

THE RANCH



Final Presentation

Luke Widing

Concept

What: Adult oriented 3D animated horror short using a largely unseen monster, focusing on environment and sound.

How: 3D modeling & animation and rendering using Maya.

Texturing in Substance Painter & Photoshop. Rotoscoping done in Adobe Animate, After effects used for compositing the final product.

Thesis

Animated horror allows for visualizing unknown fears & total control of the project's internal world. Animation's multimedia capacity is often underutilized, I aim to create a short that uses its potential to enhance the story.

Logline / Synopsis

- After unknowingly freeing a vengeful spirit, Gary finds himself cornered after the newly freed entity takes the Ranch's prized mare.
- Gary is watching over his Uncle's ranch over the winter when he unknowingly incurs the wrath of a vengeful spirit by chopping a tree for firewood. The spirit then begins stalking Gary from the woods, who begins to turn to alcohol as a means of calming himself. This results in him leaving the stable doors open one night, and the spirit takes Daisy into the woods. Realizing she's missing, Gary searches for her before the spirit taunts him with the horse. In the end, Gary willingly goes into the woods, playing right into the spirit's hands.

Look Inspo / Moodboard



Animated Inspiration



Tone, shot composition



Black and white 3D / 2D
hybrid



Rotoscoping

Style Frame A



Style Frame B



Style frame C



MidJourney AI Concepting

MidJourney AI Art Generator was used for initial concepting of the Evil Tree, as the loose, flowy quality AI art tends to have fit well with the goal of creating an organic, tendrilly tree. Even with this in mind, it took ~30mins of prompting in order to produce an acceptable result.





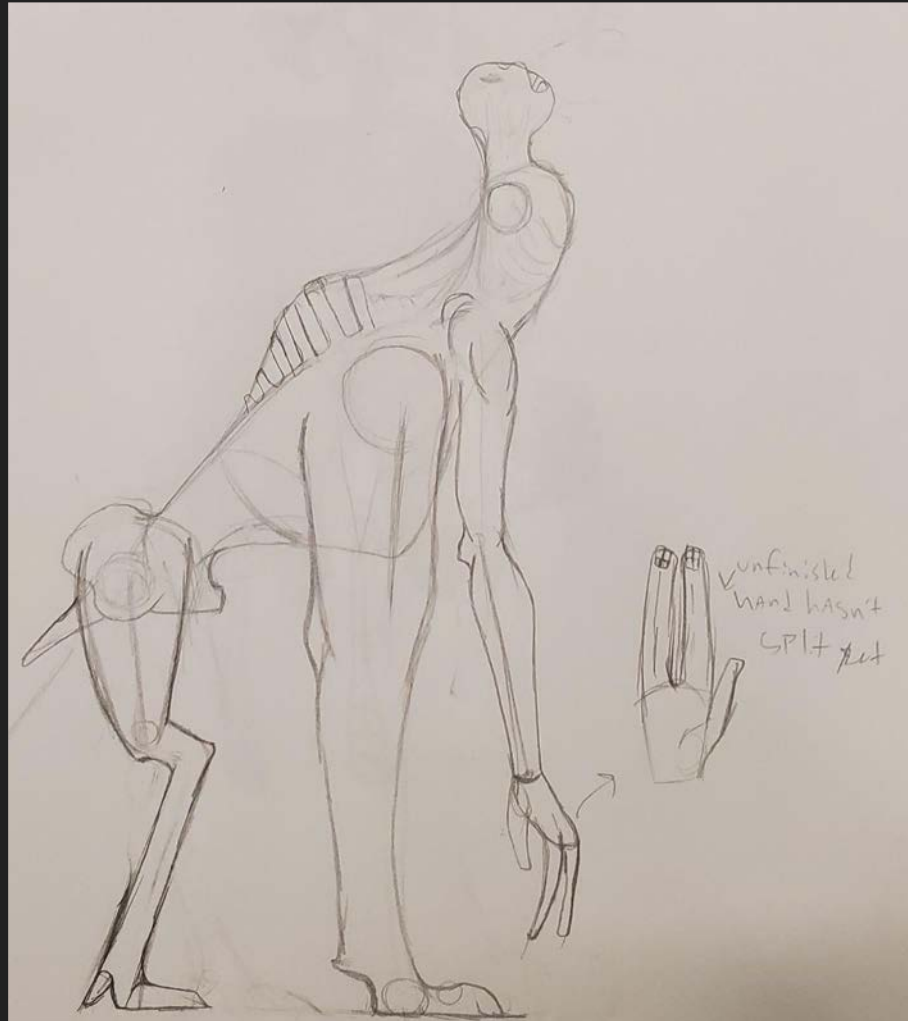






Spirit Concept A

Initial design based off the spirit as a shapeshifting beast, with multiple unfinished transformations throughout the body. Decided against this concept due to complexity, number of limbs and because the story's direction didn't fit with a design like this.



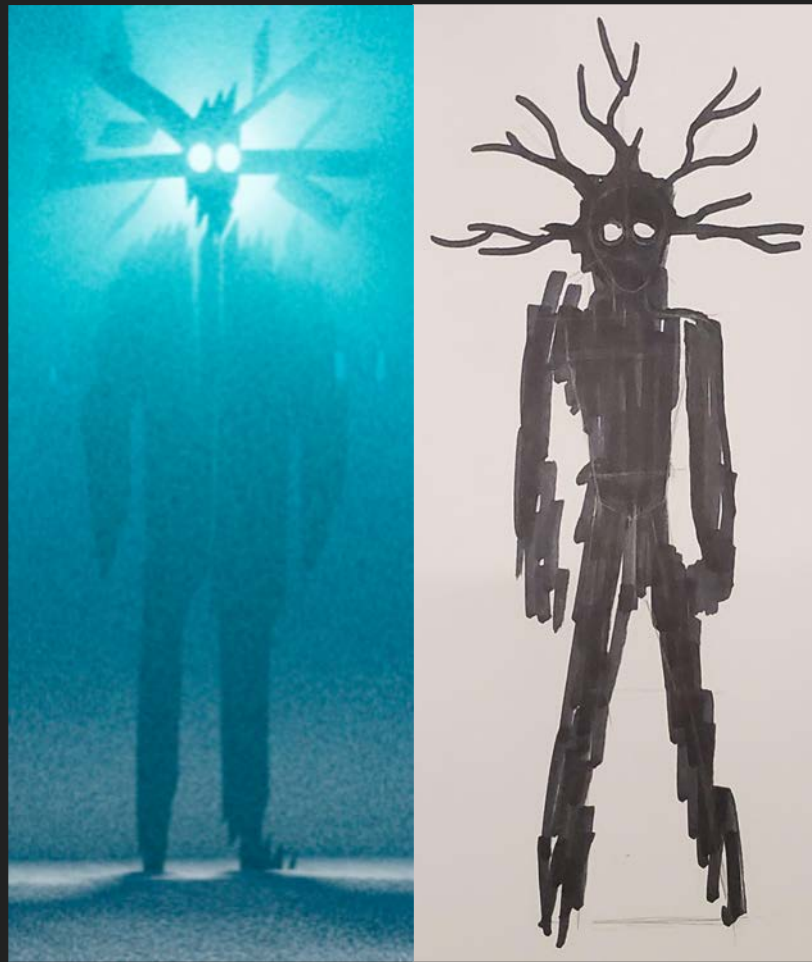
Spirit Concept B

Concept that treated the spirit as a smoky mass around bones. Would have been fully modeled & rigged. Decided against this design once I figured out how I wanted to make the spirit feel otherworldly via rotoscoping instead of sticking myself in particle and render time hell.



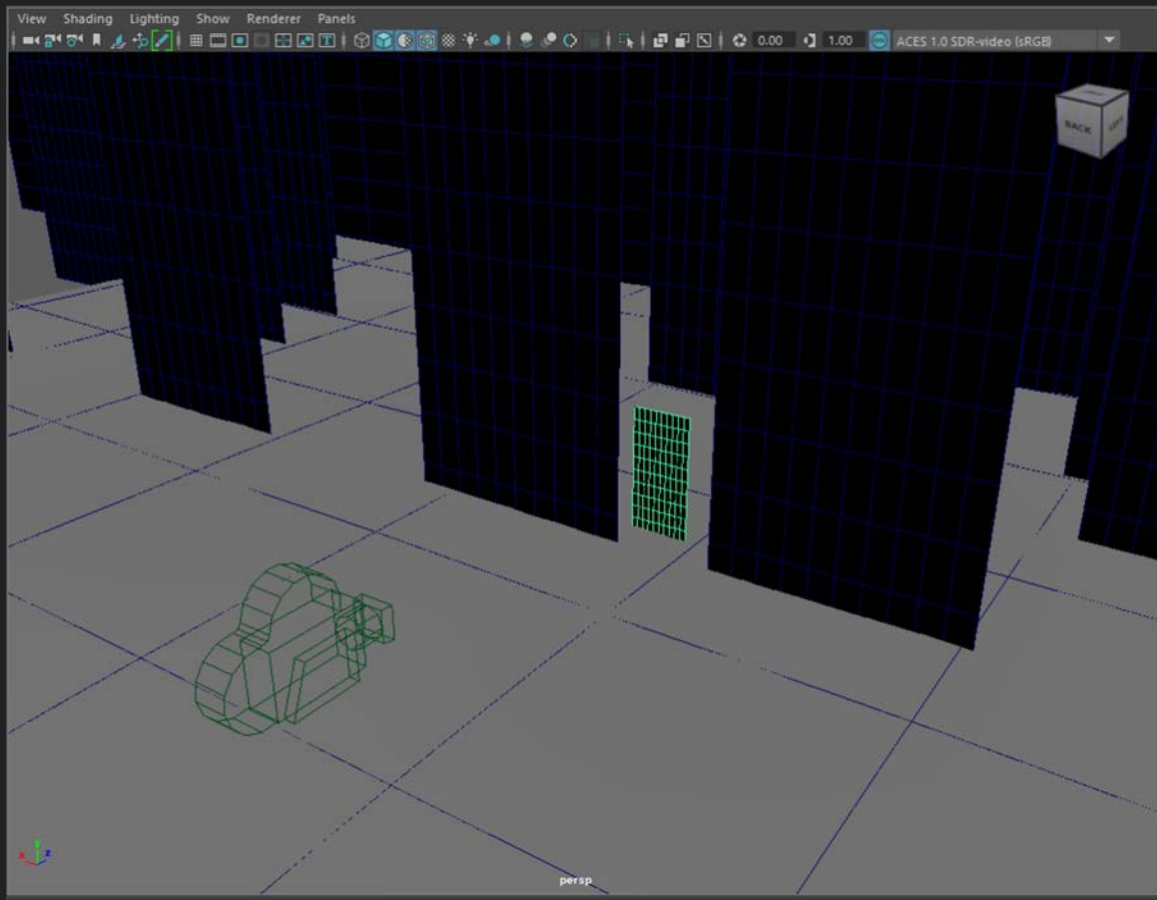
Spirit Concept C (final)

Concept treating spirit as a 'Shadow person'. Design kept simple to allow quick rotoscoping, while constructing the body out of a series of vertical strokes as opposed to a more defined form. Large, glowing eyes keep spirit visible even at long distances in dark shots.



Mixing Mediums

In order to get a 2D character in a 3D space some tricks were necessary. The spirit is a flat card with a bright light directly behind it. The spirit is animated in such a way that it is always directly facing the camera. Keeping the illusion intact.



Spirit Comp Test



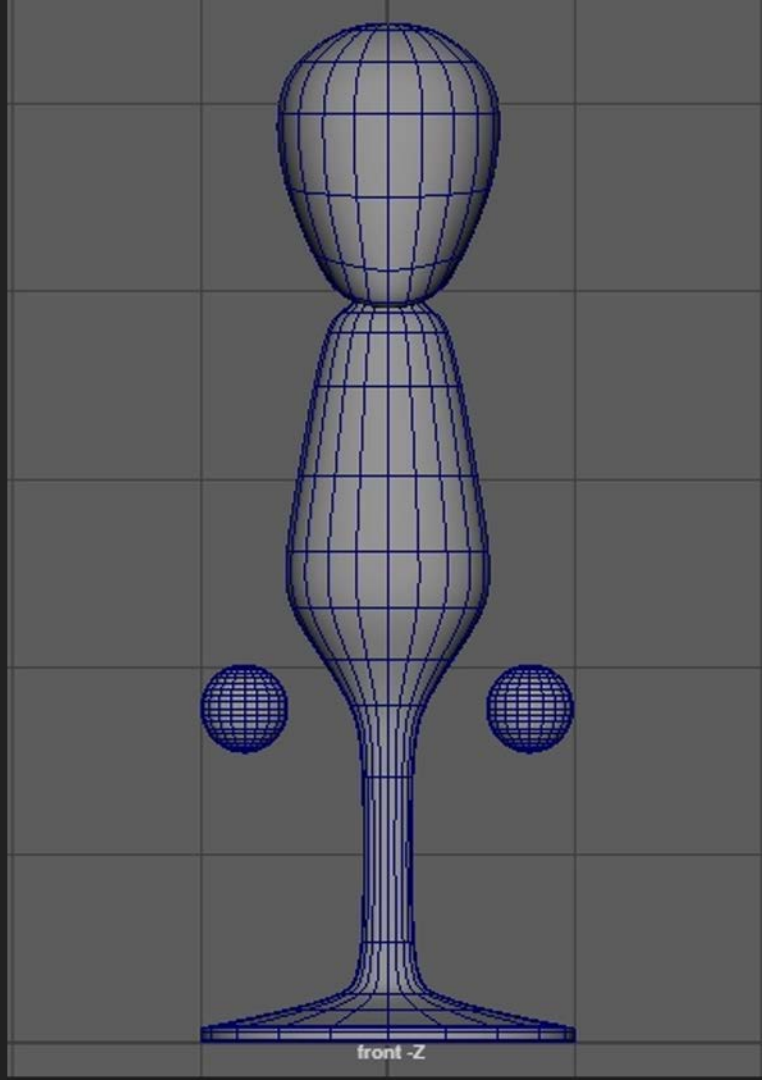
Gary Concept A

Initial concept for Gary as a fully modeled, rigged, and textured character. Scrapped early on for time, since I wanted to focus on environments over characters in terms of modeling.



Gary Concept B

Second iteration attempting to simplify Gary's design to allow for ease of rigging and animation. Scrapped because the pawn/game piece shape wasn't working with the tone of the short.



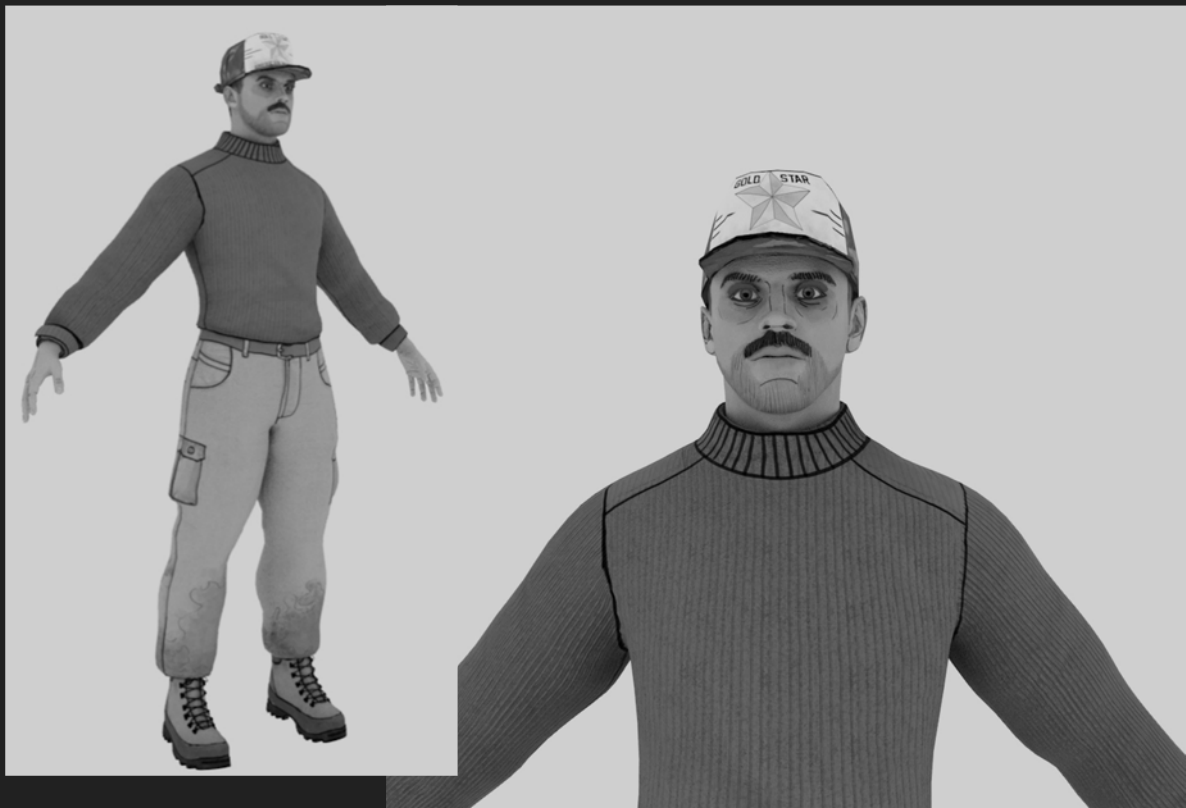
Gary Concept C

Third iteration of Gary's design, using a premade model that I retextured to be in line with the look and feel of the short. Scrapped due to rigging issue.



Gary Concept D (final)

Fourth and final iteration of Gary. Another premade rig made for VR/games purchased online using modified textures.



Daisy

Premade horse rig found in CIA Resource Bin using modified textures.

Special care had to be taken when animating the rig due to its age.



Color Script



Thank You