WHY CHARACTERS EXIST

- Try to think of a story without characters.
- Most narratives involve sequences of events that happen to someone.
- No characters means no dialogue, no point of view, and no frame of reference for events.
WHY CHARACTER DESIGN MATTERS

1. Think of your favorite animation
2. What made it so enjoyable?
3. The quality of the characters can make or break an animation
THE AUDIENCE WILL WANT TO KNOW...

- WHO?
- WHAT?
- WHEN AND WHERE?
- WHY?
- HOW?
WHO IS THIS CHARACTER?

- Establish a basic identity
- Protagonist, antagonist, parallel, foil?
- The story you want to tell determines what character(s) you require
WHAT DOES THE CHARACTER LOOK LIKE?

- THE CHARACTER’S OUTWARD APPEARANCE

- PERSON, ANIMAL, TALKING TOASTER, SENTIENT PLANET?

- APPEARANCE OFTEN GIVES THE FIRST IMPRESSION OF A CHARACTER

- THINK OF THE VISUAL MESSAGES YOU WANT TO CONVEY
WHEN AND WHERE DOES IT EXIST?

- Story setting can be a major factor
- Elements such as time period, geography, or visual style can affect the character’s traits
- The character can fit in, or it can be a “fish out of water”
WHY DOES IT ACT THIS WAY?

• THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF CHARACTER DESIGN

• CONSTRUCT YOUR CHARACTER’S PERSONALITY, HOPES, DREAMS, DESIRES, STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, QUIRKS, FLAWS, ETC.

• THESE ARE THE CHARACTER’S MOTIVATIONS, AFFECTING RESPONSES TO EVENTS AND OTHER CHARACTERS
How does it treat others?

- Vital in stories with multiple characters
- Relationships can highlight character traits
- How would they react to each other?
- How these change over time can be the story's main component!
Capture the Character in Action

- A great brainstorming tool
- The more you draw your character, the easier it is to define the character's internal aspects
- Also allows you to refine the character's appearance
DON’T FORGET TO HAVE FUN!

- The design stage is your chance to experiment!
- Don’t be afraid to try many different approaches to a character
- Even rejects offer valuable information
THE CHARACTERS OF “RUMBLE IN THE ROSES”
THE STORY

& A PETTY DISPUTE OVER A ROSE LEADS TO CATASTROPHIC RESULTS

& THE RESULTING REQUIREMENTS:

& A GARDENER INTENT ON KEEPING THE ROSE IN TIP-TOP CONDITION

& SOMEONE INTENT ON WILTING THE ROSE, AND HAVING IT STAY THAT WAY

& THE HIDEOUS RESULT OF THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE AFOREMENTIONED CHARACTERS
NANOVIE

- THE LITTLE CARETAKER OF THE ROSEBUSH
- VISUALLY SPEAKING, NOT YOUR AVERAGE ANGEL...
- A SYMBOL OF LIFE-GIVING: NURTURING, SWEET, CHEERFUL, PERSISTENT
Initial Design
The Redesign

- More expressive eyes
- Rounder fingers and toes
- Less horn-like “ears”
- Eventually reverted back to two toes
THE FINAL RESULT
MICROMORT

- A short grim reaper who lets nothing get in the way of business

- Also proof that inspiration can come from the strangest places...

- Embodying death: quiet, stern, dark, determined
INITIAL DESIGN

Front

MicroMort

Side

- Black Robe
- Oversized Scythe
- Arms not visible unless raised
- Scooching Walk
THE REDESIGN

- WIDER SKULL TO ACCENTUATE SHORT, SQUAT LOOK
- MORE YELLOWISH BONE
- SCYTHE SPIRAL EVENTUALLY MADE TO CURL UPWARDS
THE FINAL RESULT
THE ZOMBIE ROSE

BY THEIR POWERS COMBINED, IT’S AN ABOMINATION!

IMPLIES THE POWERS OF LIFE AND DEATH WERE NOT MEANT TO CLASH

WHEN YOU THINK “ZOMBIE”: DECAYING, UNNATURAL, DRIVEN BY HUNGER, AGGRESSIVE
INITIAL DESIGN

ZOMBIE ROSE

Browny-red for mid-decay

Leaves for limbs

Green spell for saliva (ew!)

Yeah, this is one big zombie

Smashes make it angry

Not sure how this happens...

Roses are smaller mouths
ROAR!

GRRRR...

Under the petals...

Squash!
(more like "close petals")

Stretch!
THE REDESIGN

- LESS GREEN, MORE BROWN
- MORE RAGGED-LOOKING BLOSSOM
- THE WHOLE ROSEBUSH IS DECAYED
- BROWNISH TEETH TO BETTER MATCH THE LOOK

Zombie Rose Mk. II
"The Crawler"
ALTER NATE APPROACH

Zombie Rose Mk. III
"Dragon Bloom"
THE FINAL RESULT
QUESTIONS?