

# Concept Live Brief and Employability

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# The Brief - Deliverables

'Design a Demonic Boss for a Third-Person Action Videogame.'

- ❑ A high-quality character concept that is usable for a 3D model.
  - ❑ A detailed character design and prop design.
- ❑ Create a design that shows a story that fits the theme and direction provided.
  - ❑ Realism/Semi-Realism Style
- ❑ Display a detailed process and integration into the art pipeline

## Deliverables:

- ❑ Inspiration and Research
  - ❑ Blue Sky
  - ❑ Thumbnails
- ❑ Developed Designs
  - ❑ Phase Design
  - ❑ Prop Design
- ❑ Beauty Render
  - ❑ Turnaround

# Flix Research

During the research part of my project, I wanted to do a little bit of research into the company that set me this brief. I wanted to look into where they are based and the games they have made.

Flix Interactive is an England based company located in Birmingham, the studio began in 2011.

They are well known for being involved in games such as:

-Sea of Thieves

-Pax Dei

-Mafia: The Old Country

Whilst the studio has not directly made these games, they have been a big part of the process that has gone into making these games incredible.

I have spent hundreds of hours playing Sea of Thieves so it is a game I hold very close to my heart and I am delighted to have the opportunity to work on a brief set by a company that has been part of making one of my favourite games.



# Mood Board



# Inspirations - Diablo

I wanted to look into some industry examples before I began to begin my own work and designs.

I decided to start with the Diablo franchise as I believe it displays a lot of different types of 'demon boss' whilst keeping everything uniformed.

I started off by going to the library and finding the 'Diablo Art Book' and scanning some of the pages of work I felt were interesting and visually in the direction of what I am hoping to achieve.

As well as the physical book for the first game, I had a look on art station at a concept artist (Victor Lee) and a cinematic artist (Jamir Blanco) to help gauge a more recent selection of their art as their works I looked at was for Diablo IV.

I began by looking into the colours, the main thing I noticed was the plain background for the turn arounds as well as the drawings of the characters interacting with an environment.

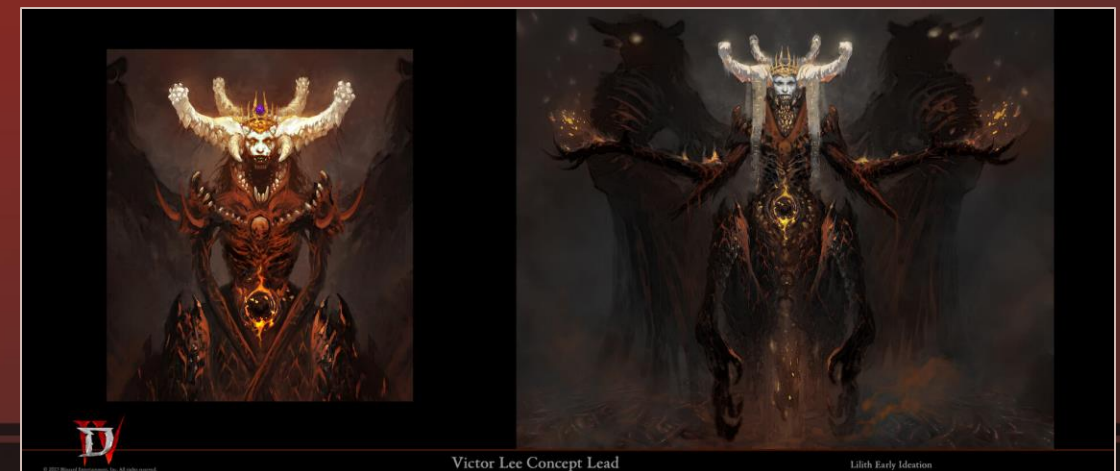
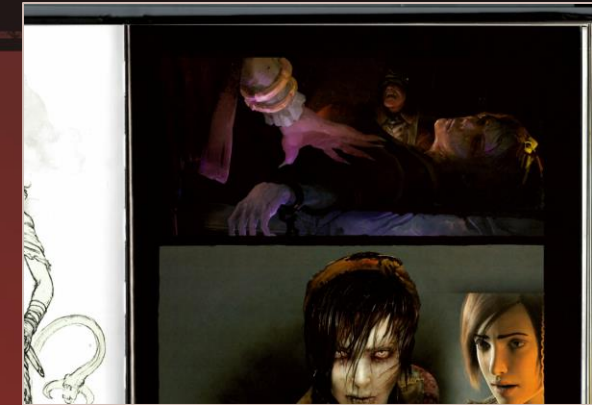
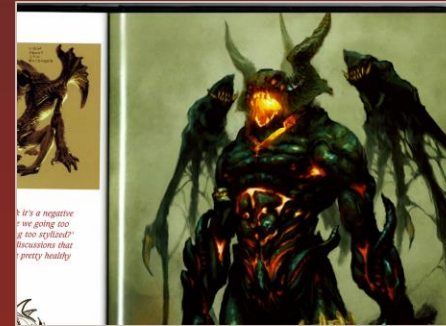
Style wise there are a lot of warm colours in play even on the characters with pale skin - the image to the middle left shows this well with the pale character having a bright red stain going from their mouth to their stomach.

I really like the contrast as it makes the red stand out.

I will be trying to use how Diablo uses colours to highlight and contrast key parts of the design through their concept work.

[ArtStation - Jamir Blanco](#)

[ArtStation - victor lee](#)



# Inspirations – Baldur's Gate 3

After looking into Diablo, I decided to dive into my own personal library and go into my Baldur's Gate 3 (BG3) Artbook.

I was looking mainly at the presentation of work for this as I felt the textured background contributes to the fantasy feel.

I think if I were to use this kind of presentation, I would use it for a beauty render and use something less textured for a turn around and ability/phase display. As well as the looking into presentation, I wanted to focus on the painting style used. The brief states a realistic/semi-realistic style and I feel this style suits that and I shall be using it as inspiration throughout my work.

I also think BG3 is extremely good at capturing the details of armour and the game includes a lot of demon/devil characters - this is extremely helpful as it allows me to see the best ways to display those aspects of my design as well as what call-outs I could do.

I overall think BG3 is a great example to keep in mind when I head towards my final designs and presentation for my work, as well as a great example of the anatomy and painting style I should aim for.



# Inspirations - Arcane

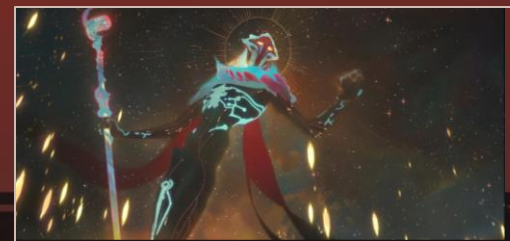
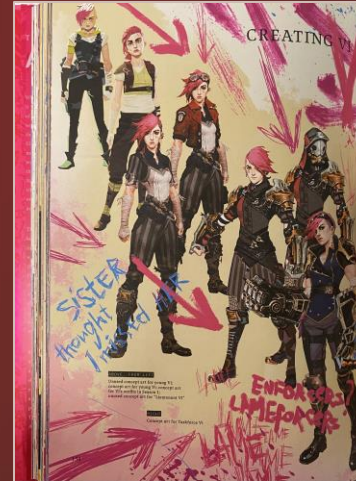
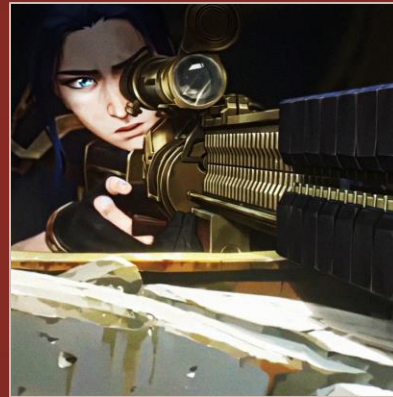
Arcane is a bit of a wild card aesthetically. Whilst it is a stylised media, I believe their way of rendering materials is something to note as inspiration during my project.

Arcane has a very specific way of rendering materials that I myself, absolutely adore. I am wanting to use this as a loose inspiration as I think it is clear and bold, which would help a modeller.

Shape wise I believe it is a bit too stylised to follow the brief so this is where I would be referring back to other parts of my inspirations.

I also really like the way they completed their early stages/bluesky with the block colour full body sketches as I think it displays a lot of big gestures and shapes early on which is helpful for taking a design further.

I wanted to try and focus on multiple different areas for my inspirations and research, all of which I will try to use as inspiration in specific parts of my project to help push my work to the next level.



# Blue Sky

Starting off, I began by creating a range of Bluesky sketches including a variation of body types, genres and aesthetics to help begin my design process.

I wanted to use this part of my process to cover the different types of demonic we see in media. Ranging from the classic Dungeons and Dragons infernal, Diablo, Doom and Devil May Cry aesthetics.

I also created three bigger, more developed sketches which included three of my favourite ideas I was having at this point.

I decided to take the middle large design forward as I felt it was the strongest in both ability design and overall look.

Going from this design, I had the idea to create a wing skirt concept to help differentiate phase one and phase two - however completing this design and keeping it to the brief would require a bit of work as there are certain requirements to both the phases, but I still wanted to take this design further.



# Thumbnails

1



2



3



4



Moving on to my first round of thumbnails, I really wanted to begin thinking on the specifics of the aesthetic as well as the possible ways I can get the wings to sit in a way where they look natural and logical.

I was also playing around with a single horn idea however after looking at the designs I wasn't sure this was the best idea.

At this point, I received some peer feedback and similarly to me, they felt I needed to try and pull the general shapes of the character more, in order to get the dramatic, demon flare I was after. So, I decided to keep these ideas in mind and move to completing some silhouettes.

# Silhouettes

1



2



3



4



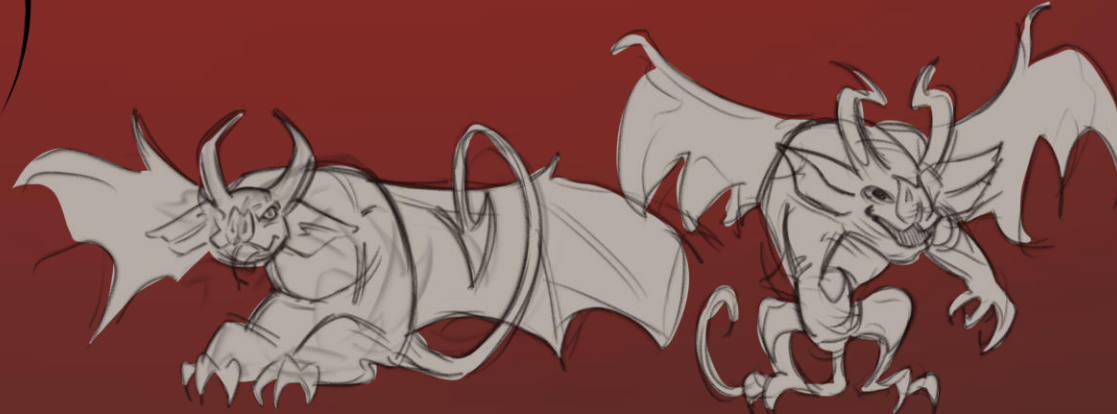
When completing these silhouettes, there was a few things I was trying to focus on.

I really wanted to start thinking about a big neck piece to help accent the flowing hair look I wanted to push.

I also started to focus on the different types of weapons, I liked the idea of a fork-like weapon as it felt traditionally appropriate for the type of demon I was starting to lean towards.

I still was not overly happy with the body's shape language - I really wanted it to feel like her strength comes from magic and calculated moves, so this was something I wanted to work on further.

# Silhouettes



Continuing with my silhouettes, I wanted to focus on the points I had made on the previous slide.

I was really beginning to like the design and aesthetic captured on silhouette 4 and I also began to have this idea of her having pet imps incorporated into her abilities and design, so I started working on some thumbnails to help get that ball rolling.

By the end of this round of silhouettes, I was happy with the overall idea of my character and I was now wanting to really lock into an aesthetic, so at this point I am going to go back to thumbnailing to help figure out the fine details of my character.

# Thumbnails

1



2



3



4



This part of my process was me finalising an aesthetic. I really liked the messy sticks and bones look 1 and 3 have as I felt 2 and 4 were very close to already existing dragon inspired bosses and this wasn't something I was wanting to take forward.

After deciding to take 1 and 3 forward, I started trying to think of different accents I could put on the design. I took a lot of inspiration from the Wicker Man ride featured at Alton Towers for this part of my process.

It was at this point I was starting to lean towards a goat idea. Goats are very commonly depicted with demonic themes and this was something I was interested in taking further.

# Thumbnails

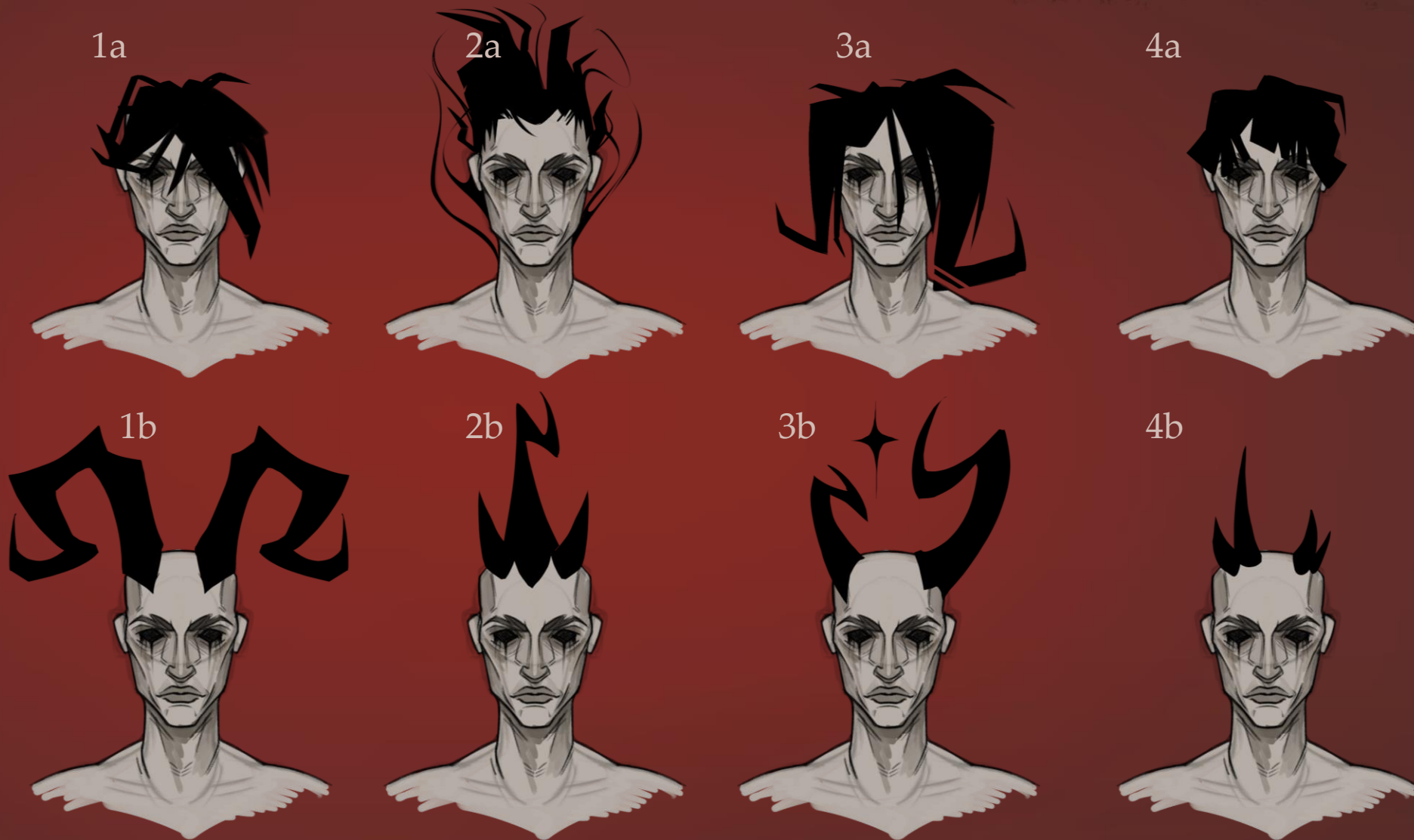
Before fully committing to the goat idea, I wanted to try and focus on some of the smaller details, like the horns.

I really liked how over exaggerated 1b looked, I felt they sat well with the messy sticks and fabrics idea I was already experimenting with, as they kept the sharp protruding look that was already present on the design.

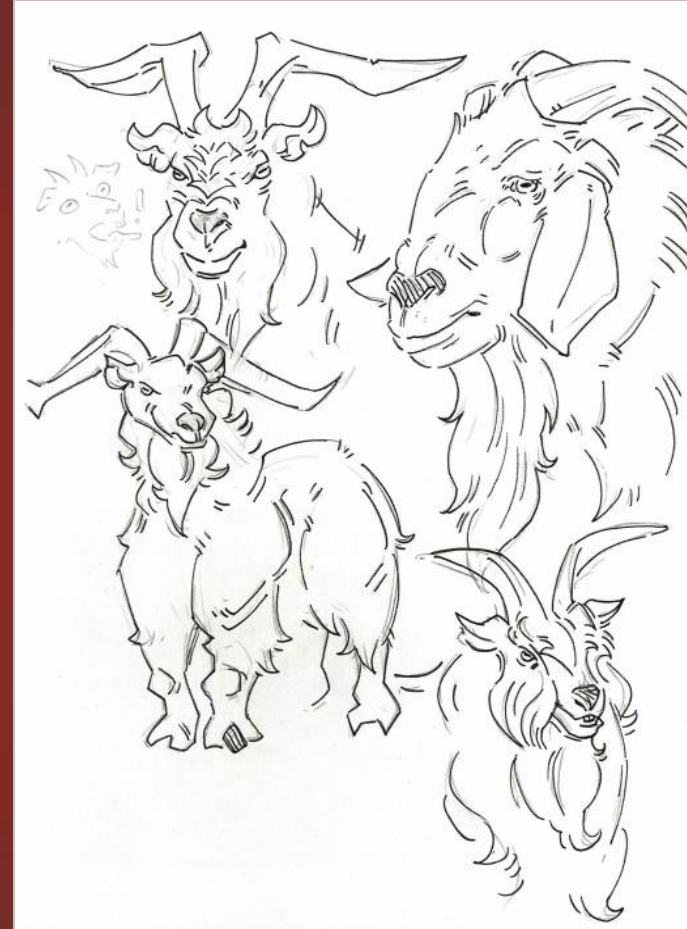
I also wanted to start trying to think about different ways the hair may interact with the horns and how I can incorporate the upwards flowing hair look smoothly and in a way where it makes sense.

In the end, I went with option 2a for this as I felt it matched to an already existing hair idea and keeps to the overall messy vibe I am trying to keep in my design.

I was still however wanting to push the goat idea so I will continue to develop this into my design.



# Studies



Before moving forward with my design, I wanted to try and do some quick studies covering a wide variety of different types of goats, to help myself learn the basic shapes they have in their facial structure and how the fur tends to sit on their skin etc.

I think these studies will be helpful when it comes to designing the imps, as I think it makes sense to make the little imps heavily goat accented to help push this idea.

Whilst I know the goats are not a character they are an important asset to my boss and I want to make sure they look well thought out and detailed.

# Thumbnails



Continuing with my characters design now, I was wanting to iron out a few things before moving on to the final parts of her design.

I was mainly focusing on her neck piece in this as well as giving a close look to the facial structure I was wanting to achieve. The sleek cheek bones and sharp teeth was something I had been picturing throughout the process and I felt now was a good time to display this. I also really liked the way my first silhouette accents her neck and hair without being too much - which is something I will keep in mind moving over to the final parts of my design.

I also kept the blindfold idea which appeared on some of my earlier thumbnails as I think it keeps the vagueness a first act boss should have and this could possibly be removed moving into the second phase.

# Phase Concept

At this point, I wanted to start trying to visualise both phases.

I created two simple illustrations including a draft version of my character and a silhouetted version of what her possible phase two could be.

The idea currently is that in the first phase she is confident and powerful using magic and teleporting around to hit the player with her weapon, but in the second phase, her wings open and imps fly out to attack the player.

I felt this idea follows the brief's description of moving quickly in the first phase and slower in the second. The character must remain grounded, so I needed to find a way to make a character with wings remain grounded. This is something I will work on as I progress the design.



# Imp Silhouettes

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



Before I continued my boss character, I wanted to put a bit more thought into the imp.

I did a similar but shorter process for the imp as my main boss character, beginning with a silhouette sheet, thumbnails and then developed design.

I ended up taking designs 3 and 8 forward as I felt they were the most 'mischievous' looking.

I wanted the imps to feel mischievous as imps are typically shown to be, but also work in unison with the boss's design.

# Imp Thumbnails

1



2



3



4



5



6



I wanted to move on to some developed imp thumbnails.

I ended up being a big fan of my second thumbnail. The longer arms reminded me of a gibbon and I found this quite appealing and wanted to take this further.

I was also a big fan of the robe/scarf accessory as I felt it gave 'branding' to my character and also gave the suggestion that she cares enough for them to give them clothing which was a dynamic I liked the idea of.

One thing I wasn't sure about was the long tail. I felt it was un-realistic of a goat and also got jumbled in the mix of arms and clothing.

I do however, want to refine this a little bit more before I develop a final design.

# Developed Thumbnails

1



2



These are my developed imp designs.

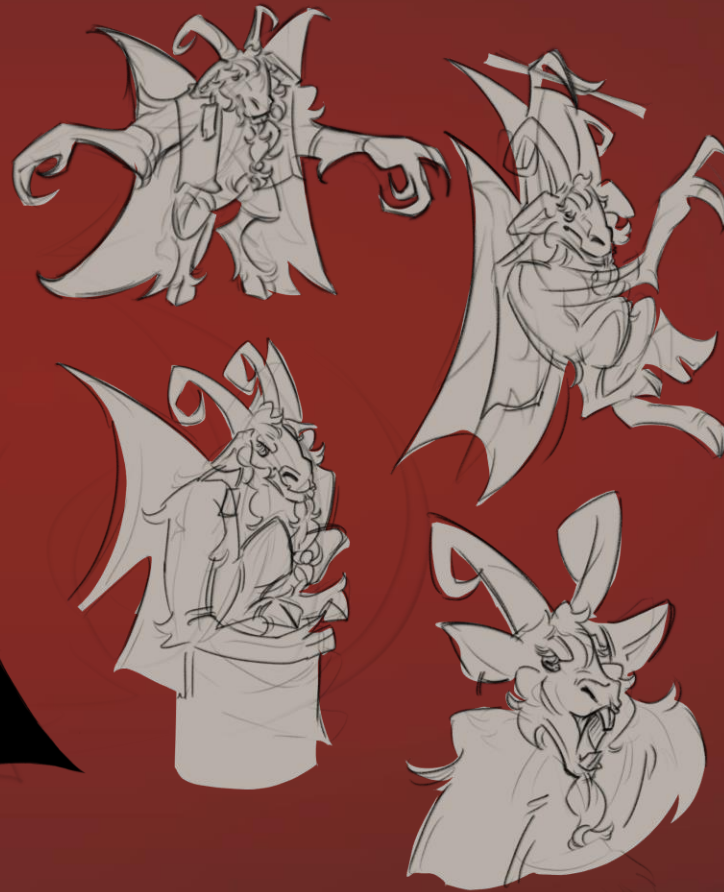
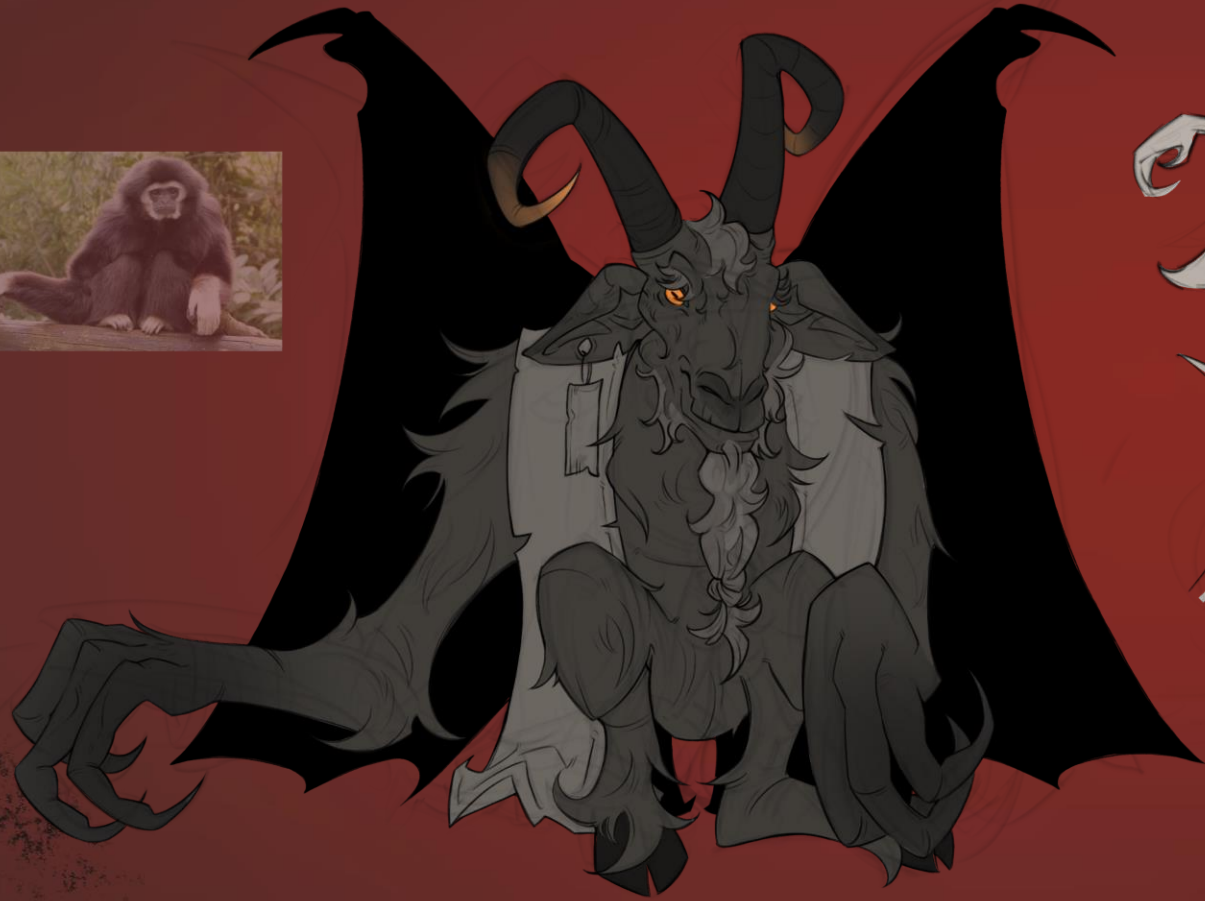
After completing these I decided to take design 1 further as it really captures the silly gibbon vibe I had grown quite fond of.

I also think removing the long tail was a good move as he feels a lot easier to read and is more realistic.

I also like the face shape here as it feels classic to a goat but isn't extremely stylised as him being too stylised was a worry of mine throughout this part of my process.

I do however want to play around with some gestures to try and figure out exactly how he moves and carries himself.

# Imp Design

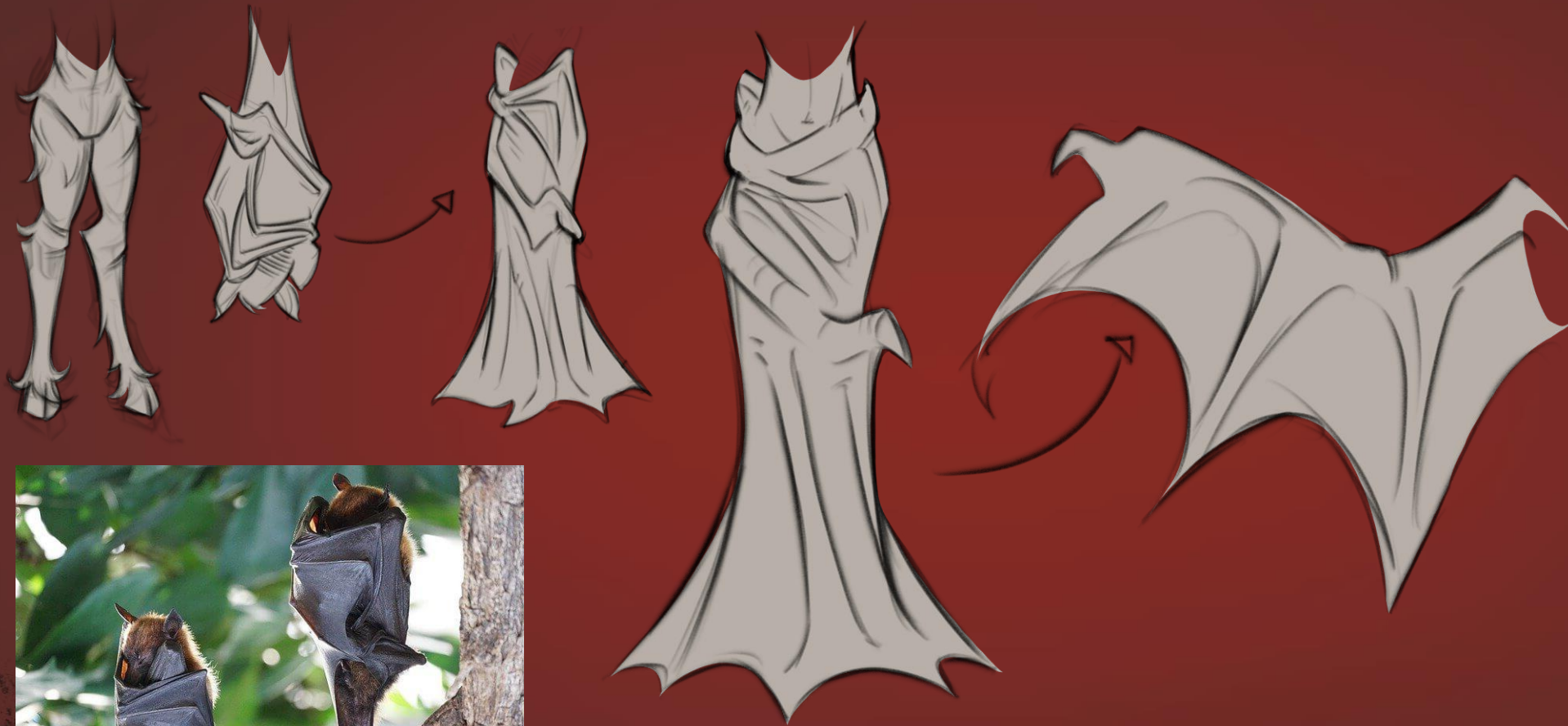


This is my final imp design. I hadn't completed any colours for the imp yet as it is waiting on the colours for my main boss design, as I felt it was more important to make sure the imps match her than her match the imps.

I also completed some gestures for the imps, inspired heavily by pictures of gibbons I found online. I completed these to display the silly, cheeky personality I am wanting them to have and I felt this would be useful for the hypothetical situation where they interact with a player.

I will be completing a turnaround for the imp later in my process as I feel he is an important asset to get right and that will contain a finished colour pallet.

# Skirt Development



Whilst I had my idea pretty much finalised, I wanted to put a bit more effort into making sure the skirt works both aesthetically and logically.

I went about this by doing a simple sleeping bat study and then flipped it upside down and tweaked it to work as a skirt.

I also started to think about her legs under the skirt as they will be visible during the second phase. I did end up liking the goat leg idea so I will be taking this into the next stage.

I also wanted to start thinking about how I could get the wings to not function as wings and I realised that for them to function as a skirt they would need a few extra joints, including one that bends the wrong way - this I felt would be enough for them to not work for flight.

# Skirt Exploration

Before moving to prop design, I wanted to really finalise the skirt and make sure it functioned.

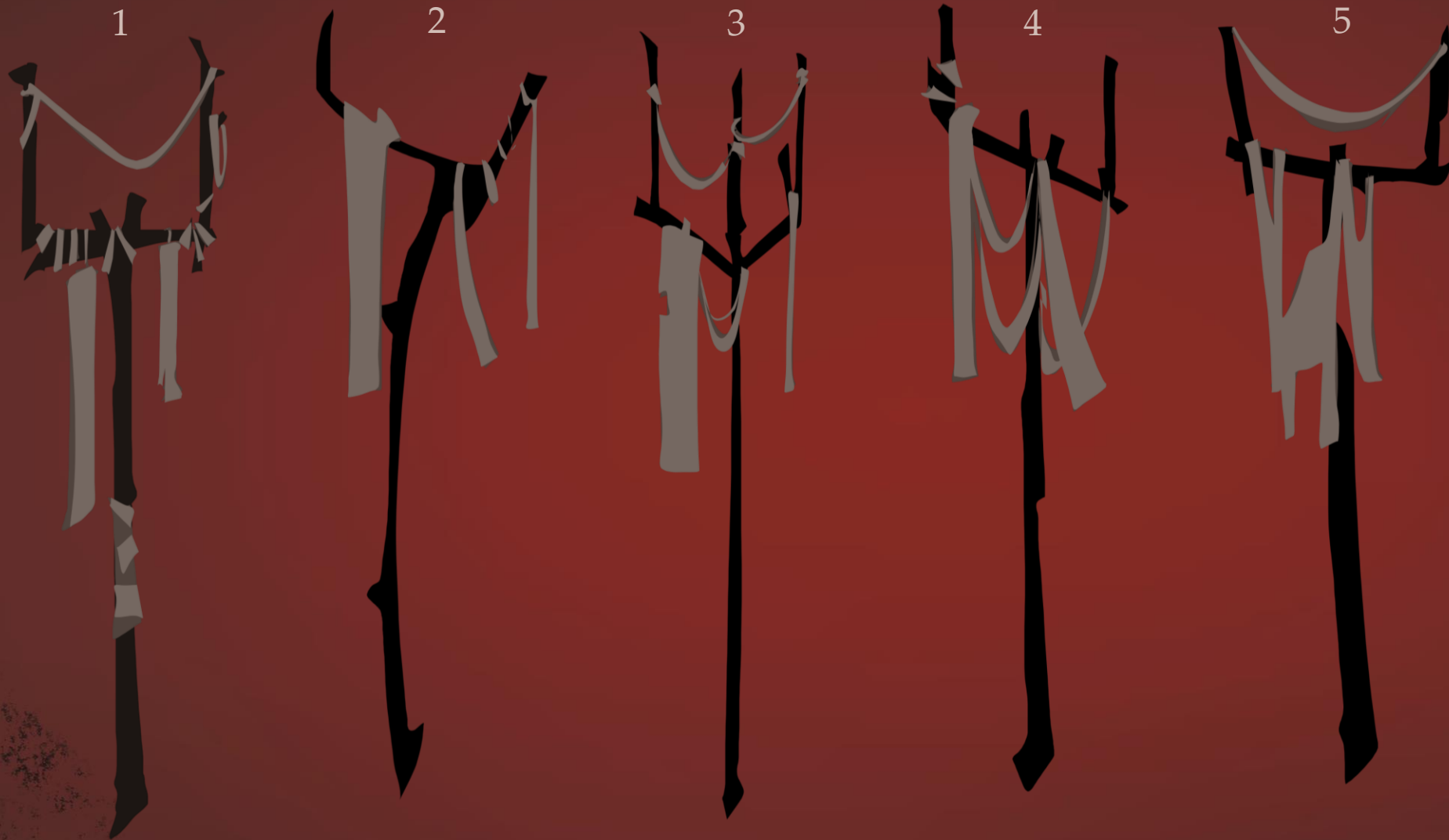
To do this, I decided to draw two simplified designs to show how the two phases would operate.

Phase one being blindfold on, wings closed and phase two being glowing wings open, no blindfold and longer, bigger, flamed hair.

Finally happy with the skirt, I decided to move over to my prop design.



# Prop Silhouettes



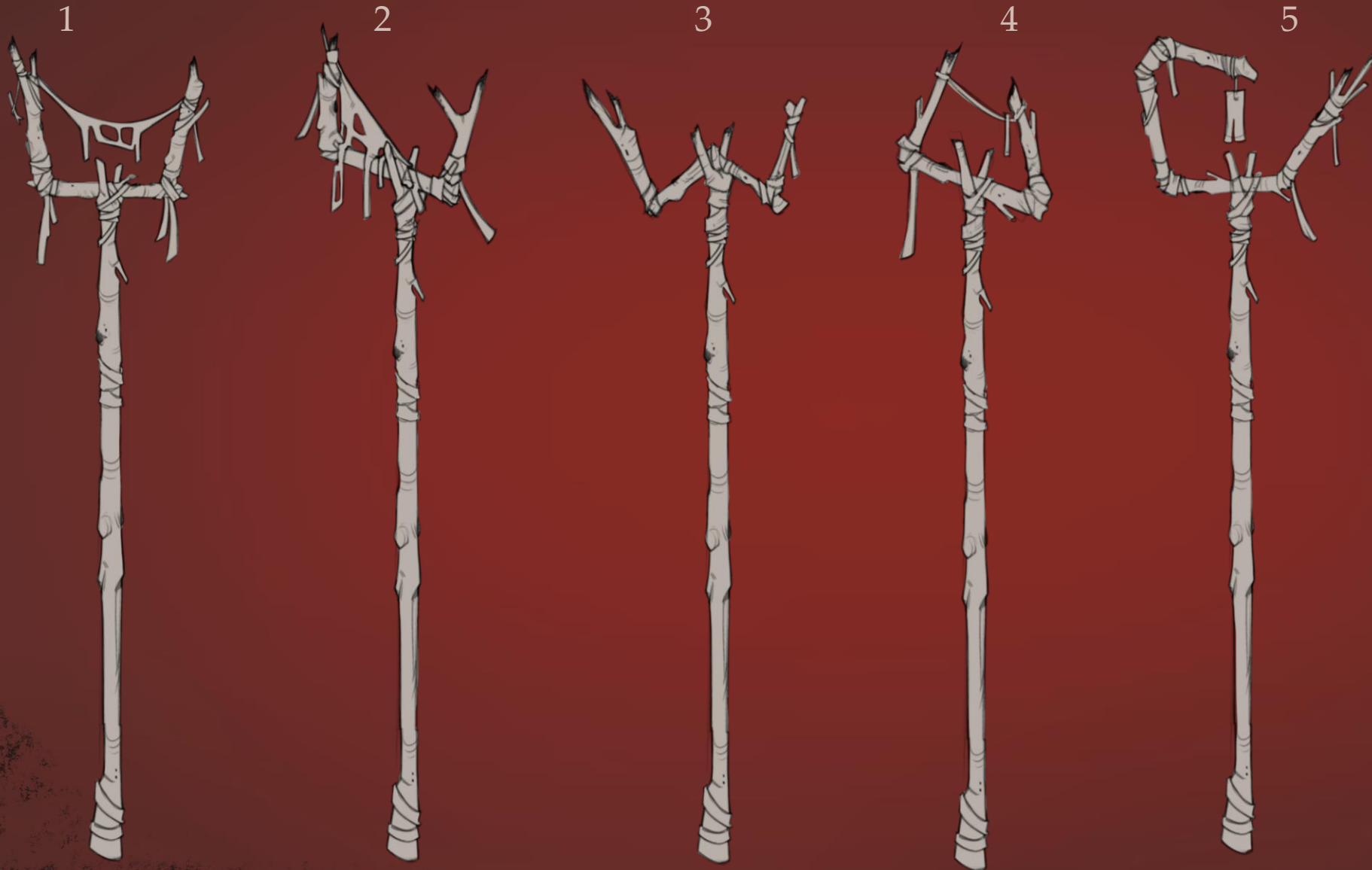
These silhouettes were done to get the general shape of the prop as I already knew what kind of weapon I wanted.

I'd been pretty hard set on a fork type of prop since the beginning, so I wanted to revisit this here to make sure it still worked.

I actually ended up liking design 2 with the two prongs so when I move forward with my design to the thumbnailing stage I will be taking this design further.

Going forward, I wanted to think about how the fabrics will sit and fall on the prop to keep them in theme with my existing character.

# Prop Thumbnails



These are my final thumbnails before I move onto the last stages before my beauty renders. I wanted to have a finalised prop ready for the beauty renders and turnarounds.

With these designs, I decided that 2 was my favourite. I like the fabric that's tied to one side and the middle and I could already imagine the imp swinging off the other side creating a nice balanced design.

I am keeping to the process that I kept to with the imp where I don't add colour just yet as I haven't made it that far with the actual boss's design.

# Colour Iterations



I started to complete these colour iterations and realised that I actually really liked the colours I had been doing as a 'placeholder' on my previous iterations.

However, I did want to take some inspiration from pallet 1 too as I really like the red contrasting with other parts but still feeling on theme as it is a warm colour.

I think in the future I will still try to complete more iterations, even if I already have a vision, or I will complete them to more detail as I know I am wanting to play around with a fire effect on this character and it may have been worth experimenting with that here, to see how well it lands with the other colours.

# Gestures

I decided to complete some simple gestures to help visualise how my character might move in her two phases, before I start completing ability and phase design.

I wanted to show the posture and confidence she holds herself with in phase one compared to the hunched over desperation in the second phase.

I had the idea here to remove her weapon in the second phase, so it leaves her vulnerable to the player as well as making it seem that the imps are her last desperate effort to win.

I will write a more detailed explanation on this as well as some illustrations of it, however I felt these gestures would be good to display her as a person as well as a boss.





Phase one will consist of a lot of teleportation moves. This will look like she's being pulled into herself almost like a firecracker blackhole. There would then be an orange circle that appears nearby to indicate where she will reappear to allow the player a few seconds to prepare. This phase would also consist of a lot of varied weapon attacks.

The idea behind this part of the phase is for her to be fast and hard to track whilst getting close to the player and using a variety of melee weapon attacks.

I decided to try and make it look almost like firecrackers when she uses her ability as fire is a consistent feature in her design and I felt this showed a chaotic, dangerous version to the fire already present on her design.

I was worried the tight skirt may cause some issues regarding her having a fast movement phase, but I think taking advantage of fire magic and teleportation works well to prevent this issue.

## Phase 1 Mechanics



In phase two, she will become more chaotic - ripping her blindfold off, hunching over and opening her wings to show a glowing orange inside. During this her weapon will also burn away. This is to indicate her moving away from melee attacks.

During this phase, her imps will begin to fly out of her wings almost like a portal. She will remain relatively idle during this to follow the briefs request of a slow moving phase.

To also follow the briefs request of a grounded character I have designed her wings to have too many joints and joints that bend the wrong way to create wings that would not function for flight.

When the imps emerge from the wings, they will follow a similar block orange texture to the wing interior which will 'melt away' as the imps fly towards the player to help a smooth transition from projectile to enemy.

## Phase 2 Mechanics



Imp Turnaround



Phase 1 Turnaround & Face Callout



Phase 2 Turnaround

Phase 1

The Imp  
Mother

Beauty  
Render



Phase 2

The Imp  
Mother

Beauty  
Render

