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Rochester Institute of Technology

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
in candidacy for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

Kethelavia:

**Promoting and Branding an Original Cartoon using Interactive
Website Design**

Wenzheng Cui

Computer Graphics Design

November 22 2010

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Abstract

How to design and promote a cartoon brand are always interesting questions to the contemporary cartoon industry. To the rising Chinese cartoon business, we need to find a suitable way for its continuous development. Through reviewing the evolution of some classical cartoon brands in the world, the history and current status of Chinese cartoon industry, I have found that, cartoon making is no longer purely an art form, but rather a concept of brand design. Like fashion, cartoon brand design asks for a constant self-re-innovation to meet the change in culture and aesthetic standards.

On the other hand, new technology innovations always affect the concept of cartoon and its artistic style. Application of novel techniques into cartoon making has already propelled the cartoon industry at fascinating speed. This thesis work will also review some best examples to illustrate such relationship between technology innovation and cartoon industry evolution.

As the main body of this thesis work, I will present my original cartoon brand creation-the world of *Kethelavia* -to demonstrate my vision of cartoon brand making. *Kethelavia* has a plot and role design derived from a popular Chinese mythology. It incorporates western graphic design style and popular digital techniques in its artistic form. Action Script 3 is one of the core techniques that are used to power the interactive interface between the designers and the customers. The *Kethelavia* concept and its products will be promoted in the form of an interactive webpage through the Internet. Its potential customers are actively engaged to experience the world of *Kethelavia* in multiple ways online.

Introduction

1. Cartoon In the Early Time (1920's- 1980's)

a. American Cartoon in the 1920's

In the history of cartoon making, America is the first country that truly combined animation and photography and proposed “animation film” concept to the world. In 1920, *Sullivan Studio* created the first popular cartoon character *Felix the Cat*. At the same time, *Fleischer Studios* created *Popeye* and *Betty Boop*. In that period, cartoon animations were silent, mostly in black and white, produced by hand drawn and frame-by-frame photo shoot techniques. *Disney* showed the first sound animation, *Steamboat Willie*, in 1928. American animation began to add music to the film. This was just real-time performance, mainly because lots of these animation films were only played in a theater as an opening/filling film before the main film was played.

b. The example of “Mickey Mouse”

When you talk about American cartoon industry, it is hard to not refer to *Disney* and its famous family member--*Mickey Mouse*. *Mickey Mouse* is the signature look of *Disney*, born in 1928. When *Mickey Mouse* first came out, his passionate, smart, and adventurous characteristics instantly brought a ray of sunshine to the depressed economy U.S. at that time.

Shortly after its success in US, it went on to gain its global popularity as one of the most famous cartoon characters at the time. In 1984, Then-most-important TV station of China--CCTV (China Central Television)

brought Disney's TV anime, *Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck*, as the first American cartoon introduced to China. According to the agreement, Disney agreed that China could show 104 episodes of *Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck*, which would end in 1988. But thousands of audiences asked for a rebroadcast after the show was done. Disney gave permission for it to be played free for six months because China didn't have enough money to rebroadcast it at the time. I was one of the most popular cartoons ever seen in China.

c. Chinese Cartoon before the 1980's

It has been 80 years since the first Chinese cartoon animation, *Uproar In Studio* made in 1926. Before the 1980's, cartoon animation was also called fine arts animation in China. This is because, in that period, the cartoon was made by Chinese art elements such as paper-cut, puppet, shadow puppet, or ink painting. For example, the first Chinese feature-length animation, *Princess Iron-Fan*, made in 1941, was 80 minutes long. The whole animation used traditional Chinese realistic (Gong-bi) painting style. In 1960, The Chinese animators drew inspirations and style elements from works of famous Chinese painter Qi Baishi, made the first ink animation of the world, *Polliwog Looking For Mother*. It won many international awards and recognitions. Even today, some of the most famous cartoons that made the Chinese proud were produced before 1980's.

d. The example of "Uproar In Heaven"

Uproar In Heaven is the representative work of Chinese cartoon. It was made in 1961-1964, and is 120 minutes long. The script was derived from the famous novel *Journey to the West* by Wu Cheng'en, which is one of the

Four Great Classical Novels of China. The character and action designs as well as its soundtrack compositions beautifully incorporated elements from costume, stage design and music of Chinese Opera (mainly Beijing Opera). The entire work presents a state-of-the-art masterpiece the famous fairy tale of Chinese history. *Uproar In Heaven* also won many awards, for example the “Outstanding film award” in *London International Film Festival* in 1978, the “Special Interest Award” in the *13th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival*, and the “Best Art” and the “Children’s Literature Award” in the *2nd Chinese Film "Hundred Flowers Festival"*. It has been published in 40 countries. Also the main character, *Monkey King*, has become a classical character in Chinese cartoon.

Conclusion

The history of cartoon making has yielded a handful of legendary cartoon figures that are encouraging to cartoon makers. However, these cartoons were mostly shown and known in theater. A cartoon character promoted through such way usually took a long time to be known to a broad group of audiences. America, as the leading cartoon maker of the world, has shaped cartoon making into a rising business; nowadays, cartoons are seen on multiple media including TV, magazine, and others. In comparison, although Chinese cartoon was at its beginning stage with limited production at the time, every piece of work was created by a group of talented artists with distinctive culture elements. So Chinese cartoons were also well known internationally.

2. New Concept of Cartoon

Entering the now rapidly moving world, everything is happening at the speed of instant Internet connection and the ease of mobile communication. The evolution of our daily life calls for the change in almost all industries to meet its speed and demand. Japan has developed a strong cartoon market and taken cartoon making into the business world through its special marketing strategy.

a. The concept of “Character Business”

"Character Business" is a newly emerging concept in the world of animation. The main purpose is to promote its product sale through creating and popularizing its cartoon character designs. It could be a further product development of existing cartoon episodes, or a completely novel cartoon character design. Comparing to the traditional animation business concept, its revenue does not have to be tied with cartoon making, but instead, contributed by various ways such as stationery, clothing, food products designs, and others. Hence, Character Business is not only a concept of animation, but also of design. That infers the character designs have to meet the challenge of rapidly changing fashion trends.

b. The example of “Hello Kitty”

Hello Kitty, one of the most famous cartoon characters in Japan, is the best example of character business. Because of its popularity, *Hello Kitty* is also one of the most profitable cartoon brands in the world. However, unlike most of the popular Disney cartoon characters, it doesn't have any related stories, movies or books to develop the popularity of the character itself. In fact, the company that created *Hello Kitty*, Sanrio, created some brand new market strategies at the time. They seek out for

opportunities to print the *Hello Kitty* image on diverse types of products including papers, pens, clothing, toys, watches, cups, cell phones, laptops, cars and such. The selling of the products itself benefited the popularity of the character and vice versa. The low-cost feature of such business strategy is named “Grass-Roots Marketing” which is marketing your company or products on a local and on a personal level. It is a great way to really reach your customers on the basis as to where they get to know you and you get to know them. Today, the image of *Hello Kitty* has already appeared on about 22,000 different types of products and sells in more than 40 countries.

c. The example of “Blue Cat”

Blue Cat is a representative Chinese cartoon character produced by Sunchime Cartoon Group in the late 1990’s. It produced TV anime *3000 questions of Blue Cat*, and set the record of TV anime with the most episodes in the world. Unfortunately, despite the massive quantity of production, its business failed after several years. Besides, it was not familiar to the world. The major reasons are thought to be its rather old design style, story telling, and lack of copyright acknowledgements. For example, it used soundtracks of other publishers without mutual agreements. This is an example case demonstrating the importance of quality in the long-term success of a character business.

3. The Influence of Internet Development to Cartoon Industry

In the beginning of the 21st century, Korean cartoon designers created a new cartoon style and marketing strategy based on web media and flash technology. It made the promotion of cartoon character easy and cost efficient.

a. Flash Time Technology

Flash technology (developed by Macromedia in 1995, now a brand of Adobe) is the first software for webpage animation design. After Flash 4 enabled the function of importing mp3 as music track in 1999, it became the mainstream design tools in the world of animation. The appearance of Flash technology allows more people to create their visions using the user-friendly tools. This is especially helpful to those who have not received extensive traditional trainings in graphics.

b. The example of “Mashimaro”

Korean cartoon didn't attract much attention until it rose in the light of Flash technology and Internet promotion in 2004. Their best example is the popular brand *Mashimaro*. It has lovely character design and many short funny episodes written for the characters. Like the marketing idea of *Hello kitty*, *Mashimaro* was extensively promoted through the Internet in addition to its frequent appearance on the products. *Mashimaro* soon became very popular in Asia including China after its debut.

4. The Influence of CG technology to Cartoon Industry

Just like new science and technology have changed the world, Computer Graphics (CG) technology has revolutionized the world cartoon animation. The development of super computers and more sophisticated software is bringing the designers more imagination, because some new ideas and effects are created base on the software.

a. The example of “Toy Story”

Toy Story is the world’s first 3D animation made by Pixar and Disney in 1995. It avoided the more traditional “black and white” role design in its plot. Its director John Lasseter won the Special Achievement Award for the development and application of novel techniques in bringing in the first feature-length computer-animated film. As a success of the film, its two main characters Woody and Buzz Lightyear also became globally popular. *Toy story* initiated the trend of 3D in the world of cartoon making. Such trend grew and peaked in around 2004, when several major filmmakers including Warner Bros, Fox, Dreamwork all started to make 3D animation films. However, Disney didn’t have many good-selling films during such time, probably due to its initial conservative attitude to 3D technology.

b. The example of “Rayman Rabbids”

CG technology not only has reshaped cartoon making, but also changed the gaming world. In 2006, the famous Japanese video game company Nintendo released a revolutionary TV game platform—Wii. *Rayman* is a computer game UbiSoft designed for this particular platform. Surprisingly, as it turns out, the supporting role-Rabbids went on to be even more popular than the leading role-Rayman after

the game came out. This is probably because the role design of Rabbids, even though a “black” side of the plot, has a funny character design and been embodied with a prankish characteristic entertaining to the game players. Rabbids’ fan group contains both young and elder game players. And it soon became the main character in the second year after the game came out. This game now is in its 4th generation until 2010.

c. **The example of “Angry Birds “**

In 2007, Apple released its new cell phone concept, iPhone, with revolutionarily upgraded graphic and display technologies. Since then, electronic games are no longer a specialty of handheld game console. Lots of electronic game developers started to develop games that are tailored for the convenience of smart phones such as iPhone and Android. Within this crowd, Rovio studio made its now famous and one of the all-the-time best-selling iPhone games, *Angry Birds*. The delight pictures, strong playability, and simple mission of each game level all help stressed workers to release after a long day at work. As a result, its character, Angry Bird, is now a quite popular cartoon character for its large group of fans.

My Thesis Work

1. Motivations and Inspirations

It is obvious that new technologies always influence the development of cartoon character designs. My major Computer Graphics Design has new technique that I have been inspired by and experimented with in my final character designs.

The long prosperous history of China embraces countless characters and their stories recorded in the books and folk tales passed down from generation to generation. Unfortunately, our Chinese people haven't explored our own resources well enough. Even though we have some classical characters, Monkey King for example, he was not maintained and updated well enough to be popular in the world. On the other hand, *Mickey Mouse* and *Hello Kitty*, which debuted in recent years actively evolved their figure design and keep their styles matched to the current culture and fashion trend.

After comprehensive research and thinking, I found there is a huge area waiting to be explored in Chinese cartoon. Chinese economy is developing at a high speed today. People's aesthetic standard and the ability of accepting novel things are evolving fast as well. Chinese government strongly supports the cartoon business. As a Chinese student studying design in the US, I understand what is new in design field of the world and am also familiar with Chinese culture. Therefore, I decided to do cartoon design as my thesis topic and propose strategy of taking this great opportunity and doing cartoon business in China in the near future.

2. Kethelavia

Kethelavia is not a real word in the dictionary. The first time it showed up was in my college email box. It is an automatically generated password for my account. When I saw it, I felt it was so cool in its figure and pronunciation. Later on, I found this name is highly suitable to the image and story of *Kethelavia*. In the story setting, *Kethelavia* is a name of a secrete space and a composition of two kids' names, Kethe and Lavia.

In the process of creating the world “*Kethelavia*”, I used the interactive design concept and technique that is quite popular nowadays. The first stage product is an online interactive webpage presenting the designing concepts, drawings, plot, and original music tracks to the viewers. Since I am a fresh graduate from a design school, I think the best approach to market my character designs is to focus on the promotion of my end-product design first. Although it is a great idea to create a cartoon that tells the stories of the characters, I do not have sufficient resources to achieve this at this stage.

In regard to the designing concept and techniques, *Kethelavia* not only employs the traditional VI design, UI design, product design, and fashion design approaches, it also incorporates novel elements including Designer's toy, 3DDG, Interactive and Motion Graphics.

Its plot and role design derives from a popular Chinese ideology and incorporates characteristics of western story-telling and picture styles. Hence, *Kethelavia* not only displays new design concepts and techniques, but also is a creative bridge of the western and Chinese cultures.

3. Functional Specification

Since Flash 4 was published in 1994, the web design added a new design conception, Interactive design. The biggest characteristic of Interactive design is to allow customers to better know and experience a new product or team. This function can also be utilized in exhibiting an animation brand.

a. Opening Page

The first page of *Kethelavia*'s website is its logo design presented on a curtain background. The audience also experiences instantly peaceful night-like music: a string of slow piano notes joined by the sound of nature.



b. Homepage

After clicking the logo, the curtain will open and show the environment of the homepage. This is a moving stage, showing the characteristic of each character. Technically, it not only renders active rolling as you move your mouse up and down, left and right on the webpage to explore the space, but also the technique of time tracking. Time tracking is an interesting design concept in this space, which allows the background/environment to change along with the clock of the computer. As long as the computer clock is synchronized to its local time, the viewers will see the environment in the webpage shift between day and night, and four seasons similar as the weather and day/night change in their real life. In addition, at different times, the properties, clothes and look of each character will change too.



c. News & Media

This section functions as a design blog. It is where I will introduce to the viewers the story of the creation of the cartoon, any important events, and the recent updates in the world of *Kethelavia*.



d. Toy Show

In this section, I aim to let the viewers experience the toy designs of my characters. Customers are allowed to choose between different characters and their skins to make their own favorite toy designs. After choosing a character, you can select different appearance for your favorite character within a click. Notably, in the sub-menu after you choose a specific character, you will notice that it has its own set of buttons with distinct features that were meticulously designed to suit the manner of its character. For example, Zhen embodies the element of Thunder, and Ghen represents Mountain; each character was given a different set of buttons and submenu appearance inspired with the elements represented.



e. Download

This section is dedicated for displaying *Kethelavia* icon, wallpaper, film, and background music designs. The viewers are allowed to experience some of the key components of the design, and download them for memories.



f. **Store**

Kethelavia is a multi-dimensional brand. This section displays the inspired clothesline designs and also provides the customers with on-line shopping convenience. The clothing design concept is displayed on an interactive design based mode. Customers can choose between hats, T-shirts, pants, shoes, and watches to “dress” the character and visualize their appearance on a cartoon figure and decide their favorite products. Magnification function is also provided to assist better visualization of the product designs.



g. About

This section is reserved for introducing the designer's biography and contact information. In addition, a brief introduction of the story of *Kethelavia* is also provided.

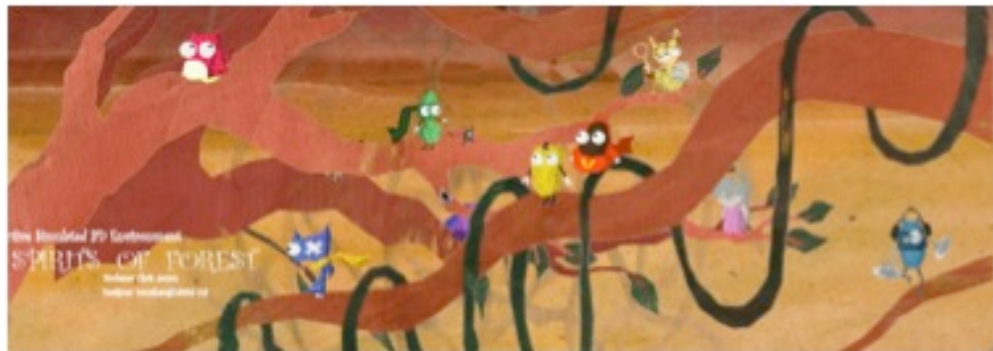


4. Creative Process

Design

a. Stylize

The style setting of my work combines paper textures and photos, using high-quality ash color system and paper-cut style figure. This is the first style-setting picture. It was made in 2009.



And this is the final style-setting picture that was made in 2010.



b. Logo Design

Kethelavia

Kethelavia

Kethelavia

Kethelavia

c. **Typeface Design**

Typeface design is also an important part of brand culture. It not only makes your design more special, but also improves efficiency and saves your time. By using Font Lab Studio, I applied similar styling elements from the cartoon character designs to design the typeface.

○ Uppercase

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

○ Lowercase

a b c d e f g h i j k l
m n o p q r s t u v w x
y z

a b c d e f g h
i j k l m n o p q
r s t u v w x y z

- Number

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

These typeface designs are used for the title of each section of *Kethelavia*.

News&Media

Toy Show

Download

About

Store

d. Character Design

- Lavia



Lavia is the main character of story. She is a six years old girl. She likes reading, and has read all of the books on her Daddy's bookshelf. She can think as an adult, but She never believes what adults say. People think she is a strange girl, and kids do not like to talk with her too much. Even her parents feel their daughter is hard to communicate.

- Kethe



Kethe is a three-year-old boy. He is Lavia's younger brother. Just like other kids, he likes to know everything he doesn't know and always like to ask questions. He is the only person to trusts his sister's words.

- Chee'an



Chee'an lives in a cliff that is called Cut Sky in the northwest. He has a pair of dragon horns and two pairs of wings. He looks like a commander in the sky who overlooks the earth. He has too much energy and is never weary of shuttling between the forest and mountain. Therefore, he often hits cliffs or trees and hurts himself. When he feels angry, his small back wings and horns will become bigger and longer.

- Qui'en



Qui'en lives in the cave under the earth that is called Lost in the southwest. She is kind and likes reading and researching new stuff. Because of living under the land, she can touch the tree roots and change their inside structure to control their growths. She has bad eyesight and poor sense of direction, so she is often lost.

- Lee



Lee lives in a volcano that is called the Fire of Phoenix in the south. She is kind but doesn't seem like being close to others, especially girls. She doesn't like sports. When she is angry, her body will turn dark red, and her devil horn will get longer and a third eye will show up.

- Ghen



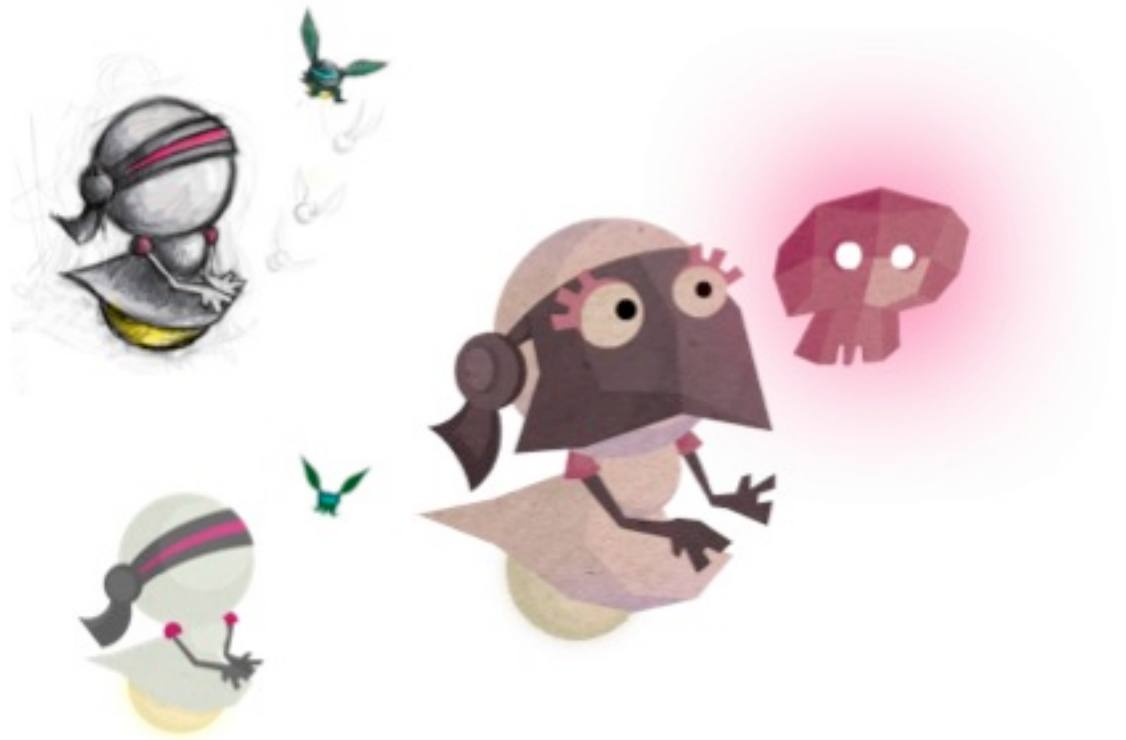
Ghen lives in the mountain named The Gate of Titans in northeast. He is a quiet man. He loves plants. His movement is very slow. He will become a huge guy when he is angry.

- Schun



Schun lives in a valley that is called Blue Sand in the southeast. She is an arrogant lady, and loves make up and dancing. She can control the wind.

- Doo-A



Doo-A lives in the Crystal Marsh located in the west. She is a cute little girl, and loves make up as well. She is shy and afraid to meet strangers. Moreover, she likes scary things, a skull for example.

- Zhen



Zhen lives in the forest that is called Dream. His speed is as fast as lightning. Although his temper is not so good, he is a coward and easy to be scared. When he is enraged, his flame-thrower on his back will jet out flames and his horns will discharge.

- Khan



Khan lives in the ocean named Black Gold in the north. He is a super smart boy. In the dark black ocean, nobody can see clearly but him. He likes mischief to cover his loneliness because he is the only creature in the ocean. He can only play with a copy of himself that is made of water.

- Other Characters



Those characters are not use in the final version of my thesis design.

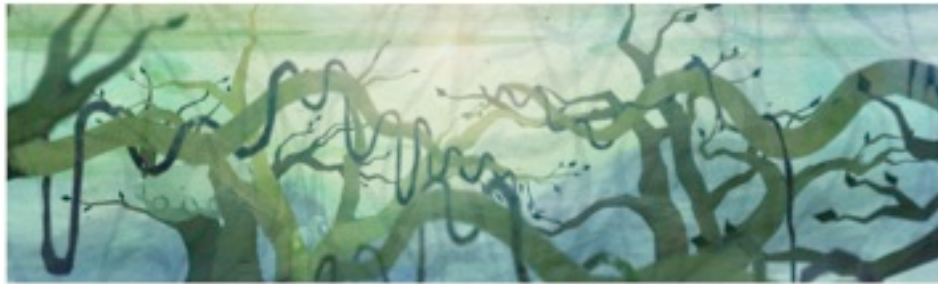
e. Environment Design

I designed two seasons environment background and three timing (morning, afternoon and evening) for each season.

○ *Spring Season*



○ *Autumn Season*



- *Characters of Timing*

The character's situation should follow the timing. So I designed three styles for each character. In the future, I will design different action for them. Like the character will show the sleeping figure in the evening scene.

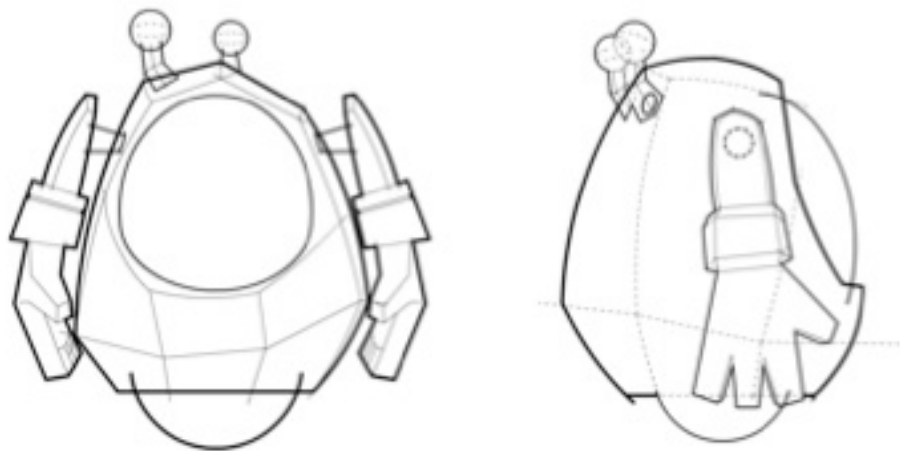
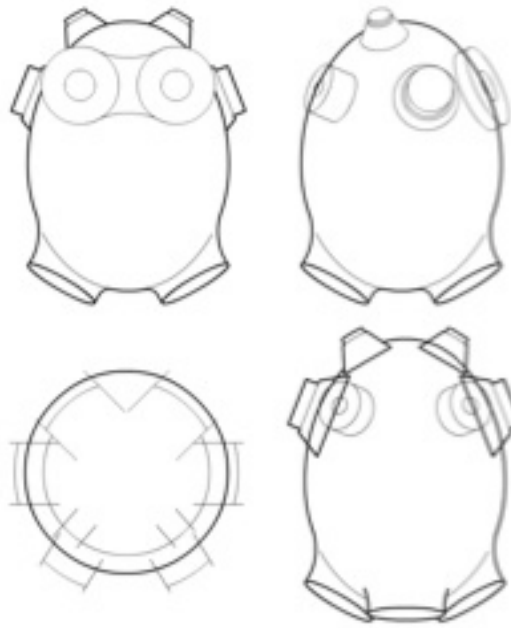


f. Toy Design

- Clay Model

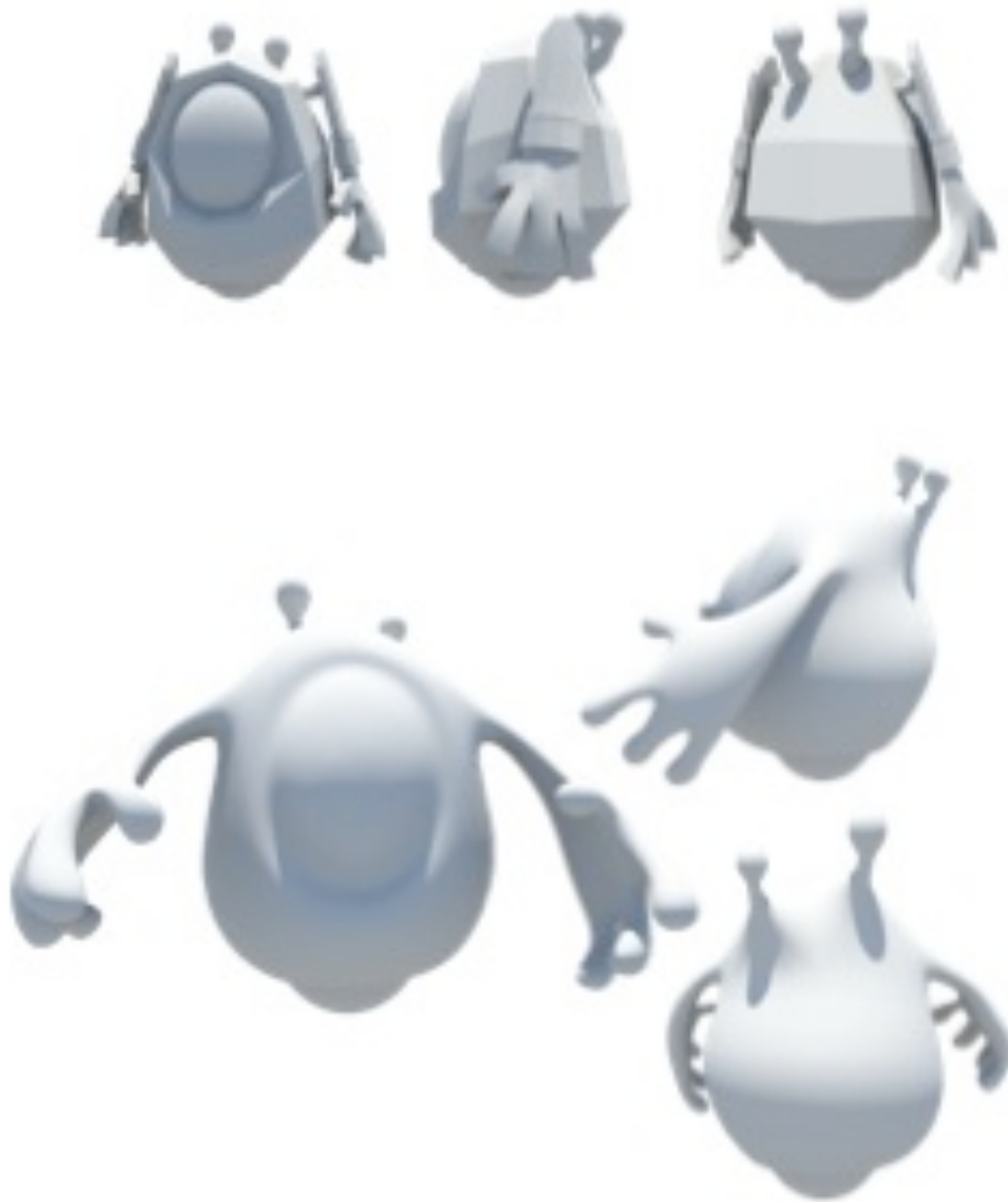


- View Images for 3D Model



- 3D Model

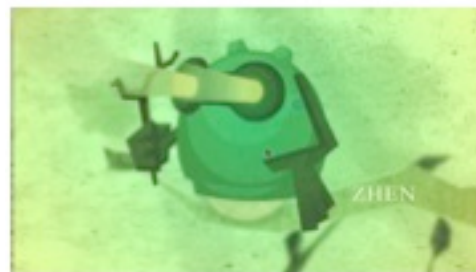
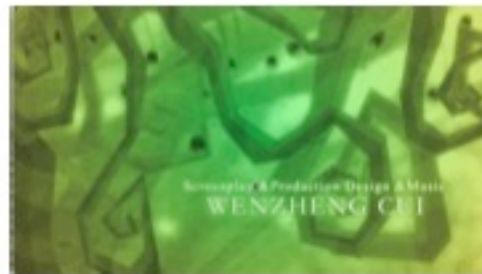
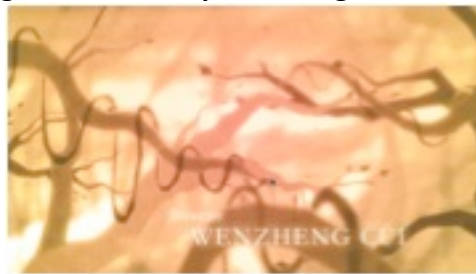


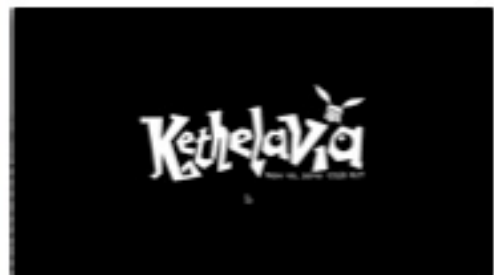
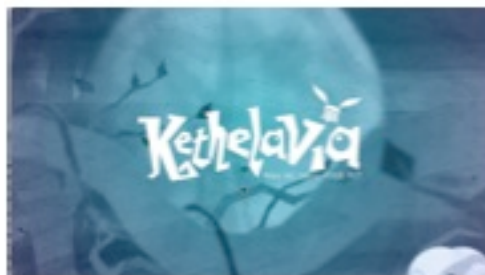
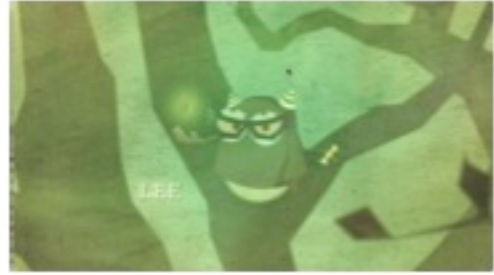






g. Motion Graphics Design

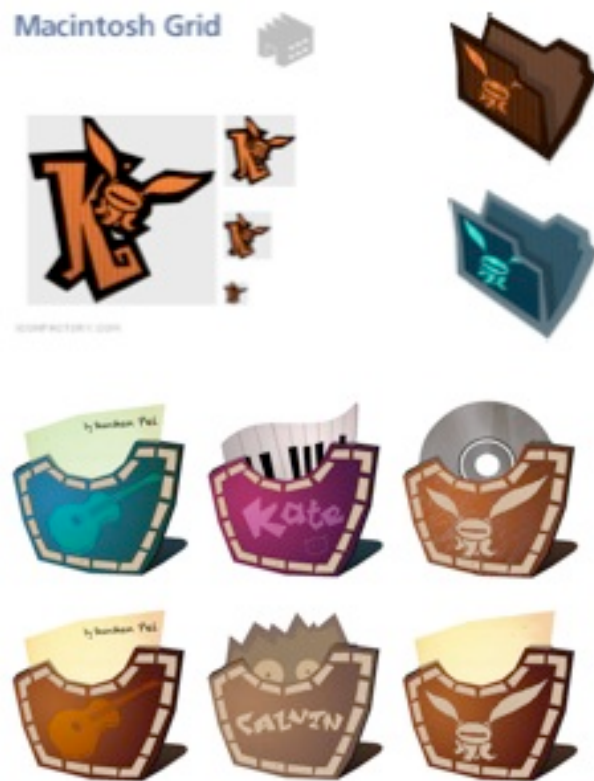


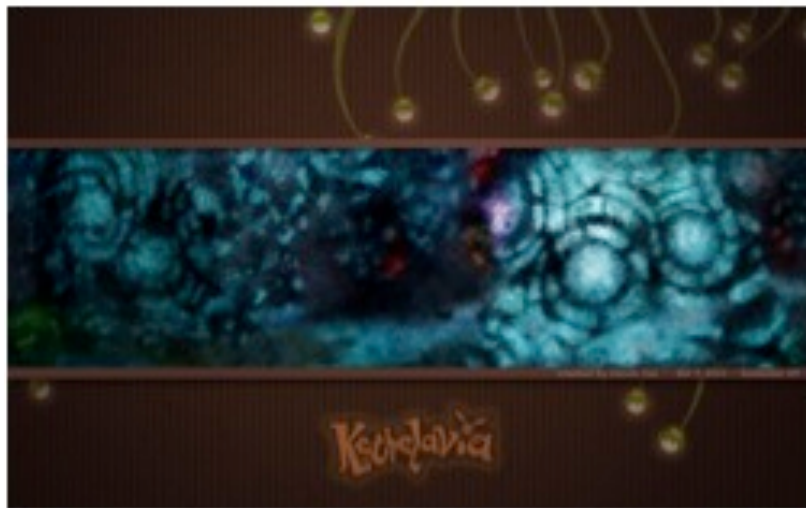


h. Website Design



i. Icon and Wallpaper Design





Coding

j. Timing

```
var swfLoader:Loader = addChild(new Loader()) as Loader;
var swfUrl

    if(new Date().getMonth()>=1 && new Date().getMonth()<=7){
        swfUrl="Spring.swf"}else if(new Date().getMonth()>=8 || new
        Date().getMonth()<=1){ swfUrl="AutumnNew.swf"}

swfLoader.load(new URLRequest(swfUrl));
```

k. Scrolling Map

```
public class AutumnCode extends Sprite
{
    private var container:Sprite;
    private var obj:Sprite;
    private var camera:CameraFocus;
    private var mouseOvered:Boolean;
    private var layerArray:Array =
[

    { name:"AM_BG", scale:1, scrollFactor:.9 },
    { name:"AM_Layer1", scale:1, scrollFactor:.9 },
    { name:"AM_Layer2", scale:1, scrollFactor:.9 },
    { name:"AM_Layer3", scale:1, scrollFactor:.9 },
    { name:"AM_Layer4", scale:1, scrollFactor:.9 },
    { name:"AM_FG", scale:2, scrollFactor:1 },
];
```

```

camera = new CameraFocus( stage, [ 1200, 800 ], container, AM_FG, [ obj, 0,
0, 0 ] );

camera.setScrolling( [
    { layer:AM_FG, scrollFactor:1, offSet:{ x:AM_FG.width/2,
y:AM_FG.height } },
    { layer:AM_Layer1, scrollFactor:.4, offSet:{ x:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer1.width-AM_FG.width)/2, y:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer1.height-AM_FG.height) + 600 } },

    { layer:AM_Layer2, scrollFactor:.3, offSet:{ x:-
Math.as(AM_Layer2.width-AM_FG.width)/2, y:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer2.height-AM_FG.height) + 600 } },

    { layer:AM_Layer3, scrollFactor:.2, offSet:{ x:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer3.width-AM_FG.width)/2, y:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer3.height-AM_FG.height) + 600 } },

    { layer:AM_Layer4, scrollFactor:.1, offSet:{ x:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer4.width-AM_FG.width)/2, y:-
Math.abs(AM_Layer4.height-AM_FG.height) + 600 } },

    { layer:AM_BG, scrollFactor:.8, offSet:{ x:-
Math.abs(AM_BG.width-AM_FG.width)/2, y:-
Math.abs(AM_BG.height-AM_FG.height) + 600 } },  ] );

addEventListener( Event.ENTER_FRAME, enterframeHandler);
container.addEventListener( MouseEvent.MOUSE_OVER,
mouseOverHandler );
container.addEventListener( MouseEvent.MOUSE_OUT,
mouseOutHandler );
}

```

I. Document Text

public class AutumnCode extends Sprite

{

private var textContainer:Sprite;

private var textbox:TextBox;

private function mouseOverHandler(e:MouseEvent):void

{

mouseOvered = true;

textbox = new TextBox();

textContainer.addChild(textbox);

textbox.alpha = 0;

*var tx:Number = getGlobalLoc(e.target.parent, e.target.x,
e.target.y).x;*

*var ty:Number = getGlobalLoc(e.target.parent, e.target.x,
e.target.y).y;*

if(tx < textbox.width.5) tx = textbox.width*.5;*

else if(tx > stage.stageWidth - textbox.width.5) tx =
stage.stageWidth - textbox.width*.5;*

if(ty < textbox.height.5) ty = textbox.height*.5;*

else if(ty > stage.stageHeight - textbox.height.5) ty =
stage.stageHeight - textbox.height*.5;*

textbox.x = tx;

textbox.y = ty;

textbox.gotoAndStop(e.target.name);

TweenLite.to(textbox, .5, { alpha:1 });

e.target.stop();

}

Music

I created the soundtrack with my friends. Honestly, I don't master any music instruments. Moreover, I used the music software, GarageBand to fix the wrong key.



5. Customer Survey

a. Investigate the potential market from targeted customers

I gave some questions below for customer survey.

- Age:
- Gender:
- Educational Level:
- Profession:
- Industry:
- Currently living at:

- Do you like the design style of *Kethelavia*:
yes; don't know; no
- Who is/are your favorite character(s)?
- Would you like to buy the products of *Kethelavia* if there are any:
yes; don't know; no
- If yes, what products you would like to see the most:
Animation; Mobile Game; Toys; Cloths
- The maximum willingness to pay on cartoon products (Dollar):
5 to 10; 10 to 30; 30 to 50; 50 to 100; more than 100
- Do you like the background music?
yes; don't know; no

- What suggestions or recommendations do you have for
Kethelavia?

b. Example of Customer Survey

- Age: 27
- Gender: male
- Educational Level: PHD
- Profession: student
- Industry: medical
- Currently living at: US

- Do you like the design style of *Kethelavia*: yes;
- Would you like to buy the products of *Kethelavia* if there are any:
yes;
- If yes, what products you would like to see the most:
Mobile Game;
- The maximum willingness to pay on cartoon products (Dollar):
10 to 30;
- Do you like the background music?
yes;

- What suggestions or recommendations do you have for
Kethelavia?

I was confused at first of what this was, but then I caught on. I think this would be a cool idea to market to kids.

Conclusion

In the process of making *Kethelavia*, I encountered major challenges from using AS3 program. Writing scripts is not my specialty. I have to frequently read reference books, seek for help from professors and classmates to achieve the final work. In addition, it is important for a designer to keep in touch with the social environment. In the last year during the time of making *Kethelavia*, I had conversations with my professors and friends weekly to discuss about new design ideas. I especially sought for their suggestions in positioning the target customer group for my brand design.

For the graphics design, I utilized paper-cutting style. In comparison to the traditional cartoon making styles, such style requires less in supreme hand-drawing skills. This style is more suitable for my design concentrations in shape, graphical composition, color interpretation, and software applications.

Obviously, *Kethelavia* still requires lots of improvements including optimization of files, a better way of interactive interface design and more detailed graphic processing. I would also like to add on-line shopping function in the final project.

In the future, I plan to finish writing the plot first. The plot will serve as an inspiration for the future designs. On the next stage, I want to promote this cartoon brand through various websites (*CG Society, China Visual*), conferences (*China International Cartoon & Animation Festival, San Diego Comic-Con International, and Tokyo International Anime Fair*) and Magazines (*CG Art, Art and Design*). Also, I plan to introduce real products, such as toys, clothes and watches. In the meantime, I will try to explore new product market opportunities such as cell-phone games, interactive cartoons and cartoon episodes. *Kethelavia* is expected to be a piece of work that can stay with the newest innovation of both art and technology.

Appendix

Thesis Proposal

Title: Kethelavia: Promoting and Branding an Original Cartoon using Interactive Website Design

Abstract

Kethelavia is a cartoon brand that I will design for my thesis. *It* is the name of a secret forest. There are many little tiny monsters in this forest. They are called *Tremo*. *Tremo* are introverted creatures. They dislike talking with others too much, and dislike pop cultures. They don't care about what is happening outside their world. Moreover, Every Tremos have different personalities and habits. In my thesis design, I will promote it through an interactive website. In this website, you may find some interesting 2D animation in the movie section. In the Generator section, you can create a special Tremo by yourself, and then you can buy the toy that you created online.

Problem Statement

Current Situation

In February 19th, 2008, SARFT (China's State Administration of Radio, Film and Television) issued an injunction that forbids the playing of foreign cartoons in the golden time that was during 17:00 to 21:00 after May 1st.2008 in every Chinese TV station. It means the Chinese government encourages and supports the original Chinese cartoon field. They wish that more and more Chinese throw themselves into cartoons so that they can produce cartoons as popular as America's and Japan's. Unfortunately, there is still not a good cartoon company in China so far.

On the other hand, the Chinese cartoon style today is still the same as the last century. The main purpose is education and moral fiber, and the main audience always is children. This is the reason why people above 13 year's old dislike watching Chinese cartoons.

Although there are some new cartoon brands that are designed by young Chinese designers appearing in the market, they are still not very popular like Mickey or Hello Kitty. The story is cut and dried, and the character style has not too much breakthrough. Therefore, Chinese children don't have a chance to see the most popular cartoons, and young people cannot find out a cartoon specially design for them.

Purpose of Thesis

The purpose of this project is to explore new media design in branding and promoting an original cartoon that I will design. As a Chinese student who is studying design in the US has a chance to watch all the best cartoon of the world. Also, It is a good opportunity for me to start a cartoon business in China. Accordingly, my thesis purpose is creating a new style of cartoon branding.

Scope

In my thesis project, I will design an interactive website to show my characters. I am going to apply 2D animation, 3D modeling, motion graphics and Actionsript.

Literature Survey

During one month researching, I tried to find out the succeed reason of the most classical and popular cartoon character that have created since the last century to nowadays. I absorb their advantages into my design. Meanwhile, I studied 2D animation, Motion Graphics Design and Interactive Design. Thus, my main survey fields are cartoon, design and software tutorial.

The Field of Cartoon

Book

Comic Art Now

by Dez Skinn (Author), Mark Millar (Foreword) Publisher: Collins Design (May 27, 2008)

This book shows character styles that are not just for kids. Also, it directs me how to present my hand drawing part of my MV (Music Video) by different art styles.

Cartoon Animation

by Preston Blair Publisher: Walter Foster (January 1, 1994)

This book teaches me how to draw 2D animation and shows me a popular American cartoon style. It will help me to finish the Model Sheet with various poses.

Scriptwriting

by Paul Wells Published by AVA Publishing SA

This book helps me to make sure the character's personality and story sitting.

Storyboarding Design Course

by Giuseppe Cristiano Publisher: Barron's Educational Series (October 1, 2007)

Exploring Storyboarding

by Wendy Tumminello Publisher: Delmar Cengage Learning; 1 edition (July 16, 2004)

These two books will direct me to draw the storyboard of MV and Documentary, figure out the exactly time that I will finish and make sure the movie shooting in every key frames.

Sell Cartoon

by Pingyun Liu Publisher: Guangdong People Press (September, 2004)

It's like a history book of commercial cartoons. It introduces many famous cartoon brands of the world. Also it talks a little bit about the Chinese cartoon field during recent 10 years.

Website

About.com-Top 50 Cartoon Characters

<http://animatedtv.about.com/library/extra/bltop50.htm>

The most popular cartoon brands in China

http://www.topkt.com/zhuanjiashuping/2007-09-07/952_2.html

Character Business

<http://www.characterbusiness.com/>

It is a small team of design and marketing professionals whose love of characters has led them on a never-ending quest to bring character fun, drama and design to life. It showed me many commercial cartoon character's design and animation.

Cartoon Network

<http://www.cartoonnetwork.com/>

Cartoon Network is home to my favorite cartoons, videos and free online games.

I think the style of their cartoon is the newest one,

Nickelodeon Kids and Family

<http://www.nick.com/>

Nickelodeon is an authority cartoon publishing in the US. I may find the newest animations of the world. Also it shows me a lot of new cartoon characters so that I can figure out what kind of character design is more popular.

Disney

<http://disney.go.com/index>

Obviously, Disney is the most classic cartoon company. Their Mickey is the biggest brand. And Mickey has changed its figure design many times since 1929 to today. I am learning from it how to modify the design style to be more fashionable.

San-x

<http://www.san-x.co.jp/home.html>

It is a Japanese cartoon company. They created the most famous character-HelloKitty. I have been looking for the reason why HelloKitty was so popular in the world and trying to learn how to marketing a new character.

The Field of Design

Book

Toys: MTV Overground #3

by Jim Crawford Publisher: Universe (May 2, 2006)

MTV and Universe are launching the newest release from MTV's Overground series. This comprehensive book celebrates the latest in toy design. It will help me to know how to direct a cartoon MTV by the newest character design.

Pictoplasma: Characters in Motion 2

by Peter Thaler, Lars Denicke Publisher: Pictoplasma (November 30, 2007)

This is a survey of the best contemporary character design in animation. It gave me highly instruction about how to add cartoon design into motion graphics.

Motion Blur: 2: Multidimensional Moving Imagemakers

by onedotzero Publisher: Laurence King Publishers; Pap/DVD edition (November 8, 2007)

This book features 27 international filmmakers who are exploring the evolving possibilities of motion graphics, broadcast design, digital film effects, and animation. It is a good reference book that teaches you how to design Motion Graphics.

Project Description / Methodology

Interactive Website Design (Dec 19th 2009 – Apr 14th 2009)

This is the core part of my thesis. I will design a 3D environment website that will combine 2D and 3D images. It will include 9 sections: News&Media, Movie, Document, Generator, Download, Product, Shop, Contact and Secret. In this website, every button is a moving Tremo, and graphics always change in different time. It includes four seasons, seven times of day (early morning, morning, noon, afternoon, evening and midnight) and holidays (New Year, Valentines Day, Halloween and Christmas). During the midnight, every Tremo will sleep. They will tell you “It’s time to sleep” “Why do you sleep so late?” if you click them, and the News&Media section will close. But the Secret section will tell you “Come here, I will show you something”, and this section only open at midnight.

News&Media: Showing Tremo’s news, like a Blog.

Movie: Showing a 2D Animation (1minute using Flash and After Effect) and Title Promo (20 second using motion graphics)

Document: Introduction of original 10 characters (image and description)

Generator: Creating your favorite characters by yourself. Also you can print the image and book the toy and buy it online. (Example:

<http://mysackboy.littlebigplanet.com/>) (3 basic models)

Download: User can download wallpaper and icons here.

Product: I will show the 3D Tremos product model that I design in Maya.

Shop: Online store (just a model).

Contact: My contact information

Secret: I will put my design drafts and idea of Kethelavia. By the way, it just shows at midnight and disappears of 6:00am.

Graphic Design - 8 weeks (Dec 19th 2009 - Feb 6th 2009)

Software: Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop

*** 2D Character Design (Dec 19th – Jan 16th)**

There should be a large number of characters in my whole story.

In my thesis design, I will design 10 Tremos with model sheet.

• Logo, Logotype (Jan 16th – Jan 19th)

Kethelavia and Tremo

• Environment Design (Jan 20th – Jan 30th)

spring, summer, fall, winter, early morning, morning, noon, afternoon, evening ,midnight, New Year, Valentines Day, Halloween and Christmas (14 Pic)

• 12 Wall papers +11 icons (Jan 31st – Feb 6th)

Wall papers: 12 month calendar =10 characters for ten month and other two months are Tremo's group photo.

Icons: computer, document, favorites, pictures, movies, music, library, tools, folder, trash-empty, trash-full,

- 2D Animation (Feb 7th – Feb 20th)
- The story is about a dream of a little girl called Coffee. Coffee is an introvert. She is shy and does not have friends. One day, She went into a secret forest called Kethelavia. She met a kind of creature called Tremo and befriended with them. Then Coffee started her amazing story with Tremos...

Storyboard (Feb 7th – Feb 14th)

Editing (Feb 14th – Feb 20th)

- 3D Character Model (Feb 20th - March 1st)

3 basic figures with assistant objects

Section: head, body, hands, feet, background (every section has 5 objects)

- Products Design (March 1st – March 6th)

The design will show on 3D Model

T-Shirt (12), Watch (12), Cup (12),

Programming 9 weeks (March 7th – Apr 14th)

Title promo - 4 weeks (Apr 15th 2009 - May 20th 2009)

Software: AfterEffects, Flash, Maya

In this part, I will design a 20 second motion movie that combines 2D and 3D elements.

Limitations

If I can't finish the thesis planning on time, I will continue my study to October 2009.

If I can finish early, I will design a Branding Guideline book and some products by 3D model.

Implications of the Research:

Since cartoon business is the beginning part in China, the Chinese government encourages and supports this field now. Companies are looking for more powerful designers join them and making diversified economy for promoting, add a strong enough influence already. My characters could create a good marketing opportunity easier than other native brands.

Marketing Plan:

I plan to take my design to participate some professional conference below:

Tokyo International Anime Fair

The 5th China International Cartoon And Animation Festival

Comic-Con International: San Diego

Target Audience

Age	Teenager
Gender	Male/Female
Ethnic background	High school
Experience with my subject	Familiar with cartoon
School Experience	Higher than Primary school
Geographic Location	Beijing/Shanghai/Shenzhen
Interests and Hobbies	Cartoon/PC or Video Game/Comic/Fashion

Hardware Requirements

- Macintosh G5
- Mac OS X10
- 750GB free disk space and 1GB main memory
- Sony HANDYCAM DCR-SR82

Bibliography

The Museum of Broadcast Communications

<http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=cartoons>

Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix_the_Cat

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rayman_Raving_Rabbids