

Character Final: Mirai

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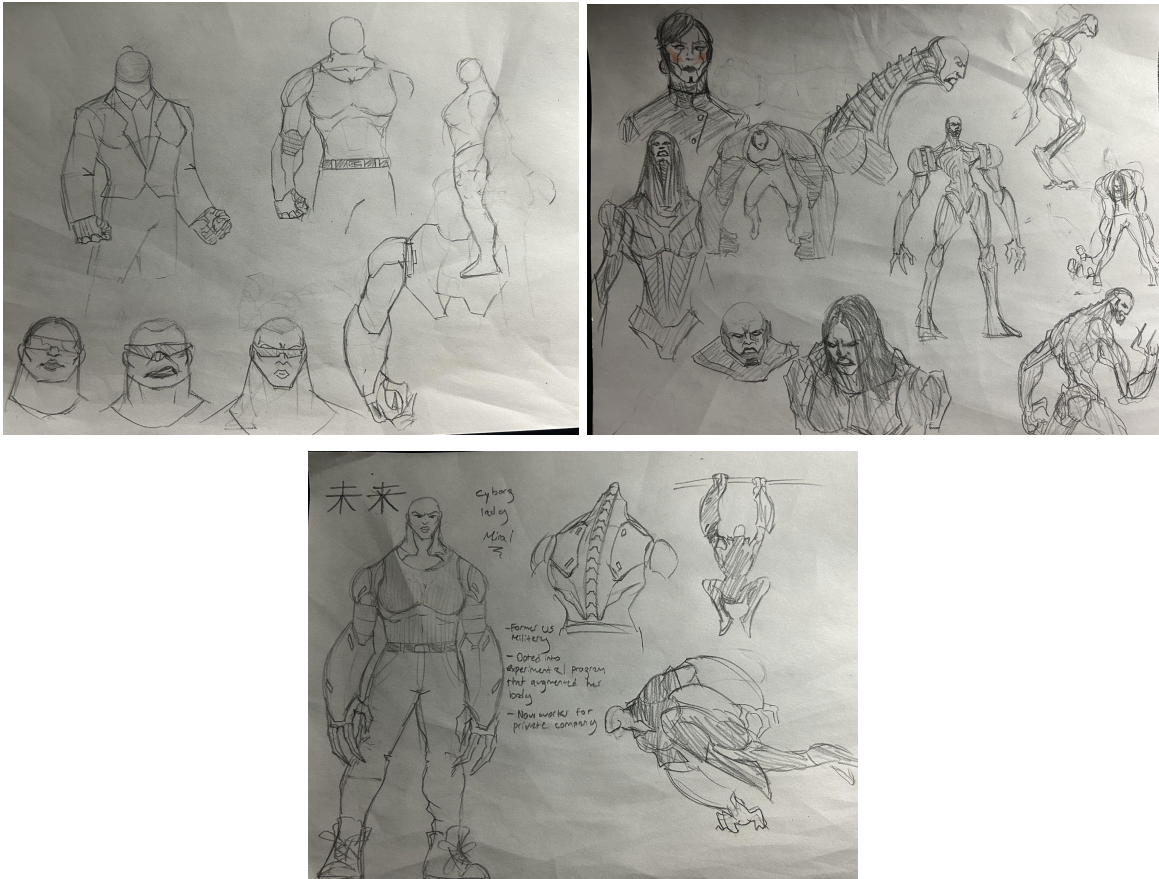
GitHub Link

https://github.com/Lukeinator65/LukeGalgoci_UVU-AGD-Portfolio/tree/main/UnityProject/Assets/MayaProject/scenes/Character/FinalProject

YouTube Link

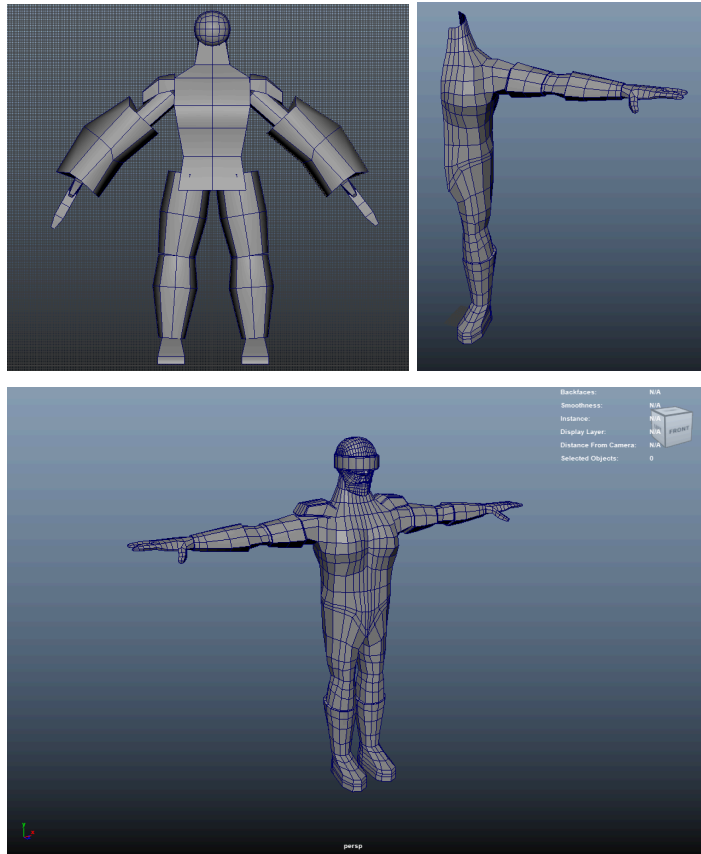
<https://youtu.be/N3AfYtbCHKU>

Design and Concept



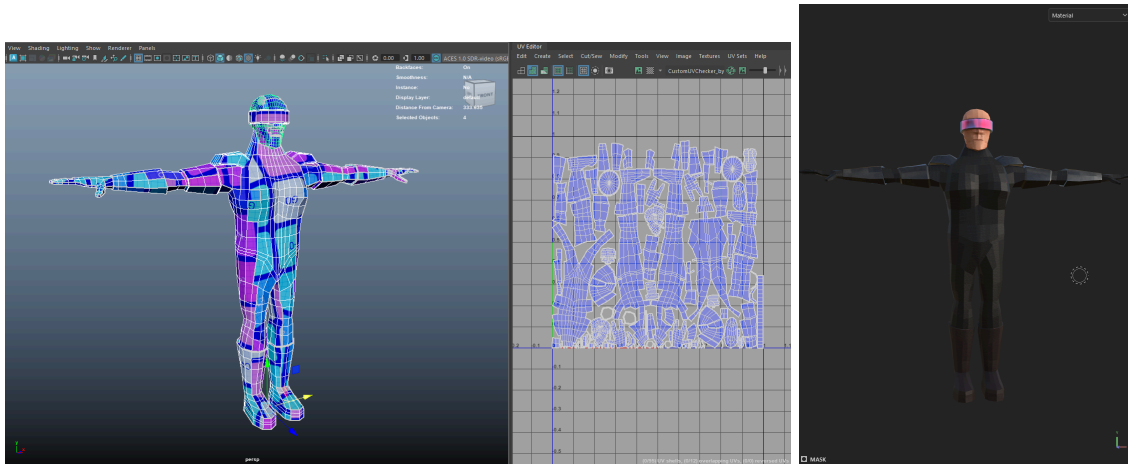
When thinking up ideas for my character, I had thought about the characters I had worked on and conceptualized previously. What I noticed is that I hadn't made a female character before, so I decided that I would make one. The first thing that popped into my head was that she would be a giant and very bulky character, and so I started to sketch out ideas of what I had in mind. I then practiced an exercise from my Character Design book I got and started to make drastic variations of the character to decide what would make a good middle ground between all the different versions. I eventually decided on the bottom most design whilst taking some creative liberties along the modeling process.

Modeling



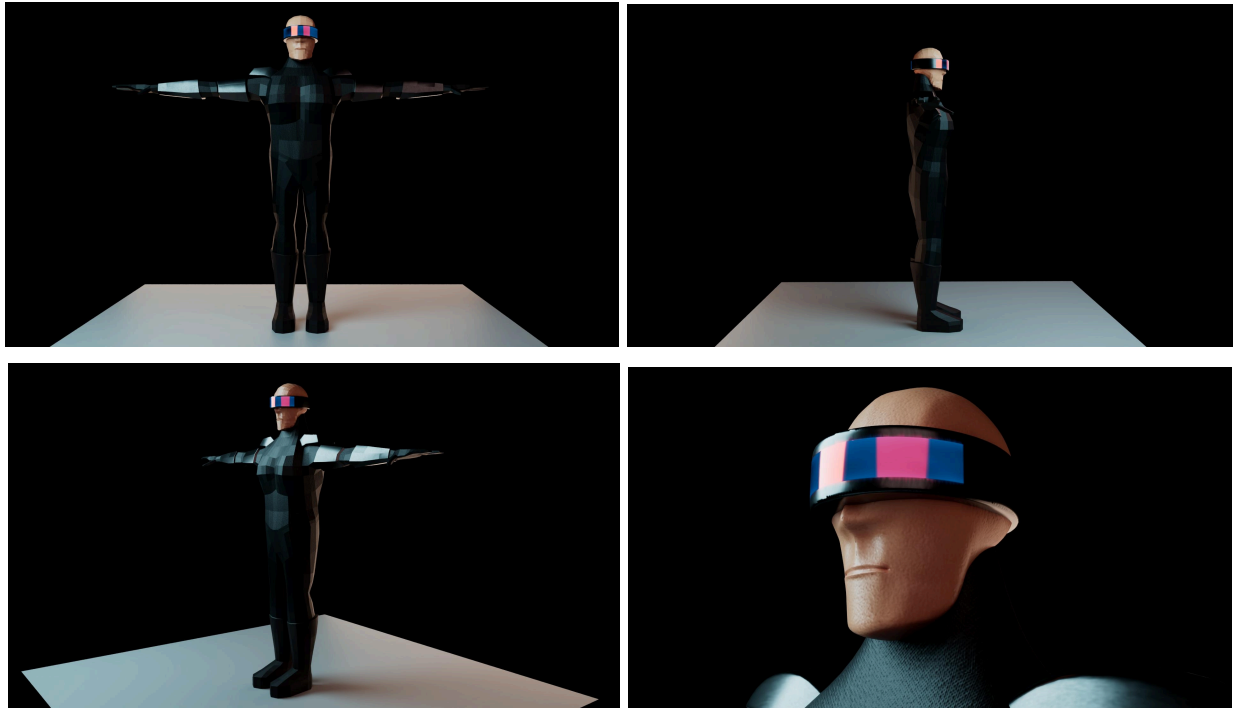
Modeling the character was a little more tricky in comparison to conceptualizing, but not as hard I thought it would be. For a while, I debated whether I should tackle this model in Maya or try my hand and Zbrush, but since I'm just more familiar with the Maya tools and interface, I stuck with Maya. I started with a rough block out to start figuring out the proportions. I then modified the torso I had built to get a more human shape. I then started extruding the arms, legs, and neck and began to retopologize. I got started on the head, repoto'd it, then retopo'd it again to fix a UV issue, and then I made some simple shoulder pads and a visor.

UVs and Surfacing



Creating the UVs and getting my model into Substance was pretty straight forward as I just used the automatic option for UVing for most of the model. There was some non manifold geometry (some of which I had to fix with retopology), but Maya was able to fix it. Once everything looked good enough, I exported the FBX file and got it into Substance. I made sure to use different layers, groups, and masks when setting up my character, and I used mostly basic materials rather than smart ones. I wish I could've gotten some interesting community materials, but due to restrictions on my Adobe Student account, I had to work with stuff that was already in Substance. Once that was all set, I got my textures exported and began setting up my final rendered version of the model.

Final Renders



With my Final Render, I set up a pretty basic three point lighting set up and adjusted the colors of the lights to give them more of a moody feel to match the look of the character. I tried to make sure that all the features and materials used on the model were visible and looked appealing. I also experimented with the smooth version of the model as seen in the image on the bottom right. While it did look a little nicer, the textures started to distort a little since they were created with the rigid version in mind.

Reflection

I think over the course of this semester, I've learned a lot about Maya and how to handle my creative process. For a lot of projects, not just for this class, I had this sense of imposter syndrome and that my work wouldn't be up to snuff and that my modeling capabilities wouldn't be good enough to create the stuff I wanted. Then I realized that's pretty much the entire reason I'm in this program. It's to learn how to make the stuff you want to make. Yeah, my first couple models might be a little rough, but for this being my first human character mesh that I made from scratch, I think it turned out pretty alright.

With this character going forward, I'm going to try and refine the entire design, since I don't think it's quite where I'd like it to be still, and make the new model in Zbrush before finishing it up in Maya. I really like the idea behind this character and I think it has some potential for story telling opportunities, but I'd like to get more familiar with Zbrush and modeling people in general before I jump back into this character. I also want to delve deeper into my character design book that I got, since I only read the first bit of it.

Overall, I've gotten pretty familiar with the tools in Maya and Substance, and I think I'm going to find myself creating characters and animations on my own time rather than what's needed for my grade. I'm going to try and get more familiar with some of the programs I don't know that well, like Zbrush, over Winter break so I can be better prepared for what's to come in the next semester of the program.