Production

Design Assesment

Module

3D Production Deseign and Animation

Assignment Title:
Art is Real Sorcery

Julia Bronowska

Ross Stewart

Artist Reserch

Studying Ross Stewards work is an essential step to ensure my own project is successful. Understanding how an artist's style can influence the final outcome of a scene or character made me think of the overall end goal while I worked. Looking at his concept art and work on movies like Wolf walkers helped me get a better understanding of the creative process of production design. This will be useful to me later on as it helped me to plan out what I should be studying and focusing on early and what to develop later.

I chose this artist as he has a fantastic understanding of shapes and composition, evident in his personal and concept art. I can learn a lot from the way they create. Their storytelling ability can translate really well into 3D cameras and setting. This will help me establish a believable scene later.

Info on artist

Ross Stewart, an Irish painter and illustrator most well known for his work in concept design and art direction.

You may recognise his work from films such as “ParaNorman”, “The secret of Kells” and “Song of the Sea”.

Most recently he has co-directed the animated film “WolfWalkers” with Tomm Moore, which I will discuss later.

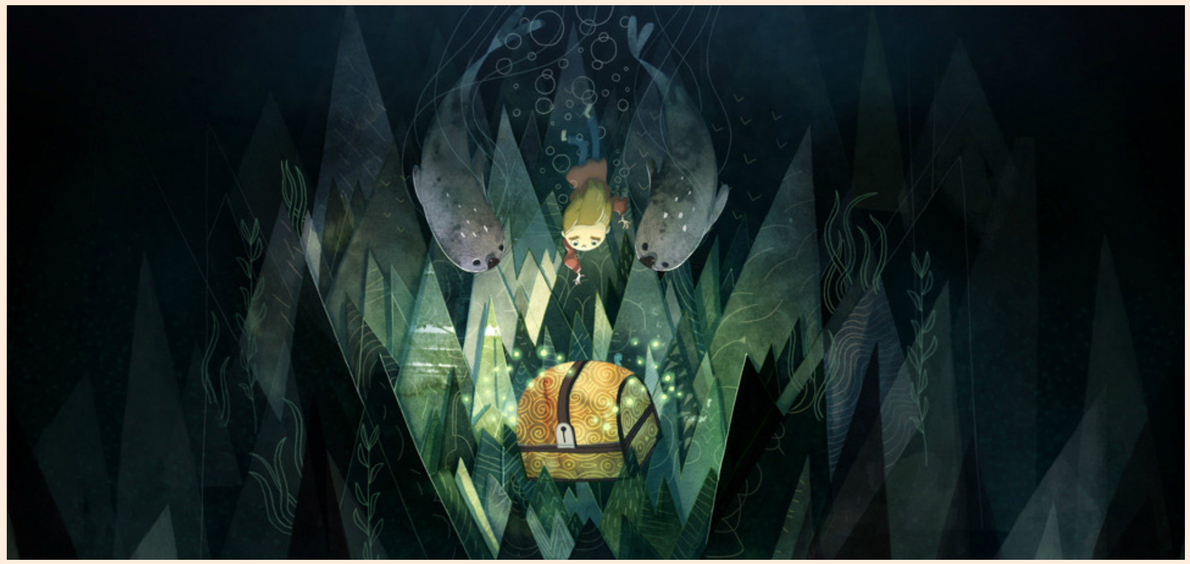


His art is semi abstract and geometric in nature. He has an innate ability to create the illusion of depth and perspective with flat shapes. It always shows an incredible understanding of visual hierarchy and storytelling, guiding the viewer through the image in an interesting way.

He focuses on mood and tone in his work expressed through layout and colour choices, along with creative, strong, lighting. An abundance of textures and noise is apparent in his work to create a lively image and bring the art to life.

A favorite example of his work would be his treasure chest painting. The focus is on the chest at the bottom of the sea, emanating a glow while the edges of the page remain darker. This makes the viewer immediately look at the main subject of the drawing as well as evoke a feeling of pressure or fear because of the looming darkness and spikes around the chest. The gradient of light fades upwards towards the girl with the brightest part of the image exactly where the girl’s hand is. This shows the dramatic story in just one image.







ParaNorman Concept Art

His work on Paranornamn was interstign to me as it had a dtraticly different tone to his art work with a more creepy and horror orientated story.

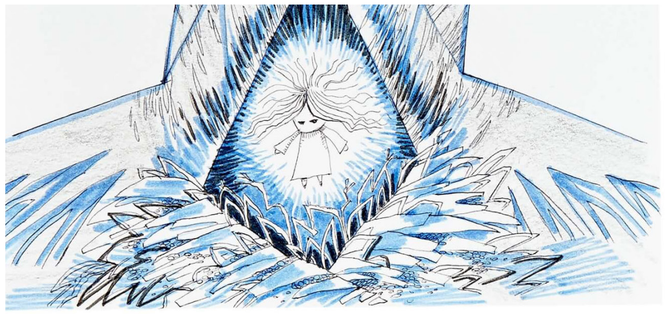


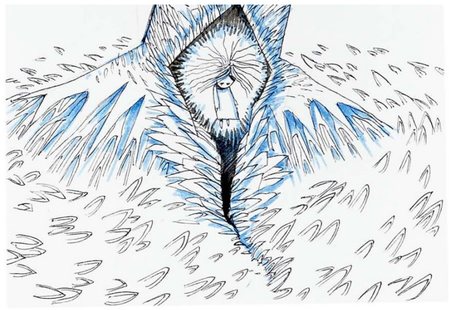




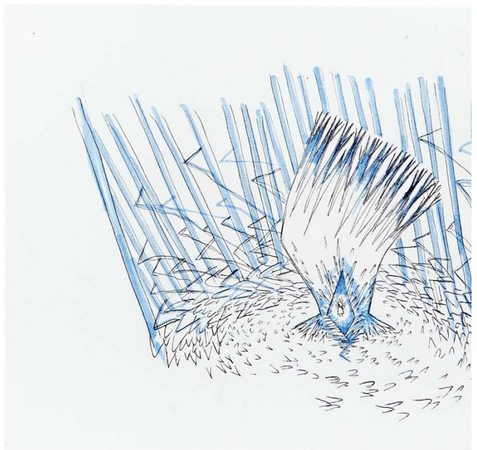
I wanted to include this art as it shows some interior and building concepts in an angular and stylised way. Every line seems deliberate and sharp. For example, with the tree concept, the hash lines all point inwards towards the focus point of the scene.

The art for the interior of Normans house really shows he was thinking of how the acne would translate to a movie. The banister of the house cuts up the frame and makes you feel like you are following the stairs down or looking down from the top from the perspective of a child.









Wolf Walkers

Here I have decided to take a more indepth look at how Ross Steward translate his work into a moving image and further understand his process using Wolf Walkers

This was aniniamted fillm directed by Ross Stewart and Thomm Moore relaeased in December 2020 and was part of A “Irsih Folklore Trilogy” linked toThe secret of Kells and Song of the Sea.

Overview

The movie “Wolf Walkers” is a compelling story about two girls going against everything they know in the name of friendship. Robyn, an apprentice huntress, is set on helping her father rid the forest of wolves. Mehb, a feral girl rumoured to have the ability to transform into a wolf at night . The unlikely pair befriend each other but the rules of Robyn’s society keep them apart. Her city is plagued with fear and superstition of the wolf walkers, thinking anything untamed savage/ evil and anything magical to be the devils’ work on earth. These ideals were imposed by The Lord Protector, ruler of the city, a strictly religious man who justifies his vile actions against nature as “the Lord’s work”. The two girls must fight against the city’s oppressive system in order to save Mehbs mother who has been missing for some time.

Context

The story is set in Ireland in 1650 when the religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants was tenses. In addition to this any mention of Pagain ideals or practices was considered sinful and anything that could be called magic was considered witchcraft and silenced .

This is important as this idea of following strict rules and fitting into society or risk being thrown out of it is a huge theme in the movie. The idea that anything natural is there to be tamed or belongs to humans is also a big part of the main villain’s mindset, based off of Oliver Cromwell and how he took over the natural landscape of ireland.

Oliver Cromwell’s conquest is largely to blame for the extinction of wolves in Ireland, having hunted them and transformed natural lands into towns and farmland. This also resulted in the local folklore surrounding wolves to fade away too. This one main reason the movie was created, to bring lost Irish Folklore back to light.

Visuals and Effect

The movie overall is beautiful and every scene looks like a painting. They were very creative with the layout of their shots, for example the marching scene when the soldier switched from parallel to matching towards the viewer. Everything seemed flat like every person was made of paper and it created an incredible effect like a storybook come to life.

There is a theme of finding similarities in your opposite, the way their situations reflect each other, for example the mother and Robin, both in cages. One by society and her expectations as a woman, the other as an abomination and an unwanted creature. Both are shunned by society because of her beliefs. Contrast and conflict is a common theme throughout the film, the Forest and the City are a good visual example of this.

The City

The city and its rules are designed to be a cage for both the girls in different ways. This idea translates well into how the city was designed; Shap, parallel lines, orderly and structured get slightly unsettling or tilted in places.

This was inspired by woodcut prints from the 1650s, German Expressionism. The style really shows through and adds a lot to the meaning of the city itself.







The Forest

The forest is much more colourful and unruly yet beautiful. The natural chaos it depicted with large curved lines and a mix of smooth and sketchy organic lines. Even the animals move smoothly in the ways they are animated. They curve and bound, showing their free nature in contrast to the machine like movement of the city environment.











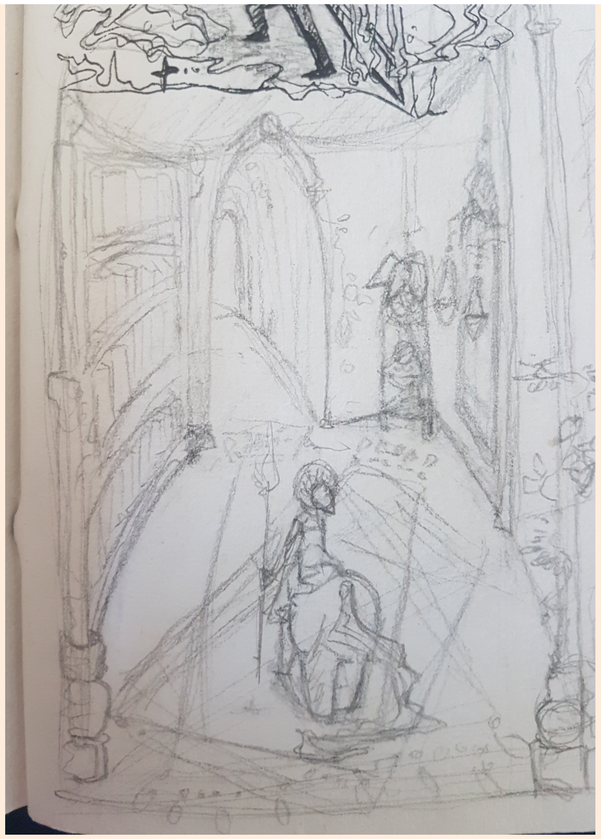


Class Task

Settings + scene

In class, we were tasked with a collaborative exercise. We were asked to create a simple scene with setting and cameras in mind. We then swapped sketches with another student and developed their work further, adding lighting, annotating what might be animated, incorporating story and so on.
I feel this taks helped me to see how I should go about developing my own work and how a sketch or an idea can change into a more fleshed out story in an image.

The following are some of my work from the class

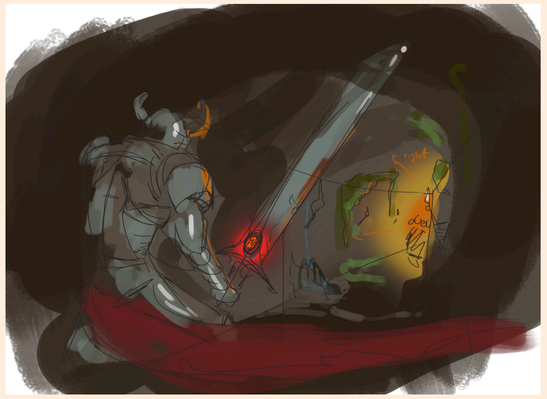


This was my contribution to the class. A library scene with a centaur witch exploring it.

I like the way I curved the shelves and walls creating a fish eye effect and making the corridor seem longer.

I tried to suggest the idea of plants and fine details on the wooden shelving

Hallway conflict

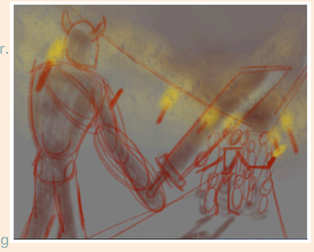


I took the origional concpet and pushed it firther, curving the coridor to creat a more dramtic prespective and elongate the corridor.

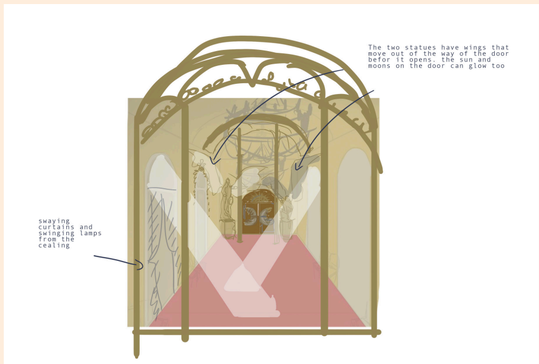
I also moved the thretenif mob further back, as i feel the suggestion of a threat cretes more aniticipation and interest,

il bent the chracter dowm more and moved his leg out for ballence. I wannted them to seem more tired as if they have been fighting or running a while .

I also removed the torches and made the main light sorce come from down the ocrridor. i feel this could build anticipation as the light comes round the corrner



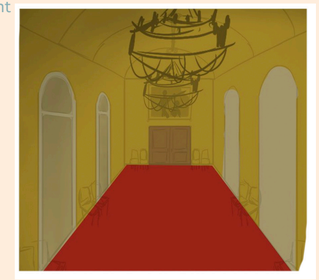
Ballroom



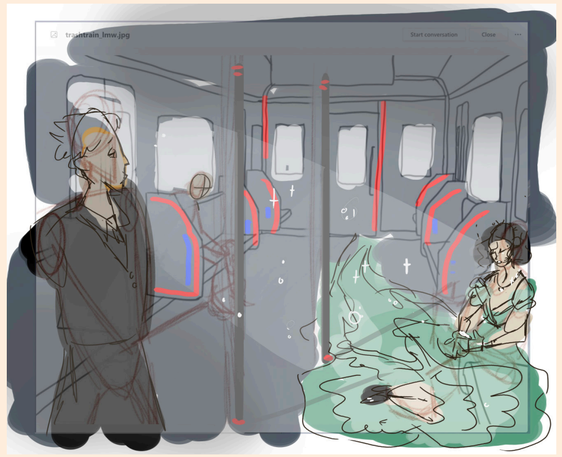
Here i tried implementing lighting coming from the widnows in beems for an elegant effect.

I also broke up the large celing with ornate collumbs and arches to make the space seem more reigale.

Thinking of potetnial aniamtion in the scene, I included two winged statues guarding the door that move thier wings out of the way and megr with the wall when the door is opened. They seem to fit well as they feel grand and woudl add extra detiel to the scene.



Train Carrage

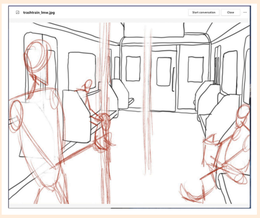


I loved well ballenced chrvater placent in the orgigional and decided to devlop it further by including a narative or suggest a story

the two on the left seem to be looking at the right figure, so i decided to make them apoint of interest. A woman wearing a large, fancy dress in a busy train.

the light from the windowss could be flashing acros sher as the train moves to make her dress glitter.

sl created a small narative linked ot the ball-room scene. Prehaps she is late to the ball and took the train, or she is runing away from the party.



Assesment

Kiki's Room

"Gracious sakes! Why didn't you tell me?! We have a room—it's upstairs in the flour storehouse. It's small, but there's a bed, and even a sink."

"Really! Do you mean it?"

Kiki almost crushed Jiji in relief.

"If you don't like it, you can look for something better tomorrow."

"Oh no! I wouldn't think of it. Oh, I'm very grateful. I . . . actually, I didn't know what to do. Are, are you sure it's all right? You know, I'm a witch. And I don't think the people in this town like witches very much," Kiki began to feel misery creep up on her again.

"I told you, you're delightful! And *I* like you. Now you just relax. Actually, I'll bet there's even something special about having a witch stay in your house." Osono put her hand under Kiki's drooping chin and, making her look up, winked at her with a warm smile.

The second floor of the flour storehouse next door to the bakery was covered with flour. After Kiki and Jiji had eaten their supper, they crawled into the bed.

"You know, I'm probably going to wake up a white cat tomorrow," said Jiji, gazing at his fur and sneezing a small sneeze.

"But look, Jiji! There's a nice windowsill where the warm sun will shine, just like you were hoping for."

Kiki was happy and relieved. It had been a long trip, but the first day of her maiden journey was about to end.

"Kiki, are you going to look for another town?" asked Jiji.

"No. I think I'm going to stay here for a while. The people didn't welcome me like I thought they would, but the baker's wife said she likes me. Maybe we can find one or two more people who will like us. Don't you think so?"

"Well, maybe. There ought to be at least two or three," murmured Jiji, and with that he was soon deep asleep.



I have decided to model a tenagers room, more specifically the room of Kiki from "Witch's Express Home Delivery". This is a children's fantasy novel written by Eiko Kadono, originally in Japanese, about a young witch who leaves home to discover her talent.

Kiki is one such witch and ends up living within a bakery, working as their delivery girl. The story is a wonderful mix of magic and reality, teaching passion and the difficult challenge of growing up and being comfortable with one's own character.

The book was adapted into Hayao Miyazaki's "Kikis delivery service" in 1986 wish i will use as one of my references. However I didn't want to replicate the room from the movie and decided to focus on this passage from the book.

Though its not incredibly descriptive of the room, I feel that will push me to do more research to create a decade accurate room. I want to design the room, not as she first saw it, bust as if she has been living here for a year or two and has really made it her own place.This is where the lack of description of the rooms contents may be helpful to push me to research what Kiki may have filled it with.

I chose this as my project as its indoors, small but detailed, inspiring, lots of ideas based around Kiki as a character and the story around her.

Reference and Research

Decade Research

It's considered to be set in the 1950s Europe in an alternate timeline without the events of both world wars. The technology is much the same. Tombo Kopoli, the boy who falls in love with kiki, I obsessed with the rise of air travel and aircraft, trying to create his own plains. Radios are also popularly used in place of TVs but they are still available and used through the story.

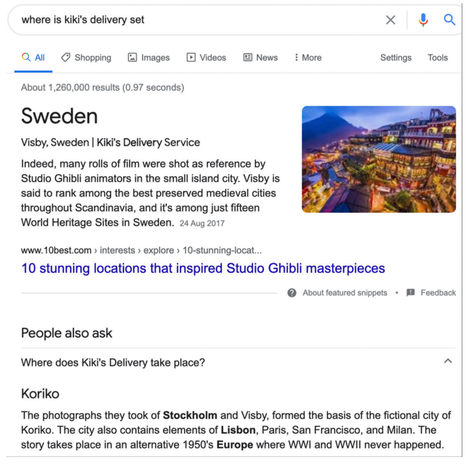




I began by looking at classic 1950s rooms to get a sense of what mine could be.

Setting Research

The setting and where in the world it is, is important and will influence the style of the building itself. The book is set in a fiction city of Koriko, inspired by european cities. Paris millan and Stockholm were a big influence, Visby in sweden being another. Visby has an interesting architectural history with a large amount of preserved medical buildings. I thought this was important to note and I'd have to look at older buildings to create my bakery as I don't want the bakery to look new considering it's a family run place in the book.



Kiki as a Person

I thought it was important to understand Kiki as a character inorder to think about what she may be like now that she's a little older and how she would live. Her character will greatly influence the room and I want it to look like this person belongs there.

Kiki is a proud, confident and polite person. She won't stand for rudeness towards her and likes to make that clear but she is not snooty. She also has a very soft heart and does her best to help everyone, being very compassionate and thoughtful, though this can lead her to pushing herself too far. Her confidence is more of a front a lot of the time. She often feels stressed in social situations with others her age and is worried about coming across as strange. She likes who she is but is worried others don't and that worries her. Through the book she works to understand herself and becomes truly confident in who she is and learns to not let her worries be a barrier to making new friends.





Reference and Research

Items

Here I made a list of items that may appear in her room in order of importance;

Essential

Furniture

Bed

- Desk + chair
- Bedside table
- Cooker or harth - connected to bakery chimney

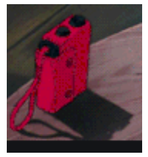
Character related

- Radio - given to her by father
- Broom - Needed for deliver service
- Delivery Bag

Extra

Map of the city and mapping tools for planning delivery paths
Deliver related items - envelopes, brown paper, stamps
Model planes - her friend makes planes and may have given her one as a gift
Painting kit - she may have started painting after her friend the artist
Jiji Cup- a cup with a black cat on it from the movie
Red shoes - she saw them in a shop window but couldn't afford them, I'd like to think she got them eventually

Sewing machine - she mends her clothes and likes to take up hobbies
Teaset - vintage and cute, can imagine her having tea in the mornings
Hand held mirror and brush - she has long hair now she's older maybe
Witchy items - dried herbs, books, crystals, plants and bones





















Desk



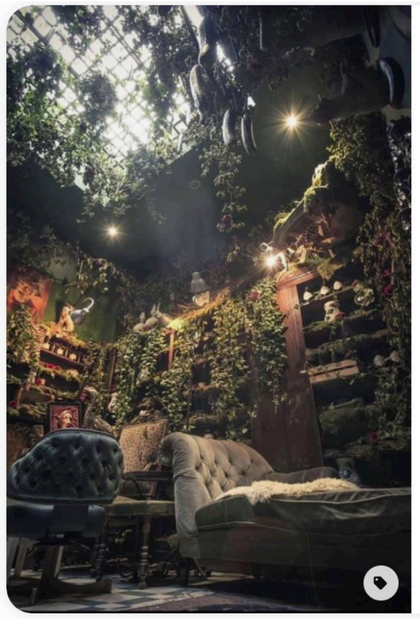
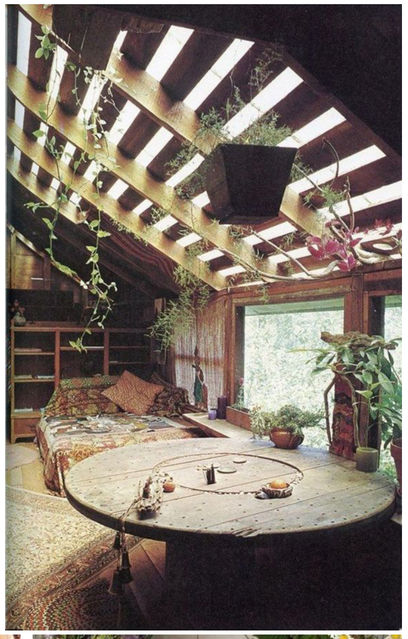


Bed





I didn't want her room to look like a default 1950s room since the project is about Kiki and not an embodiment of the 1950s. But it was important to keep the time period in mind to make sure she didn't have anything that wouldn't have been available to her. From Here I put together some references for individual items and pictures that will help establish the feeling of her room. Keeping each item, a decade appropriate or older, seeing as she's classical, I feel she would be comfortable with older items such as a wood burner oven rather than an electric oven.






Concept Art

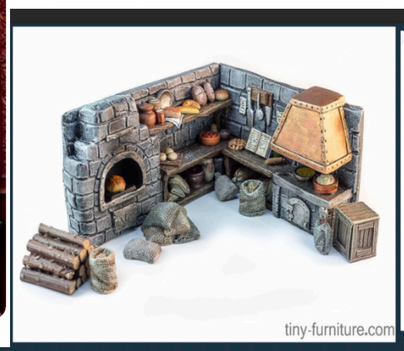
Exterior of Bakery

Here are some references I looked at the outside of the building. I used screnshots from the movie. Models of the movie house, Real 1950s bakeries and interesting shop fronts. I also included anything that I used in the modelling process such as the roof tiles























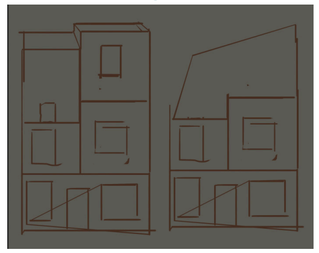


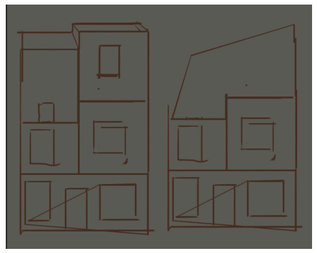


Concept Art

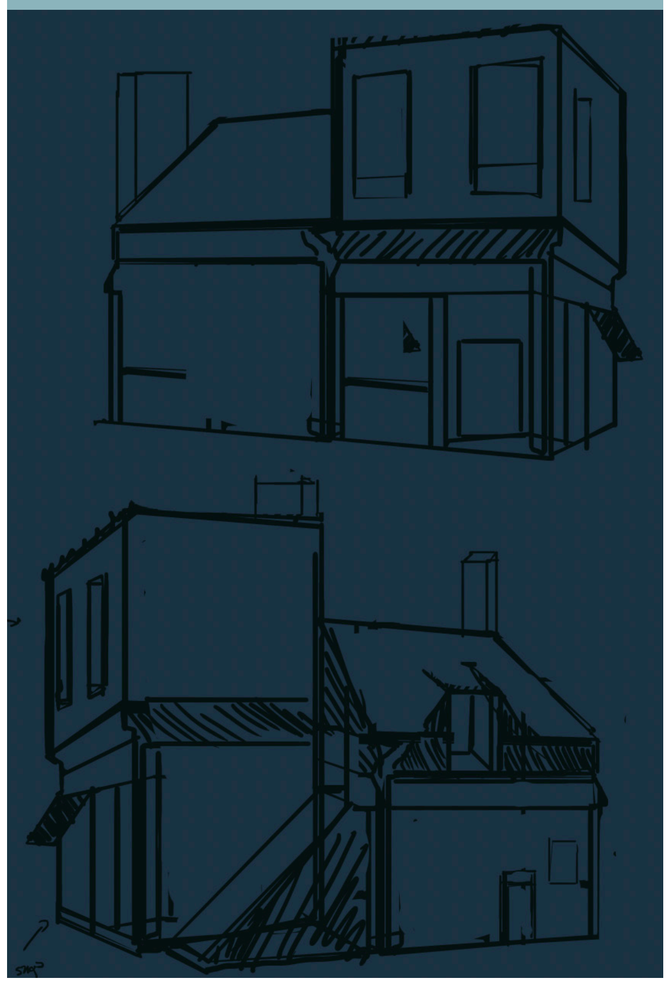
Exterior of Bakery

Having looked at some 1950s shop fronts and bakeries I began designing some ideas for my own. I wanted the building itself to be older and I looked at old english bakers and buildings to establish that. The Shop was to look like it was added onto a modified old building so I kept that in mind while designing the whole shop and connected kitchen/ storage room.





Chosen Idea





Older idea



Interior and layout

Once happy with the design,I moved onto the interior layout/ floor plan of the building. This helped me understand the scale and the space much clearer than before and helped me notice details such as how tall the walls of the attic had to be to fit a door, where windows can be positioned and where there might be support beams in the way.

It took some reworking but I got something I liked then started focusing on Kikis room and how the layout may look. I was only looking at essential items at this point such as a bed, desk and cupboard as they would be the biggest items in the room. Also had to keep in mind the access corridor since the stairs from the kitchen need to lead to both kikies room and the upstorads of the shop. This would cut into the space of kikis room and I had to take that into account.



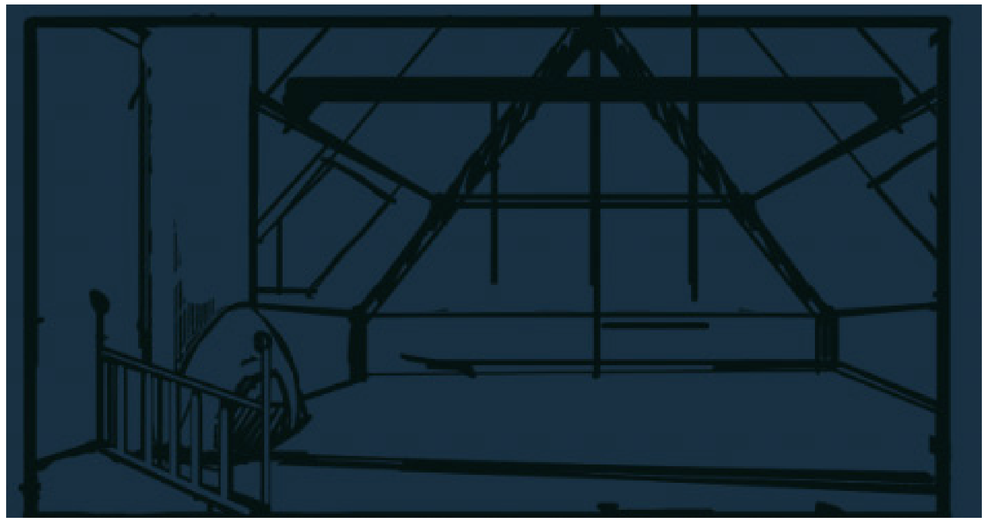
Older ideas

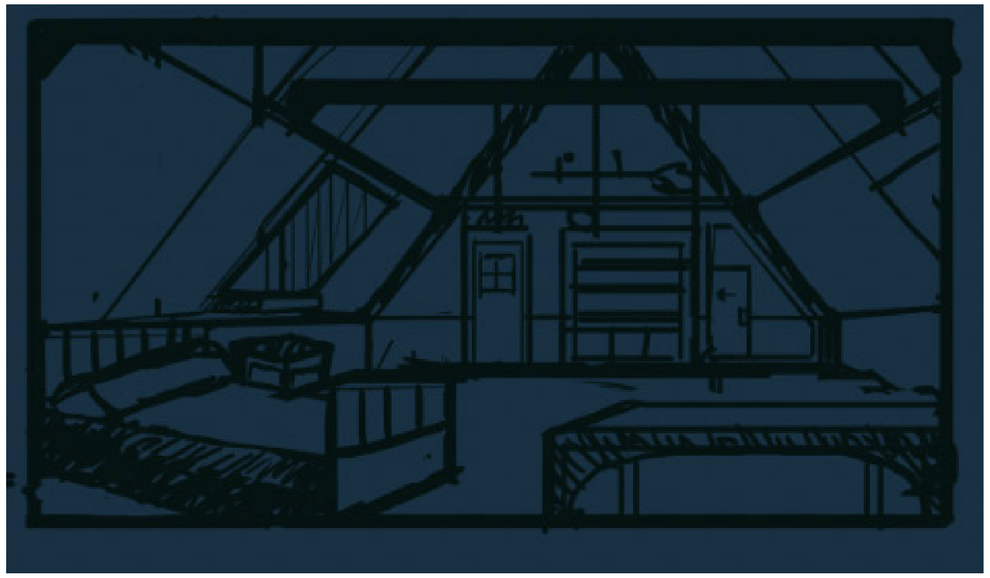


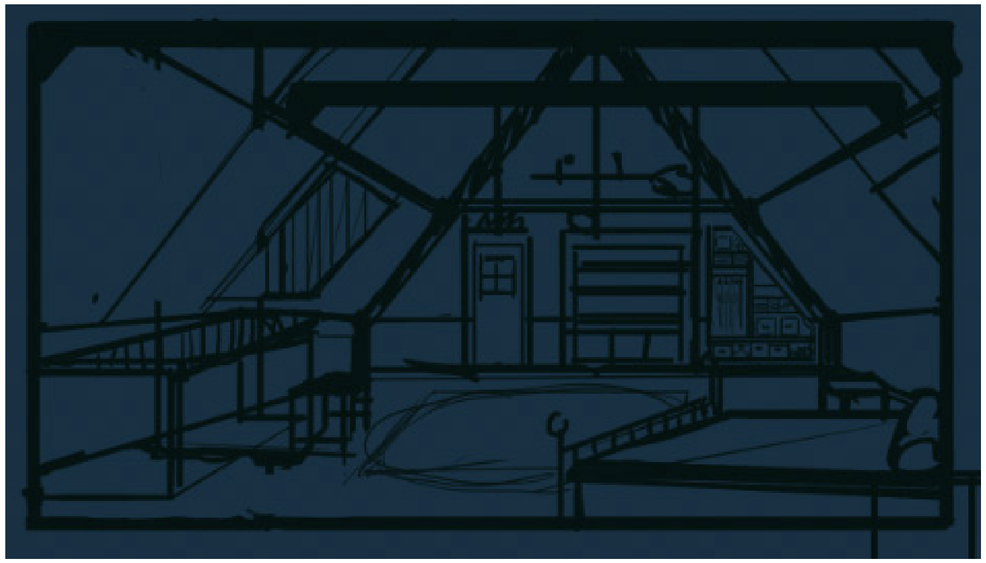


Chosen Idea









3D Work

Exterior of Bakery

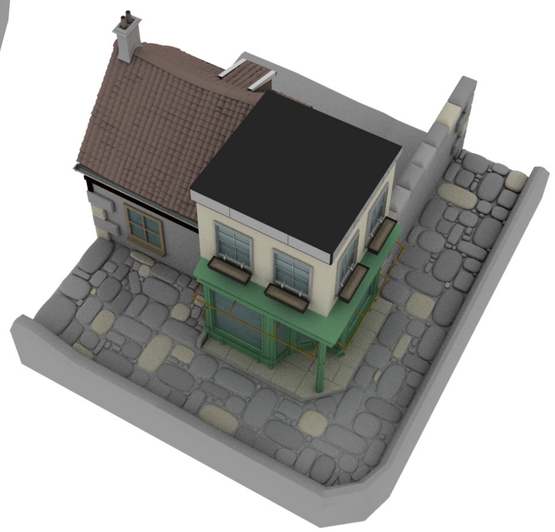
I started by modeling the building itself along with the street around it as if it had been cut out of a scene. I wanted to blend the older looking kitchen to the news looking shop font and followed a mix of references and my sketches closely to make sure I included as much detail as possible. I didn't want anything floating or strangely placed, always thinking of how things conceded to other things.

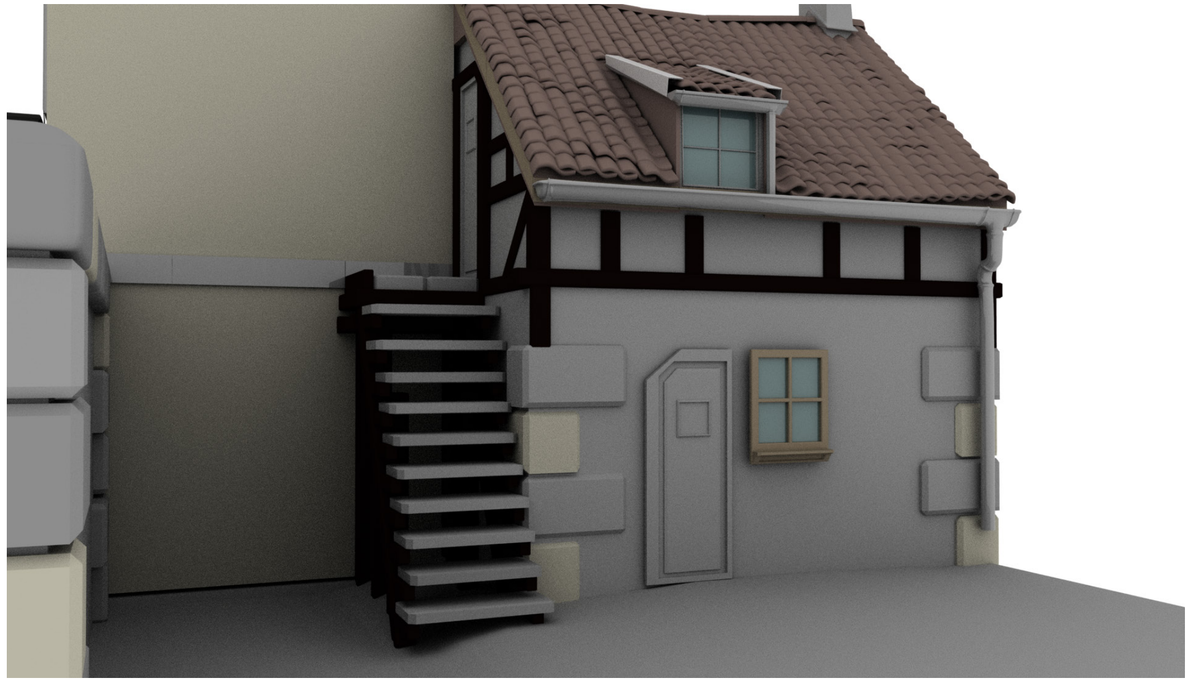
I wanted the scene to be slightly stylized and cartoon-like, with the large cobblestone paths and the sloped roof of the older half of the building. I wanted to exaggerate the age of the building by making the tiles slightly uneven and make them jut out in certain places.

I then moved onto Kiki's room itself. I built up the basic framework first of the roof pillars then thought about the walls and flooring on the interior.

A lot changed in this part of the build. I realised the walls were too sloped to accommodate a door on the outside of the house the way I had done in the concept art. I tried making the roof taller and bringing in the sides but it didn't work well and decided to reposition the door to the center of the wall. And move the stairs to the left side. In older houses i noticed the stairs were steep and twisted upwards so it would make sense for the staircase to be squashed and small in this situation so it worked out.









Texturing

I kept texturing simple only applying colours and material qualities such us reflectiveness to the glass and white plastic panels across the shop front. I also made the poles on the outside of the shop metallic and shiny.

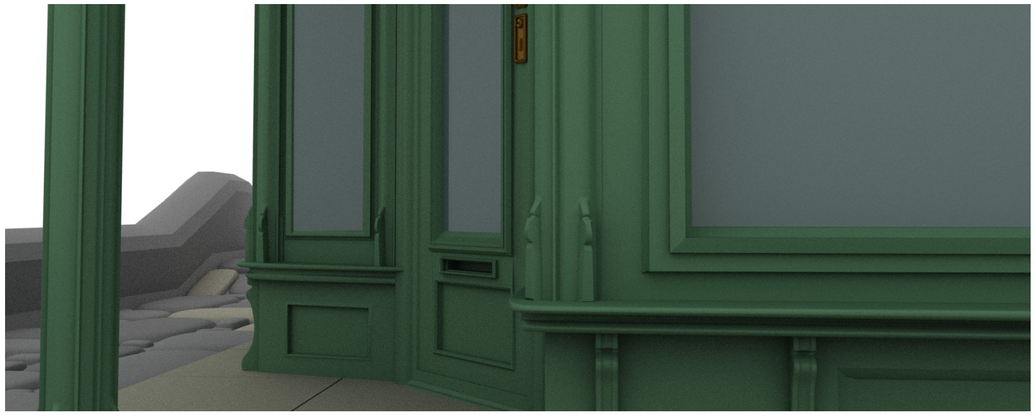
Lighting

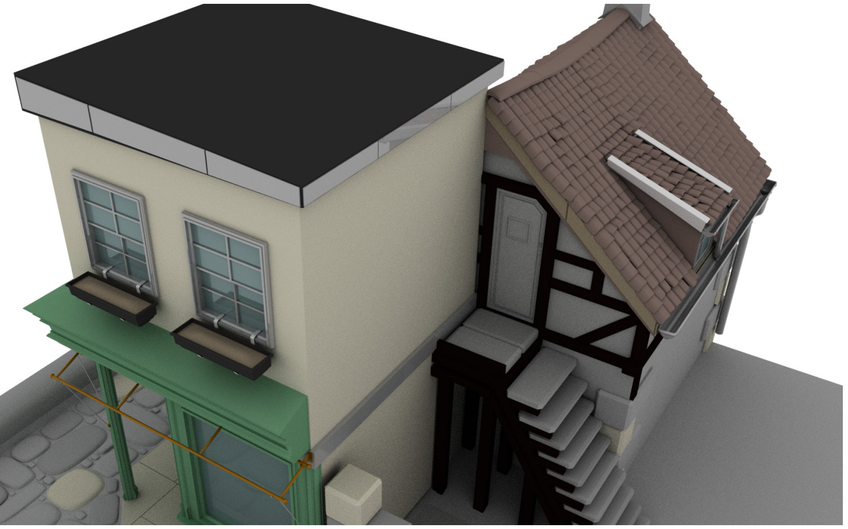
I wanted light from the window and wood burner rather than the main electrical light in the center of the ceiling and set up a directional light and panel light accordingly but they didn't show up correctly in the final render.

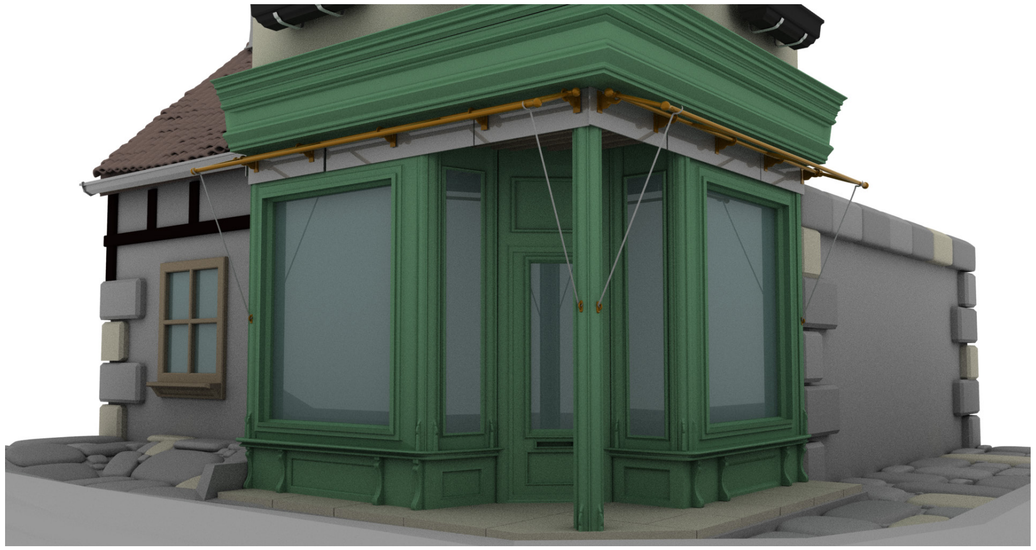
Animating

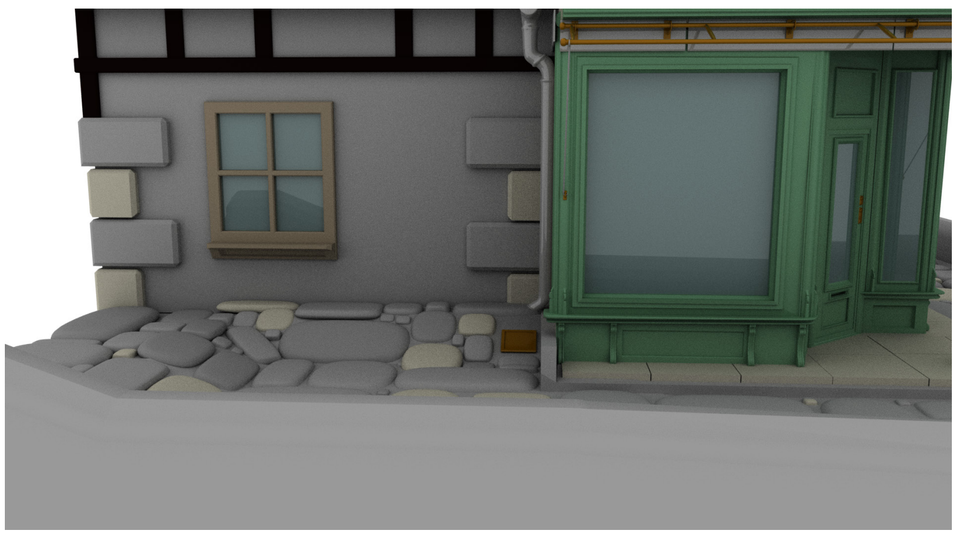
I had a lot of plans for this section though unfortunately didn't reach my goals. Writing this with retrospect I had put my focus into modeling more than Icould take on and also leave enough time to do alli wanted. I did manage to create some simple curtains with a wind simulation that worked well. I learned a lot about how fabric behaves and how to weigh it according to what I wanted to achieve.

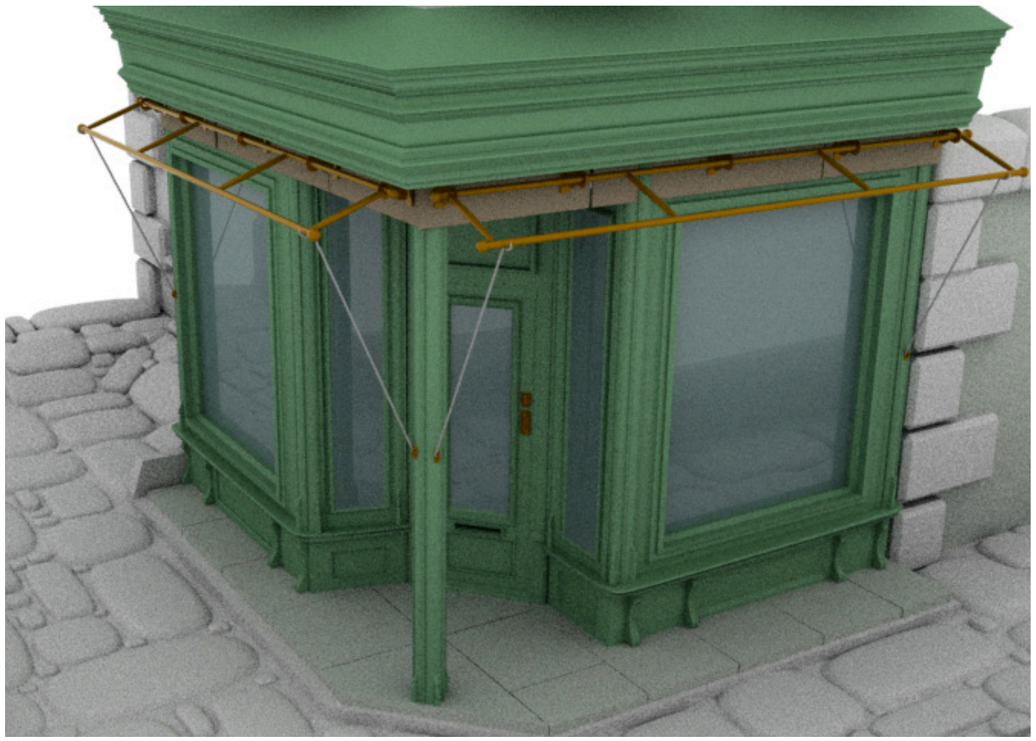


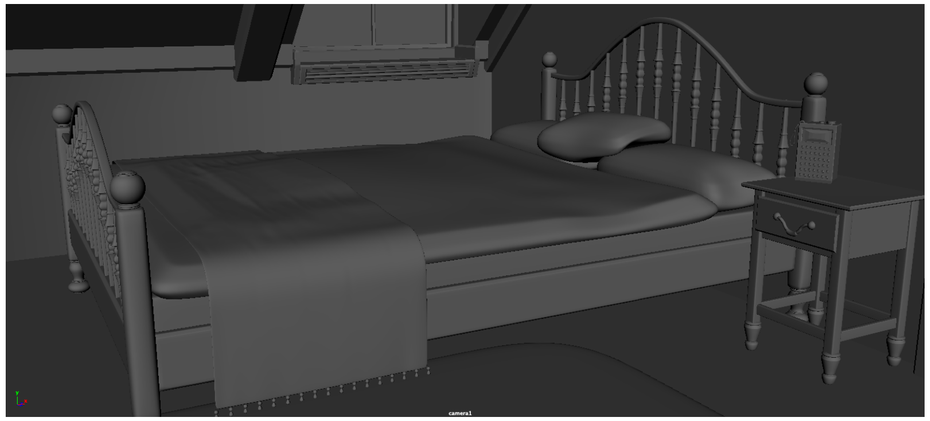




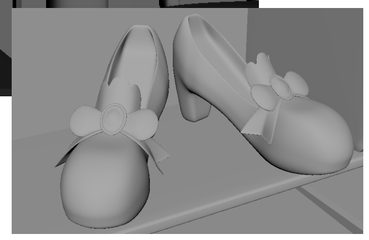


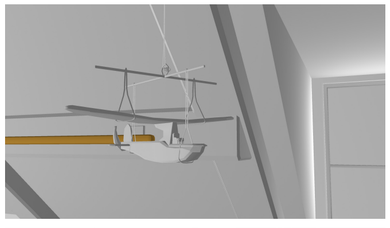


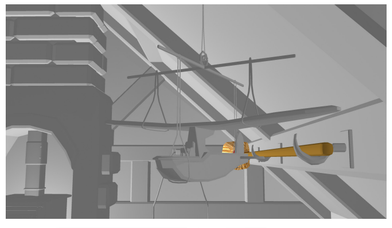


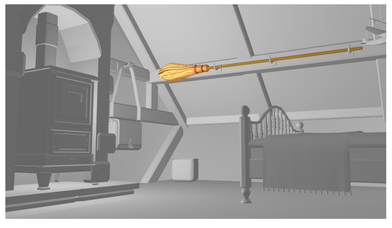

camera1

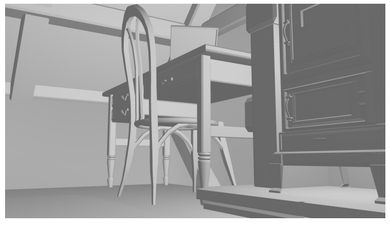

camera1

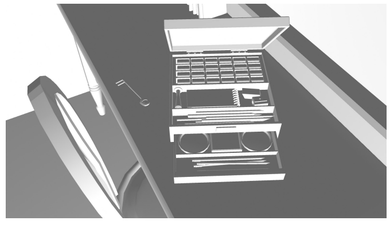


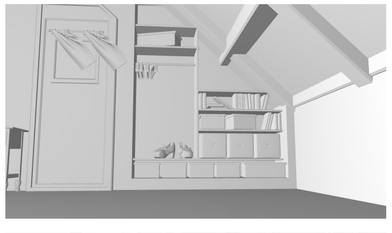


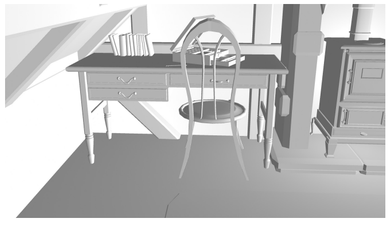






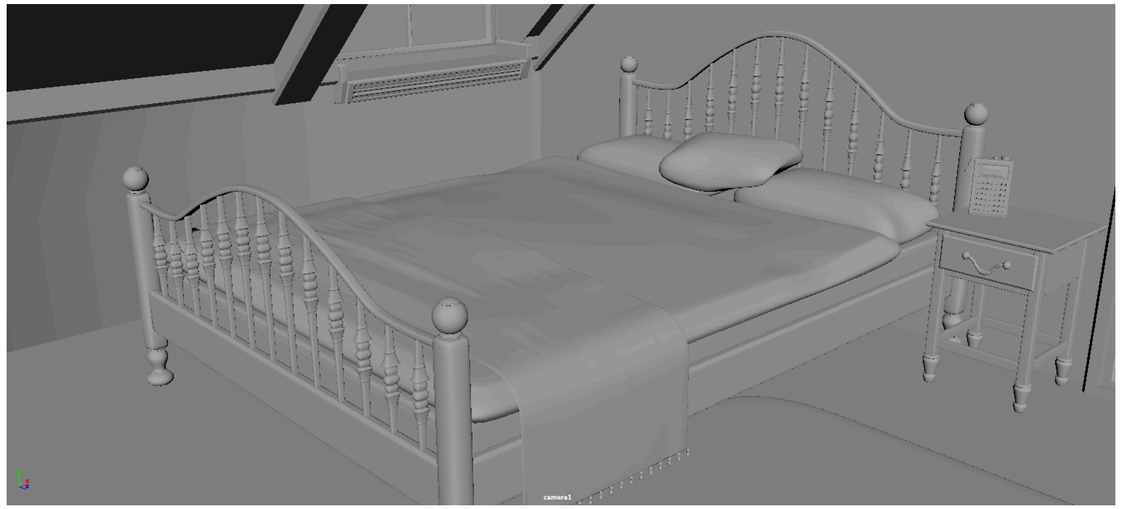


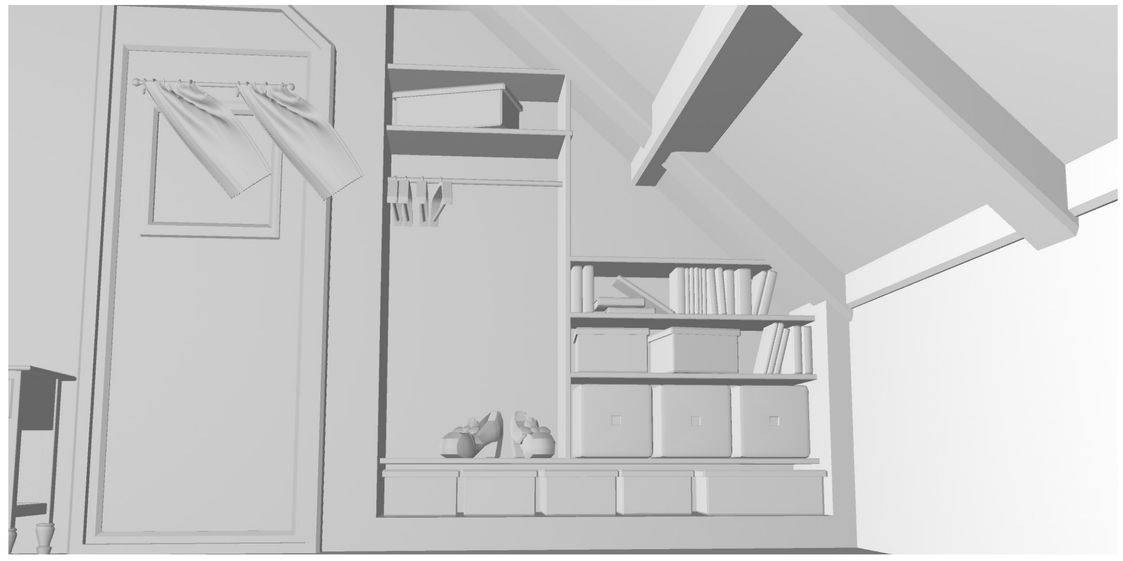


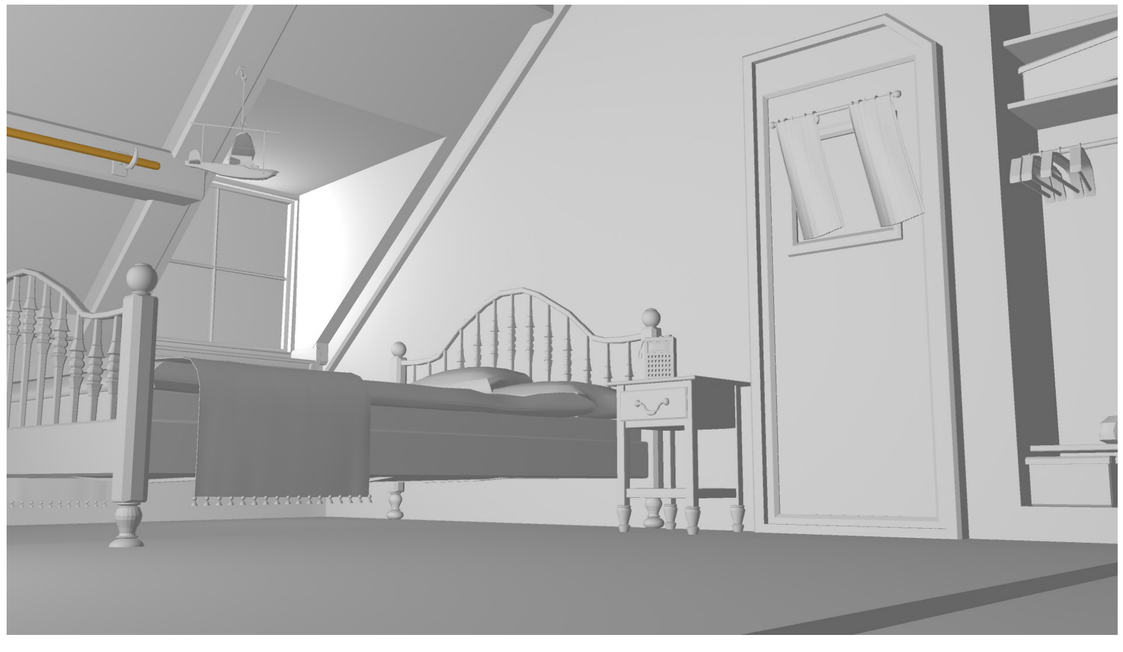







camera1





Reflection

I had a lot of problems in the end with this one. I couldn't render a video of the camera going through the scene despite having keyed it due to an error involving the references and time slider. In my attempts to fix the issue I ended up losing the file and had to work on an older save to bring it back to its previous standard.

I'm not sure what I could have done differently as I was careful to do test renders which came out fine but the final one failed. I'm glad I had the foresight to keep old saves and keep most essential items as references. Though I enjoyed working with ncloth to make the bed and I feel it looks realistic and the fabric falls so well, I'm very proud of it. The Wood burner/ cooker is another item I enjoyed making.

Overall I feel I have become much more skilled in understanding how to model accurately and I feel I have good attention to detail. However I feel this project proves I have a lot of room to improve and I hope to learn how to efficiently texture and light up a scene by my next project. Though I faced problems I feel I managed my time as well as I could and combated the issues to the best of my ability. I'm excited to improve and do much better in the future.