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### Two Moons

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# RIT

# Two Moons

By

Chuhan Peng

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Fine Art in Visual Communication Design

School of Design

College of Art and Design

Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester, NY

December 14, 2021

**Thesis Approval**

**Two Moons**

Thesis Title

**Chuhan Peng**

Thesis Author

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of **Master of Fine Arts**   
The School of Design | Visual Communication Design   
Rochester Institute of Technology | Rochester, New York

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## Abstract

People may think that they can better understand the world through convenient technology in this Internet age. The fact is that even though we can search almost everything on Google, we still live and are confined to a small world. What's worse, big smart data will provide you with "privately customized" information services based on your specific situation. People gradually become accustomed to a voice and are more inclined to think that the world is what they see. This has also led to the fact that people of different social classes and cultural environments may be very different, and they believe too much in the world they perceive and tend to reject and deny other voices.

**Keywords:** Information Cocoon, Group Effect, Motion Graphics

## Introduction

As soon as there is news, you will see different speeches and comments, and these speeches often quickly escalate into scolding wars between other camps. Even people who are emotionally stable and peaceful in their lives seem to be easily irritable on the Internet. A person who is usually good at speculation and careful consideration of problems when he comments on the Internet is prone to extreme bias towards one side.

A recent example, some extreme netizens seem to regard blacks and the police as two opposite groups on the BLM issue, which is the hottest on the Internet this year. When people who support BLM emphasized that everyone is equal, they disgusted and insulted the entire police group. We all know that not all police officers are disrespectful to death. But during that period, because many police vandalism was concentrated and deliberately posted on social media, many netizens immediately condemned the entire police team, and some personal attacks occurred.

Sociologists have found that people are more likely to be coerced by groups and participate in various disputes and quarrels in the online world, leading to a small problem being exaggerated into the most significant conflict. In fact, due to the proliferation of information on the Internet, people need always to be alert to the paranoia and emotionality that homogenized information may bring to themselves. Only by recognizing the existence of the information cocoon can we not be trapped by it and get lost in the flood of information.

## Context

The general election is one of the most important political activities in the United States. During the election period, supporters of all parties will express their opinions through various channels. We can find that as the timeline of the election progresses, speech on the Internet has become more intense. This is because people continue to hear the set of arguments in their group, and people become more confident, more unified, and more extreme.

Social stratification is also an issue worthy of attention in social development-this is also one of the reasons leading to constant disputes on the Internet. Their growth environment shapes people's cognition, and people cultivated in different environments may have completely different views of the world. The famous documentary "Up" series faithfully records and

feedback on social class's influence on people's development. There is a high probability that our whole life will only focus on the class we are in, and it is difficult to imagine the lives of other classes. When people of different socio-economic backgrounds are on the same Internet platform and hear entirely different voices through social media, contradictions arise.

The research on the psychological effects of groups has a long history. The group psychology book "The Crowd" puts forward the following point of view: In a group, very few people can resist emotional cues, so they are easy to get lost in the tide of convergence. This is not to say that the Internet is about to overthrow democracy. On the contrary, the development of social media allows people to access information on various platforms faster than ever. But in an era of apparent class division and partisanship, we had better be wary of whether a large amount of information we obtain is a cocoon of "ignorance" made up of our unconscious choices.

## Methodology

Netizens usually have the following characteristics: they show anti-authority and question characteristics of science, but they often believe in the information they obtain from Internet analysis. So I think that showing the problem in animation is a way to stimulate people to think. Many extremes on social media do not lack knowledge or logical abilities; they need a slight hint. In my mind, animation is a proper way. In terms of drawing and expression of animation, I mainly used the following three methods to lead the audience to rethink their emotions:

### 1. The form of comparison

The split-screen of the animation simultaneously shows the different lives of the twins. When two babies are adopted by two kinds of families, they have different education, jobs, lives. It seems that there is a natural opposition to the Internet. But, by observing, we can see their differences and the similarities hidden under the differences.

The split-screen narrative makes the whole picture more exciting and increases the animation's drama. The audience will involuntarily observe the two sides of the contrast screen. In addition, the split-screen narrative also helped me silently show a phenomenon: people of different classes have more commonalities than they thought. Although people in the animation have different fates, their rhythms of life are very similar. When we realize that there is also a

flesh-and-blood person behind every seemingly unreasonable comment on the Internet, who may not be the same as mine about something, we may not be so mad.



*Figure 1-2. Parallel screens show the comparison and connection*

## 2. Let people have a sense of substitution

The animation itself aims not only to show different lives but also to make people reflect on their own lives. I choose two kinds of ordinary life to display, which help the audience easily substitute the characters. I hope that through some fragments of daily life, the audience will have a feeling of "I also live in this way". Based on this, when I show how social networks affect people's lives and emotions, people are more likely to think of themselves and think about whether I am also affected by this.

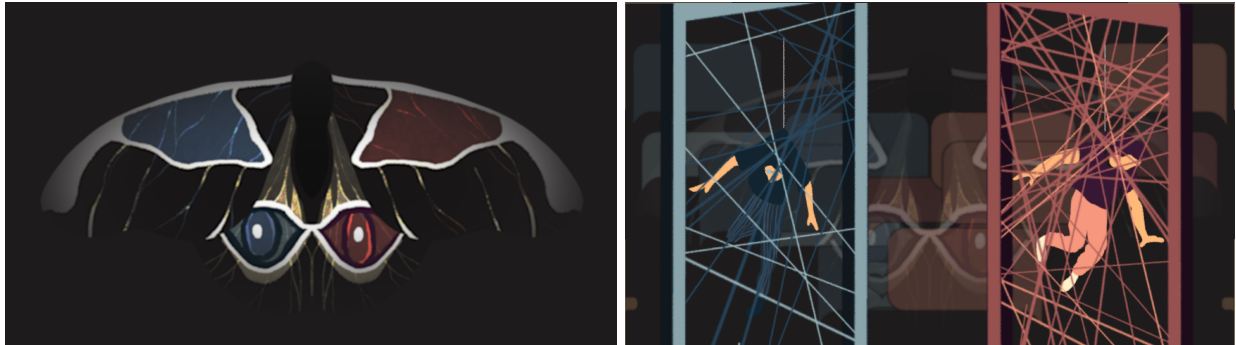


*Figure 3-4. Scenes that give people a sense of substitution*

## 3. Stimulate the audience through exaggerated metaphors

Metaphors and exaggeration are commonly used artistic techniques in literary works. Unlike the boring theory, the terrible scenes in which people are bound and bound by information through animation are more likely to make people spontaneously vigilant.

In addition, I also use red and blue to distinguish two different social attributes. Including the new messages that pop up constantly in the animation, they are also divided into red and blue. I do this to compare the information we continue to receive, and after data screening, it is "more suitable for us." Living in such an information environment for a long time makes it easy for us to forget how to look at the problem comprehensively and think dialectically.



*Figure 5-6. Metaphors of Internet emotions are concretized*

After Effects is the primary tool used in most scenes and composite the final video; besides, Procreate and Adobe Illustrator helped me with illustrations. The AE plug-in Duik works for the character rigging part. Professional works were used as references to design specific motions and transitions.

## Conclusion

"Two Moons" aims to convey a message to the audience: we may also be trapped in the information cocoon room and be members of the group's emotional distress. The animation exaggerates how we are trapped in social media by showing the high erosion of the Internet in our lives.

To let the audience feel the characteristics of the information cocoon room, I used different colors to distinguish the worlds of the two protagonists in the story. They usually only see the information that belongs to their world, which also metaphors that in real life, the information we receive is the result of data screening, which is what big data thinks we prefer to see.



It is not easy to remain rational and neutral in a complex Internet environment. Even people who have always been good at speculation will inevitably prefer to accept the knowledge they agree with. Coupled with the promotion of big data technology, people repeatedly receive similar information, and it is easy to get trapped in the information cocoon. People in the information cocoon are often very confident in their knowledge, and it is difficult for others to realize their limitations through ordinary debates or preaching.

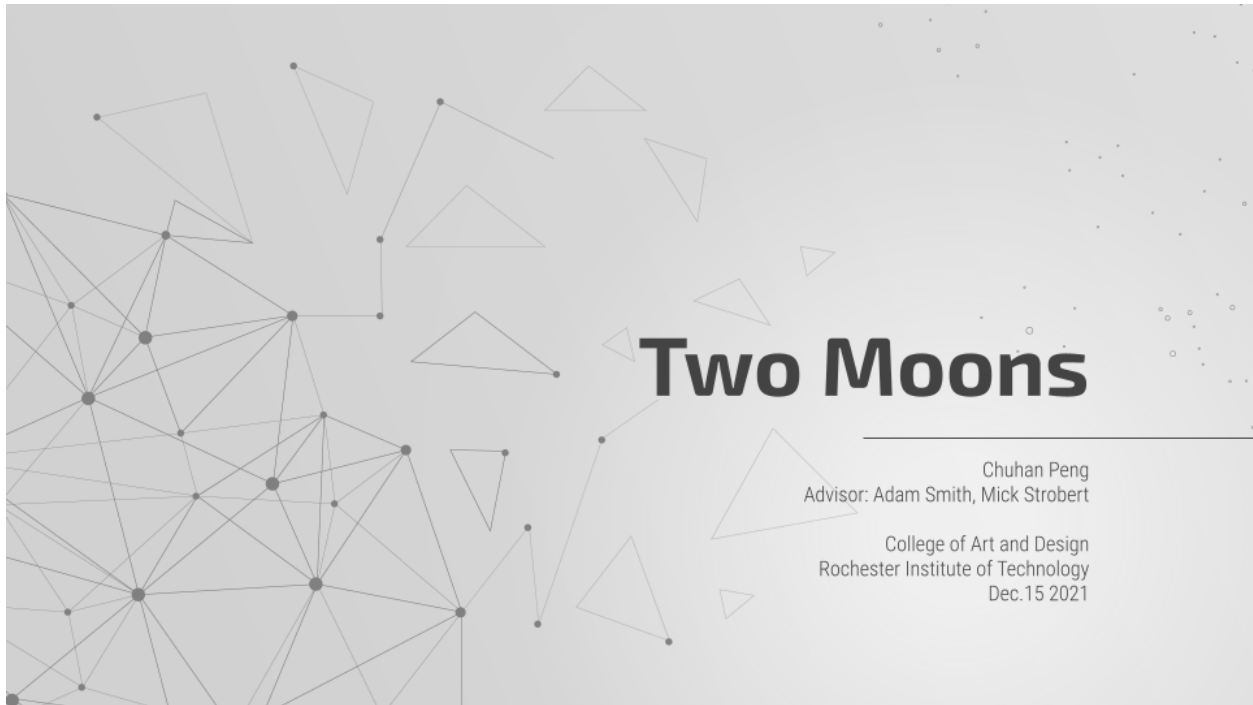
Because people in the information cocoon are more inclined to believe in the content they have captured rather than the characteristics forced by the outside world. I use easy and interesting animations to guide rather than force people to think about their lives.

The role of new media is to convey some ideas to people in a more exciting and receptive form. In recent years, motion graphics have been more and more accepted by more people. My design works are expressed through art, not preaching, reminding people to be wary of the information limitations that the network environment may bring to themselves.

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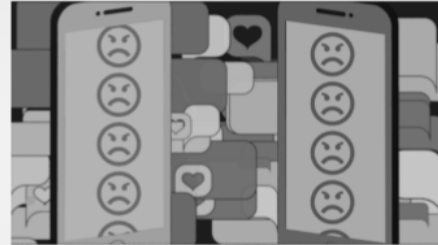
## Appendix B: Thesis Defense Presentation





## Problem Statement

In the Internet age, commercialized big data tends to push people more content that they may be more interested in, causing people to fall into the information cocoon. People in the information cocoon can easily fall into group emotions, argue with others on the Internet, or refuse to accept different opinions.



## The Significance

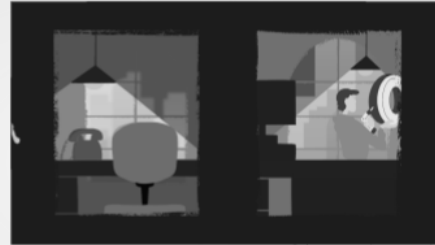
People usually think that the Internet and social media have broadened their information and learn more about the world.

However, they are silently bound by the information cocoon, trapped in repetitive information, and forget to think and look at the world dialectically.



## Solution

An animation uses absurd drama to exaggerately show the incomprehension of people living in two parallel worlds on same social media.



# 02

## Narrative Iterations

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# The original scenario

**Scenario:**

Two worlds, two moons, one social media.

There are two different worlds in the story I tell, and they operate like parallel worlds. Each world has its own rhythm of operation, we first call them the blue world and the red world. Why is it called that? Because the most common but most different thing in the two worlds is their moon.

The moon in the blue world is a sphere emitting a faint blue light, hanging remotely on the sky. It does not appear for a long time every day, from 10 pm to 6 am only 8 hours. But when the blue moonlight shines on the earth, people will have a sense of tranquility and relaxation. Getting up the next morning was another day full of energy.

The moon in the red world has never revealed its full picture. Its huge body is half-hidden in the horizon as if staring at the whole world. It will only disappear around noon; what falls with it is the thick shadow it brings. In this world, the sun only shines for 8 hours. The two worlds are not completely parallel and have no intersection. On the contrary, people use the same and only social software-"moon". But it seems that no one will deliberately talk about the moon on social software. Everyone talks about society, politics, and economics... talk about this and talk about that. Various disputes often erupt on the Internet. From the birth of democratic politics to the balcony planting of green onions, people seem to have endless topics.

Until one day, person Chris from the blue world walked into the manhole cover, and he came to the red world. He was shocked by the sight before him. He was standing on a road with a tree beside him, and the evening moon glowed with an oppressive red light. A homeless man came over, and he approached. He pointed to the huge red sphere on the horizon and asked, "What is that?" "That's the moon, idiot." said the tramp. Trembling, Chris took out his phone to take a picture of the moon in front of him and posted it on social networking sites.

He thought that his sharing would shock the world he lived before, but his sharing fell to the ground, and no one was interested in the moon. The sporadic replies were also ridiculing and mocking: "This filter is too fake." "A fool can see that this is a photoshop art." "Is there such a fool in this world?"

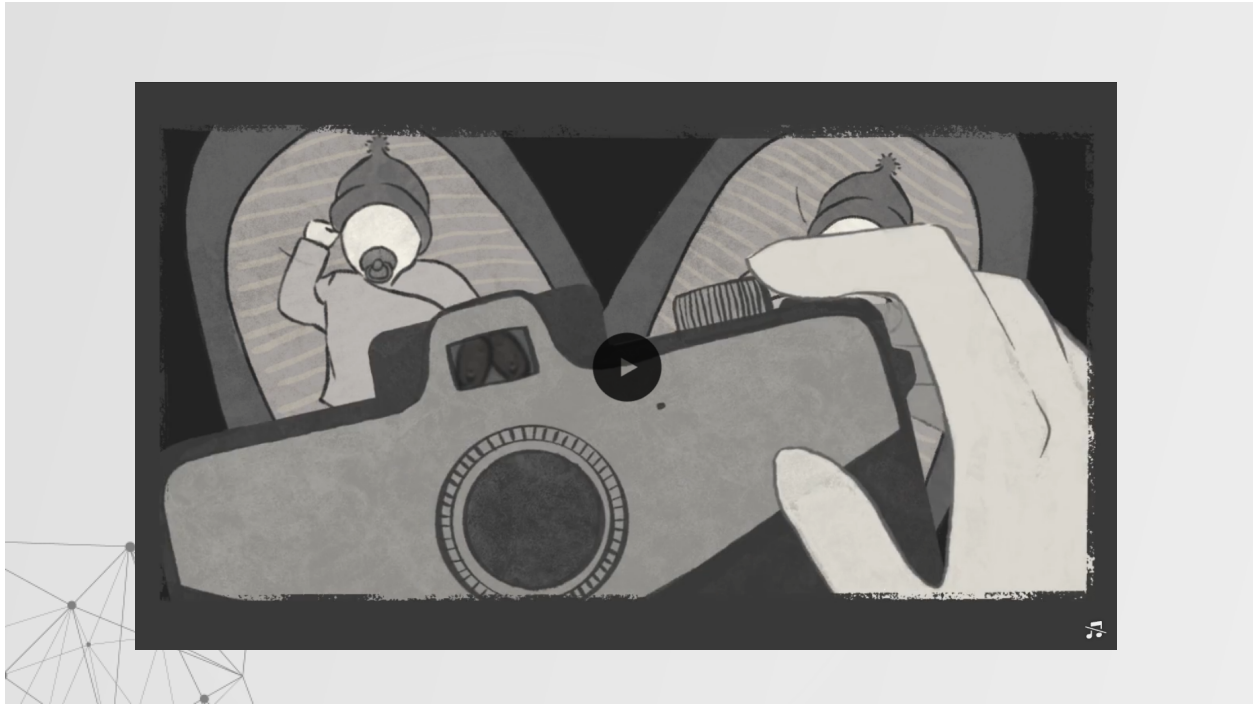
Another person attached an blue moon pic in the message: "Show you what the moon is, idiot." Chris put the tramp in front of his phone, and the tramp glanced at the pic in his phone, only shook his head and said: "There is another person crazy." Then he left.

# Storyboard Process

The storyboard process is divided into several stages with detailed Chinese annotations:

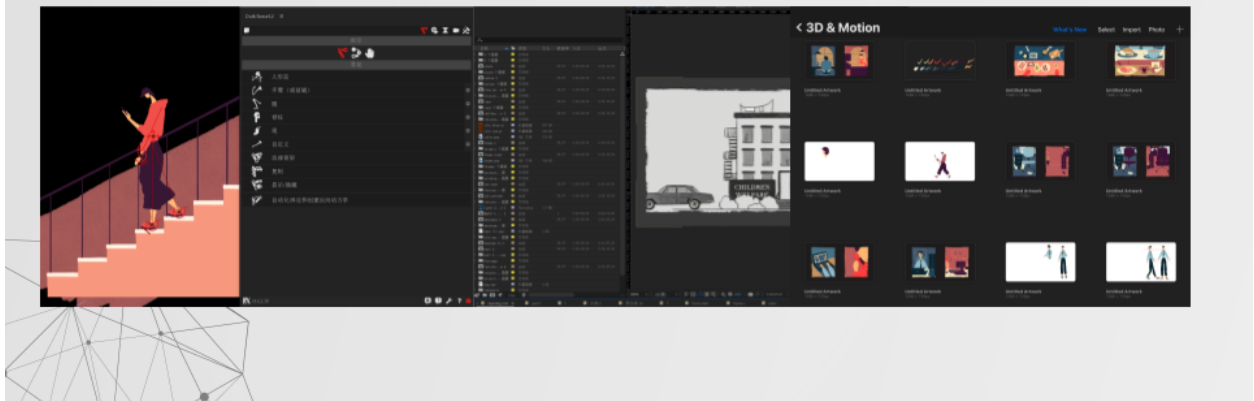
- Storyboard Grid:** A grid of 24 hand-drawn sketches on a dark background, showing various scenes and characters.
- Storyboard Annotations:**
  - ① 画面中, 两种月球 (In the picture, two moons)
  - ② 一天中, 月球 (One day, moon)
  - ③ 月球在地球上的位置 (Position of the moon on Earth)
  - ④ 画面转到月球上, 月球在地球上的位置 (Picture turns to the moon, position of the moon on Earth)
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## Build up

After Effects is the main tool used in the animation. Procreate and Adobe Illustrator help me make all the illustrations. Besides, I use the AE plug-in DUIK to make the character rigging parts in the video.






## Appendix C: A full-page screen capture of the Thesis website

Home 3D & Motion UI/UX More Works

# Two Moons

2021 Thesis - Chuhan Peng

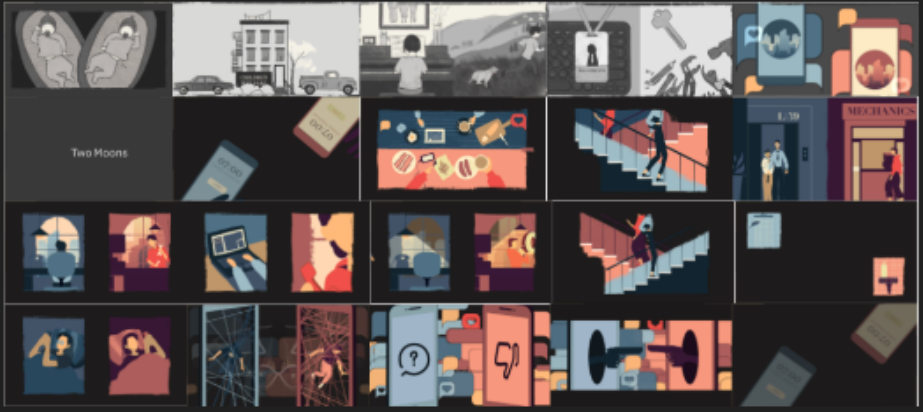
"Two Moons" is a short animation that tries to illustrate people who live in the internet age are burdened by information and bandaged in information cocoons. The title refers to the moon having a variety of shapes and situations, but if some people only watch it from one aspect, for a long time, they would believe the moon should only be like that.



**Narratives:**

The story tells the story of a pair of twins who were adopted by two different families and grew up in different environments. When they grew up, the two were engaged in white-collar and blue-collar jobs, leading seemingly unrelated ordinary lives. Similarly, the lives of two people are inseparable from social networks, and their emotions appear to be more extreme in social networks...

**Storyboards:**



## Features:

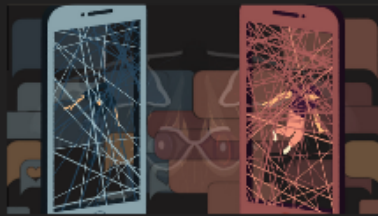


### 1. The form of comparison

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### 3. Stimulate the audience through exaggerated metaphors

Metaphors and exaggeration are commonly used artistic techniques in literary works. Unlike the boring theory, the terrible scenes in which people are bound and bound by information through animation are more likely to make people spontaneously vigilant.

## Process:



## Credits:

Advisors  
Adam Smith, Mike Strobert, Daniel DeLuna

Animator  
Chuhan Peng