

One Stop Away

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Senior Project - FMX 499

Artist Statement

The human capacity for love has no bounds. This inexplicable desire to love and feel is often derailed by the world we live in. Due to societal norms that create these notions, ideals, and values, invisible walls grow in our minds in which we continue to abide by. The internal and more often external struggle between the choice of feeling something and what is deemed right has grown over time into a political debate, especially in the era where these two minds reside.

Based in the 1950s, *One Stop Away* uncovers these complexities of love through the relationship between two students; one a black girl, and the other a white boy. The two face their challenges head on after running into one another, and begin to explore the tensions of societal norms and how they deal with their hearts wanting otherwise. As the story ensues, I want the viewer to feel the struggle between the two as well as the desire for hope of things changing for the path to their future. Without the uncomfortable knowledge of the past, we would never be able to truly understand the choices between love and reality.

Pre-Production

Concept

The choice to make this project about racial tension was not random. I've always grown up with more white friends than black, and as I got older, a question that continued to transpire from others was if I had any black friends or any idea when I plan on dating someone the same color as me. While these things don't necessarily immediately correlate with the racial aggression of the 1950s, it stems from a thought process that has lingered on throughout the decades. I wanted to explore this story through the racial dynamics of a white boy and a black girl, and learn within the process.

History

The 3-D animated film will be based off of both the 1951 Briggs v. Elliott and the larger 1954 Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka cases. The Briggs v. Elliot case began when a white school superintendent, R.M. Elliott, refused to provide a bus for the black children who had to walk to school, with some walking 16 miles everyday. The case was escalated once the goal was changed to end school segregation, and became the first of five cases that created the landmark case Brown v. Board.

Logline

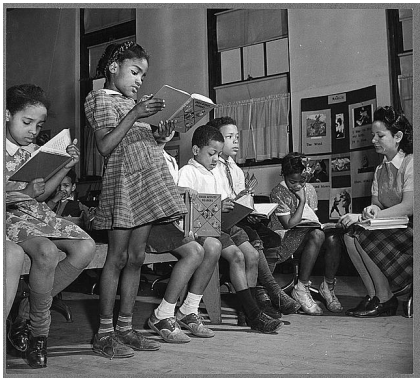
The tale of two young lives during the Civil Rights Movement whose minds and hearts are progressing farther than their present.

Script Outline

A white boy and a black girl set in the 1950's, around ten years old in age. Segregation of schooling and bussing is still prevalent. Her house borders the "Whites Only" subdivision line, forcing her to pass the conveniently-placed bus stop to walk four miles back and fourth to school each day. We begin with the girl being late for her morning walk to school.

- Girl running out of the door, showing hurried feet only.
 - Holding her books, looking around.
 - She looks over at the sun rising as she runs.
 - She rams into a boy, white and around the same age.
 - Scared, she apologizes and he tells her it's okay, and as he's picking up her books their eyes meet.
 - After the brief moment between the two, she takes her books and the bus pulls up.
 - He realizes and slowly walks on.
 - She watches the bus go, and realizes herself that she'll be late, and starts running off to school.
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- The time changes, and the girl is now walking back from school during sunset.
 - The bus pulls up, and the boy gets off and sees her.
 - She struggles once again with her books as the bus pulls off, and he offers to help. She declines but he does anyway.
 - They talk and laugh as the night comes, with the sun almost set.
 - She realizes what time it is, they say bye, and she runs off. He looks at her as she runs away.
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- Morning, she begins to place a bow in her hair, with a confident face. She leaves.
 - The boy is already standing there, and once he realizes that she's almost there, he smiles.
 - They sit down again and talk, and the bus pulls up. He grabs her hand and squeezes it. She smiles.
 - He begins to pull her onto the bus, and she gets scared. The door forcefully shuts in their faces, leaving the two separated physically and socially. It pulls off with the boy looking out the window at the girl as the bus leaves her behind.
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- Evening comes, and the girl sees the boy waiting for her. Upset, she moves past him and walks home.
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- The next morning comes and the boy is running late. He runs out of the door and gets to the stop as soon as the bus arrives. As he is about to get on the bus, he sees the girl walking far in the distance to school.
 - He takes a moment to think, and slowly gets off the bus, but runs and quickly catches up to her.
 - Surprised but saddened, the girl turns away from him. He takes her books and he lifts her chin. Their eyes meet, and he grabs her hand, like he did once before. They smile at one another, and walk off into the distance to school.

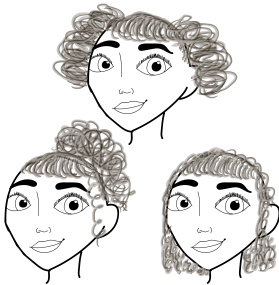
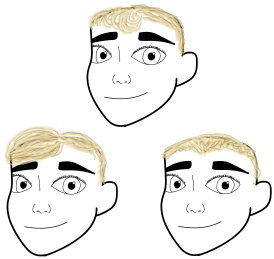
Reference Images



Environment Drawings



Character Drawings



Shot List

A MONSTER INSIDE SHOT LIST

| | SHOT | CHARACTER ACTION | CAMERA ACTION | CAM/FRAME # |
|---|------|--|--|--------------------------|
| ✓ | 1 | Girl running out of the door | shot of feet running on the ground | S1; 1-30 |
| ✓ | 2 | Holding her books, looking around | medium shot of face and books | S2; 31-150 |
| ✓ | 3 | She looks over at the sun rising as she runs | POV girl, shot of sun rising in the southern morning | S3; 151-235 |
| ✓ | 4a | She rams into a boy, white and around the same age | closeup of girl, distracted by the sunrise, rams into boy | S4; 236-274 |
| ✓ | 4b | ^ | wider shot of the boy and girl falling | S5; 275-346 |
| ✓ | 5a | Scared, she apologizes and he tells her it's okay, and as he's picking up her books their eyes meet | PAN holds at her feet, starts as they pick up the books and holds at her face as she realizes the boy | S6; 347-438 |
| ✓ | 5b | ^ | cut to his face, with a similar gaze in his eyes | S7; 439-510 |
| ✓ | 6 | After the brief moment between the two, he hands her books and the bus pulls up | cut back to her face, medium shot, with the same look, and she shakes herself out of it | S8; 511-609 |
| ✓ | 7a | ^ | cut to his face and he shakes out of it. the bus pulls up in the background out of focus | S9; 610-725 |
| ✓ | 7b | He realizes and slowly walks on | wider shot of him getting onto bus with her standing there. Straight on with backs to camera | S10; 726-860 (787.) |
| ✓ | 8a | She watches the bus go, and realizes herself that she'll be late, and starts running off to school | closeup of her face as she watches the bus go and realizes | S11; 861-985 |
| ✓ | 8b | ^ | cut to bus driving in the distance as the girl runs alongside the road | S12; 986-1082 |
| ✓ | 9 | The time changes, and the girl is now walking back from school during sunset | FADE to girl walking back in the early sunset | S12; 1083-1160 |
| ✓ | 10a | The bus pulls up, and the boy gets off and sees her | bus pulls up, and the boy gets off | S13; 1161-1255 (650) |
| ✓ | 10b | ^ | medium shot of boy walking across the street and he looks over | S14; 1300-1365 |
| ✓ | 10c | ^ | POV boy, getting closer as she's carrying her books and doesn't notice him | S15; 1366-1465 |
| ✓ | 11a | She struggles once again with her books as the bus pulls off, and he offers to help. She declines but he does anyway | medium shot of girl freaking out when the bus makes a noise to drive off | S16; 1475-1494 1521-1540 |
| ✓ | 11b | ^(cut between 11a-11b) | closeup of boy as he helps her grab her books in the air, and he smiles | S17; 1495-1520 |
| ✓ | 11c | ^ | medium shot, straight ahead, of the two holding the books as they sink to the bench, smiling | S18; 1541-1650 |
| ✓ | 12 | They talk and laugh as the night comes, with the sun almost set | FADE to them laughing and talking | S18; 1651-1700 |
| ✓ | 13a | She realizes what time it is, they say bye, and she runs off. He looks at her as she runs away | closeup of girl as she realizes the time | S19; 1701-1770 |
| ✓ | 13b | ^ | medium shot of the two as she spins back and says bye and runs off | S20; 1771-1855 |
| ✓ | 13c | ^ | closeup of boy as he looks after her, and smiles | S21; 1856-1905 |
| ✓ | 14 | Morning, she begins to place a bow in her hair, with a confident face. She leaves | shot of her placing the bow, PAN to her face. Background stays out of focus | S22; 1910-1960 (610) |
| ✓ | 15 | The boy is already standing there, and once he realizes that she's almost there, he smiles | medium shot of boy standing at bus stop, looking toward house | S23; 1961-2020 |
| ✓ | 16a | They sit down again and talk, and the bus pulls up. He grabs her hand and squeezes it. She smiles | wider shot of the boy and girl sitting on the bench from across the street, straight ahead | S24; 2021-2085 |
| ✓ | 16b | ^ | closeup of boy seeing the bus, and looking at her to grab her hand | S25; 2086-2190 |
| ✓ | 16c | ^ | closeup of boy grabbing hand, PAN to her smile | S26; 2191-2270 |
| ✓ | 17a | He begins to pull her onto the bus, and she gets scared. The door forcefully shuts in their faces | medium shot of boy pulling girl onto the bus, girl resisting | S27; 2271-2314 |
| ✓ | 17b | ^ | POV of boy on the bus, with the doors shutting | S28; 2315-2350 |
| ✓ | 17c | ^ | medium shot of girl looking at the bus, holding her hand, back facing the camera and the boy moving through the bus to see her | S29; 2351-2385 |
| ✓ | 18a | It pulls off with the boy looking out the window at the girl as the bus leaves her behind | medium shot of boy looking out the window watching the girl get left behind | S30; 2400-2460 |
| ✓ | 18b | ^ | wide shot of the girl walking slowly to school, head down | S31; 2461-2520 |
| ✓ | 19a | Evening comes, and the girl sees the boy waiting for her. Upset, she moves past him and walks home | closeup of girl as she walks home, sees the boy | S32; 2521-2580 (249) |
| ✓ | 19b | ^ | medium shot of boy sitting, then he stands when he sees her | S33; 2581-2640 |
| ✓ | 19c | ^ | medium shot of the two as she pushes past him | S34; 2641-2710 |
| ✓ | 19d | ^ | shot behind the boy's head looking at her run off, with her in focus | S35; 2711-2770 |
| ✓ | 20a | The next morning, boy is running late. He runs out of the door and gets to the stop as soon as the bus arrives. As he is about to get on the bus, he sees the girl walking far in the distance to school | closeup of feet running | S36; 2771-2795 (659) |
| ✓ | 20b | ^ | PAN? closeup of face running, checks watch and runs faster | S37; 2796-2840 |
| ✓ | 20c | ^ | medium shot of boy getting to the stop, catches his breath and looks around. The bus pulls up | S38; 2841-2880 |
| ✓ | 20d | ^ | closeup of boy as he puts his leg up, looks over and sees the girl already walking in the distance, now in focus | S39; 2881-2945 |
| ✓ | 20e | He takes a moment to think, and slowly gets off the bus, but runs and quickly catches up to her | closeup of boy as he thinks about his choices, slowly gets off and starts running | S40; 2946-3010 |
| ✓ | 21a | Surprised but saddened, the girl turns away from him. He takes her books and he lifts her chin. Their eyes meet, and he grabs her hand, like he did once before. They smile at one another, and walk off into the distance to school | closeup of girl sad, boy coming more into focus from running and catches up to her | S41; 3011-3055 |
| ✓ | 21b | ^ | medium shot of the two with the boy in front, and she tries to push past but he doesn't let her | S42; 3101-3160 |
| ✓ | 21c | ^ | closeup of girl as his arm lifts her chin | S43; 3161-3210 |
| ✓ | 21d | ^ | closeup of boy as he smiles back at her, and looks down to hold her hand | S44; 3211-3260 |
| ✓ | 21e | ^ | medium shot of the two as he holds out his hand, and she grabs it | S45; 3261-3327 |
| ✓ | 21f | ^ | ZOOM? wide shot of the two walking to school together | S46; 3328-3430 |

KEY

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|--|-------------|
| | Not Started |
| | In Progress |
| | Completed |

Production

Character Rigging

Rigging has always been the hardest part of creating content for me in Maya. Using Lynda.com and multitudes of YouTube videos helped me tremendously. I spent a long time weighting the characters to make sure they had more human-like proportions and gestures. Although I am no longer terrified of rigging and weighting, it is still a large learning curve to understand and master.

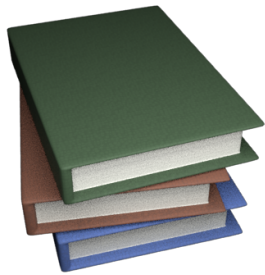
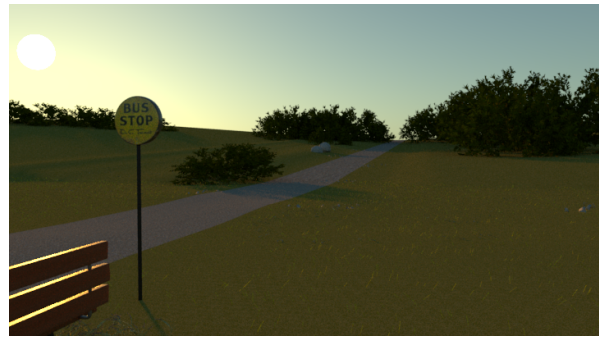
Hair Dynamics

Since I chose a more difficult route, I decided to create hair dynamics for both of my characters. There were many times where the hair kept flying off, but through the use of Google, I figured out how to make the hair look good and stay manageable for animation. In the end, the dynamics were not cooperating well enough, so I chose to keep them in the Static state so I could maintain the look, but the movement was lost.



Assets

I created many different assets for the character's environment, including books, trees, a bus, a bench, a house, and a few other additional items. Texturing everything was very meticulous due to the fragile file structure that the texture attributes carry. The bus was the most time-consuming due to its irregular shapes and different style, but I am happy with the realistic results that I ended up with.



Rendering

I don't think that one is able to mentally prepare for the endurance that you need for rendering.

Since I am used Arnold to render my project, the frames took a lot longer to render and process than it would if I used Maya to render. Averaging at 3 minutes per frame with 3400 frames, I had to render frames for around 170 hours. This was an extremely intensive piece of the project, due to the rendering process using the entirety of my computer for over a week. If I was able to do something differently, I would try to plan out a lot more time to render the files so the process would not disrupt my everyday workflow.

Post-Production

Compositing

Truly the simpler piece of creating my project, compositing in Adobe After Effects took about two hours to complete. Taking the time to now make sure that all the frames look correct as well as line up with one another is crucial after rendering, especially due to the immense amount of frames I had to maintain. The shot list was more helpful than ever, allowing me to search for frames in sections instead of guessing where different scenes begin and end.

Music

Recently learning about YouTube's audio library, they have royalty free music as well as copyright free songs for content creators to use. I wanted to capture tension in the music, but also have a light-hearted ending to balance the film out when the plot moved forward. After days of searching, I landed on Chris Haugen's "Northern Lights" due to its warm yet unsettling tone and for the composed ending since it matched well with the storyline.

Editing

The final edit in Adobe Premiere Pro was mainly placing all the scenes together and making sure that each one has the correct color balance and feel, and if there were any glaring issues I wanted to make sure I could fix them. Overall, the full render out of Premiere Pro took less than a minute since all the videos were composited beforehand.