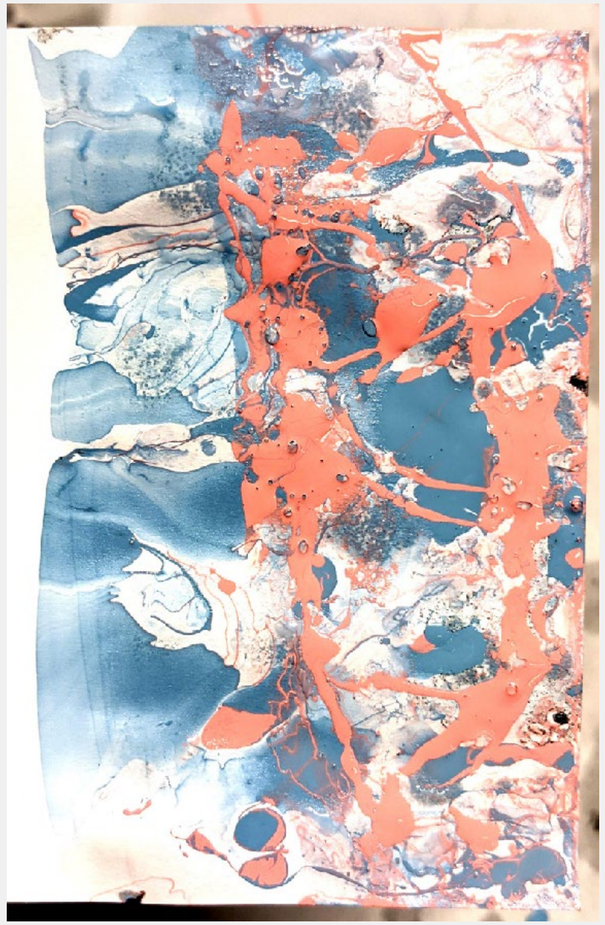
Digital Drawing

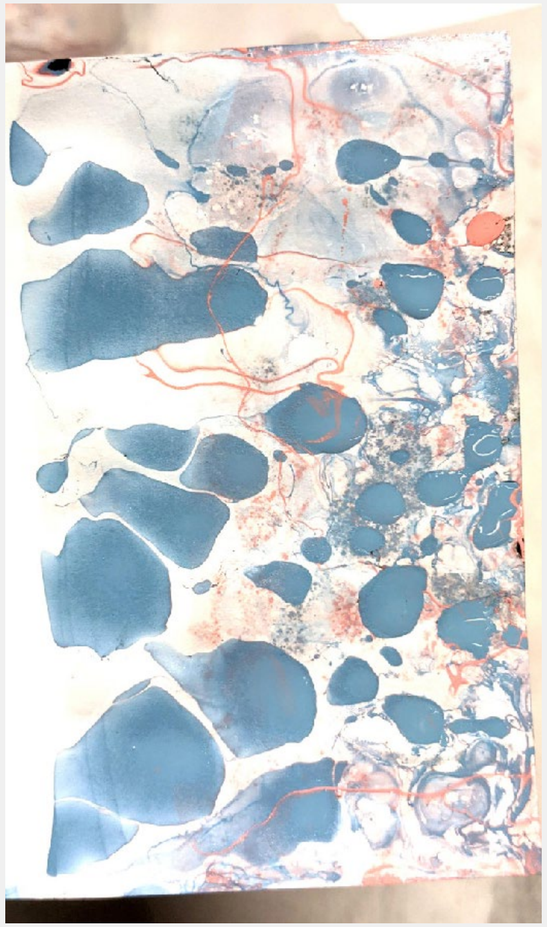


Isolated Marbling









Assignment 2: Photocollage
Evaluation

Here's the photocollage I put together for the second assignment.

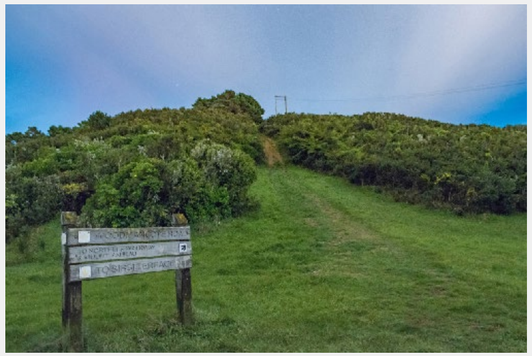
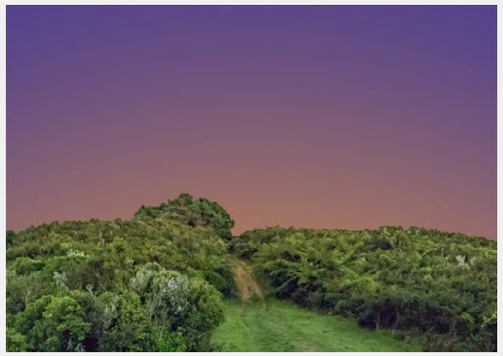
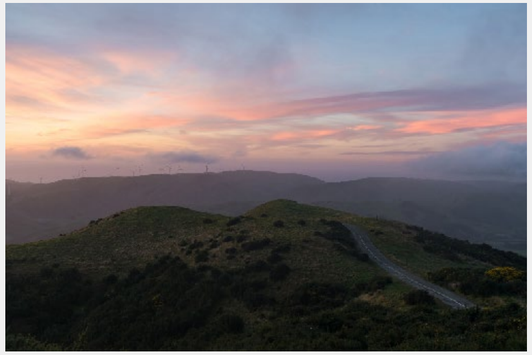
I noticed that a few pepeha concepts I researched were images stacked on top of each other, so I went for a clearer environment (set at Mount Kaukau).

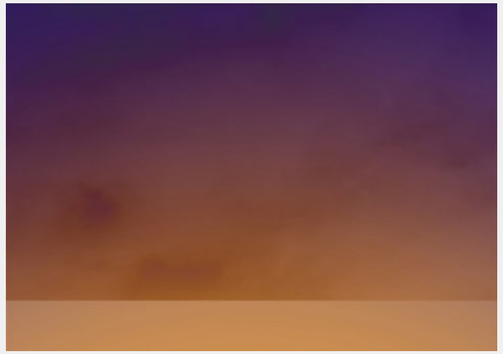
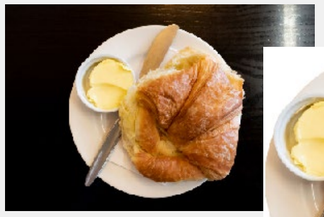
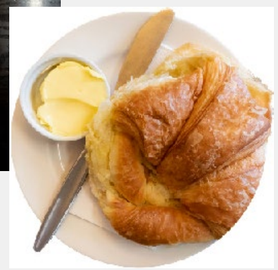
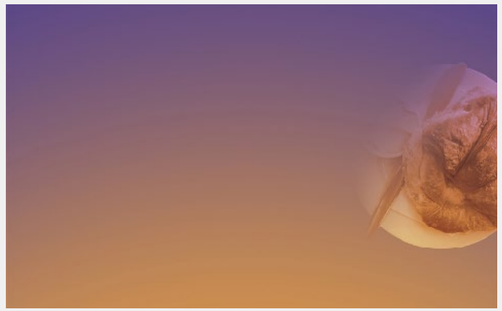
The photocollage features a lot of purple and gold tints, which is part of a design language I like the look of. The use of this in the photocollage resulted in a colour graded appearance and elements that seem to blend together in a more integrated environment. Without this, the hills would appear a solid green, which wouldn't match the night sky. All that being said, the distinct otherworldly style was intentional since very early in the development of the collage.

The triforce in the background represents the Legend of Zelda franchise, which was one of my favorites growing up. I thought it fit well with the environment here.

In retrospect the croissant felt out of place, but when I removed it and shifted the pedestal, avatar and me to the right, the collage looked underdeveloped and basic, so I kept it because it's one of my favourite foods.

The stars and marble texture which can be seen on the pedestal were downloaded from Google Images, but everything else was either hand-drawn or photographed by me.

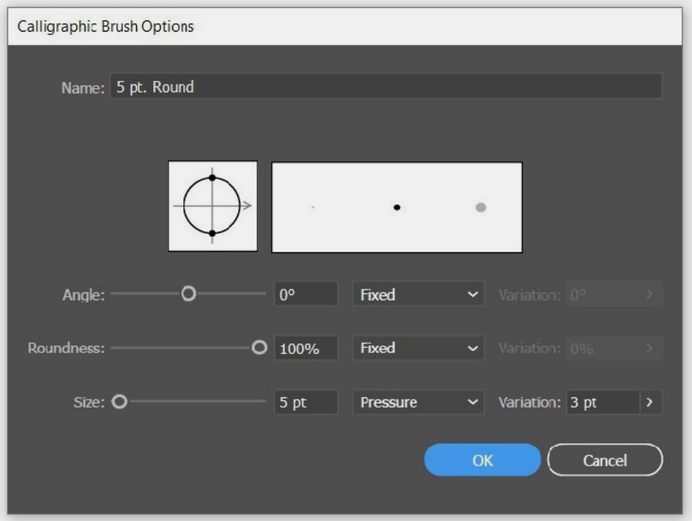
Assignment 2: Photocollage
Photo Editing and Compositing

Different elements from a few different photos were isolated then combined to make the environment seen in the photocollage, plus the croissant.

The hill, mountains and sky were shot back in 2018 when I started learning professional DSLR photography. Interestingly, the hill photo was taken at midnight with a 30-second exposure so that's why it has a flat-lighting look to it.

The use of both hill and mountain photos creates depth that would've been difficult to acheive using the mountain image alone, as well as providing a slightly more appropriate base for the blue pedestal to sit without it appearing too tall.

The croissant photo was edited seperately from the Pepeha Photoshop file, but it mainly involved using Photoshop's background eraser tool to remove the dark brown table.



Assignment 2: Photocollage

Avatar Creation

The avatar shown in the top-right is actually a recent creation for my social media persona. It was initially sketched out in Photoshop which made it easy to erase and resize elements to increase “appeal”, an important aspect of character design.

Then I imported it into Illustrator as a reference layer and traced over it using the default brush but with a defined variable stroke width range controlled by the pen pressure.

I exported the outline as a PNG file and painted it in using Photoshop (I’m still getting to know how filling works in Illustrator). Then I duplicated the coloured layer and added some rough dodging and burning to represent cel shading.

Finally, I added a purple-gold gradient as a separate layer then set the blending mode to Soft Light to show depth and really finish it off.

Assignment 2: Photocollage

Self-Portrait Cutout

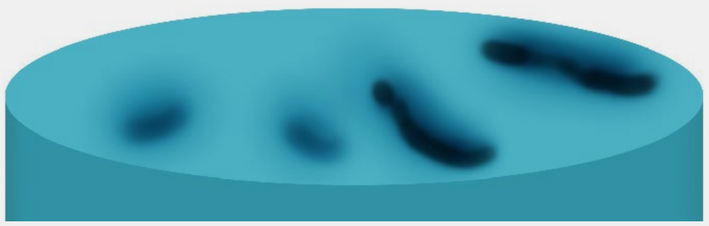
To make a cutout image of me seen in the photocollage, I mounted my DSLR on a tripod and set the exposure to 1/30s, f/3.8 and ISO 800. The environment I took the photo in was based on a combination of convenience, appropriate lighting and a distinguishable background.

I brought the raw photo into Photoshop where I used the new “Super Resolution” feature to upscale the image to 96MP using artificial intelligence. This gave me more pixels to work with which meant I could get a cleaner cut-out - especially when downscaling - even if only by a small amount.

I used the background eraser tool to remove the wooden wall and concrete floor. The colour was a bit too similar near my left hand, so I had to manually erase that part of the background using the standard eraser. This resulted in the second image.

To match the aesthetic in the final photocollage, I applied two solid-to-transparent gradients (one purple and the other gold), resulting in the third image.

Then I just downscaled it a ton to hide any imperfections and inconsistencies in the background removal.



Assignment 2: Photocollage
Tests

The top-left photocollage was early days, and while the layout and appearance was near final, the individual elements were not. Note how it lacks the final purple/gold lighting that I mentioned earlier, resulting in elements that look more distinct and isolated.

To the right of that is the last-minute test with the croissant omitted as mentioned in the first page.

On the left are the marble and starry sky textures that were downloaded from the internet. Everything else is original work.

The pedestal at this point was just two solid colours, plus some shading under the avatar and me, acheived using the burn tool. Later on, edge shadows, coloured lighting and a marble texture were applied, making it more realistic.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video
Waterfront

This was made by chroma-keying a video of me and duplicating the layer a few times but offsetting it so it has a lag effect. I added coloured drop shadows to them and set it to “shadow only”.

The background was made by speeding up footage and animating a color grade to make it look like dawn. I used After Effects to extend the shutter angle which left a trail with the people walking past.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video

Panic

This clip was made by animating an effect called “optics compensation” in After Effects to make the video shake a bit. Then I messed around with colour levels and blending modes with duplicated clips to simulate chromatic abberation.

This video was actually filmed in broad daylight, but I had my desk chair behind me and used an RGB lamp to make the red lighting.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video
Dog Running and Curtsy

This was made by masking out a dog running on a still frame of the original video. I then repeated this video several times to make it look like lots of dogs.

I recorded a video of me attempting to curtsy but failing miserably but that's okay because it's just a hand-drawn rotoscope which I made in Adobe Animate. I could've used Photoshop's timeline like the tutorial said but that would've involved too many layers and this was easier.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video
Awkward Dancing

Another boring green screen video of me trying to dance. The middle video was slowed down while the other two were sped up.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video
Gradual Environment Lighting

This was made mostly by masking around different sections of the photo using the pen tool.

It reminds me of the effect in Zelda: Ocarina of Time where Link charges his sword and the environment lighting narrows down to surround him, as if the light of the world is coming from him.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video

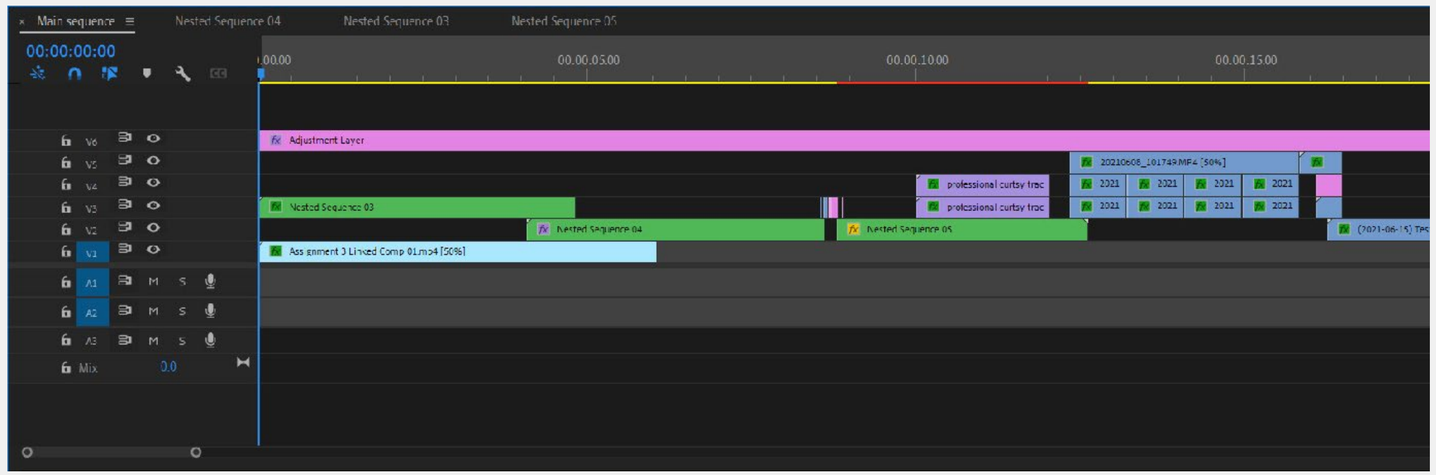
Image Plane Tracking

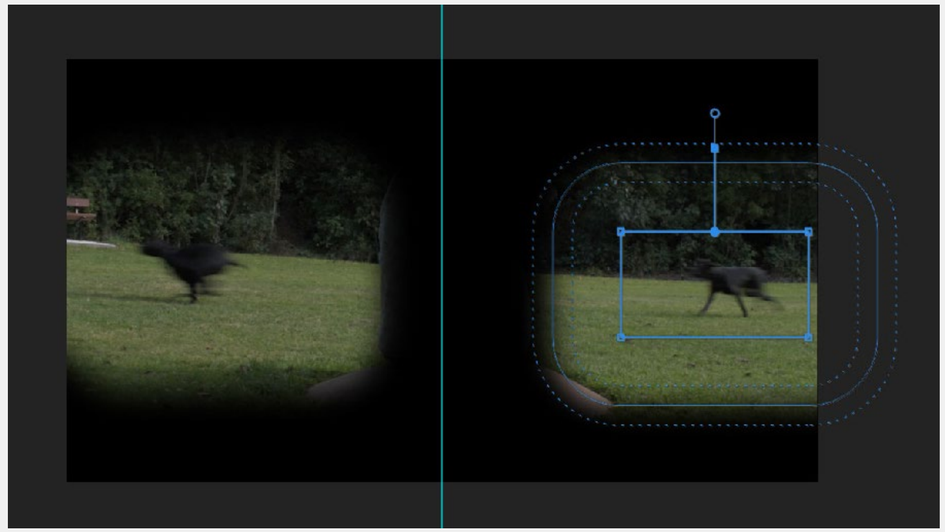
This was done in After Effects using the “corner pin” tool to map each corner of the previous video to the TV screen. Then I just color graded both clips to match.

The point of this clip was to give the overall video a meta aesthetic (I think that’s the right word), in the sense that the video is being presented on a screen which was the same screen the entire video was presented on.

Interesting to note is the rest of the video was cropped down to a cinematic 2:1 Univisium aspect ratio, which was then removed here (going back to 16:9).

Screenshots





Tests: Rotoscope

I downloaded a video of Peter Mckinnon doing his catchphrase “bwots up everybody Peter Kinnon here”, converted it to 12fps and imported it into the Photoshop timeline. Then I converted it to greyscale and turned down the opacity to make it easier to trace.

I’m not good at drawing faces so I left that bit out.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video

Tests: Slow Motion & Green Screen

I made a slow motion video of Dylan blinking at 100fps to really show the detail of his face.

WIth Nathan's shirt, I noticed that it was completely blue, so I applied the Ultra Key effect in Premiere Pro to that colour which removed it while keeping the texture of his shirt. As Nathan walked towards the camera, it served as an expanding mask that revealed the waterfront clip in the background. An oversight here is that Nathan is also in the background wearing a completely different shirt.

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video

Tests: When Time Runs Out

This video was initially recorded at 100fps, so with the help of Premiere Pro's Optical Flow feature, I was able to interpolate more frames to fill in the gaps, allowing me to slow down the clip almost infinitely. The items falling out of the bag slow to a stop.

The narrative here is the concept that time must eventually come to an end, and it slows down like a flat battery.

The scream and images serve as a jumpscare.

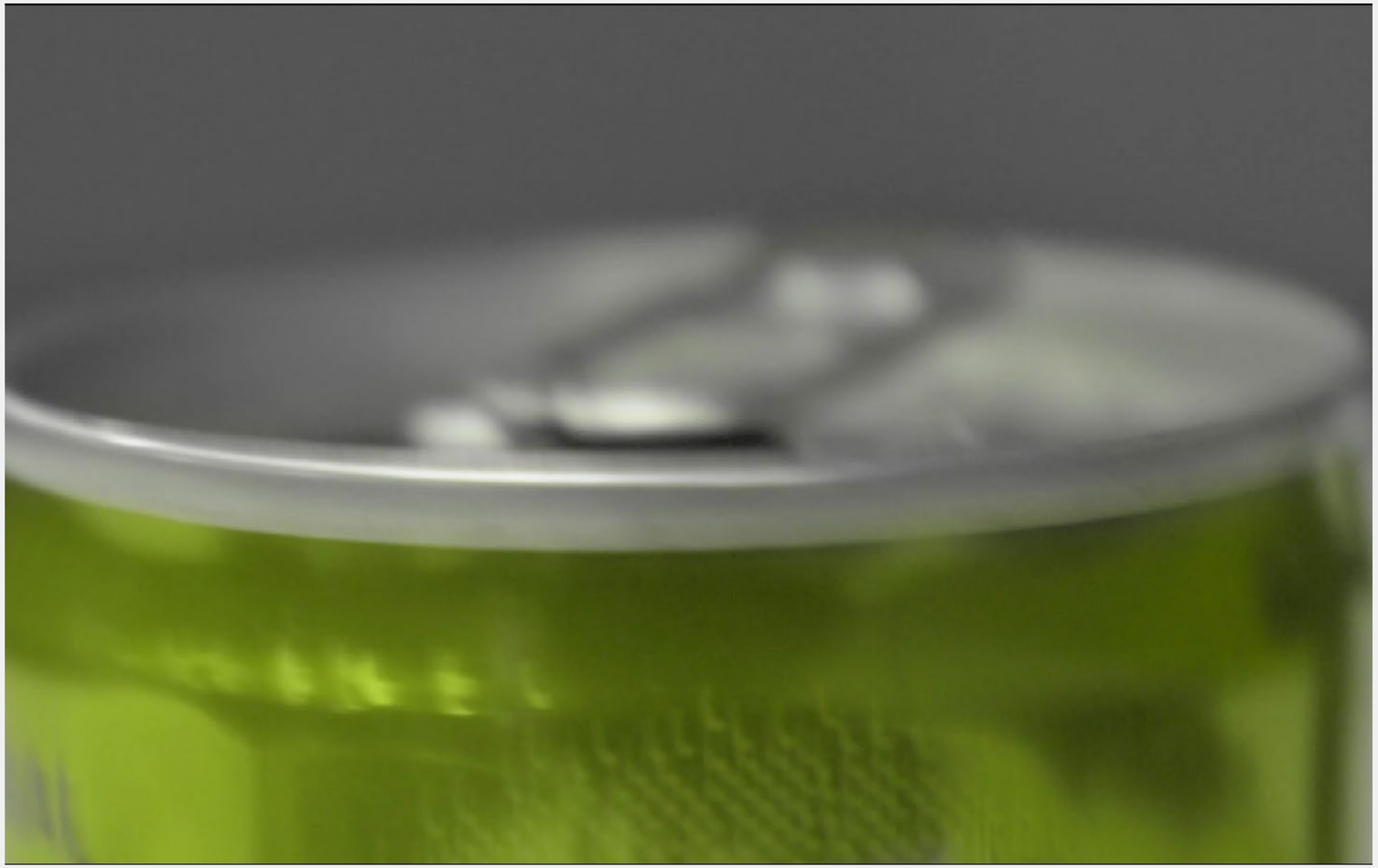
Finally, an old TV effect is shown on top of the final moment of reality, as though a film of the universe has just ended.

I wonder where this TV screen is located?

Assignment 3: Pepeha Video
Tests: Nathan Lifts Perry

I was messing around with Photoshop's Content-Aware Scale feature, which is kind of like resizing something but produces funny results.

I messed around with so many effects and distortions that I can't even name them all, but the end result is certainly trippy.



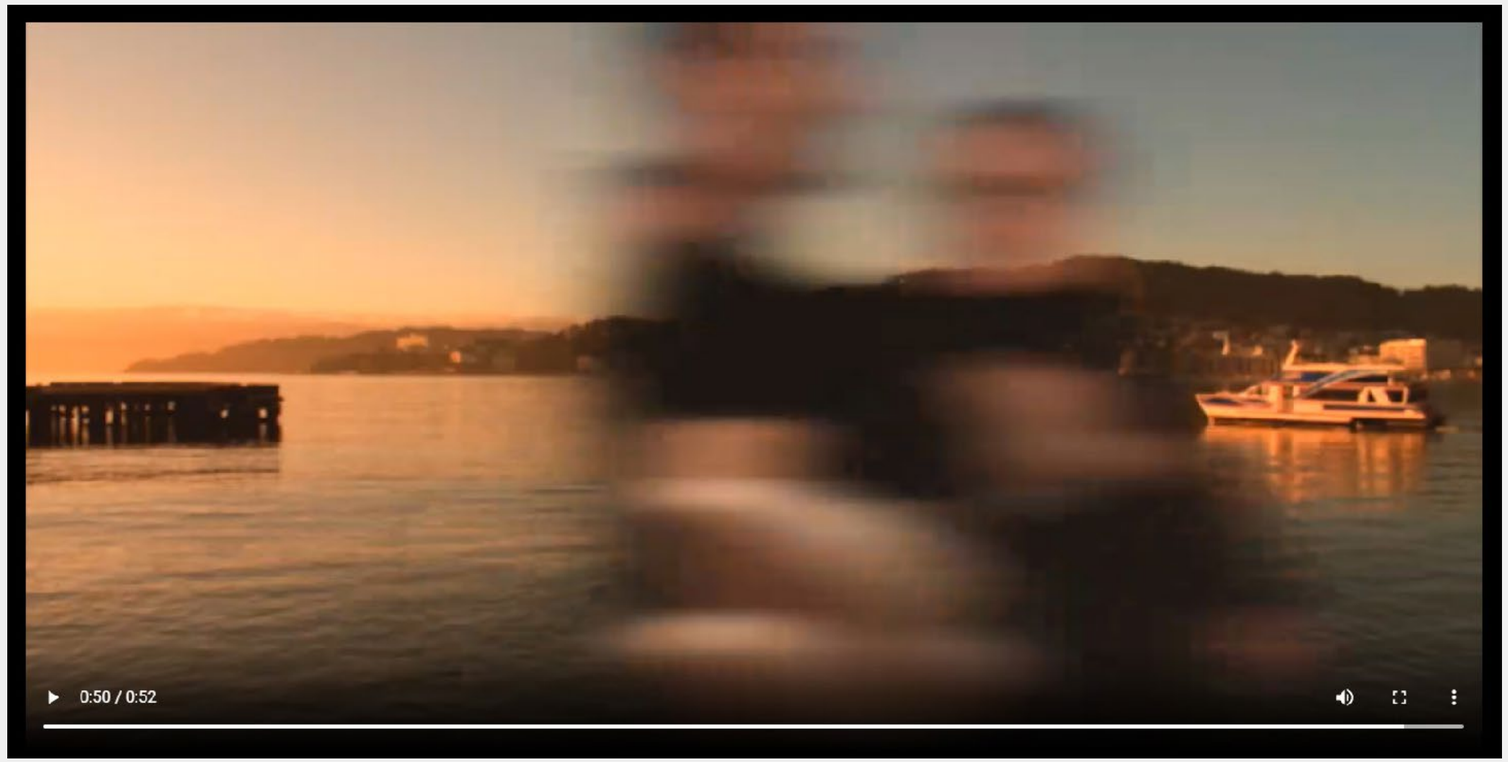
Assignment 3: Pepeha Video

Tests: God That Looks Tasty!

This video focuses on HSL (hue, saturation, luminance) sliders. I filmed this because I happened to have an energy drink nearby.

I thought about having the focus be on the can's green colour until I drank out of it, depleting it of it's sweet goodness.

What can I say? Energy drinks are good, and they have vitamin B12! I just couldn't resist.



Assignment 3: Pepeha Video

Tests: Prepare For Takeoff

I think the less I say about this one the better.

I basically sped up the footage of Nathan and Perry spinning and applied a motion blur effect to give the appearance of fast motion. I introduced a small horizontal gaussian blur for extra effect.

Finally, I colour graded this and the background so they fit together better.

How romantic!