THE ART OF
HAVEN
BY TY DAVIES

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Introduction

What if, within a world of magic, exists a civilisation that abhors and actively rejects the use of the concept, in pursuit of technological advance? This civilisation that so astutely segregates itself is called Haven.

The moon will hold a civilisation and have a character represent the lengths of technological advances made there, as will the body masses that surround the rings not far above the atmosphere within the setting, and finally lower down, there will be a character that dwells within floating land formations closer to the surface of the planetary body.

Deliverables

For the first semester (14/10/24 - 10/12/24), the deliverables are to provide:

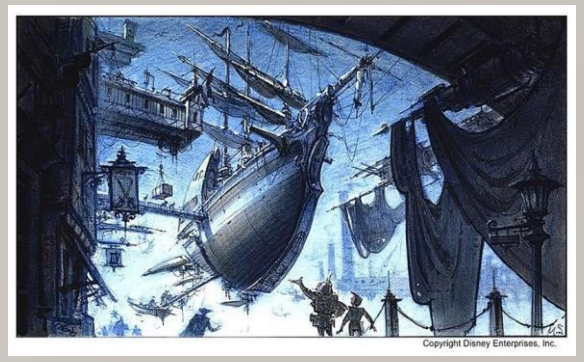
- ***Relevant research and moodboards for Character 1 and 2***
- ***Bluesky sketches and silhouettes for Character 1 and 2***
- ***Comprehensive Breakout sheets for Character 1 and 2***
- ***Turnaround Renders for Character 1 and 2***

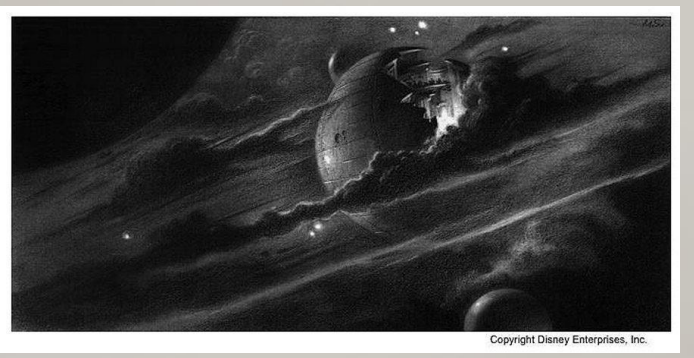
For the second semester (6/1/25 – 25/2/25) , the deliverables are to provide:

- ***Relevant research and moodboards for Character 3***
- ***Bluesky sketches and silhouettes for Character 3***
- ***Comprehensive Breakout sheets for Character 3***
- ***Turnaround Renders for Character 3***
- ***Mood pieces for Character 1, 2 and 3***
- ***Key Art for Characters 1, 2 and 3***

Media Inspirations

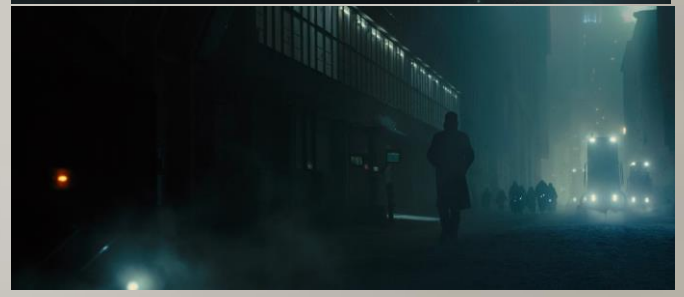
A large inspiration for the project as a whole was Treasure planet. Treasure planet seemless melds the genres of pirates and space travel, I wanted to capture exactly that level of synergy and make the world and characters feel alive in a similar way.

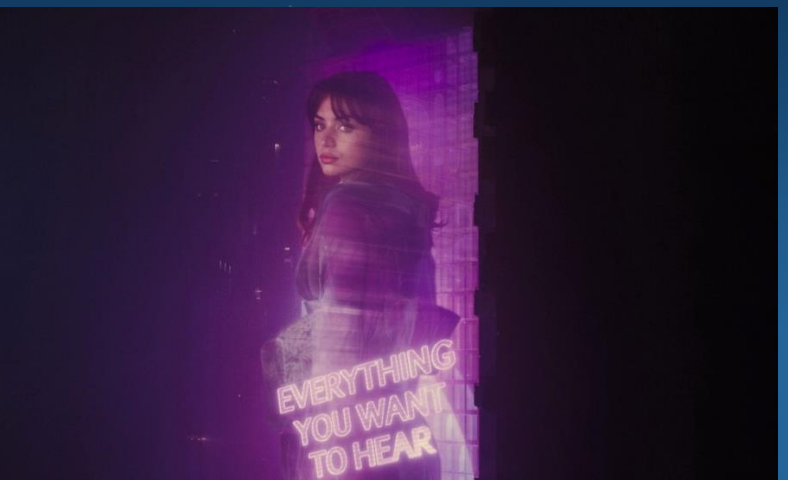


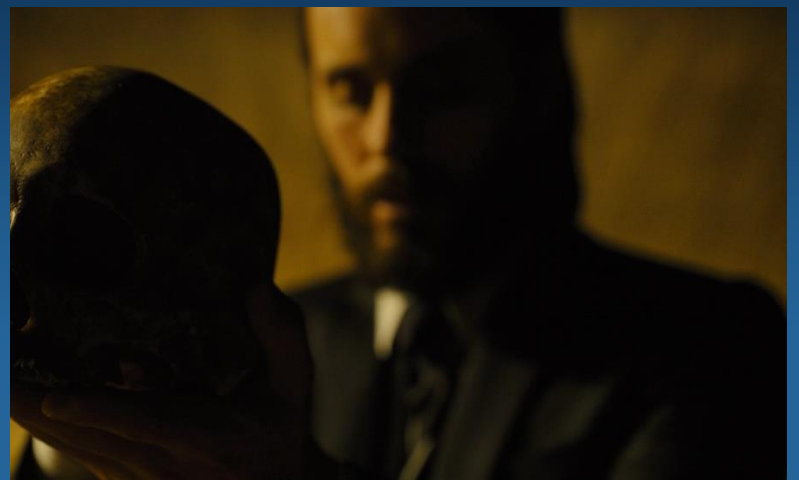


Bladerunner:2049

Blade runner 2049 seems to successfully capture the coldness and emptiness of the futuristic dystopia. From the wide and foggy environments to the muted character designs.



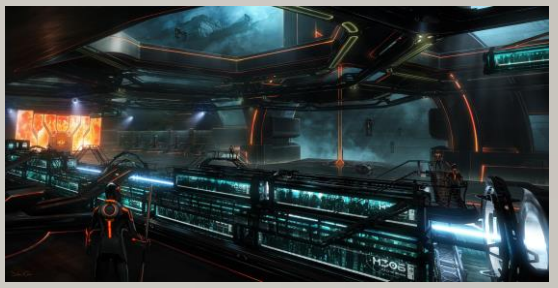

EVERYTHING
YOU WANT
TO HEAR

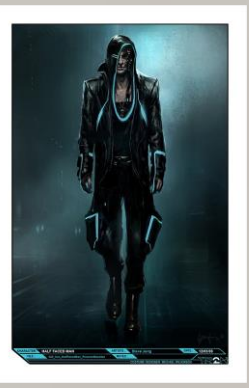


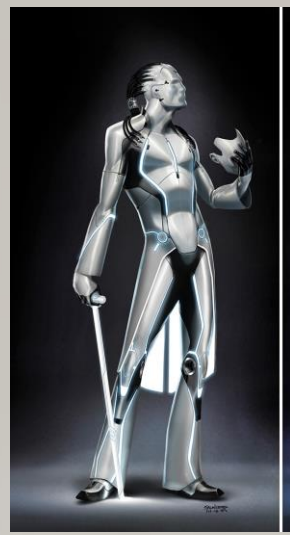
Enjoy
PEUGEOT
Coca-Cola

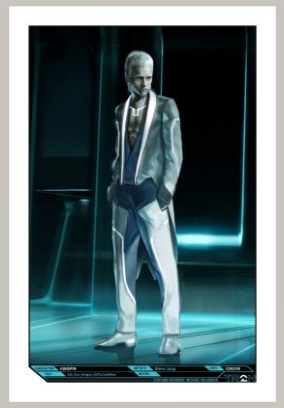
Tron Legacy

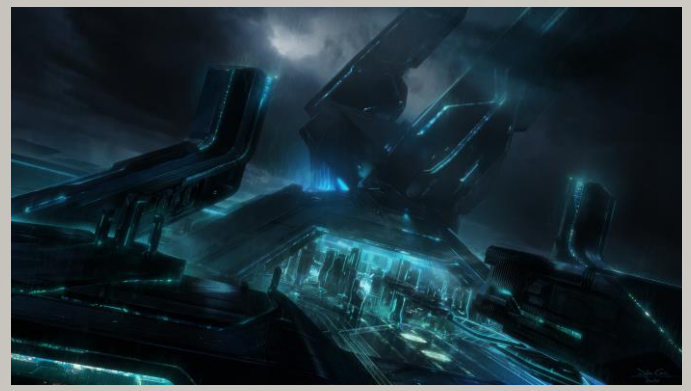
TRON I feel captures the dichotomy from modernity to futurism in the character designs in their character designs, with regular civilians within the setting wanting “the next best thing” now, in the form of high fashion, and everyone indulging in technological advances to the point where, although they look humanoid, they are detached far from it. Almost as if the flesh of humanity is a thing of the past. Almost perfect to represent a dystopia.

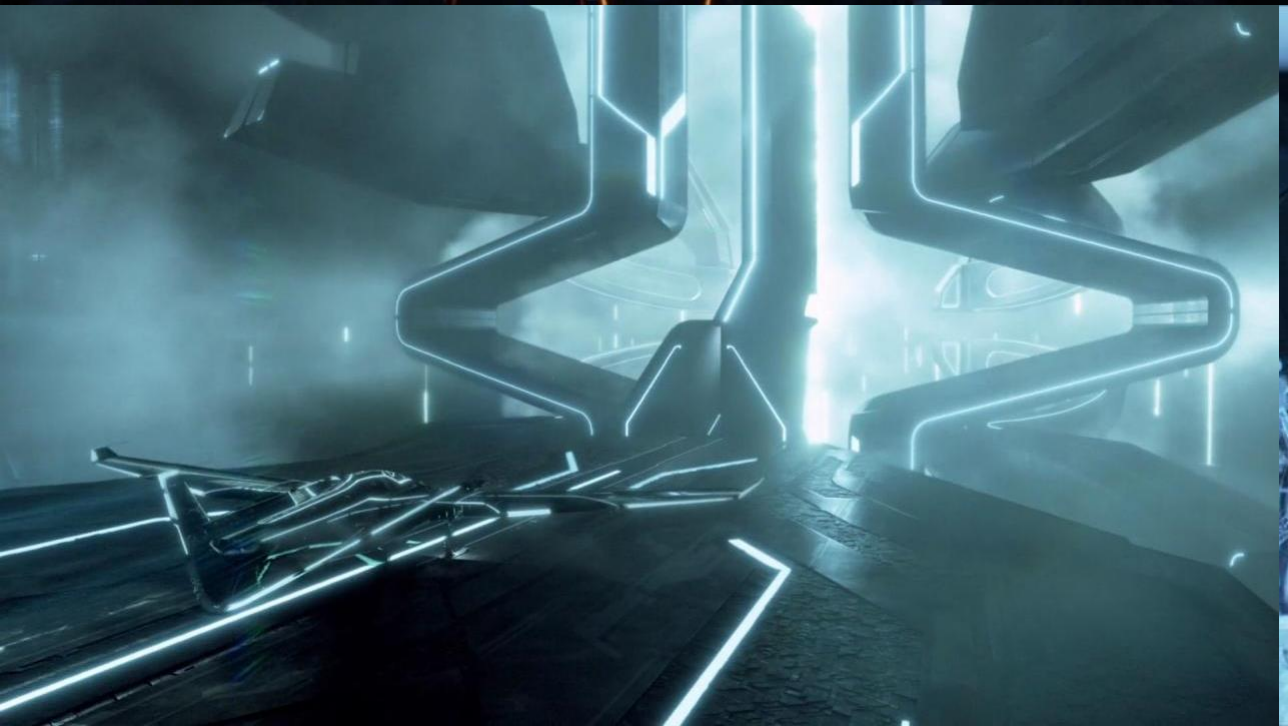










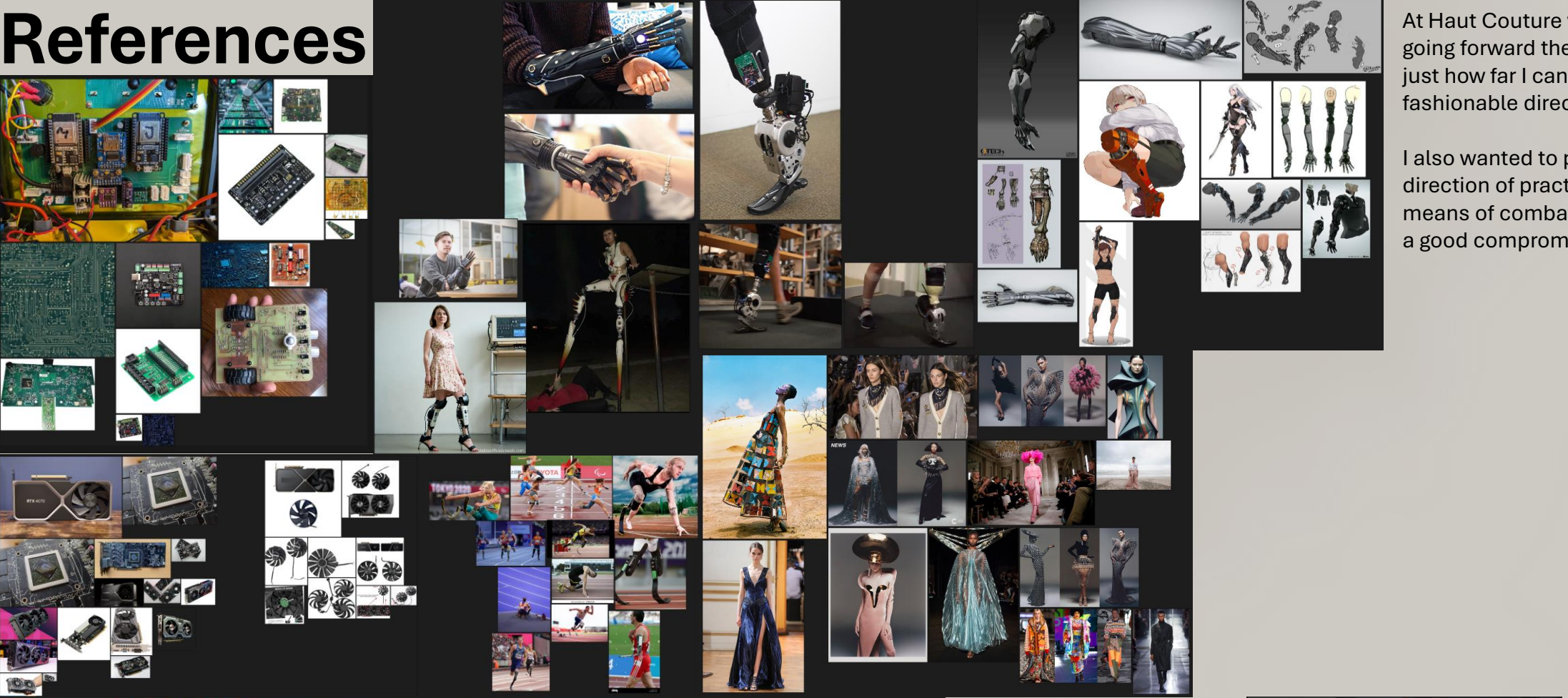


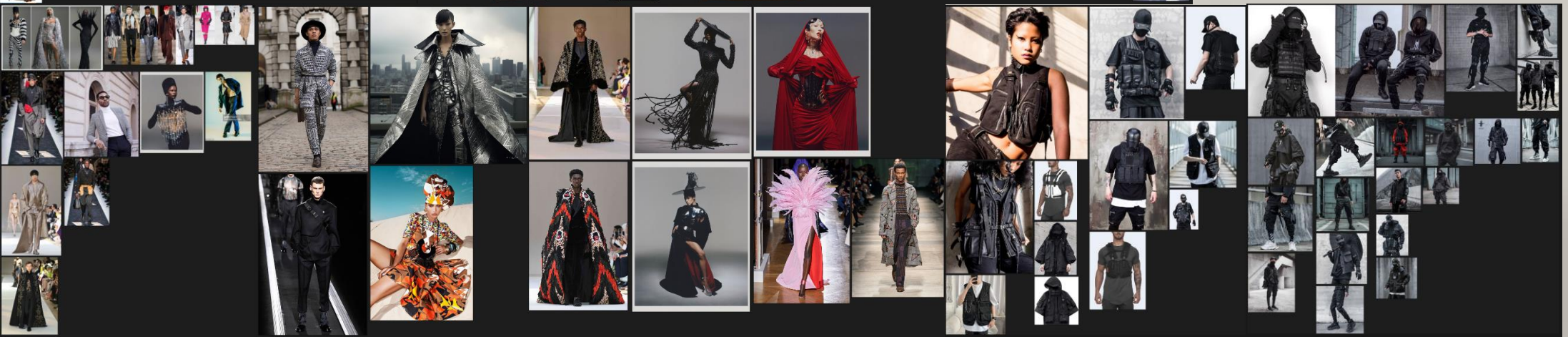
Hyde, the Rogue Mercenary

A deadly cyborg lacking memories of her past life, she now travels alongside Pedro, content with passing time as his personal hired gun during his expeditions.

YOU LL NEVER BELIEVE THIS!
I BOARDED THIS TOTALLED SHIP,
LOOKED LIKE IT HAD BEEN RAIDED,
NOT A SINGLE SURVIVOR AND NO OTHER SHIPS ON THE RADAR.
I HEAD TO THE CONTROL
ROOM AND TO MY SURPRISE THERE S SOMEONE THERE.
ANDROID, DOESN T SPEAK MUCH EITHER.
SAID SHE DOESN T REMEMBER ANYTHING BUT HER OWN NAME.
I COULDN T JUST LEAVE HER THERE,
AND SHE DIDN T MIND COMING ALONG.
LOOKS LIKE SHE S PART OF THE CREW NOW.
HOPE DOLLY WON T GET JEALOUS.
THINK SHE S INTO ME?
– CAPT P_

References





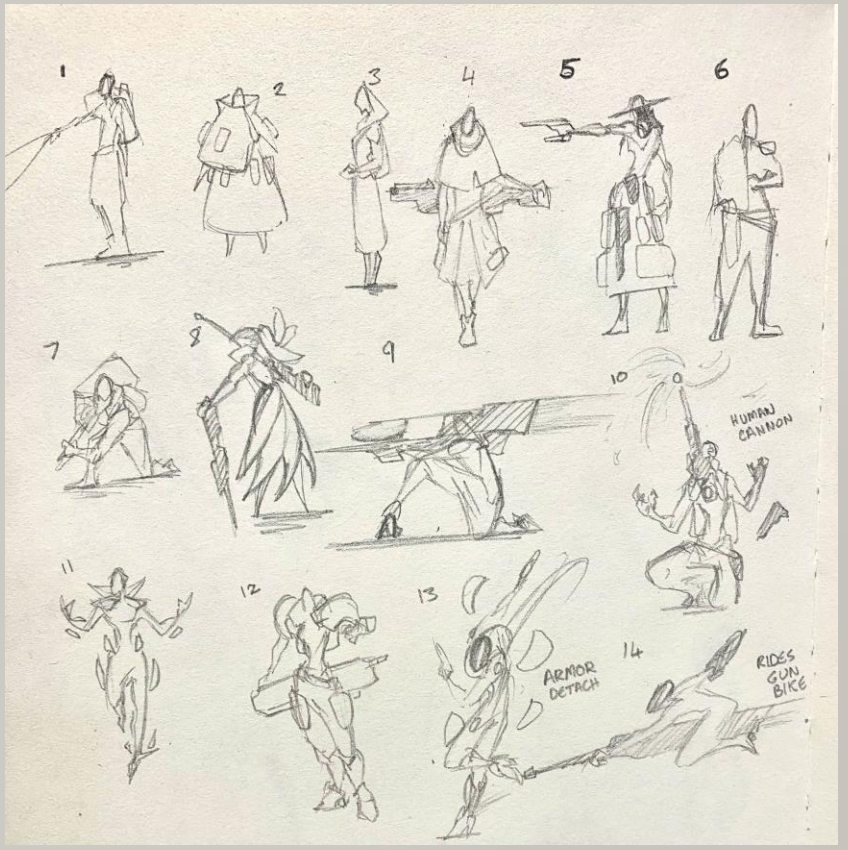
At Haut Couture was a huge point of drive going forward the design, I wanted to see just how far I can push a scifi design in the fashionable direction.

I also wanted to pull in the opposite direction of practical, especially in the means of combat, techwear seemed like a good compromise to achieve just that.

Exploration

One of the setting characters I had thought to design and concept would be hailing from the Moon, far separated from the affairs of the world below, physically and culturally, making their designs have a dystopian appeal, something far from human norms and so uncomfortably close to being inhuman and almost entirely artificial, reflecting the cold but efficient advances of a machine.

With the sketches I had initially thought to make the character that of a sharpshooter or weapons expert.



Initial Thumbnails

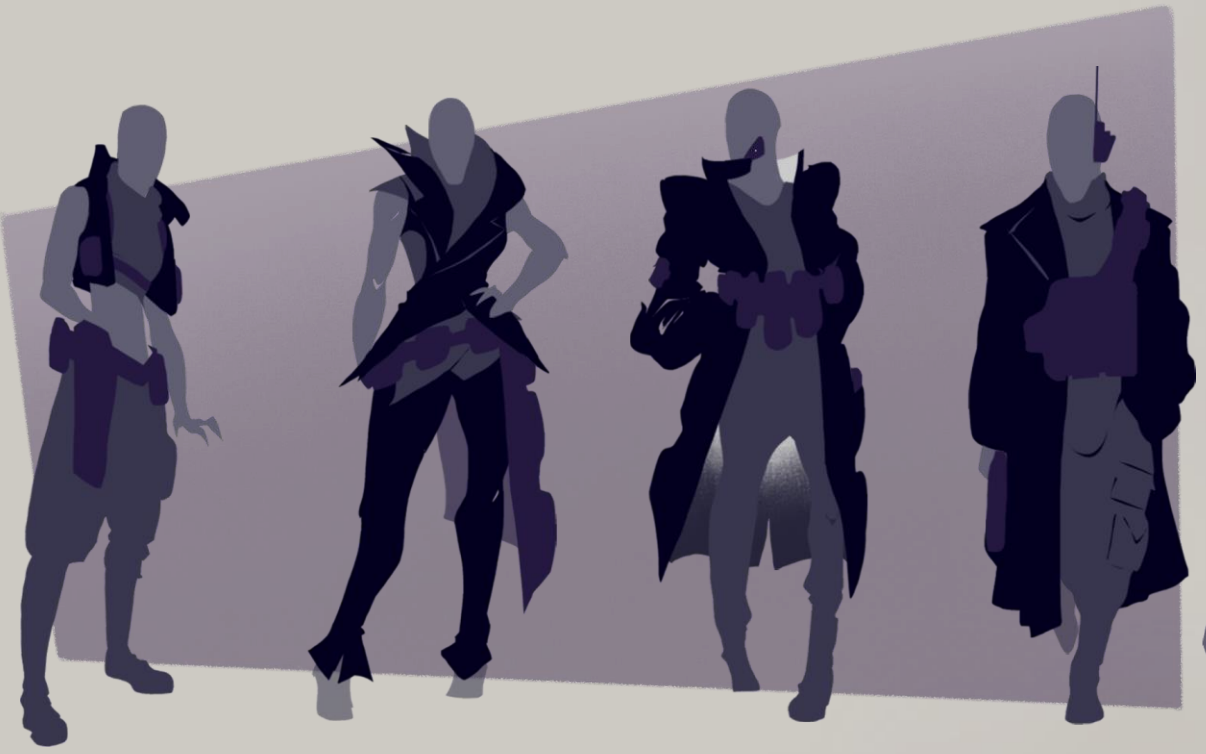
At the early stages it was just a matter of spitballing all the current ideas of the the character I had in my head. What if she was a sentient AI? or an ex law enforcer? There was too many ideas this early in, but one thing for certain is I want to make them very visually distinct.

Fashion of Dystopia: Figuring it out

I had tried to take a different approach than normal. It had occurred to me that the character wouldn't quite make sense in a vacuum. It needed a world around them to give them context. So I had sketched out a rough idea of what the inhabitants of her part of the setting would wear as everyday clothing.

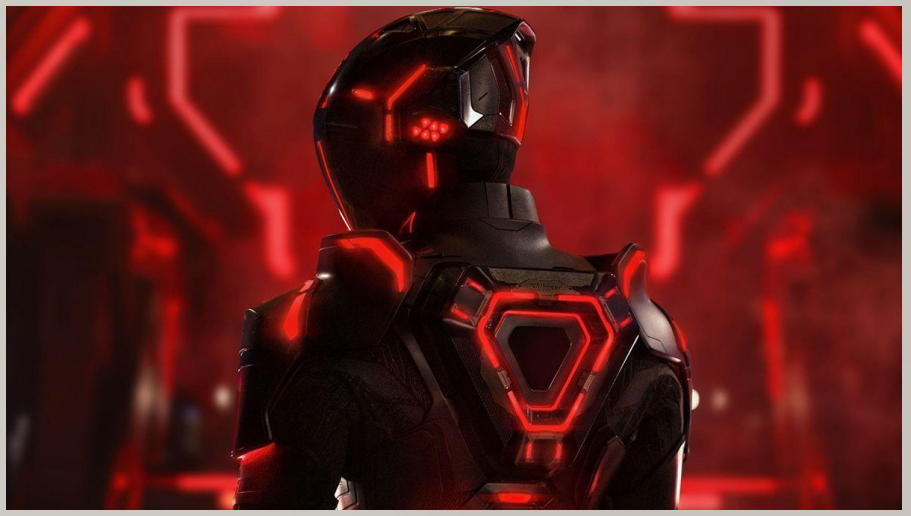
Once the ideation begun, the question was urged immediately with how machine do I really make the character?

Having to make three character's I had thought it would make the most sense that the machine would be of logic and reason in the dynamic, but how I go about reflecting that would be through character design.



The second set of thumbnails had made me realise quite an issue with the design choice of haut couture with a dystopian setting, it would be difficult to weigh fashion against functionand get a decent balance. These were my attempts at it.

Given the occupation of a mercenary, the fashion aspect of the outfit would have to be put on the backburner in place of the practicality, but not enough that it's entirely lost to the velcros, pockets and weapons.



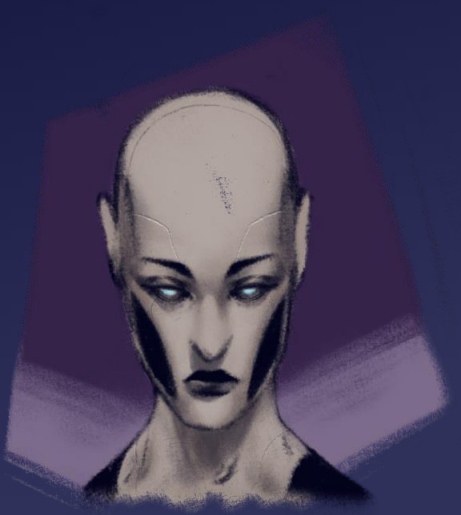
The Bust: Head Iterations

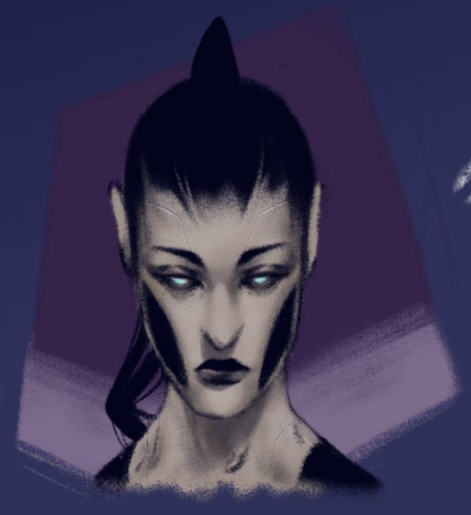
While I had figured out the fashion and feel of the character, I hadn't quite taken the time to fully visualise the face of the character, I wanted her to be an android and a cold and lethal combatant, but I never thought about what that would facially look like.

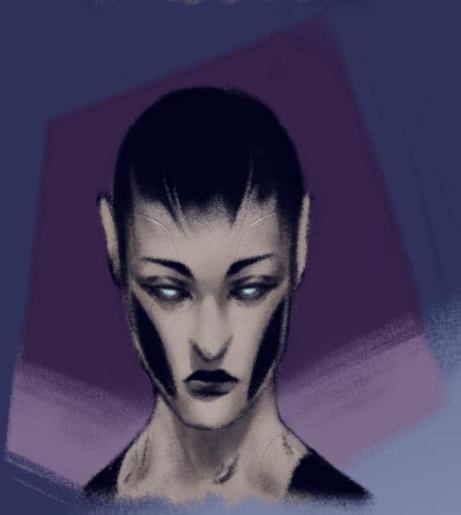
The start of hair iterations

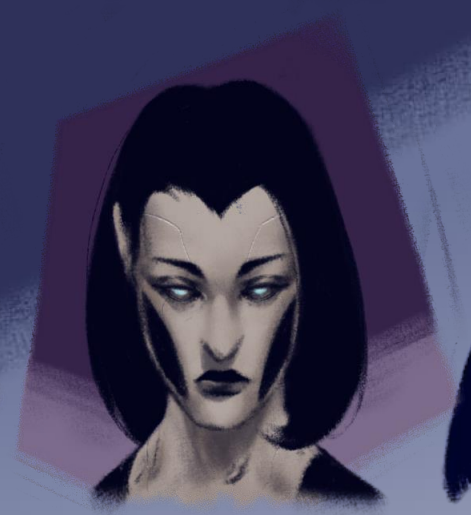
I had started the hair iterations with uniform styles, hairstyles that one would probably see in an office (excluding bald for the most part) to exude an authorative or formal appeal, someone who you'd approach to make the sound and vital decisions.

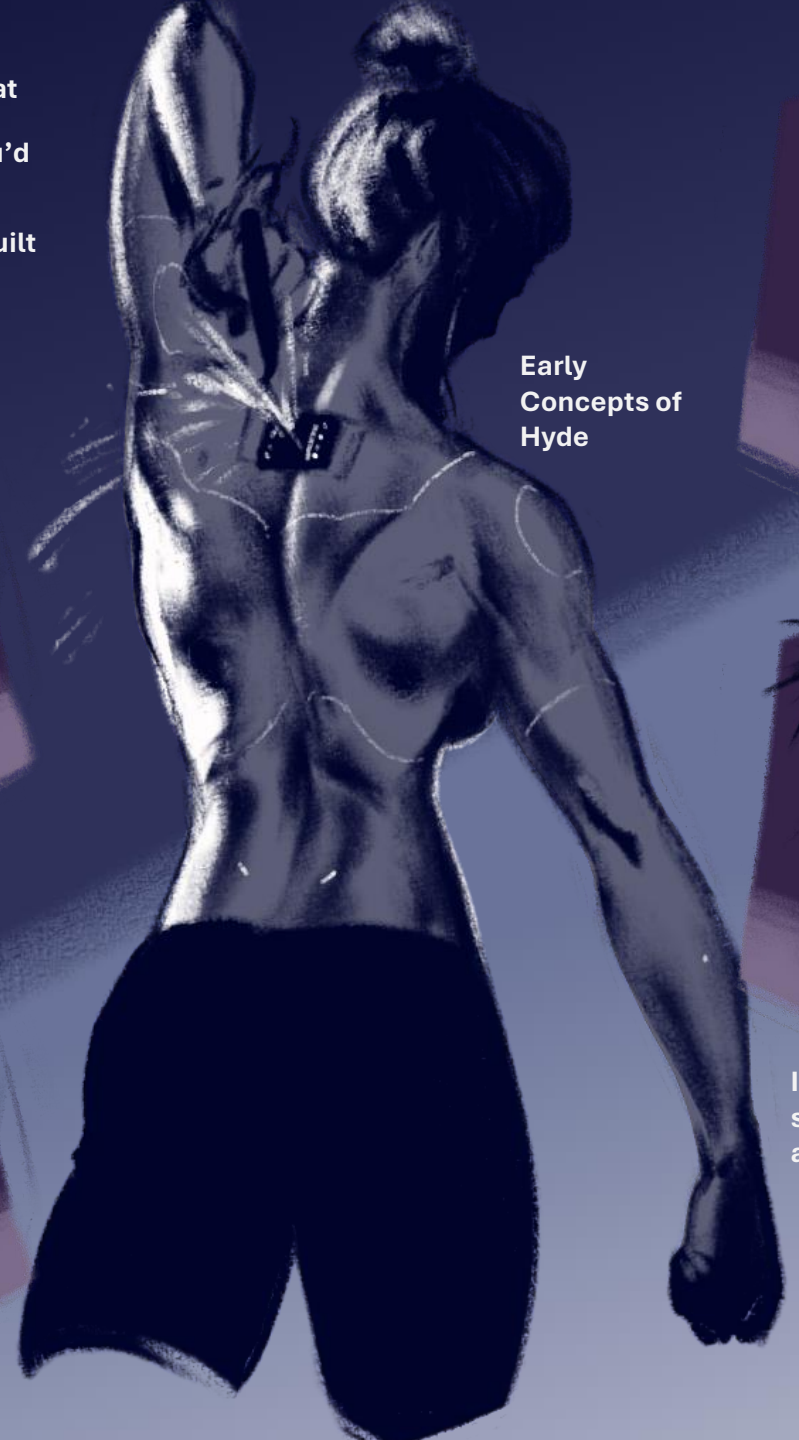
Initially I had thought that being bald would suit her as, if she's built for combat, hair would have little practicality in the thick of it. Baldness is also used as a tool for dehumanisation



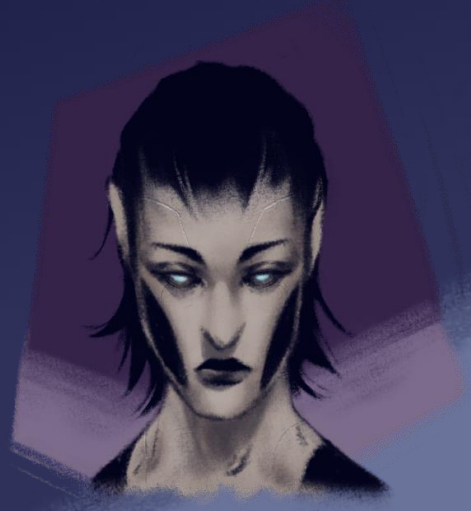


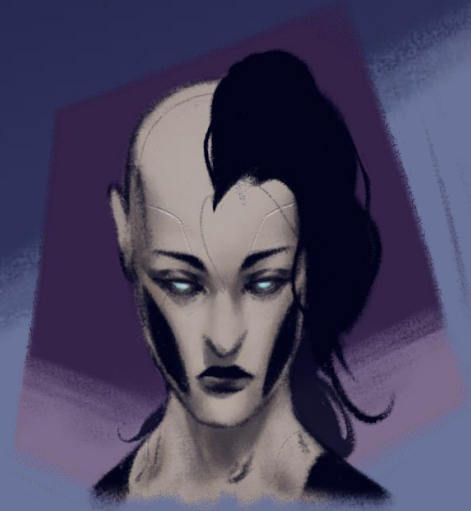


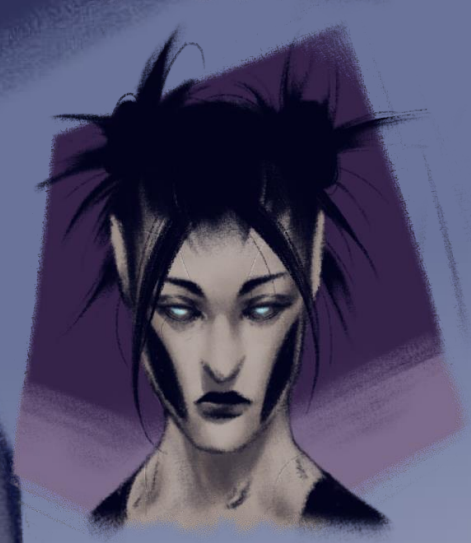


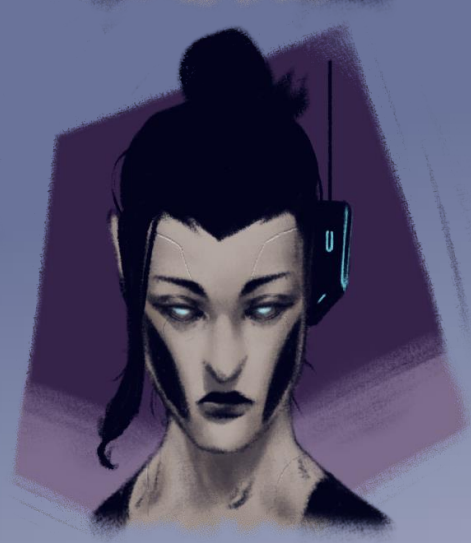


Early Concepts of Hyde









I gradually branched off and explored typically more wildcard hair styles, though I did want the character to be calculating, they also are living a relatively risky profession.

The ethicity of the character isn't something I had set in stone at this point so I decided to see if an asian complexion would add to their charm. At this point I'm looking for a design that would tell me „yep, that's a mercenary".

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Different hair types have different styles, so it was not easy deciding

The bantu knots stood out to me the most, not only because they are visually distinct, but also that i get the feeling of unpredictability from the character which I like. The idea that the character can be normal and switch on a dime is especially fitting for an android.#

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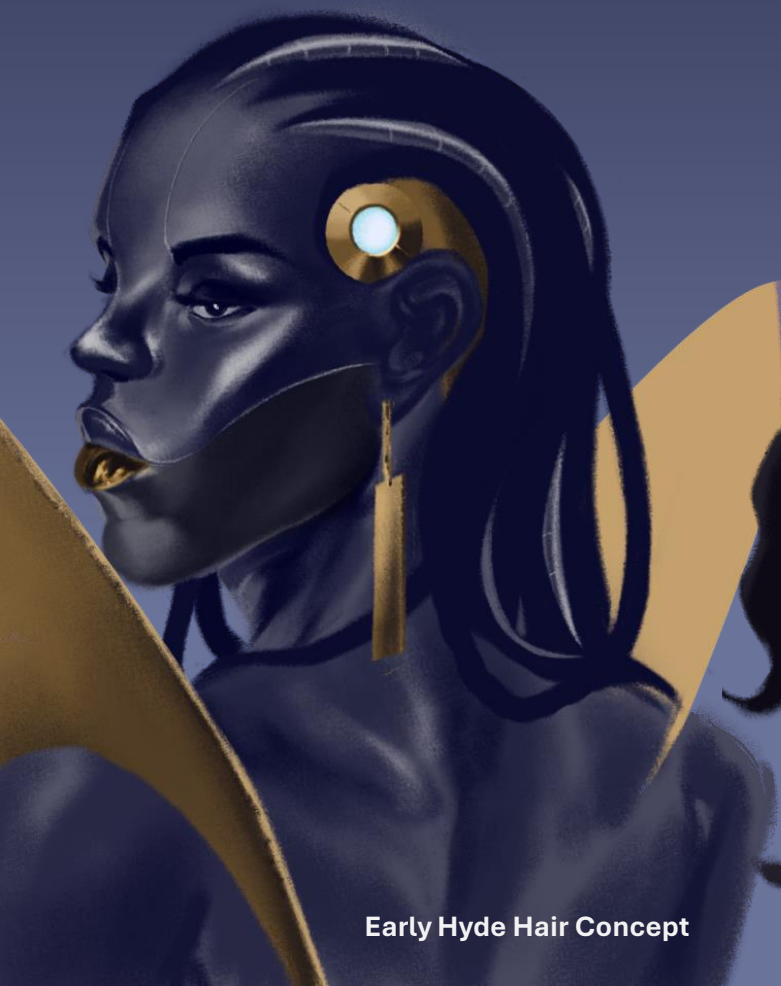
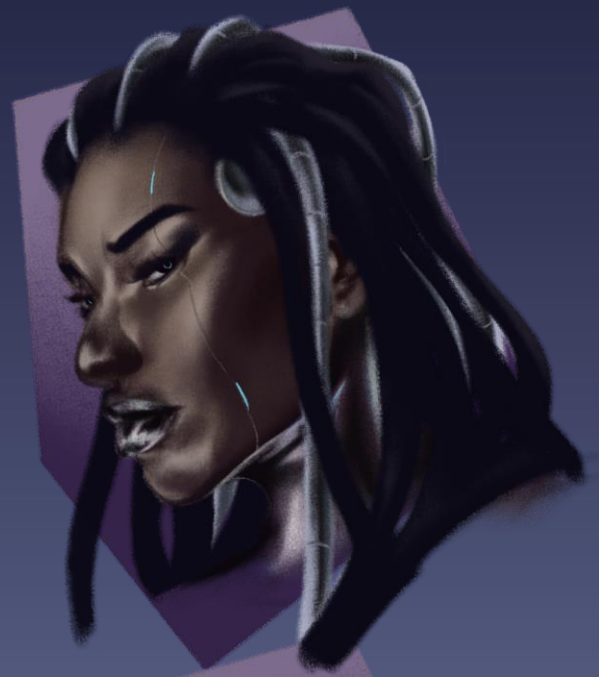
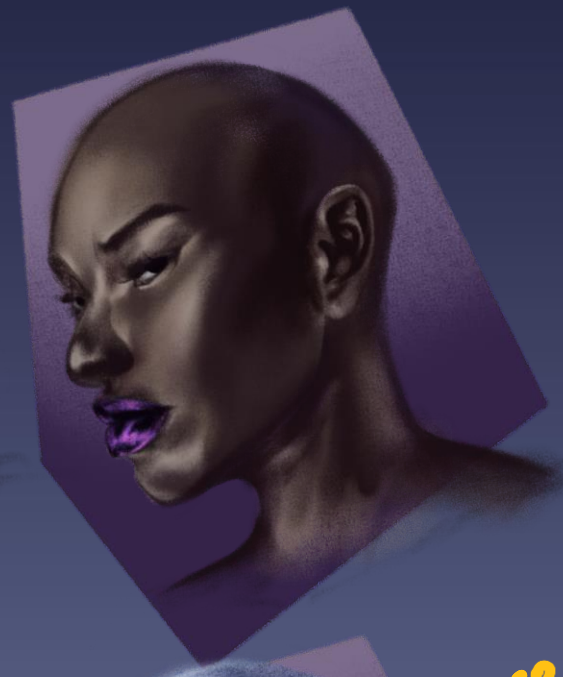
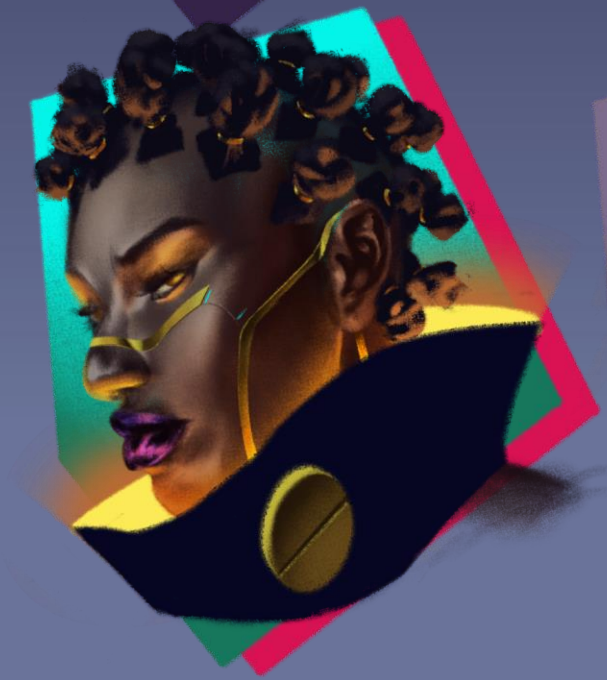
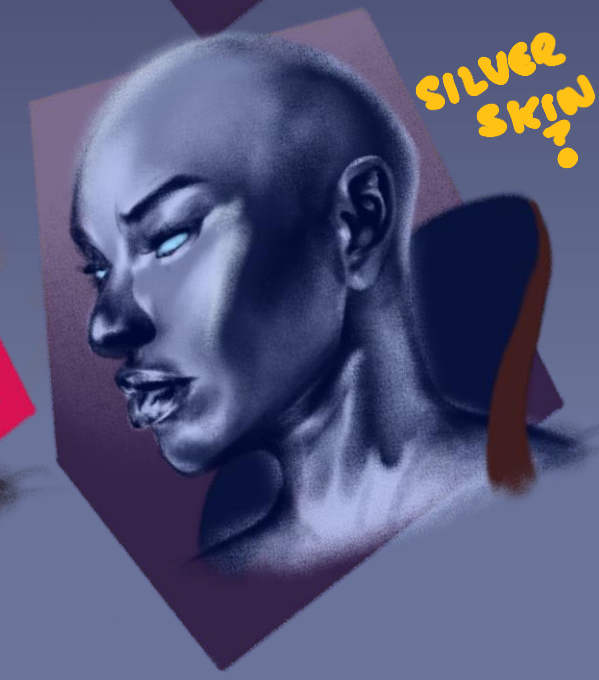


Early Hyde Hair Concept









The glowing collar also is visually appealing, so it was worth keeping to compliment the short hair

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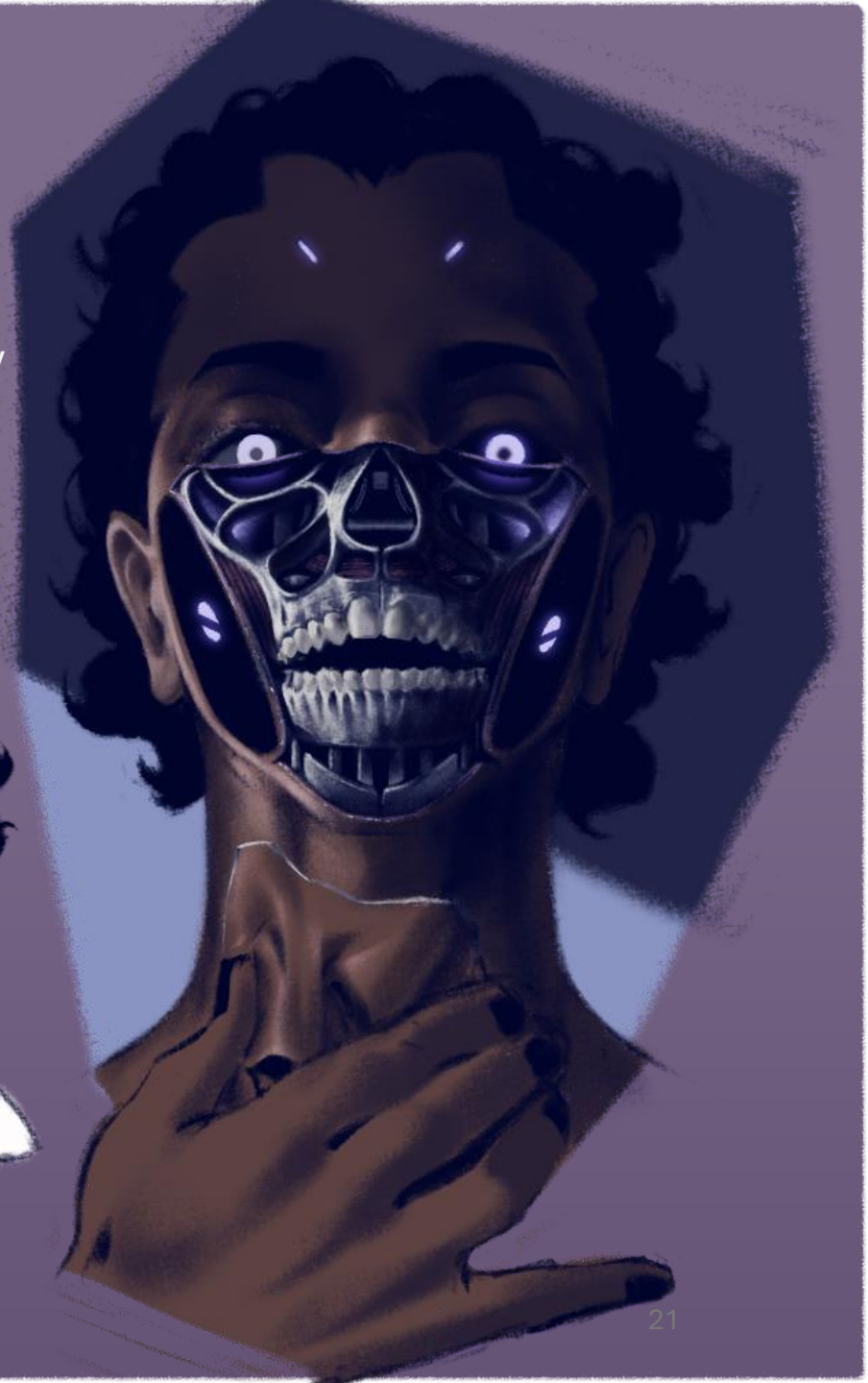


Outfit Iterations

As I had already decided the outfit during the thumbnailling, these further iterations became a matter of colourswatches with variations here and there to see what really sticks.

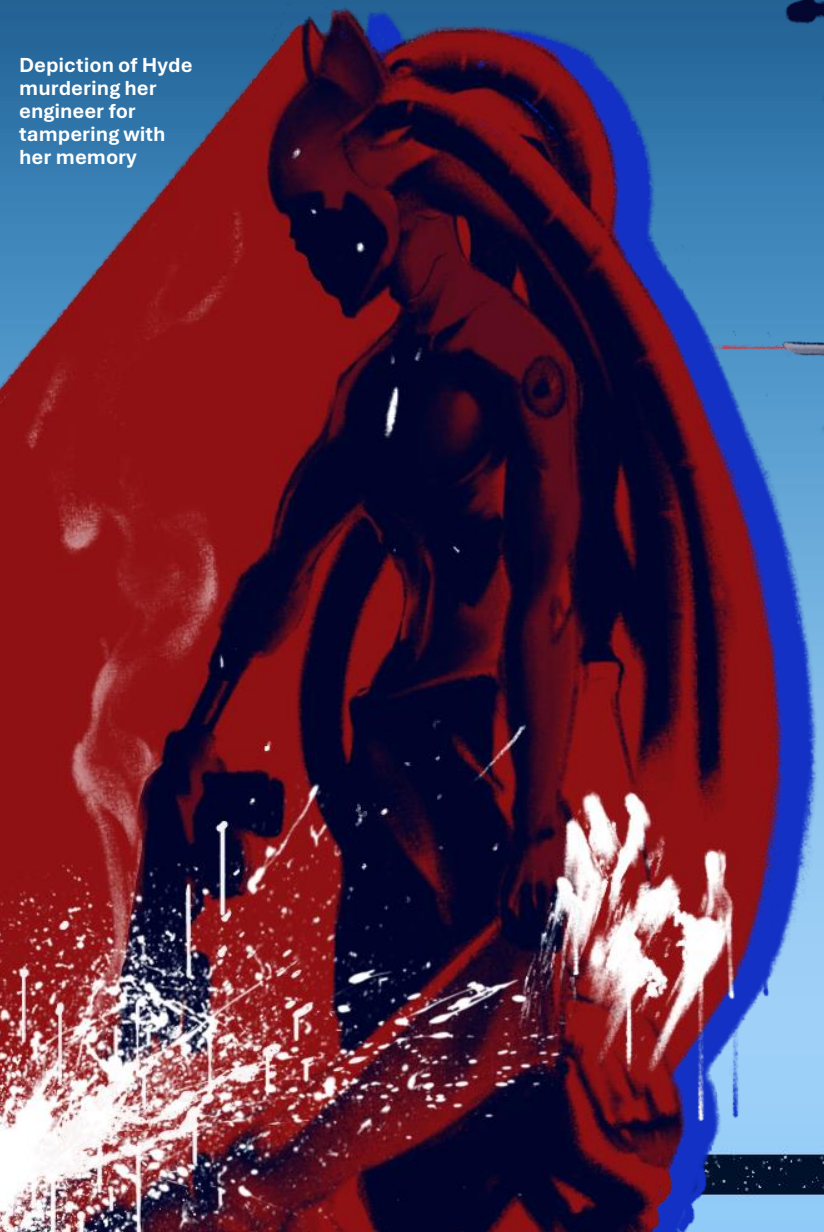
Weaponry

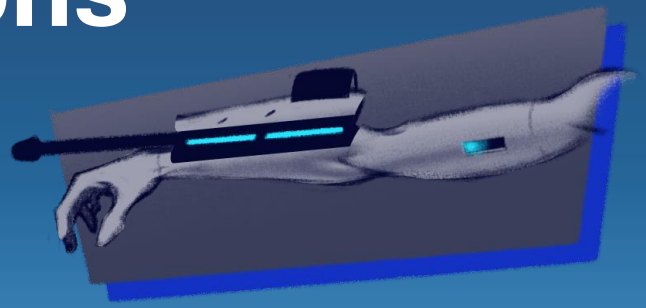
The idea of having a firearm as a literal arm seemed pretty enticing as a gimmick while also serving the purpose of making the character visually distinct from the future characters.

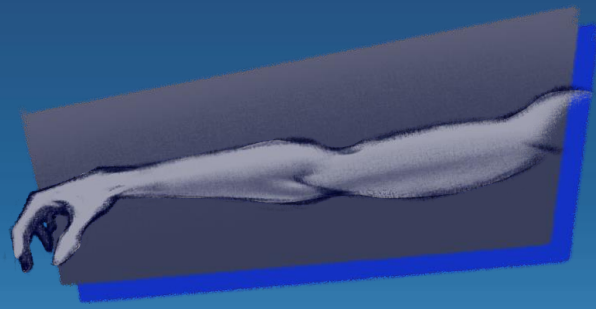
Subdermal aluminium-carbon lattice.
HRSI micro-mesh fused to the subject's skin.
Full-spectrum lens.
Seams of skin joined with graphite-epoxy composite.
Multi-feed analysers.
Petaflop neural processor.
Artificial thyroid.
Spinal access port.
Titanium reinforced bone structure.
Fusion power matrix.
Atmospheric purifier.
Multi-frequency intake.
Language decoder.
Food processer.
Forearm integrated directed energy weapon.
High power semiautomatic firearm.
Elbow integrated shotgun.
Micro-nuclear radar and motion sensor panels.

Firearm Iterations

Depiction of Hyde murdering her engineer for tampering with her memory







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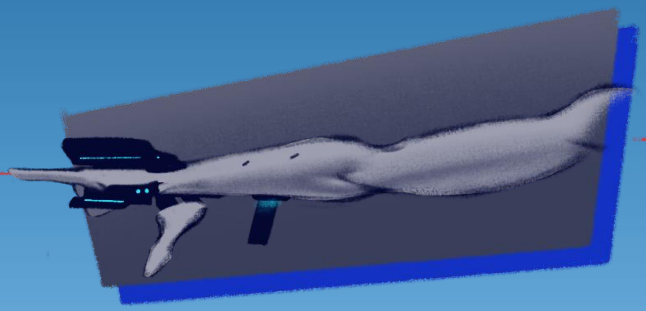
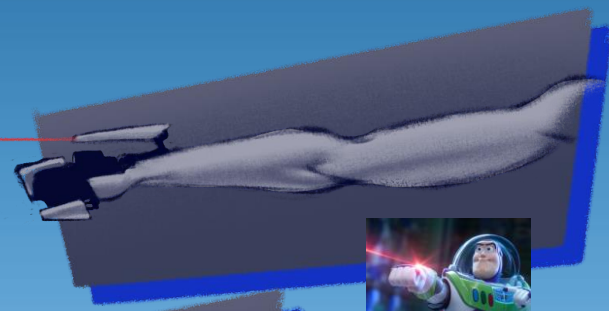
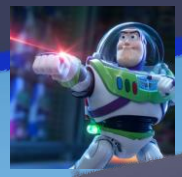
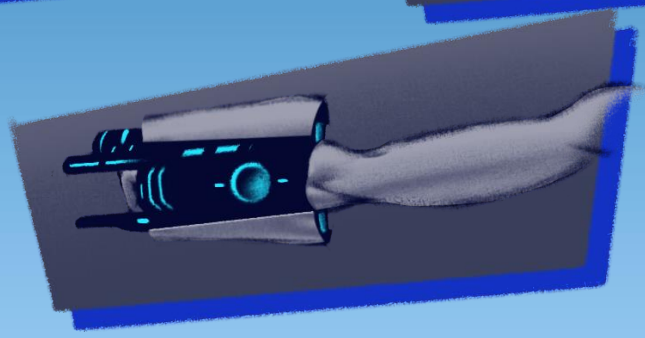
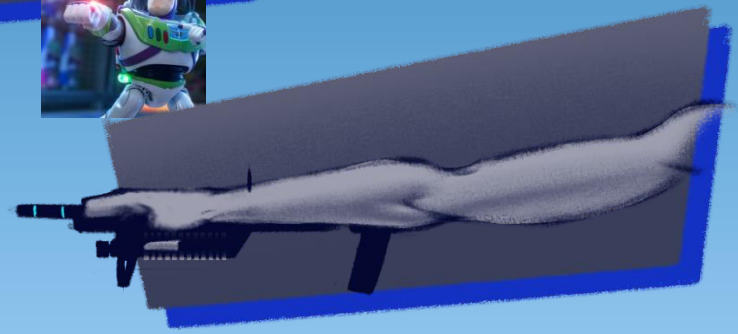


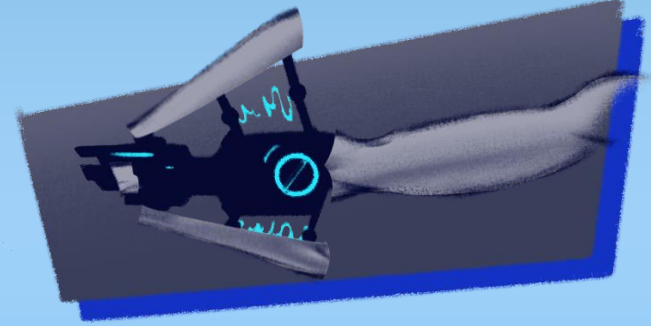




The goal with these is to push the morphing of human anatomy to get something creative without making it too uncanny.



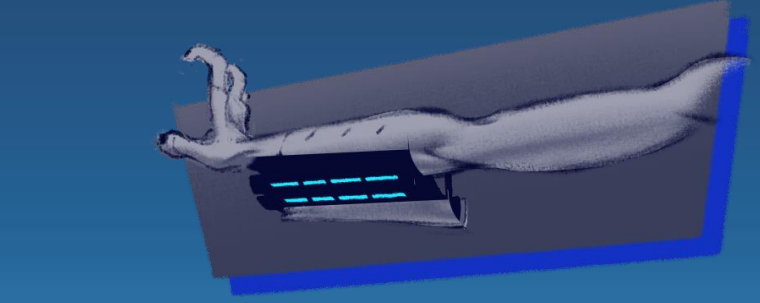


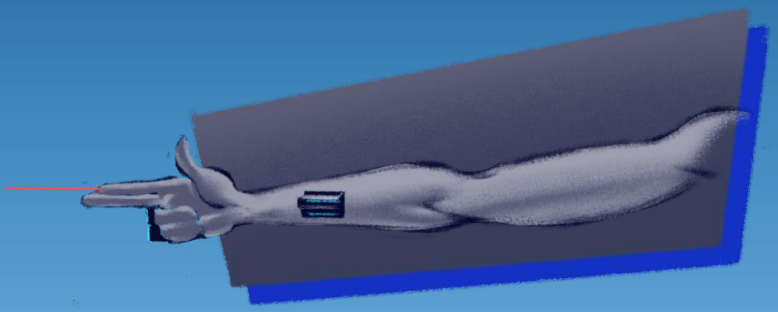


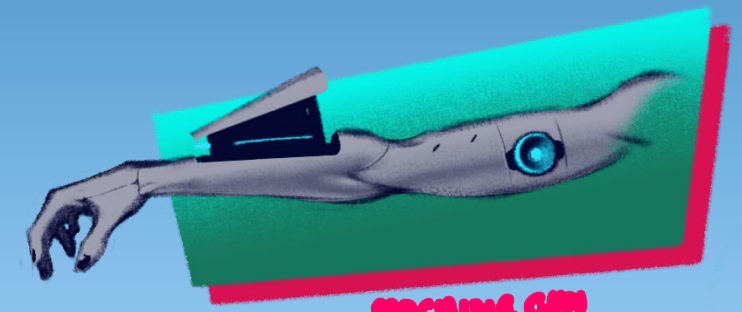
Firearm Design

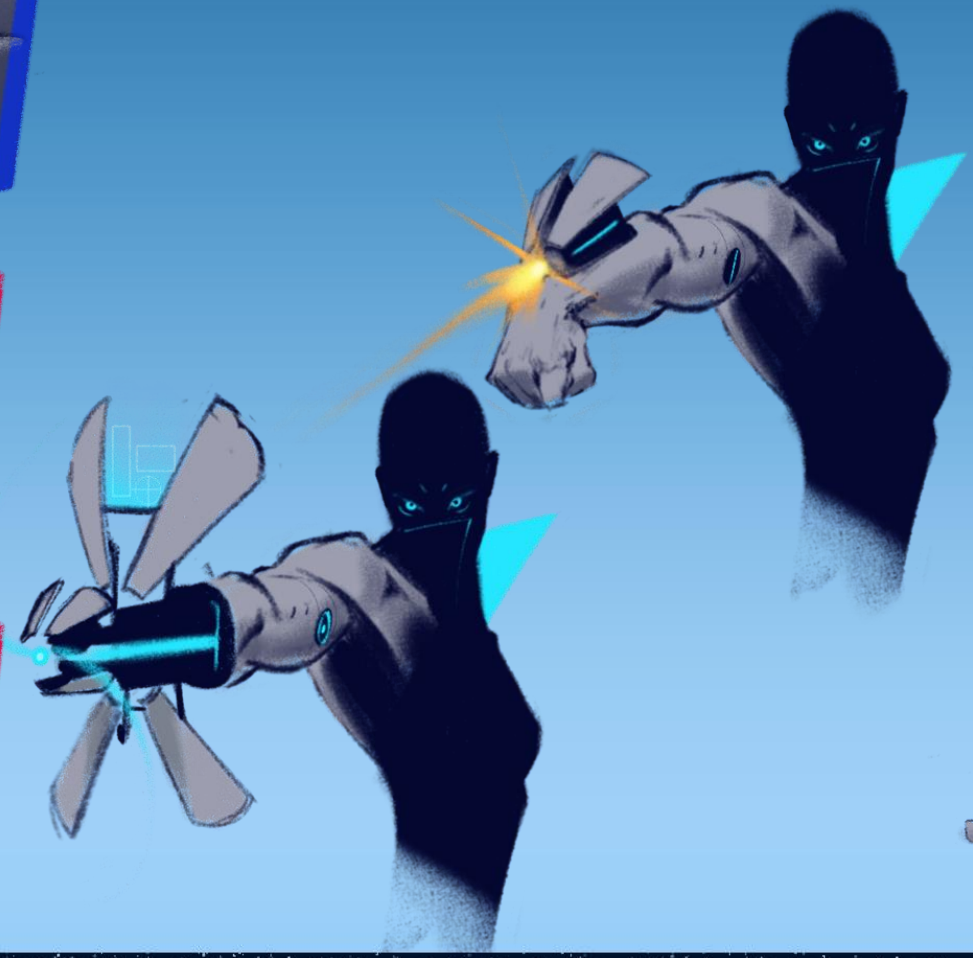
The highlighted firearms stood out to me as an idea as the two could be swapped between, the top doesn't occupy a lot of space on the arm so feasibly it could work.

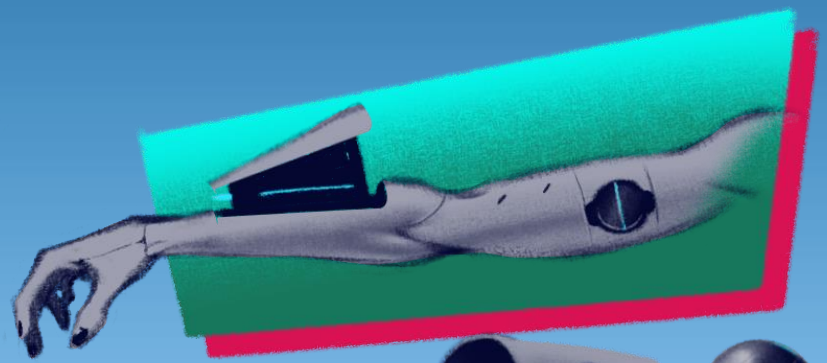
After establishing which firearm was the most suited for Hyde, I had done a few callouts to help visualise how the guns would fire.

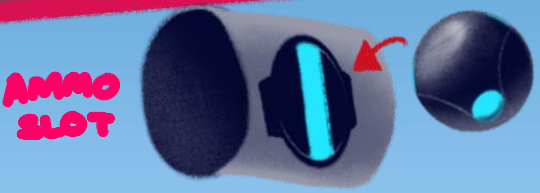






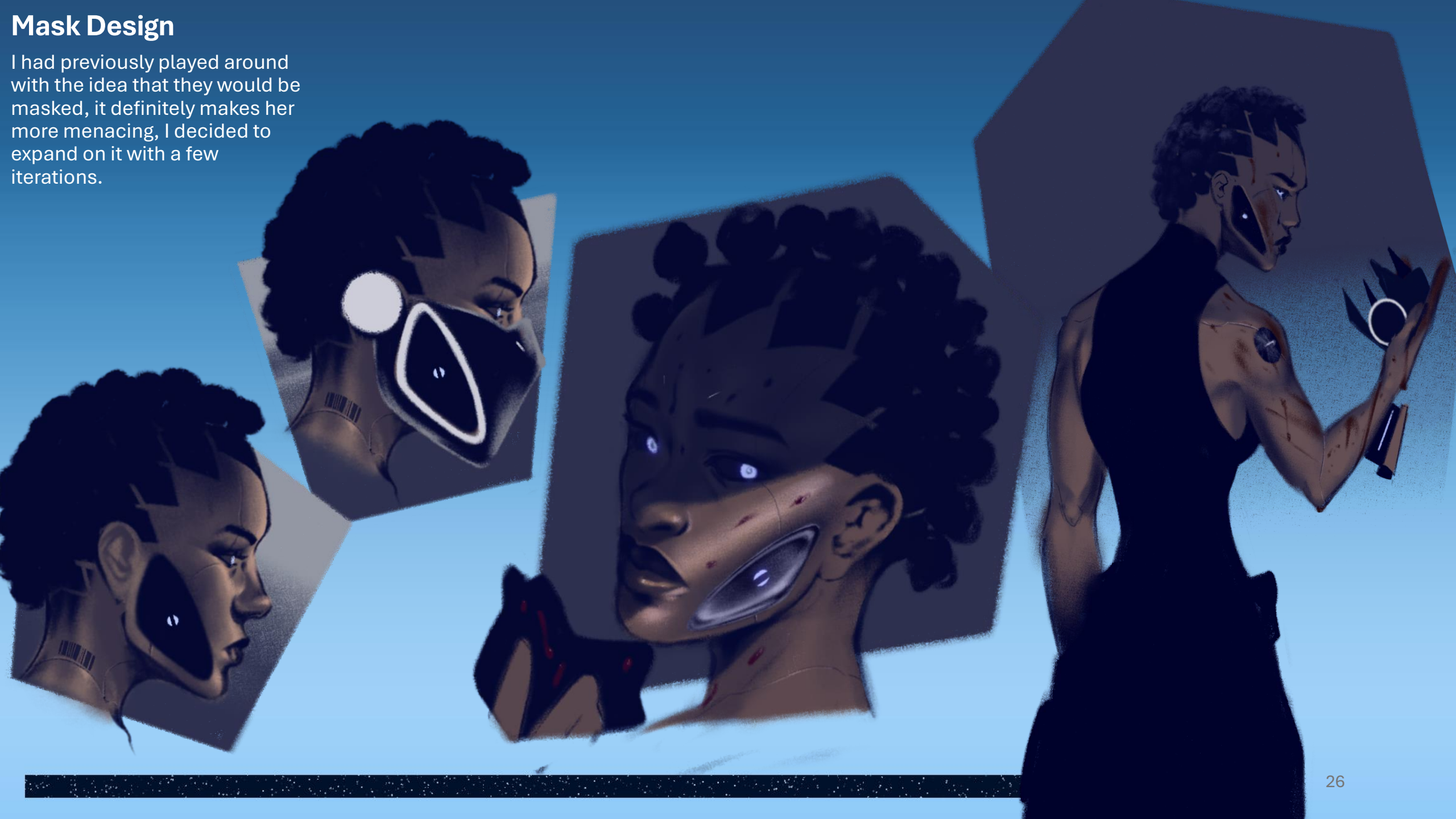






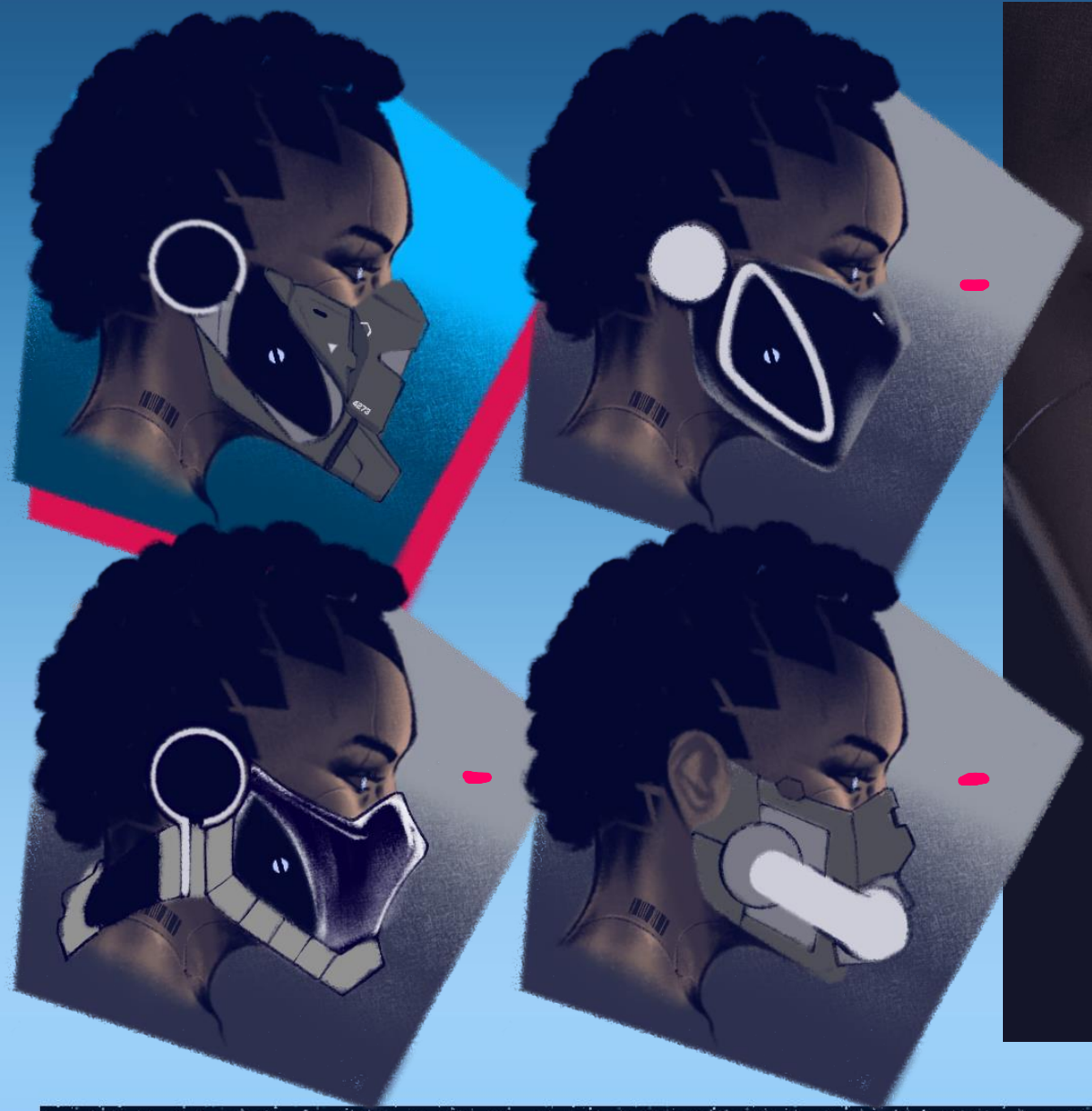
Mask Design

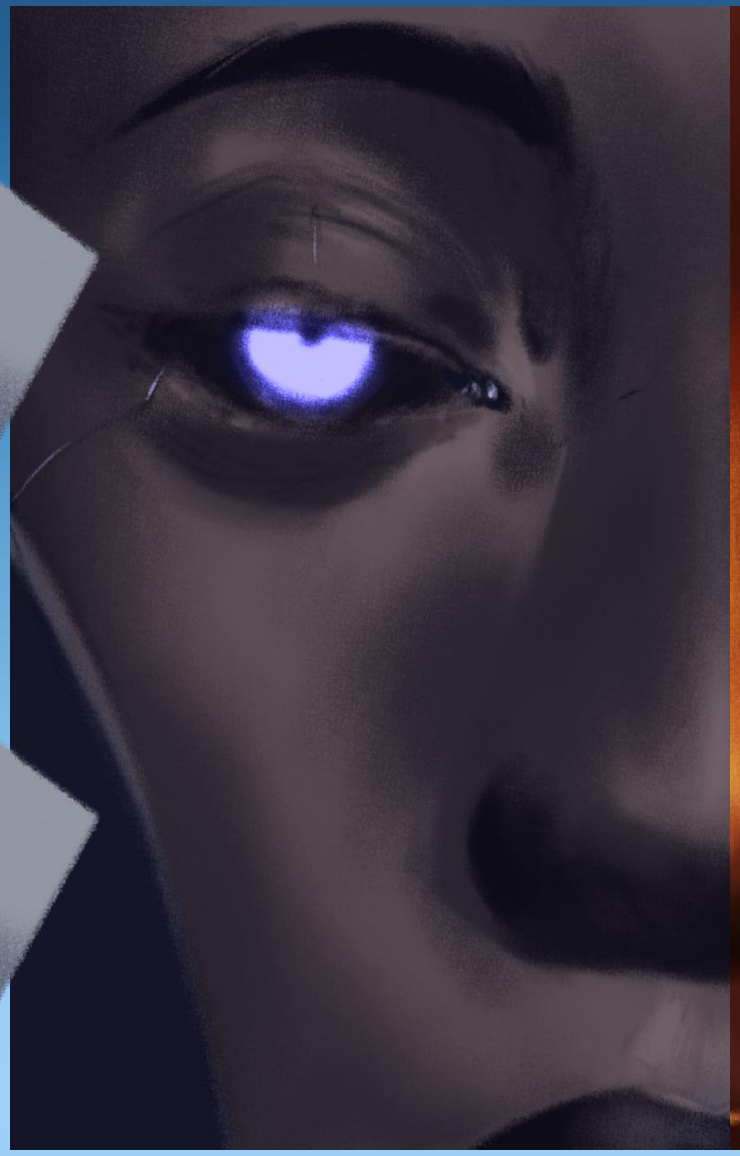
I had previously played around with the idea that they would be masked, it definitely makes her more menacing, I decided to expand on it with a few iterations.

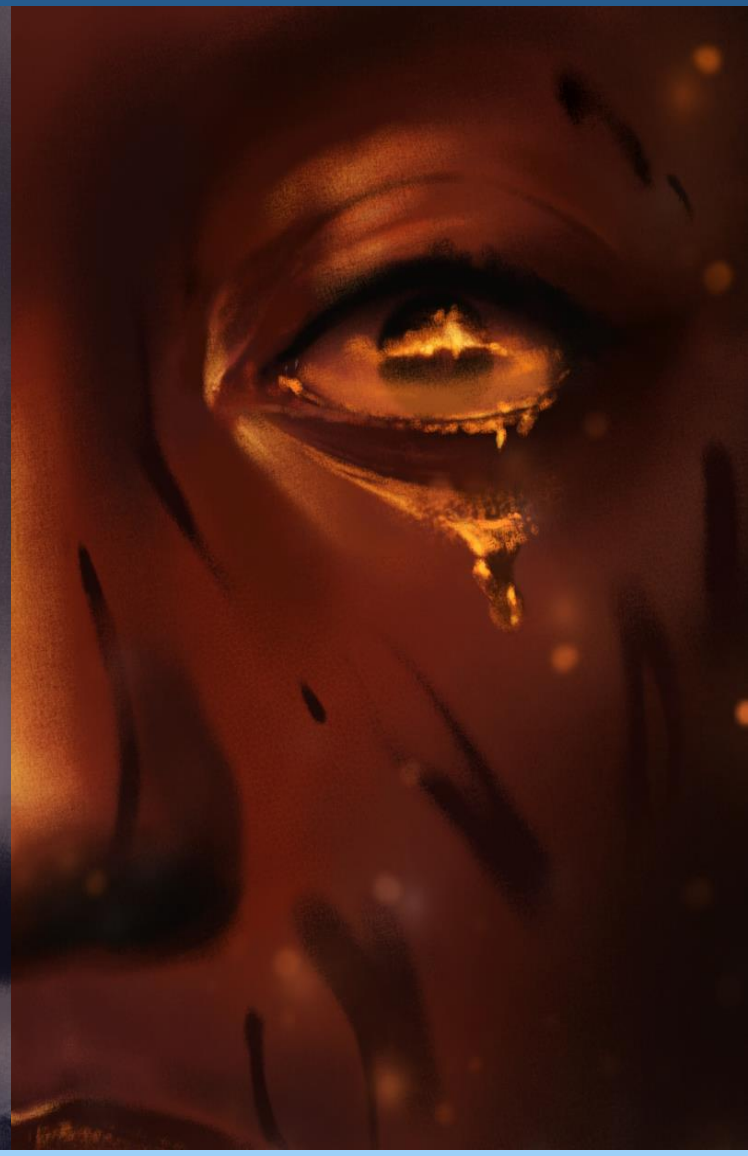


Mask Iterations

The top left has more feasibly, I can visualise how it is taken off and put on, also successfully fulfills the role of being menacing.

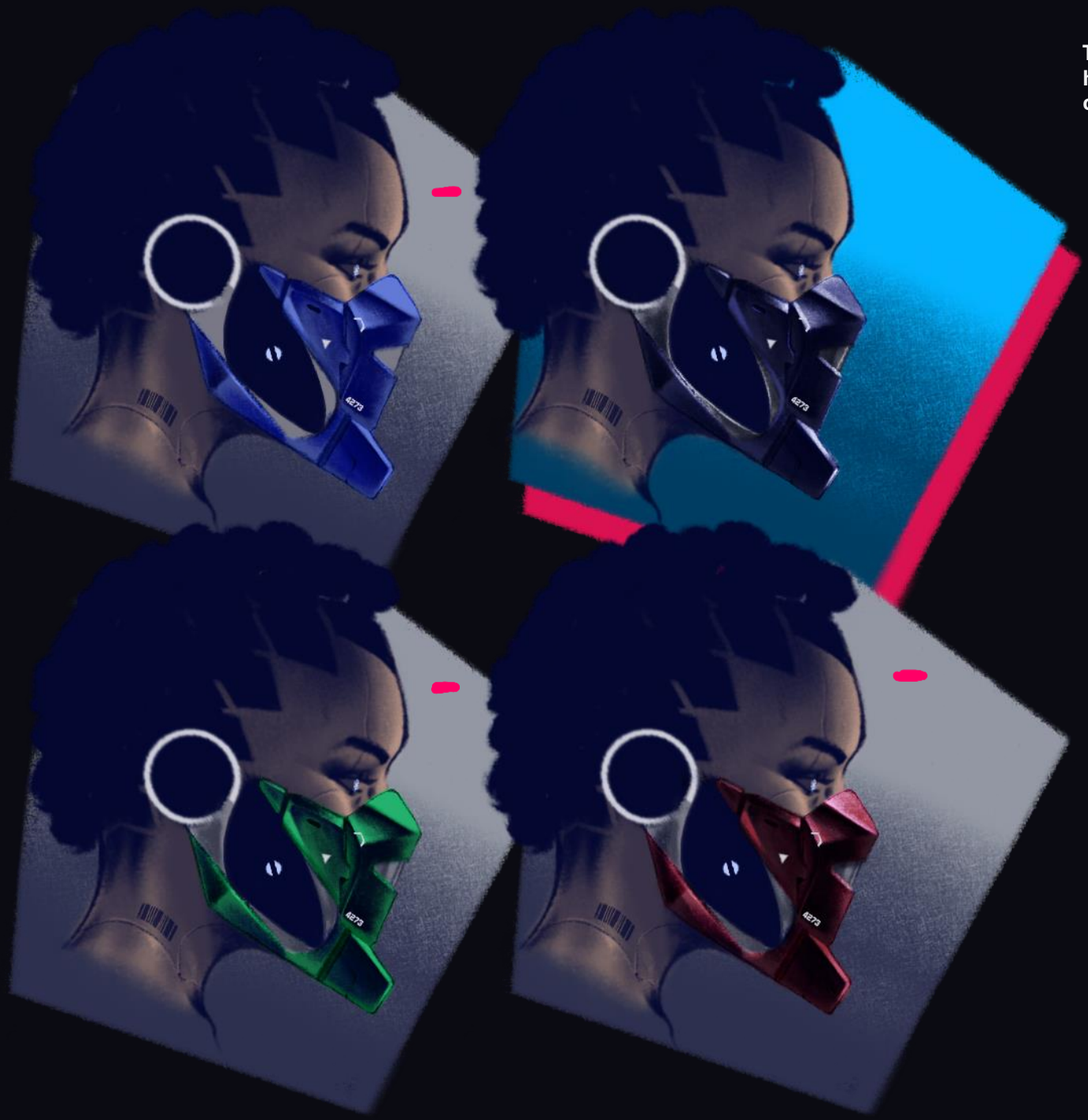






Mask Colour Iterations

As I had already decided the outfit during the thumbnailling, these further iterations became a matter of colourswatches with variations here and there to see what really sticks.



The stealthy metallic dark colour helps better characterise Hyde as covert and deadly.

Turnaround

Pedro, the Scavenger Captain

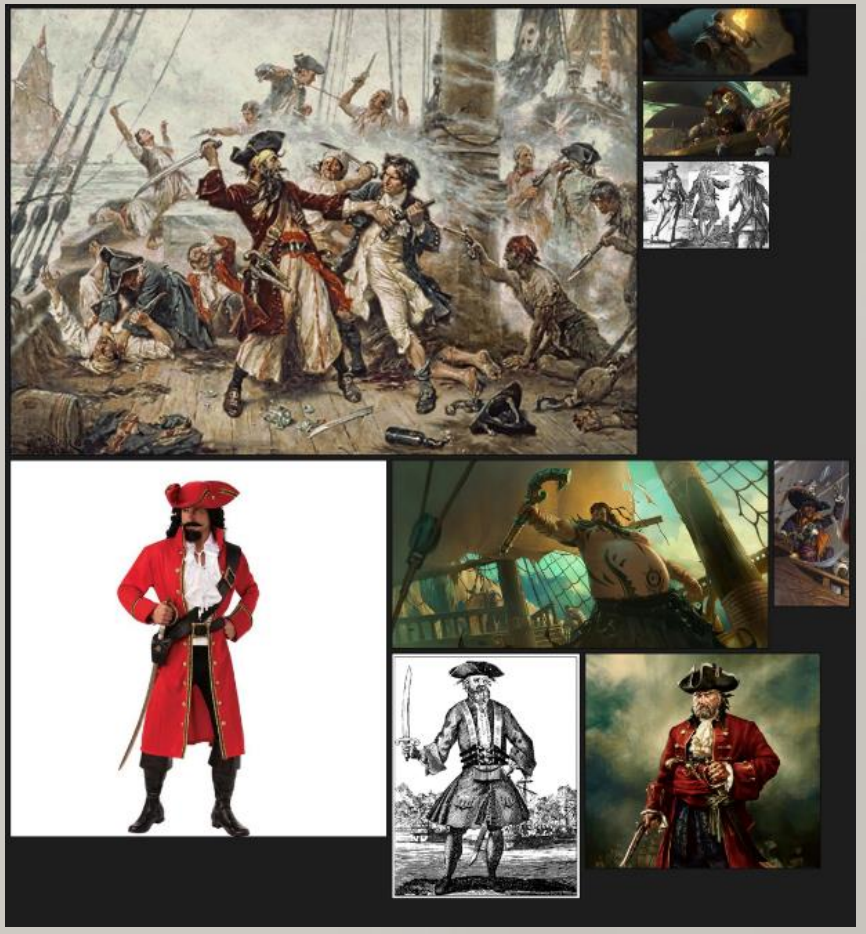
A larger than life Scavenger Captain making an honest living with his trusty Ground Dragon at his side. Now that another has joined him on his contracts, he's that much closer to living the glory days, travelling the Rift with a loyal crew.

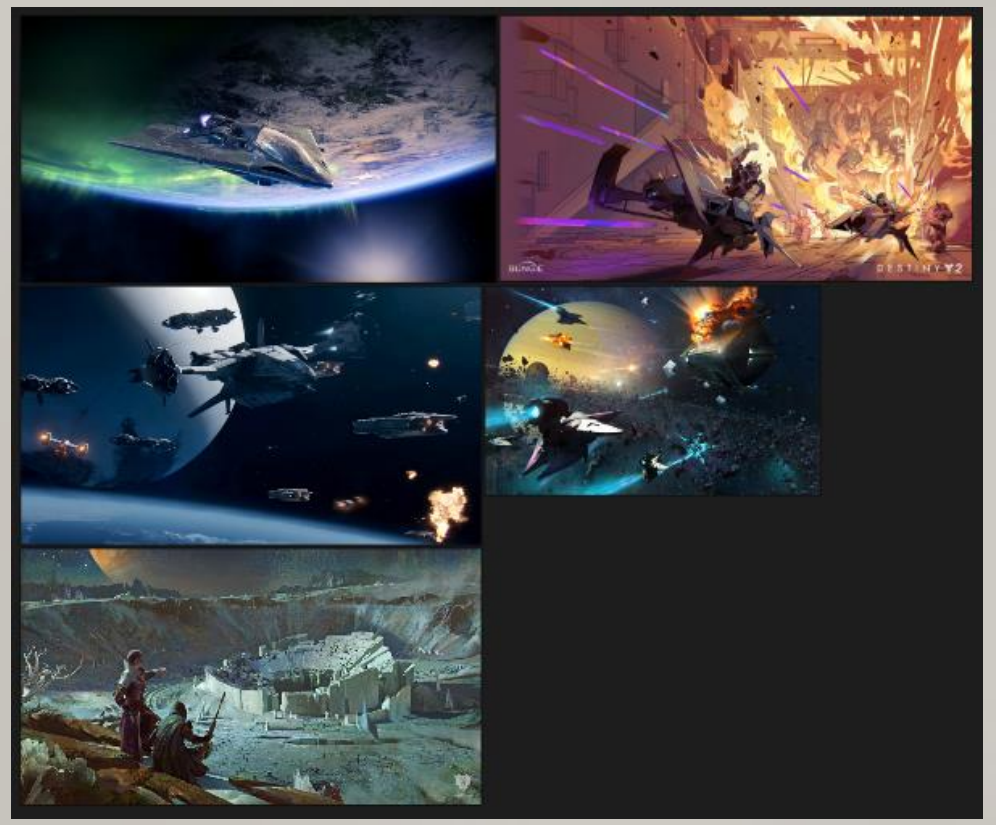
TODAY HE MADE ME FOOD. AN OMELETTE THEY CALL IT.
CANNOT ACCEPT.
SUSTAINENCE CANNOT BE CONSUMED OUTSIDE OF MAINTENANCE HOUR.
HE LEANS 4 DEGREES FORWARD WHEN HE WALKS
POSSIBLE DEFECT. YET TO CONFIRM
DOMINANT FOOT: LEFT
32 COMBAT COMPROMISES TO DATE
RIGHT FLANK SUSCEPTIBLE TO PUNCTURE UNDER FOURTH RIB
HE SMILED
THE DRACONIAN ALSO SMILED
WHAT PROMPTED IT?
NEXT EXPEDITION AT 14:00. QUOTA: 250 LBS TITANIUM DEPOSIT.
LOCATION: SOUTH EAST OF LANDING POINT
THE OMELETTE. IT SMELLED GOOD.
– H

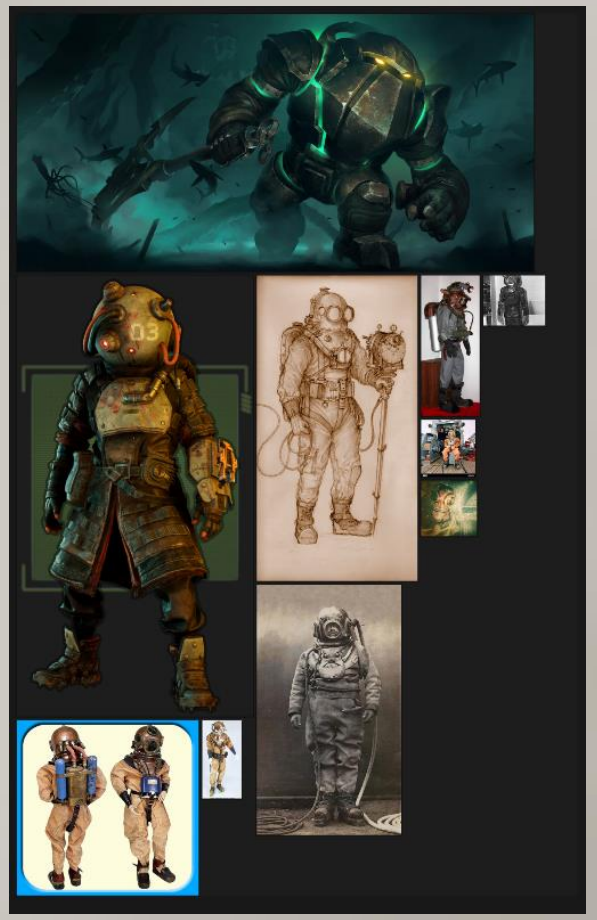
References

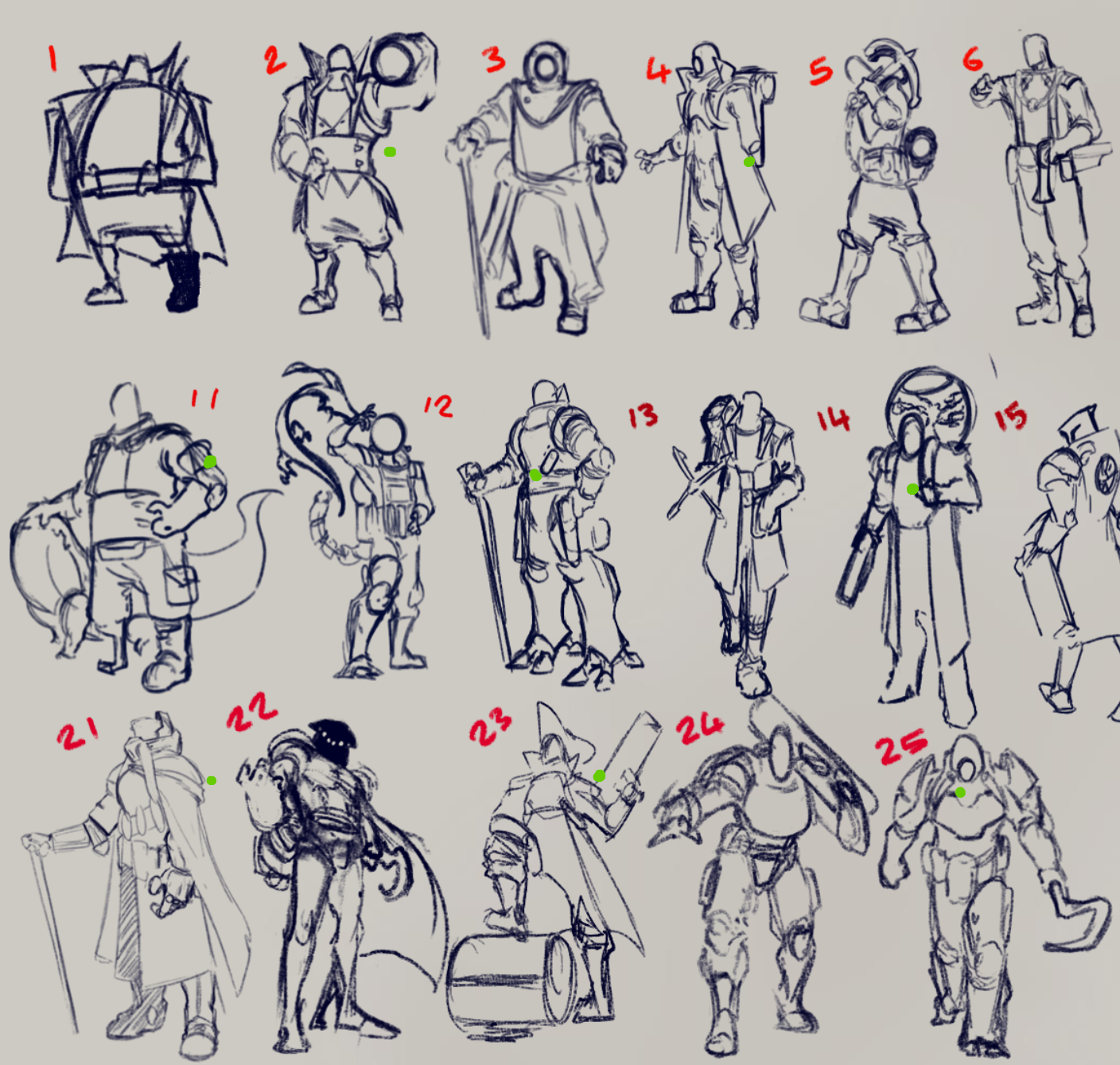
The idea that space within my setting is as bountiful a resource as the ocean that must harvested with the technological advances with humanity seemed like a good challenge to portray with character design. I would also be able to show the diversity in lifestyles within the civilisation, and that the deprivation of magic means little in the lawless gathering of resources.

Research









For the preliminary thumbnails of the captain, I had tried multiple avenues of design, but a main pillar of philosophy to stick to was to design them around space as if it was as populated with life as the ocean is.

As such, I had tried to have the captain ready for the occasion, whether its being equipped with an oxygen tank or being dressed in a nautilus suit.

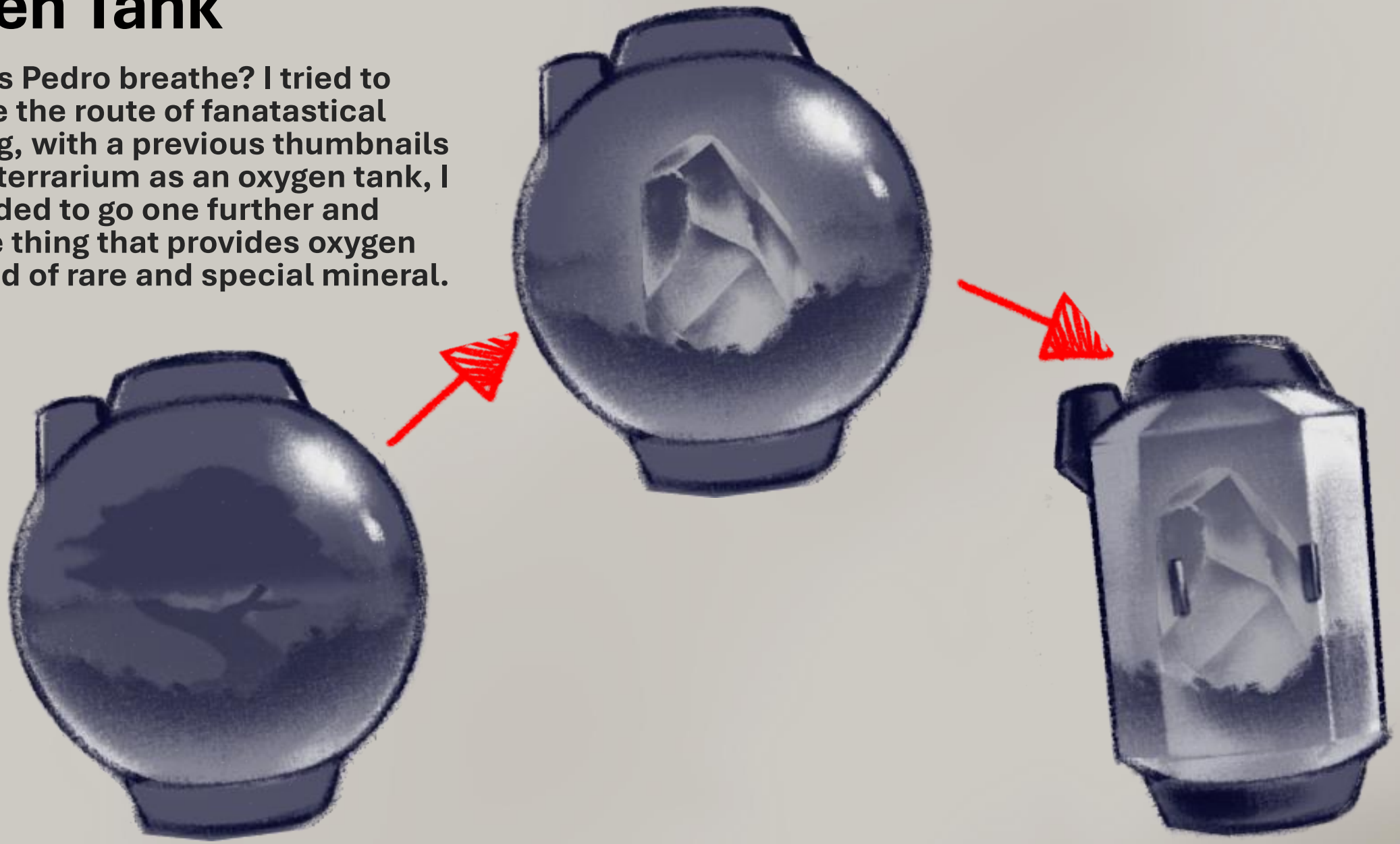
I still wasn't sold on the thumbnails I had made so far, so I had picked a few from the previous set of thumb nails and made further branching designs to see what appealed the most.

This particular thumbnail from the last set had promise so I had decided to expand upon it further, while the initial thumbnail did capture the captain in the light of seasoned

I had thought that both Pedro and Hyde would be likeminded and would make their dynamic less interesting. To change this, I had decided to make him young, more of a reckless musclehead than anything.

Oxygen Tank

How does Pedro breathe? I tried to about the the route of fanatastical reasoning, with a previous thumbnails having a terrarium as an oxygen tank, I had decided to go one further and make the thing that provides oxygen some kind of rare and special mineral.



Hair Iterations

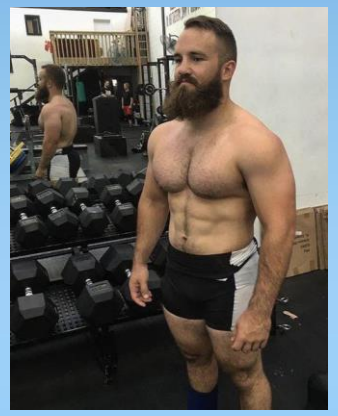
Hair can convey a lot about a character, for Pedro in particular I wanted to convey his youth and recklessness, so I ended up going with the mullet.

Colour Variation

I had went further in iterating on the armour after I had the intial build of it from the concepts, trying my best to maintain the same feel without adding or removing too much.

Powerlifter Physique

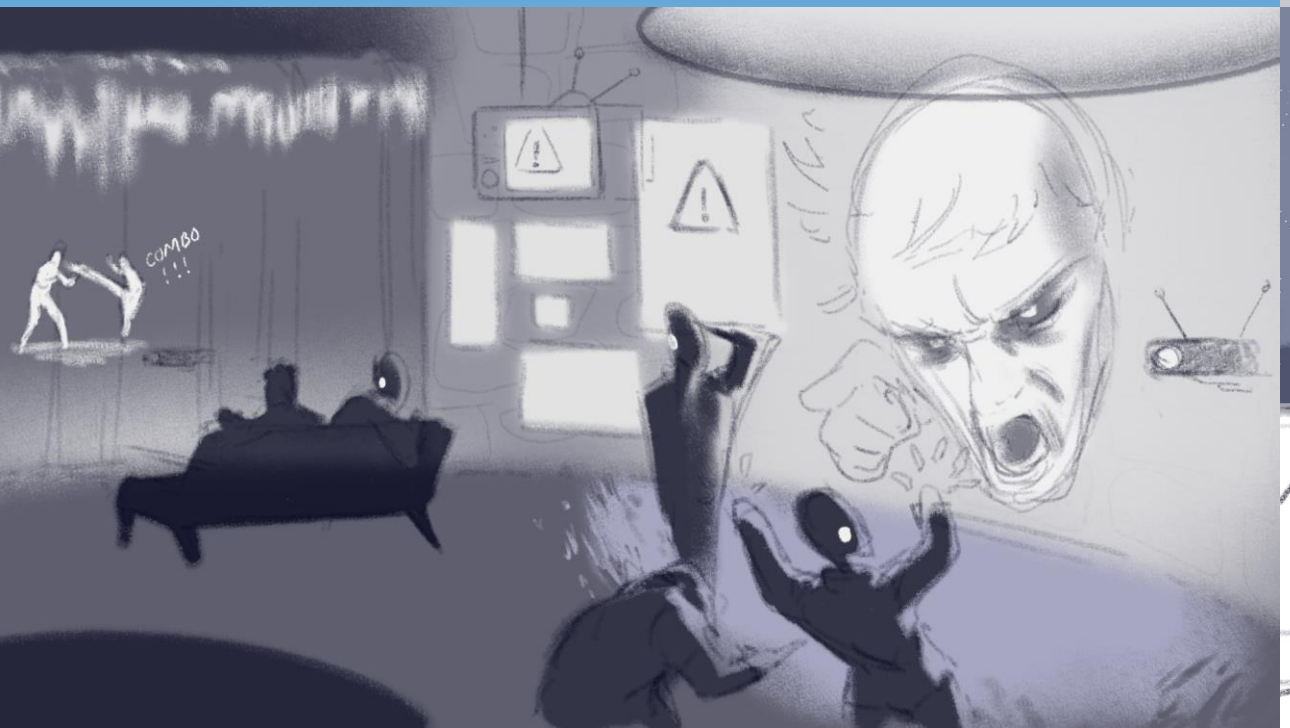
I wanted Pedro to have a physique that looks like he lifts heavy things often, so I looked into powerlifters to really get some insight on the proportions and implement them onto Pedro.



Turnaround

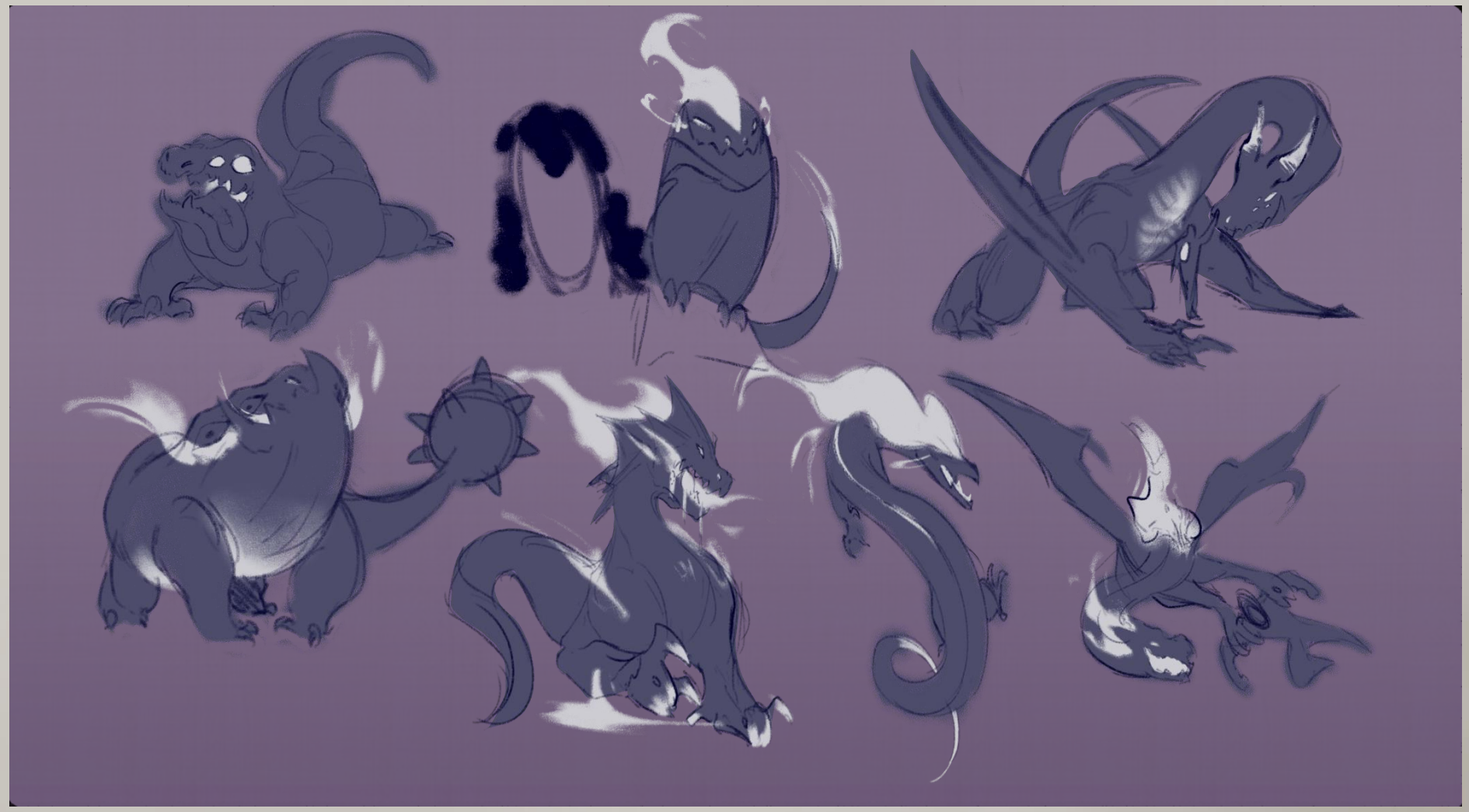
Pedro’s Keyart

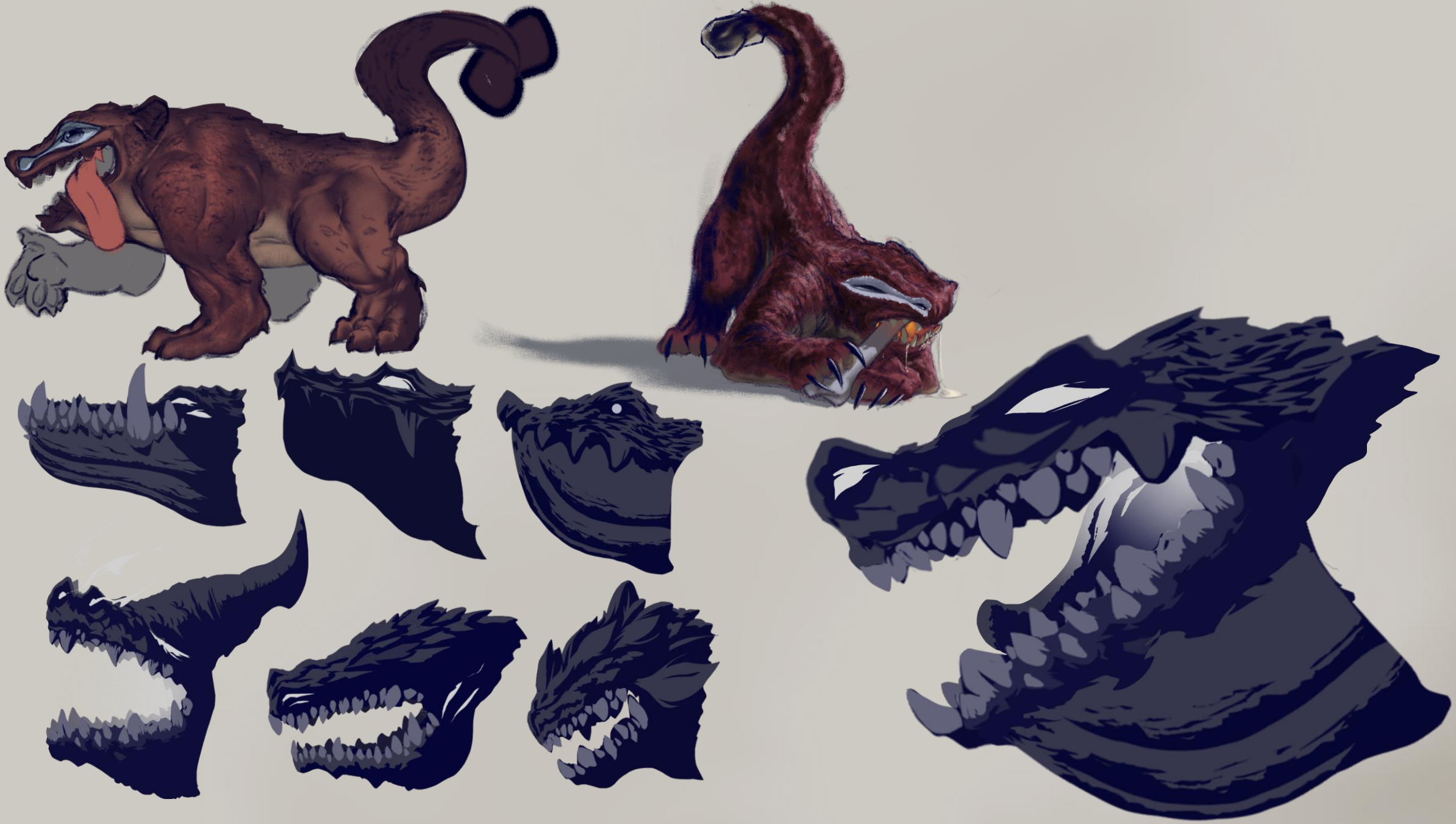
As much as I had wanted the key art to feature the world itself with pedro and co being in the thick of it, my preliminary thumbnails would easy have them be lost in the scene itself, which would defeat the point of the thumb.



Dolly thumbnails

I approached Dolly's design with somewhat freedom as I had in mind that she would act as the captain's faithful companion. As such I felt that she could take on any kind of anatomical form, whether she's dozens of times the size of the captain or perched on his shoulder.



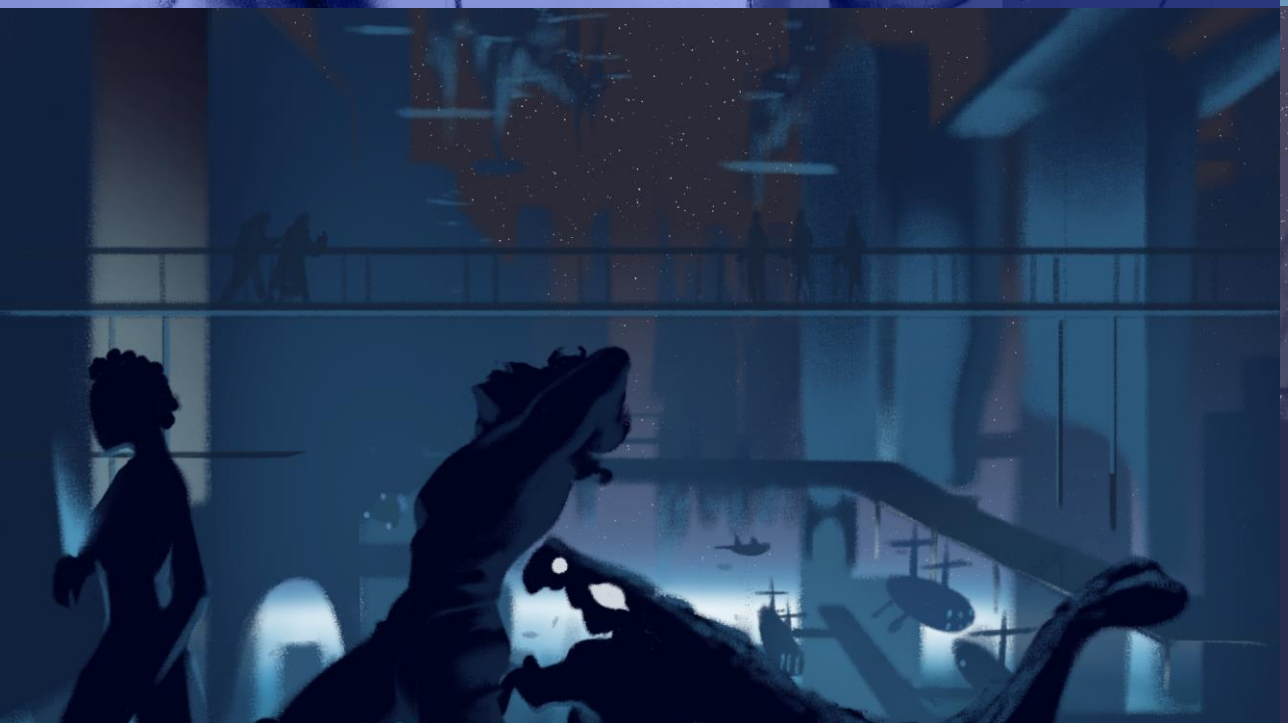


Dolly, the Ground Dragon

Regularly mistaken with other large reptiles of the crocodilian family, Ground Dragons are often pests and if provoked, a force to reckoned with. These Draconians spend most of their lives travelling from asteroid to asteroid, burrowing under the surface in a state similar to brumation. They do this in order to migrate far to solar systems with ecosystems.

Ground Dragons, though a rare sight, are often nicknamed Nomads on the outskirts of Haven. Their diets consist of bones, minerals and on occasion: cadavers. They are able to detect certain minerals in the vacuum of space through a special sensory organ akin to that of olfactory senses. Consuming several tons of mineral and bones a day, the Ground Dragon's stomach produces an unprecedented concentration of hydrochloric acid, enough to melt the strongest of metals, like water on tissue. These creatures can be aggressive, protecting its local territory from similar sized threats.

When provoked, the Ground Dragon will regurgitate its reserves of acids and ignite it with a specific inflammatory organ just below the uvula.



PLAY

Evaluation

As a whole, I am content the project. I was able to be somewhat comfortable in genres like science fiction where as, before the project, fantasy and high fantasy was my comfort zone.

Though my focus was predominantlty characters going throuhg the project of the pipeline had helped me get an understanding in what makes fictional settings within games come to life, from the interactions between characters to the ambient environment that key frames and key art can present.

Designing the environments, making creatures and concepting hard surface assisted me in more generalist work that I am now proficient enough to cover in the industry.

The challenges were exactly as mentioned before, environments were a rough patch for me to begin with but has now became manageable over time.

The final products produced for the project present a ranged of skills from keyframes to character concepting to creature design.