

bodyjacking

ボーディー・ジヤッキング

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Sacramento, California, USA

H-AIR Proposal

About the Project:

"Bodyjacking" is a short animated film that follows two lives intertwined across time through a chance encounter.

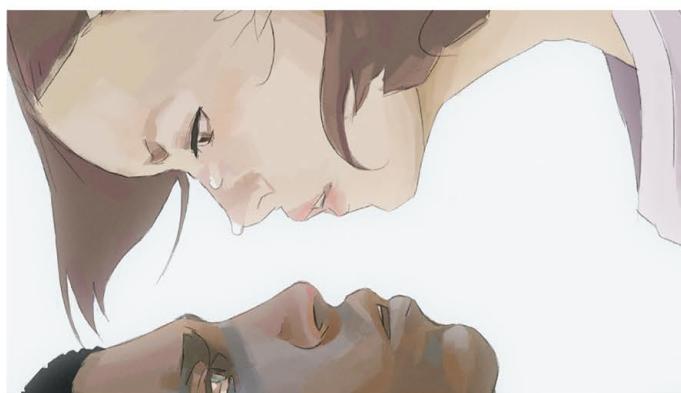
The film's tagline is: "Dedicated to everyone who never met."

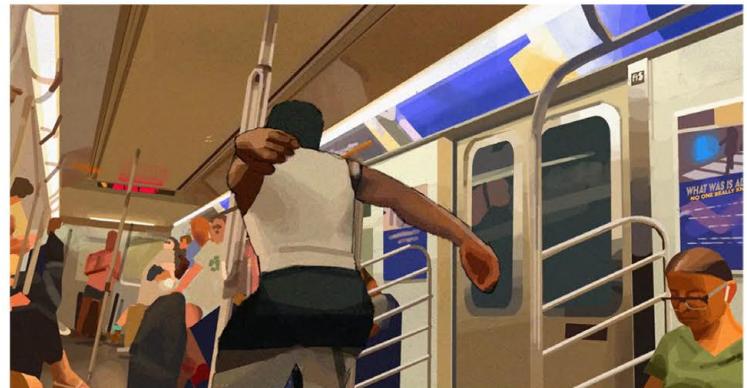
On its surface, the film presents itself as a story about a missed connection, but at its core, its theme is deeper: Purpose.

What if you were confronted with a purpose you didn't know you had, but it slipped away in the same instant? Would that fleeting moment follow you for the rest of your life? What about your next life, or the one after that?

The story revolves around two characters who are tied to one another only by a memory of having met accidentally in a different life, and the conditions which lead them both to remember their chance encounter with every passing life. Memories fade with the passage of life and the trauma of death and rebirth, but these two characters are inevitably reunited in the end. The story's throughline is the obsession either character has with their vague memories of having met the other somewhere in the past, and the ways that they express the impression these memories leave on them unintentionally become the influences that draw them back together during the climax. The reveal of the story is that these two characters were once a single consciousness, having been split in half somewhere along the way. In this way the concept is analogous to the idea of "losing sight of oneself," or the sacrificing of self that we all do throughout our lives, as age complicates our egos. The story proposes that one can never truly lose sight of oneself, and who one is will always find them.

The film is animated traditionally, in 2D, and incorporates a specific hand-painted semi-realistic look that I have been developing for several years. Following are some examples of fully realized concept art that depict the film's 2D animated style:

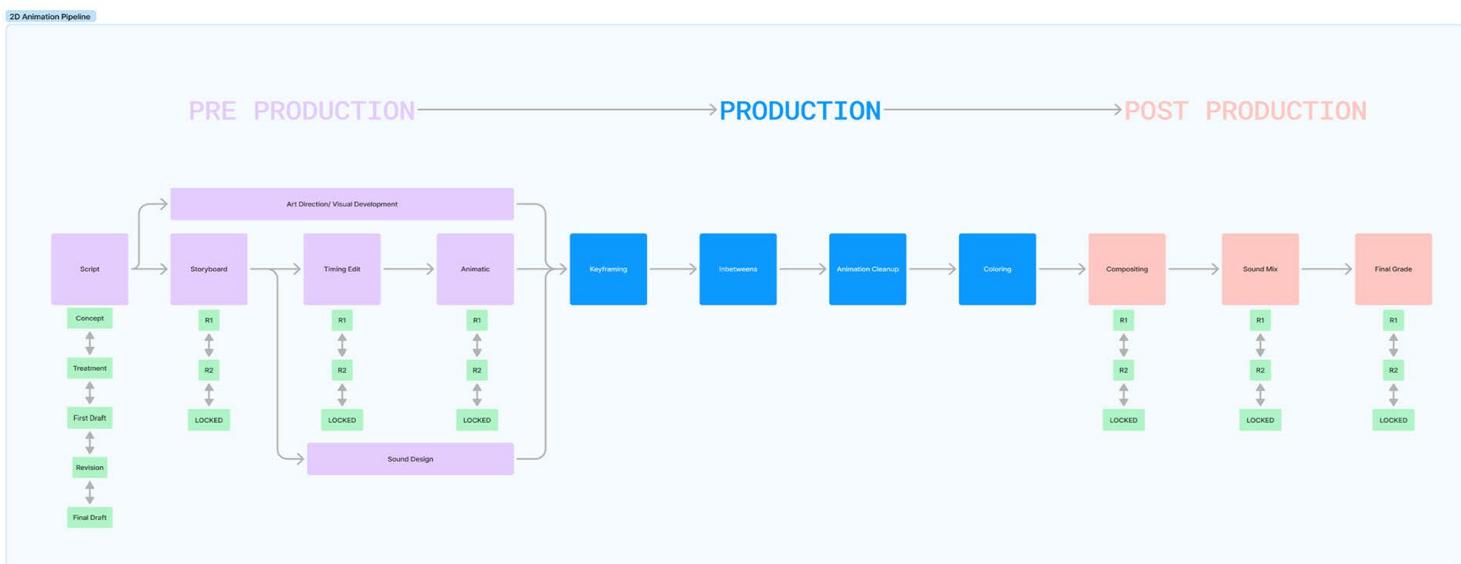




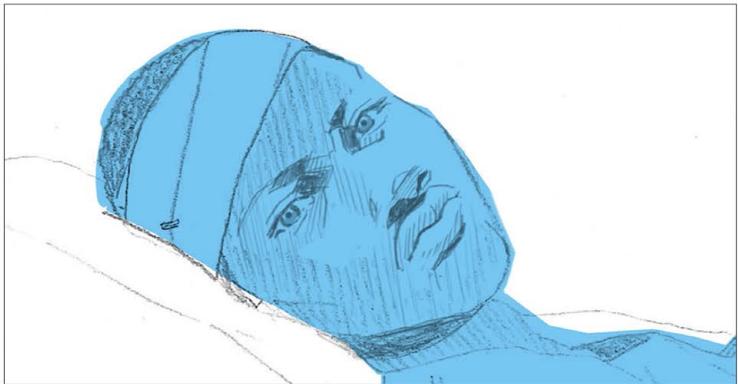
Examples of this style in motion I've been developing can be seen at www.dogsbarking.net or on instagram.com/ddogsbarking

As an animator I have so far had the opportunity to work on a variety of commercial projects, including content for Netflix, Nickelodeon, as well as a joint US/Japanese educational series by Yoshimoto Kogyo and Austin Community College, and so this project is meaningful to me as my first foray into using what I've learned through contract work to develop something that is uniquely my own with the hopes of entering it into festivals and seeking further expansion in the form of a feature length movie or OVA.

The production process for this film follows a specific pipeline:



Currently this film is near the end of the Pre-Production phase, and entering into the Production phase. Some stills from the rough animatic follow:



The Importance of Work Abroad:

This story deals with many different lives and locations, and as such, I've spent considerable time trying to expose myself to as many different people and places as I can while writing it, in order to serve the script. One important aspect of the film is the wide array of perspectives and cultures represented in it. These 2 main characters' lives span the globe and further, and a key to the effectiveness of the story is the accurate depictions of two lives that at times couldn't be further apart, so that their eventual reunion is that much more impactful to a viewer.

I feel that the story cannot be accurately representative without immersion and research into locations and situations. For example, the first main story beat in the film takes place in Chicago, Illinois, USA, near the end of the Vietnam war, and includes a historically inspired depiction of a protest in which a member of the Brown Berets, a historic Chicano organization, is present. I have spent considerable time in Chicago both researching similar events and capturing reference imagery of the city and neighborhoods where these events are set, and this firsthand experience of the location has helped shape both the aesthetic of the work as well as the direction of the script. I'd like to do the same in Hiroshima.

One of the iterations of the main character in this film is an everyman who leads a quiet life with his partner in a medium sized city. While his story plays out, his counterpart is living a completely different life in a similar sized town across the globe, in a different era. The effect I want this part of the story to have on an audience is to illustrate a similarity between the two characters, despite their many differences, and so I'd like to set this part of the story in a city like Hiroshima, to counter the setting of Austin, Texas, USA where the other side of this scene takes place.

If Accepted Into the Program:

If accepted into the program, I plan to use a majority of my time working directly on the

animation production for this project. There is a large degree of drawing and painting that needs to be done, and having a dedicated period of time to work is something that I don't often get. This residency would allow me to focus solely on the project at hand, in an environment conducive to the work. This residency would also allow me the exposure to valuable first hand reference material for setting and imagery, similar to the time I spent in Chicago, planning this project.



"The Commuter"



"The Brown Beret"

I have visited Hiroshima once before, for one day in 2023, playing at a live venue with a band, and I felt an unmatched connection to the area. I spent 14 days in a different Japanese city each day while on tour, and Hiroshima and Yamaguchi prefectures left by far the biggest impression on me. I made more friends in this area than anywhere else, and Hiroshima city strikes me as the perfect place to spend time working on a project about people. Ever since I left, I've wanted to get back as soon as possible, and the H-AIR program would be an opportunity for me to become more involved with a community I already feel drawn to, and to do so in the context of animation no less. This residency seems indescribably rewarding to me for both of these reasons.

Aside from the credits that would be given to the city and the animation program in helping produce this film, I feel that the main way my participation in the program could benefit the city of Hiroshima is my willingness to engage with the community and to work with the program in whatever capacity I am needed. Participating in events related to the Hiroshima Animation Festival is something I look especially forward to, and if accepted, I would be very eager to learn more about how I could do my part to benefit the program and the festival on a day to day basis during my stay.

My interest in animation has led me to meet some talented artists, but most of this interaction has been virtual. Getting the opportunity to meet other animators or those who are interested in animation in person would be very valuable to me and current and future projects. I feel that being able to share some of the animation processes that I am knowledgeable about and have been developing would be highly rewarding, and to work with other artists and students to teach as well as learn would benefit both myself and my work to a high degree. To be able to meet and work alongside other animators would undoubtedly help me to improve my craft in a fundamental way, while also sharing what I know. No project is a single handed effort, and this project would benefit immensely from an experience like H-AIR.

Thank you for your time.