# Influences

ob-SOUL-1337's visual language was inspired by various points in animation. Initial influences include Futurama, Into The Spider-Verse, Road Runner & Wile E. Coyote and the works of Cartoon Saloon, Gerard Way and Masaaki Yuasa.

Web animation was a key influence for the short's presentation and flow as works on Newgrounds and YouTube, while lo-fi and shocking, were unapologetic and expressive. Certain names who inspired the film include David Firth, Jonni Phillips and Ian Worthington.
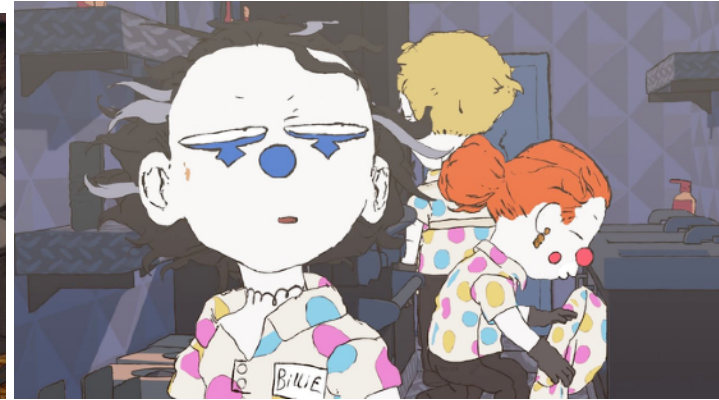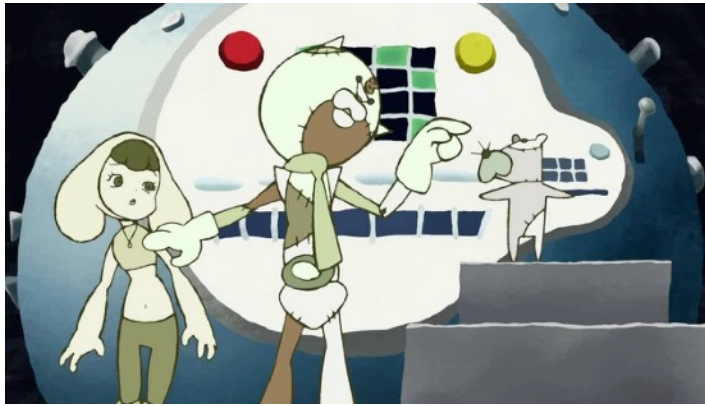
Kaiba © 2008 Madhouse, Inc.
Futurama © 2023 20th Television
Wolfwalkers © 2020 Cartoon Saloon
Bigtop Burger © 2023 Ian Worthington
Barber Westchester © 2021 Jonni Phillips

# Conception

ob-SOUL-1337 was a short conceived from watching Futurama, questioning robots throughout pop culture are 1-to-1 with humans yet robots do not share our restrictions of brainpower, flesh, bone and mortality. This combined with a pessimistic view of the tech industry (particularly Big Tech, Silicon Valley and the rise of generative AI), nostalgia for Web 1.0, fondness for the internet's freedom of information, reflections on our relationship with technology and curiousities of death laid down the thematic foundations paired with the aforementioned creative influences.

ob-SOUL-1337 is a completely solo project with myself handling all pre-production, animation, dialogue, music, editing and branding. The film's production started alongside my Master's in September 2022 and finished in early August 2023. The film uses NO generative AI shortcuts with 95% of visual assets on screen made from scratch.

# Art Direction

ob-SOUL-1337's visual language is divided in 2 areas. One is the gritty semi-dystopian city run by Gootch, characterised with watercolor and ink backgrounds. The other is the sleek and hypnotic world of purGle, software housed inside Grimmi that aids the "prematurely deceased" with vibrant colours and waves.



Collection of collage paintings. Acrylic on Cardboard. 2022

L: Concept art showing Grimmi. Digital illustration. 2022
R: Concept art showing Gootch. Digital illustration. 2022
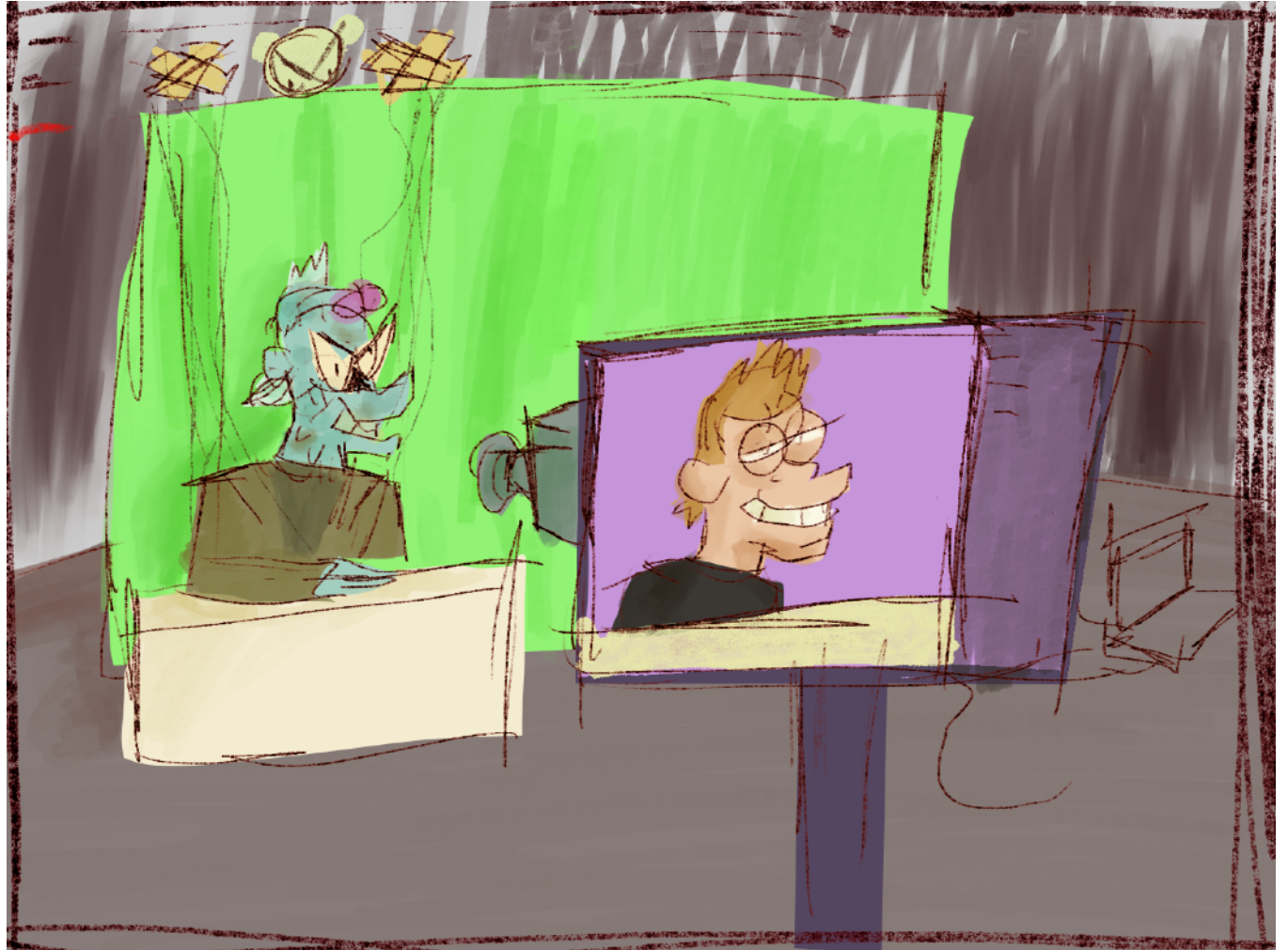
L: purGle Concept art . Digital illustration. 2022
R: Grimmi & Wendy concept sketch. Digital illustration. 2022

# Character Design

Some characters of ob-SOUL-1337 like Ray, Wendy and Gootch were created with the themes of dual identity on/offline in mind. Ray being a closeted trans woman whereas Gootch covers up his decaying body. Grimmi acts as the Grim Reaper in the form of a mecha piloted by souls.
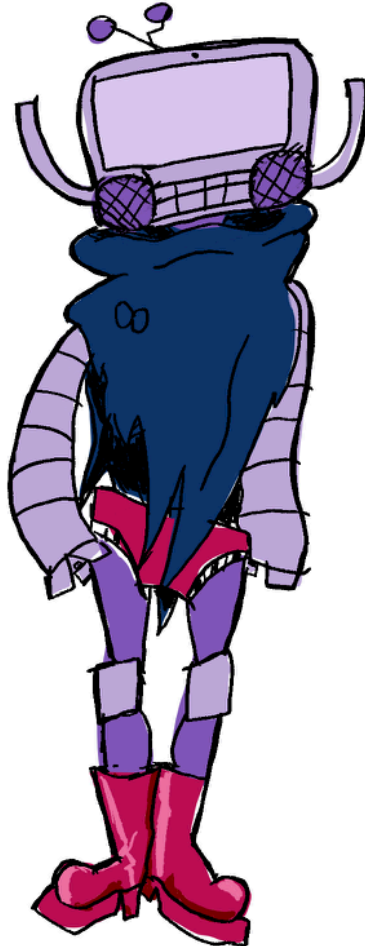
GRIMMI
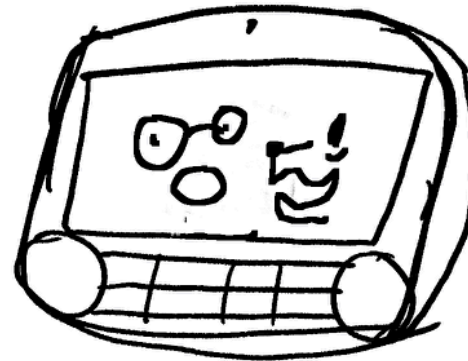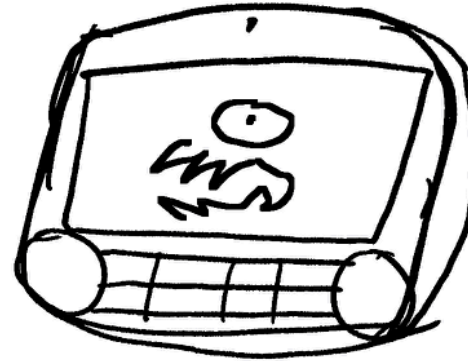
PURGSONAS
CONTROL
GRIMMI
LIKE MECH

"Grimmi" Character Design. Digital Illustration 2022

RAY
- TRANS WOMAN
(semi closted. out online/to
those intimate)
- DRESSES UP MASC FOR
SAFETY.

"Ray" Character Design. Digital Illustration 2022
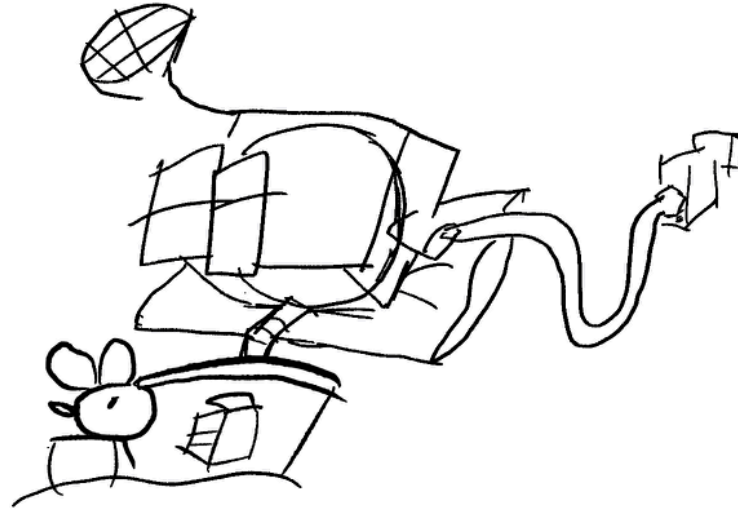
WENDY
– UNDERWENT
EXTREME
COSEMTIC.
REMOVEALL
FLESH BONE
organ out
KEPT Heart /3falh

WENDY'S
PREVIOUS
Form
– BODY OTSnoPP'in
– unsluck shean/
HumcnSogm.

"Wendy" Character Design. Digital Illustration 2022

younger yrs

USES
FILTERS
CGF
PUPPETRY
MAKEUP

TO
LOOK
LIKE
THIS
INFOBLL'L

ABE
GOOCH
TECH
TYCOON - ADDICTED
TO DAT.

↑
HENCHMEN
CARRY HIM
WKND @ Bernies
OR USE PUPPETS

"Gootch" + henchmen Character Design. Digital Illustration 2022

10

GRIMMI-GANG.
- ALL were murdered BUT
- Act as Nurturers of souls
collected by grimmi
- Decided to work WM grimmi
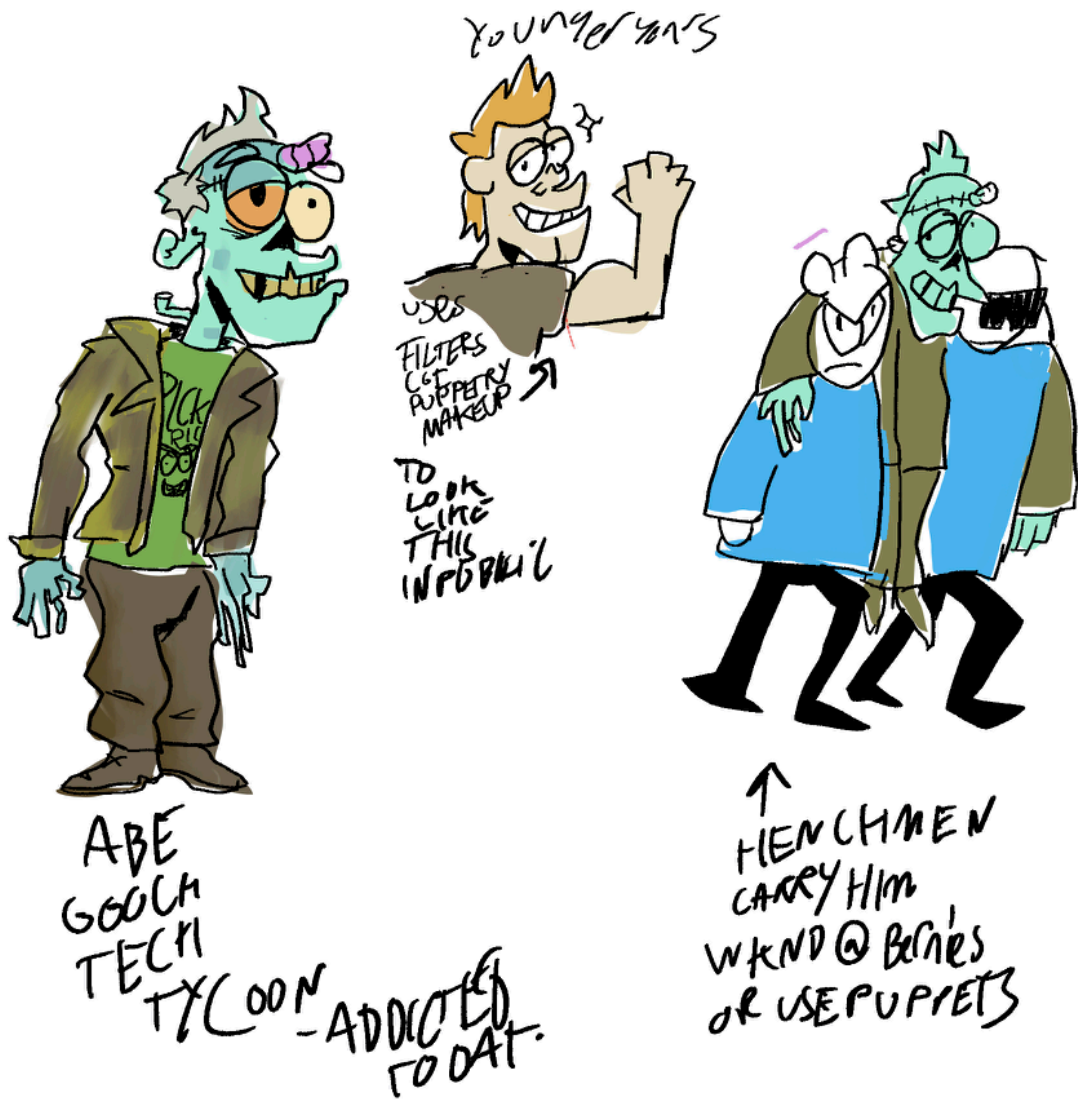
"purGsonas" aka "Grimmi-Gang" Character Design. Digital Illustration 2022

# Storyboards
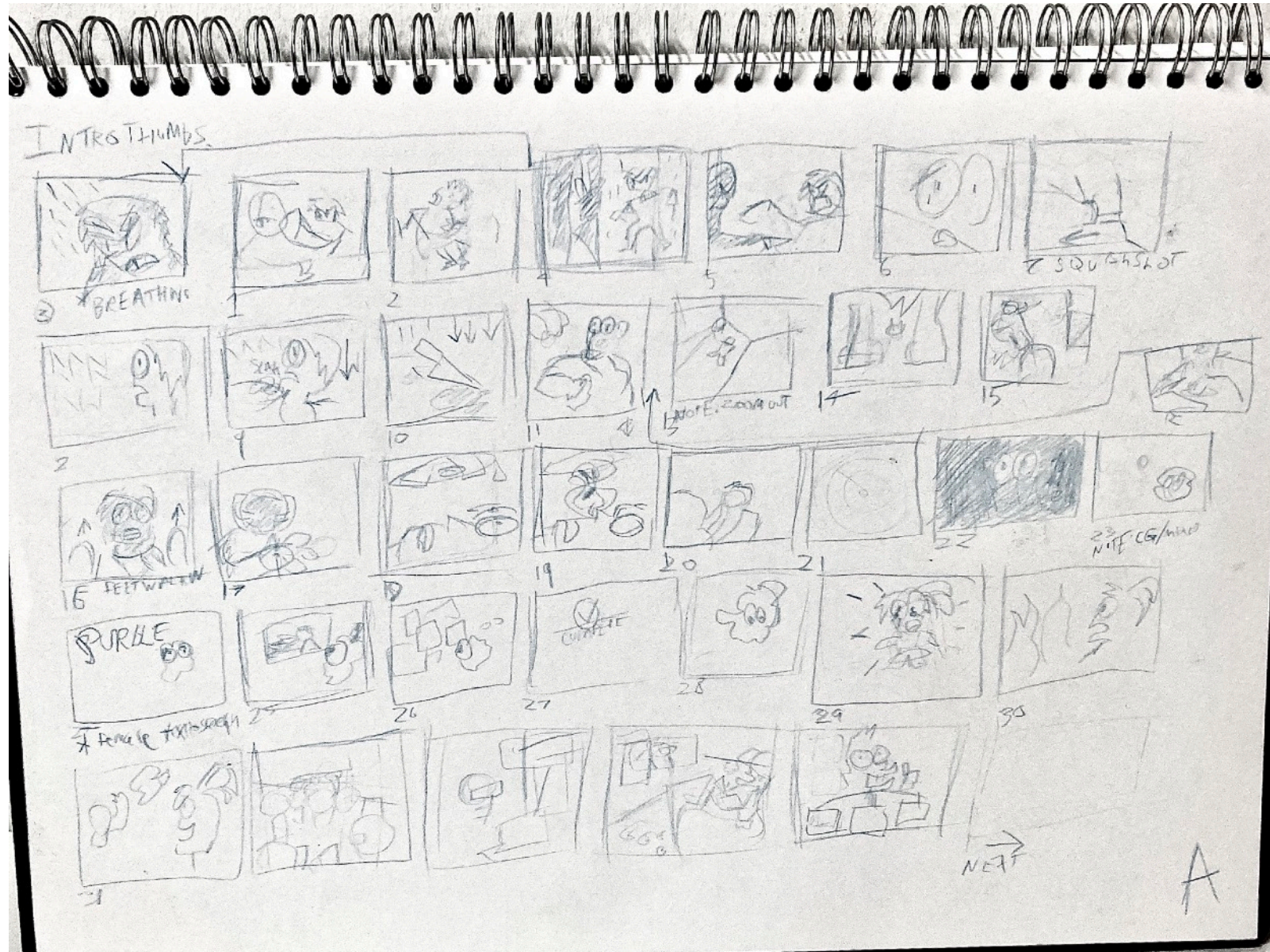


Storyboards A: Ray's Death and introduction to purGle.

Storyboards B: Gootch's introduction/Wendy's introduction

Storyboards C: Slapstick section/Wendy's backstory
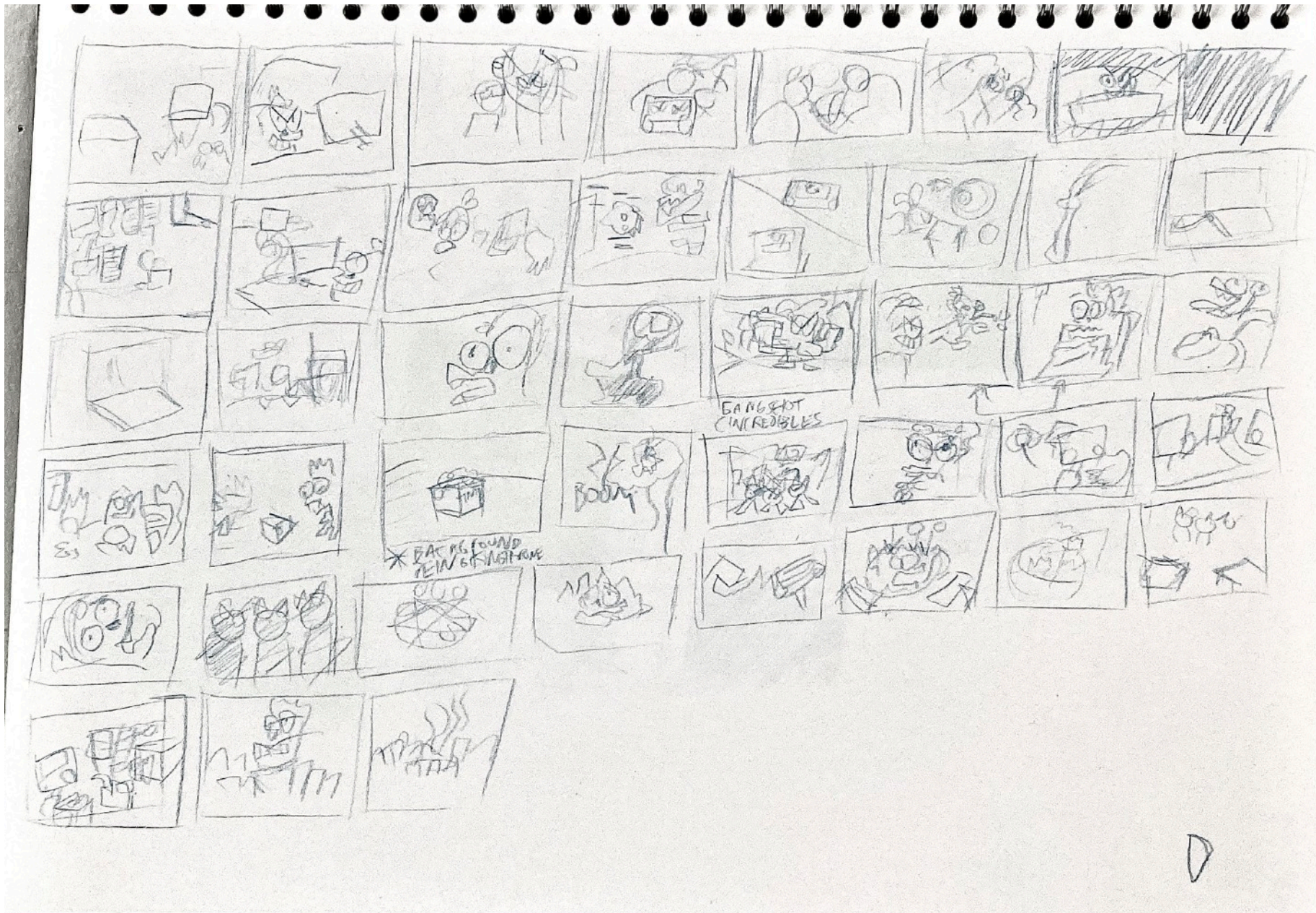
Storyboards D: Grimmi captured by Gootch/Climax

Storyboards E: Ray using her final wish. Ending of film.

# 2D Animation

The 2D portions of the film were done in RoughAnimator on iPadOS. While digital, the intent was to have the 2D portions be hand-drawn with little reliance on puppet rigs or tweening as well as having a raw look. Animation cycles were used prominent for efficiency, especially during dialogue scenes. Dialogue was done in a fashion similar to anime, priotising expressions and body language over accurate syllables.
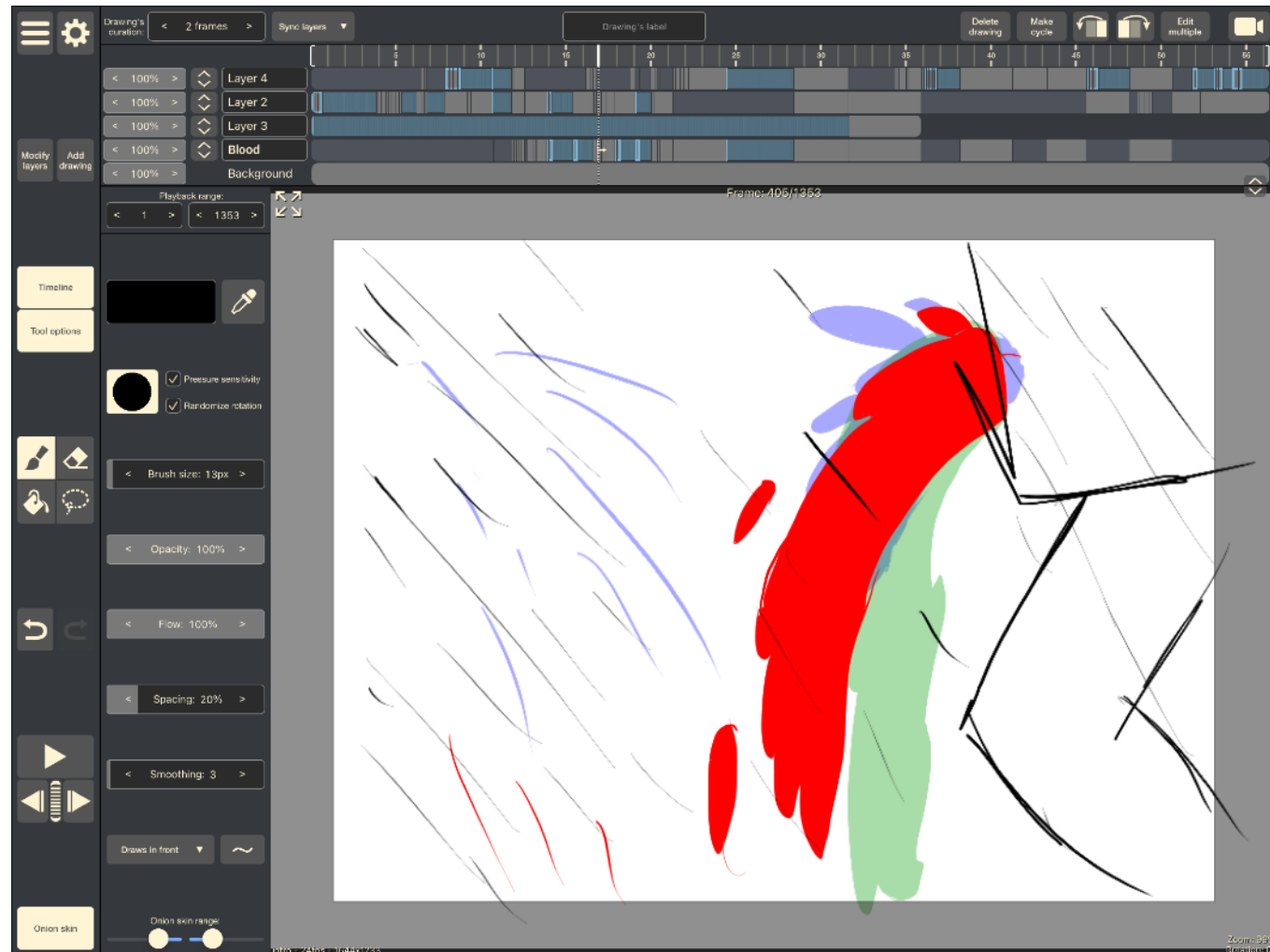


Screenshot of RoughAnimator on iPadOS. 2023

2D animation in ob-SOUL-1337 (2023)

# 3D Animation

3D portions were done via Blender. Blender has been a go-to for 3D due to its accessibilty, versatility with different types of animation and the vast amount of resources, plugins and tutorials related.

I used a trademark of mine to animate 2D textures for eyes/ mouth/face in lieu of face rig to blend 2D/3D.

Everything down to a vertice in a scene can be animated and keyframed, which I took advantage alongside the composting nodes of to create the film's psychedelic look.
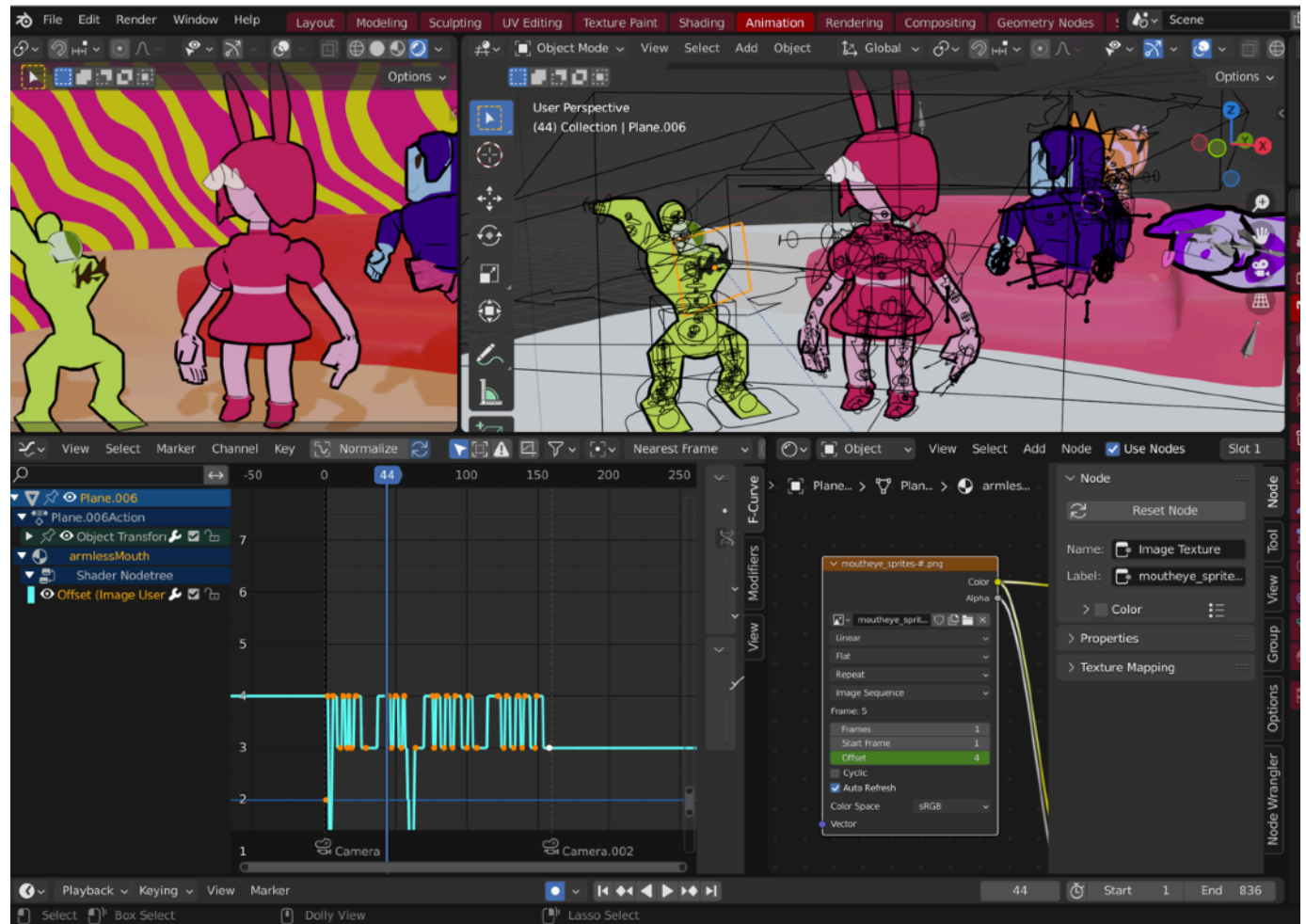


Screenshot of Blender 3.0 on macOS showcasing lipsyncing. 2023

19
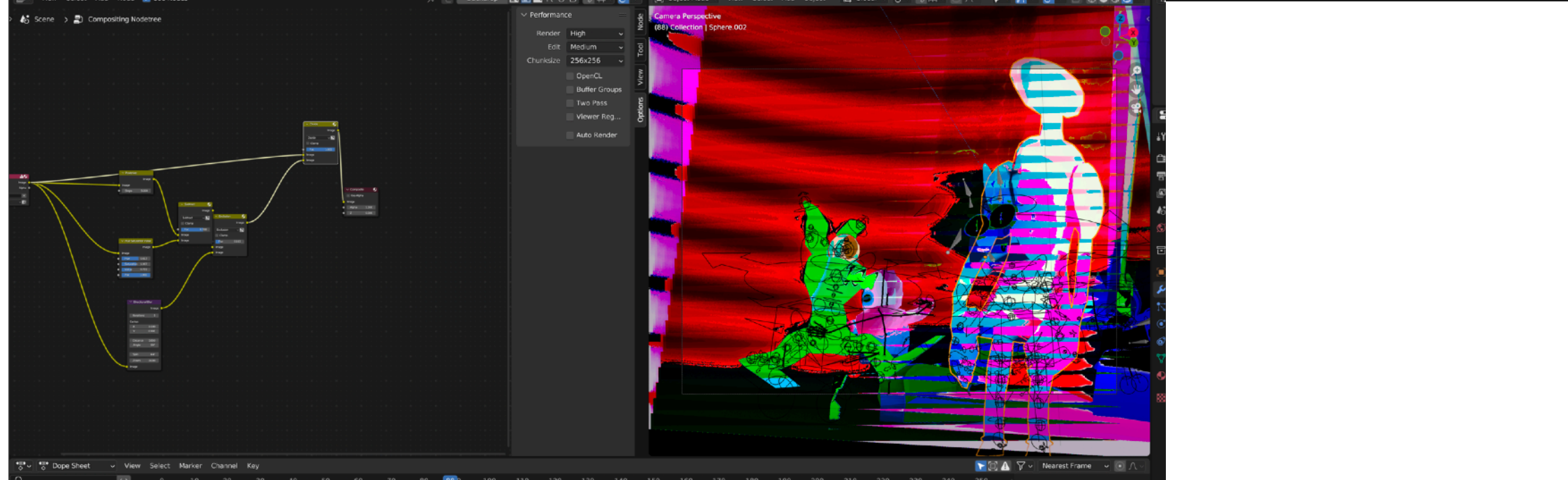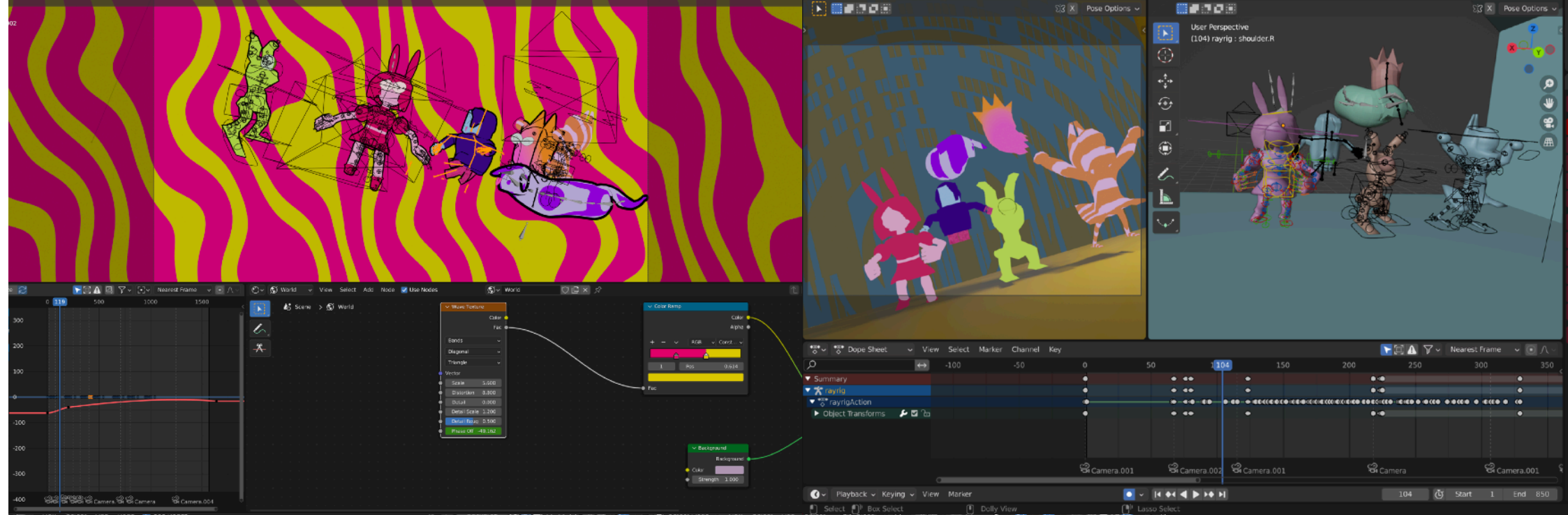
Screenshots of Blender 3.0-3.5 showing animation development. 2023

20

3D Animation in ob-SOUL-1337. 2023

# Miscellaneous

Posters, branding and marketing materials were created as part of promotion for the film at the show and online.

ob SOUL 1337

ob-SOUL-1337 logo. 2023

manifesto

how will you die surrounded by ones and zeros?
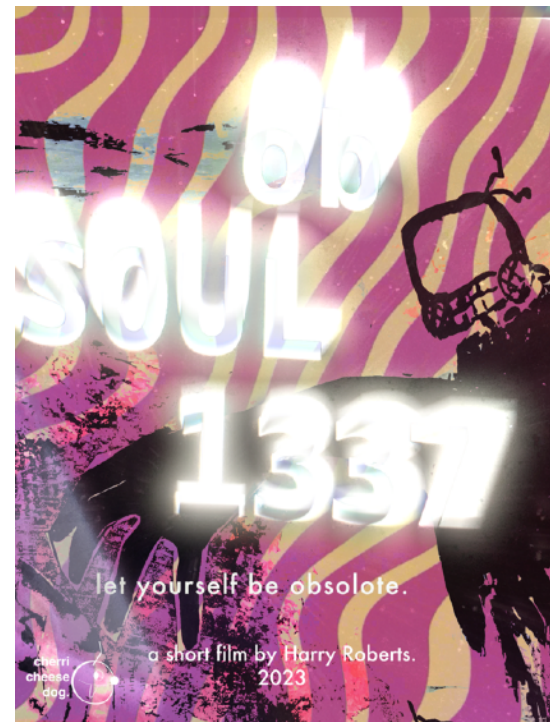
our world has been engulfed with technology for centuries that it is. we stress that technology is neither good or evil as we, the world and our morals are not binary for the most part. however there are evils that uses that technology to abuse and profit. tracking every move, every thought every blink you have made.

will you let your shell and the soul within be harvested for evil?

when you die, it is expected that your shell and your soul are used and abused, to be converted to data. be aware that data is currency for these evils, their services may be free but you are their product.

we at purGle believe that you should die with respect and not be fuel for a machine that brings misery to all. we aim to save your soul from hands that will mutilate your spirit and forces that see you nothing more than a price tag.

let your soul be obsolete.

aug_26 - sep_02 - gray's school of art, aberdeen

ob-SOUL-1337 (PREVIEW)

welcome to purGle

L: purGle logo R: purGLE.neocities.org web design.

ob-SOUL-1337 promotional posters. 2023