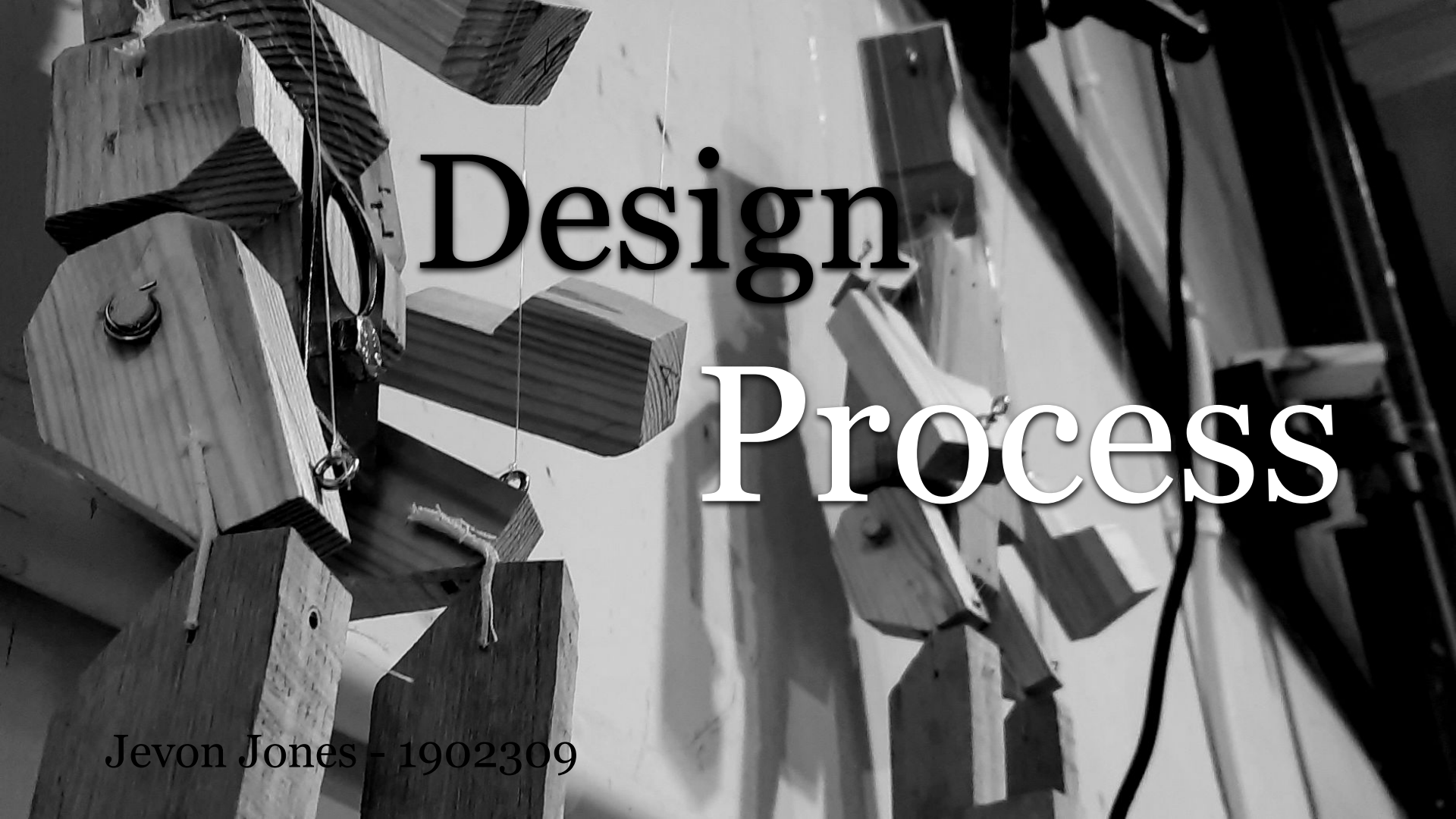


Design Process

Jevon Jones - 1902309

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/Introduction

My relationship to the medium

I have been nagging Stacey for over a year to get the change at making some kind of puppet module. Here we are. The gauntlet has been thrown!

My first (and only) attempt at a puppet was at around 9 or 10 years old. I dreamt of an expressive face, around the size of a coconut, falling out of a vending machine. It was pale, and intriguing. The following day, which happened not to be a school day (For a child with no internet access), I crudely put together a meccano mechanism that had two rotating axis that could be manipulated at one end with little levers, and housed steel ball bearings with socket principles at the other end. Once complete, I wrapped an old sock around the mechanism and fitted the bearings over the fabric. The effect was a strange sock entity that could furrow its brow, or look extremely sad. Though it looked nothing like my dream, everybody was impressed and it was hard to create something after that that my parents liked more. But I digress.

Though I adore making things from wood, I never contemplated their animation or articulation in the way that a puppeteer would. I hoped to gain confidence in whatever my final outcome happens to be.

Puppetry intimidates me, as it's simply not enough to make something rugged and slightly over-engineered; which is usually what i do as a fallback if I know what I'm doing is not quite hitting the mark for its final purpose. It would be a treat to finish this module not only confident in at least some factors about one of the many types of puppets, but also able to explain myself to another who does not understand the concept as I do now.

/Introduction

Nights at the Circus - Overview

Nights at the Circus is a theatre adaptation by Tom Morris and Emma Rice, based off of a book by the same name by author Angela Carter.

Set in 1899, the script in question follows the events of Fevvers, a winged trapeze artist, and the Icelandic reporter Jack Walser. His initial intentions are to expose her as a fraud, but as he learns more about her, he undergoes many difficult trials and hardships in order to preserve his found infatuation for her. The play ends with all the cruel systems and institutions that harmed them literally being blown away by an improvised bomb. The themes of freedom and liberty correspond intricately with its inherited themes of magical-realism and postmodernism.

"While inevitably filleting Carter's book, Rice and Morris stay true to its intentions. Fevvers herself is both a richly vulgar reality and a symbol of feminine possibility as she is told: "You are the pure child of the century, the new age in which no woman will be bound to the ground." But on stage it also becomes a story about the demolition of Walser's detachment" (Billington, 2006)



(Billington, 2006)

By utilising a lack of distinct rules to the ways time and space work within the play's universe, *Nights at the Circus* boasts a great expanse of artistic wiggle room at its disposal, and I look forward to seeing what we can generate from this script in terms of physical products.

/Introduction - Commitment

Module task - Script Analysis

In this module, we are to adapt a script into a fully fleshed out idea in small groups. Once assigned to each group, each person will be in charge of a specific role (i.e. set design).

Some may say that the research period is never over. Thus we had to explore many alleyways of different ideas before committing to any specific one, as per the designated steps: Commitment, Analysis, Research, Incubation, Selection, Implementation and Evaluation.

As a full class group, we did multiple script readings where we identified and broke down the script into multiple parts. This was to make it easier to digest the events of it. By highlighting concepts such as sounds, lights, props and costumes, it becomes much more clear at a glance what is happening when from a practical standpoint. Assigning certain blocks of the script to scenes further aided this cause.

We also carried out some brainstorming exercises as a class before splitting into our groups, this also enabled us to further break down the characters per their motivations and roles in the play. This phase was very crucial to my understanding of the script, and I am very glad we did this. Not only for my individual understanding, but also for the sake of unifying what everybody knew so nobody was left behind.



/Introduction - Commitment

The space to be used

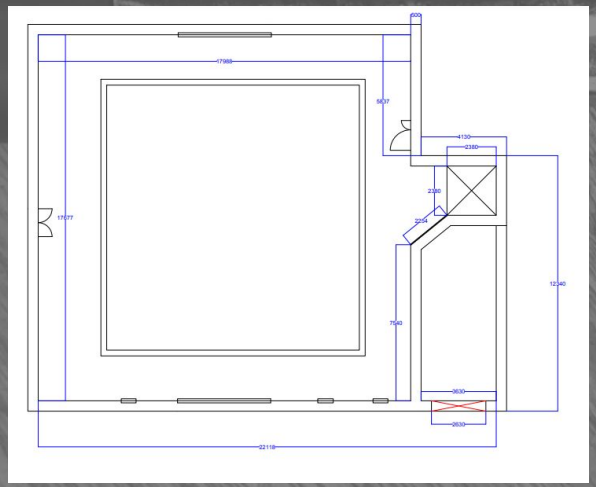
As mentioned before, our task as sub groups was to imitate a real production company's capability to take a script, then design and develop a tangible vision that would then be advertised to potential stakeholders via a 20-30 minute presentation.

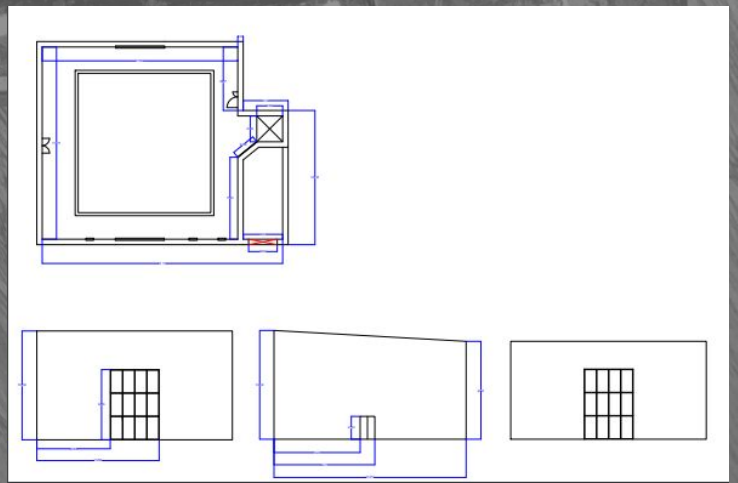
The space that we would theoretically use, would be the campuses' own Y Llwyfan theatre - found within the UWTSD Carmarthen grounds.

Just as the script leaves a massive space for creative interpretation, so too does the physical space we were designing for. This would greatly influence my ideas and concepts early on.









/Analysis

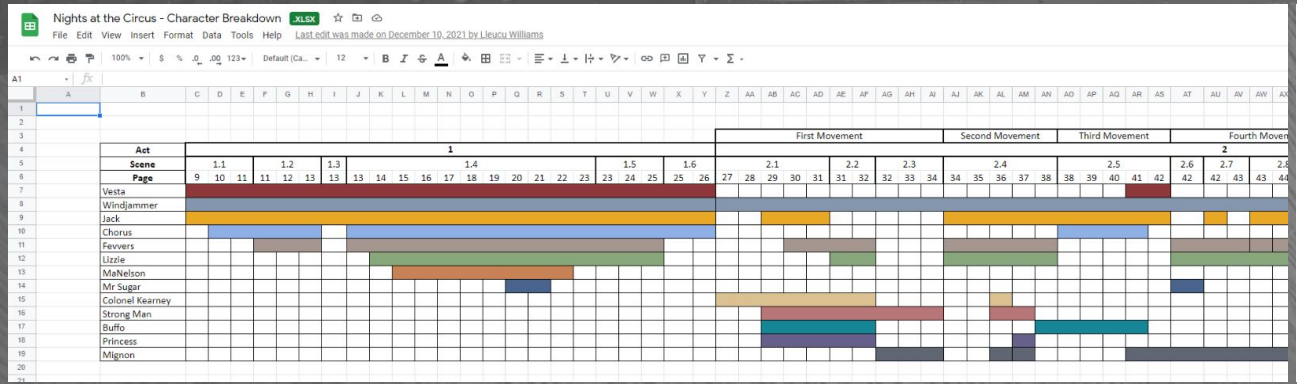
Script Analysis continued

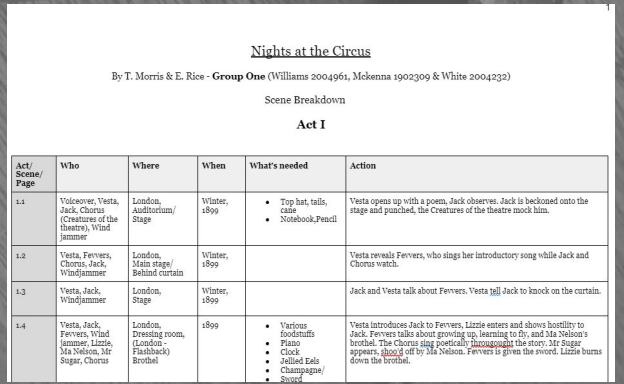
When the teams were established, I was put into a group of three with George White and Lleucu Williams. I would be the puppeteer of the group, George would be Set Design and Lleucu would be costume.

Armed with this confirmation, we made a shared google drive and started to create documents specific to our group that we all agreed with. These two important documents were used to obtain clear specific moments when our production changed set pieces, costumes, props, or anything else. It felt good to be making something that people throughout the industry utilize all the time. We also made a google calendar and a group Microsoft Teams chat, as well as a whatsapp group.

After assembling all the information we had agreed upon, I sketched a rough draft on paper that Lleucu could then integrate into the digital version that would become the basis for our understanding of the script.







Nights at the Circus

By T. Morris & E. Rice - **Group One** (Williams 2004961, Mckenna 1902309 & White 2004232)

Scene Breakdown

Act I

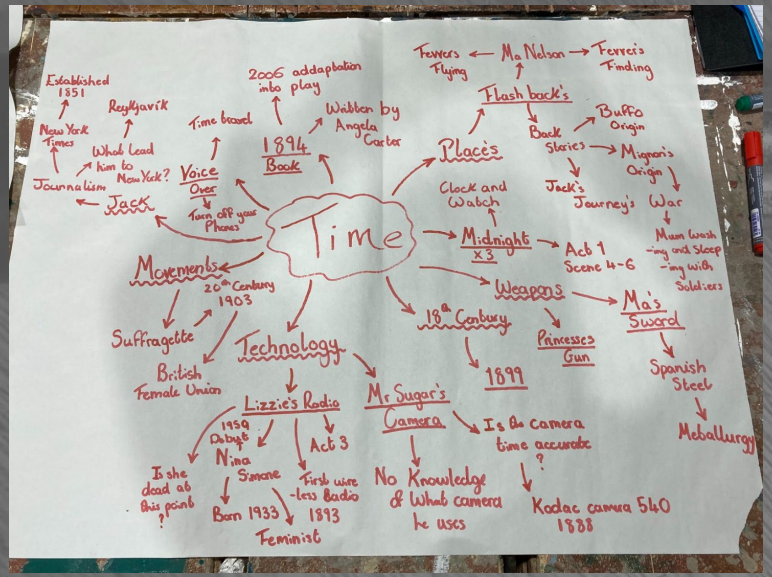
Act/ Scene/ Page	Who	Where	When	What's needed	Action
1.1	Voiceover, Vesta, Jack, Chorus (Creatures of the theatre), Wind jammer	London, Auditorium/ Stage	Winter, 1899	• Top hat, tails, cane • Notebook,Pencil	Vesta opens up with a poem, Jack observes. Jack is beckoned onto the stage and punched, the Creatures of the theatre mock him.
1.2	Vesta, Fevvers, Chorus, Jack, Windjammer	London, Main stage/ Behind curtain	Winter, 1899		Vesta reveals Fevvers, who sings her introductory song while Jack and Chorus watch.
1.3	Vesta, Jack, Windjammer	London, Stage	Winter, 1899		Jack and Vesta talk about Fevvers. Vesta tell Jack to knock on the curtain.
1.4	Vesta, Jack, Fevvers, Wind jammer, Lizzie, Ma Nelson, Mr Sugar, Chorus	London, Dressing room, (London - Flashback) Brothel	1899	• Various foodstuffs • Piano • Clock • Jellied Eels • Champagne/ • Sword	Vesta introduces Jack to Fevvers, Lizzie enters and shows hostility to Jack. Fevvers talks about growing up, learning to fly, and Ma Nelson's brothel. The Chorus sing poetically throughout the story. Mr Sugar appears, shoo'd off by Ma Nelson. Fevvers is given the sword. Lizzie burns down the brothel.

/Analysis

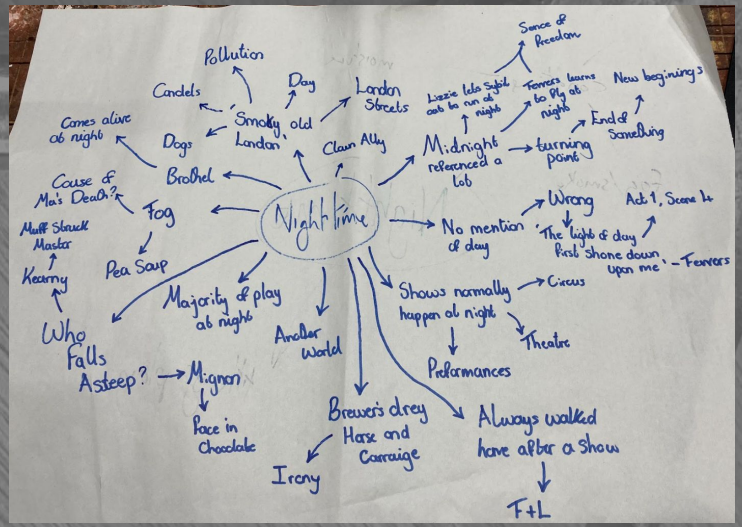
Our three key words exercise

Before we began any research into the possible methods and ideas available to us, we made three mindmaps from three words of our own choosing. This was so we could roughly expand on them, and use the internet to assist us in answering any questions that arose along the way. It was an excellent way of deciding on the feel of the world that we would create, and obtaining any facts to back up our ideas if there was any.

We chose the words ‘Time’, ‘Freedom’, and ‘Nighttime’ for this.



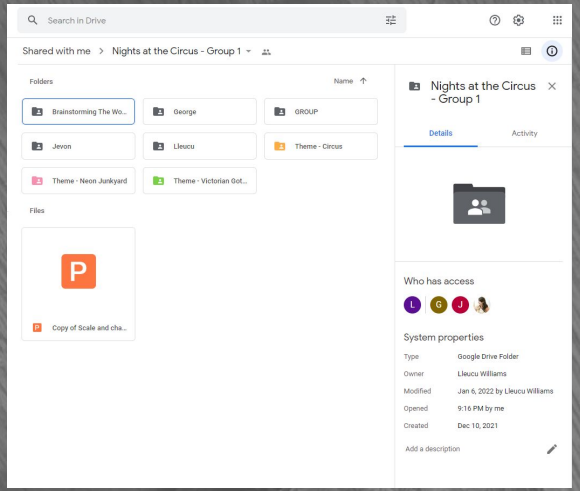




/Analysis

Script Analysis continued

Over the coming weeks, we put together a series of research draft folders on the google drive we had established. This was a first for me, and it was very interesting to be able to see both Lleucu and George's visual journeys of research while carrying out my own. The folder system was also used to collaboratively work on the previously mentioned character breakdown sheets. Internet collaboration technology has really been shown to be a useful asset in this module for me.



As well as the artists, practitioners and early concept doodles posted there, it was also a fantastic way to let the other member's visuals help direct you in a more parallel path as to make the process of combining ideas easier. Indeed, I hope you will see how George and Lleucu's research and work has ultimately shaped mine, and vice versa.

I immediately began to contemplate and research large animal puppets, as I liked the idea of providing a puppet step in for the characters who have animals around them - Such as Kearney with his pig, and Princess, with her Tigers.

/Research

Royal De Luxe

This street marionette company was introduced to me by my team mate Lleucu, as she had seen them in person and thought I would like to know of them - and I'm very glad and grateful that she did.

Through the use of massive industry vehicles and machinery, Royal De Luxe employ what would be presumed to be building construction equipment alongside many other means to animate their massive street marionettes. Having performed all over the world, their characters see much use time after time - for example their little girl (at 30 feet tall) has been used to tell multiple different stories - most notably *Sea Oddysey: Giant Spectacular* which marks 100 years since the RMS Titanic sank.

Founded in 1979, the company didn't commit to the giants they are now known for until the 1990's. But since then they have performed in the capitals of France, Germany, Chile, Mexico, Australia, Belgium, Portugal, Iceland, Spain, Switzerland and Canada.

"Royal de Luxe operate on the grandest scale, yet remain capable of intimate detail. The expression of the figures constantly alters through hydraulics and radio control; the girl has a 5ft tongue flexible enough to lick a lollipop. "This is the great challenge," Courcoult says, "for the work to be immense and still touch people's hearts. My work is all about stealth so that nobody understands how an enormous machine could appear as if from nowhere." (Hickling,2012)



(Hickling, 2012)



(Gardner, 2006)


(Taylor, 2012)



(Taylor, 2012)


(Taylor, 2012)


(Taylor, 2012)


(Smart, 2020)


(Taylor, 2012)

/Research

The Lion King Musical - Zazu

The 1997 musical adaptation of the Lion King animated film has proven to be a very successful show. Though it features lots of actors in masks and costumes, there is a significantly complex puppet used for the character of Zazu - played here by the talented Gary Jordan (bottom right).

This puppet features immaculate detail, along with several very unusual uses of ordinary objects. For starters, his neck is a ‘jr slinky’, this means no matter which way his head is turned, the width of his neck never buckles or warps.

Using the kind of tubes and wire you would find on a push bike, Zazu’s eyes and mouth can be closed and opened. With a tensioned pulley system the wings can open and close, for the fantastic imitation of flight and gliding too.

During Adam Savage’s backstage tour in 2016, lead puppet supervisor Michael Reilly had the following to say about Zazu:

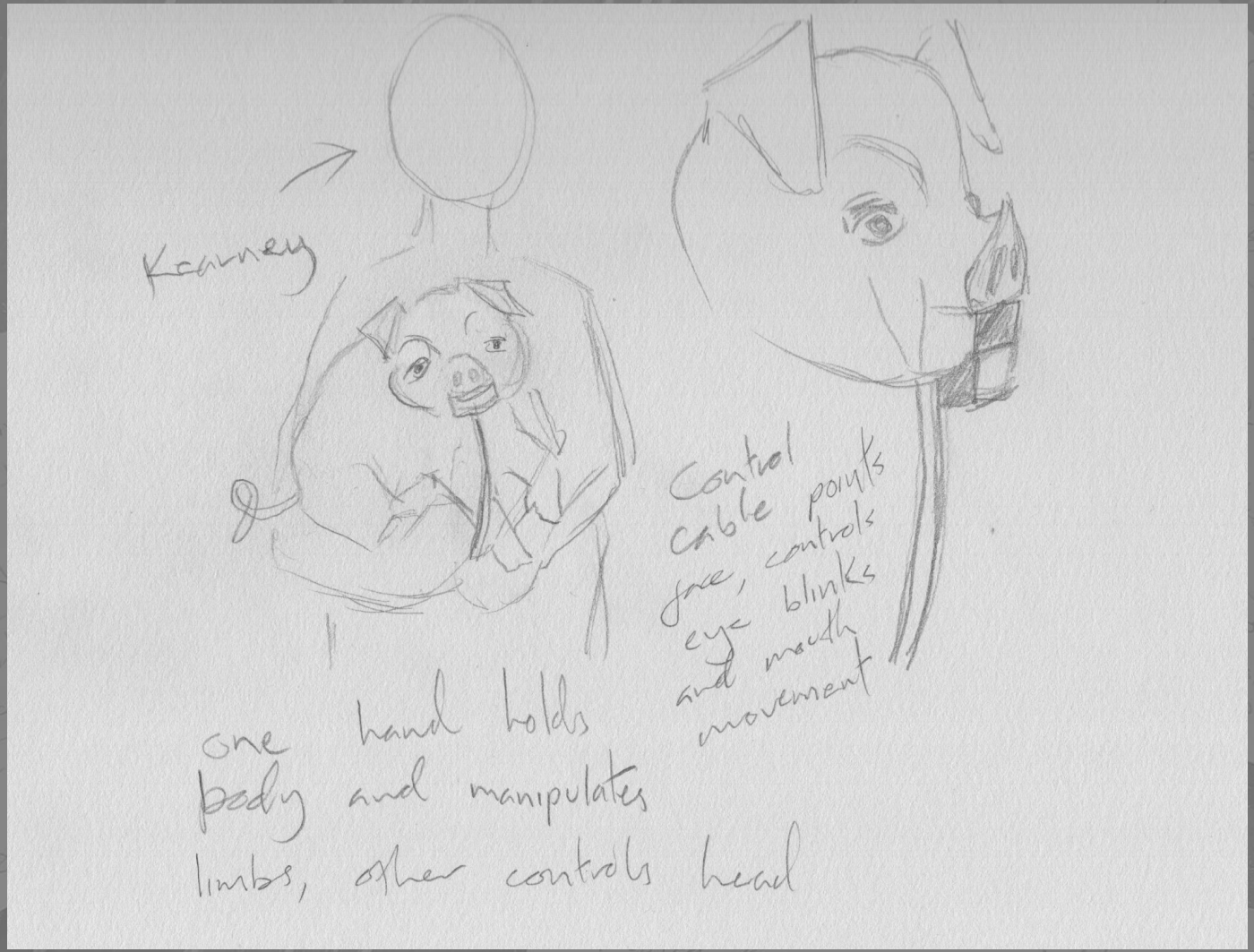
“Yeah, he's pretty cool. You know, he's one of the only hand puppets in our show. We're known as a puppet show, but he's the only hand puppet!” (Savage, 2016)



(Savage, 2016)



(Levene, 2019)


Kearney
Control cable points face, controls eye blinks and mouth movement
one hand holds body and manipulates limbs, other controls head

/Research

Lantern Co Puppets

A company is based in Liverpool, Lantern Co Puppets have been creating spectacular illuminated puppets for over 10 years. Headed by the artistic director Jo Pocock, they have a wide range of expertise to use at their disposal.

Though they specialise in Giant puppets and Lanterns, the company offer all kinds of puppetry products and classes, including rentals.

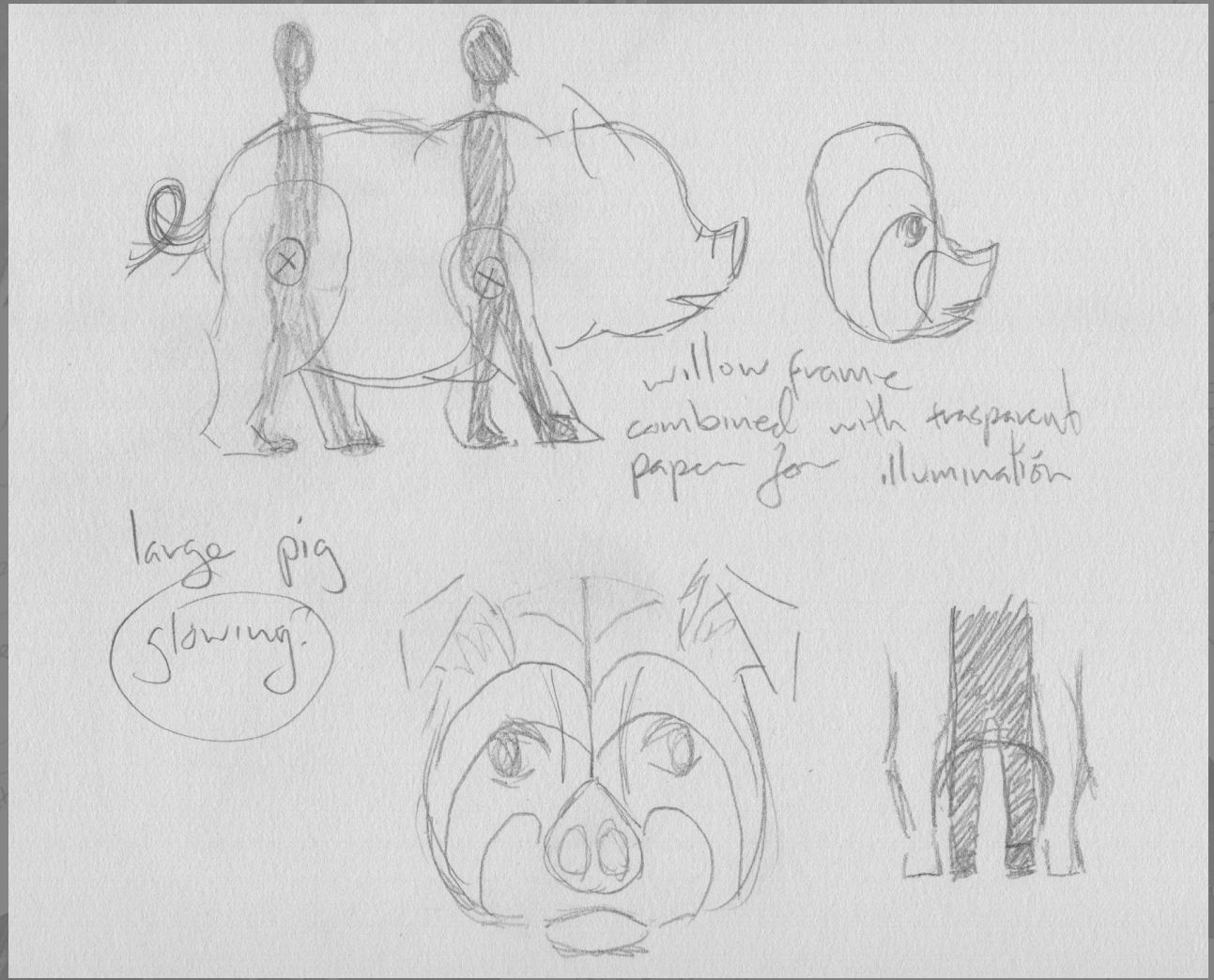


I especially like their carnival floats, which are situated upon large wheeled bases. This allows them to be mounted in such a way that the quadropedal animals they make can be manipulated to look like they are walking.





(lanterncompany.co.uk, 2010)


willow frame
combined with trasparent
paper for illumination
large pig
glowing?

/Research

Yaya Coulibaly

In Mali, West Africa, there is a very ancient tradition involving puppets. In her article, *Mali*, Sakame (2011) states the following:

"(Mali's) puppet theatre remains one of the most beautiful legacies of tradition. Its origins are so ancient that they cannot be dated, including those of the Bozo fisherman to whom paternity is attributed. At first, puppets were used in animist rituals. They were venerated objects, used in secret religious ceremonies that involved sacrifice. The goal of these rites was essentially to obtain abundant rain."

Given this cultural significance, it is no surprise that Mali has created some world class puppeteers. One such craftsman is Yaya Coulibaly, a venerated artist from the region with a decorated family history in puppeteering.

"Yaya Coulibaly considers himself a complete artist with a two-fold artistic training: traditional and modern. Inspiration comes from dreams, fetishes and animals to hold an important place in his work. He uses rod puppets, string puppets, and body puppets. Coulibaly lives in Bamako where he sculpts his statuettes with his brother and sells his work. He also restores old pieces and teaches his children the art of manipulation." (Delaroche, 2012)

Coulibaly's work is an excellent example of the diverse range of puppets that come from the region's rich historical heritage - as well as his own versions of them.



(Foundationcartier.com, 2017)

/Research

Mali's influence on Hand Spring

During their TED talk on the story behind their iconic puppet of Joey from the theatrical play Warhorse, Adrian Kohler and Basil Jones explain how they contacted a puppeteering company in Mali when they needed to make a life-size giraffe.

A whopping success, this enabled them to gain the confidence to take it even further in regards to the mechanical prowess they would display with their flagship puppet, Joey.

As can be observed, the same logistics of usage apply to both the giraffe and the horse, with two puppeteers within the 'heart' and rear of the animal, operating the legs with the full use of their arms and legs.

To think that the same roots of puppetry found in Mali's history can be traced directly to such a well known large scale puppet is very inspiring to me.





(Kohler & Jones, 2011)

/Research

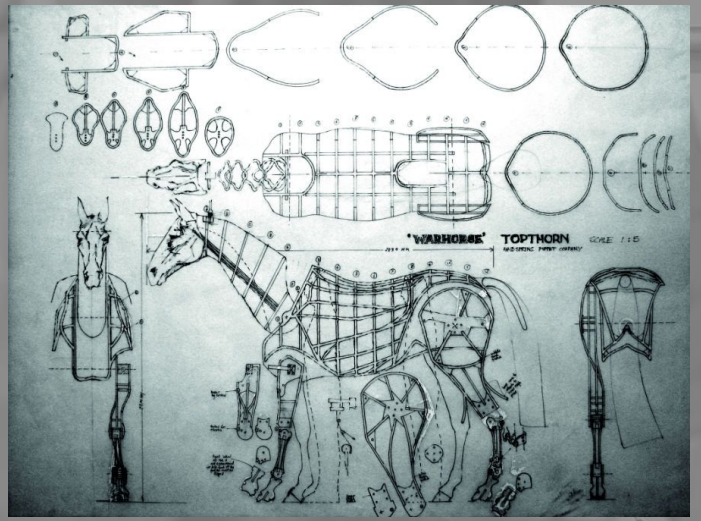
Handspring's Joey

As well as being a national treasure in the hearts of those who know of it, the HandSpring puppet of Joey from the Nick Stafford theatre play Warhorse is a spectacular and state of the art example of what puppetry can achieve within theatrical narrative.

"In a triumph of theatricality, this beast that so quivers with life is entirely manufactured - and is seen to be so, even while he looks so tender. The equine heroes of War Horse, a heart-stopping staging of Michael Morpurgo's First World War story, are creations of the South African Handspring Puppet Company. Near-relatives of the **giant Sultan's Elephant**, who ambled through the streets of London 18 months ago, these are no meek glove-puppets, but body puppets whose every gesture is free, individual, expressive." (Clapp, 2007)

Through a similar construction to a canoe, Joey's central body is made of a series of circular loops that are fastened together with a central aluminium frame for the rider to sit upon. With three operators - two within and one in front, the whole horse is so lifelike in movement that its astonishing.





(Kohler & Jones, 2020)

/Research

Handspring's Foal transition

There is so much to observe about Handspring's work. So much of it is so unique and life like in its function.

What truly blew me away, however, was the way of which the artists at HandSpring displayed how the titular animal grew up. On the left here is a sequence put together from a demonstrational rehearsal video by the company.

During the sequence, young Joey stands lit, with an adult Joey unlit and ready behind him. While the foals legs are unclipped from it's torso while it lowers its head, the horse behind stands on his hind legs. What follows is a spectacle like no other, where the foal literally comes apart as the horse occupies his physical space with a tremendous entrance.



(Kohler & Jones, 2020)



/Research

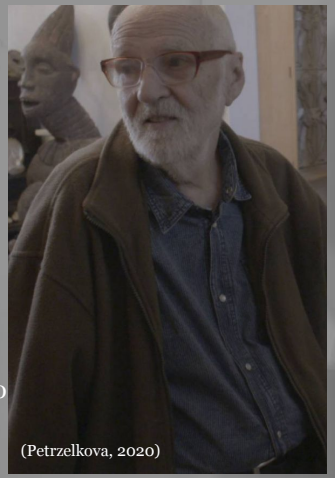
Jan Švankmajer

As far as surrealist contemporary artists go, it's hard to beat Svankmajer when it comes to creating uncanny visuals from reclaimed everyday objects. Though he has dabbled in many art forms, he is most well known for his films - for example his rendition of the well known tale Alice (1988). By using stop-motion puppets for much of the characters, he is able to get a very intimate, creepy atmosphere from his work. The rabbit, pictured bottom right, is a stuffed rabbit repurposed with a wire skeleton to allow for positioning during stop-motion.

"While Svankmajer's vision may at times be pessimistic, bleak and disturbing (Flora manages to push all these buttons in its economic half-minute duration), it is also playful, irreverent and devilishly funny, as is perhaps best emblematised by his favourite image - recurring through many of these short films - of a tongue poking out." (Bitel, 2007)

What I find truly inspiring about Jan's work is its diversity - possibly due to how he can utilise the uniqueness of each of the objects he uses in his art pieces. I believe the same qualities that make something mundane or ordinary can be effectively weaponised to make them even scarier or uncanny, when used in the right way.

"Often scary and violent in an unhinged sort of way and with deeply perturbing soundtracks, they also achieve a masterful blend of uneasy comedy and beauty. Furthermore, over a 30-year span they are rarely allowed to repeat ideas or techniques. The latter include puppet theatre, stop motion, live action and a kind of claymation that's at the opposite end of the spectrum from the relatively cuddly Aardman output." (Makie, 2007)


(Petrzelkova, 2020)


(Guner, 2011)


(Clements, 2010)

/Research

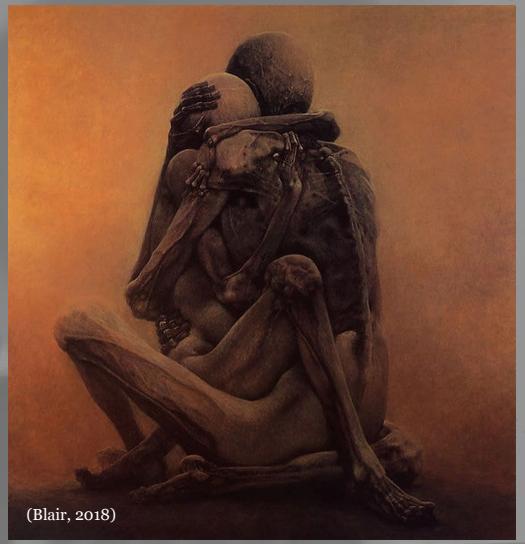
Zdzisław Beksiński

“Beksiński was a modern-day surrealist painter, photographer and sculptor with a mind for the obscure. His paintings concocted up odd images in the mind, and were a true step into absurdity in the field of dystopian surrealism.” (Blair, 2018)

When it comes to post-apocalyptic dystopian surrealism, one artist who comes to mind is Beksiński. During his tragically short life, he managed to create many fantastic works of art - depicting vivid, intense scenarios of intense shapes and colours.

“The Polish-born artist lived through endless amounts of pain and suffering throughout his life, from world war to suicide and cancer. Living through so much hardship may beat down some, but Zdzislaw Beksiński was able to channel his pain into his artworks, leaving behind hundreds of gorgeous paintings and inspired fans.” (Jacob, 2021)

What moves me about Beksiński’s work is not necessarily the undertones of the searing, saddening and evocative humanoids and piles of twisted bodies, but rather the intensity of the colour he employs to convey the atmosphere. For me, I often find post-apocalyptic scenes depicted in dull, washed out colours. His strong hues and outlines are especially inspiring to me.



(Blair, 2018)



(Blair, 2018)

/Incubation

My vision for a design world so far

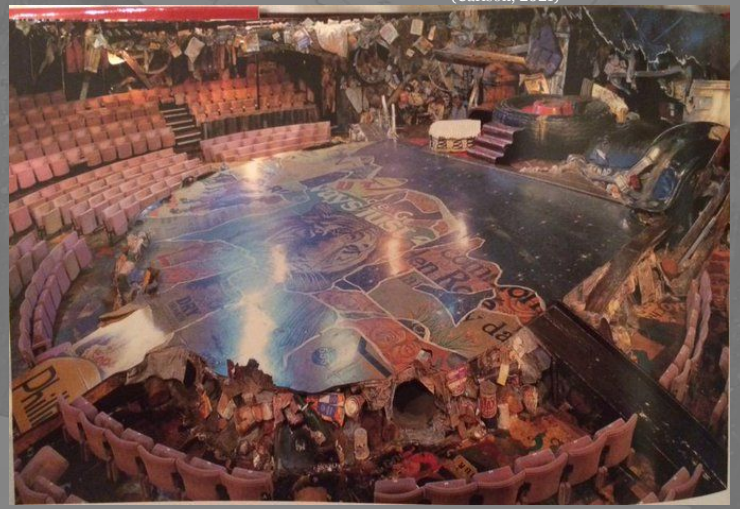
Through my practitioner research I had many ideas in regards to how a potential puppet could work, either as a large scale style one that the puppeteer goes inside of, or as a separate entity that one controls from above - like a marionette.

However, as for the visual feel of the world I was trying to envision, I really liked and latched onto the complex notions juxtaposing the surrealist dystopias of Beksinski with the reclaimed atmospheres and textures of Svankmajer - but with a hearty helping of the neon colours seen in plays like the 2012 Anne Washburn production *Mr. Burns: A post Electric play* (2021). I also was fascinated by an image I saw of the original set of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats* (1981).

I envisioned sets for my puppets to exist within the spectacular multi-coloured heaps of wreckages of modern society, whereby the actors and puppets interacted directly with each other, and the set pieces and puppets would rise and fall from the dreg heaps of the surrounding set. This idea resonates with how I see *Nights at the Circus*, as much of the characters and themes are about how certain characters are used and abandoned. For example, the whole of the brothel scene; and the rag-tag notions of the circus segments.



(Carlson, 2021)



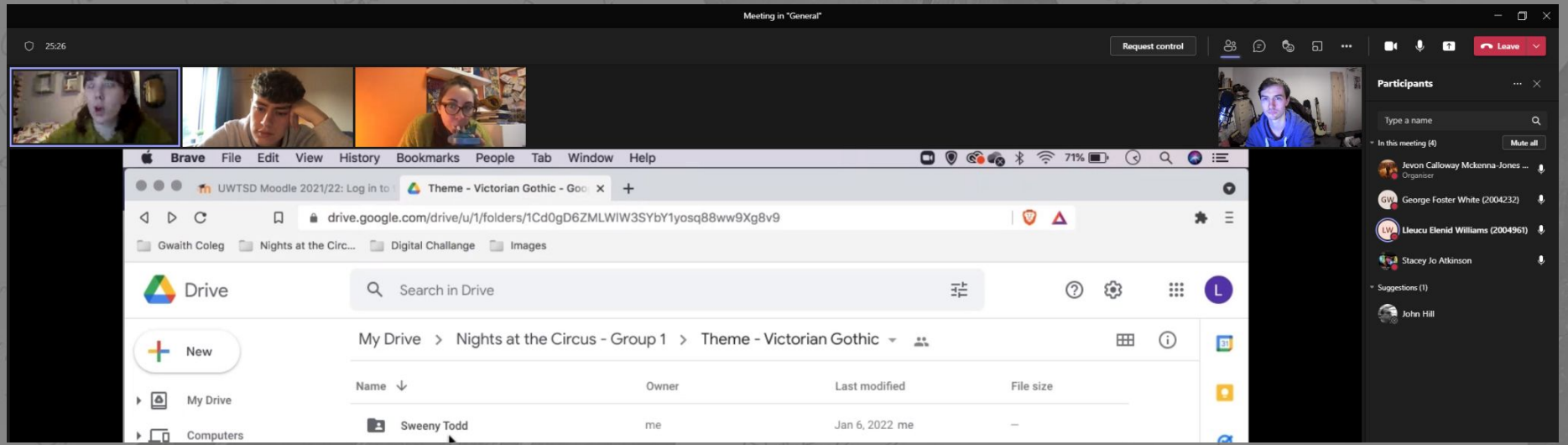
(Catsthemusical via twitter.com, 2015)

/Selection

Group research - consolidating the world

Early on, we had multiple group meeting between the three of us over Microsoft Teams. These meetings were to discuss our initial research ideas and how to unify them into a coherent visual world of which all our designs would live inside seamlessly.

I'll be the first to admit that I found this very difficult, as we all had very unique ideas. On top of that, everybody thought I was still committed to making a large animal, whereas I was becoming much more drawn to the notion of making a humanoid. I should have communicated more. We decided to make a refined folder for a final group moodboard to establish our world's atmosphere - Where all three notions would merge as one moving forward.

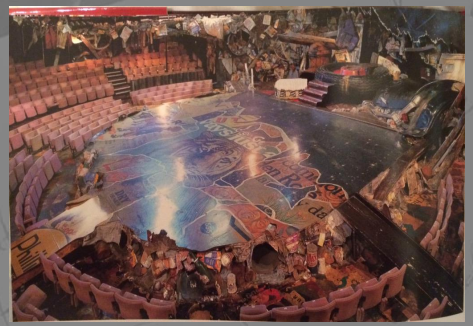


/Selection

Group research - consolidating the world

On the final moodboard, we put together a special folder of images that we especially liked, and then all refined that down to five images each, meaning the final group moodboard would be fifteen images in total. Here in no particular order are my five images, and the final moodboard they became part of.

I chose these images because I liked the use of shadows, highlights, bright rich colours, and textures. I hoped that by putting these images in the mood board I could help steer the final world we were building in a less ‘generic circus’ direction.













/Research

Czeck Puppets - Themes of Resistance

The Czeck Republic prides itself on its rich history of puppets - dating back as far as Medieval times.

“In the course of the 17th century, English, Dutch, Italian, and later German theatre groups increasingly travelled to the Czech regions, performing with string puppets to augment the attraction of performances by live actors. Johann Baptist Hilverding, Girolamo Renzi and Josef Anton Geissler were among the first important puppeteers of this period. Many of these theatre people gradually specialized in puppet theatre.” (Dubska & Malikova, 2012)

What followed after this initial boom of creativity and entertainment innovation is what cemented Czeck Puppets as a staple of cultural history:

“-Because after the Austrians crushed them in 1620, they were not allowed to use Czeck for any important public events; for theatre, for anything. They did let them use them for puppets. So Czeck was useful for fieldhands, and for the puppeteers. And it helped keep the language alive.” (Power, 2016)

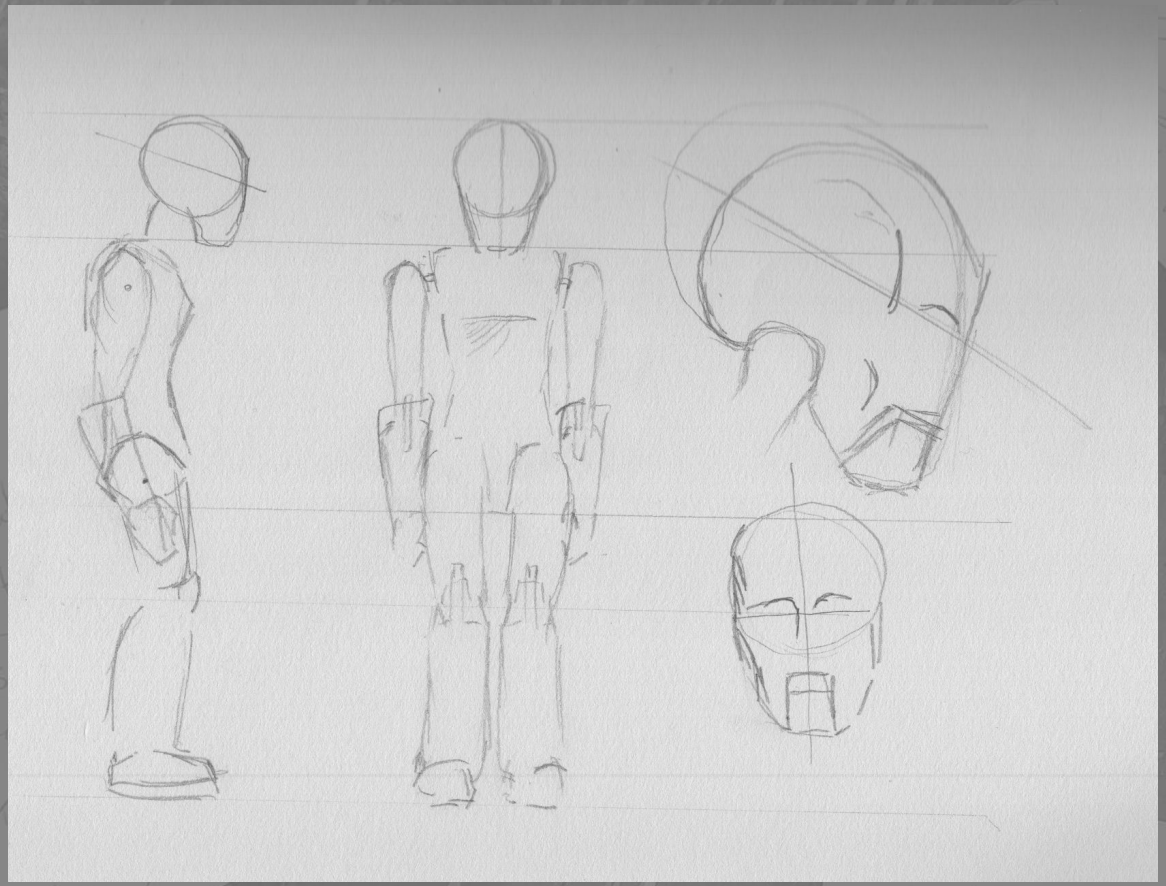
Indeed, this idea of a simple peasant’s form of entertainment keeping a language alive adds a whole depth of emotional weight to it. Truly, these entertainers were heroes to their people for what they did in the face of adversity.

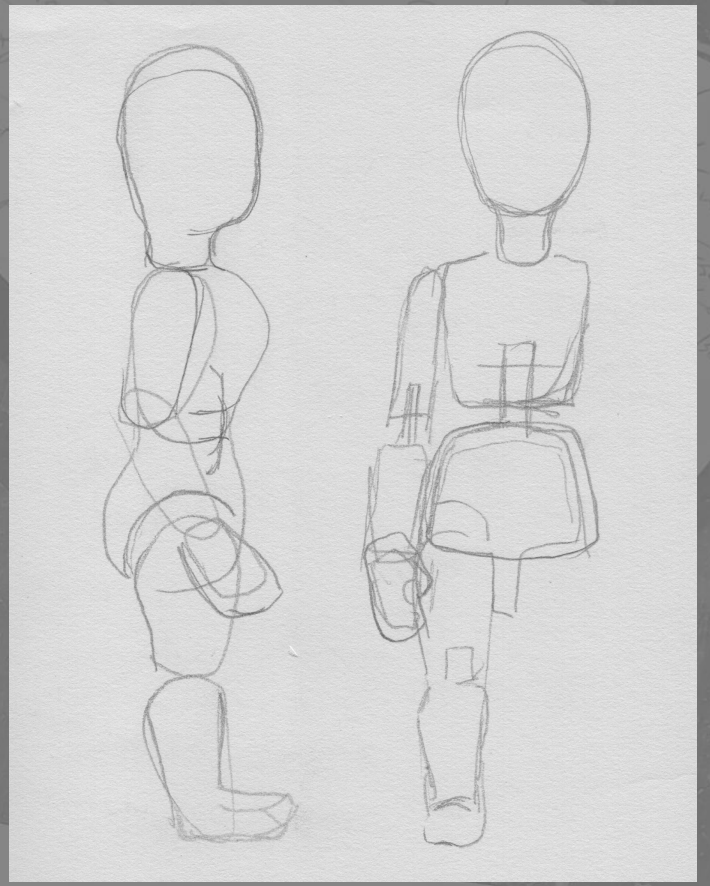


(Puppetsinprague.eu, 2020)



(Dubska & Malikova, 2012)













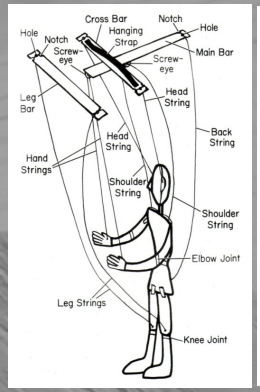




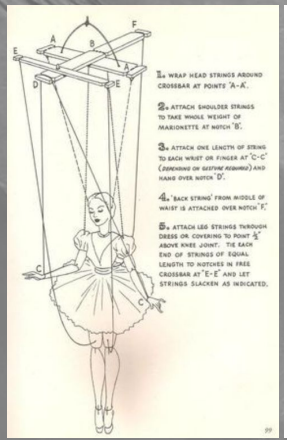


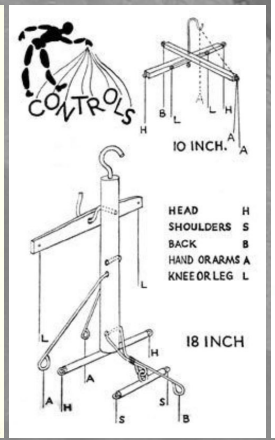


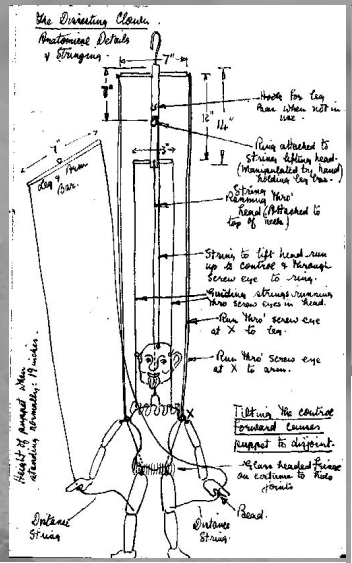
/Research

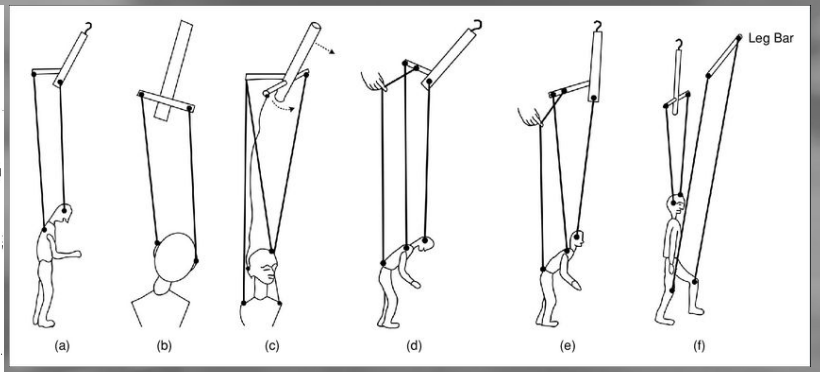

Cross Bar
Hanging Strap
Notch
Hole
Hole
Notch
Screw-eye
Main Bar
Screw-eye
Leg Bar
Head String
Head String
Back String
Hand Strings
Shoulder String
Shoulder String
Elbow Joint
Leg Strings
Knee Joint

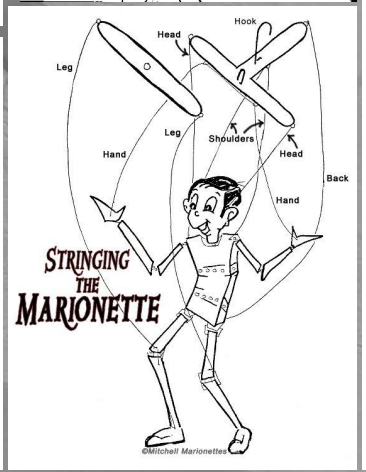

3D.
Marionettes.cz
Skupa
Controller
Skupovo Vahadlo
Leg
Rubber
Leg
Eyes
Eye lids
Mouth
Head
Hand
Hand
Head
Moon walk
Fold for easy transport
Back
Shoulders

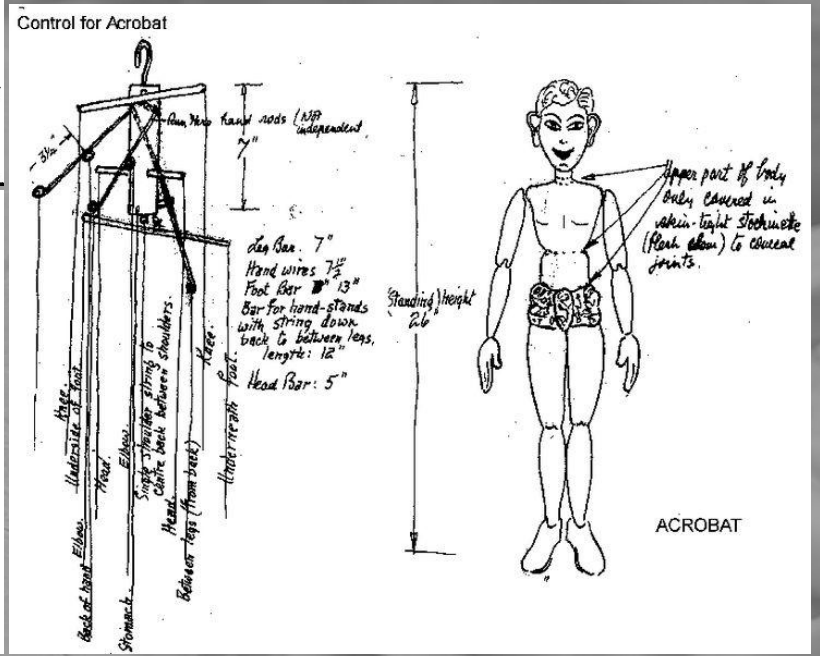

1. WRAP HEAD STRINGS AROUND CROSSBAR AT POINTS 'A-A'.
2. ATTACH SHOULDER STRINGS TO TAKE WHOLE WEIGHT OF MARIONETTE AT NOTCH 'B'.
3. ATTACH ONE LENGTH OF STRING TO EACH WRIST OR FINGER AT 'C-C' (DEPENDING ON GESTURE REQUIRED) AND HAND OVER NOTCH 'D'.
4. 'BACK STRING' FROM MIDDLE OF WAIST IS ATTACHED OVER NOTCH 'E'.
5. ATTACH LEG STRINGS THROUGH DRESS OR COVERING TO POINT ½" ABOVE KNEE JOINT. TIE EACH END OF STRINGS OF EQUAL LENGTH TO NOTCHES IN FREE CROSSBAR AT 'E-E' AND LET STRINGS SLACKEN AS INDICATED.


CONTROLS
10 INCH.
HEAD H
SHOULDERS S
BACK B
HAND OR ARMS A
KNEE OR LEG L
18 INCH

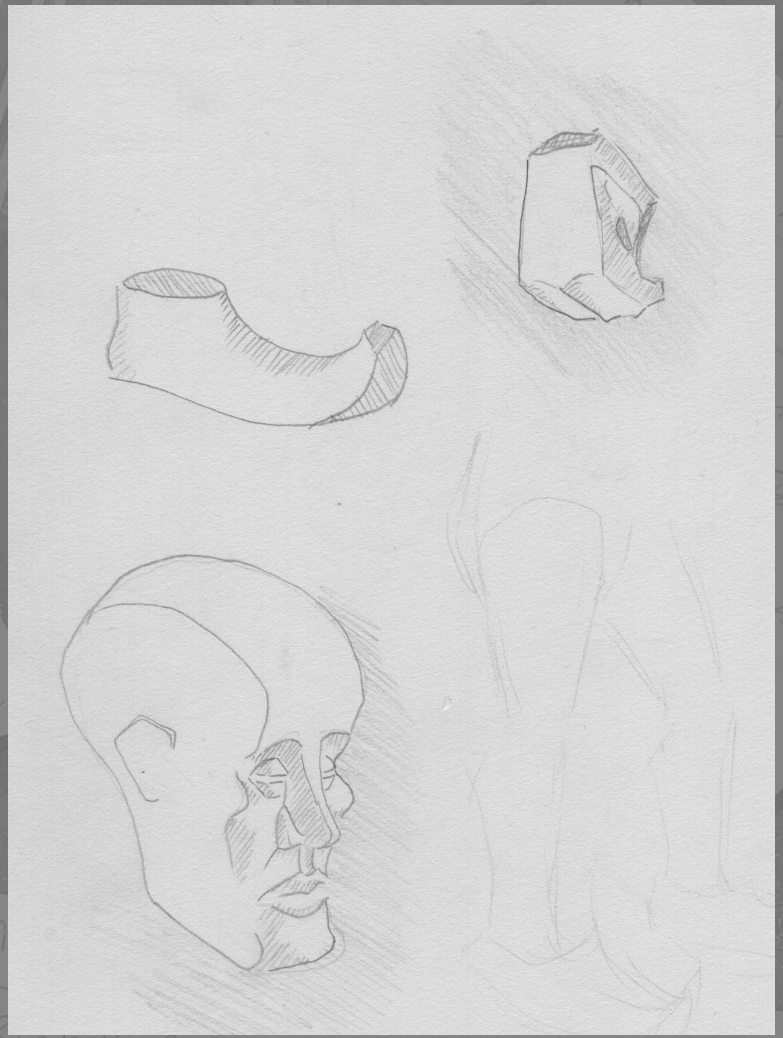

The Directing Clown
Anatomical Details
& Strings
Hook for leg bar when not in use
Ring attached to strings lifting head. (Manipulated by hand holding leg bar.)
String Running thro' Head (Attached to top of neck)
String to lift head, run up & control & through screw eye to ring.
Guiding strings running thro screw eyes in head.
Run thro' screw eye at X to ten.
Run thro' screw eye at X to arm.
Tilting the control forward causes puppet to depend.
Strings headed Loops on control to hold joints
Bead.
Distance String
Distance String

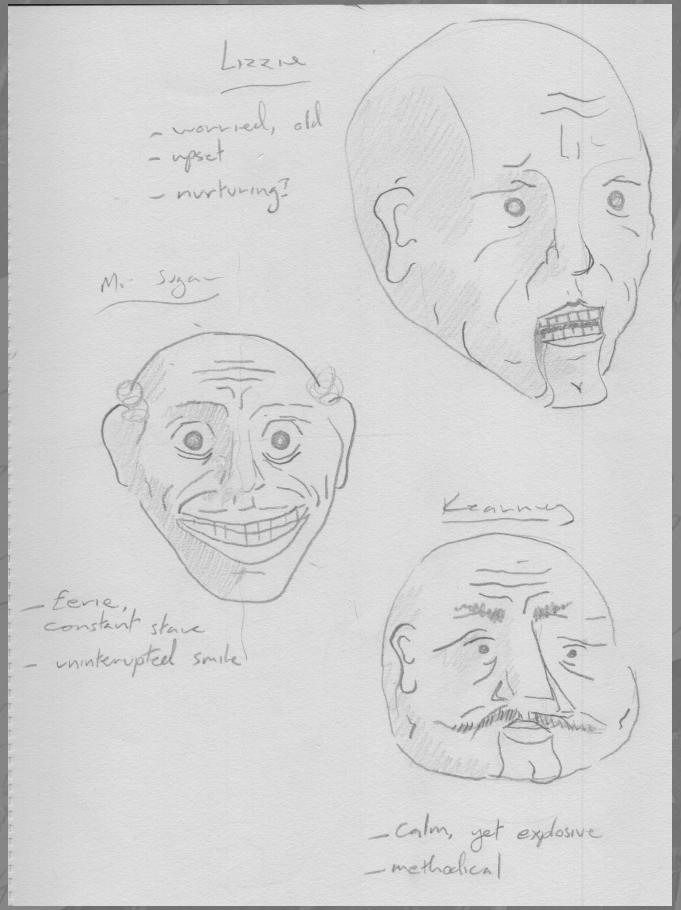

Leg Bar
(a)
(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)
(f)

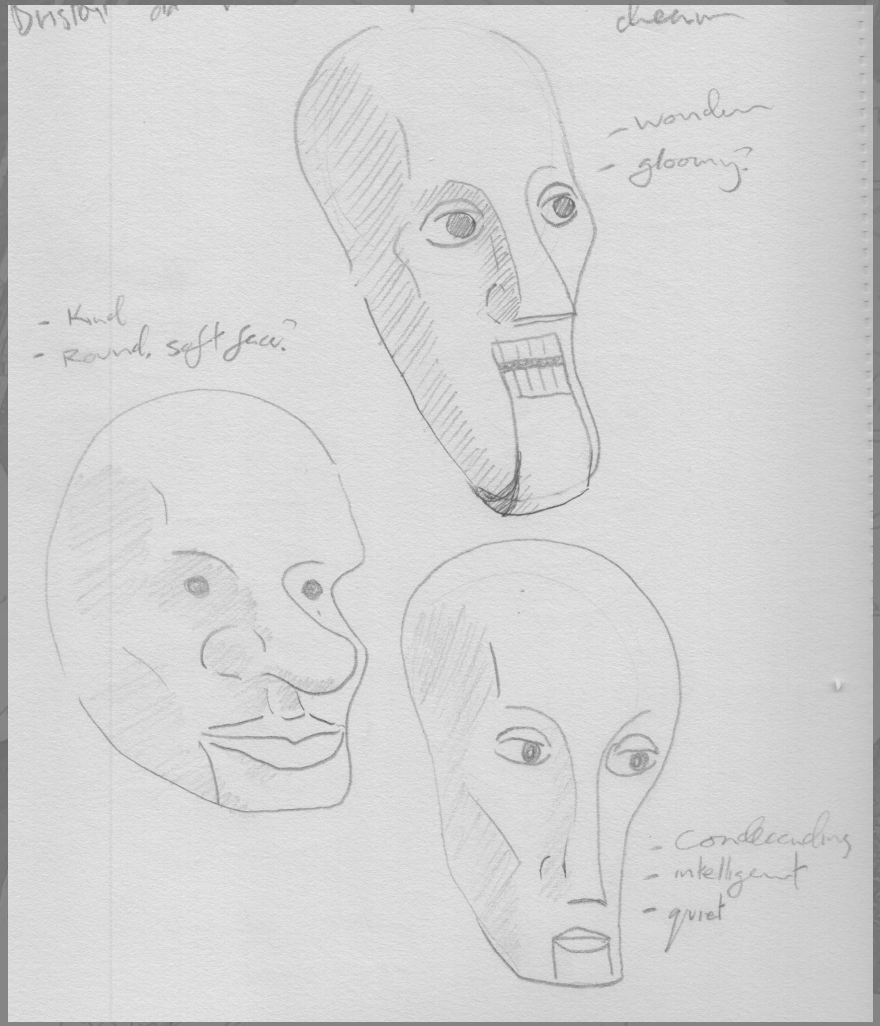

Head
Hook
Leg
Leg
Shoulders
Head
Hand
Hand
Back
STRINGING THE MARIONETTE
©Mitchell Marionettes


Control for Acrobat
Run thro' hand rods (NOT independent)
7"
Leg Bar. 7"
Hand wires 7½"
Foot Bar 13"
Bar for hand-stands with string down back to between legs, length: 12"
Head Bar: 5"
Standing Height 2'6"
Upper part of body body covered in skin-tight stockinette (flesh colour) to conceal joints.
ACROBAT


Ball & socket joint
one way pivot




Lizzie
- worried, old
- upset
- nurturing?
Mr. Sugar
- Eerie, constant stare
- uninterrupted smile
Kearney
- Calm, yet explosive
- methodical


- wondering
- gloomy?
- Kind
- Round, soft face?
- Condescending
- intelligent
- quiet

/Incubation

Idea consolidation

With a more centralised idea of exactly what we wanted, I set about committing and sketching designs of marionettes, with body ratios heavily inspired by the Czeck ones I found so fascinating.

While doing this, I observed some of the preliminary moodboards Lleucu had done for her rendition of Fevver's loose design (pictured here). At once I was inspired to see if I could design a puppet version of her idea, but leaning even more heavily into the bird side of her character. I wanted the puppet version and the actor's costume to resemble each other, but only just enough to get the point across.

After brainstorming, designing, and then showing Lleucu what I had done in response to what she had done, I realised I had actually trod partially into her department. It's not that there was anything wrong with this, but still important to document this thought process.

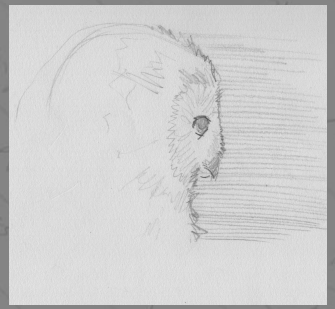




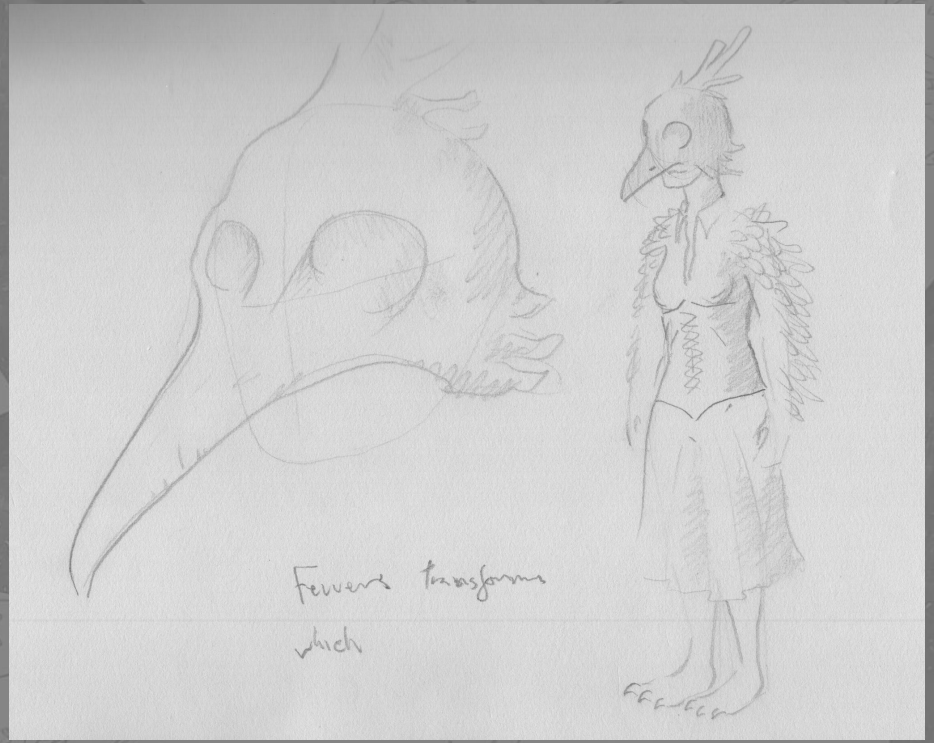


/Incubation

A possible Fevvers







/Implementation

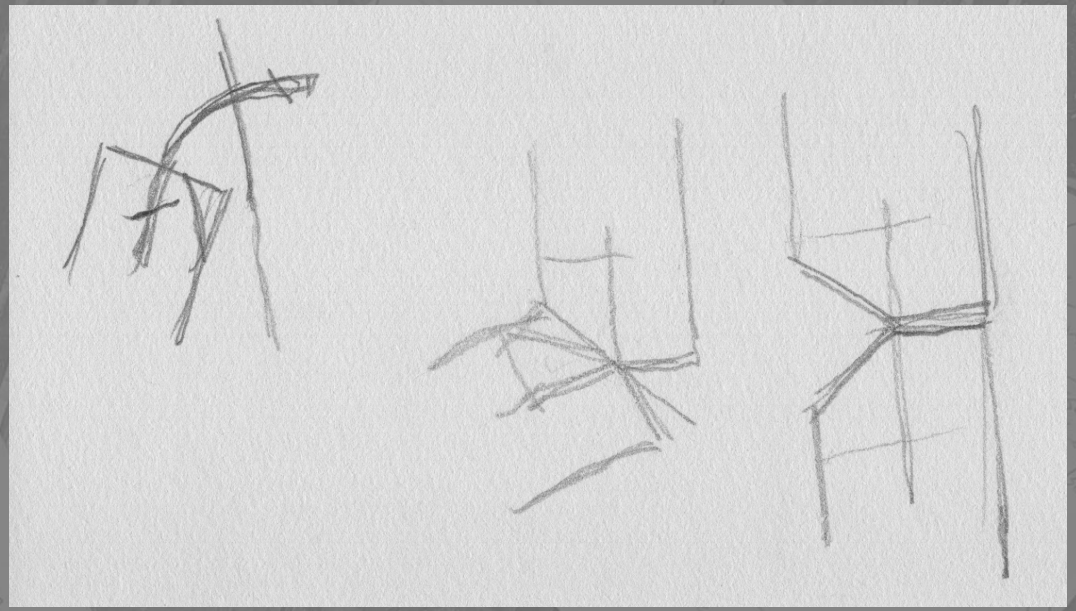
Idea consolidation

With the first week of two swiftly arriving, I made about planning exactly what I would do with my time in the workshop.

As somebody who has never operated a puppet, let alone make one, I saw it as a little fruitless to make some perfect design before getting my hands on something real, something I could learn from. So I aimed to make several prototypes during that first week.

My first hurdle was how the joints would work, both the ball joints and the straight pivot joints (knee joints, ect). Stacey helped me out straight off the bat with a design whereby a slot is cut into both limbs, then a flat bit of folded canvas is fastened into it with pins. This instantly granted me the ability to make excellent knee joints and such.

I adapted this design into an improvised ball joint by rolling some canvas quite tightly, then gently placing it into drilled holes on both body parts - and using the same method of pins to fasten them permanently.









/Implementation

Making Marionettes



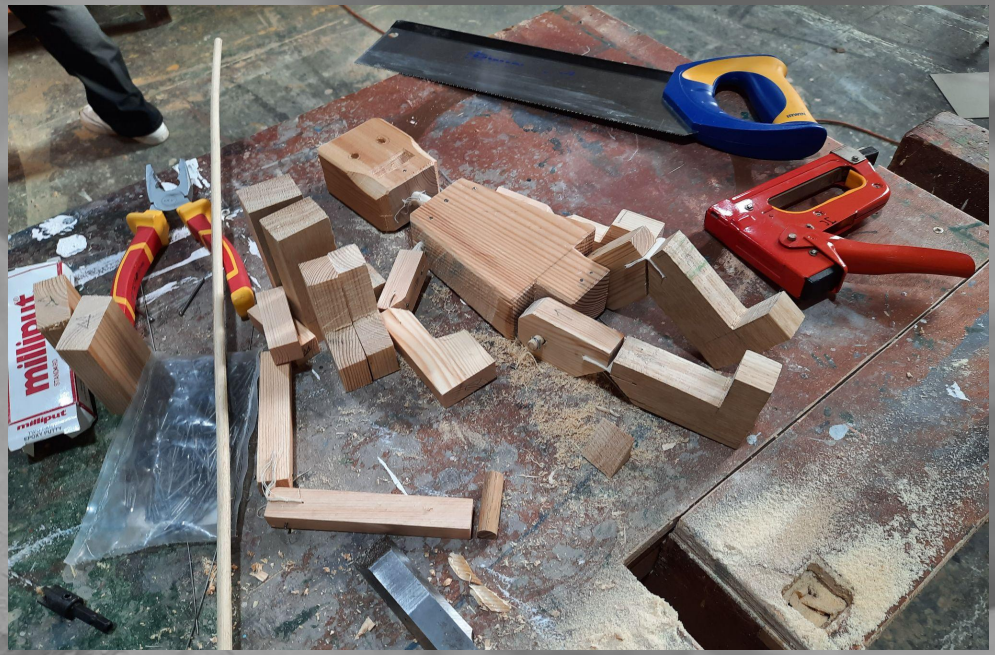


In preparation for failure, I batch cut three sets of limbs at once, partially incase I broke them, but also because I wanted to have multiple attempts at making the same general idea. I drew this idea onto a sheet of A3 paper, as a way of visually referencing the sizes. This was how I ended up at the height I used for them.

/Implementation

Making Marionettes





Before long I had a wooden doll. Before I started on its controller however, I wanted to keep making bodies while I was on a roll. And I had already learned some things about making the first one, things which I wanted to do differently.

For example, I now had learned to use the air powered pin gun to sink just the right sized pins into both hard and soft woods. Which was important, as they could blow out and/or sit proud if I didn't use the correct air pressure. And I had made the feet from Oak compared to the pine bodies, as I had read during my research that it benefits their ability to walk.

/Implementation

Making Marionettes





With more carefully made joints that flexed to a tighter degree, a weighted abdomen and further chest articulation, the second doll was leaps ahead of the first. I was already more confident in my ability to make them by this point, so I thought I'd have a crack at a controller next.



/Implementation

Making Marionettes





/Implementation

Making Marionettes







/Implementation

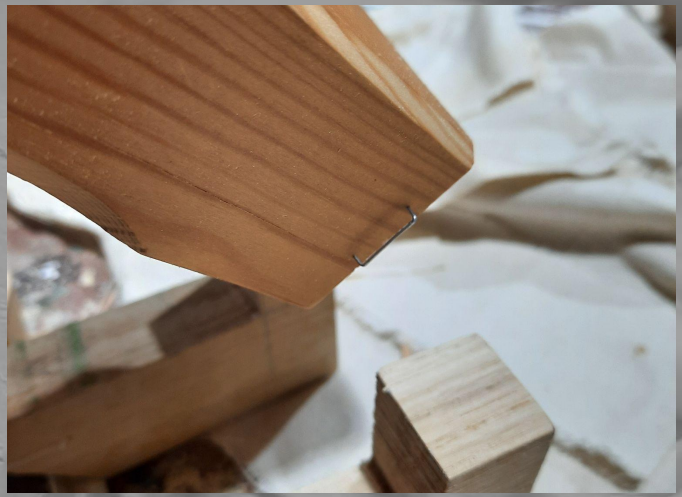
Making Marionettes

The first puppet I attempted to make was the most crude, and many mistakes were made along the way. I was also sorely lacking in crucial materials needed for this type of work. For example, instead of strong fishing line, I had very thin polyester thread. Instead of eye hooks, I had staples from a staple gun that could not properly sink them into the wood. As for moving parts within the controller, I simply didn't have any - I utilised a housing joint to enable the leg strings to separate off and do the motions of walking with.

Once strung up, it was a very special moment for me when I first saw it start to move. It was also a steep learning curve for me just to make it move in a convincing way. I compare it to rubbing one's belly while patting one's head.

Before I strung up the second one, I bought some supplies that would aid me with the techniques I had learned.





/Implementation

Making Marionettes

This second prototype outperformed the original in almost every way, and it could also be used one handed, due to how the controller utilizes several moving pivotal points. However, this one cannot jump or squat the same way the previous one can due to the nature of its leg controlling mechanism. I also got the balance much more centered this time, its head did not droop to one side!







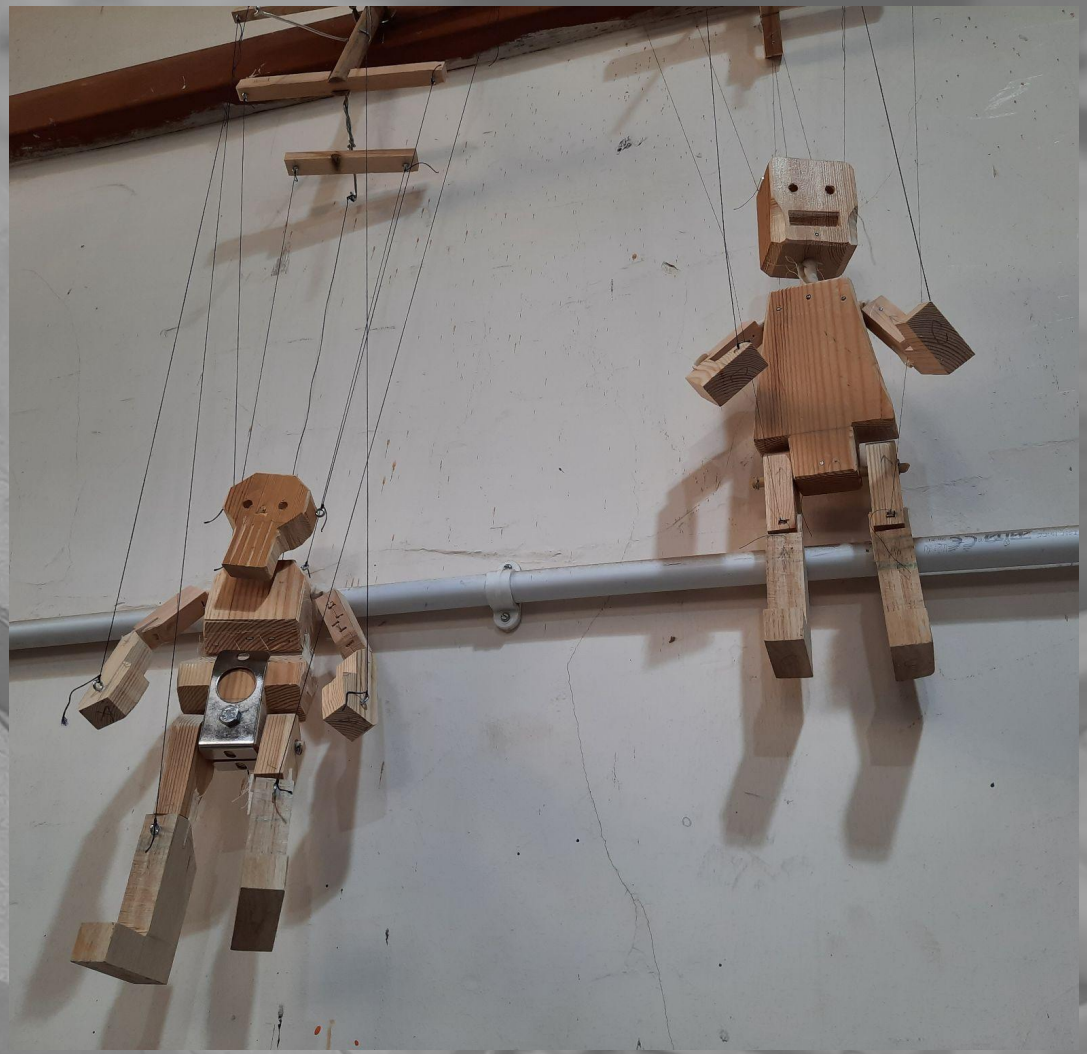






/Implementation





/Implementation

Making Marionettes

For my third and final prototype marionette, I opted for even more articulation and complexity.

I also adopted aspects from both previous incarnations, such as the articulated midriff from the second one and the detachable leg string system from the first.

This time I wanted something even more refined, and able to express emotion than the previous two.







/Implementation









/Implementation

Making Marionettes

Armed with eye hooks, fishing line, strong gardening wire, and now Milliput (Thanks to Dave), I thought I'd make the third one's head more three-dimensional using some of the putty pasted over some balsa fins attached to the back of the head. I'm glad I did this, as it was a good learning curve in two part epoxy.





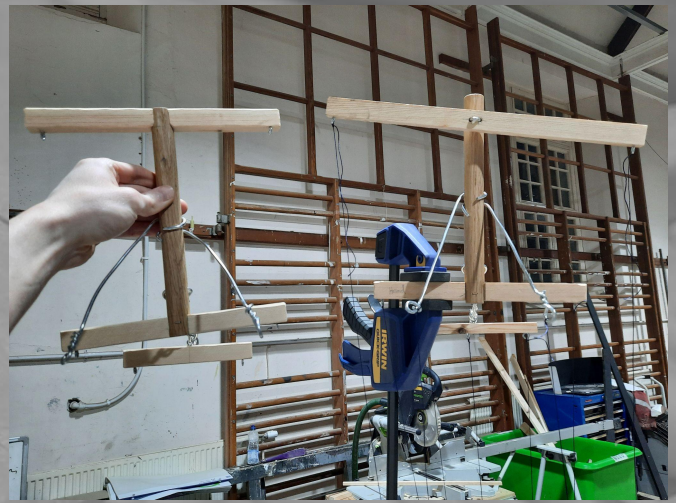


/Implementation







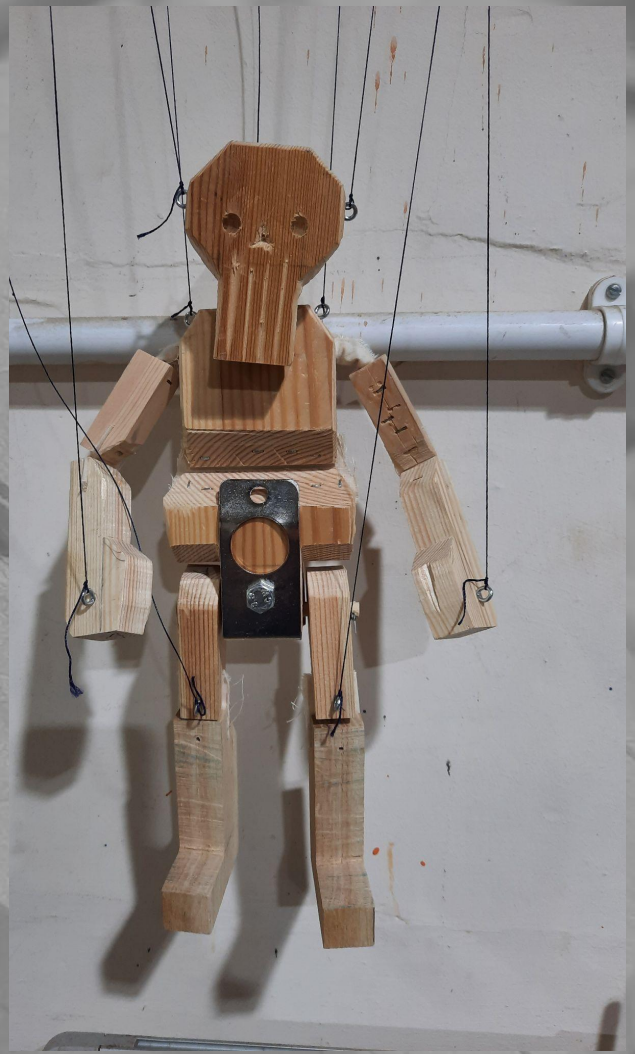


With four more points of articulation (The feet and hands), this third prototype was my favourite. Notably, I believe it's worth stating that whereas I needed help stringing up the first two, I was able to do this one all by myself. I felt much faster and more efficient in the building of this third marionette than the previous two.

As I had left over Milliput from it's head, I coated a piece of dowel and made an impromptu wine bottle for it. I thought the implication of intoxication would lend itself well to the way these things move.

/Implementation







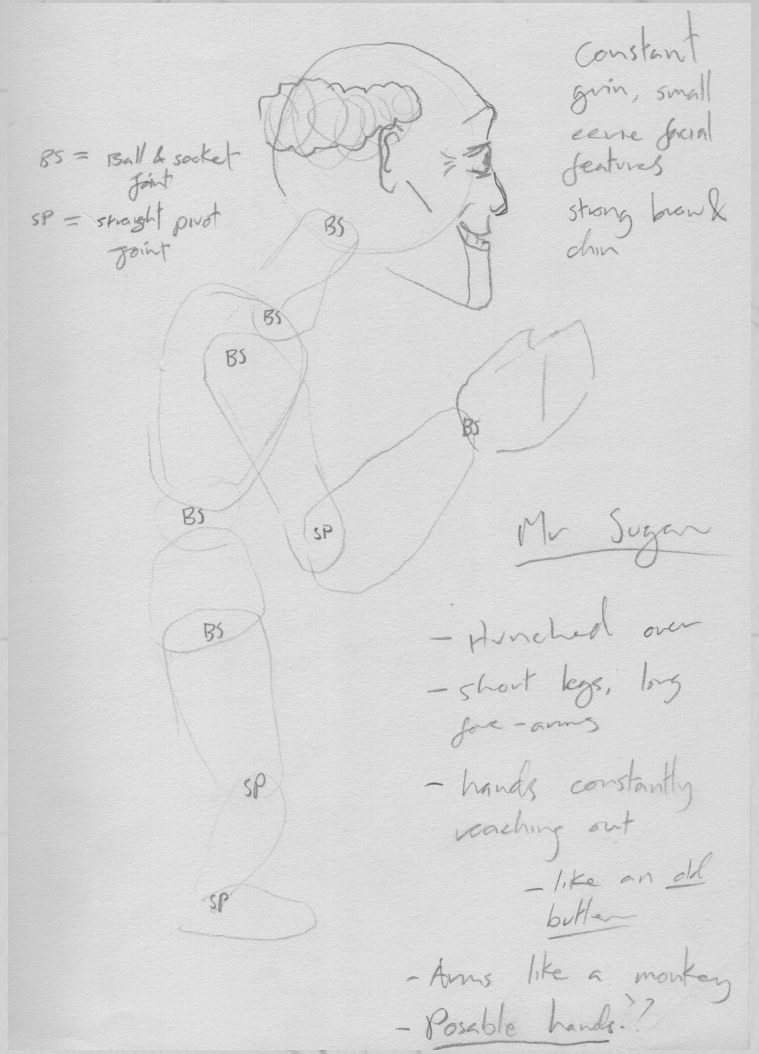
/Selection

Design process

With some good experience in the medium backing me up, I was now able to more accurately judge my capabilities in regards to what was possible for any further puppet making. Here are some possible characters for the flashbacks of which they would appear in puppet form.

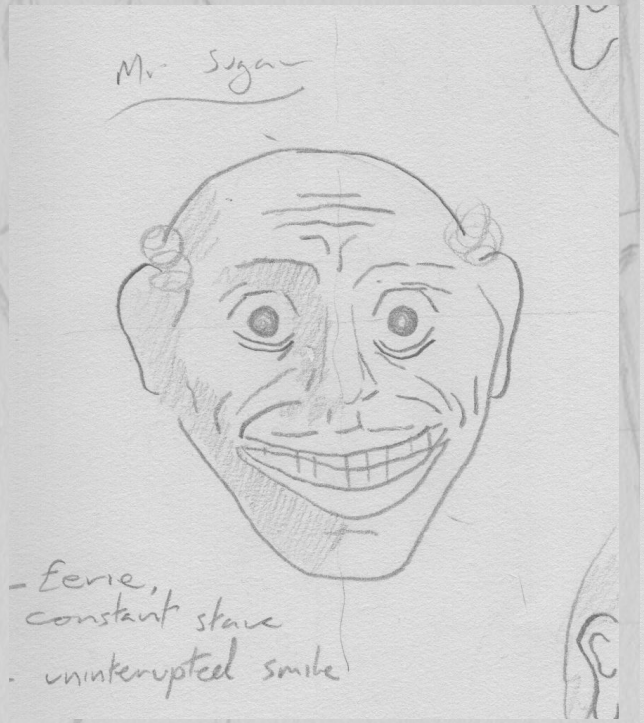
I did plan to make a third and final puppet. It would be larger, more intricate, and possibly have a moving mouth. This was my mindset going into the second week, as I had accomplished so much during the first.

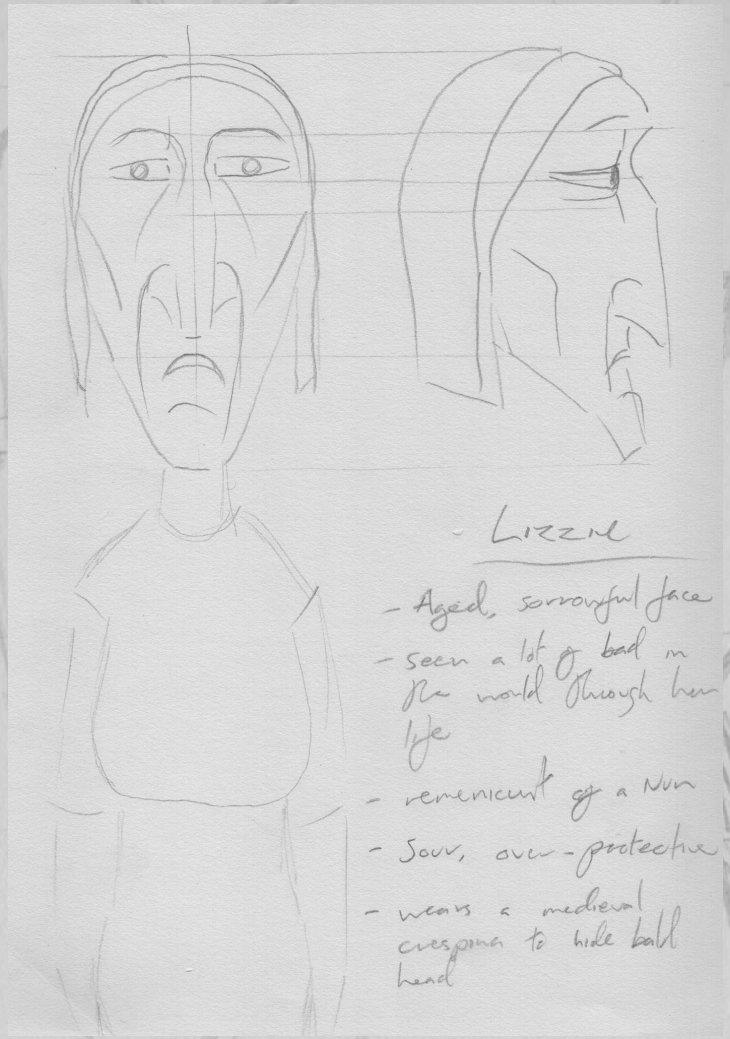
However, I opted to leave it at three, as I could spend my time helping my group with their physical projects - and making a platform for my work in preparation for the presentation that was looming around the corner. It seemed like my three marionettes already spoke for themselves in regards to what they could accomplish visually and narratively.



/Selection

Design process



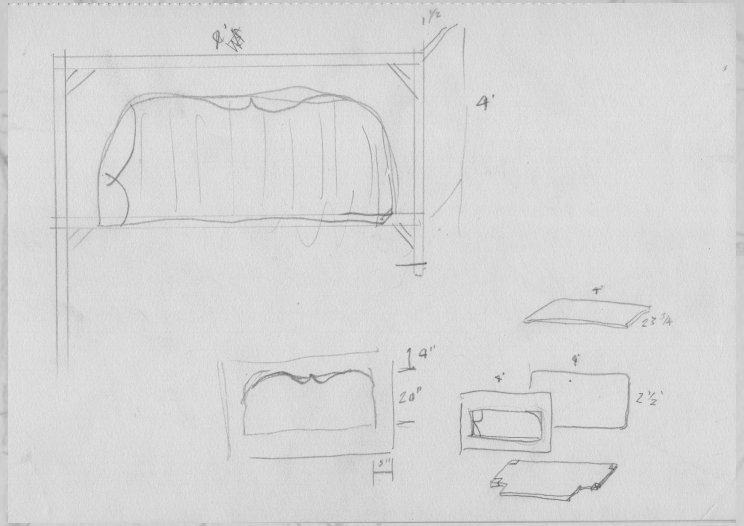


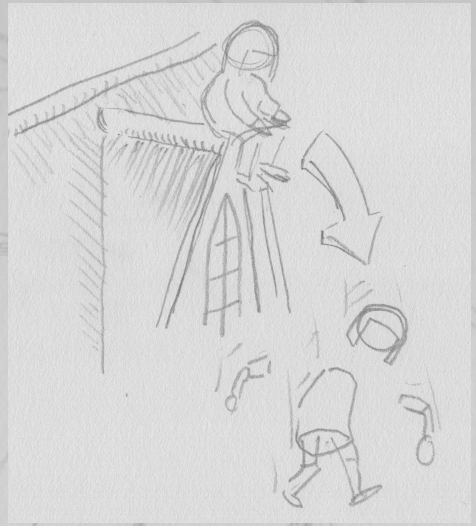


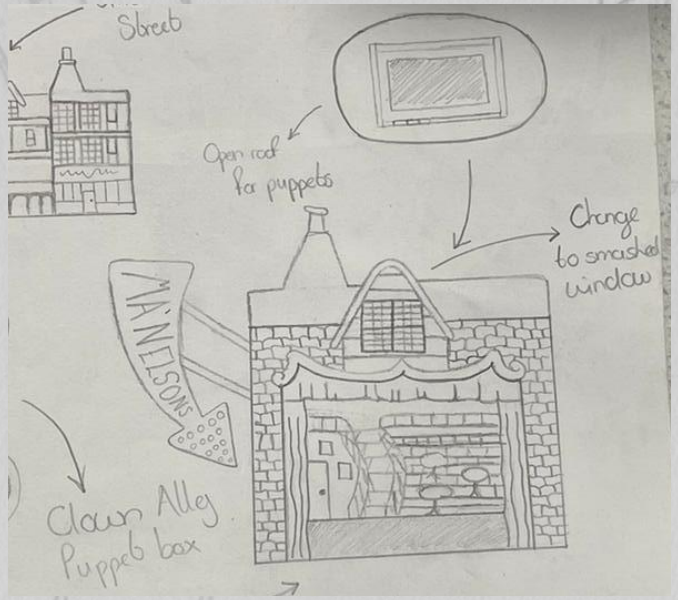
/Selection

Design process

Me and George, despite clashing at first with the initial ideas, ended up working closely together to ensure our ideas were synchronous with eachother's visions.



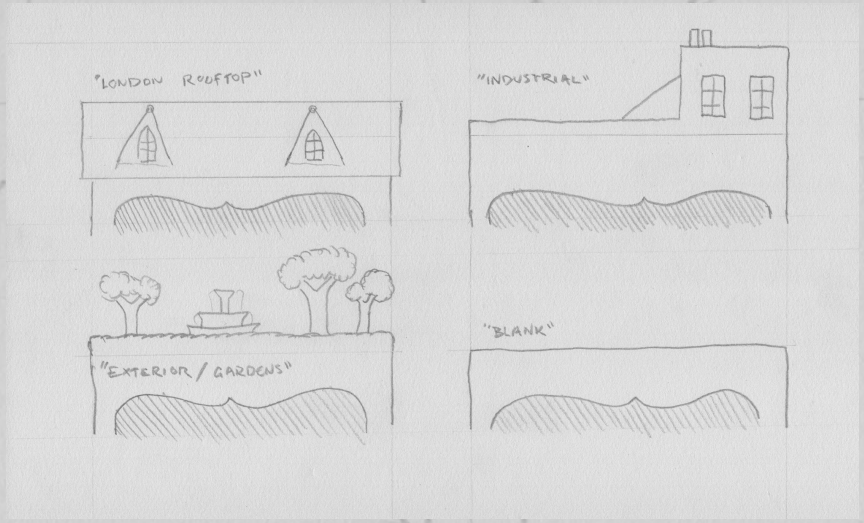




From his designs of a miniature stage for the flashbacks, I was able to develop, and then create the prototype of his design. This would be its own theatrical ecosystem, complete with its own miniature lights.

This further inspired me to create designs for different rooftops to symbolise the different areas, as well as a means of explaining Fevver's crucial brothel flashback - the part where she flies for the first time.

By taking inspiration from Clickspring, I figured out that by using an older and younger puppet, I could seamlessly display how the main protagonist grows up and gains her wings.

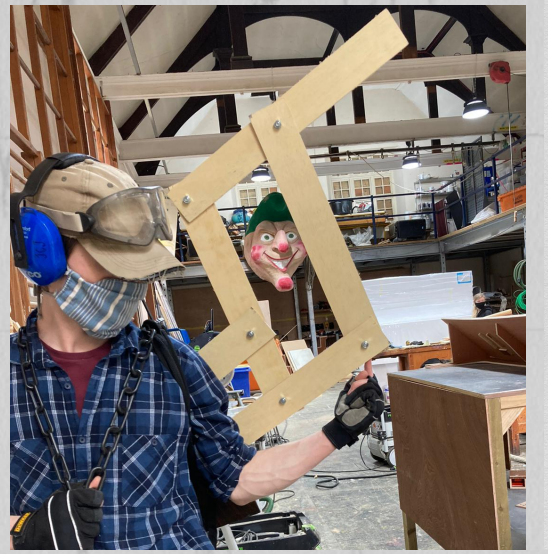


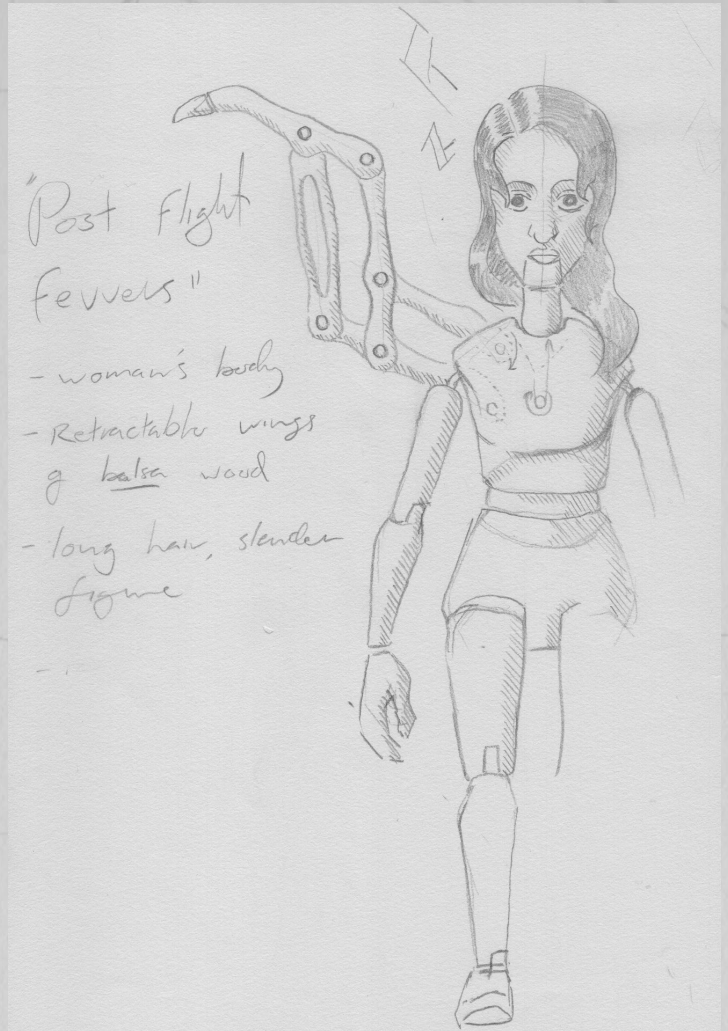
/Selection

Design process



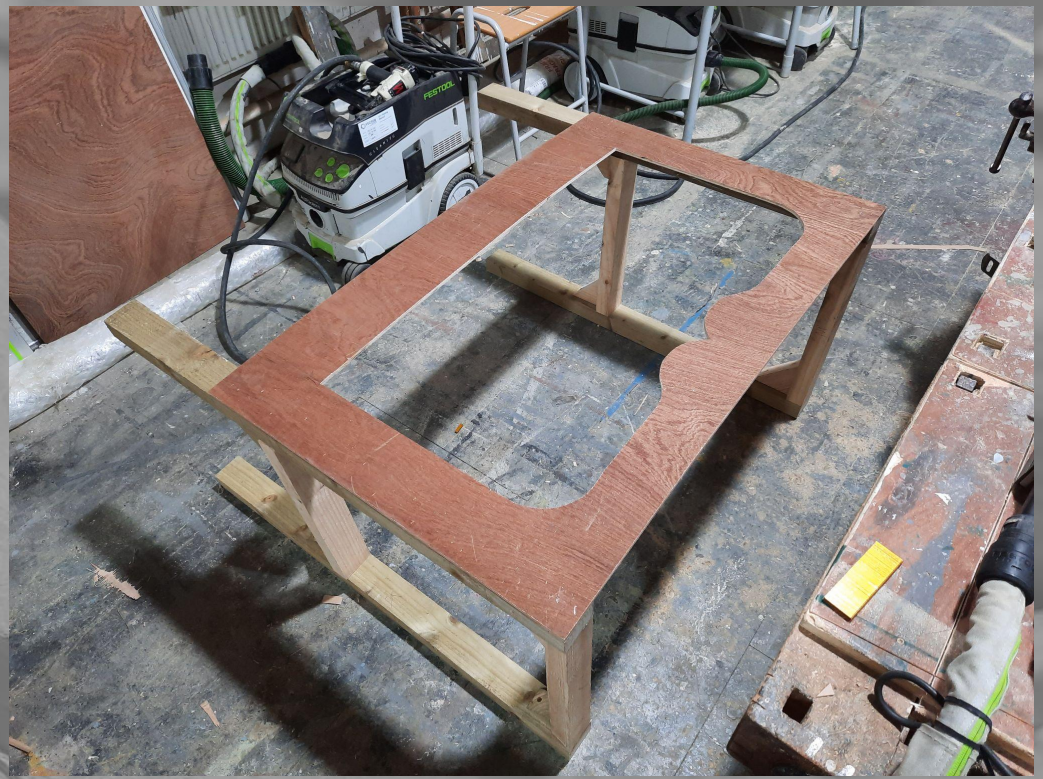
Using the fantastic idea of a puppet that can come apart via velcro or other means, I finalised the concept designs of young and adult Fevvers, shown here. Because of the time I had spent helping Lleucu's project of retractable wings, I was also able to work with her very closely in how they would look and feel.





/Implementation







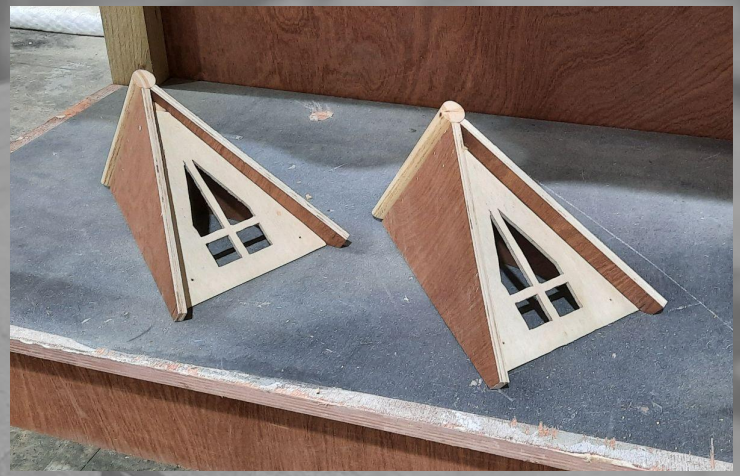


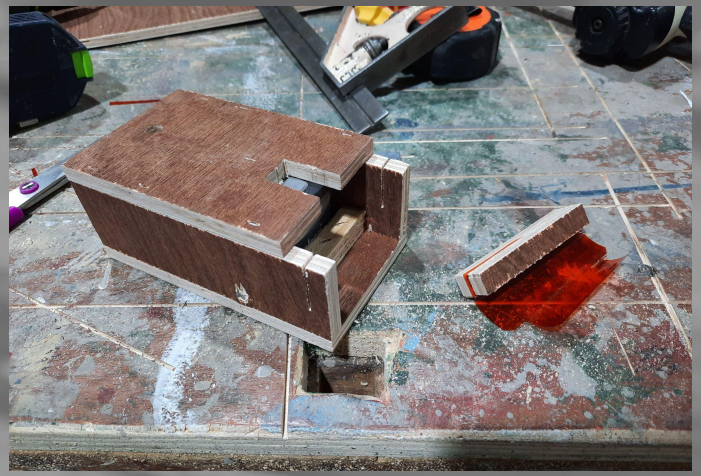




/Implementation











/Implementation





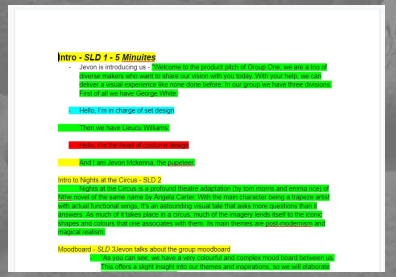
/Evaluation

Presentation

When it was time for our presentation, we were still working on the physical projects and were short on time. Understandably, when Stacey saw our rehearsal, she was not too impressed. We took her feedback and did a revision of our script, and made bullet point cards - all via the internet. Thankfully again to shared online documents, this was easy to write and collaborate together with.

What came as a shock was that having all three puppets moving at the same time was a little distracting - and it took a lot of time for us to rearrange the little stage from george presenting on it to us performing inside of it. We rectified this by having george present on a seperate table, so my segment was instantly accessible to me. Additionally, I built a quick mounting system so that though only one marionette was being used, the other two were still positioned inside of the theatre like they were being held.

All this being said though, I was still certain that our product pitch would not be very impressive on the due day. However, I now know that I worried too much over it, and I'm very proud of the three of us in our delivery of the presentation. I had to try really hard to talk slowly and methodically.


Intro - *SLD 1 - 5 Minutes*

- Jevon is introducing us - "Welcome to the product pitch of Group One, we are a trio of theatre makers who want to share our vision with you today. With your help, we can deliver a visual experience like none done before. In our group we have three theatre fans of all we have George White."

"Hello, I'm in charge of set design"

"...There we have Libuse Williams"

"Hello, I am the head of costume design"

"And I am Jevon Mckenna, the puppeteer."

Intro to Nights at the Circus - SLD 2

"Nights at the Circus is a profound theatre adaptation (by tom morris and emma rice) of the novel of the same name by Angela Carter. With he main character being a trapeze artist with actual functional wings. It's an astounding visual tale that asks more questions than it answers. As much of it takes place in a circus, much of the imagery lends itself to the iconic shapes and colours that one associates them with. Its main themes are post-modernism and magical realism."

Moodboard - SLD 3Jevon talks about the group moodboard

"As you can see, we have a very colourful and complex mood board between us, this offers a slight insight into our themes and inspirations, so we will elaborate





/Evaluation

Reflections

During this module, I found some parts especially easy, and some parts very difficult.

My group's journey was an interesting one for me, as at the beginning it was so hard to find common ground between our individual world ideas. I personally was probably a major cause of this, as I was adamant that I wanted subversion, I didn't want to have to make a generic default circus. Thankfully this was not really the case at all, as my group did listen to my ideas and incorporate them when possible. By the end presentation, I felt like we had had one joint vision all along - Hopefully my classmates who watched us present our work thought the same.

I feel that the give and take of group design development is a complex art, and I'm not very good at it. But I feel better now than I did before - I just have to widen the scope of what I'd like to be implemented. This way I don't have to get so upset that the idea I grew so attached to was discarded. In some ways this did happen with the neon-decay theme I had put together, but that's okay.

I definitely feel like me, Lleucu and George are better at working with each other than before. Hopefully we can utilize this synergy next time we work together on something. Though I have worked with them both before, there was an intimacy to how small our group was, and I feel that has aided me in my ability to understand their idiosyncrasies better.

During the prototyping stage of making the puppets, I don't know if I've ever been more in my element this year than that week - Possibly because being permitted to make mistakes is so liberating. I'm actually still surprised that I managed to get three completely functional marionettes complete within the space of a week. That was definitely a highlight of this module for me. The feedback I got from my year and the third years was incredibly encouraging - I'm not used to so much attention being directed towards my work in person.

/Evaluation

Reflections

In regards to timekeeping and deadlines, I'm still working on that. I did have some house & computer troubles during this module - but I hope it didn't show. If I was to do this again, I would have been better at putting together my packet lunches. If I was more on top of the timekeeping, I would have been able to obtain much more feedback with my work. I'm aware of that.

One thing I feel is important to touch upon, is how my department of puppetry was very subject to the whims of the other two departments, I believe more so than the other two were to me. This is because my puppets had to resemble whatever Lleucu had settled on, and likewise they had to exist within the allocated space George had drawn out. The less optimistic view of this is that I was more or less 'boxed in' to the box George had envisioned, where my creations were entirely separate from the actors in every way. In some ways this is advantageous, but in other ways I did feel cut off from being able to implement more ideas directly into their workflow in the way they could into mine. But I digress.

It was exhilarating when we did our presentation, or at least I found it so, because I really put my faith into my teammates in regards to what we were promoting as a group. It made me proud when George said *"You won't find a harder working group than Group One"*, and I knew he meant it. I find it very hard to sell the ideas and products I make, let alone myself as a maker.

I hope to bring that same ability to quickly execute rough ideas in physical form to my next module, and I hope whoever I work with can see my usefulness in that degree. I think I do suffer from 'over-analysis' when it comes to the idea before it comes time to actually make it, it's like the fear of the blank canvases potential versus whatever I can draw on it.

I'm just thankful for the opportunity to really sink my teeth into a lovely task such as this one, as I feel overall, it went pretty well for me.

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