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#### Introduction

'Thumbelina - Thrips on Violets' is an adaptation of the Hans Christian Andersen short story 'Thumbelina/Little Tiny' as a Detective Noir Narrative game, set in 1930s Hollywood.

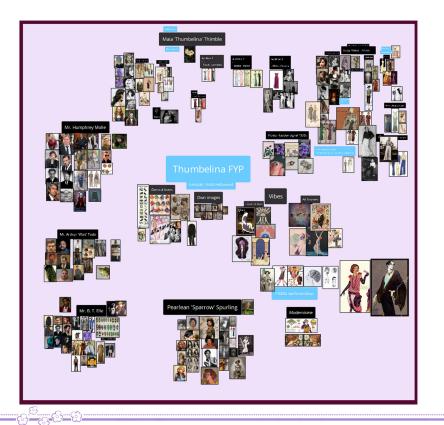
The story surrounds Maia Thimble, a young woman who moves from the Appalachian mountains to Hollywood to pursue a career in singing. When she arrives, she meets a famous New York artist — Ruby Prince. They are instantly infatuated with one another, that is until once Maia starts working at Arthur T. Tode's Jazz Club — The Lily Pad — Ruby goes missing, and Maia is the number one suspect.

As Maia traverses through the struggles of the entertainment industry, the police and paparazzi are constantly on her tail as more and more people go missing or are killed. Maia is trying her best to find Ruby amidst the chaos, but, the answer may be closer than she thinks









#### **Idea Generation**

To create the characters, I accumulated reference images and noted specific characteristics of the fashion during this time period.

In addition, I gathered visual references of artistic movements and styles of the era, predominantly drawing inspiration from French Art Deco.



Close-up on Thumbelina's section

# Industry Example -The Wolf Among Us (2013)

I looked towards The Wolf Among Us by Telltale Games

- It's an episodic Neo Noir based on classic fairtales/Nursery Rhymes and Fables
- The Game is similar in themes to what I imagine my project to be, a gritty fairytale retelling however mine would stick to one fairytale rather than multiple









# Industry Example -June's Journey (2017)

- 'June's Journey' by Wooga is a female lead detective puzzle game, which is a direction I can see 'Thumbelina' going in.
- The concept art released by Iga Oliwiak is the same development pipeline I followed, using a manequin style for character design
- Using this as inspiration, I went on to include expressions within my production art since it would be a narrative heavy game.











# Industry Example -Disney Mirrorverse (2022)

- For the Turn Arounds and final production art, my main inspiration was the concept art released by Disney Mirrorverse in the book 'The Art of Disney Mirrorverse' (2024)
- Based on this concept art, in my production art includes posing, to bring an understanding to my designs as they are complex.





# Inspiration Thumbelina (1994)

- Don Bluth's Thumbelina features the scene 'The Beetle Ball' that is themed around 1920s-30s jazz clubs, and was the main source of inspiration for my project











# **Inspiration**French Art Deco

- The Fashion and Stylyisation for this project was all inspired by the French Art Deco movement, particularly with illustrations by George Barbier
- During the 40s 60s, many fairtale illustrations took inspiration from this movement, such as Sheilah Beckett











# **Inspiration**The Red Shoes (1948)

- The 1948 film
  encaptures the
  mental downfall of
  the main heroine,
  through her
  performance while
  dancing and off stage.
- The film also uses colour and lighting to exaggerate these themes











### **Historical Context**

#### 1930s Hollywood

During the 30s, with the Great Depression starting in 1929, the world of Cinema boomed, with an enslaught of people coming to Los Angeles looking for work, and many finding it in Hollywood. This grew even more with the change from silent film to 'Talkies', where previous silent actors couldn't translate over into dialogue. Some actors would be dubbed by new voice actors or would be repplaced entirely. Because of the industry growth, more and more jobs opened up not just in Hollywood but the entire L.A Area with people hoping to work up into the industry and become a Hollywood Star.



Jazz Clubs that started in the 20s grew, and Radio Stations became more popular. It was also an Industry that allowed women to have their own independent career, with most U.S states legalising Women's equality. It was an opptunity for people of all backgrounds to find a career, even with the Hays Code. However due to discrimination laws, (Sodomy Laws and Segregation) it was very easy for studios to cheat and exploit their workers with little legal protections.







### Historical Context Queer Culture in 1930s Hollywood

The 1920s - 30s was a pivitol Time for the LGBT Community.

The 20s brought along the 'Pansy Craze', where the general public became fascintaed with Drag Queens/Kings. During this time many places held Drag events due to the popularity. However with the 1930s sodomy laws and the rise in sexology, homosexuality and Queer Culture became hated once again. In 1934 the Hays Code came into Hollywood, banning any depiction of Gay relationships or people. However through marketing, Queer people became a target audience, especially Lesbians. Sex Ambiguity became a selling point with such actresses as Marlene Dietrich.



Because of the criminalisation of Homosexuality, Queer People developed different signals to find each other and to creat safe spaces. Particularly for lesbians, Violets became a signal which may have come from the 1927 play 'The Air', which also starred Marlene Dietrich. Masculine Lesbians would wear a French Monocle on the left side, adopted from underground gay clubs in France. In Hollywood, 'The Sewing Club' became a secret Lesbian Club.







#### **Deliverables:**

For each character, I gave them all the same set of deliverables:

Total characters (Some will have more than I Design)

- Maia Thimble/ Thumbelina
- Ruby Prince/ The Fairy Prince
- Arthur T. Tode/ The Todd
- B. T. Elle? The Beetle
- Humphrey Mole/ The

Per Character:

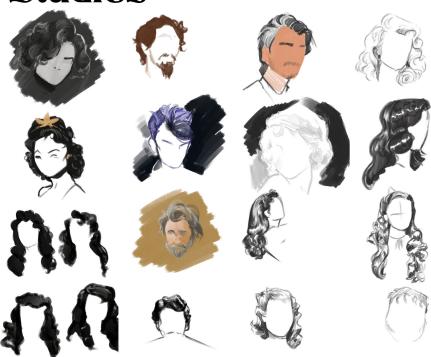
- Moodboards
- BlueSky
- Thumbnails
- Colour Iterations
- Greyscale
- Asset Iterations
- Character sheet

Per Charcter Sheet:

- Expressions (5 min)
- Poses (5 min)
- Front and back Turn
  Arounds
- Head Turn Arounds



# **Studies**

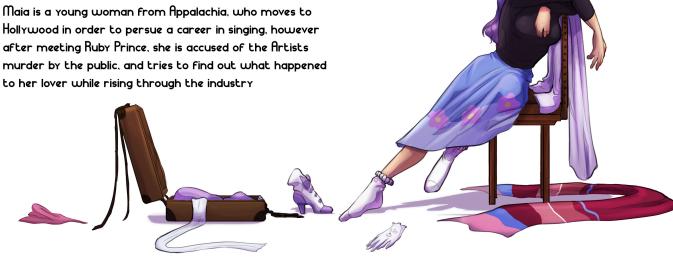






# Maia Thimble Thumbeling

Maia is a young woman from Appalachia, who moves to Hollywood in order to persue a career in singing, however after meeting Ruby Prince, she is accused of the Artists murder by the public, and tries to find out what happened



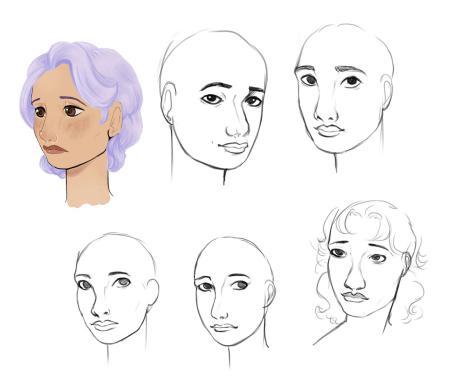
#### Maia Thimble BlueSky

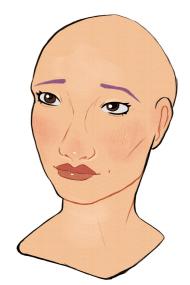


For Maia's BlueSkys, it was more focused on how her clothing could portray her role at points in the narrative, and how her personality would shine through during these moments.

It was also a point of exploring different styles of fashion of the 1930s era to see what I preferred on her.

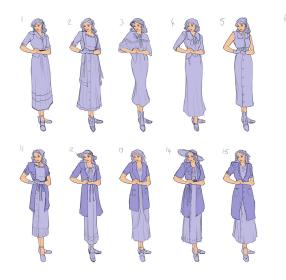


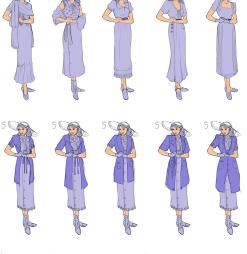




**Face Development** 

# Discarded Original Thumbelina Thumbnails





Before continuing with the rest of Maia's development, these were discarded Thumbnails of her first design. They were discarded as they didn't showcase who she was at this point, they were too clean and put together for someone who had uprooted her life and was inexperienced.





#### Anotated Moodboard - Arriving in Hollywood



Metally but tagetien carried stockings





19205 - doefn't Innow how wen a her Scory

After scrapping the first thumbnails, I made a specific mood board for this design and would continue to do this with other designs. I also annotated it in order to keep track of why I was drawn to these specific design elements.

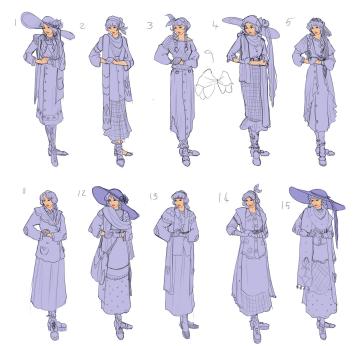
Her clothing during this point is purposely out of date, with lots of layering, patterns as if she had thrown in together. The mood board was to give me ideas such as scarfs, coats, skirts and dresses.

This is also where I start the floral motif throughout Maia's design as a reference to Thumbelina being born from a flower in the book.





#### Maia Thimble Thumbnails





#### Wave I

This first wave of Thumbnails was too similar to the scrapped ones, and I was advised to go with something more like 9, 12 and 15



#### Maia Thimble Thumbnails





#### Wave 2

The final wave was a time for me to play around with layerig. Some were too much and some not enough, but the one chosen was 4.









# Arrival Design Colour Iterations and Greyscale Test

The colours for this design were very important, as this would solidify what colour palette Maia's other designs. This one is has the most colour variation to show the starting point of Maia's mental state, which will become more pale and white. The one chosen was 9.



#### Anotated Moodboard - Working for Tode



I looked at images of afternoon dresses from the 1930s, as they were semi-formal but also cheaper than an evening/formal dress, which would suit Maia's career at that point.

I also featured ones that had ruffles in the sleeves, bodice or skirt because I could bring in the floral elements that I started in her first design.



## Maia Thimble Thumbnails - Arthur. T. Tode





#### Wave I

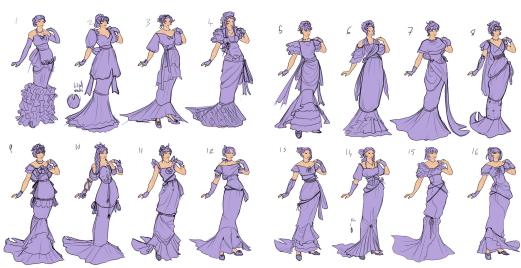
This Wave was almost scrapped, as most of them come off more as a high-fantasy dress rather than a cheap and tacky dress



## Maia Thimble Thumbnails - Arthur. T. Tode

Wave 2

With this Wave I started basically from stratch, but still brought in some elements of the first Wave, but I focused more on making the dress look hand-made and to almost look uncomfortable to wear, so the final was a combination of 12 and 13













### **Tode Design Colour Iterations and Greyscale Test**

For Maia's first entertainment job her design is more colourful than her future designs but not as colourful as her first due to the work environment. I went with 2 with some changes.



#### Anotated Moodboard - working for B. T. Elle



























At this point in her career, Maia has moved up into being a micro celebrity (or time period equivalent) now working for B. T. Elle rather than Tode.

For the mood board. I collected images of more expensive clothing for travelling, with the idea that Maia would be on the move between different gigs. I also looked at autumnal clothing from the 30s to give her some more coverage and to add to the 'suit' like look I want for her.

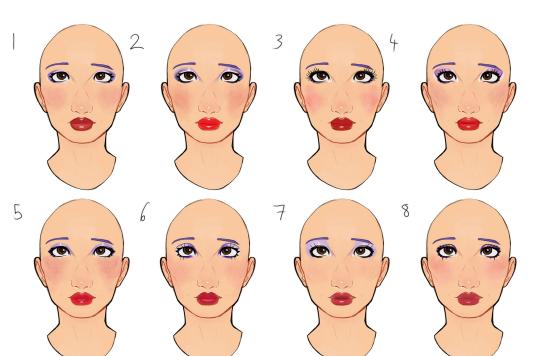


### Maia Thimble Thumbnails - B. T. Elle

This design only took one Wave of thumbnailing before I was satisfied with a design. This design is meant to be her at her peak, where she's at the highlight of her career and feeling to most like herself but also staying professional, and I believe 16 reflects those







### Maia Make-Up Iterations

These iterations originally were meant for just the B. T. Elle Design, (going with I) but I ended up using 2 and 7 for the Molle and Tode design.





#### B. T. Elle Design Hair Iterations

In the thumbnails for this design, the hair was too simple to suit the time period, and so I wanted to experiment more with texture and styling. I ended up with 17, which was still very simple, but could reflect Maia's simple and calm nature.









#### B. T. Elle Colour Iterations and Greyscale Test

Despite the Design being Maia at her career peak and the most in her style, the colours are still nearly all white, as her mental health crumbles.



#### Anotated Moodboard - Working for Molle

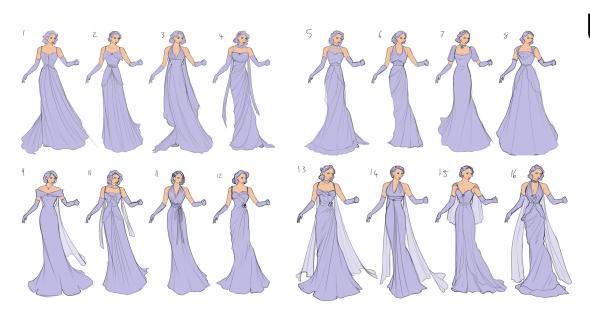


Maia's final design is for while she works for the Molle. In the original story, this is when Thumbelina is tired, exhausted and is being convinced to marry the Mole, despite her not wanting to.

Because of this, my main inspiration for this was wedding dresses of the late 30s and early 40s to make her fashion more modern as she becomes progressively more famous. I also looked for more glamorous dresses that were worn at awards/events to make sure I didn't go too bridal with my inspirations.



#### Maia Thimble Thumbnails - Molle



#### Wave I

Despite favouring ones such as 4 or II. it was decided to lean more with 7 or 9, something more conservative and formal to suit Molle's taste and show his control over her.



#### Maia Thimble Thumbnails - Molle



#### Wave 2

After Wave 2 I still wasn't satisfied with her design, and so I ended up 'Frankenstein'ing my favourites together and ended up with the final design.





#### Molle Design Colour

At her final design, Maia's dress in completely white/silver, This is when her mental health and has lost most of her sense of self and is almost a 'blank canvas' for Molle.









## Ruby Prince

#### The Prince

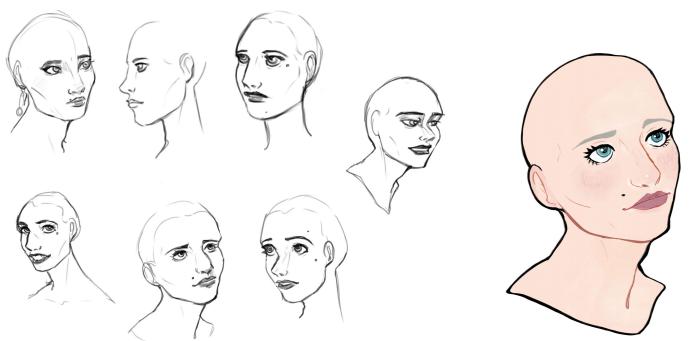
Ruby Prince is the heiress to the Prince Diamond Mine in Montana, as well as an acclaimed painter who uses diamonds in her work, After meeting and courting Maia Thimble, she mysteriously goes missing and her Art Studio is raided.



### Ruby Prince BlueSky



Ruby's BlueSky phase was mostly focusing on how masculine or feminine | wanted her to be, and how glamourous she would present herself. and it is also where her becoming an Artist originated from.



**Face Development** 



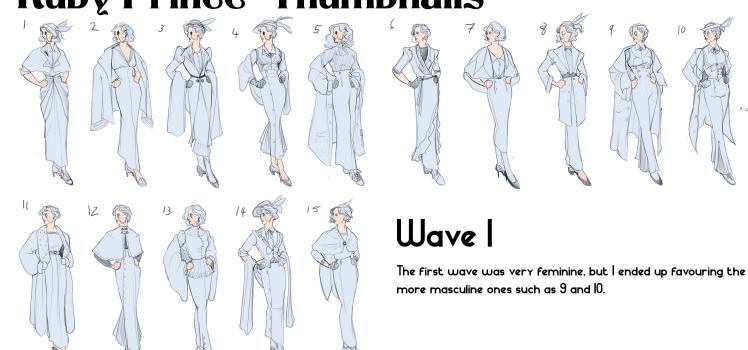
#### Ruby Prince Mood board



In Ruby's mood board. I was leaning more feminine than what she ends up looking like, with most of my inspirations being skirts/dresses, but quickly changed to suits while Thumbnailing.



**Ruby Prince Thumbnails** 



#### **Ruby Prince Thumbnails**

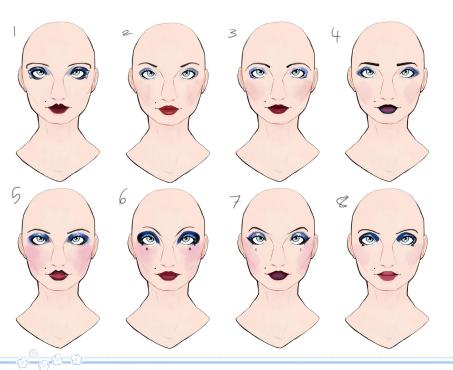


#### Wave 2

The second wave carried on from the first into the second, I carried on with the more masculine ideas and made her more androgynous.

I went with I on the second row.

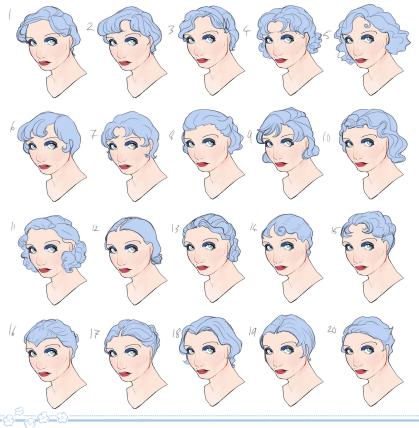
### Ruby Prince Make-Up Iterations





Her make-up is inspired by 19320s flapper girl make-up to give it more of an edge than 1930s make-up.

The final one ended up being a combination of 6 and 8



## Ruby Prince Hair Iterations

The decided Thumbnail had a very short hair style but like with Maia's B. T. Elle Design I wanted to experiment with styles and textures.

I ended up choosing 7.







## Ruby Prince Colour Iterations and Greyscale Test

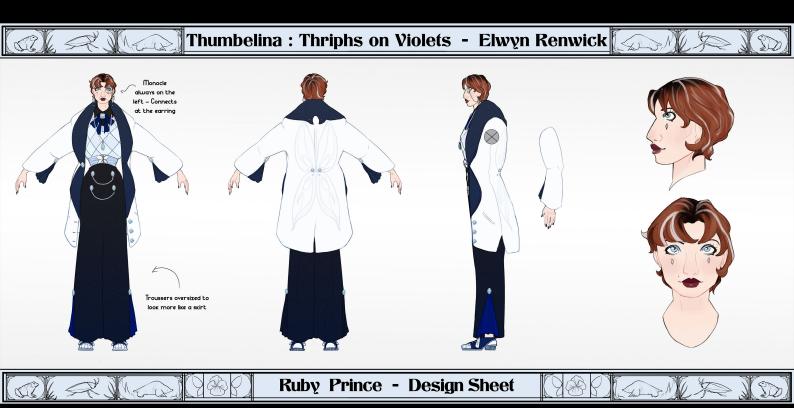
In the book, the Fairy Prince is described as being 'as if he had been made of crystal!' I wanted to keep to colder pale tones like a diamond, and with harsh contrasts to give them a more alternative look.

#### **Narrative Changes**

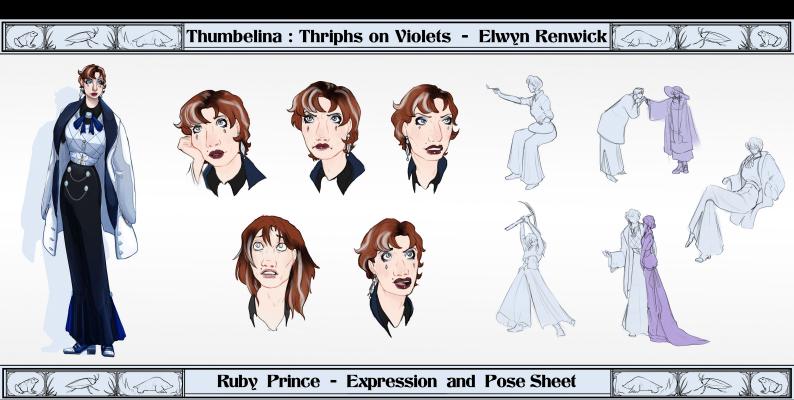
Since a major plotpoint in my Narrative is Ruby going missing. I thought it would be appropriate to give her an alternate design to show what happens to her and how she looks at the end of the plot.

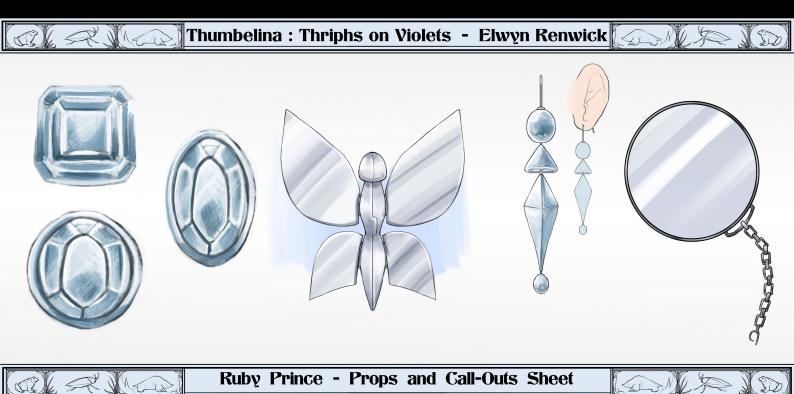












Arthur. T. Toad

#### The Toad

A washed up business man, desperate to make a break through and is certain if he does it the same way every time it'll catch on. He employs Maia and sees her as his chance to finally be noticed by Mr. Molle and become a big shot producer

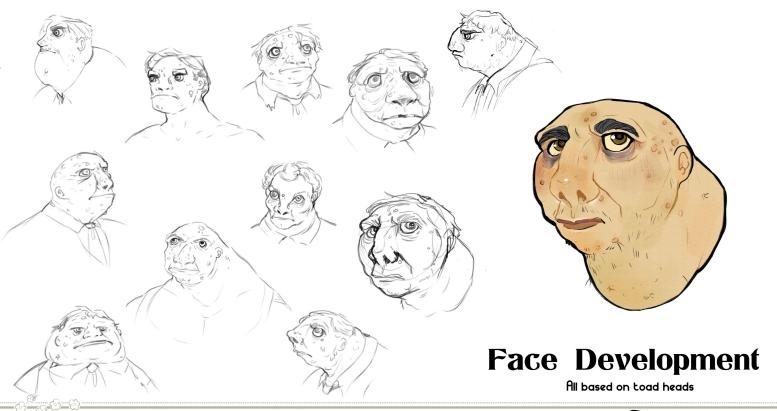


### Arthur T. Tode BlueSky

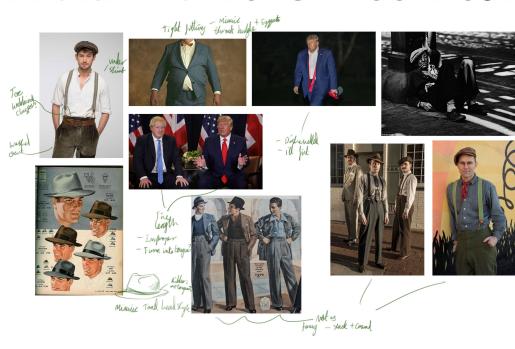


Tode's BlueSky was more around how his clothing could be ill-fitting for him or how he might not know how to wear them, as a precursor to his Thumbnails.





#### Arthur T. Tode Moodboard

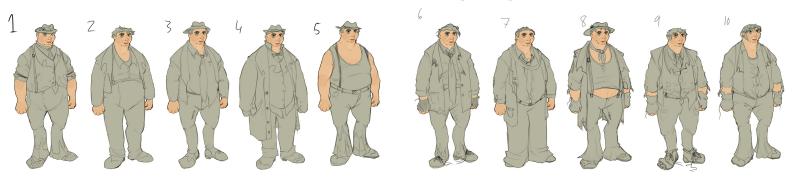






wanted to stay away from the finer and nicer suits most 1930s mens fashion shows, and so I did depend on some hsitorical recreations to get an idea of what I intended.

#### Arthur T. Tode Tumbnails

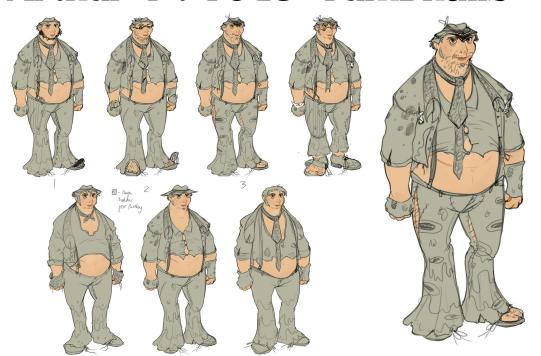




#### Wave I

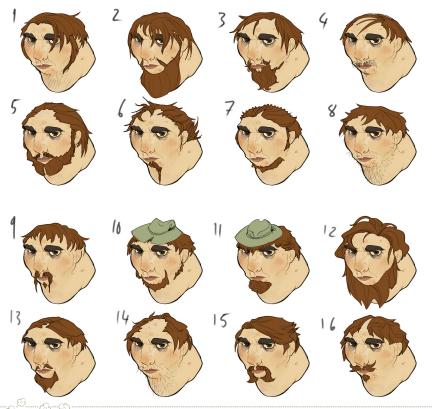
For the first 10 I was still decided on if his clothes would be oversized or too tight, and ended up chosing them being too tight to exaggerate his size.

#### Arthur T. Tode Tumbnails



#### Wave 2

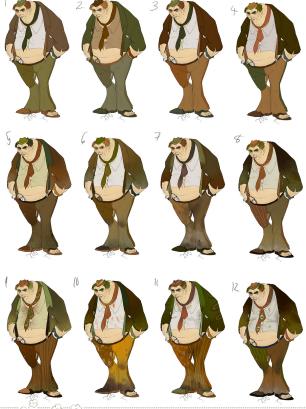
The Final Iterations was focusing on how grubby I could make him, finally chosing the 3rd one on the top row.



# Tode hair and Facial Hair Iterations

Despite Toads not having hair. Tode had a wide variety of them to experiment with how messy his hair was, and how greasy I could make it look

The one chosen was 14 but to bring in the hat like 10 and 11







# Tode Colour iterations and Greyscale Test

Tode colours were inspired by the Cane Toad, an invasive species of toad. As well as typical swamp colours. This is also when I brought in the idea of mold being on him to make him more gross.

I chose II.

#### **Tode Patterns**

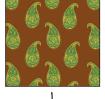
To go with the washed-up business man who was struggling, I made a pattern for his tie that was like a novelty tie, something cheap.

I was unsatisfied with my patterns for a while but ended up with the second pattern on the first row,

























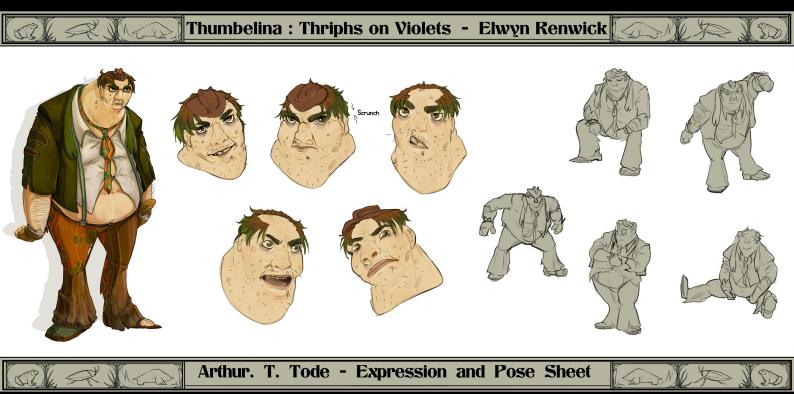








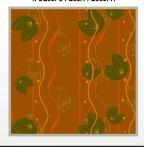




#### Thumbelina : Thriphs on Violets - Elwyn Renwick



Trousers Patch Pattern

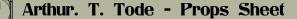




Suspenders clasp







# B. T. Elle The Beetle

B. T. Elle, a radio host and talent agent for Humphrey Molle. He mostly keeps to himself, often appearing in clubs and bars without a word looking for new talent. After discovering Maia and rescuing her from Tode, takes her under his wing.



#### B. T. Elle BlueSky



All of B. T. Elle's design is based on a Jewel Beetle. His design was inspired by Prince, in order to make him stand out in a room without a word.







## Face Development All based on beetle heads



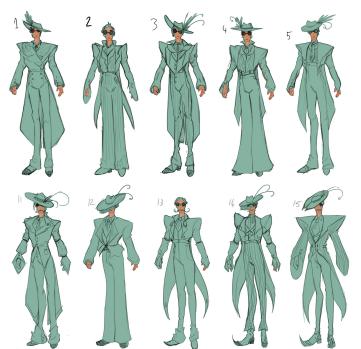
#### B. T. Elle Mood Board



I wanted B. T. Elle's design to mimic a beetle as closely as I could, and so I looked to blazers with clong tails, and waist high pants in order to divide the body like a beetles thorax and have the blazer mimic his wings.



#### B. T. Elle Tumbnails

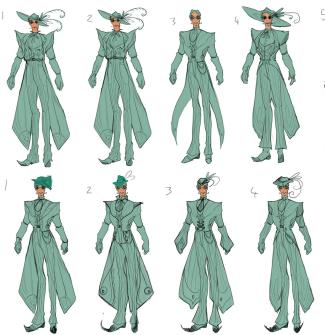




#### Wave I

Most of B. T. Elle's Thumbnails are relatively similar mostly playing with how I can reflect his beetle qualities with coat tails, hats and shoulder-pads. I ended up favouring the more skin tight suits.

## B. T. Elle Tumbnails



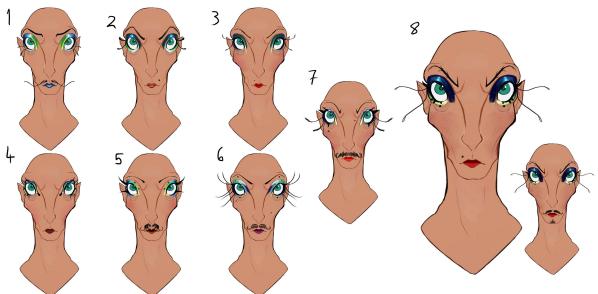


## Wave 2

This final wave was to solidify the beetle elements now that I had decided on a base for his suit. I also ended up going with a smaller hat to contrast Maia.



# B. T. Elle Make Up



Inspired by the gender ambiguity that has been within the Queer Community for hundreds of years, particularly ewith Gaymen.

Using the same colours as a jewel Beetle, I went for 8, using more blue tones than green.

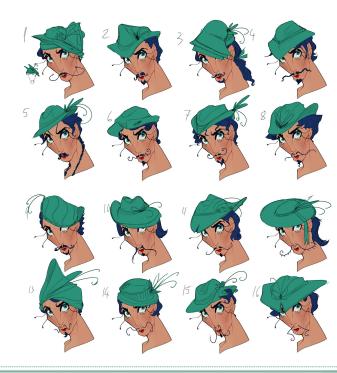


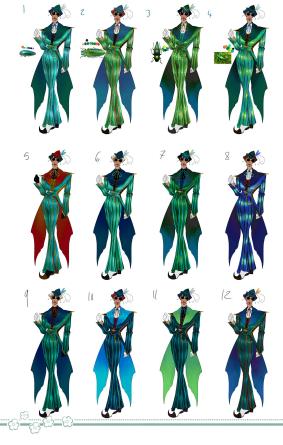
## B. T. Elle Hair and Hat Iterations



Hair and Htas was another way for me to continue his Beetle motif, using his hair to mimic the exoskeleton on a beetles head and the hat to continue to imagery of the elytra.

In the end I went with hair 8 and hat 2







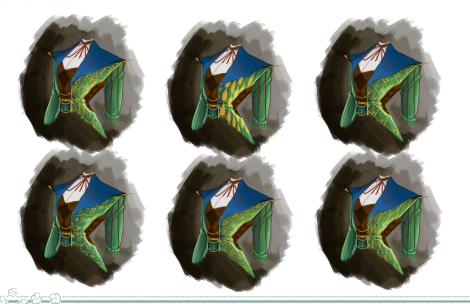


# B. T. Elle Colour iterations and Greyscale Test

Because of the Jewel Beetle Inspiration, the colours are relatively consistent, with reflective greens and blues, and accents of orange and yellow. In the end I went for an edited version of I2, lightening some colours to help make them pop.

## B. T. Elle Patterns

Inspired by the 2022 film 'Scrooged: A Christmas Carol', I created a series of patterns mimicking beetles for his clothing. All inspired by Art Deco vintage fabrics. I went with the bottom right pattern, but also used the first in the second line for the waist coat.

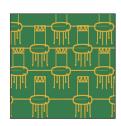














# **Narrative Changes**

Similarly to Ruby, B. T. Elle becomes a target, and will confront Maia just before he dies, seriously injured. For this, I created a quick design showcasing what may have happened to him when he sees Maia.





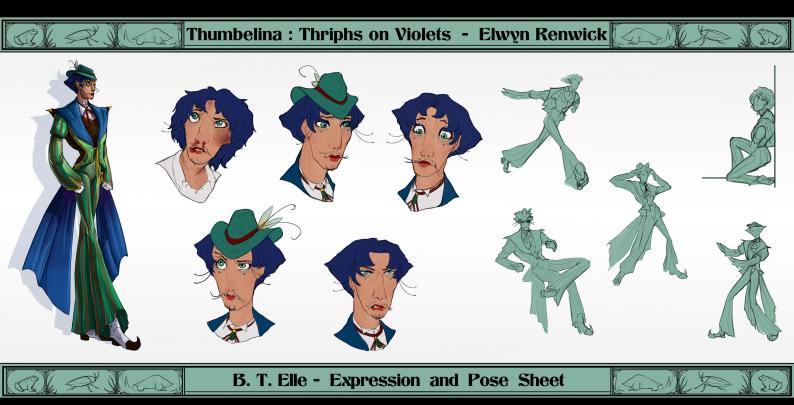














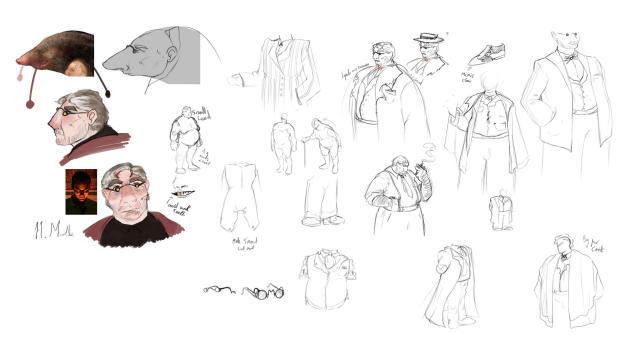
Humphrey Molle

### The Mole

Molle is a wealthy film director, producer and CEO of his own film company. He is greatly admired within the industry and is infamously hard to reach. When he learns about Maia through B. T. Elle, he stops at nothing to get her.



# Humphrey Molle BlueSky



Originally, during the Bluesky phase. Molle was coming across as more visibly friendly, experimenting with softer shapes and making his overall shape language quite round. This would appeal to a narrative where he is a twist villain, making Maia Thimble more trusting of him if they were to have met any earlier.

However, sticking to the original plot points of findersen's Thumbelina, she wouldn't meet him until much later in the narrative. During development. Molle changes into someone more visibly dangerous, suiting the way Maia's narrative has changed to something darker





## **Head Development**



Final
All based on mole heads

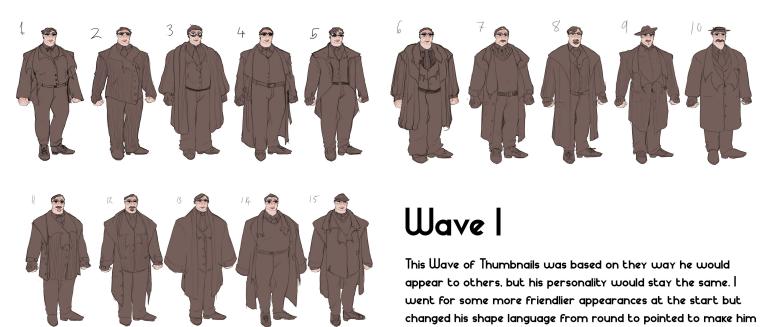
## **Anotated Moodboard**

On this moodboard, I leaned into the more business man look that presented in his BlueSky phase. I also looked for bulkier suits, along with layering, as I wanted this man to be the largest out of the character line up.





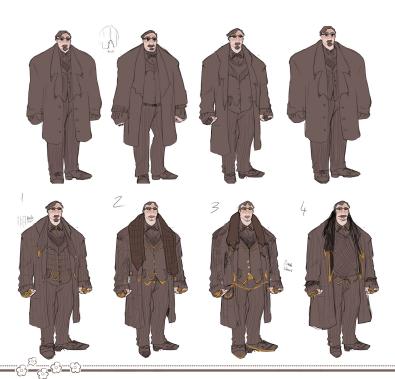
## **Humphrey Molle Thumbnails**





more professional and give way to his true self more.

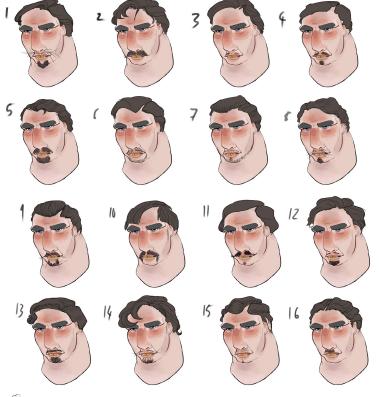
## **Humphrey Molle Thumbnails**





### Wave 5

These are the final thumbnails, bringing in elements I enjoyed out of the previous Thumnbanils while also pushing for the menacing yet charming business man I was aiming for.



# Hair and Facial Hair Iterations

These iterations were a way to further push the mole elements within his design, especially since he was the only mammal based character in this project.

His hair presents professional, well kept and with the times as he is (within my narrative and the original story) one of the richest characters in the area. But while his hair was well kept, his facial hair was an area I was able to play around with more. Some iterations kept with the neatness of the hair, but other's went more with his animal characteristics. Many were intended to mimic

The facial hair I chose had the beard mimic a claw while the mustache mimicked whiskers.







### **Colour Iterations and Greyscale Test**

During his colour phase, I tried not to stray far away from his mole elements, as his design isn't as directly themed as the other characters, and so I wanted the colours to reflect more of it.

I kept to dark earthy colours, with some greys, greens and deep blues. Bringing in some reds as unlike the other characters, Molle's design is a bit more violent with his animal imagery. His coat is made from mole fur, and his waistcoat lapels are meant to mimic a mole's limbs being splayed out in death, even using mole claws as fasteners.

In the end I went for one that kept the earthy tones of a mole but brought it more blood-like

## **Mole Patterns**

Inspired by 'Scrooged: A Christmas Carol' (2022). Molle's waistcoat pattern again brings in mole iconography. I went for a stripe based design in reference to mole tunnels, featuring small silhouettes of moles between these stripes. Some, however, I eventually chose one without too many mole silhouettes, due to not wanting to be too literal with the depiction of a mole.

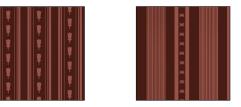


















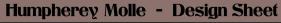


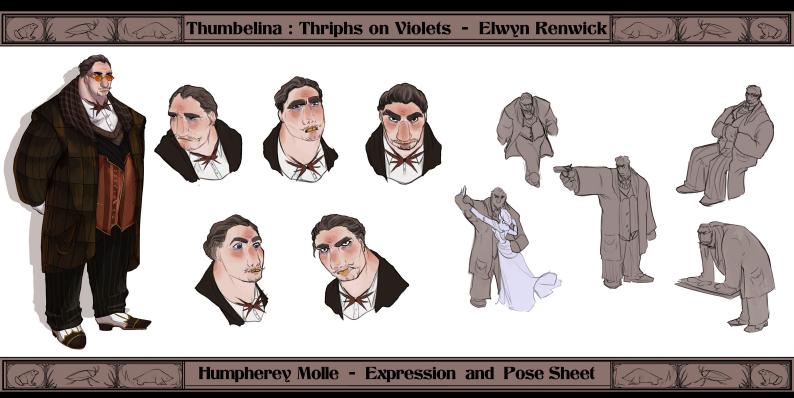


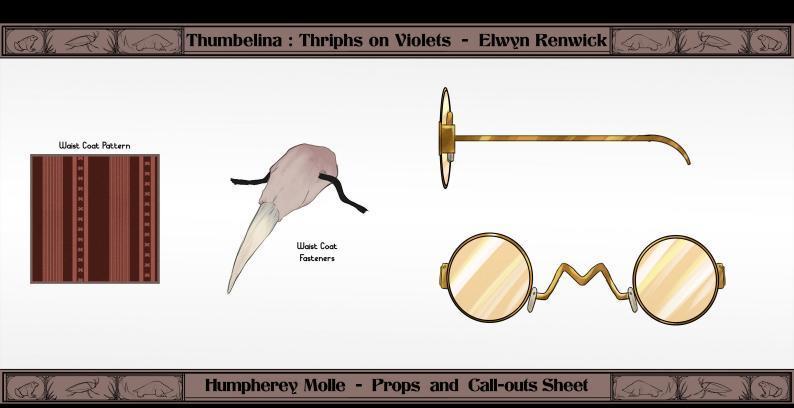


### Thumbelina : Thriphs on Violets - Elwyn Renwick







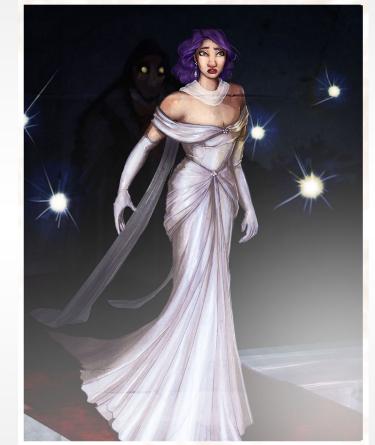


# Character Line-Up









# **Sketches to establish Maia and Molle's Relationship Dynmaic**







# **Evaluation**



Overall, I am very proud of this project. This has been my biggest and most complex out of of projects to date, which has helped me grow immensely, creatively. I believe each character has their own distinct style, which I was able to capture their personality within each design. The individual colours help each character feel separate from the rest, maintaining their own stories, whilst ensuring they complement each other in a way that keeps them connected to the same plot.

However, I do believe I could have explored more within my creative processing. Many of my designs, especially in Thumbnailing, are very similar, with mainly weight differences and detailing. I feel I could have pushed the shapes and animalistic qualities moreso, verging on fantasy realism.

Secondly, I think I would have benefitted from planning less, and letting the Thumbnail stage take hold of my creativity and let the ideas flow, rather than depending so heavily on my references — even if I was aiming for historical accuracy. I believe this is what limited my exaggeration when it came to the more animalistic characters.

Nevertheless, with regards to my work effort, I stayed close to my industry inspirations, 'June's Journey' and 'Disney Mirrorverse', with their 'mannequin' style of thumbnailing and iteration reflected in the style in which my design sheets.

If I were to repeat this project in future, I would add an additional character based on the Sparrow, named Pearlean Spurling. The Sparrow would have accompanied Maia Thimble, meeting her at Tode's Club. As in the original story, the Sparrow vowed to help Thumbelina to get home, and then to help her find 'the Veil of the Fairies', which through my narrative would translate her into helping Maia's investigation. I would have also done additional Hey Art or Illustrations, depicting each of Maia's relationship with other characters, in the style of a photograph to suit the detective genre. This would have added further insight into the narrative as well as Maia's relationship with each character. It could also be used within game play as a collective to personify the Press and public opinion surrounding Maia and the accusations towards her.

This project has helped develop my ability to create comprehensive yet interconnected characters as well as effectively portray a given narrative to the audience. This has also challenged my time efficiently to complete each character in a swift manner whilst not compromising on their effectiveness. I lintend to continue to develop these skills going forward in my career.

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