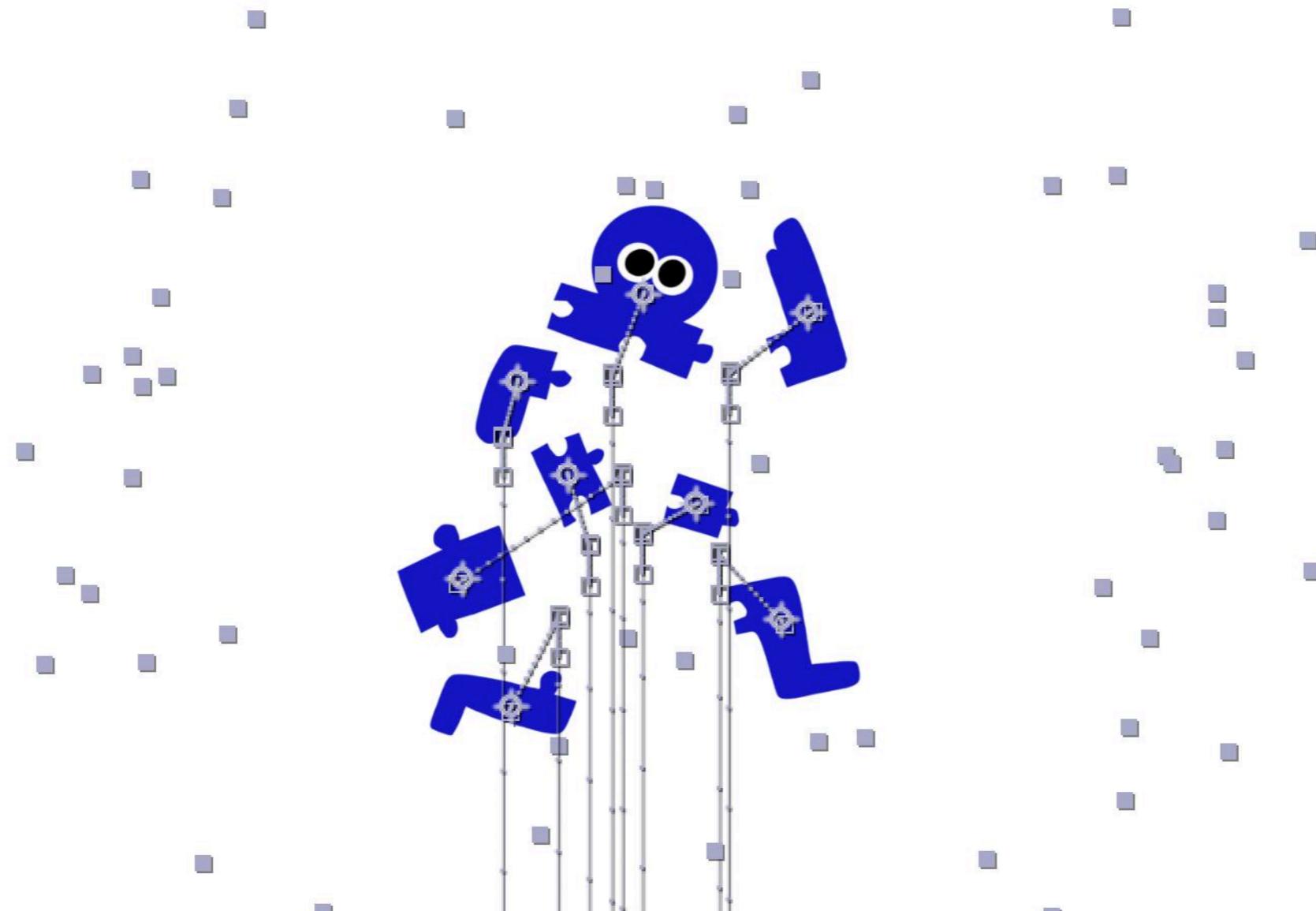


Documentation

What is Pain? *Animated Explainer*

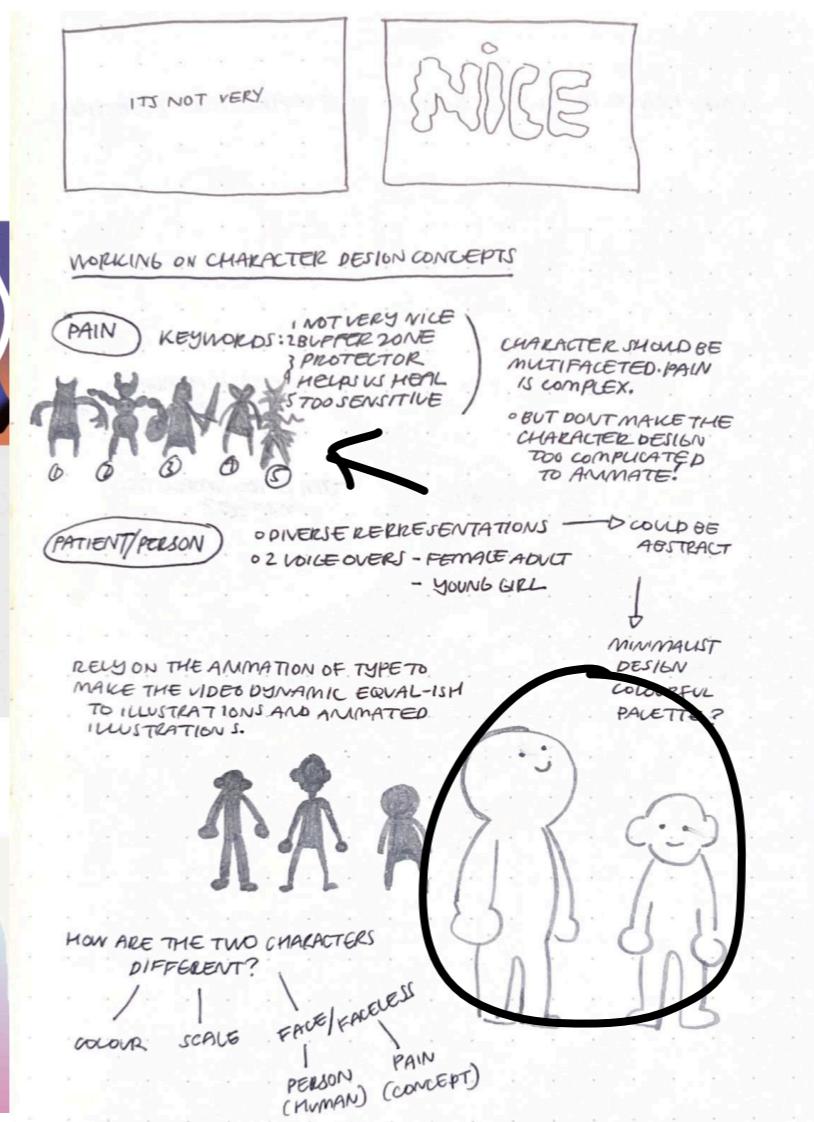
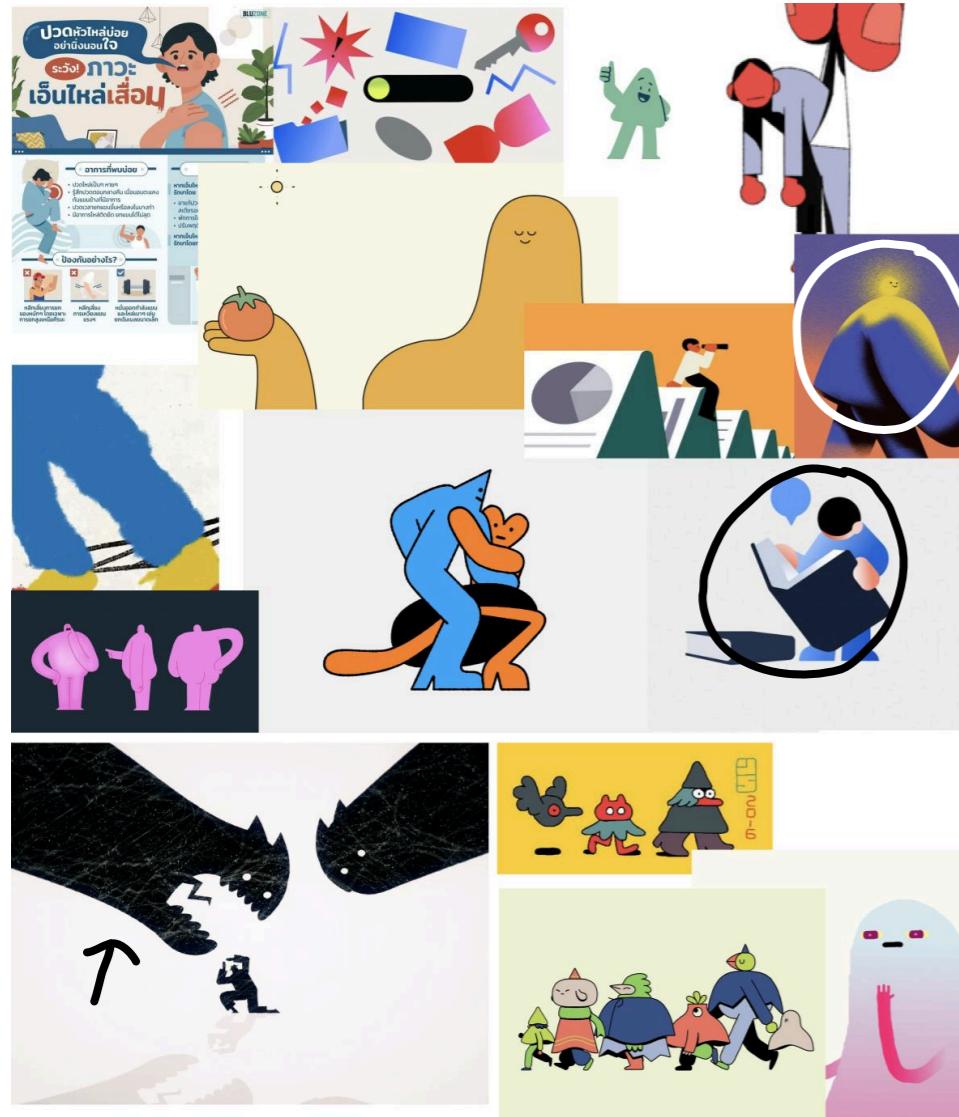


Rationale

Having chosen the project brief *What is pain?* for The Alfred Hospital, my main aim was to create an animated explainer video that was informative, yet engaging. I felt that most informative videos that came out of healthcare institutions lacked a sense of visual engagement, and may have come off as bland or information heavy. To combat this with my own style, I wanted to create an animation that was more visually stimulating and carried a sort of narrative.

The style that I ended up leaning towards was done with intention. Because I had chosen the voiceover done by a younger child, I wanted to maintain a playful essence throughout the video. In doing so, the stylistic elements of the animated explainer are more cartoonish and a little comedic. It utilises the tool of characterisations and simple visual metaphors as to be easily understood.

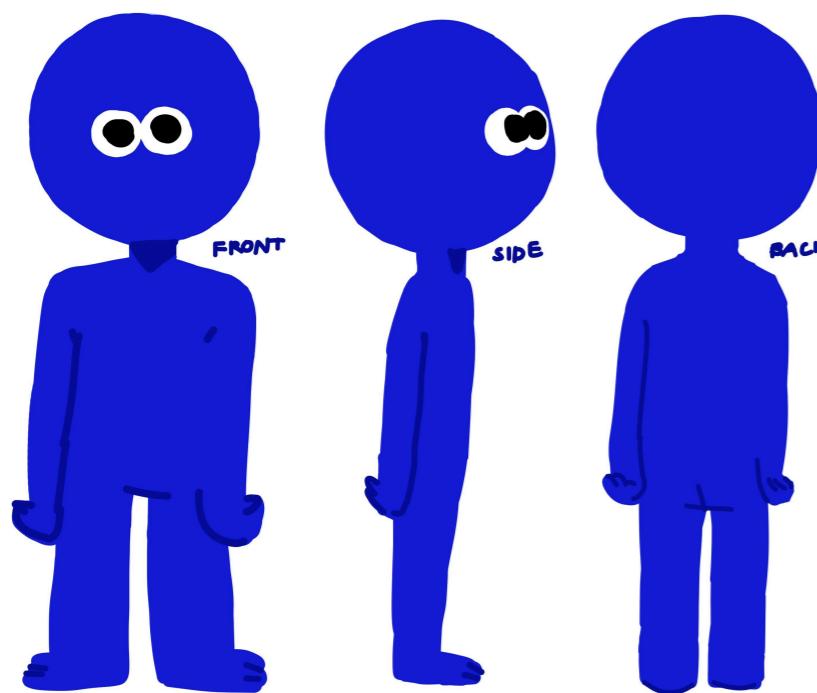
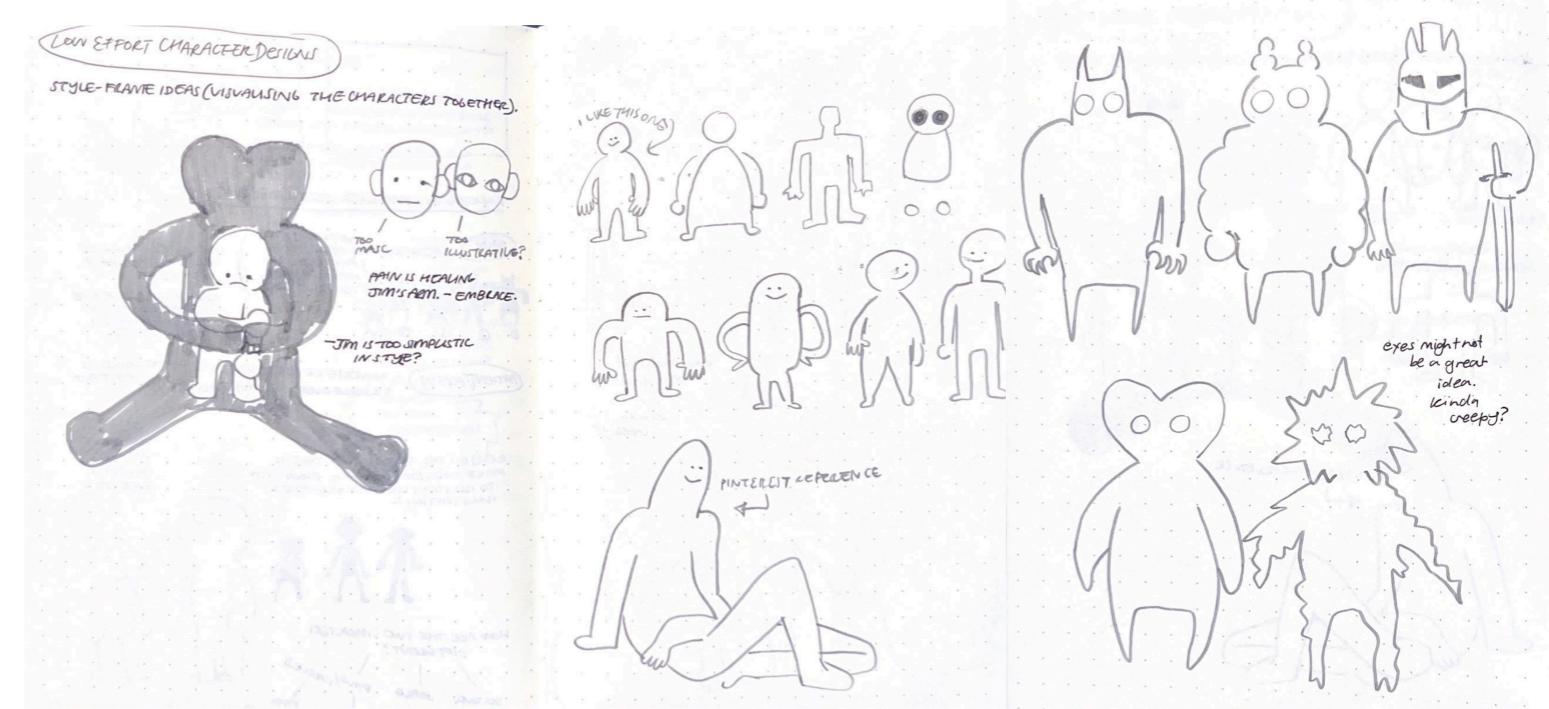
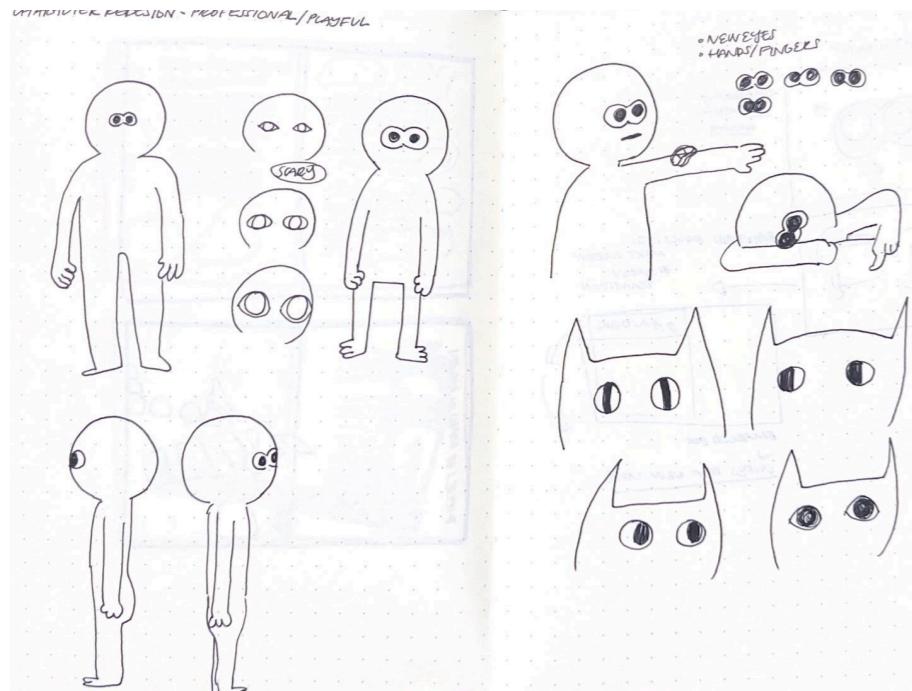
Concept Development



During the concept development phase I spent most of my time gathering visual precedents that I saw fit for my vision. The two common denominators of graphics that I found to be useful, included flat illustration that relied on gradients and texture such as noise/grain.

When beginning the ideation process, I did most of the work in my notebook. Here, I began establishing the concepts and metaphors that I wanted to instil in the animation. Pain was personified into a misunderstood monster, whereas the person who experiences pain is a blue humanoid character.

Concept Development

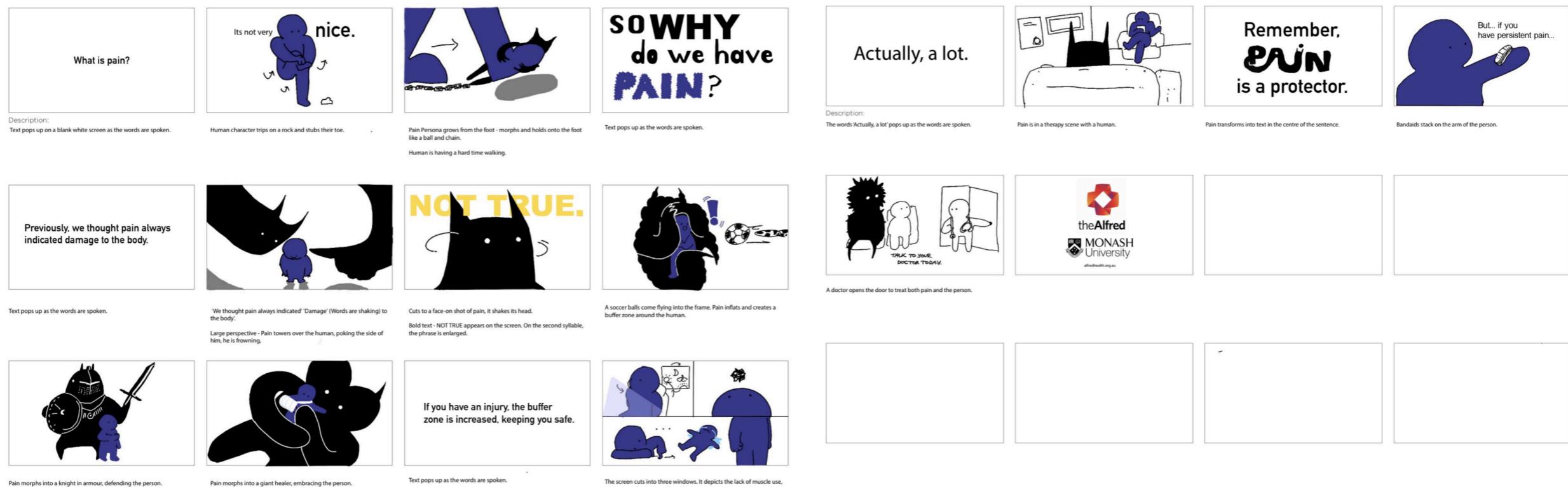


In the later stages of concept development, I was able to sketch up a turn-around of the character that I call "Blue". Rather than sticking with simplistic black dots for eyes, I gave the character visible eyeballs. This allowed me to enhance facial expressions, where I was able to actually animate the eyes to either look around or well up with tears.

The character iterations for "Pain" were quite limited and remained simplistic while having a stronger character concept. "Pain" would be able to morph into different things - for example: a buffer zone, a protector, and a healer. These were all visualised differently.

Storyboard

Project Title: What is Pain? The Alfred Hospital
Duration: 1:00 minute
Storyboard by: Cathy Ma
Page number: 1



The storyboard was the first requirement for milestone one. This meant that it was the earliest task that we needed to complete. My storyboard was illustrated on Procreate and edited on InDesign to add text. I kept it fairly simple with a good balance of plain text and visual frames.

The constructive feedback that I received during consultations were to add depth to the characters as they were flat, as well as avoid keeping backgrounds to be purely white. Some suggestions that I took of note that day, included adding animated backgrounds and simple gradients - of which I later implemented.

Styleframes



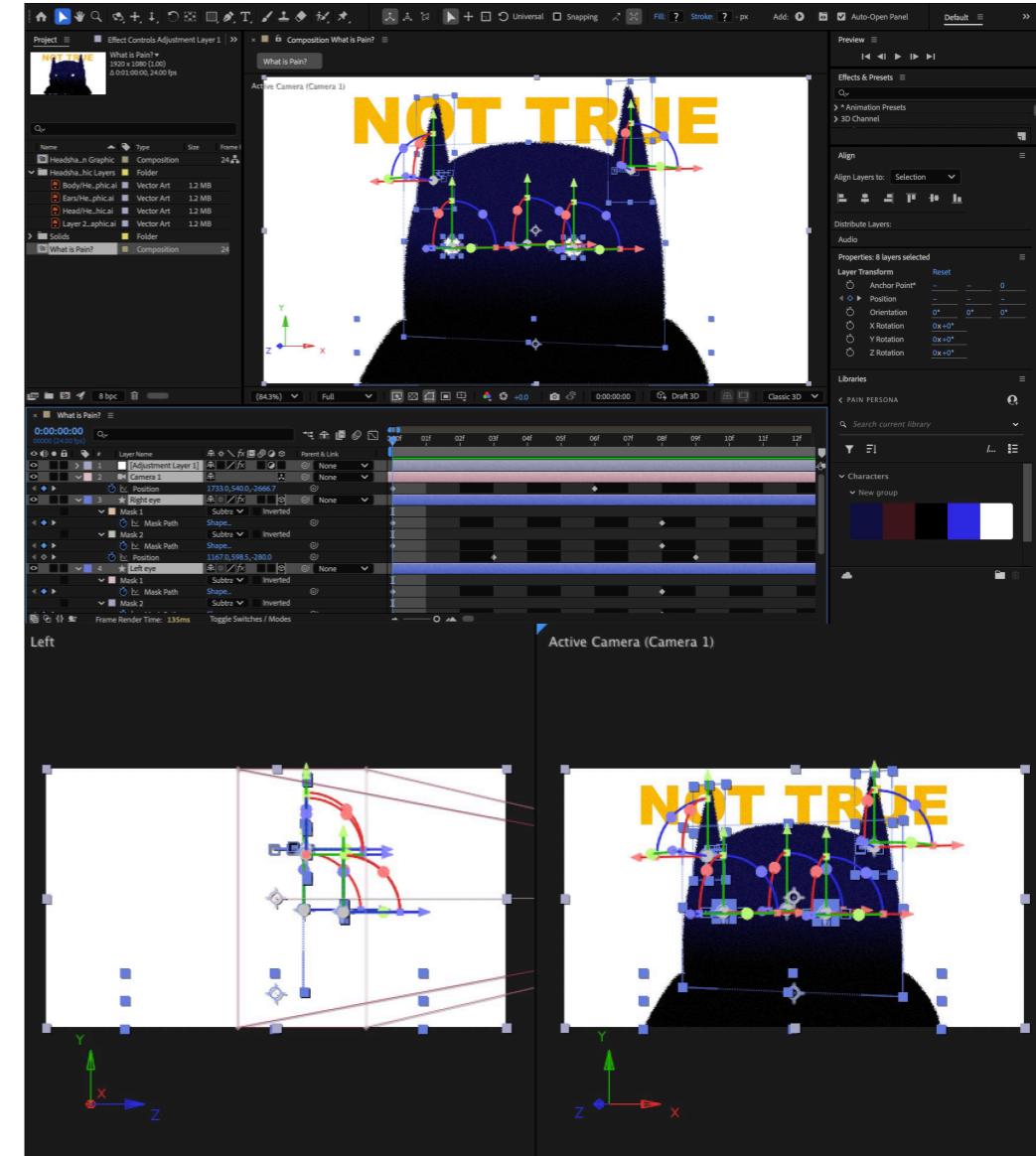
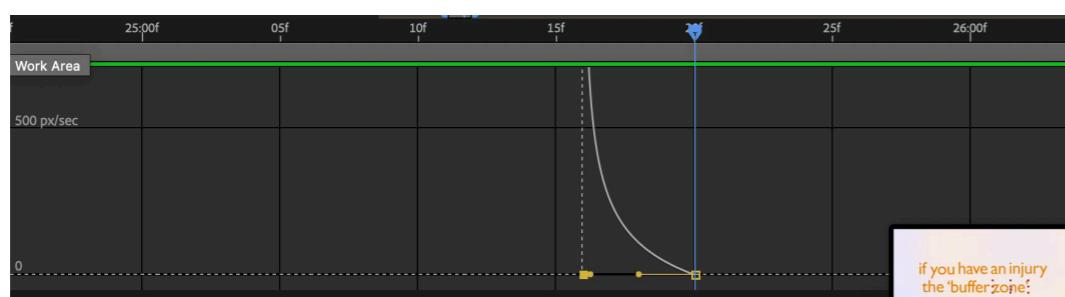
NOT TRUE



The initial styleframes still remained in the simplistic style of dots for eyes, and a sketchy/doodle vibe. However, when progressing with my work I decided to pivot into a different visual aesthetic. I wanted to attempt cleaner graphics to maintain a slight sense of professionalism in my animation.

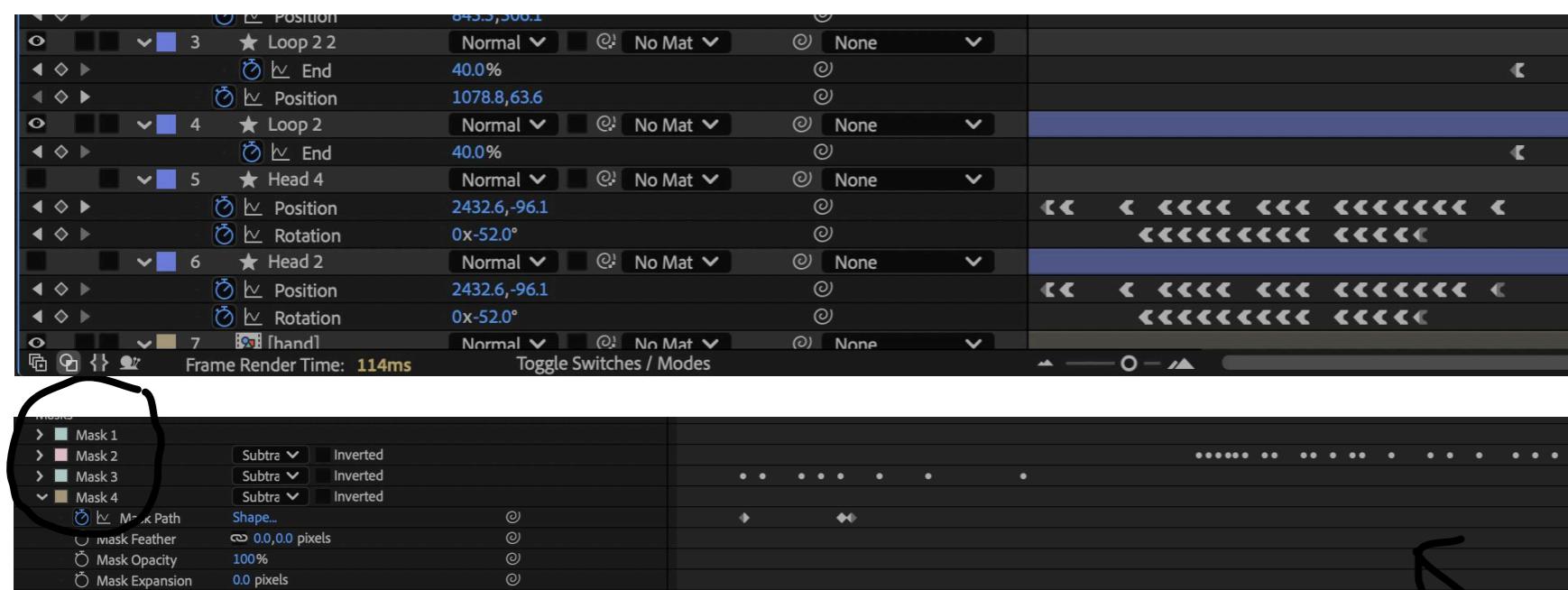
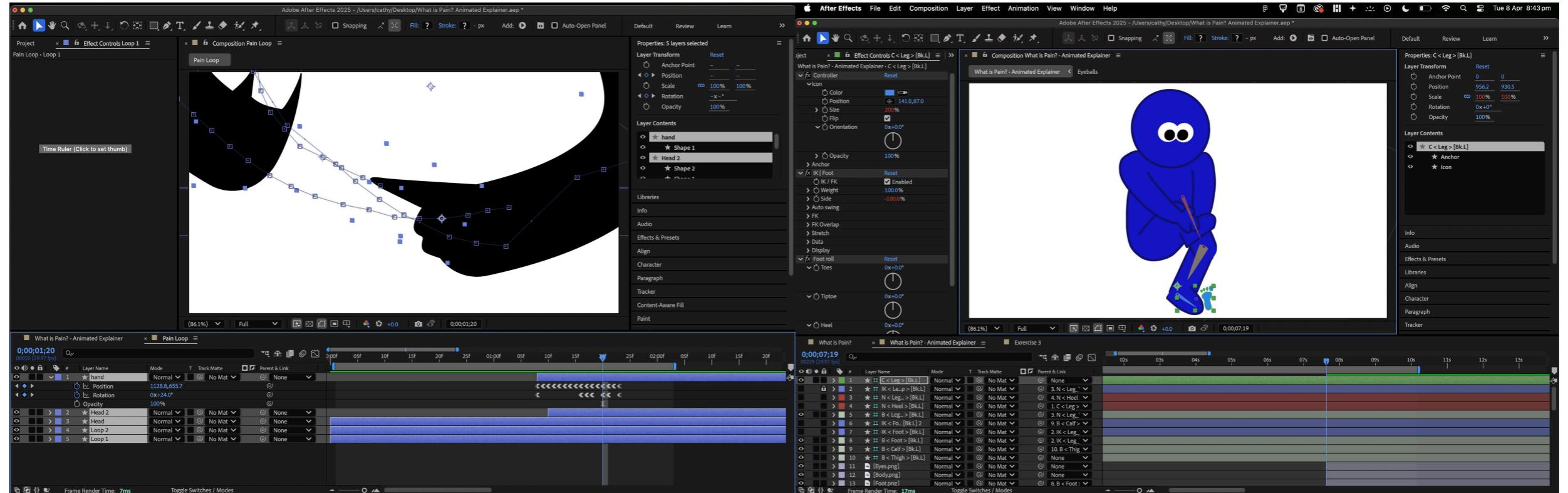
For my first assignment of motion graphics I relied heavily on Procreate to hand draw. For this project, I practised my skills on Adobe Illustrator and Adobe After effects to realise my visual ideas. You can see the strongest sense of comparison in the before and after of these styleframes.

Editing



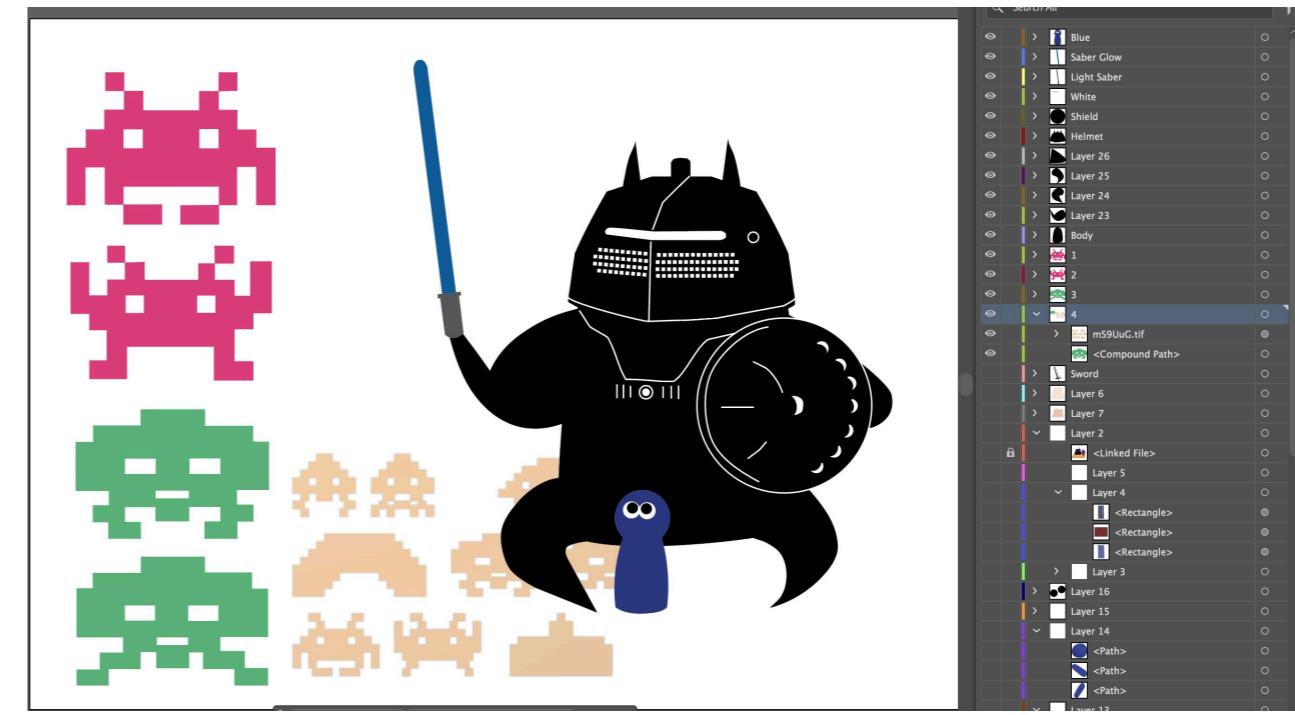
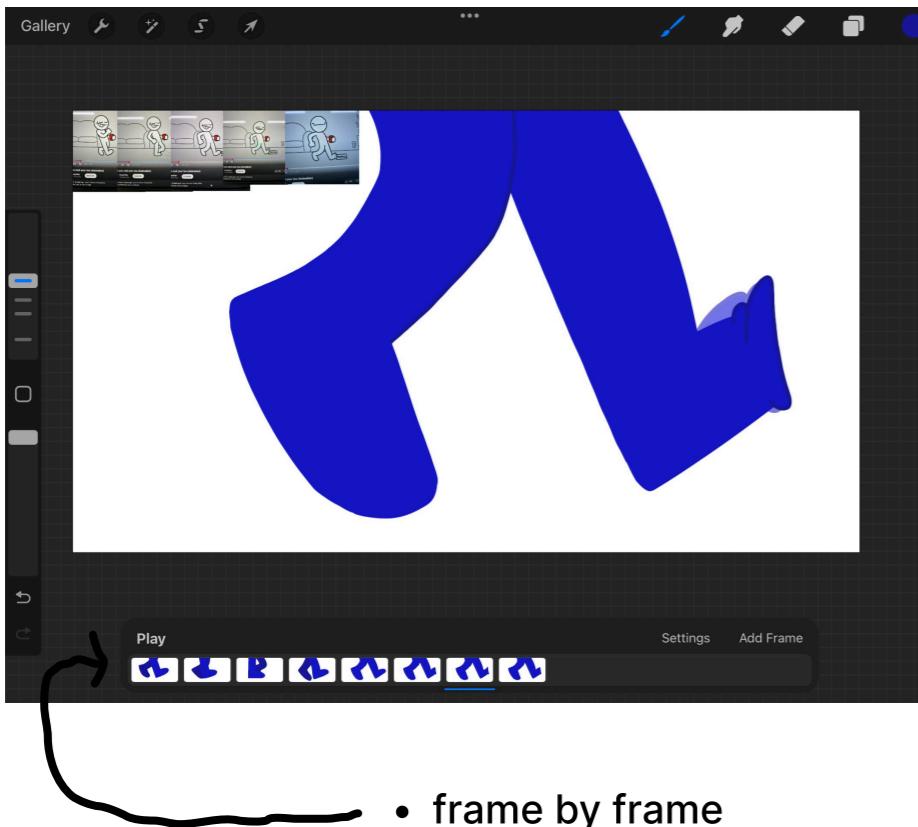
I learnt a lot during the editing phase of this project. To make text appear less cut and dry, I worked with using graphs to ensure smoothness of text animations. I also was able to explore the use of 3D animation in AE when animating a head-shaking scene. I also repetitively used layer styles and fx to add grain, noise, and turbulence. Most used included gradient overlay and roughen edges.

Animating/Graphics



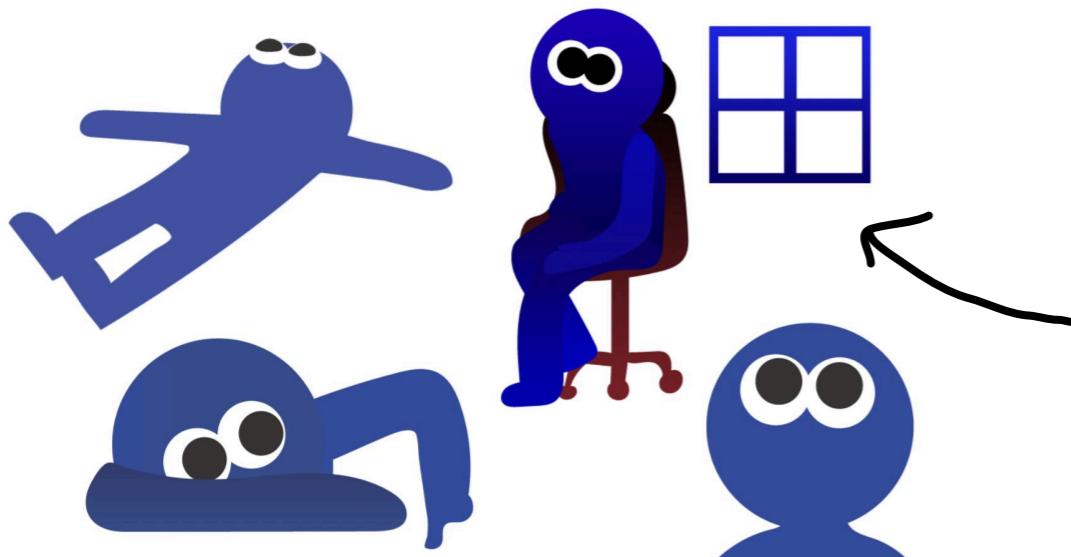
Animating the loop scene was difficult to figure out. To do this I had to create two different bodies, as well as the head and hand. To keep the end of the head stuck onto the loop, I created multiple position keyframes following it. The loop itself was created by creating a stroke, adding a trim path and then editing its start/end/offset options. The mask was created to reveal text as the character looped around the screen.

Illustrating Graphics



- frame by frame
- key-frames from reference & then adding in-between frames

- Most graphics were illustrated and animated within Adobe Softwares. This included Adobe Illustrator using the pencil/pen tool, and then later animated in After Effects using the technique of key-framing or the puppet-pin tool.



- Where hand animation was necessary, I used animation assist in Procreate. These were done using an iPad and Apple pencil.
- Adding a gradient overlay to the illustrations to saturate the colours. Transferring files over from Adobe Illustrator changes the colours.

Conclusion

While there are some scenes and animations that I am satisfied with at the end of this project, there is a lot more that I would redo if I had more time.

Despite maintaining a more cartoon-ish visual identity for this animated explainer, next time I want to be able to create something completely different. Though it did fit the voice-over of this particular animated explainer, I want to attempt to create something that is less catered towards children. On a more positive note, I have learnt many functions of AE that have advanced from the last motion graphics assignment. This included using the 3D camera, new expressions, layer styles, as well as animating simple backgrounds. I also found it hard to find a backing track that fit the essence of the film, but didn't overpower the voice-over.

I ended up using a track from UpBeat titled 'Puzzle Pieces' by Albert Behar.

Music from #Upbeat (free for Creators!):

<https://upbeat.io/t/albert-behar/puzzle-pieces>

License code: EWNTBSSGOZTGJWWQ

This assignment has once again taught me the importance of time management, and making decisions on the creative direction of an animation's visual identity.