

### **Planning**

#### **Pre-production**

- Brief Breakdown
- Reference Gathering
- Concept Design and Iteration

#### **Production**

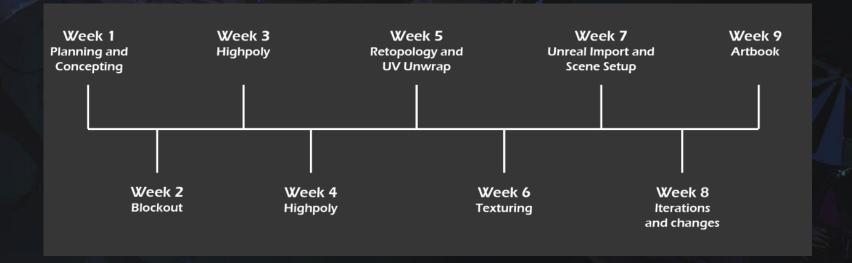
- Blockout
- Highpoly
- Retopology
- UV Unwrap
- Texturing
- Unreal import
- Rigging and posing

#### **Iteration**

- Feedback gathering
- Changes to the model

#### Critique

- Industry comparison
- Final feedback
- Successes and Failures



#### ART TEST | CHARACTER - STYLISED

Design, model and texture a stylised merchant human character.

- Theme: A merchant or shopkeeper with a background of your choice.
   This could be anything from a purveyor of exotic goods to a seller of simple necessities.
- Style: A painterly character which takes inspiration from but is not limited to titles such as: Disco Elysium, Arcane, and Sea of Thieves.
- Sculpting: Employ a range of stylised sculpting techniques and brushes. Show examples of stylised chunky sculpting with trimmed edges and clean, facetted surfaces.
- Texturing: Use a range of modern texturing techniques and software to produce textures with a hand-painted texture effect, where the paint strokes are visible.
- Presentation: Present the character in Unreal Engine 5, with or without any supporting props/dioramas.











#### ART TEST | CHARACTER - STYLISED

#### **Art Test Deliverables:**

- 5+ High-Resolution Screenshots of your final work showing your character from several angles, showing off all the best aspects of your character.
- A Development Diary within which you will depict your thought process and log your progress throughout the project.

#### The Budget:

- 50 70K Triangles for the character and any props.
- Maximum four 4K textures for the character, props and environments.
- Use only what's needed.

Please note, Quixel Megascans or other downloadable assets used for dioramas will not be marked but may be used for presentation.

### **Project Overview**

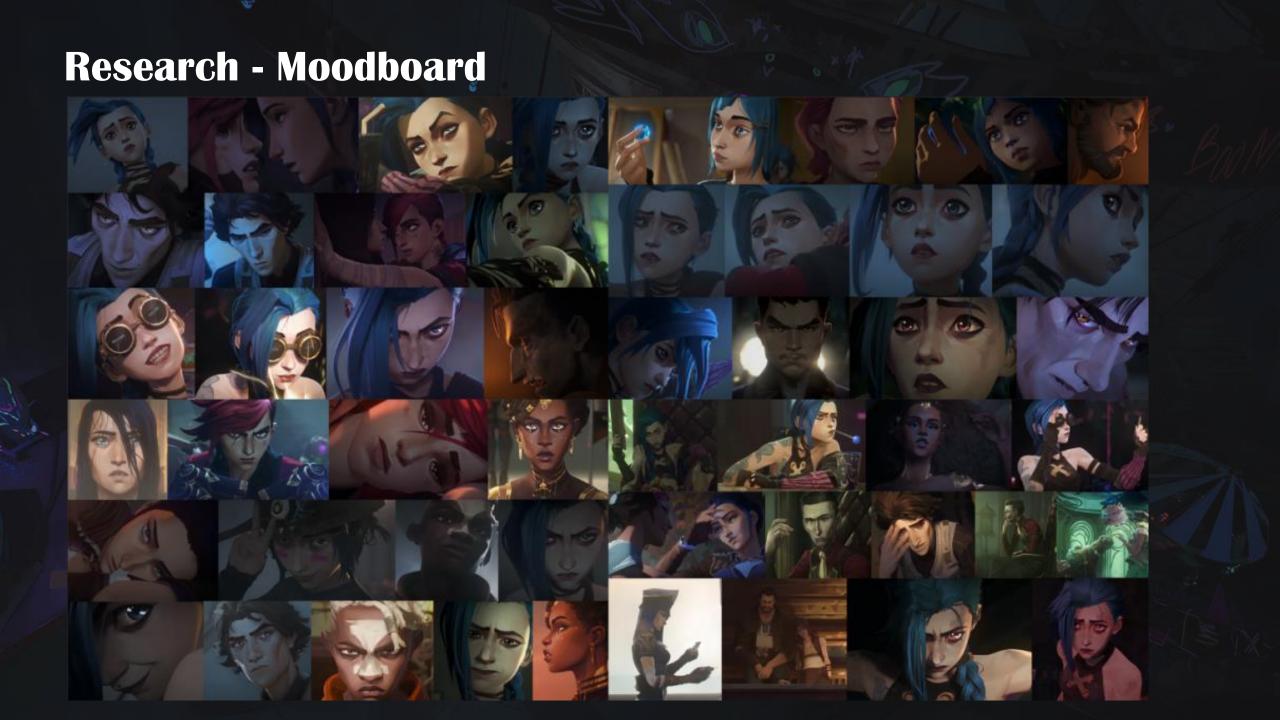
For this task it is required to concept and create a stylized merchant character for Flix Interactive.

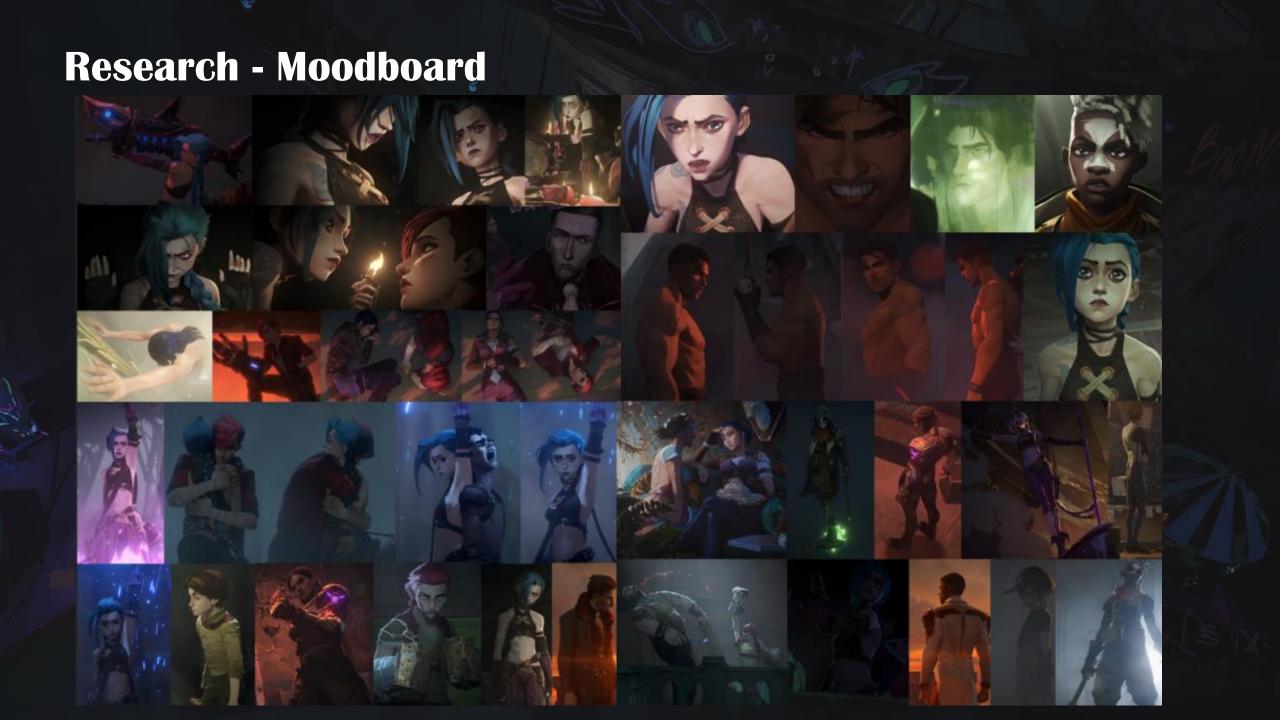
The programs used shall be:

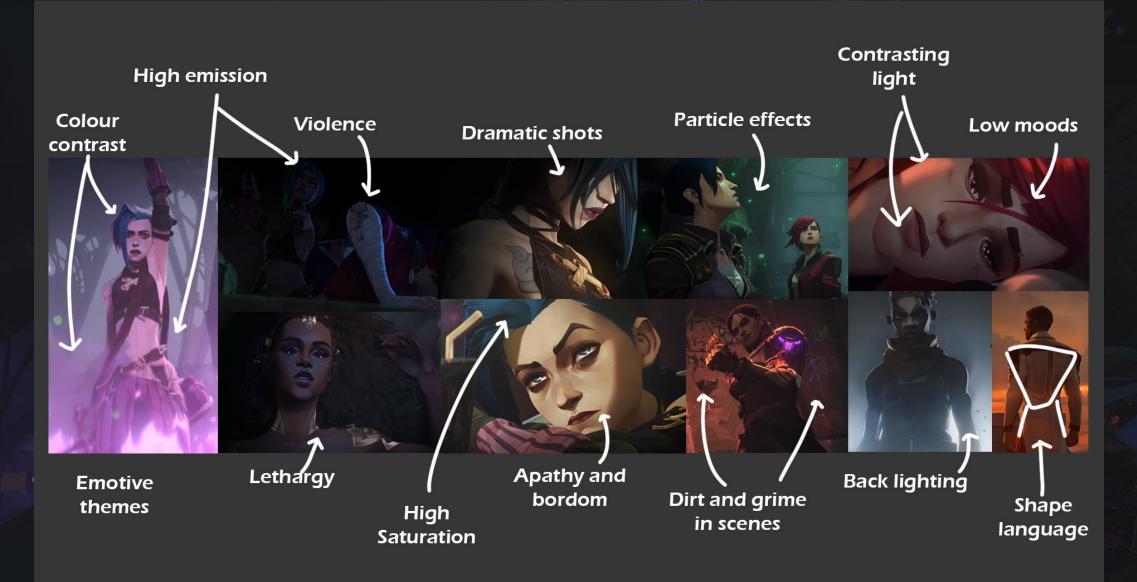
- Z brush
- Maya
- 3DS Max
- Substance Painter
- Photoshop
- Unreal 5

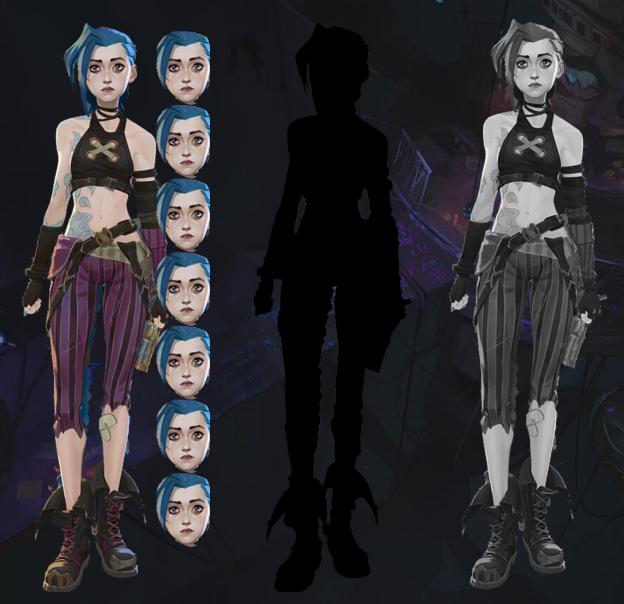
The deliverables for this project are:

- 5 or more High-Res Screenshots
- Development Diary
- Four 4K Texture Sets for all assets
- 70-100k Tri count

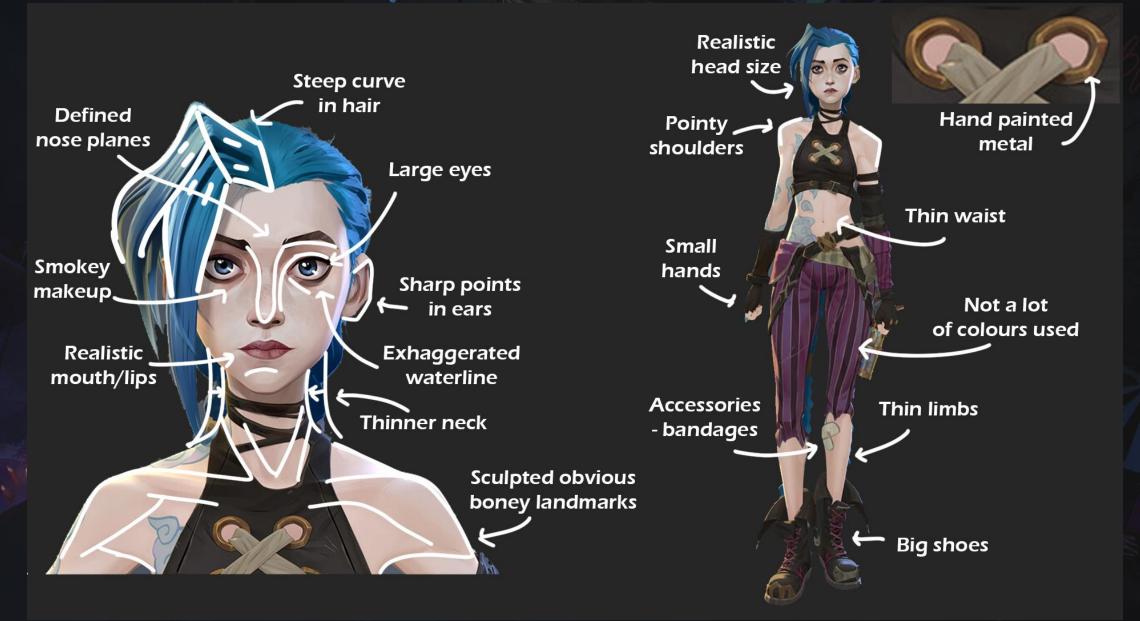




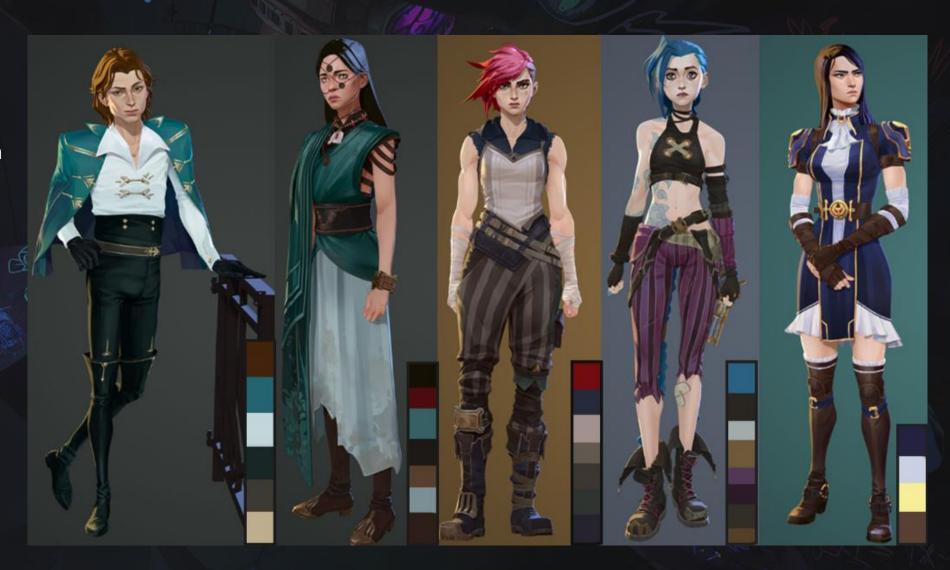




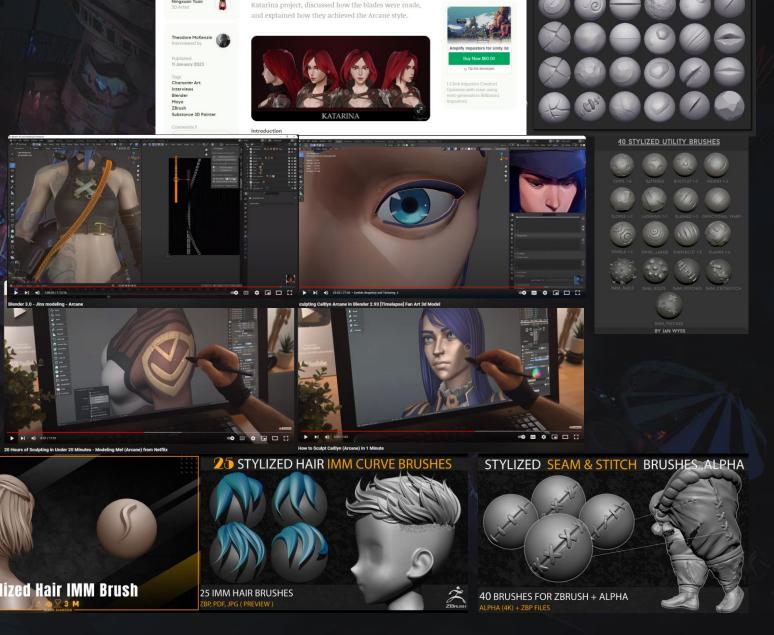
- The characters in Arcane generally stand at around 7 and a half heads high.
- Art of the show is generally featured in a relaxed pose instead of A-pose as seen on ArtStation.
- The silhouette is interesting and readable yet still relatively simple. Sharp edges can be seen along the body at the shoulders, hair, and shoes.
- The values show lots of contrast, focus on the eyes and torso. Clothes all way darker than the skin tone and hair.



- Most characters have high saturation hair colours.
- High contrast saturation vs low in clothes.
- They all have some form of white and of black.
- Accent colours of gold trimming.
- All characters have belts, something on their arms, and long boots.
- Poor characters wear stripes.



- This style will be achieved by following references from industry models and artists, as well as inspiration being taken from official art.
- It will also be taken from articles detailing how to achieve the style, and YouTube tutorials from industry experts and fans alike on how to both model and texture in the Arcane style.
- Stylized brush and hair sets can also be taken from art station to enhance the model.



Designing League of Legends' Katarina Arcane-Style

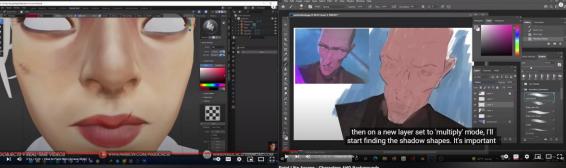
in ZBrush & Maya

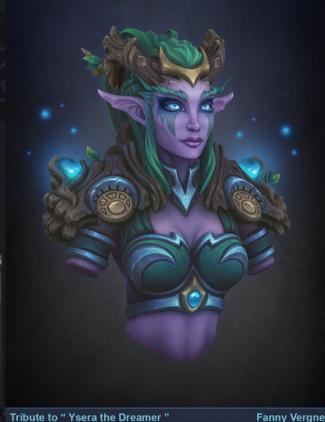


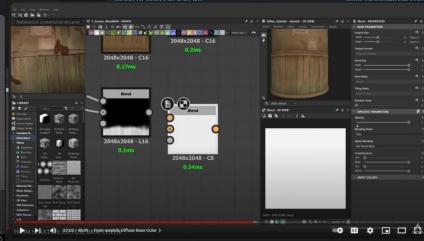
This is where the hand-painting starts. I continued by exporting the new diffuse texture and importing it into 3D-Coat. My painting process is very straight-forward. My main focus is always to add more definition and highlight to the areas that I want the viewer to focus on. I started by painting lighter values fading from the middle of the face, which gives the face more depth. Additionally, I tried painting a lot of different hues in the face such as reds, greens and blues. I treat this process no different than painting a character in a 2D illustration.















#### **Inspirational References and Considerations**

#### Requirements

- Humanoid character
- Arcane/Disco Elysium/Sea of Thieves
- Merchant of some kind
- Hand painted textures
- Presented in Unreal engine 5

#### Considerations

- Wealth
- Products
- Gender
- Height
- Weight
- Environment they're from
- Age
- Race
- Personality
- Colour Palette

# **Inspirational References and Considerations**

























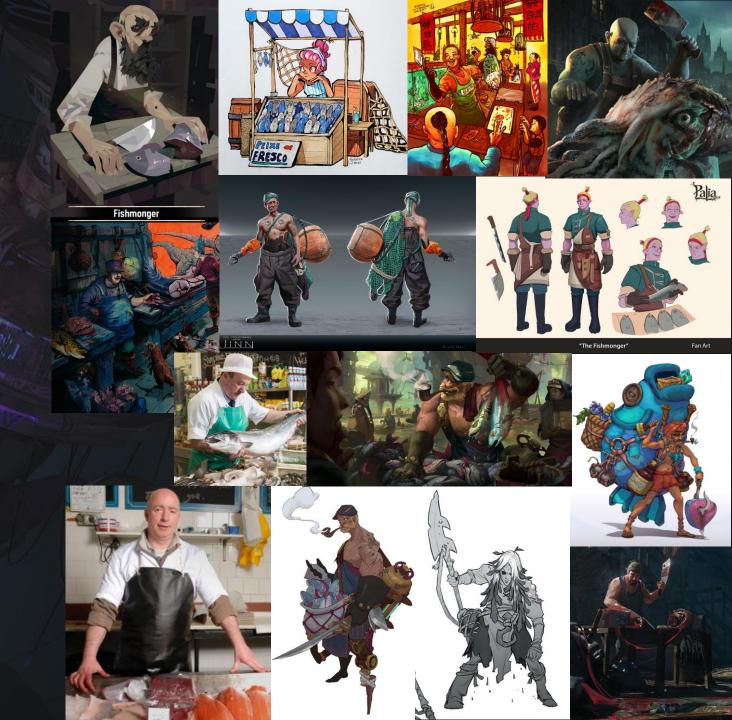




#### **Concept Development**

#### Fishmonger

- Muscley
- Works on the docks in the sun
- Tanned
- Confident and working class
- Apron
- Knife
- Netting
- Gloves
- Eyepatch? Injuries?
- Hat/cloth to keep hair out of face



### **Concept Development**

#### Pet merchant

- Relatively wealthy
- Male or female
- Busy city stall or brick and mortor
- Shy and friendly family owned
- Open and welcoming
- Pet related items treat bag animal ear headband











### **Concept Design**

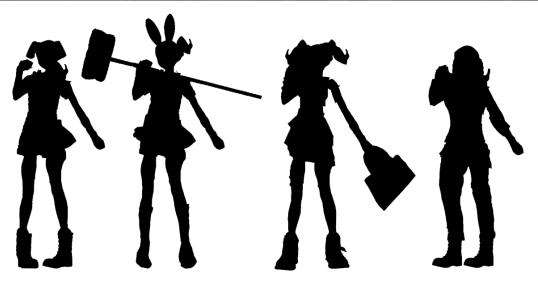
- Final idea for the character is the pet merchant.
- Happy go lucky character with lots of energy.
- The concepts are photobashes of several different iterations taking consideration on the types of clothing, footwear and accessories someone would need.





### **Concept Design**

- Values show more work needs to be done pushing the darkness of the clothes to try and draw the eyes to the face, ears and satchel/tool belt as these are the parts that suggest the job.
- Bunny ears is the most interesting silhouette and stands out the most due to the ears, the broom and the attachments on the hip.





### **Concept Design**

- Experimentation with coloured was started.
- To match style clothes, need to be darker and have an element of white or black, as well as less saturation
- A use of accent colours such as gold or a complimentary colour in places of focus.



### Final concept

For the character it is important to have a purpose for each part of the design.

- The bunny ears suggest an animal centric person
- The bucket and brush suggest they are hard working
- Ponytail hair suggests they work in an environment hair needs to be out of their face
- Toolbelt and satchel suggest the person has many jobs and prepared for anything
- The shirt and playsuit make it easy to move around, however still presentable for customers
- The boots are hard wearing and show they need something like that for their job



## Final concept

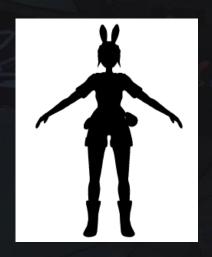
#### Asset list

- Bunny ears
- Hair cap/bangs/ponytail
- Head
- Body arms/legs
- Shirt
- Playsuit
- Bracelets
- Toolbelt
- Brush
- Satchel
- Bandage
- Boots
- Bucket Brush



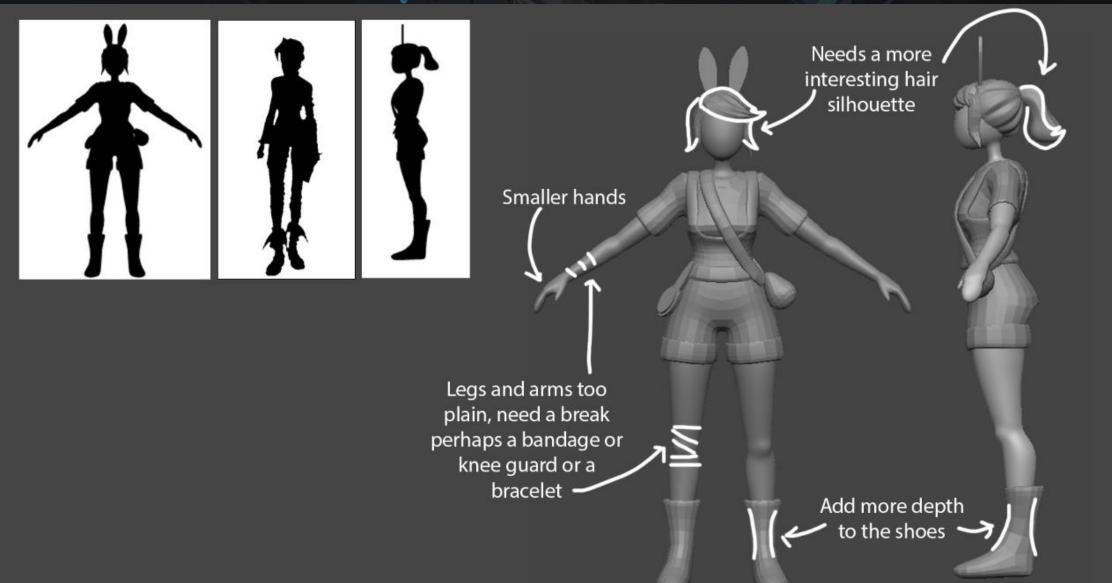
### **Blockout Development**

- The first iterations of the blockout
- Following the Zbrush female model, then moving to the proportions of the style
- Adding clothes and forming a bigger head
- · Referring to references often, and keeping an eye on the silhouette





### **Blockout Development**



# **Blockout Development**

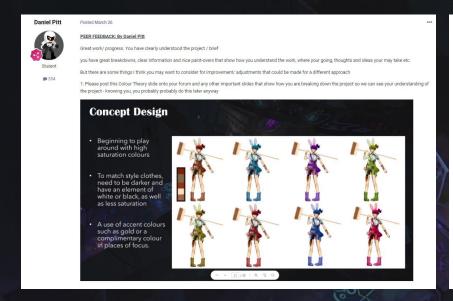


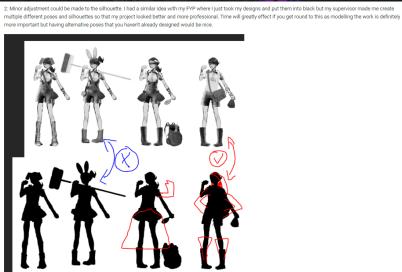
### **Face Development**

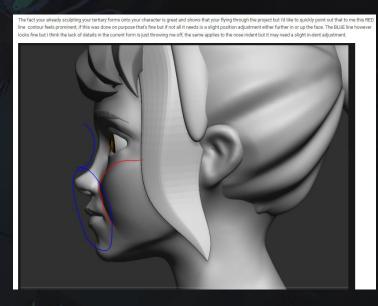


- Moved the features around and using the pinch tool to create the chunky look
- Adding clothes back and moving the face around from there





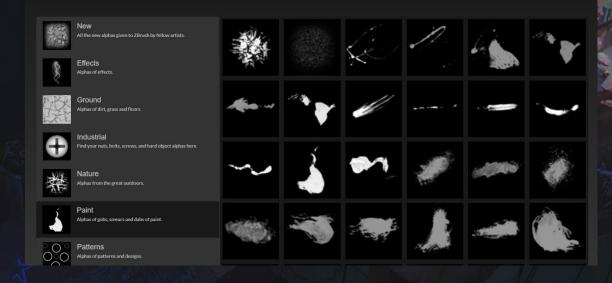




- Look into different brush packs and alpha packs for substance to help break up the painting from the basic alphas
- Bubble backpack with an animal inside
- Cat carrier
- Bird cage attached to the belt, or used as earrings
- Bucket and the brush is generally disliked so remove those and add in the ideas above
- Gloves for handling pets
- a net for catching pets could be incorporated

#### Welcome to the ZBrush Alpha Library

We have created a library full of amazing Alpha materials from ZBrush artists who wish to share their work with the ZBrush community. This library gives you one unique location to view, download, and begin sculpting using any of the alphas found in this library. See what ZBrush can do with your alphas. Enjoy the search.



- Can use zbrush alpha packs for painting
- Poly paint first before taking it into substance for a base

https://pixologic.com/zbrush/downloadcenter/alpha/?\_ga=2.253103949.57247 2251.1714663955-59746371.1714663955





- Added in the pet carrier and the earrings
  - Added net and bubble backpack

Here is my peer feedback for you.

o very nice to see the silhouetting of the character in different shapes and sizes. One thing I have picked up on its the decision on what the block is, isn't obvious to an



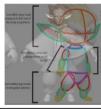


materials for building. Also could be a feral type of yordle that is selling old ruins and huge artifacts.

would again have a look at different yordles and see if you can take from their colour palettes and create a nice looking palette, don't forget to use adobe explore as you will find some nice things here! https://color.adobe.com/explore



the head a lot larner and the horiz a lot shorter virities have make a different set of horiz removities to normal humans. If you don't want to play an



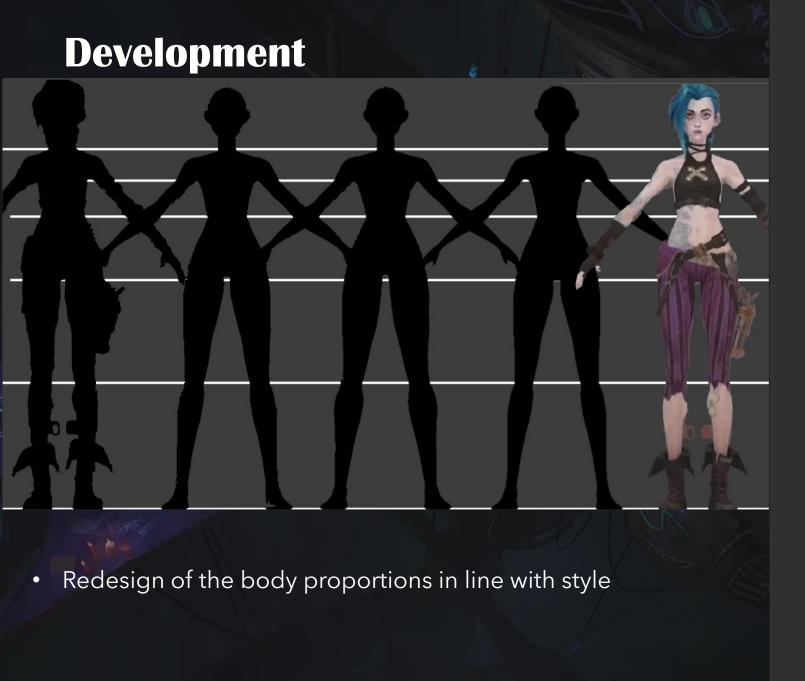






- Project artefact in answer to a brief Research and Development Sone towards the Live Brief

- Posted feedback
- Discussion on research
- References
- **Proportions**
- Concepting
- Colour palettes
- Modelling paintovers and discussion
- Video references
- Assessment doc information









#### Asset list

- Bunny ears
- Hair cap/bangs/ponytail
- Head
- Body arms/legs
- Shirt
- Playsuit
- Bracelets
- Toolbelt
- Brush
- Satchel
- Bandage
- Boots
- Bucket Brush



- Took a reference from art station
- Added in wrinkles
- Added buttons



- Separates straps
- Added in seams
- Added collar







Subdivision 4

- Started work on the boots
- Added base
- Added front and back parts of the shoe
- Changed the shape



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v =-LtBZ36ymSE



- Added subdivision
- Added poly paint
- Removed straps and added as a separate object
- Lowered the belt and added in buttons
- Added hands
- Refined the knees
- Began working on the boots
- Added shirt collar
- Added wrinkles to the playsuit



Turn around of work so far

#### **Development - Polypaint**





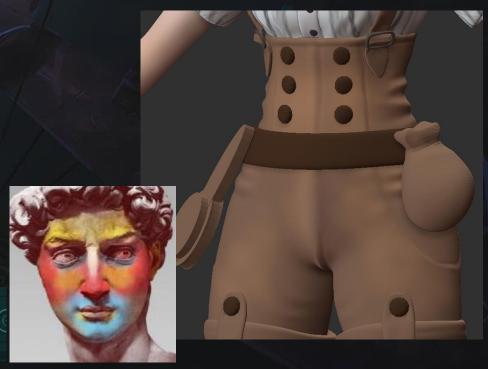




- Added colour zones to the face
- Added warm zones on the knees and elbows
- Used the spray to paint colour variation in the skin
- Added in variation on the playsuit, cool blue shades for the dark spots and orange shades for the lighter parts
- Added in lines for the shirt to match the concept
- Changed the material to mat cap white







#### **Development**







- Head shapes not quite right so needed a rework
- Removed the starkness of the nasel label fold
- Eyes were made smaller
- Flattened the bottom of the nose
- Deepened the areas under the eyes

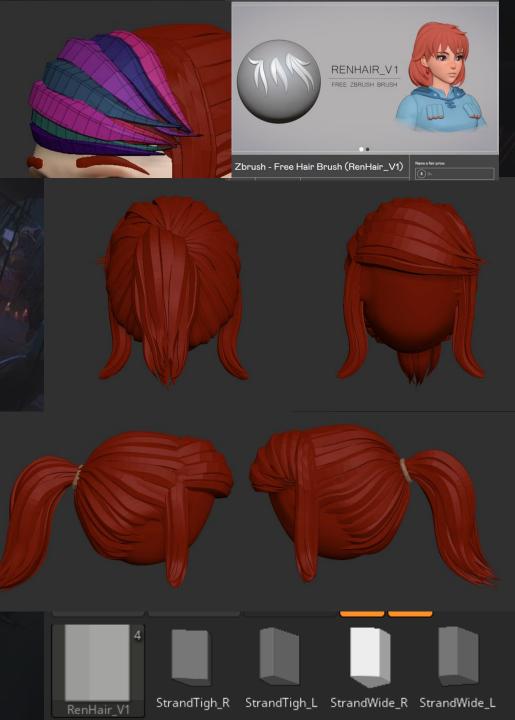




#### **Development - Hair**

- Hair was created with Ren Hair V1 brush
- This brush uses low poly when creating the strokes which makes it easy to use for the retopology
- A sphere was places over the head and then strokes were layered over it to create this effect.





# **Development Pipeline - Highpoly**



# **Development Pipeline - Highpoly**

#### **Development Pipeline - Lowpoly**

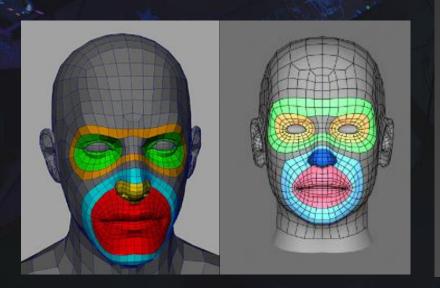
- The retop ended at 31k tris which is well within the allocation
- Animation loops were taken into consideration at the knees, making them collapsible
- The chest considers the breasts movement
- Mostly even quads that flow well and have no spirals

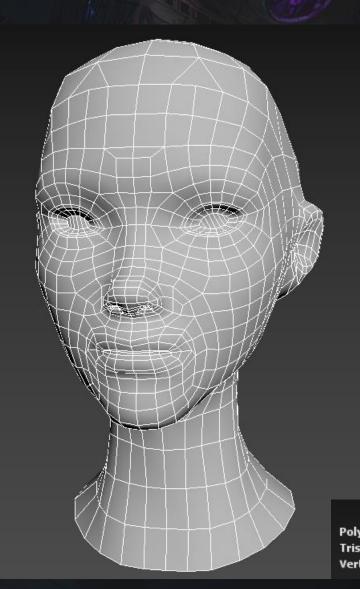


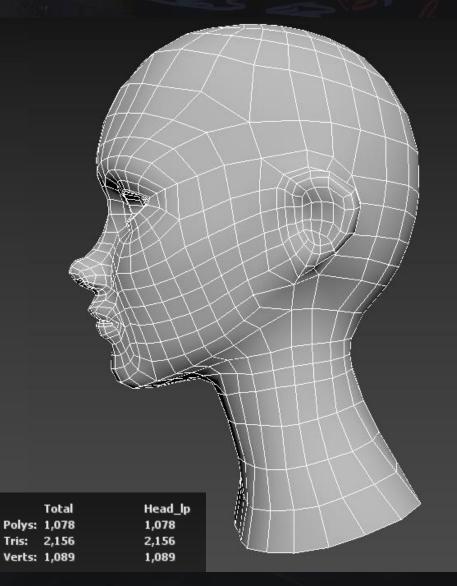


#### **Development Pipeline - Lowpoly**

- Face added up to 2k tris
- Animation loops around the eyes, nose, eyebrows, mouth and ears.
- Quads flow together around the model







#### **Development Pipeline - Lowpoly**

- Denser topology in the hair to allow more movement when animated
- Hair cap is considerably lower as this part won't move around at all like the bangs and the fringe.



- Smoothing groups are applied to the model to do most of the work with the topology
- Texture sets separated into 5 sets
  - -Head
  - -Hair
  - -Accessories
  - -Clothes
  - -Skin
- These are going to be 1 4K map and 4
   2k maps



# **Development Pipeline** Uvs set out with small gaps apart from the skin as there were only 4 islands

- The vertex paint was taken from the zbrush file with the ID material which allowed for a good initial base
- Render settings for Substance were changed to better simulate that in unreal



- Use of baked highlights and shadows in the base colour view helped tone the colours
- Using the knife tool to add a painterly effect with sampled and then slightly altered to help blend the colours





- Dirt generator used to add colour variation
- Colours layered and overlayed onto parts of the model to change how warm or cold they were

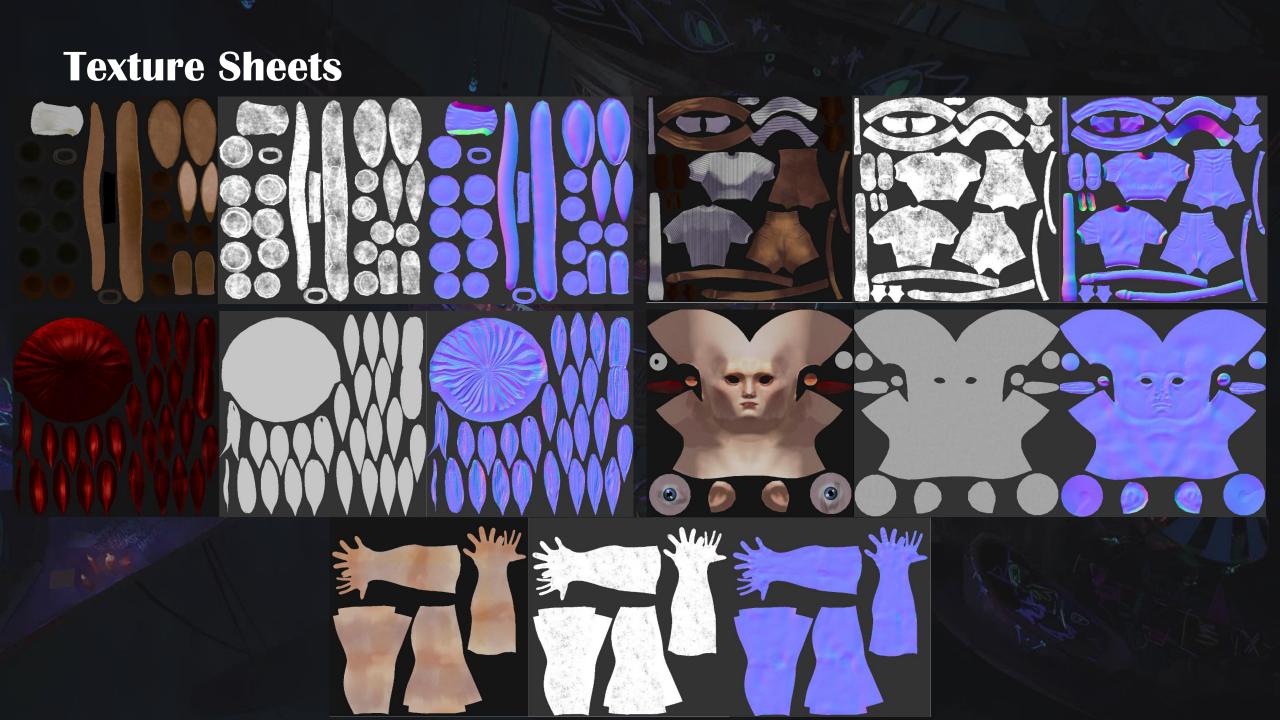




- Spent most of the time on the face as this is what people are drawn to first
- Used the Jynx example to create the eyes building up the colours
- Used the knife brush, building up red shades, shadows and highlights in the characters face
- Adding in the details of the lips with different layers
- Used the spray brush to add freckles

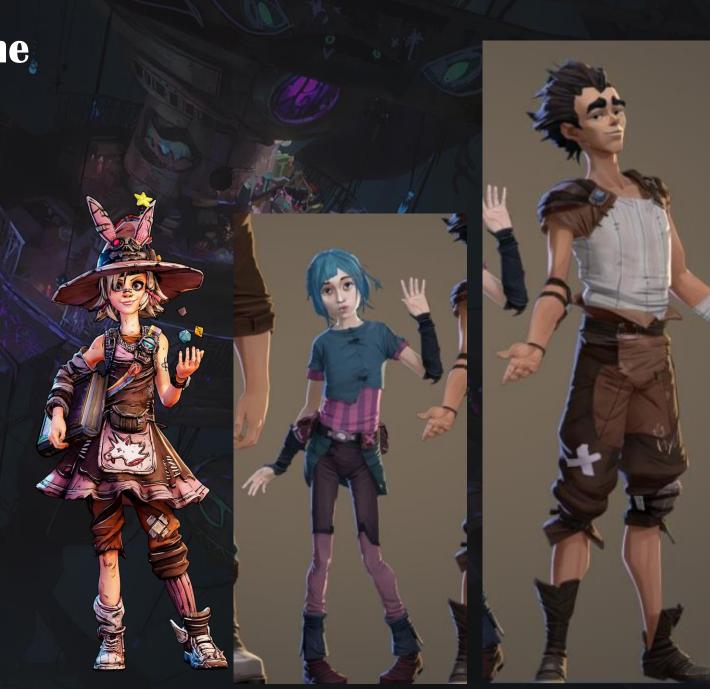








- Character should be happy go lucky
- Confident and sociable if they're a merchant
- Holding something, or with open gestures and body language
- Take references from Arcane and Borderlands



 Mixamo was used to test the model and see how easily it would rig.

 It was also used to see the different poses that could be created for the model



- The first attempt at rigging was with the base human skeleton in 3DS Max however there was issues where some of the model wasn't weighted properly
- To counteract this a brand new rig was made from scratch, and when this was voxel skinned it was pretty much perfect and could be moved around
- Silly poses were made to stretch around the model and see how it moves around and if anything needed the weight painting











- Mixamo poses were used and then cleaned up
- The face and eyes were moved around to add expression to the character in the different poses

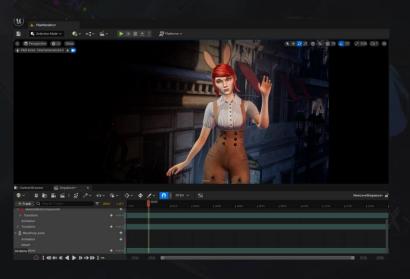


- The unreal scene was set up with an infinity wall
- Basic 3 point lighting was set up and then extra ones added in to complement the model
- Orange lights were added for in front and cool ones for behind
- A background was found online and placed on a plane behind
- To get the high res pictures the level sequencer was set up as other techniques didn't get as quality result

























# **Beauty Renders**



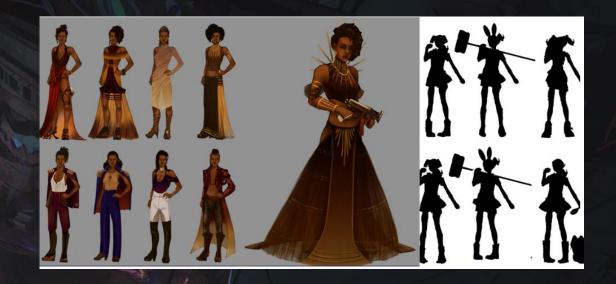


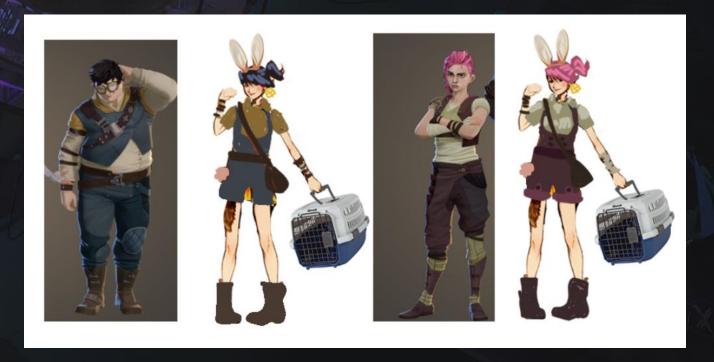


# **Beauty Renders**



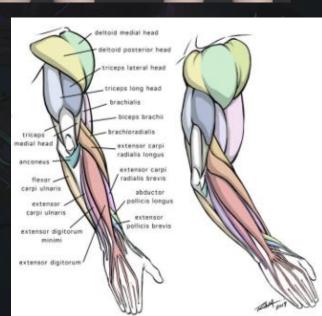
- The concepting of the project was very well thought out, will lots of considerations of what the character will be and look like. It would however been more beneficial to work from the silhouette first instead of photobashing or using it in combination to create something more interesting as a lot of the silhouettes look the same and very basic.
- While colour was explored it was also a basic hue change without looking at the values and how it effects the character. Even something as simple as sampling colours from current characters and applying them to the concept of the project would help bring it more inline with the Arcane style.





- The high poly while lacking some of the finer details shows off good secondary shapes.
- The reference for the clothes is excellent and more could have been taken from it such as deeper folds in the clothes and more defined seams to really add some depth.
- The buttons leave a lot to be desired and could have been smaller and slightly lower down on the body as seen in the reference. Arcane has a grungier look so adding some nicks with orb slash to the buttons and using some Hpolish would highly improve the accessories, including the ears.
- In terms of the concept a few things were missing such as the belt, pouch, earrings, and glove, which are all storytelling elements of the character which would vastly improve the character.
- The arm anatomy also could use more work as it is still basic shapes without any of the muscle forms and boney landmarks.

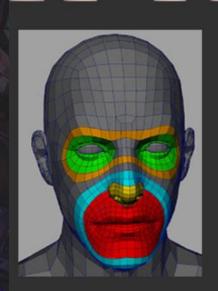


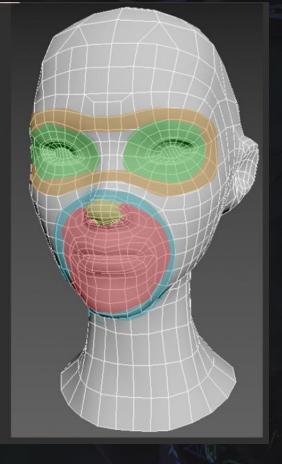


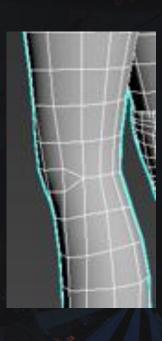




- Current tri count is 31,414 which is lower then the allocated 50-70k.
- While this means good use of retopology, it also means more could have been added to the model to enhance it.
- Adding in the extra pieces missing would have brought the could up to the expected amount, as well as adding in additional props such as a broom or net.
- The flow of the topology is nice with the denser areas being the head, hands and hair which is to be expected with considerations to the animation.
- Collapsing loops around the knees was done to help them bend, as well as the loops around the hip and breast areas. The face considers the way it would move around the eyes, nose, and mouth.
- There are a few areas that are denser than they should be as can be seen in the knee bandage, playsuit cuff straps and the buttons on the playsuit.

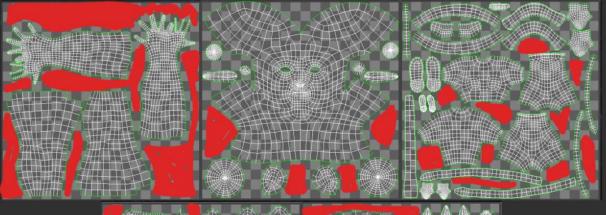


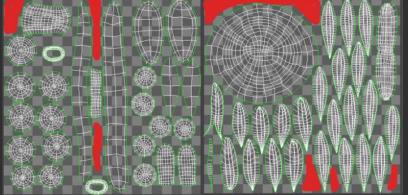




- The texture set allocation is well though out with it consisting of hair, head, clothes, accessories, and skin.
- The skin could have been moved together into the accessories set however as there was a lot of unused space in the skin set.
- Some of the islands could be straightened out further with the pin tool to be more inline with industry standard practices and it would fill in the small gaps in the sheets.







- Face textures are very nice and pushed towards the more painterly style.
- Good use of exaggerated paint around shadows and highlights and as well around the eyes. To push this further adding white to the waterline would help the eyes stand out further as well as adding a gradient to the eyeliner on the top lid.
- Some of the planes could have been more exaggerated around the nose and eyes as can be seen on the Jynx reference.
- The clothes leave a lot to be desired in terms of texturing however the basic framework is there with colour variation, baked lighting and dirt wear.
- Looking at the Arcane references, a lot more variation is needed with the colours painted on to achieve the correct effect.
- There are also a lot of belts, metal attachments, and stitches used in the clothing designs used so an addition of this would have helped bring the character closer to the brief.







- Poses were considered from Arcane, Borderlands and Mixamo which allowed for a variety of ideas to take from.
- Rig worked well as the clothing was relatively skintight, so little work was needed on the weight painting.
- Poses are subtle and relaxed which well reflects the character, however there is slight clipping in some areas such as around the elbows and ears.
- This would be fixed by going back and adding in some more animation topology there and moving the weighting around.
- To improve this further adding something for the character to hold or an animal in the scene would add to the story telling and it often used in other media such as Borderlands.



- The render scene set up properly with an infinity wall a nice use of cool and warm colours.
- The background from Arcane was a nice edition to add some character to the scene. In some renders the background was quite obviously just an image sat on a plane however from some angles this worked perfectly, and the lighting mimicked a lamppost light in an alleyway.
- To improve the renders, care should be taken into how bright the lights are which effect the character, and more full-length shots of the body to show off the whole character instead of just the top half.
- Adding some effects in photoshop afterwards would also add a lot to the character as Arcane has a lot of dramatic shots.



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