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L6 - Advanced Character Performance (ACCA6031)

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Submission Due Date:

#1 Presentation: 10/11/2025

#2 Portfolio: 16/01/2026

Link to Final Product/s:

[Advance Character Performance Module Animation \(Third Year\)](#)

[Advanced Character Performance Breakdown Video](#)

[Character Particle Simulation Animation \(ACP Module - Third
Year\)](#)

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Introduction

- **Module Aims:** Here I will *briefly state my personal goals for this module.*
What do I want to improve in my character animation?

In this module I want to be able to expand not just my base knowledge and awareness of 3D animation relating to advanced performance such as concepts, ideologies, but how I can bring these different ideas and techniques together to freely create any vision I imagine. I am sure anyone can relate, working in this industry, being so creative, you want to bring your ideas to life and to inspire just like how I gain inspiration from others creativity.

In this module I want to learn the principles and more advanced methods in which I can do exactly this. I am fully aware however, learning never stops and I want to always strive to be better, and improve my work. I can already see a difference in quality, however, as a personal reflection, I would like to get faster at creating portfolio pieces, my iteration speed is something that needs to be worked on.

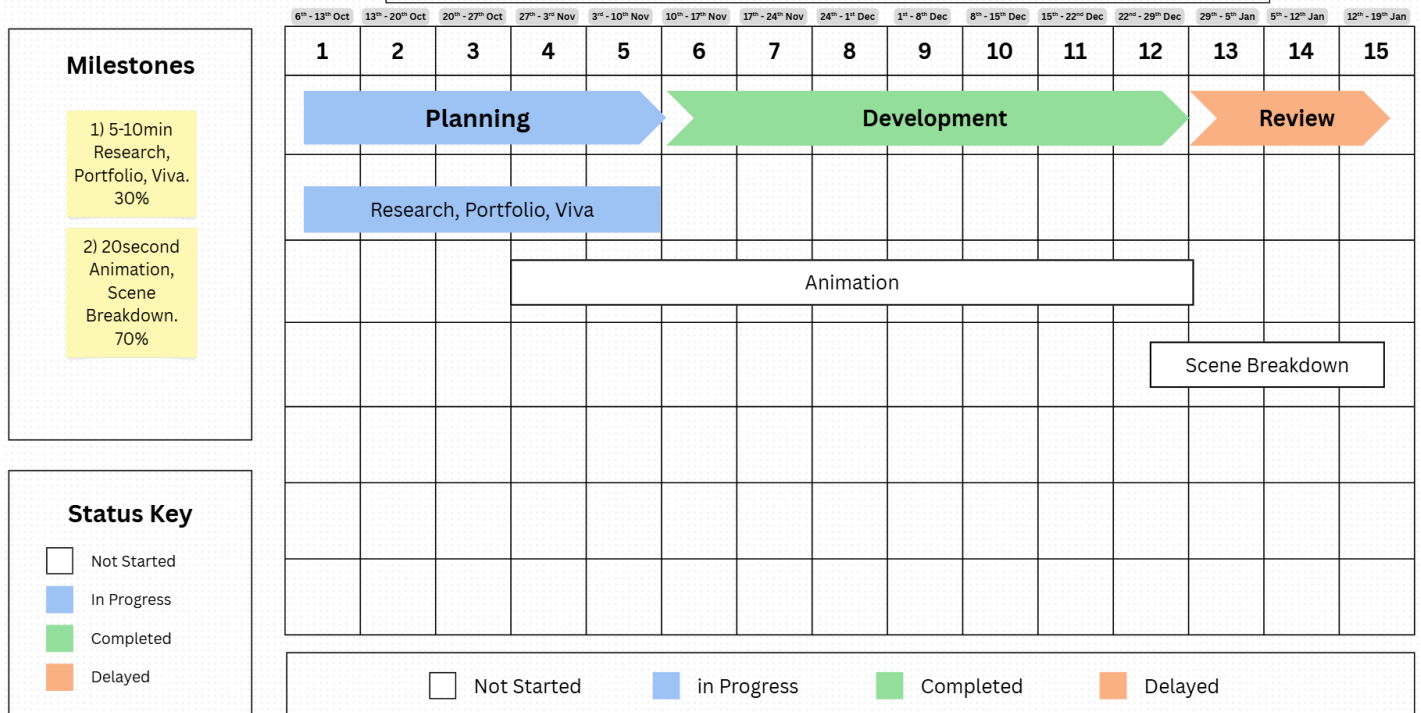
As someone with ADHD and OCD I tend to have conflicting ideologies, for example I tend to be a perfectionist which is great for attention to detail, but not so much when deadlines need to be met. However, this said, I utilise this to its best advantage to give me quality over quantity and being able to multitask efficiently allows me to stay on track and can better compartmentalise tasks amongst multiple modules at once, teaching me valuable work ready skills. Something I have put into active practice over the years I have been in education.

Likewise, this is something I will also build upon and improve in this module relating to the specific skills in advanced character performance of which I have many ideas for already. And more specifically how I can use internal and external factors to show a character, personality, characteristics, thoughts, emotions, all while driving the narrative, the vision forward and not taking you out of the moment, it will belong and feel natural to the character.

- **Gantt Chart:**

The Gantt chart below shows an important management method to track my progress on each of my modules individually, it allows me to easily keep track of milestone, where and when I should be assigning new tasks and allows me to effectively switch between modules and tasks while easily being able to look back and link relevant parts to other areas during my study and independent project.

Advanced Character Performance



- **Connection to Independent Project (IP):** Clearly define the specific aspect of my final year Independent Project that I will be researching and exploring through this module.

To fully utilise my third year and time I have left I have decided to link my independent project to my other modules so that I can not only draw inspiration from other modules but bring technical aspects into a bigger self-directive project and make it the best it can be.

I talk about this project in depth in my separate independent project reflective journal but where appropriate I will explain here how it will specifically link to which part of my independent project for context.

There are 3 characters in my independent project, all of which will need to be well thought out. This has its challenges, for example, I initially wanted to animate the protagonist Jim, however after thinking more about what I want to gain from this module, I started thinking about alternative ways I could portray Jim in the animation and the other characters, the others being non-human, a robot, and an alien entity, the latter being the focus for this module.

The entity itself does not have a solid form, it is known as the Silacra, think of it as a free-forming shapeshifting ball of power, like dense particles, partially magnetic in feel and density, the weight would feel ethereal but unnatural to create a somewhat menacing and mysterious character in and of its physical characteristics alone.

I briefly looked at particle simulations in previous years and I want to explore how a free-flowing character such as the Silacra may move and behave to show its thoughts, its intricacies in how it performs and displays itself as an antagonist.

It is somewhat experimental, but I wanted a challenge in that it is not what I would've typically chosen to do. It fascinates me however to dive into this research, how I can portray this character. It will play a pivotal role in the ending of my independent project's animation, where the Silacra will appear at the end on a in-world screen briefly, introducing the character while creating further suspense and mystery.

- **Initial Thoughts on 'Performance':** What does "evoking a performance" mean to me at the start of this project? Inspired by the Akihiko Yamashita interview, what is the "right way to draw/animate" that I am searching for?

I have already touched upon this briefly, but to me, performance means how a character is portrayed on screen, for example, how they carry them self's, from a physically point of view (external) and how they behave (internal) bringing psychology to the forefront of defining who this character is, and ultimately how impactful they will be, leaving however small or big impression on the audience. Another way of putting this would be, how memorable were they.

An example of this that I immediately think of from a game in fact, would be the character of Joel from the last of us franchise, he is a fundamentally well written, well rounded character, his motivations, his intricacies, he feels like a real, plausible character.

Having played the game, or similarly watched the shows version, all be it a different context, we are left with a powerful notion of exactly who this character is, what he stood for, and that he also had flaws, imperfections so to speak, which can help build a stronger more impactful character.

This is something I want to have influence my characters, I will talk more about other characters I may draw inspiration from in my research and investigation section.

To summarise, performance, is not just about how you animate them physically, pre-production helps just as much to create a character in the techniques you use. It influences one another and needs to be well thought out before even opening any animation software, however testing, and iterating to see what may work and does not work is important and can help choose a direction earlier on, this will be my philosophy in this module.

Part 1: Investigation & Proposal (Presentation - 30%)

1.1. Research & Investigation

- **Identifying the Core Challenge:** Pinpointing the key performance or motion problem in my IP I need to solve (e.g., conveying a specific emotion non-verbally, animating a complex physical action, developing a unique creature's body language).

Before I begin researching examples to help inspire, influence or help guide me in a direction to improvement, I need to first pinpoint precisely what I am trying to achieve. This will decide the areas and genres where I may start to research.

The core example being, I need to discover what makes a nonverbal performance just as or more powerful than a verbal performance, I can look into this for human and non-human examples, potentially looking into Disney and Pixar examples as these companies have been at the forefront of not just advancing animation but utilizing non verbal characters with the fundamental principles of animation.

After which I can begin to expand my search and potentially look into other types of mediums, such as films games, or TV, to discover non-human examples, weather live action VFX or stylistic approaches.

At this early stage, learning how the industry uses different approaches to convey similar characters will help me gain a broader understanding on the concepts used while then being able to narrow down my search for more specific examples relating to perhaps my genre and medium of chosen animation which I can utilise in the creation of my character.

Other areas I will research may include but not limited to are, body language examples, particle simulations in various forms and mediums, e.g. how it is used in driving a performance forward internally and externally.

Another, being how flocks behave, the psychology behind flock, packs, school's movement patterns, while also looking into hive mind examples, e.g., how one affects the other and ultimately how they conjoin and move to create an overall performance as one character.

Or in my case the character of the Silacra who has a hive mind capacity and appearance of particle/flock like mechanics that will drive its performance, and ultimately enhance how it internalises its thoughts in non-verbal ways of communication, keeping in mind internal and external driving factors, which could also be relating to environmental or non-environmental depending on how I write the scene, only to be decided after conducting thorough research.

This is because, upon learning more about the intricacies of this type of character and the ways in which these mechanics work together in a performance I may need to consider difference environmental factors that may help drive a certain narrative, for example, weather, obstacles or props in the scene.

Due to this, it cannot be rushed as it would be harder to change these large external factors once I have already iterated techniques for the performance as in a lot of cases, external effects internal, vice versa, as mentioned, this needs to be well thought out before hand, in the research stages, before proceeding to production to best utilise my time and effort spent, making for a more effective style of approach than I may have used in previous years.

To conclude, pre-production, in any case needs to have time and effort into it, it cannot be rushed, so much of it will influence and choose the direction I take in production, this is why it is so important and why I find best to write my thoughts and ideas down thoroughly, not just for an examiners understanding/context but for my own, to help me internalise and get the most out of this module, for self-improvement and to bring forward into a working environment with ease.

Precedent Study (Visual Portfolio):

- Analysis of inspirational animations (films, games, shorts) that tackle similar performance challenges.
- Study of key animators, directors, or studios relevant to my chosen topic.
- Breakdown of live action acting references and motion studies.

1. Research Area: Particle / Flock / Swarm Behaviour

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This is central to my core idea of a "hive mind capacity and appearance of a particle/flock like mechanics. I firstly need to see how others have made a cohesive character out of many small parts.

- **The Sandman (*Spider-Man 3, No Way Home*):** A classic example of a character formed from granular particles.
- **The Microbots (*Big Hero 6*):** A perfect study in a "hive mind" that can form complex, intelligent structures and express intent.
- **The Swarm (*The Mummy, 1999*):** Look at how the scarab beetle swarms move, form shapes (like a human face), and convey pure menace.
- **Real-World Murmuration's:** Searching for videos of starling murmuration's or schools of fish. This is your primary reference for natural, fluid, coordinated movement.
- **What to Look For (Analysis):**
 - **Cohesion vs. Chaos:** How do these swarms hold a central form? When do individual particles break away, and what does that communicate (e.g., rage, damage, loss of focus)?
 - **Forming Shapes:** How quickly do they transition from a loose cloud to a defined shape (like a fist or face)? Is the transition smooth or jagged?
 - **Internal Motion:** Even when holding a static pose, is there constant internal movement? How does this "crawling" or "swirling" texture make the character feel alive and unsettling?
- **How to Apply This Before Blender:**
 - Sketch the flow. Draw lines and arrows over screenshots of murmuration's to understand the underlying motion vectors.
 - Do some simple 2D tests (even in Paint or Krita) to see how a "cloud" of dots can express an emotion, like contracting in fear or expanding in anger.

2. Research Area: Amorphous & Shapeshifting Forms

The Silacra is described as a free forming shapeshifting ball of power. This lack of a skeleton is a major animation challenge.

- **What to Research (Examples):**

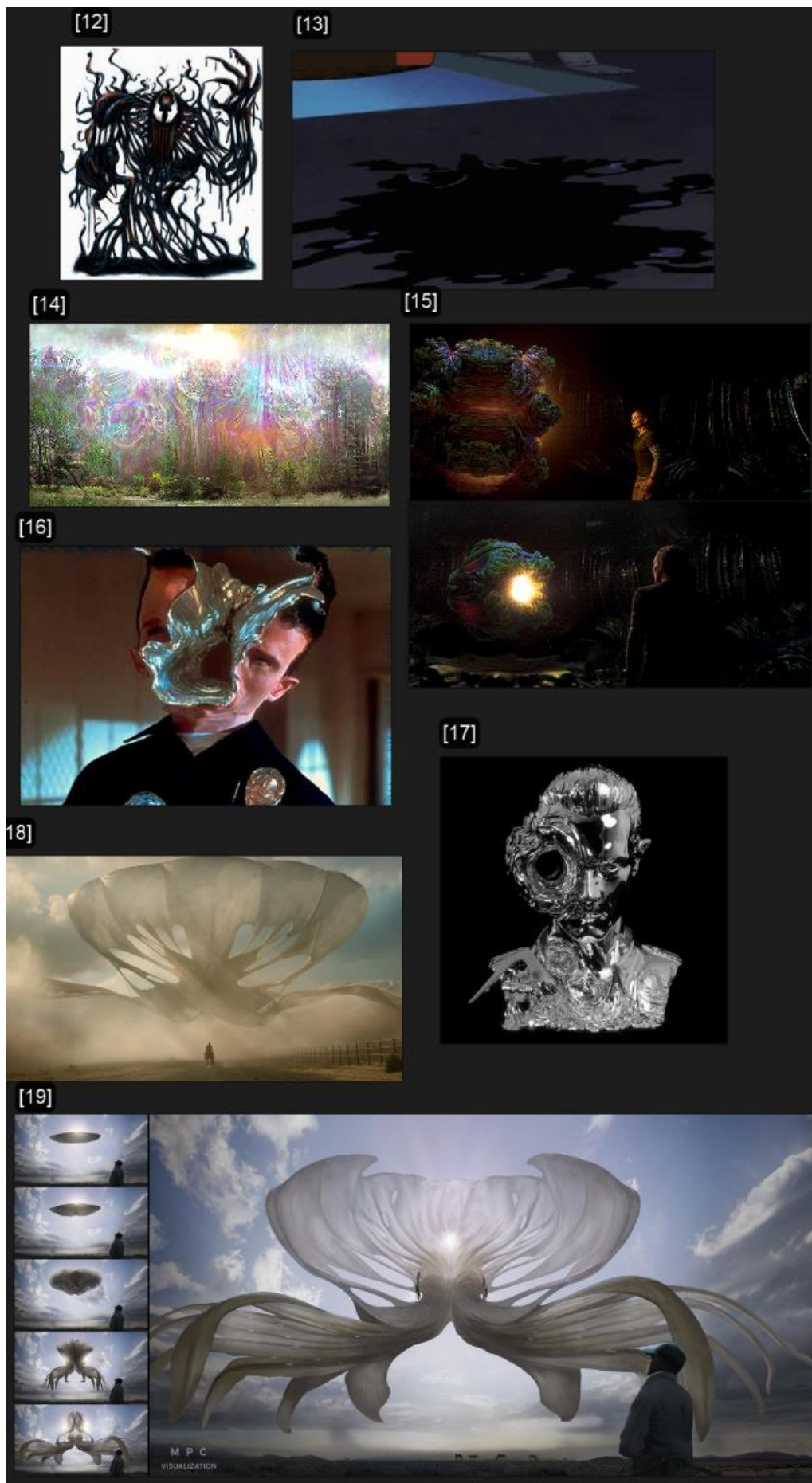
- **The Symbiotes (*Venom*, *Spider-Man* series):** Analyse how the liquid-like symbiote moves, forms tendrils, and creates sharp shapes (teeth, claws) out of a fluid body.
- **The Shimmer Alien (*Annihilation*):** This is a prime example of a creature that is both beautiful and terrifying. It has an "ethereal but unnatural" feel.
- **The T-1000 (*Terminator 2: Judgment Day*):** Paying attention to how it maintains a sense of weight and density despite being liquid metal. How does it transition from blob to human form?
- **"Jean Jacket" (*Nope*):** A study of a creature that is fundamentally a flowing, fabric-like entity before revealing its final form. Its performance is entirely based on how it moves and unfurls as well as what the viewer can and cannot see.

- **What to Look For (Analysis):**

- **Sense of Mass:** How do these characters show weight and impact without bones? Look for squash and stretch, and how they interact with the environment.
- **Surface Texture:** How does the material (liquid, energy, smoke) ripple, reflect light, and change? This is key to selling the "unnatural" feel.
- **Transformation Speed:** Does it shapeshift slowly and deliberately (intelligent) or violently and erratically (primal)?

- **How to Apply This Before Blender:**

- Reference footage of things like ferrofluid, smoke in slow motion, or non-Newtonian fluids (oobleck). These are real-world physics references.



3. Research Area: Tentacular & Ethereal Movement

Tentacle like structures flowing and entangling within itself. This is a core part of the Lovecraftian aesthetic.

- **What to Research (Examples):**

- **The Heptapods (*Arrival*):** A masterclass in non-verbal, intelligent alien performance. Their smoky, tentacular appearance and deliberate, graceful movements convey immense intellect and otherworldliness.
- **The Sentinels (*The Matrix* trilogy):** Observe their mechanical yet fluid tentacle movements. They swarm and move with a clear hive-mind purpose.
- **Yog-Sothoth (Lovecraftian Art):** More artistic interpretations of this entity. It's often described as a conglomeration of glowing orbs and tentacles, which is very close to my character the Silacra.
- **Real-World Octopuses and Jellyfish:** Essential reference for how tentacles/tendrils can move both independently and as a coordinated whole.

- **What to Look For (Analysis):**

- **Leading Action:** Does the core "orb" lead the movement and the tentacles follow? Or do the tentacles explore and pull the core along? This simple choice defines the character's personality.
- **Follow-through and Overlap:** How do the tentacles continue to move after the main body has stopped? This is a fundamental animation principle that will be critical for my character.

- **How to Apply This Before Blender:**

- I can look into gesture drawings of octopus tentacles. Not just focusing on detail, just the "S" curves and flowing lines of action. This will help me internalize the motion.

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1.2. The Proposal

- **Summary of Findings:** What are the key takeaways from my research? What techniques or principles stand out?
- **My Animated 'Take':** A clear statement of what I plan to create for Part 2. What specific shot or sequence will I animate?
- **Performance Goals:** What specific emotions, motivations, or messages do I want to communicate through the animation? How will I attempt to create an "emotional connection" with the viewer?
- **Methodology:** Outline the practical steps I will take (e.g., creating storyboards, animatics, blocking, etc.).

My presentation research concluded that an effective, non-verbal performance for an amorphous entity like the Silacra must be built from a 'performance language' combining swarm logic, material properties, and unnatural timing. Based on this, my animated 'take' for Part 2 will be a **20-second progression reel of a single shot, "The Silacra's Reveal."**

The primary performance goal is to animate the creature infesting a small robot, communicating its alien intelligence and menacing curiosity as it transitions from a chaotic particle swarm into a controlled, tentacular form. I will execute this using a hybrid technical methodology in Blender, starting with storyboards and animatics, then animating a particle simulation that is directed by a key-framed, underlying mesh to achieve both an ethereal feel and precise, artist-driven performance.

The details of which can be found in said presentation.

Presentation (10/11/2025)

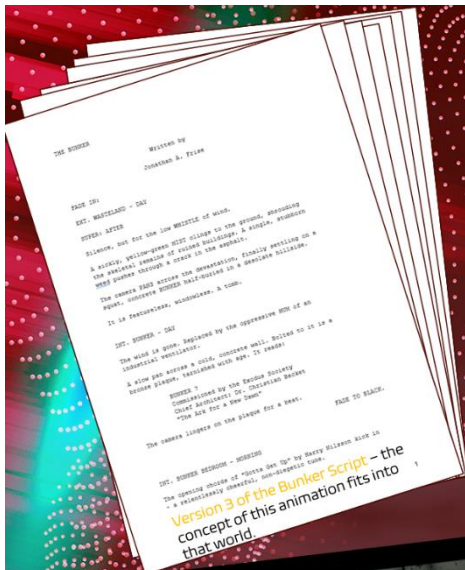
ACP – PRESENTATION + PROPOSAL

EVOKING PERFORMANCE IN THE AMORPHOUS: ANIMATING 'THE SILACRA'

BY JONATHAN A. FRISE

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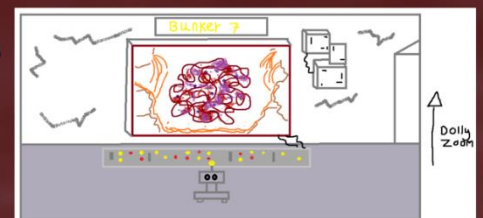
THE CHALLENGE + IP CONNECTION



The Island Part 1 - A previous project linking to the same IP and expanding the characters in the concept



Chips the Robot - Physical prototype / Prop



Storyboard of key shot



Ground Zero EP01 - A previous project linking to the same IP

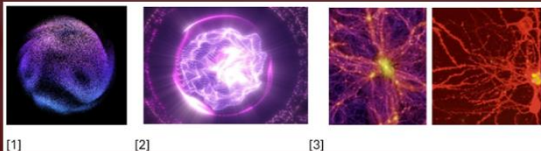
- **The Character:** The Silacra, is a non-verbal, Lovecraftian entity composed of particles, tentacles, and energy.
- **The Animation Problem:** The core challenge is to show its *internal* thoughts and menace through *external* motion, without relying on any human features.
- The Animation links to previous iterations relating to the same concept (IP) I have been building around and takes inspiration from sc-fi and thriller genres.

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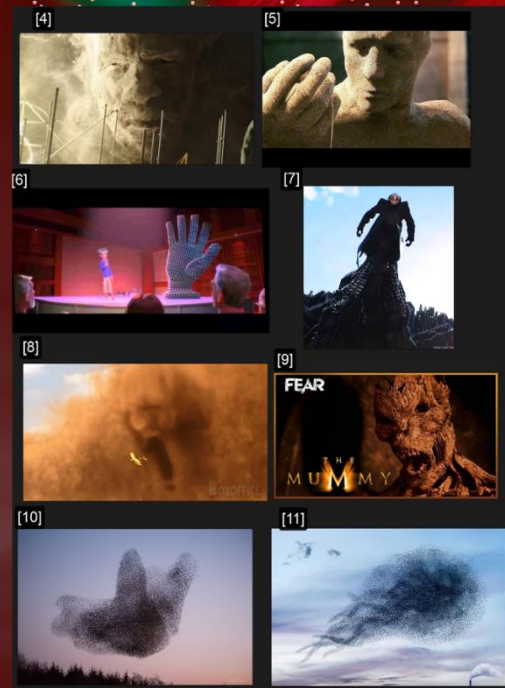
RESEARCH AREA 1: SWARM & PARTICLE PERFORMANCE

Below are images that evoke the same **essence** I want to capture, in the context of the characters **free flowing form**, **less symmetric** and spherical than these and more **erratic** and messier. It can form tentacle like structures weaving and entangling within itself, made from small, detailed **particles** that appear to move as one from the entity's core and pulse and change the characters **movement speed** and **form** slightly when it's **mood changes**.

For example, It shows intelligence through *collective shape and speed*. A sharp, fast-forming shape reads as 'attack,' while a slow, fluid one reads as 'thought'."



For more detailed analysis please refer to the ACP Reflective Journal



Case studies: (*Big Hero 6* Microbots, *Spider-Man* Sandman).

★ **Analytical Takeaway:** I learned that swarm performance isn't just chaos. It

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RESEARCH AREA 2: AMORPHOUS & TENTACLE PERFORMANCE

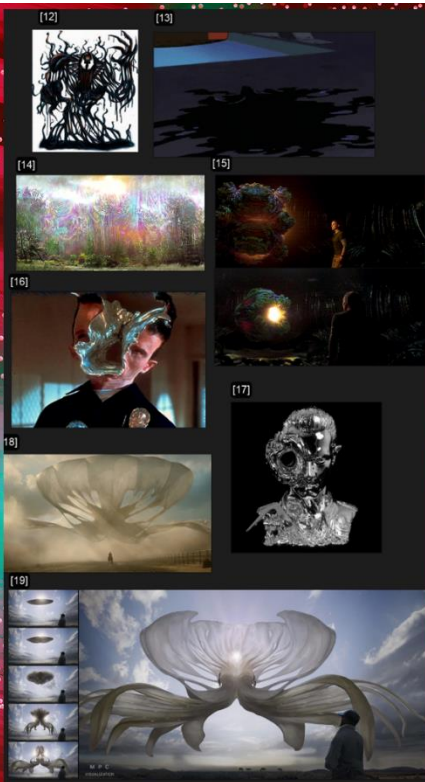
The Symbiotes (*Venom*, *Spider-Man* series): Analyse how the liquid-like symbiote moves, forms tendrils, and creates sharp shapes (teeth, claws) out of a fluid body.

The Shimmer Alien (*Annihilation*): This is a prime example of a creature that is both beautiful and terrifying. It has an "ethereal but unnatural" feel, just as you described.

The T-1000 (*Terminator 2: Judgment Day*): Pay close attention to how it maintains a sense of weight and density despite being liquid metal. How does it transition from blob to human form?

"Jean Jacket" (*Nope*): An excellent study of a creature that is fundamentally a flowing, fabric-like entity before revealing its final form. Its performance is entirely based on how it moves and unfurls.

★ **Analytical Takeaway:** A 'liquid' symbiote conveys animalistic rage, while the Heptapods' slow, 'smoky' movement conveys alien intelligence and grace."



Case studies (e.g., *Venom*, *Arrival* Heptapods, *Nope* Jean Jacket).

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RESEARCH AREA 3:

LOVECRAFTIAN & 'UNNATURAL' MOTION

The Heptapods (*Arrival*): Their smoky, tentacular appearance and **deliberate**, graceful movements convey immense **intellect** and **otherworldliness**.

The Sentinels (*The Matrix* trilogy): Observe their **mechanical** yet **fluid** tentacle movements. They swarm and move with a **clear hive-mind purpose**.

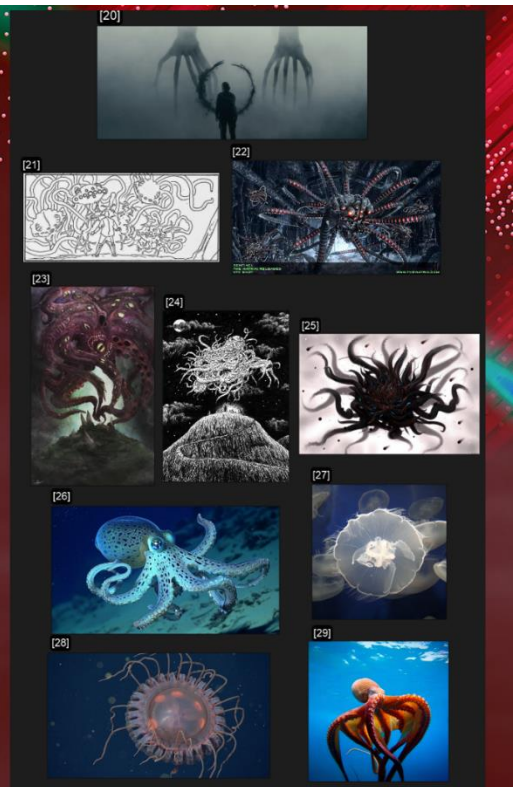
Yog-Sothoth (*Lovecraftian Art*): More artistic interpretations of an entity. It's often described as a conglomeration of **glowing orbs** and **tentacles**, which is very close to the Silacra.

Real-World Octopuses and Jellyfish: Essential **reference** for how tentacles/tendrils can move both **independently** and as a **coordinated whole**.



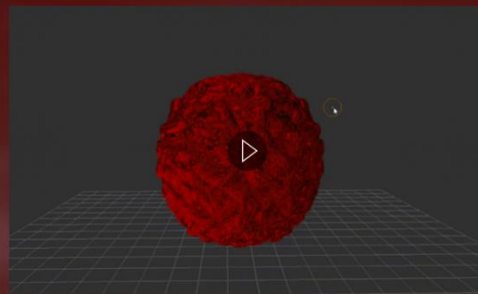
Analytical Takeaway:

- VISUALS: Show your case studies (e.g., *Annihilation* Shimmer-Alien, Yog-Sothoth art).
- Analytical Takeaway: "Lovecraftian horror isn't just about tentacles; it's about unnatural motion. My research shows that performance is evoked by breaking audience expectations—movements that feel too smooth, too symmetrical, or that defy perceived physics."



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SYNTHESIS: A "PERFORMANCE LANGUAGE" FOR THE SILACRA



•My analysis shows I can't rely on one idea. I must create a 'performance language' for the Silacra by combining:

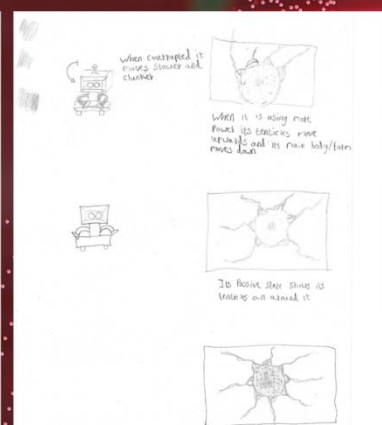
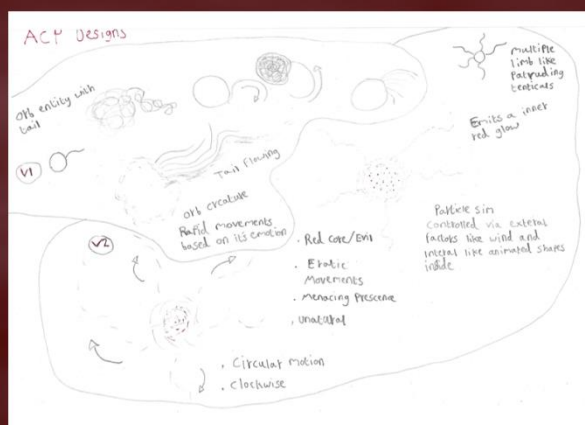
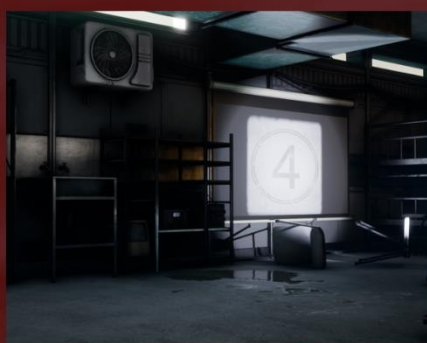
- Swarm Logic:** (e.g., Particle speed = emotional state)
- Material Expression:** (e.g., Forming sharp tendrils = focus)
- Unnatural Timing:** (e.g., Using unnatural ease-in/out to create unease)



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THE PROPOSAL: MY ANIMATED "TAKE"

- For my 20-second animated portfolio, I will create a progression reel of a single shot: **'The Silacra's First Reveal.'**
- Describe the Shot:** "This shot will show the character 'infesting' the small robot. It will demonstrate its intelligence and menace by moving from a chaotic particle swarm into a controlled, tentacular form that 'inspects' its new host from a far using it's hive mind capabilities to influence the robot, it will show the struggle and suspense in the performance."

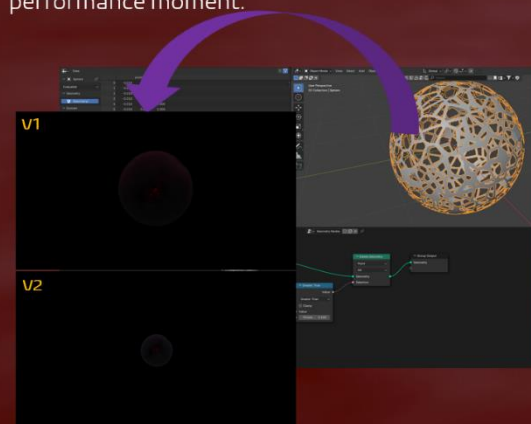
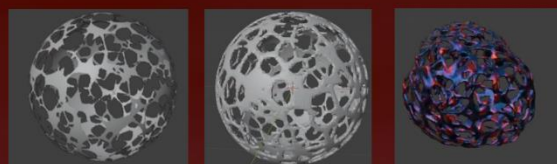


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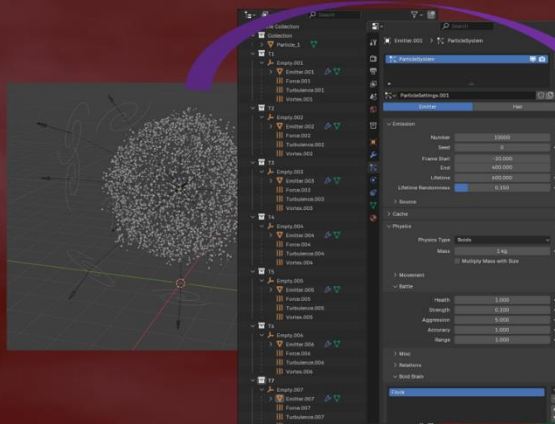
METHODOLOGY & TECHNICAL APPROACH

How will this be achieved?

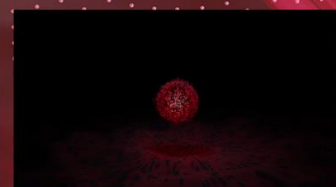
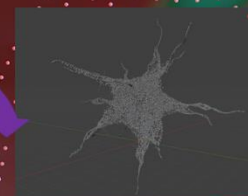
- 1. Pre-Production:** I will start with **storyboards** and an **animatic** to lock down staging and timing.
- 2. Technical Approach (Blender):** "I will use a hybrid system: a **particle simulation** (for the "flock" chaos) driven by an underlying, **key-framed mesh** (for artist-controlled, "tentacle" performance). Experimenting with particle simulation and animated **Voronoi textures**."
- 3. Performance Focus:** My focus will be on the **transition** between these **two states**, as this is the key performance moment.



Voronoi Texture Experiments



Particle Simulation & Force Field Experiments



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CONCLUSION

Summary: "This project is a deep dive into advanced, non-verbal performance. By synthesizing research from my swarm, amorphous, and alien characters of references and case studies, my proposal will tackle a complex animation challenge that directly benefits my Independent Project and explores how to make the truly alien entity *perform*."

1.1. Research & Investigation

- Identifying the Core Challenge:** Pinpointing the key performance or motion problem in my IP I need to solve (e.g., conveying a specific emotion non-verbally, animating a complex physical action, developing a unique creature's body language).

Before I begin researching examples to help inspire, influence or help guide me in a direction to improvement, I need to first pinpoint precisely what I am trying to achieve. This will decide the areas and genres where I may start to research.

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Proposal Research & Investigation introduction

ultimately enhance how it internalises its thoughts in non-verbal ways of communication, keeping in mind internal and external driving factors, which could also be relating to environmental or non-environmental depending on how I write the scene, only to be decided after conducting thorough research.

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To conclude, pre-production, in any case needs to have time and effort into it, it cannot be rushed, so much of it will influence and choose the direction I take in production, this is why it is so important and why I find best to write my thoughts and ideas down thoroughly, not just for an examiners understanding/context but for my own, to help me internalise and get the most out of this module, for self-improvement and to bring forward into a working environment with ease.

Example sounds:

alien-sfx-1.mp3 alien-sfx-2.mp3

Alien-sfx-1:

This first sound could be used to establish the entities presence to be an ominous and more malevolent one. It's echoing deep belows, could be coming from deep within the core of the entity, expelling outwards into its desolate volcanic environment.

Alien-sfx-2:

This effect could be utilised to create an uneasy atmosphere more than anything, but it's high pitch and distortedness helps to set the stage for the creature, its intent, and its motives that unfold.

Foley:

I will also experiment with foley sound effects creating my own sounds to be able to have more creative freedom and art direction with merging sounds of everyday items to create something new, that can be untitled in enhancing my characters menacing performance.

It is also important to note that though my character does not have one solid physical form, the way in which the simulation-based animation will act will be somewhat dynamic in the use of experimentation techniques, such as using internal properties such as physical objects to help manipulate the direction and movement of the character for the visual I want to create. More specially to help how the audience will perceive the character without the use or relying on any dialog. It is for this reason; my search will revolve around these examples in media and video sound creation techniques; linking not just with the exploration of today's session but directly feeding into both ACP and Independent Project modules.

Page 9 out of 10

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Reflective Journal & Proposal Document:

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- A list of all books, articles, films, and websites cited throughout the journal, using the Harvard referencing system.

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THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

ANY QUESTION...

1.2. Presentation Reflection

[To be completed]

- **Feedback:** Summarise the feedback received after my presentation.
 - **Refinement:** How has the feedback and the process of creating the presentation refined my plan for Part 2?
-

Part 2: Animated Exploration (Portfolio - 70%)

2.1. Pre-Production

- **Visual Development:**

- **Storyboards & Thumbnails:** Exploring camera placement, staging, and composition.
- **Colour Scripts:** How will colour and light be used to enhance the mood and performance?
- **Animatic(s):** Showing the timing and flow of the proposed sequence. Include different versions if I adapted my plan.

2.2. Production: The Progression Reel

- **A record of my animation process, showing the evolution of the shot(s) from start to finish. *As seen in the breakdown video.***
- **Blocking:** Initial poses, establishing key storytelling moments, and timing.
- **Splining/Breakdowns:** Refining the movement, arcs, and overlapping action.
- **Polishing & Final Details:** Adding nuanced gestures, facial expressions, and secondary motion to capture the "emotional resonance".

2.3. Analysis of Creative Decisions

- **Evaluating the Performance:** How successful was I in achieving the goals set out in my proposal? Does the final animation connect on a "performative~evocative level"?
- **Technical and Aesthetic Choices:** Justifying key decisions. Why did I choose a specific camera movement? How does the character's design support the performance?
- **Problem-Solving:** What were the biggest challenges? How did I adapt and overcome them?

Week 1 Session 2: 02/10/2025

Summary:

At the beginning of the session, I learned about the different methods and mediums in which characters can be manipulated to create an evocative enhanced performance, using still images and concept art before bringing it into animations to further. For example....

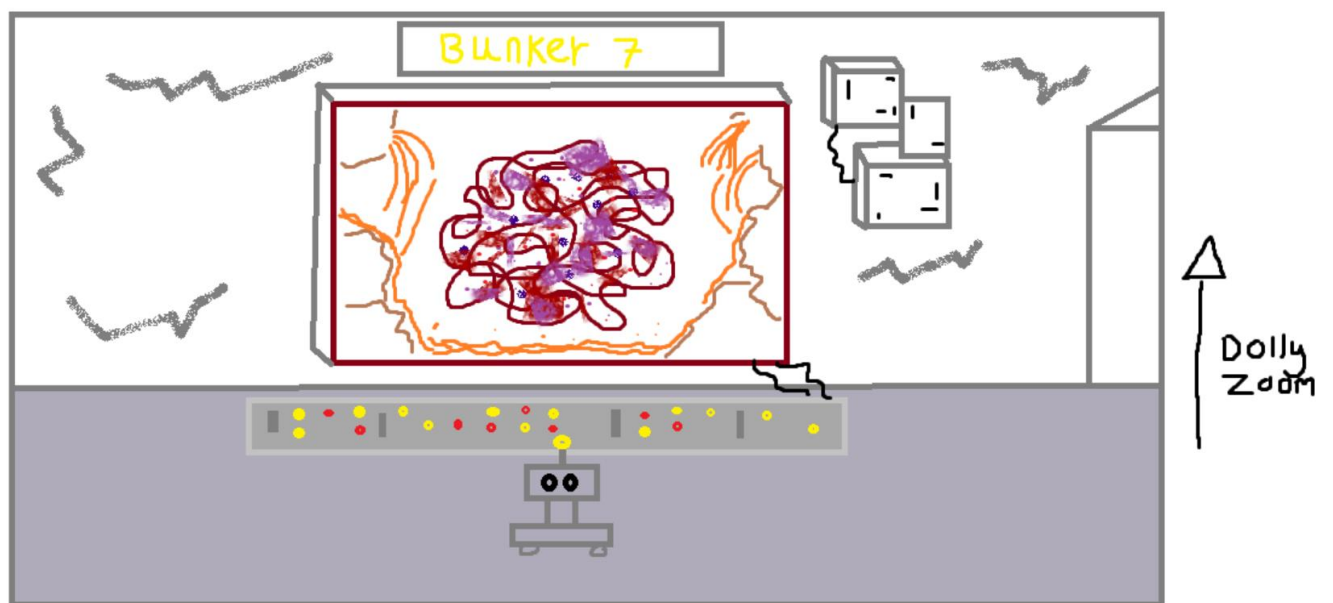
Exercise:

This sessions exercise involved creating a still, in my case using Microsoft paint for its simplicity and ease of use to create a character's performance with implementing their movement, form, acting and emotion at the forefront into the piece. Practising fast iteration and early concept work being the key to develop a character's personality creating a more varied range of acting within their performance/form that evokes a reaction from the viewer.

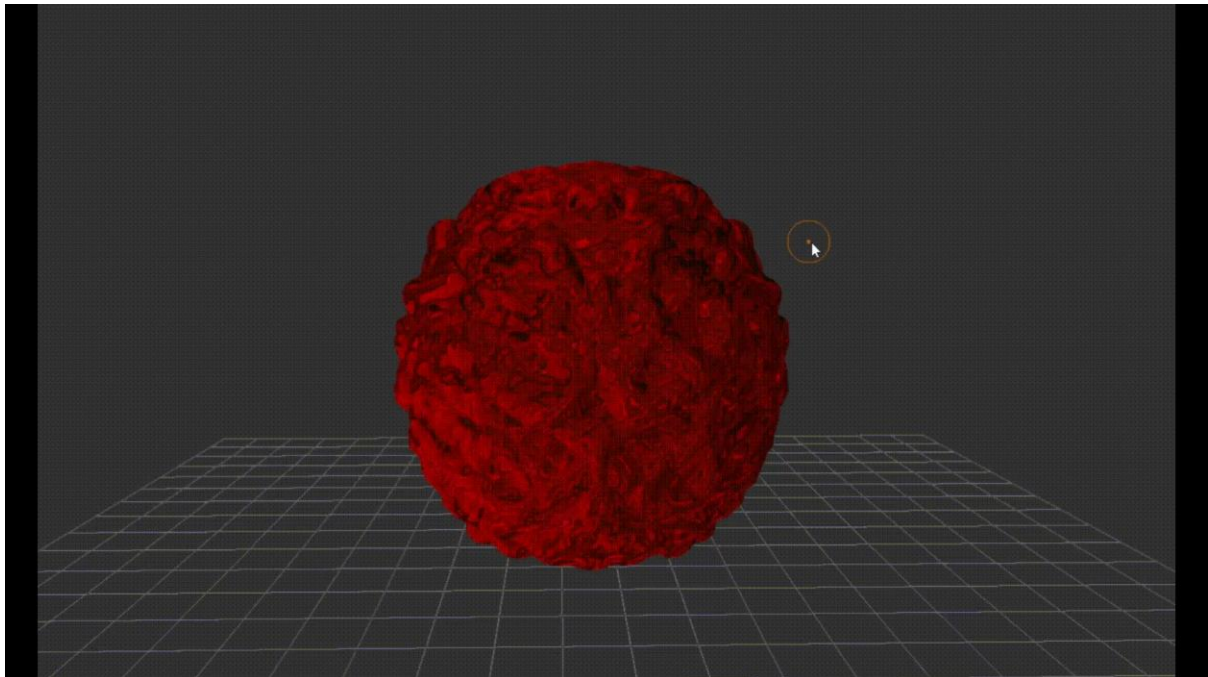
In my case I wanted to bring forward an idea relating to my independent project, a variation of the end narrative where the small innocent companion robot actually reveals to the audience that it is being controlled/infested by the alien entity though a hyperbolic scene where this is symbolised by the alien entity appearing on the screen behind the small robot, a stark, contrast, in size and tonal shift.

The Entity's performance would represent its control on the robot, being systematic in the moment with glimpse of insalubrity that acts as foreshadow. Its tentacles made from a form of energy particles almost behaving like a flock of birds or school of fish. This is what I wanted to capture with this rough sketch using basic shapes and colour as it's foundation to evoke a similar and as desired emotion.

The below is a screenshot of a physically prop of the robot, I scanned with PolyCam for 3D reference.

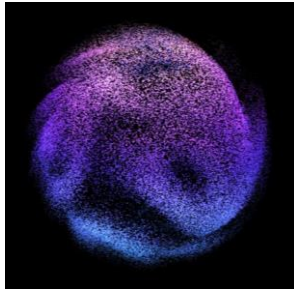


The below is a test sculpture (using SculptGL) of how the entity could appear, as they move and change their form/texture shifting parallax relative to the camera's perspective, creating a sense of unease or unactual movement. To further explore this alternative form of character I have investigated examples that could inspire from across different mediums. I can also experiment with particle and simulation effects and using an element to physically drive its performance in the way it shifts in one place.



Inspiration examples:

The examples below were images that evoke the same essence I want to capture, in the context of the characters free flowing form, less symmetric and spherical than these and more erratic and messier. The character itself can be described as an alien entity; an orb of energy not constrained to an organic body. It has tentacle like structurers flowing and entangling within itself, made from small, detailed particles that appear to move as one and pulse and change the characters movement speed and form slightly when it's mood changes.



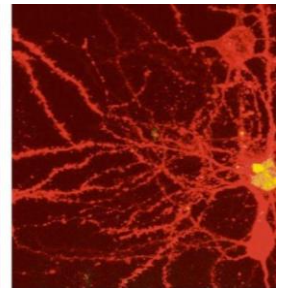
[1]



[2]



[3]



Introduction:

Week 2 Notes: Proscenium Arch

In this practical segment for the session, I will conduct analysis of a live action shot, breaking down it's camera movement, how it utilises techniques. Rule of thirds, composition, framing. Layer this and add notes.

Deconstruction of a scene:

[YouTube - Stranger Things S02 | Mind Flayer enters Will's body](#)

Analysis breakdown of the Mind Flayer possessing Will Byers. This will include breaking down the physical scene environment setup using a schematical approach to show how and why the camera moves the way it does, the way it follows the character. The way each shot is building suspense and using the composition to give an unnatural feeling to the scene as well as using the rule of thirds and traditional filmmaking techniques to bring the scene to life and make it as impactful as possible.

The scene starts by having a close up zooming in on Will's face in the normal dimension, the lights flicker starting the transition to something isn't quite right, as we see the fear on Will's face. The camera then cuts in time with the flashes to the other side of his face showing the upside down, it's now dark and warped, the audial que slowly rising, being that something is hunting him. The shift of perspective puts the audience in his shoes, its shows us what he sees as he turns his head to look down the corridor to find himself in the upside down.

[StudioBinder - Stranger Things Cinematography Explained — Camera, Lighting & Lenses](#)

The series of shots showing these key moments are as follows:

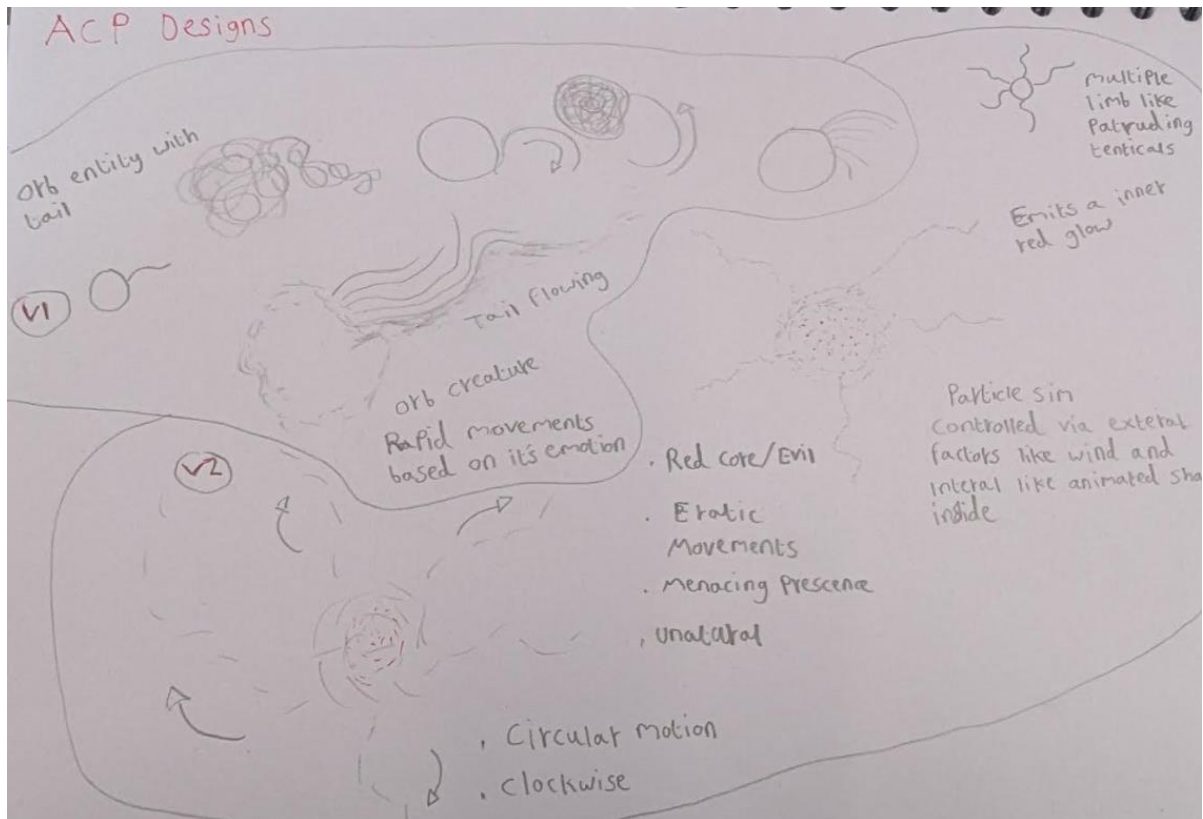




After looking at examples of how particle simulation can be used, I discover that I can shape my create and drive their performance using external factors such as wind and other force fields and internal facts, such as a physical 3D shape within the creature, hidden, but alerting the particles behaviours, for example, fast jerks to convey the creature anger and upset, and slower more ethereal movements and transitions to show it in a calmer state.

These methods could prove invaluable to show the creatures thoughts and intent. For example, in terms of my ACP project, the small robot will be seen to be influenced/controlled by the creature. Therefore, mimicking and syncing the entity movements with how the robot initially moves and behaves will enhance and influence one another's performance on the 'stage'.

In terms of cinematogrghy, in creating a moving scene, the camera will be using a dolly zoom into the robots eye level creating and adding to the unnatural tone, and realising of the corruption of the robot by this evil menacing presence of the entity.



The above screenshot shows some of my early designs, showing how the creature could move, its intent, behaviour, and its substance, what is it made out of. My research of which will heavily influence these aspects in early production when testing particle simulation.

Robot rigging

[Animating and Rigging Robots in Blender 3D](#)

Update:

Rather than writing a journal entry for each session every week, I have decided to make these entries more of a flowing form that is more logical and practical, one after the next, and will talk about the exercises more relevant to my modules project.

Notes: (things to look into)

Extremes and in-betweens documentary

Aardman speaks

Session Summary: 20/10/25

In this session we were talking about how we can use sound and dialog to enhance a character's performance.

Project Concept:

In a post-apocalyptic bunker, a malevolent entity appears on a screen, thereafter, possessing and influencing the small robot Infront of the monitor. This directly tying into the individual projects concept where the mystery of the bunker deeper as the camera weaves around using environmental storytelling to hint at its recent past.

In relation to the exercise of this session, I have thought more about how I can use sound design in this animation to create not just suspense but physically and emotively effect the characters on screen performances and how they drive the scene forward.

Since my characters will not use dialog, I must be smart in how I utilise sound, not to subtract to the scene in anyway but add to it narratively. Some key examples I will look at will be predator, taking a focus on it's mechanical like vocal clicks.

Project Breakdown

Example sounds:



alien-sfx-1.mp3



alien-sfx-2.mp3

Alien-sfx-1:

This first sound could be used to establish the entities presence to be an ominous and more malevolent one. It's echoing deep bellows, could be coming from deep within the core of the entity, expelling outwards into its desolate volcanic environment.

Alien-sfx-2:

This effect could be utilised to create an uneasy atmosphere more than anything, but it's high pitch and distortedness helps to set the stage for the creature, its intent, and its motives that unfold.

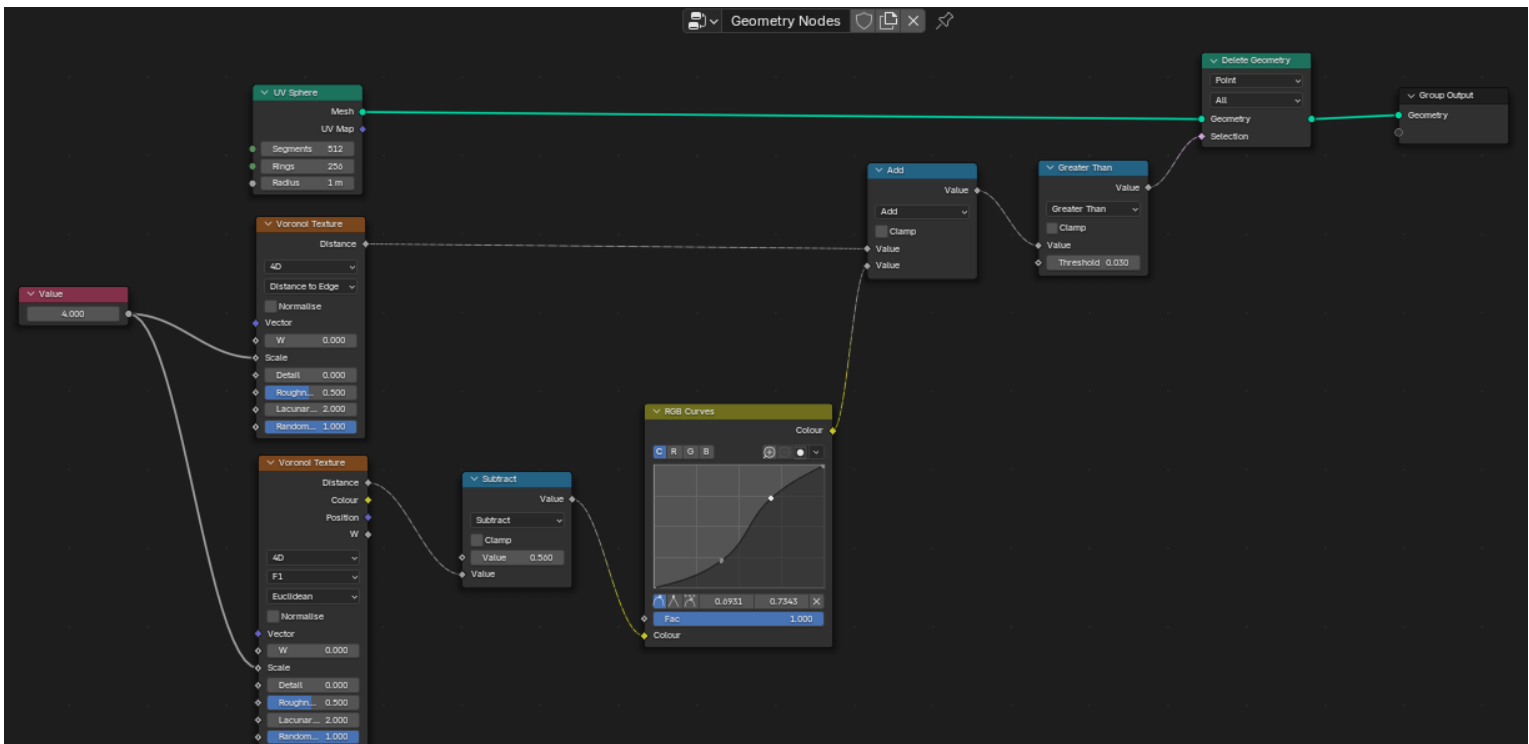
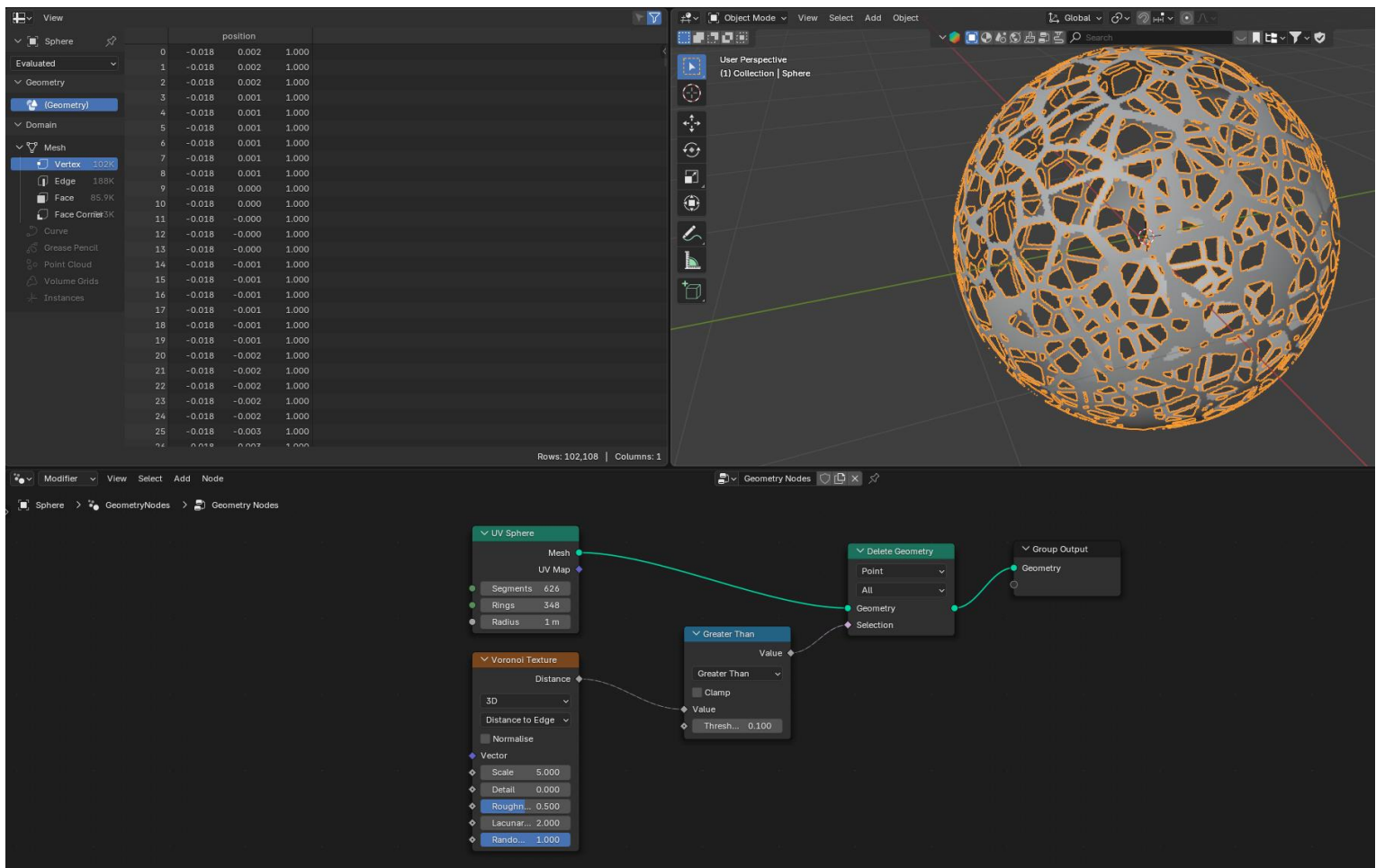
Foley:

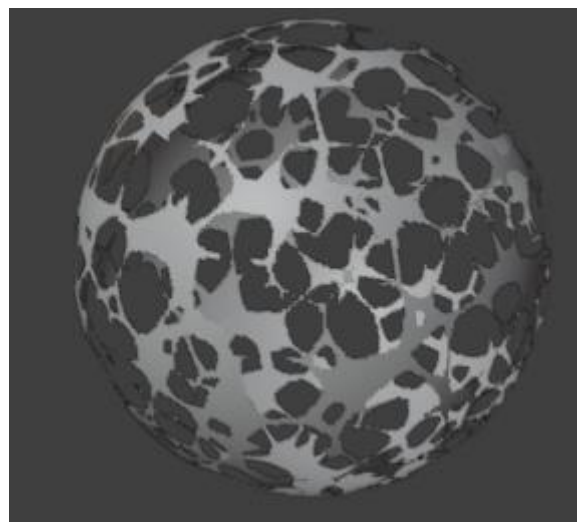
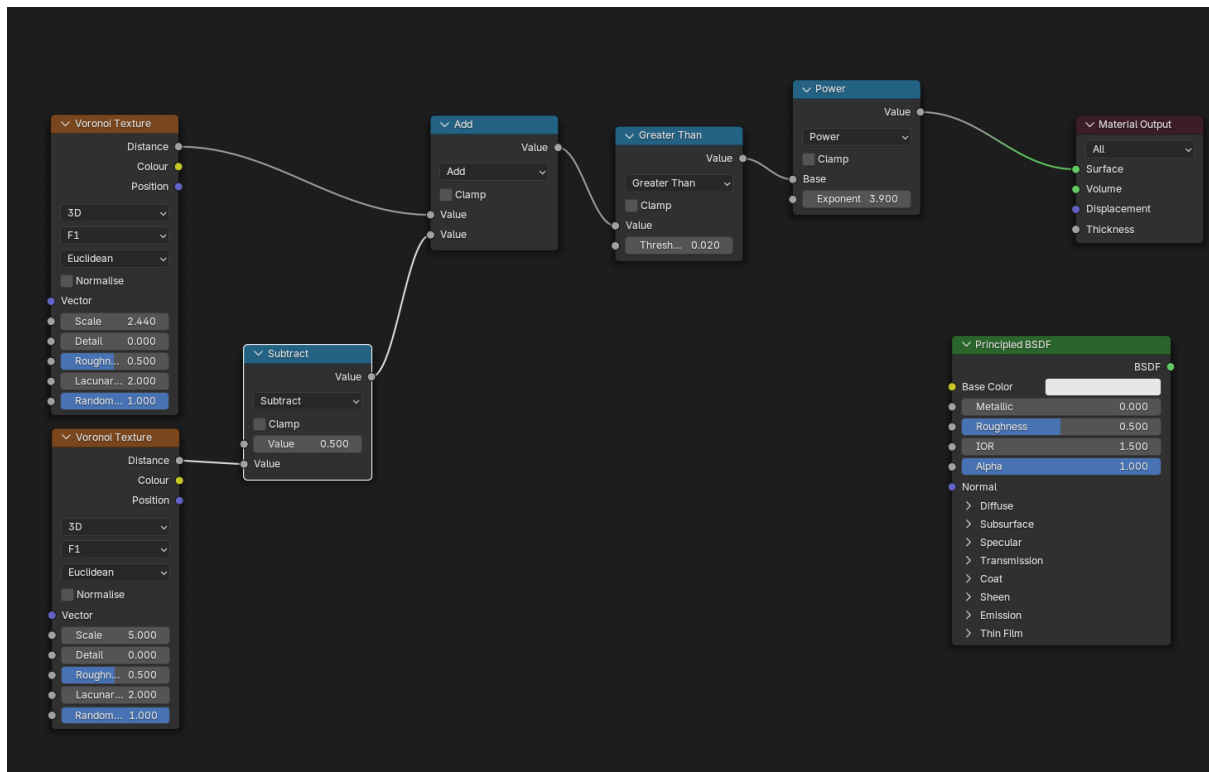
I will also experiment with foley sound effects creating my own sounds to be able to have more creative freedom and art direction with merging sounds of everyday items to create something new, that can be untitled in enhancing my characters menacing performance.

It is also important to note that though my character does not have one solid physical form, the way in which the simulation-based animation will act will be somewhat dynamic in the use of experimentation techniques, such as using internal properties such as physical objects to help manipulate the direction and movement of the simulation for the visual I want to create. More specially to help how the audience will perceive the character without the use or relying on any dialog. It is for this reason; my research will revolve around these examples in media and foley sound creation techniques; linking not just with the exploration of todays session but directly feeding into both ACP and Independent Project modules.

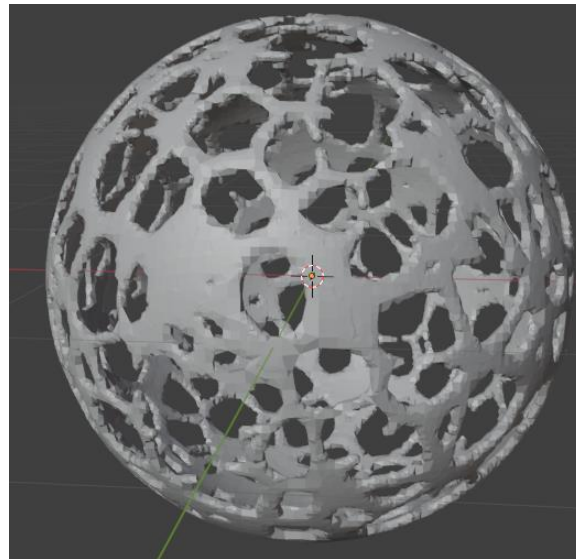
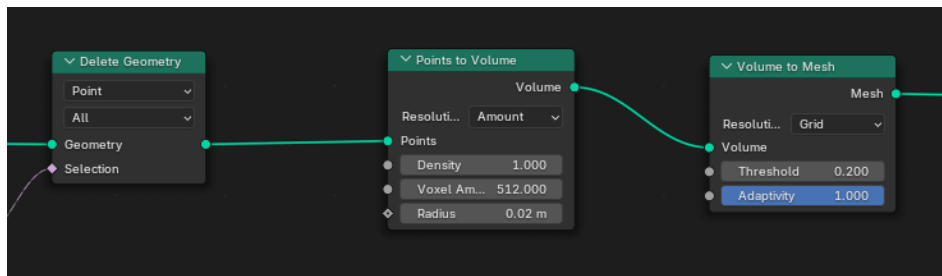
Blender

Voronoi Textures Character Tests:





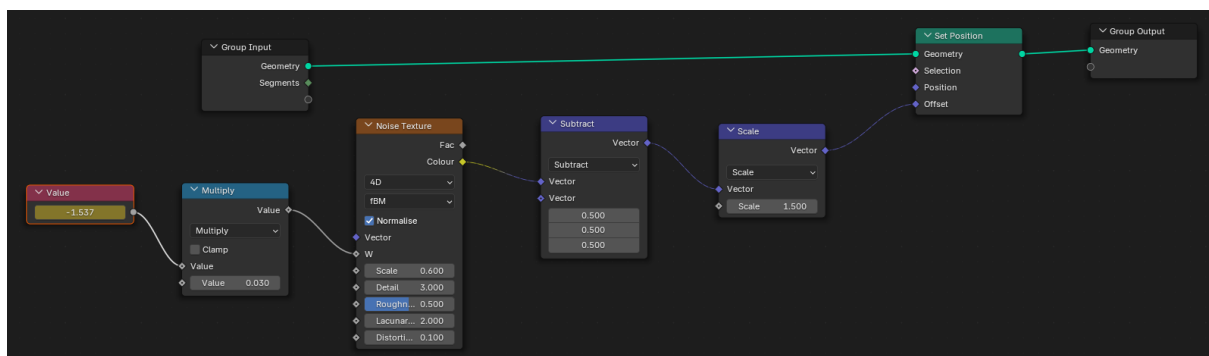
So, how do I make this appear 3D rather than 2D. Do this we add a points to volume node, then volume to mesh which converts every points to create the thickness that I want.

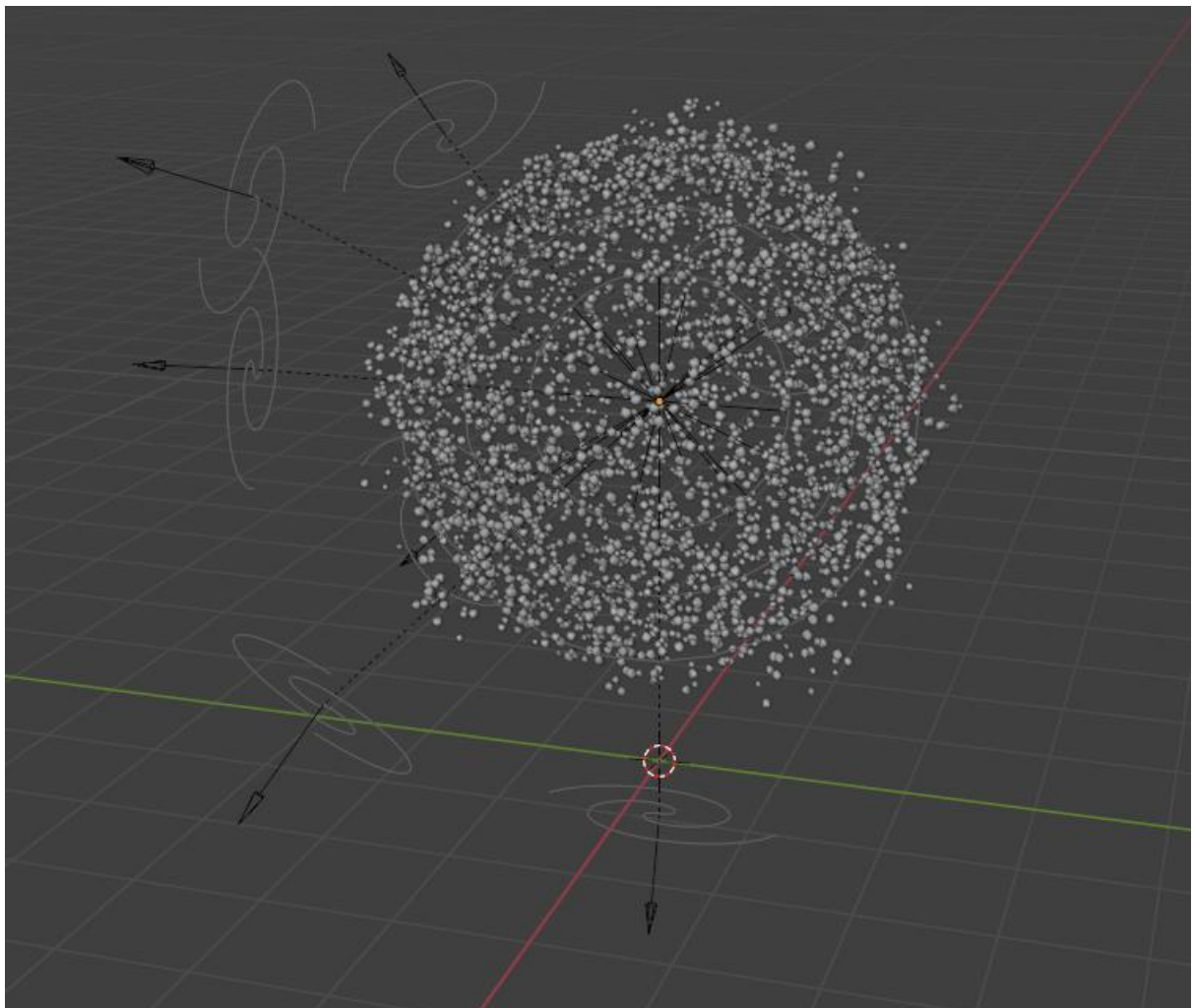
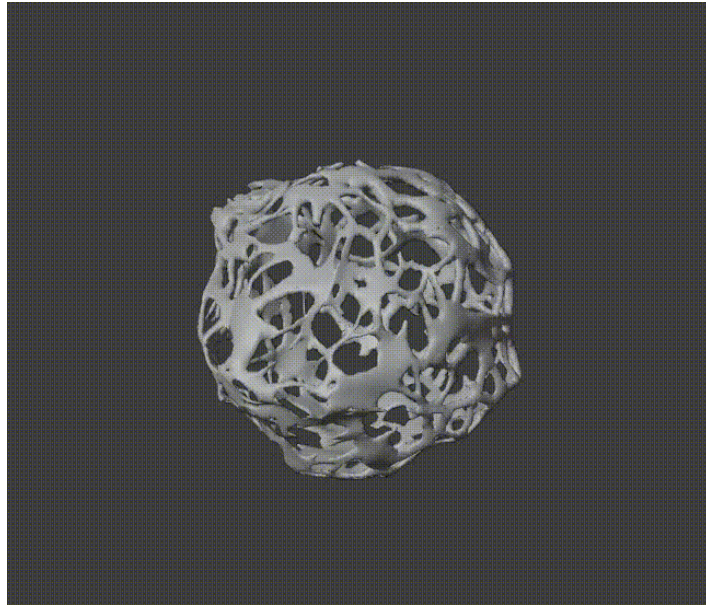


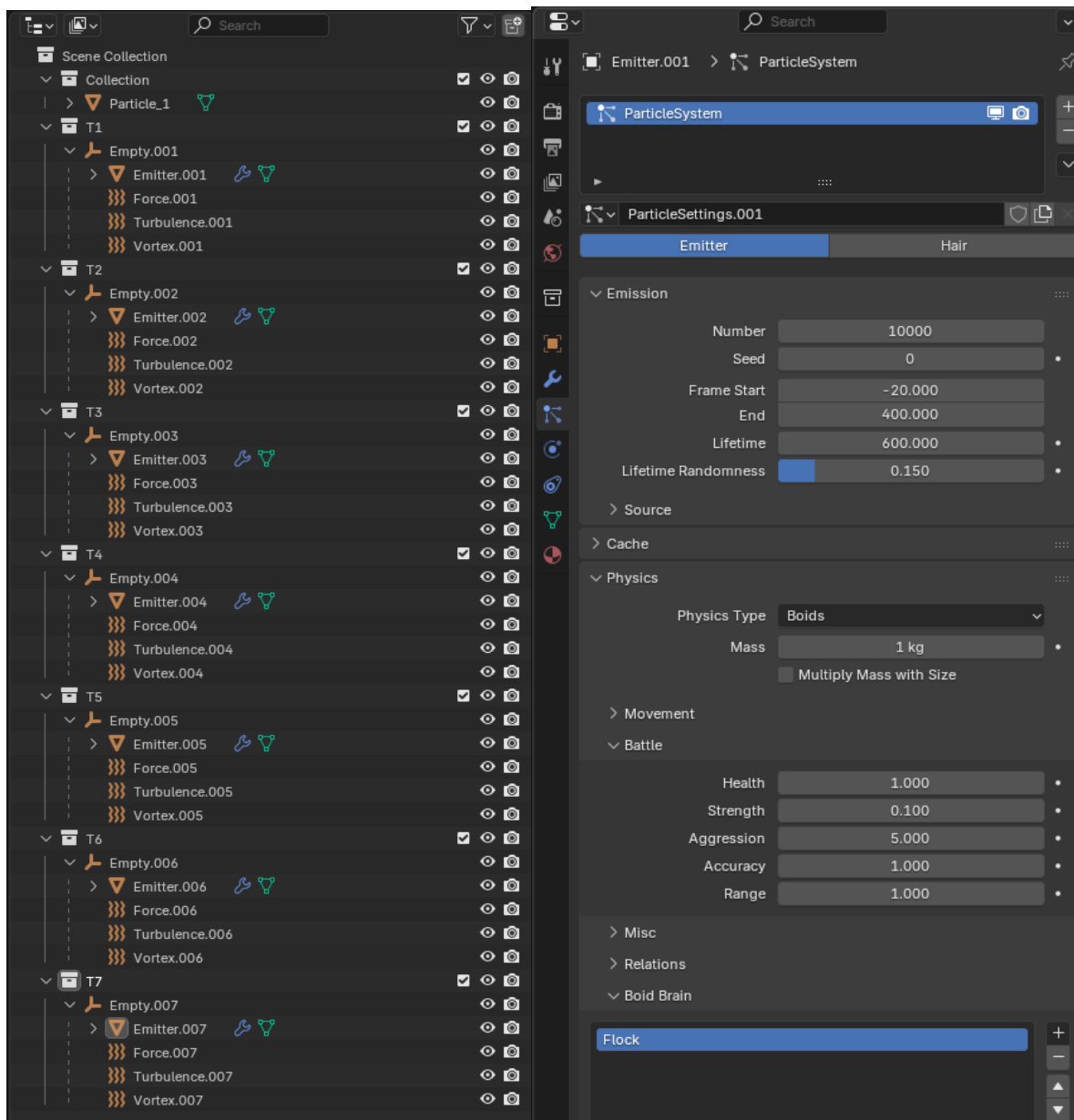
To make this smooth I added a smooth modifier.

After applying these modifiers we can see it now has volume, if zoomed in we can still see some roughness, but from a far, it has the detail required for the shot so this was perfect at this stage.

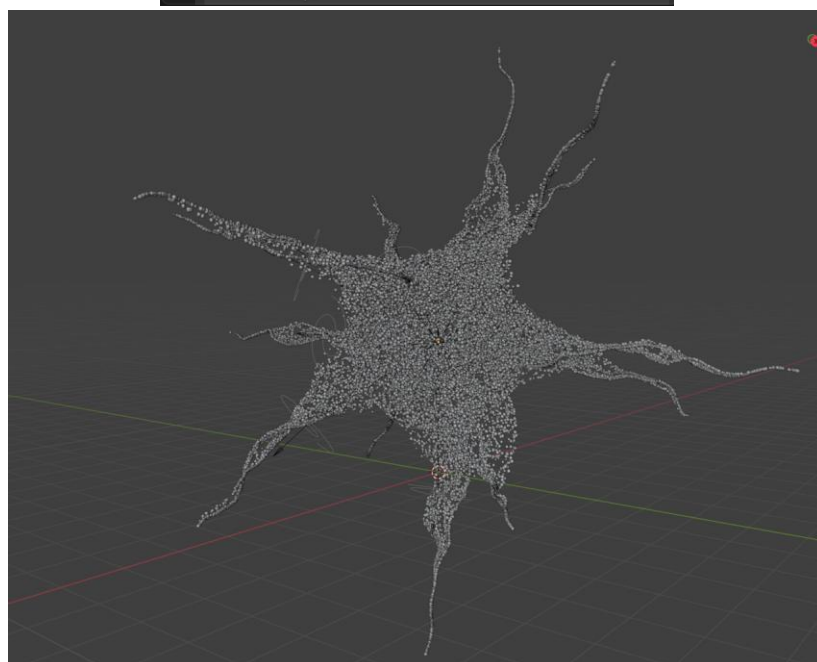
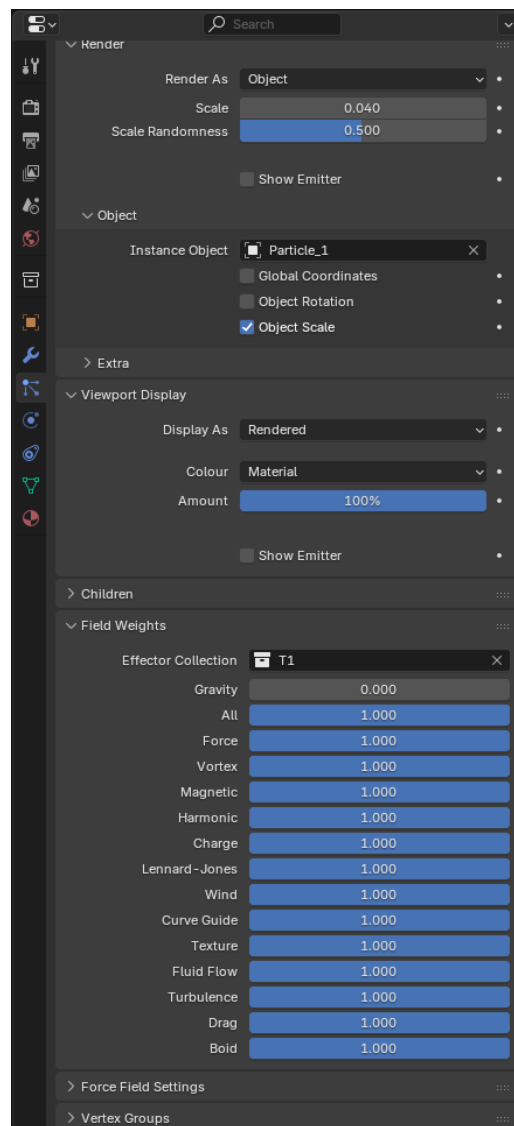
This is all well and good, but now it was time to animate it, and this is also where I can get the underlying performance of the creature by manipulating, the parameters and timing.

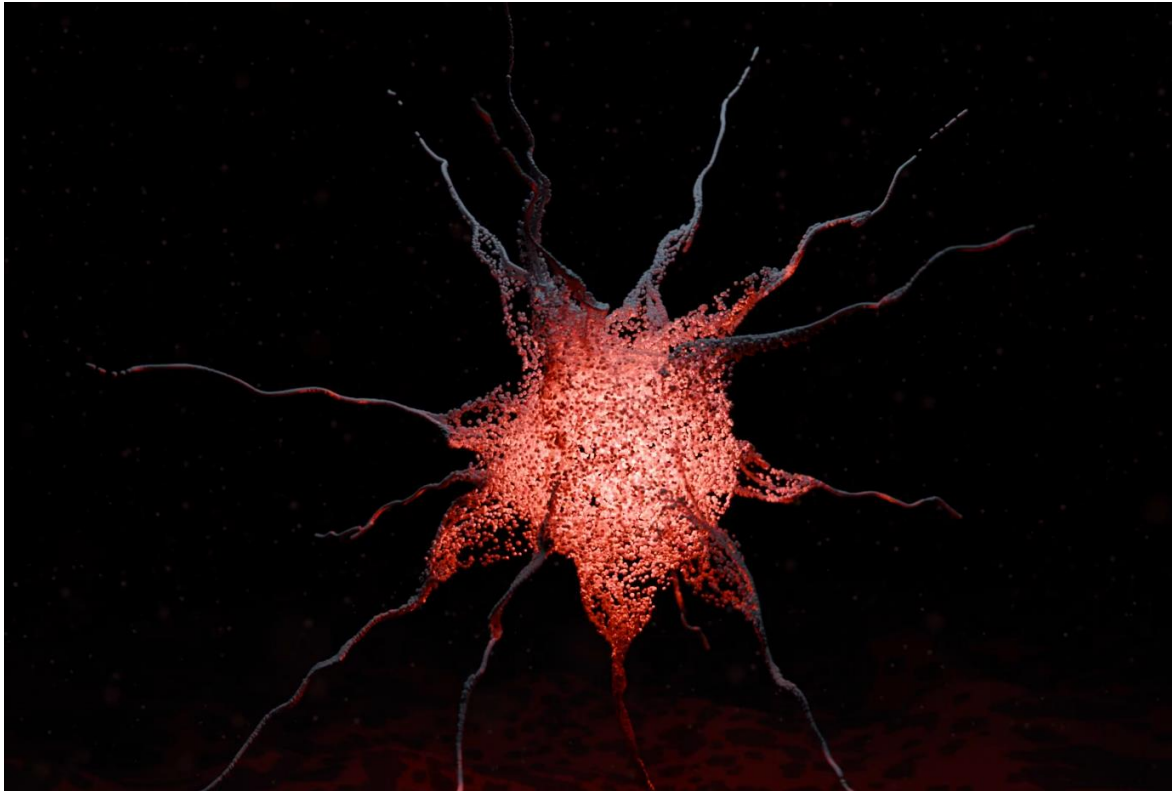






The mythology behind this creates subtle performance ques such that were a way to utilise several particle systems using force fields and internal movements to manipulate the entity/creature's movement and perceive it as malevolent or aggressive. Using the particle systems in this way allows me to use it as a complex array of building blocks for the exact performance I want to build upon by being able to control the direction, velocity, gravity, and other attributes of vortexes, magnets and Brownian motion to uphold the stage in the final composition as a unnaturalistic almost animalistic performance showing intent of corruption on the small robot in the environment centre of the shot, while a slow dolly zoom creates subtle suspense along with sound design and lighting that will drive the narrative forward and show a progression and thought process of the being in the 20 second animation.





There are 2 elements to my animation. The first being the blender made character animation of the Silacra entity using particle sims as the driving factor which has been something I have wanted to experiment with and incorporate into my wider IP of the Bunker concept which is further elaborated and the focus of my individual project this year.

The second being the partly reused handcrafted environment from my individual project as the core environment/stage of the final animation/breakdown video for part two of the assignment. This will be set inside the old bunker where a slow purposeful dolly zoom will show many monitors and flashing lights in sync with the blender animation where it will be played one of the monitors in the centre showing its manipulation to the immediate environment and the corruption of the robot in the centre of the shot below on the floor.

This design was intentional and was produced early on with a variation of different bunker designs inspired from real life schematics as well as influences from franchises such as Fallout where I optimised the flow of the layout that had the shot list and narrative of the Independent Project in mind from the very start and how the concept fits in but also works well just as much as a standalone short.

I was constantly updating the design of the environment using structures and props to flesh out and make the room feel lived in. I wanted to use a single environment for this module along with only one shot as I felt it would be easy to miscommunicate my idea using a few shots that would distract from the concept of what was happening in that

moment so I decided to focus on building the slow tension up over the 20 seconds instead which would have the more desirable effect I was looking for.

Unreal environment





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