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R·I·T

Bomber Boy

By

Biying Xu

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Fine Art in Film and Animation

School of Film and Animation
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester, NY

December 10, 2017

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ABSTRACT

Bomber Boy is a 2D animation thesis with a length of three minutes and 44 seconds. It is a story about finding a better way to control temper to avoid causing harm to others. It happens in a world that people blow up when they are angry. All the people in this world have a fuse on their head. While the main character, Thorn, has a very short fuse. He blows up quickly because of it. He blows up several times in school, which makes other students afraid of him. He hates himself and runs into an illusion that he blows up the school. But in the end, he meets an old man who also has a short fuse and learns how to express his anger peacefully.

Bomber Boy is a hand-drawn animation. I used the software Adobe Photoshop to complete the concept design, character design, and background painting. The storyboard, animatic, rough animation, inking, and coloring process was finished using the software TVPaint. The compositing software was Adobe Premiere and Adobe After Effects. Sound design and sound mixing were completed in Adobe Premiere. The music was originally scored by Shoghi Hayes.

This paper includes the inspiration and motivation of making *Bomber Boy*, and the entire process of pre-production, production, and post-production. It introduced the challenges and failures I met during the process, and how I crossed the obstacles on finishing *Bomber Boy*.

INTRODUCTION

An MFA thesis animation should be a film that can touch audiences' minds or have some deep meaning. As I was seeking a story, I realized that this was a chance for me to make a meaningful animated film.

I always thought that I was a mild-tempered person before I got into my career when I graduated from college. But after I argued with my team members several times, I realized that I became a short-tempered person. It made me feel frustrated when I lost my temper in a collaborated film project in my graduate study. It seemed that I was going backward on controlling temper.

In the beginning, I was trying to vent my anger through animation. My thesis was about a bomber boy who exploded the entire city. But I realized that I was just throwing all my negative emotion into the film. What I needed was a solution. Therefore, how to control one's temper became a question that I was desperately eager to solve. Creating a story to answer this question was not easy. I created different animatics and storyboards again and again and finally settled on the story at the beginning of the second semester.

Compared to the time that I put in the story, it took a brief time for me to decide the art style. I was very interested in graphic design at that time and decided to make an animation in a graphic style.

Bomber Boy is not only an animation for me but also a film for those who are looking for a way to control their temper.

PROCESS

Pre-Production

-Story Development

The inspiration of *Bomber Boy* came from *The Monk and the Fish*, a film by Michael Dudok De Wit. I was impressed by both the story structure and art style. It was a story about a monk who tries very hard to catch a fish. The monk finally found his peace, which was the direction of ending I chose for *Bomber Boy*.

The basic story of *Bomber Boy* was a process of him learning how to control his temper. The story happens in a world that people will blow up when they get angry. The main character, Thorn, with a very short fuse, always blows up immediately when he is bitter or frustrated. In my early versions, the fuse on people's head would grow longer if they could control themselves when they got angry. Thorn would learn how to manage his anger by taking a deep breath from an old man who had a very long fuse. Thorn's fuse would grow longer in the end. But when I talked to my committee members, I realized that there were a lot of problems that I could not answer clearly. For example, why did the fuse grow when people can control their anger? How could others with a standard-length fuse control their rage? Why couldn't Thorn stop the sparkles when his fuse was burning? Also, it took time for the fuse to grow. Considering the length of the film, it barely had time for a convincing expression. Then I tried to switch the point from how Thorn grew his fuse to how Thorn blew up the city. While in the thesis meeting, my thesis advisor Professor Larson pointed out that I was going too far. One of my committee members, MJ, reminded me that I was changing Thorn's character. He was no longer a lonely kid who tried very hard to improve himself, but a bastard who wanted to destroy everything.

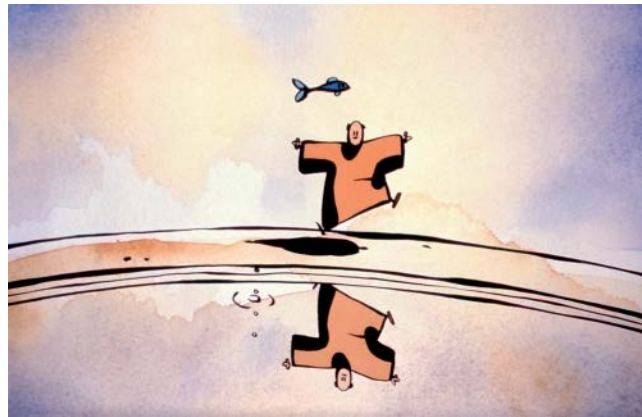
I realized that I was going in a wrong direction. After a short winter break, I decided to go back to what I was looking for in my earliest inspiration, peace. What I wanted to present in this film was how Thorn found his peace. How his fuse grew was no longer relevant for *Bomber Boy*. It was even unnecessary for Thorn to get a long fuse in the end. Instead, the point for the ending was that Thorn had learned how to stop himself from blowing up. To emphasize the peace, I added the fear of hurting people to Thorn. I created a conceptual scene for Thorn's illusion to present his fear. He blew up his classmates, the school, and his mom in it. Thorn kept his short fuse in the end in the final version. He learned how to put his anger in a balloon from an old man who also had a short fuse. Blowing balloon represents a way to sort out negative emotions, which was the answer to the primary question of *Bomber Boy*.

-Concept Design

Since concept design was not my strength, considering the time limit and my ability, I was looking for a simple art style that has compelling visual communication ability. Besides, graphic style was flat and stylized, which would help establish the unique world that the story happened better than a Disney style. Additionally, it would be strange to see a realistic character that has a fuse on his head, and it would also be uncomfortable to see him blowing up. A graphic style could make the story and characters more reliable.

At first, I was trying to imitate *The Monk and The Fish*. As the process moved forward, I realized that this style required watercolor skills, which made it hard to approach. After watching many examples on Vimeo, I finally found a proper style in *Phantom Limb*, a film by Alex Grigg. He used only three primary colors, green, orange, and red. Local color was

dominant, while texture and lighting were secondary. The way he presented the film was unique and convincing. And this style could be approached in Adobe Photoshop, which is a technique and software I am comfortable using. Therefore, I used *Phantom Limb* as my reference on concept design.

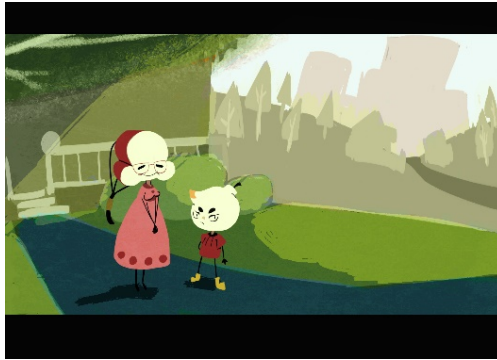


The Monk and The Fish



Phantom Limb

The process of doing concept design and background painting was not as fast as I imaged before I actually got into it. The simple style I was looking for was not simple at all. During the background design process, I was hesitating in how flat it should be. Even though the whole film was in a graphic style, I still wanted to give it a sense of depth. In my early design, I did not catch the point of *Phantom Limb*. What I did was take out the outline and painting roughly with lots of color and brushes, which was not a satisfying result.



Early Concept Design

I restarted the process after I analyzed Phantom Limb in detail. I did the background linework in a flat and geometry style to set up the original feeling. Then I spent three weeks on choosing three primary colors for the film. After numerous color testing, I settled down the palette. I used pink, purple, and brown as the main color. The intention of choosing these colors was to establish a sense of fantasy. Furthermore, it was to emphasize the uniqueness of the bomb world. In the character's regular life, the dominant color was bright pink, trying to present a warm and ordinary life. When he was in the illusion, the dominant color would change to dark purple aiming for an intense feeling.



Concept for Normal Scene

This concept design more accurately fit the tone of the story by helping the audiences get the feeling of the character. What's more, it helped me clarify the story. The goal of concept design as I applied it to my film, is to tell the story. The defect of the design was hard to distinguish the character and the background in some shots since the characters did not have

an outline. I fixed this problem in the coloring process with Adobe Photoshop and Adobe After Effect, reducing the color temperature of background. The characters stood out after separating the tone of characters and environment. Most of the concept design became the final background after refinement.



Concept for Intense Scene

-Character Design

The character design process was one of the most exciting for me. Although the story had several versions, the main character remained the same as a boy with a short fuse on his head. At the beginning of this process, I wanted to show his aggressivity on his outfit. So the main character had a lot of sharp shapes on his head, which were hair, fuse, and hood. I designed a cute dinosaur jacket for him to make him look like a naughty kid. There were also several cones for decoration on the dinosaur style hoody. Soon, Professor Larson pointed out that the most significant part of this character, the fuse, was covered by other shapes on the head, which made the fuse invisible. Also, the protruding shapes of the hair were hard to

remain the same in the animation. To a conclusion, this version of the design was neither strong nor practical. In the second version, I took out most of the hair on the character's head. But the fuse was still too hard to see. Then I decided to make the character look like a real bomb. I took out all the hair and changed his head into a round shape. The fuse was clear. But the character seemed odd with a thick fuse on his head. Following the feedback from Professor Larson, I made the character less realistic to fit the graphic style concept. I also added a metal base for the fuse to emphasize the bomb design.



First Version

Second Version



Final Design linework

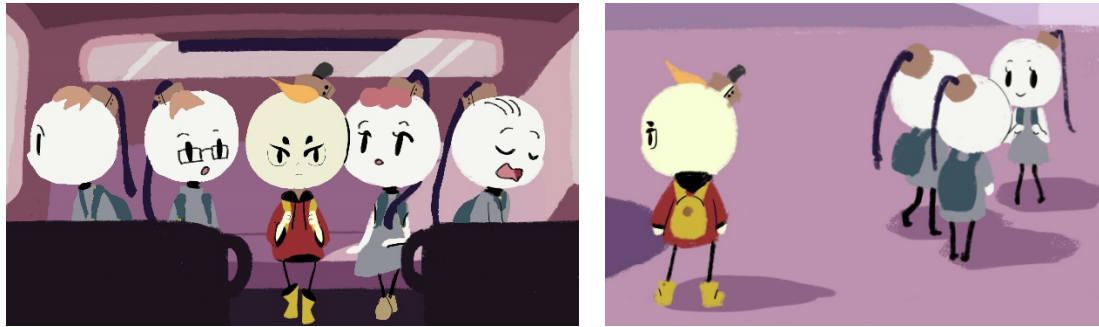
When choosing the color for the main character, the first color that showed up in my brain was red. Since the story was about a boy who easily blew up after he got mad, he should wear red clothes to show that he is aggressive and dangerous. I used bright yellow and orange as a warning color to make him stand out in the world. With the intention of making the coloring process easier, there were only flat colors with a little shadow on the characters. Some thin black lines and black shapes were added to distinguish the parts of the body. All these design elements made this version become the most proper and achievable one ever. It was the one that fit the odd and graphic concept.



Color of the Characters

After the main character was approved, all the other side characters came out quickly. I decided to use real bomb shapes on the side characters as I did on Thorn to keep the world consistent. The inspiration of the boy's mom was several sticks of dynamite tied together. One reason for the choice I made for the mom was to separate her and other characters. Since she would appear in Thorn's illusion, a unique shape could help audiences recognize her immediately. The other reason for choosing tied dynamite was to make her mature and steady comparing to the unstable round bomb I used for the kids. Besides, the same color of Thorn's hoodie and her head showed her relationship with Thorn. The old man was designed from a missile shape. But the shape was covered by his beard to make him look not aggressive at all.

He hid his short fuse with his hat, which was a plot need. All the other students in the school looked like the main character. The intention of using round bomb shape was to set up a young and active feeling around them. Instead of wearing a red hoody, they were all wearing gray clothes, aiming to emphasize the difference of the main character.



Side Characters in the film

-Storyboard and Animatic

Since the story kept changing even after I got into production, the storyboard process was the most painful process during pre-production. I was trying to present a complex idea in three to four minutes, So the elements on the screen needed to help the storytelling.

The first step for storyboarding was thumbnails. It was the fastest way to have an overall view of the film. I did three versions storyboard for my earliest story and turned the last one into an animatic. The first version story was focused on how Thorn found a way to make his fuse grow. The beginning was Thorn wanted to play with other kids, but they were scared by his short fuse, and they ran away. Then Thorn met Albert, who was has a long fuse. After a Montage of Thorn trying to stop himself blowing up in several events, the story came to an ending that Thorn, now with a long fuse, decided to help another kid who also had a short fuse. While showing the animatic to others, I suddenly realized that this was not a film that I wanted to make. The Montage was not strong at all for Thorn's growth process, which made

the ending less meaningful. After in-depth thought, I changed the story. It was a painful decision, but I would rather spend my time on a film that was worth doing. I started working on the new thumbnails immediately. Because of the time limit, I turned the thumbnails into several rough animatics to build the story at the same time so that I could have a quick view of the film, and I could decide if I would go for it before I spent a lot of time on it.

The pace of process quickened measurably. I drew the thumbnails on the software TVPaint and turned them into animatics directly. All the problems were shown in the rough animatics, such as the film was too long to finish, or the story was not clear enough. Based on the feedback I got from committees and classmates about the clarity of the story, I decided to spend more time on showing Thorn's fear of hurting others. I reconstructed the storyline to set up the tension before Thorn's illusion. The ending was gentle to suggest that Thorn has found the way to let his temper go. I also added a small reverse to make it more interesting. I used the animatics to settle down the final version of the story.



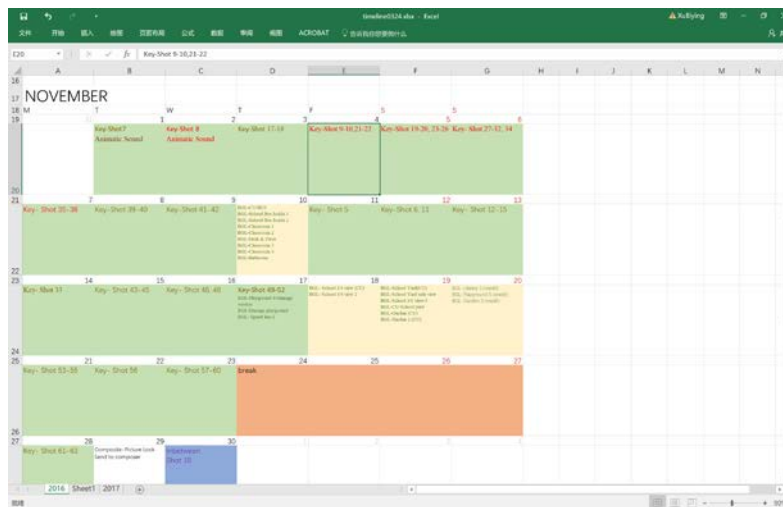
Creating Animatic in TVPaint

The final step before getting into production was creating a shot list and a timeline. A shot list helped me have a clear idea about how many shots there are in the whole film, how

many frames there are in each shot, how many backgrounds I had to paint, and how many animations in each shot. A timeline helped me manage my time on production. With the calendar, I could know if I should focus on speed or quality.

Page	Description	Animation of Characters	Environment/Location	Shot Number	Difficulty	Length	Shot Type
1	Billi/Thom turns back	None		SC-01	Easy	0:27	Blue-01 Change scene
2	Billi looks at the right side. He is surprised to see Teacher for Head in uniform. He looks at the back	None	Marking flag	SC-02 Think & Move	Normal	0:30	
3	Billi gets on the floor and sits down. The two boys sit down	None	Marking flag	SC-03 Backstory	Normal	0:14	Billi and Billi look at Thom's face
4	School bus arrives. The school bus driver looks at the school	None	Billi looks at the flag	SC-04 School Bus arrive	Normal	0:16	How to add Billi and other people?
5	School bus leaves. Billi walks into the school gate. Billi is looking at the school	None	Billi looks at the flag	SC-05 School Gate	Normal	0:10	
6	Billi runs past the background on the side	None	background	SC-06 Dark	Easy	0:10	

Shot list



Timeline

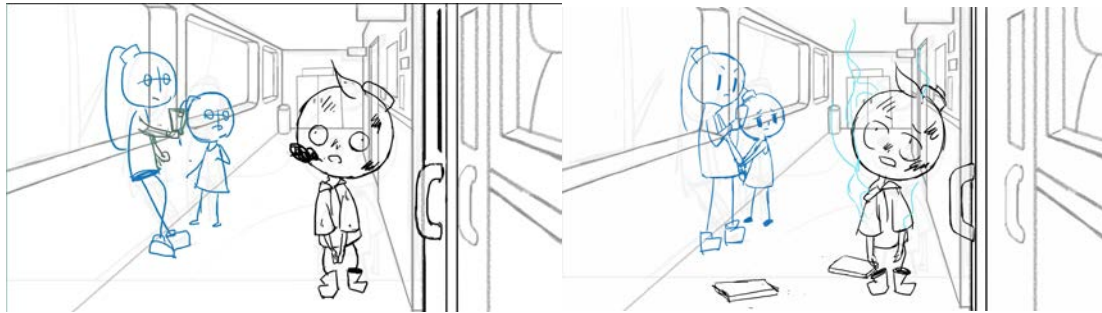
Production

-Rough Animation

To make sure that I could finish the film on time, Professor Larson pushed me into production while I was still struggling with the story. It was a smart and helpful idea. Even

though it was painful to discard lots of works after I changed the story, it speeded up the process. Some of the shots that I did were reusable. Also, it was also a great practice for animating.

Depending on the style of *Bomber boy*, the limited animation was my first choice for the animation style. The purpose of using limited animation was to make the animation itself fit the odd bomb world. There was a lot of smear in the animation, making it more stylized and less realistic. I worked on TVPaint because it was an efficient software for animation as it allowed me to play the animation I did immediately. For the character animation, the things that slowed me down were my animation skills. In the early few shots that I finished, I was drawing the keyframes pose-to-pose, which made the movement unclear and lacked a sense of gravity. Professor Larson pointed out my flaw and reminded me the principles of animation. After a large amount of practice, I found a faster and better way to do the rough animation. First, I used as much as needed rough drawings to quickly key out the movement. I planned the poses and timing on fours. Then I adjusted the timing following the animatic to see if the movement was clear enough. These steps would repeat until I was satisfied with the animation. The third step was putting all the shots with rough keys into the animatic to get the feeling of the entire film. To make sure that the transitions between each shot were smooth, I adjusted the timing and the rough drawings again. Once these steps were done, I refined the keyframes, making them close enough to the character sheets.



Rough Animation

Besides the character animation, *Bomber Boy* also included lots of effects and background movements. The process for the effect and background animation was almost the same as the process for the character animation. Since I did not have any experience of explosion effect animation, I spent some time on YouTube looking for references. The good thing was lots of the effects were reusable. I used the same effect and on different explosion scene, which saved me tons of time. The background animation was a pity to me since I did not have time to go further. In my opinion, more details I included in the film, more reliable the world of the film would be. I would like to add more information, such as the traffic on the road if I could manage the production process better.

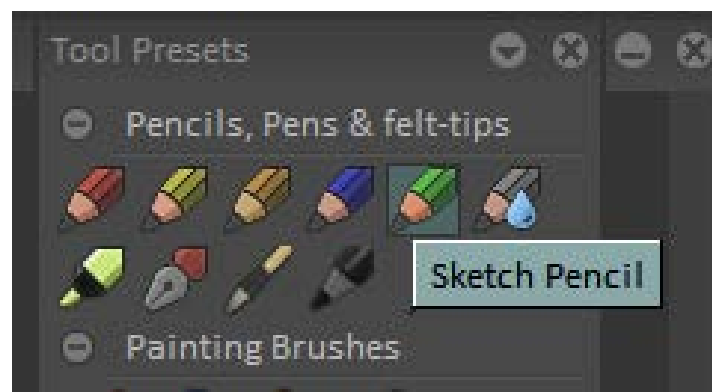
-Inking and Coloring

After all the rough animation was done, the next process was inking. It was a long and tedious process. If I knew that inking would take almost two months, I would speed up the rough animation process as much as I could.

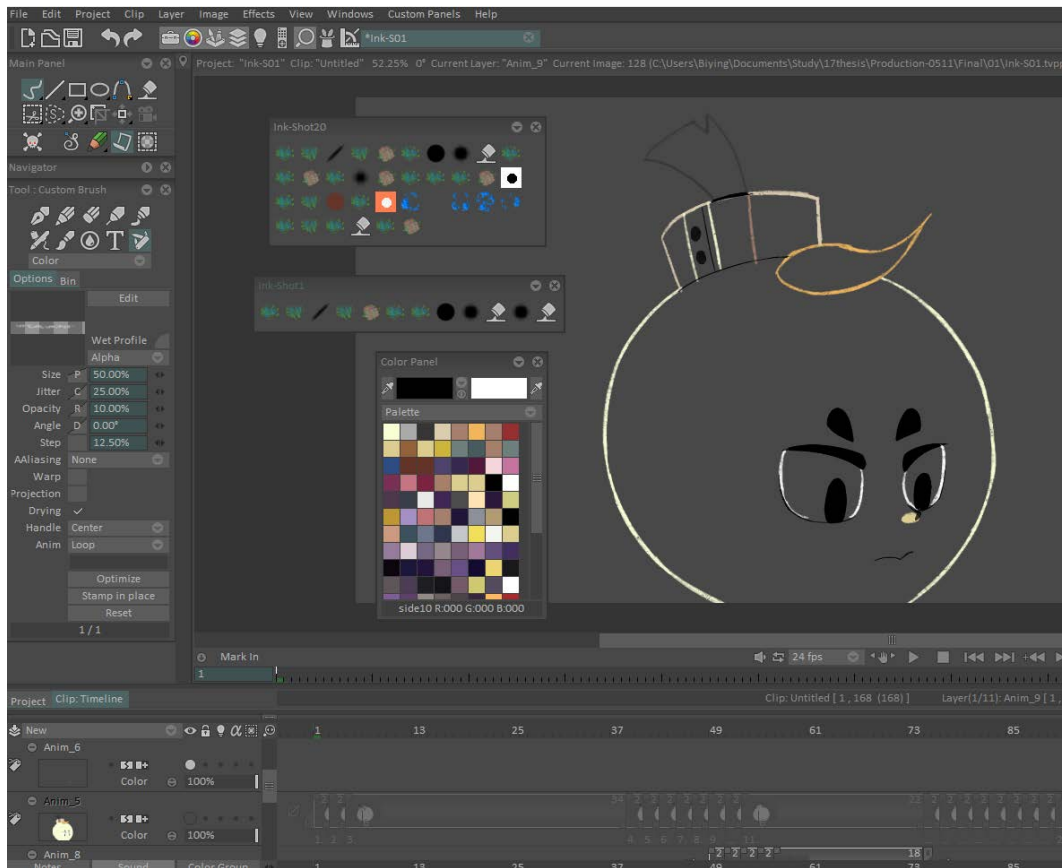
While the characters had no outlines but rough edges following the concept design, I had to use a particular brush with colors to ink. Packages that I used in this process were Adobe Photoshop and TVPaint. The advantage of Photoshop was its brush collection. Using

Photoshop could approach the quality of the concept design. But Photoshop was inconvenient for animation. It would be hard to keep the characters consistent while adding in-betweens, and it would slow down the process. Compared to Photoshop, TVPaint did better at keeping the characters constant because of the light table setting. Though TVPaint did not have the same brush as I used for the concept design, it had a similar one. After few shots of testing, I decided to use TVPaint on the inking process.

Before spending time on drawing, the first thing to do was to set up the custom panel and color panel. To make the characters look like no outline, I did the inking with colors. The brush I chose was the Sketch Pencil in TVPaint. I created the color panel from the character design. Then I picked the color which matched the part that I was inking and saved the brush with the color in the custom panel. When the custom panel was set up, it could be used in the entire film.



The Brush for inking



Custom Panel and Color Panel

Because all the gaps were closed in the inking process, the coloring process was fast and easy. The primary tool for this process was the paint bucket. Also, TVPaint was an efficient software for coloring. Several frames could be colored at the same time. It could shorten the whole process.

-Background

As the description in the chapter of concept design, the background was flat and stylized on purpose. I created the linework of all the backgrounds before the rough animation process because the background was a guide for animation. In order to save time in this process, I refined the rough background I created in the animatic as the final background linework. Then it was just painting the background during other processes.

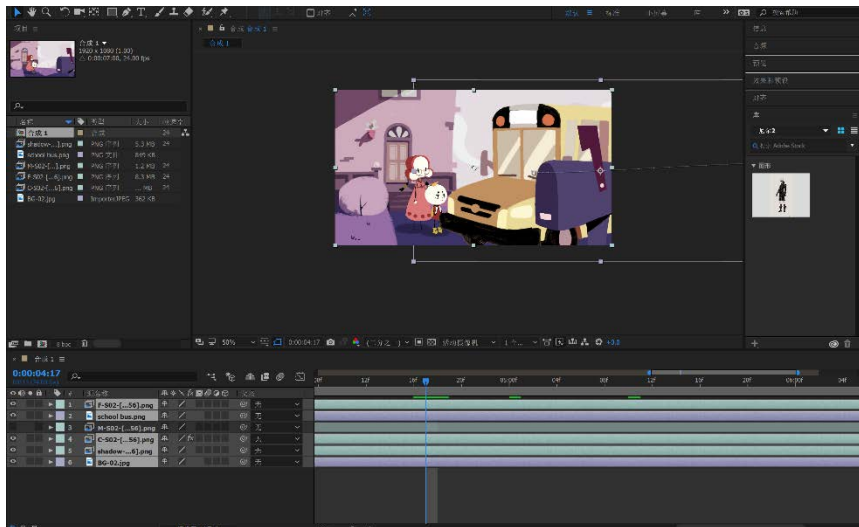
Post-Production

-Compositing

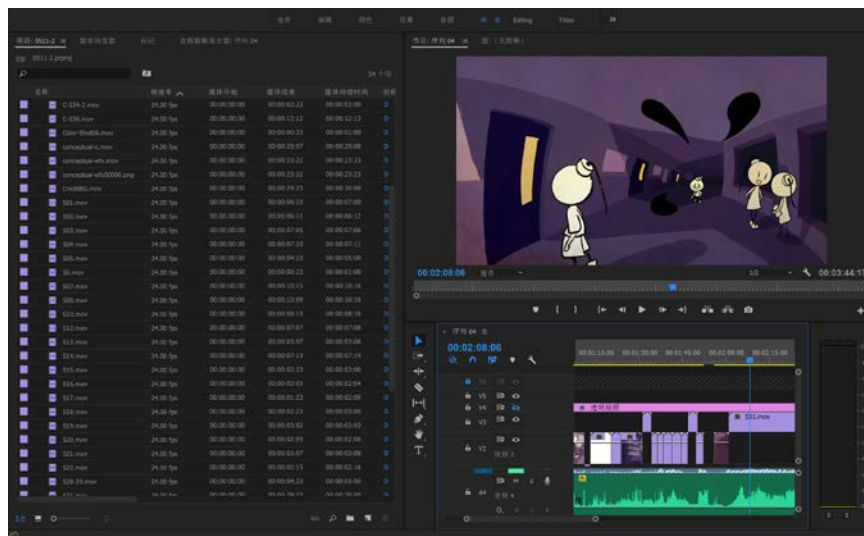
When all the animation and backgrounds were done, I composited each shot in Adobe After Effects and put all the shots together in Adobe Premiere.

The main reason why I chose After Effect to composite each shot was that it was easy to adjust layers in After Effect. Here was the compositing process for each shot. The first thing to do was to prepare all the elements for the shot. I exported the colored frames from TVPaint as several image sequences. Then I separated the background elements into different layers in Photoshop and exported them as individual PNG files. When the elements were ready, I imported them into After Effects and layered them. After I timed these elements following the animatic and animation chat, I could check if there was any problem. The other reason why I chose After Effect was that I could quickly adjust the color using the Change to Color tool under the effect menu. I changed the main character's skin color in After Effect after I found out that the original color did not fit the background. I also added a moving texture layer on the illusion part aiming for the unrealistic feeling. The process of creating a moving texture was not complicated. I made four images and built a loop comp in After Effect. Then the last thing to do was to put this texture comp on the top of the layers.

The next step was putting all the shots together in Premiere. I exported each shot from After Effects imported them into Premiere. I ordered the shots following the animatic and added the credit. Then I played the film again and again to check the transition between each shot. After a careful check on the entire film, I exported the final video track.



Compositing in After Effects



Editing in Premiere

- Music and Sound effects

Since the picture lock was done in late March, it was difficult to find an available sound designer. Therefore, I decided to work on sound effects by myself. Fortunately, I contacted several composers in the very first month, and Shoghi Hayes, who had a lot of experience on collaborating with film and animation students, was willing to work with me as my composer.

Music was an essential part of an animation, as well as sound effects. There were several

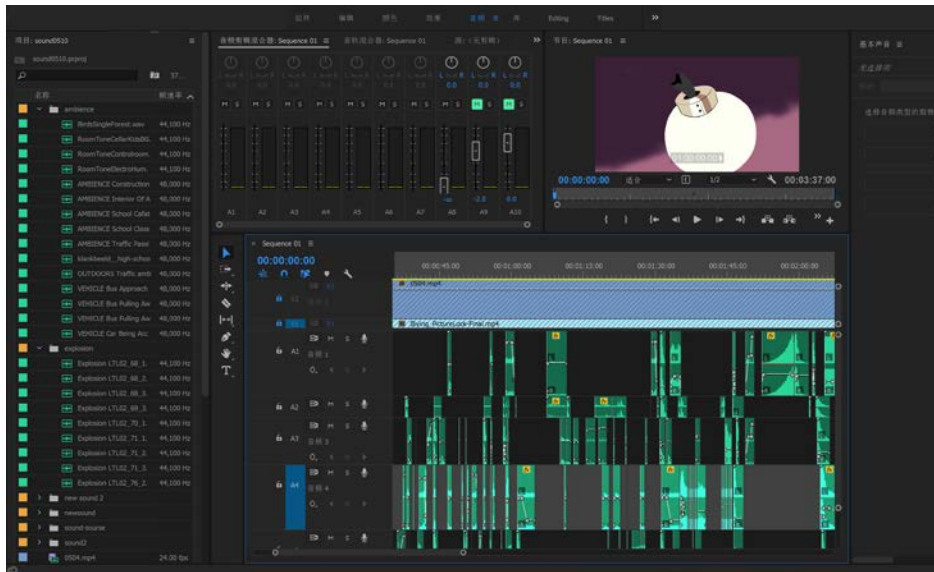
explosions in Bomber Boy, which required a higher quality of sound effect. To keep the sound effect in a consistent style, it was never a moment in the film that lack of sound. Due to the flat and stylize visual, most of the sound effects were designed in realistic in order to add more weight to the bomb world. The appropriate sound effect could help establish the world. The sound of birds singing showing that it was morning when the school bus came. The ambient sound, such as traffic noise, kids talking, and tableware sound clarified the location of each event. The humming sound emphasized the existence of vending machine. I also used the sound effects to help tell the story. After Thorn got on the school bus, there was only sound effect to show the door of the school bus was closed. In the shot that Thorn was splashed in front of the vending machine, the explosion after that was presented by the sound effect. Using sound effect to tell the story could add a variety of performance to the film, which was the second intention of my sound design.

There was limited time for the sound effects process due to the large amount of work in the inking and coloring process. The sound process could be combined into a four-day schedule. The first day, after the story settled down, I started looking for some sound sources from the RIT sound library and Internet. I used a sound list to arrange all the audio source. Then, when I got the picture lock animatic, I imported the sound effects and video track into the software I used for sound mixing. I planned to mix the sound effects in the software Pro-Tools. But I realized that I did not know how to use the new version Pro-Tools in the HD lab since I only learned how to use Pro-Tools 9 in the Basic Sound Recording class. So, I quickly changed the software for mixing. I decided to use Adobe Premiere. The next step was to put all the sound effects in the correct position following the animatic and sound list. It was a long

process because I had to search the right sound in a vast collection. And to make the sound realistic, each sound effect contained three to four different sound sources. I also added a lot of ambient sound. These were from the knowledge I learned in the Basic Sound Recording class. I spent two days on this step. The last step was mixing. I adjusted the level of each sound to make all the sounds merge. Then I could export the soundtrack for the final mixing.

Compared to the sound effects, the music was much easier for me because of my great composer Shoghi Hayes. I first talk to him about the story in September 2016. He was interested in work on this odd idea. I show him the animatic I had in December and briefly talked about the music style and the scheduler. He sent me some reference for the music style in March. I had no idea for the music at all in the beginning, while after listening to his reference music, I picked up a modern style for *bomber boy*. I sent the picture lock to him in April. After listening to his first draft, I wrote down the feedback in much detail, such as taking out the main melody from 0:30 to 0:40. The music he did was not as modern as the reference. Although it had a classic feeling, the music still could build the tension following the story. We communicated several times, and we confirmed the music in May.

I did a rough mixing for the music and sound. Then I realized that the sound effects could be improved. In my original idea, the illusion part only had music. The illusion part contained a lot of explosions, while it was too weak without sound effects. Therefore, I added a lot of explosion sound effects into the illusion part. I exported a new soundtrack for the final mixing.



Editing Sound in Premiere

There was an unpredictable trouble in the mixing process. I did not know that I could not get the access to the Mix-down Theater because I did not take the Advance Sound Class. Fortunately, Shoghi provided his studio for the final mixing. He also provided a lot of suggestions for the mixing and sound effects. I finished the mixing with his great help.

SCREENING AUDIENCE REACTION

Bomber Boy was screened on May 14th, 2017 at the Carlson auditorium in Rochester Institute of Technology. I heard a lot of the audiences laughing when the film was playing. It was a positive reaction to my film since I added many gags into the film to make it funny. While after the illusion part, the auditorium was full of silence, which made me so nervous that I almost forgot to present my artist statement after the screening. I described the original idea and the main motivation of *Bomber Boy*. The artist statement also included the entire process of the production, and all the troubleshoots during the production.

Even though I did not have the confidence that I could present it clearly, I got a lot of positive reaction from the feedback and critique. One of the feedback was from a student. He mentioned that he loved the subtle damage to the main character after the character blew up. For example, when the main character blew up in the hallway, his hood fell off his shoulder. He thought that this subtle animation made the character more relateable, and added a lot of fun to the animation itself. Another critic from an instructor in the 3D Graphics program was that my animation always refreshed his eyes. He loved the concept design, and he thought the art style fitted the story a lot. But he also mentioned that he would love to see more in the animation. For instance, the book shelf could fall on the main character after the explosion in the library, or all the drinks in the vending machine could drop after the explosion in the cafeteria. I appreciate to these comments, while the subtleness was not my intention. The damage of the explosion in the animatic was a lot stronger than it was in the final film. But I made a big mistake on the rough animation. I forgot to put the damage on the main character, while it was so hard to add it back during the inking process. The injury I added in the inking

process did not move smoothly with the original character animation. For the background animation, I did plan a lot of funny gags in the animatic, while I forgot to write it down on my schedule. Without a completed schedule, I found out that I did not have time to work on the background animation. So I had to change the background animation into a more subtle one. I agreed with all the critiques about the subtleness. I would add more animation after the screening.

Besides the animation, I also got a comment on the sound and music from Dave Sluberski. He praised the sound design because it was believable. For example, he could hear the vending machine in the cafeteria. I was too nervous at that point, and I did not give any reaction to his comment. But I had to thank my composer again for his great help in the sound mixing.

CONCLUSION

Finishing thesis was a great experience for me. During the process, I had a deeper understanding of the process of making a film by reviewing each step. I realized that I had some bad habits on drawing in the rough animation process, and I realized that my time management skill still had a lot to improve. I also learned a lot while collaborating with my composer. It was a pity that I barely had time to work with him due to the time limit.

While looking back to the original idea after the screening, I wished I could do better. I once regretted to change the story. If I did not spend that much time struggling with the story, I could focus on the animation itself. It might be much stronger. More detail could be added to establish the world. But later, I realized that this process was a great experience. I was like the bomber boy who is trying to find his peace. I was perplexed in the beginning while I did not know what kind of film I would like to make. Then I got mad during the pre-production since I did not satisfy myself. But in the end, I finished the film with peace. I would put this experience in my memory. And I would always remember to keep calm and rational.

APPENDIX I: ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

Bomber boy

(working Title)

2D Animation

Biying Xu

Thesis Proposal

For MFA in Film and Animation

School of Film and Animation

Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York

April, 2016

Approved for Submission by:

Brian Larson, Thesis Chair

Logline:

A boy who is eager to control his anger learns how to deal with it from an old man who will not get angry no matter what happens to him.

Treatment:

It is a world where people have a fuse on their head. Some people have a short fuse because they always blow up. Some people have a long fuse because they can keep calm.

THORN (male, 14) is a teenager with a short fuse. He is cutting his nails. He presses the nail clipper, but the fragment of his nail springs into his eye. His fuse is ignited and quickly burns. Then Thorn's face turns red and his head becomes bigger and bigger. He blows up and there is smoke coming out from his body. The smoke detector alarms go off.

Thorn goes out of his apartment building. When he is in the parking lot, his phone rings. As he takes out of his phone from his pocket, his apartment keys drop into the storm drain on the ground. He tries to reach them but he fails. He bangs his head on the storm grate in anger. Then his fuse is ignited again. He tries to snuff it but the fuse is too short and he can't stop the fire before he blows up.

Thorn opens his locker in the school. He takes out his textbook but then he finds out that there are a lot of graffiti on it. Some of them are about bombs and explosion. Some of them are about short fuses. Thorn's classmates, A, B, and C are laughing at his short fuse. Thorn blows up and runs out of the school. But he trips and falls in the street. As Thorn's fuse begins to burn, an old man with fishing tackle, ALBERT props him up and snuffs it out. Thorn realizes that it is Albert's fuse that makes him fall. His fuse is too long to see the end. Thorn rubs his eyes and he can't believe it. He compares it with his short fuse. Albert leaves and Thorn follows behind.

Albert walks in the street. Thorn hides behind and follows him. Thorn finds out that no matter what happens to Albert, he will not blow up. Even someone accidentally splashes water on Albert, or a bird drops some stuff on his head. Thorn follows the old man to a park. Albert sits down on a bench near a lake and starts preparing to fish. Thorn hides himself behind a tree and stares at Albert. Suddenly a ball hits Thorn's head in to the tree. It causes a loud noise. All the birds on the tree fly away. Thorn picks up the ball dizzily. There are some kids away waving to him. Thorn grabs the ball very hard. Some spark appears around his fuse. But someone pats his shoulder. Thorn turns back

and see Albert. Albert raises his hand and starts counting number with fingers. When he raises his first finger, he signals Thorn to follow his action. They make three counts. Then they have a deep breath. Thorn finds that he doesn't blow up. What's more, his fuse becomes a little bit longer. He is very happy, and he returns the ball back to the kids.

Thorn is walking near the lake happily, while a stone hits him. It is A, B and C who throws stone to Thorn. Thorn clenches his teeth. Then he starts to count numbers. But when he finishes his deep breath and tries to leave, A, B, and C run to him and push him into the lake. Thorn's body is shaking. His fuse is ignited, and he rushes towards them and pushes them on the ground. He hugs them and waiting for his explosion. A, B, and C are scared. They struggle very hard. Thorn's fuse is almost burned to the end. People around them are screaming. At this intense moment, Thorn is caught by a hook. He is thrown into the lake. It is Albert that holding the fishing rod. Then, A, B, C are thrown into the lake one by one. Thorn crawls away from the water with Albert's help. Thorn touches his fuse, which becomes extremely short because of the combustion, and he drops his head with depression.

Albert sends Thorn back to Thorn's home. Thorn stands in front of his apartment building. He reaches in his pocket. Then he quickly turns his head to the storm drain. He remembers that his keys are in the drain. He looks at his wet body with tears in his eyes. He clenches his fist. There is spark around his fuse. But he closes his eyes and raises his hand with power. He counts three numbers with his fingers. Then he breathes deeply and turn around to look at Albert.

Thorn fishes his keys from the drain with Albert's hook. He looks at Albert with a big smile. They both start to laugh under the sunset. Thorn's fuse seems a little be longer than before.

Rationale:

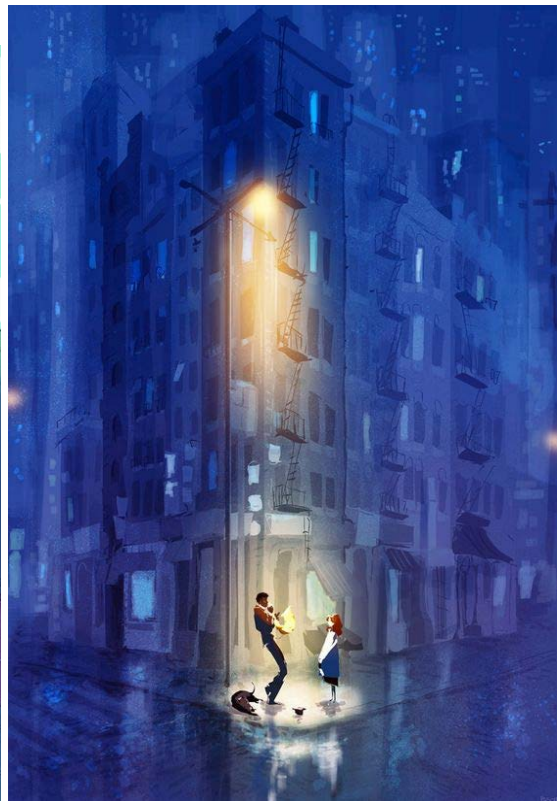
Life isn't a bed of roses. We all run into different kinds of difficulties at different stages of our lives. When we are under pressure, it is easy for us to lose our head. While we are blind with anger, we may make some bad decision that not only hurt ourselves, but also hurt others. Words coming out from an angry mind always carry a sting. There is an easy way to control ourselves. When something makes us feel angry, make some count in our mind before we react to it. This several seconds of buffer will avoid the inevitable consequence that cause by the inclination of the moment, will offer you some time to come out with a better solution and give you a chance to organize your language

into soft words to present your opinion. I hope I can learn to control my anger during the process of making this film. And I wish that people who in the situation of Thorn would learn this easy way of anger controlling.

Another reason for me to make this film is that I want to improve my skills on the visual part of the animation process. This story has a lot of potential that I could play with effect, style and exaggeration.

Vision:

This film is a stylized 2D animation. It will be colorful and funny. Here are some references for this film.

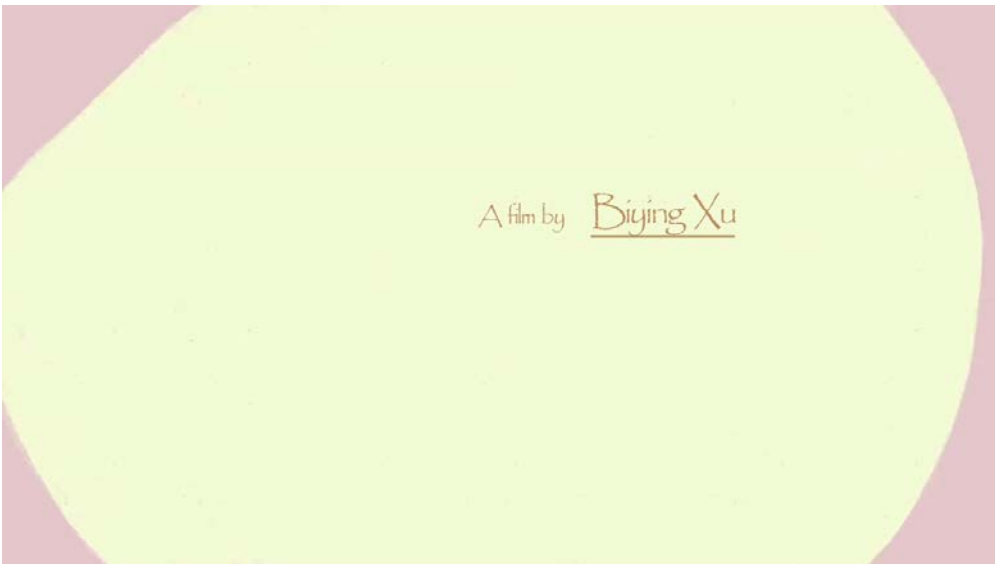




Budget:

Thesis Production Budget				
Categories and Items	Quantity	Fee	Subtotal	Acct. Total
Work Station				
Lightbox	1	44		
Drawing Supplies		100		
			144	
Software				
TVP animation 11	1	200		
Adobe Creative Suite	1	In Kind		
Pro-tools	1	In Kind		
Sketchbook Pro	1	In Kind		
			344	
Sound				
Sound Effect		0		
Composer		300		
			644	
Release				
Festival Fees		300		
DVD+cases		100		
Print DVD Covers		100		
			1144	
Contingency				
Contingency		15%		
		Total	1315.6	

APPENDIX II: SCREENSHOTS



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