

March 02 2020

# Moving Cluster

Project 02

YSDN 4002 TYPE IN MOTION

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IDEATION

Preface and Other Ideas

For this project, I focused on creating something using a character rig. I believed that we couldn't use footage and generated all of the content using native After Effects and Illustrator. I focused mainly on the effect and the way to represent typography in a novel and interesting. I went through a long and arduous iteration process, limiting myself mainly to songs and lyrical videos.

I was looking at different examples and originally, I wanted to pick a death metal song in order to build harsher tones and distorted vibes. However it was difficult to find a good song with breakpoints at the time limits as death metal usually has a lot of constant noise. I was trying to figure out a good approach, trying to figure out if I should have an overall effect on the type or create different typographic effects based on the words being said. In the end, I went with the former as it created better cohesion in the piece.

Some songs that I created ideas for included, "Last Time" by Moderat, "Reminder" by Moderat, "Gesthemene" by Dry the River, "Sea Castle" by Purity Ring, "Doomsday" by Architects, "Cardboard Box Spaceship" by Little Image, "Gravity" by A Perfect Circle, "Bodyache" by Purity Ring, "Exit Music (For A Film)" by Radiohead, "Lift" by Radiohead, "Freefall" by Northlane, "The Missing Steps" by Sleep Party People, "Another World" by Sleep Party People, "Rio" by Hey Marseilles, "Circle" by Half Moon Run, "Return to Earth" by The Contortionist, "Black Waters" by Son Lux. and "Transcendence" by Lead Hands.

The goal was to pick a song that had a darker and fringe aesthetic to it then what usually may be heard in class. However, for this project I spent a bit too much time trying to find the right song and sorting through my research and ideas, and in the end had less time for other priorities. Although, I did really enjoy this project and learned a lot of new techniques and new methods of time management.

“MOVING CLUSTER” BY SLEEP PARTY PEOPLE

From the album Lingerin Pt. II, Joyful Noise Recordings, Released 2018

I chose this song because it was at a good volume level with interesting lyrics that evoked a bit of a creepy and dreamlike feel while still maintaining a strong beat with more or less, understandable lyrics. The song also had a really good beginning and end with a harsh synth noise that repeats at the beginning and end of the segment. I chose to use hands as it was reminiscent of the artwork for the album created by Roby Dwi Antono, who creates youthful and semi realistic paintings of characters in creepy situations. This has been one of my favourite albums and have been listening to it on repeat for a while now. Initially I wanted to have more of a skin tone palette to reflect on the colours of the album but went with black and white with touches of RGB in order to emphasize colour where it happens. Overall the song had a lot of folly that would not normally appear in a popular song and felt very dark even with the major chords and positive lyrics. Sleep Party People, aka, Brian Batz, has a very surreal and creepy aesthetic and I thought it would work well with the goopy and stretchy effect as well as the human body parts of my motion piece.



(Left) Artwork for the release of Moving Cluster. (Right) Artwork for the Album Cover



Overall their branding revolves around bunny masks which can be pretty terrifying but reminds us of childhood. Images from Instagram @sleeppartypeople



INSPIRATION

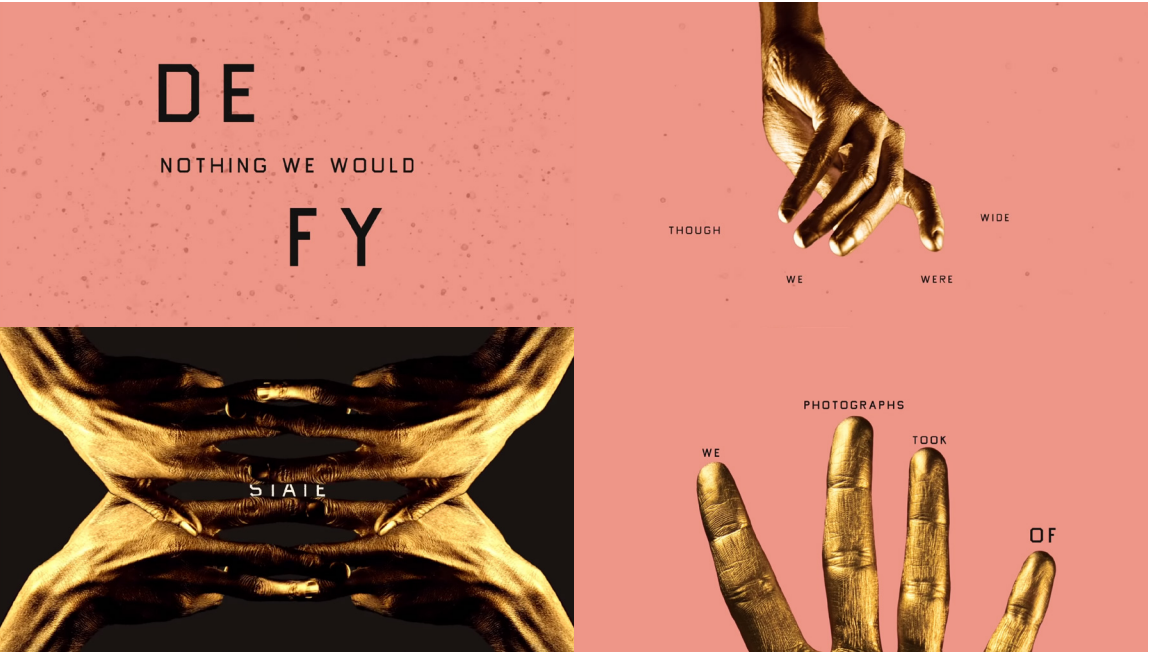
Organics & Rigging

I researched a variety of lyrical videos and different techniques for creating interesting typographic motion pieces. I really focused on creating something that would be unexpected and dynamic that I have not seen before personally. In terms of technical proficiency, I did a lot of research on a ton of techniques in order to come up with the methods I used in the motion piece. What I mainly researched is different methods of lyric videos already done that have interesting ways of revealing type. I was also greatly inspired by the colourful animations of Oddfellows, which had a lot of characters and dynamic elements and transitions.

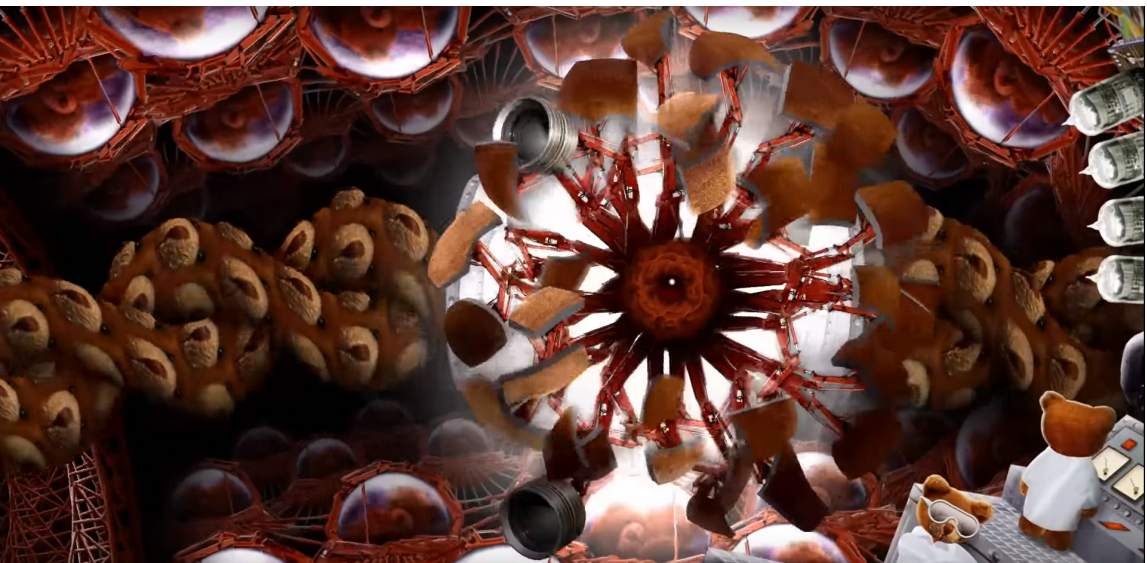
In terms of typography, the work of Nevan Doyle really inspired me as it was very bright and colourful and incorporated a lot of stretching and smearing. I really like the ripping of the text which I tried to emulate with the colourfull matte of the stretching text in my motion piece. His work also felt very organic and smooth with a more natural process.

Furthermore, I drew a lot of inspiration from the editing of Cyriak, where objects more into other objects in a creepy fractal like way. I wanted to use this technique to somehow morph the arms that I will create into text. Usually I attempt to make the text seem realistic and add some shading but this time I tried to keep things more or less flat in order to emphasize the strong outlines end edges of the typography.

I went with the concept of creating text from a set of rigged hands created in after effects. However, after critique, I realized that this effect wasn’t working too well and so I changed the primary technique to stretching and dripping and made the hands a secondary, complementary element, either framing or directing the typographic elements. I wanted to experiment a bit more with colour and not have it end up being black and white, but from the moodboards and from a visual stand point, I seem to have ended up with black and white compositions again.



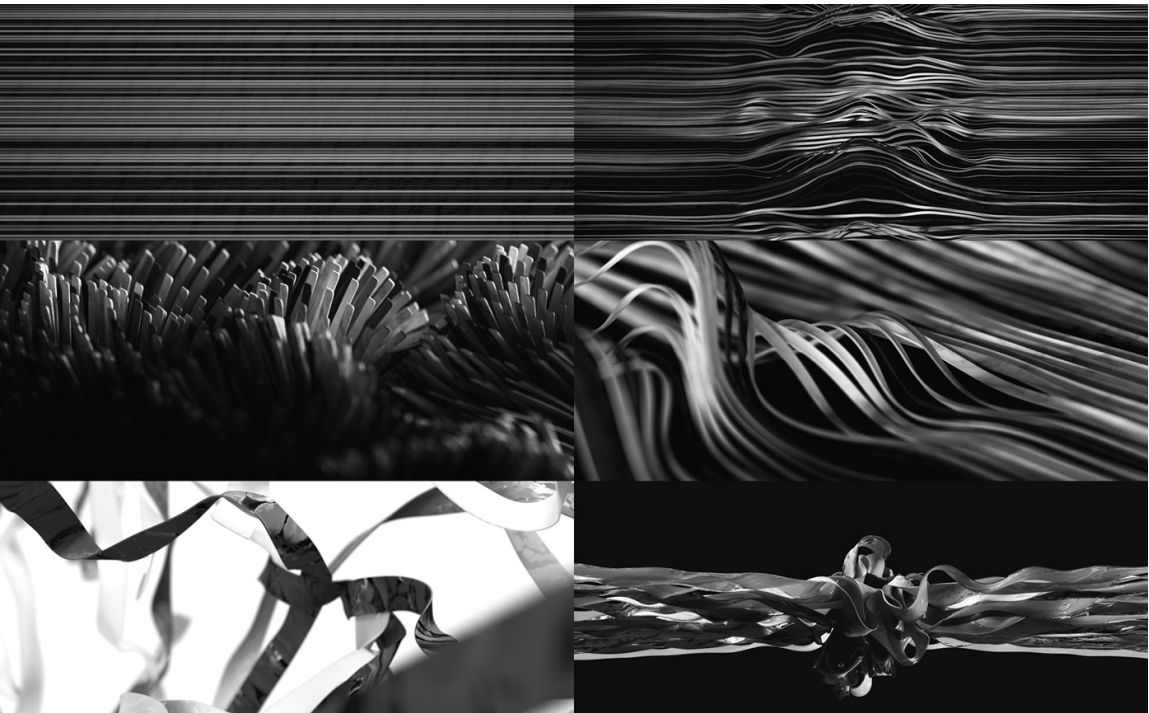
Screen shots of “Dream State” by Son Lux



“Circle World” by Cyriak



“Dreams” by Nero and Zhu



“Movement #1” by Sylvain Gaussens

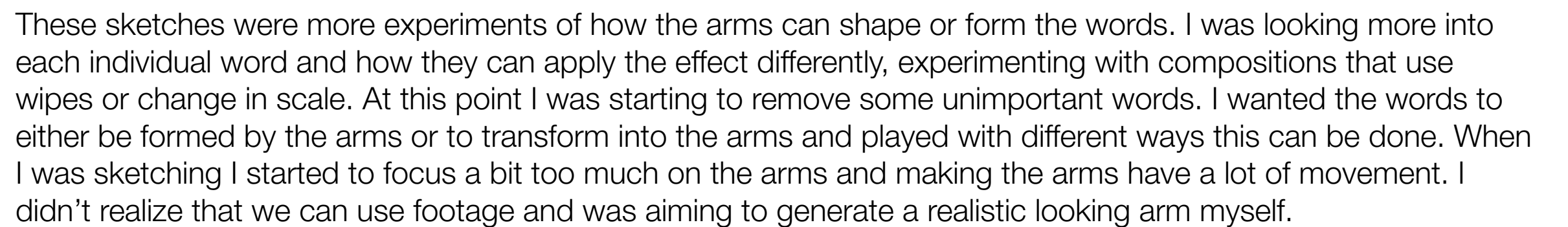




# Moodboard



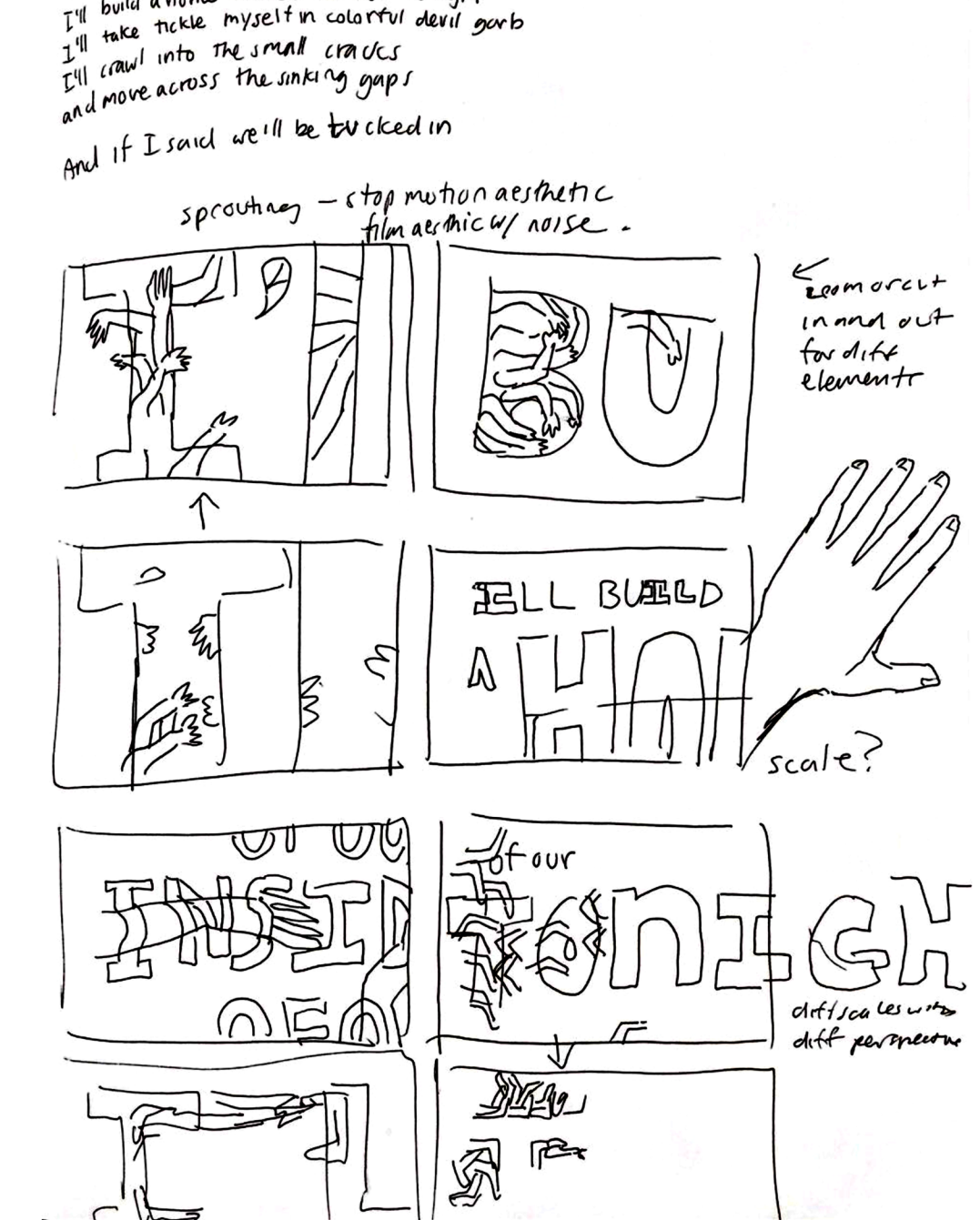
# An Organic Process

[illegible]



SKETCHES

Story Boards



These are the more complete and organized storyboards that I quickly referenced in order to create this project. After critique I realized that creating arms was not enough and incorporated more stretching and splitting. I wanted to be a bit more creative in the layout of the typography but still thought that most text should be centered and clean in order to emphasize the details in the effect. In these sketches, I have the text zooming in in order to reveal the more detailed effect of the arms moving.



TECHNIQUES

Rigging

For the beginning of the process, I sunk many hours learning how to rig characters and use controllers in after effects in order to create a 2D hand that can give off the appearance of depth. This part of the project was more focused on developing skills outside of the project and wasn't as relevant to the typography. This was the first step in created the secondary hand elements, allowing me to fully control the depth, position, rotation of both the fingers and the hands. This control allowed me to give the illusion of depth on the hands and also taught me methods of rigging which I can use later on to create versatile characters or animation set ups.

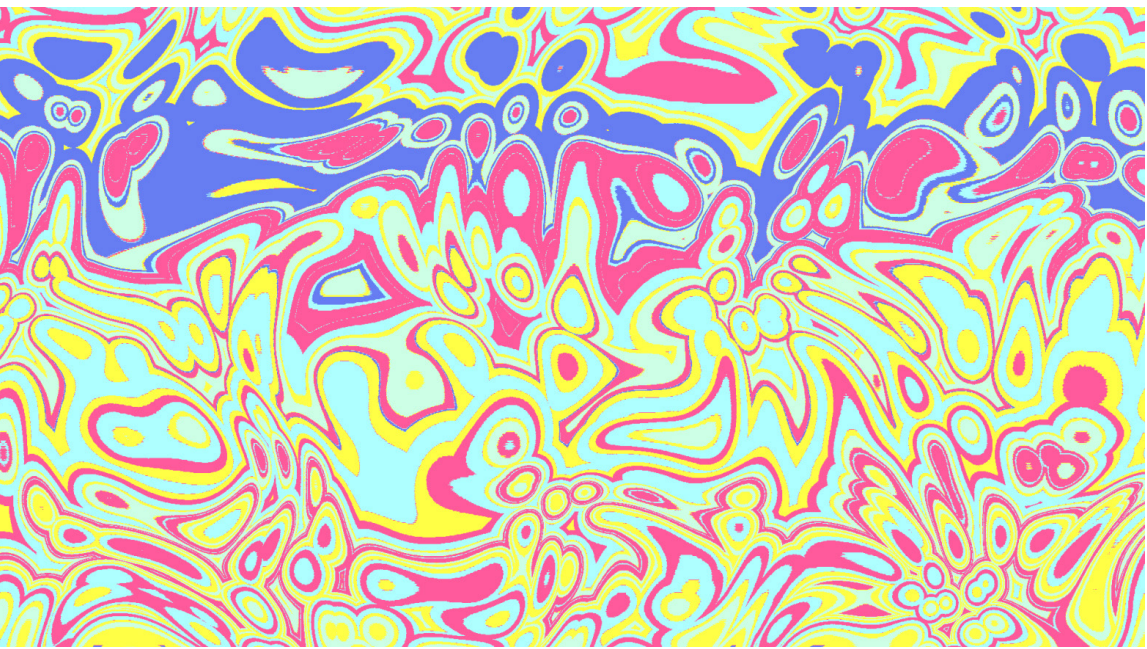
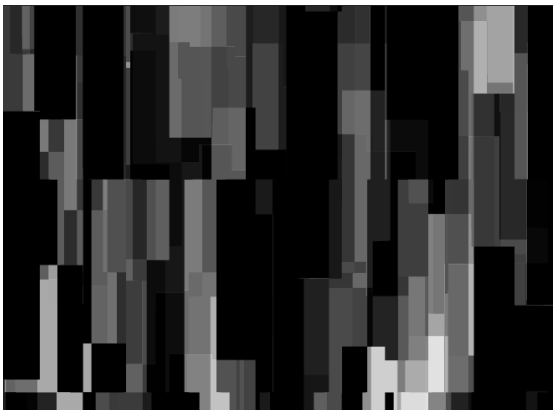
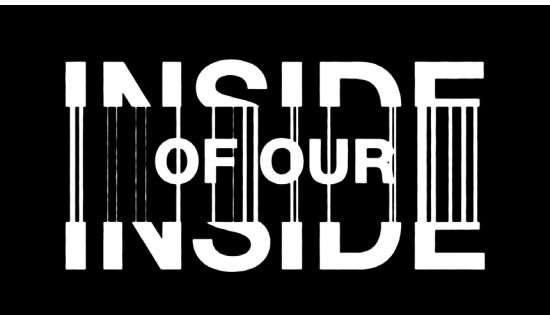
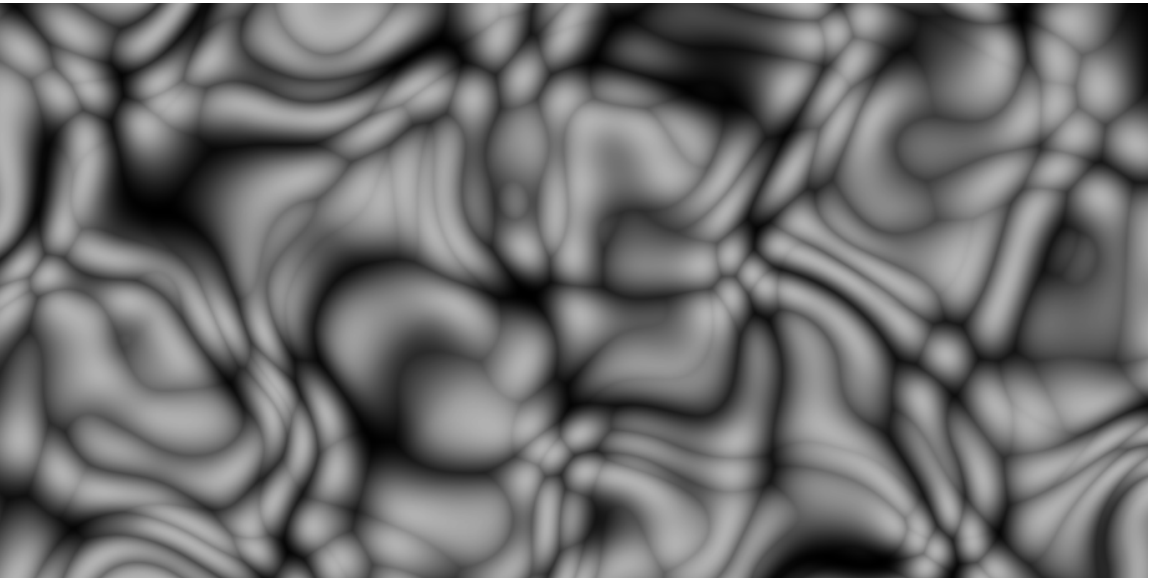
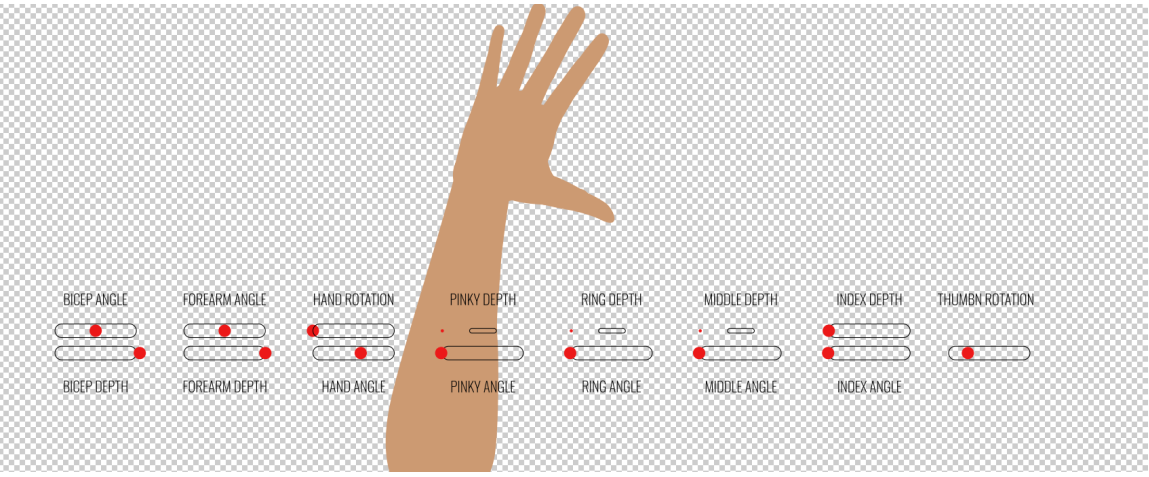
I like to approach after effects with the idea of preserving transformations in a non destructive way. And therefore If I want to copy an effect, or place a new typographic element in, then I can easily do that. Most of the text effects were all copies of 1 effects and just re keyframed to keep the variation up. It is very helpful and saves a lot of time compared to doing a lot of these effects manually.

Mapping

Displacement mapping allowed me to use a greyscale value map to determine the distortion of certain elements in the project. The bottom cells map, with the round textures was used to distort the text that was scattered throughout the scenes. Mapping was done using a fractal noise which controls the strength of how much pixels are pushed around in the composition. I used mapping in order to create the array of colours as well which I think added that cheery feel to the song. I wanted to get that feeling of tryphobia and tried to use much rounder maps with circular elements instead of the straighter fractal map at the bottom.

“Text”uring

Using Text animators and random seeds, I was able to create a glitchy and noisy patterns using the letters of the text remaining on the screen. This also was used to transition between words, adding a little bit of movement to individual letters animating on and off into and out of background blemishes and textures. The text was slightly distorted in order to emphasize the main text more and to make the text a little less recognizable. However, this distortion was also animated making the text slowly lose its shape and form. I brought the text textures around and across the various scenes in the motion piece. All of the little details and spots are different letters from the words used throughout the piece. I think this also added a bit of foreshadowing preparing the audience for certain words, such as the H and M from home in the beginning of the sequence.





ITERATIONS

Stretching

The stretching was done in many layers and precomps so that I can reuse the same assets across the entire project. Precomps are amazing for layering effects. The stretching was done by animated a line from thick and short to long and thin, connected the masked halves of the type together. Then I added a roughen edges to make it feel a bit more organic. For those that felt overly rigid, I added a subtle turbulent displace which is basically a premade and less controllable displacement map.

Overall, to achieve the aesthetic of the colourful text, I layered #4 and #5 on top of each other in order to get #6. This effect allows me to reduce the intensity of the colours which I felt were distracting on the text itself. I wanted the colours to only appear on the smaller lines that make up the stretching effect of the project. This was done by compositing a layer of white on top of the coloured layer and choking the alpha so that the edges would be pushed in. Therefore if the line was too small it would disappear. I then chocked the alpha back out but it only took the larger shapes, thus revealing the coloured details behind it. I think this effect was effective because it complimented the stretching text and made the colours more sparse and thus more special.

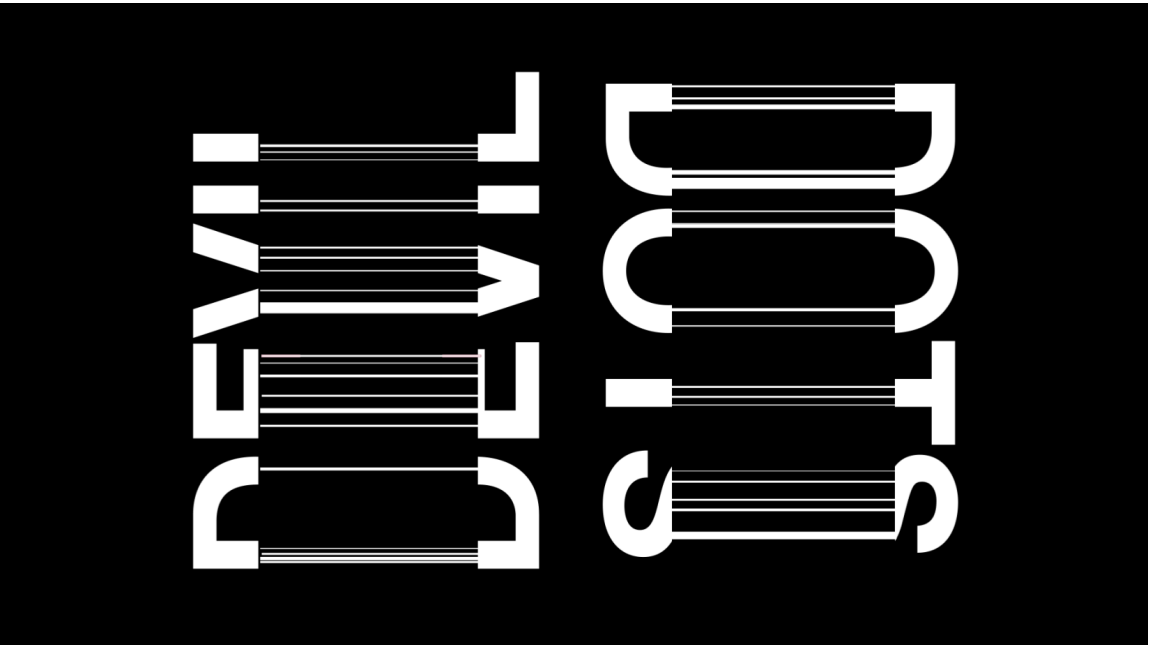
The two images on the bottom are some tutorials I pulled from in order to create the stretchy effect. I could have added a bit of gravity by distorting the precomp by a radial map after the fact but I thought that it was just as effective with straight lines.



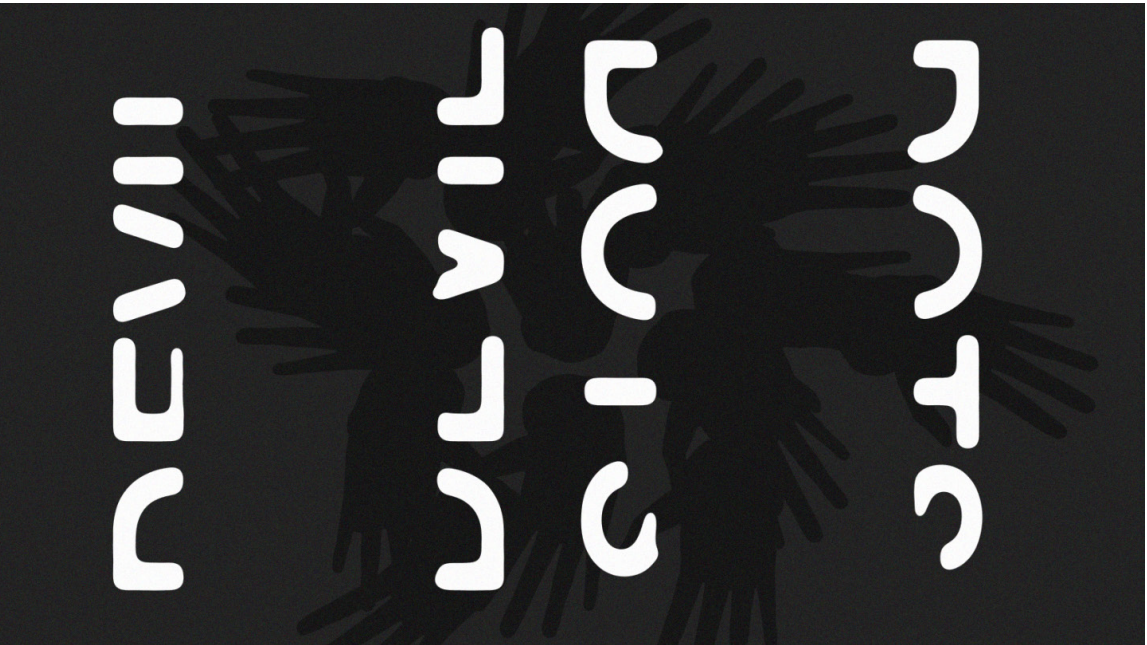
1. Initial Stage



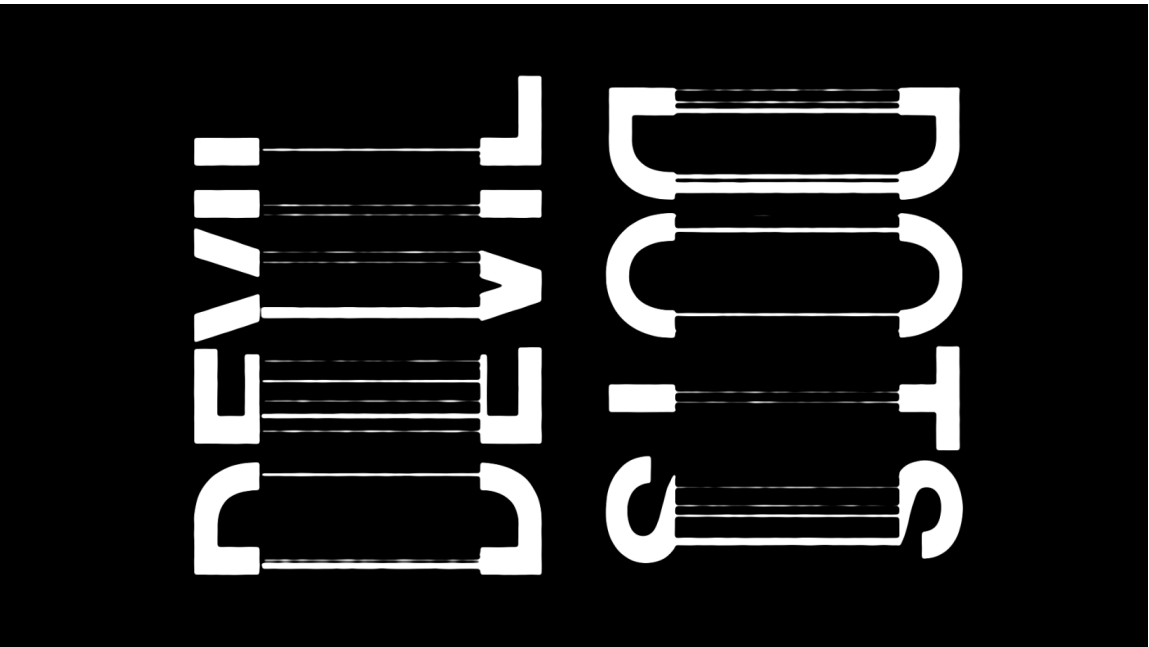
“Movement #1” by Sylvain Gaussens



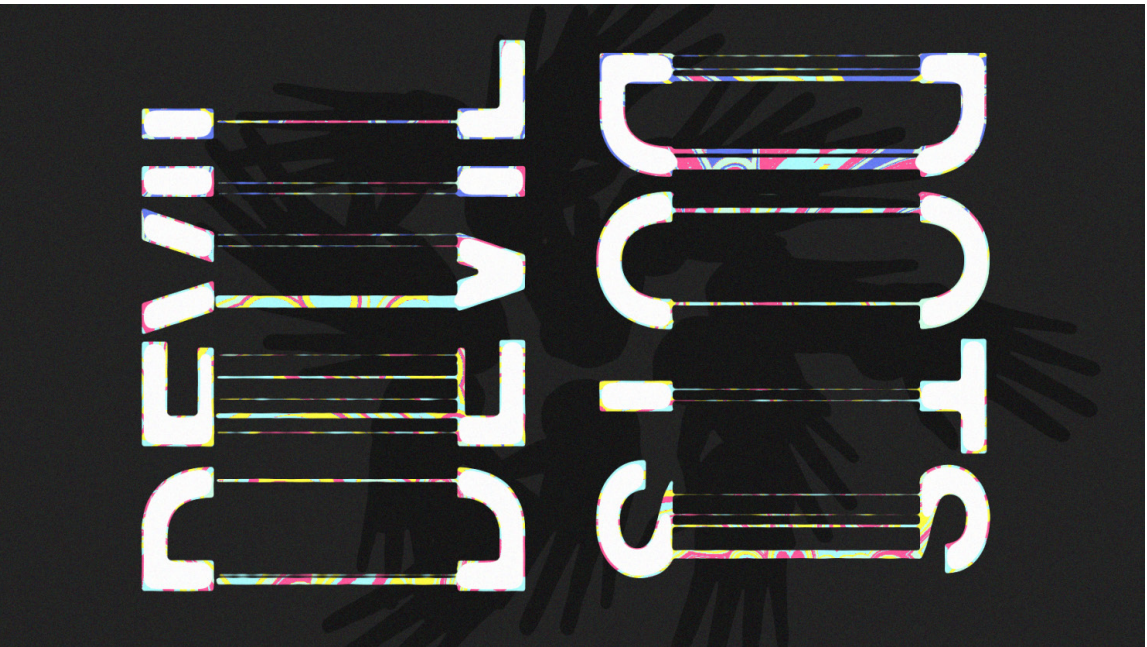
2. Stretch lines



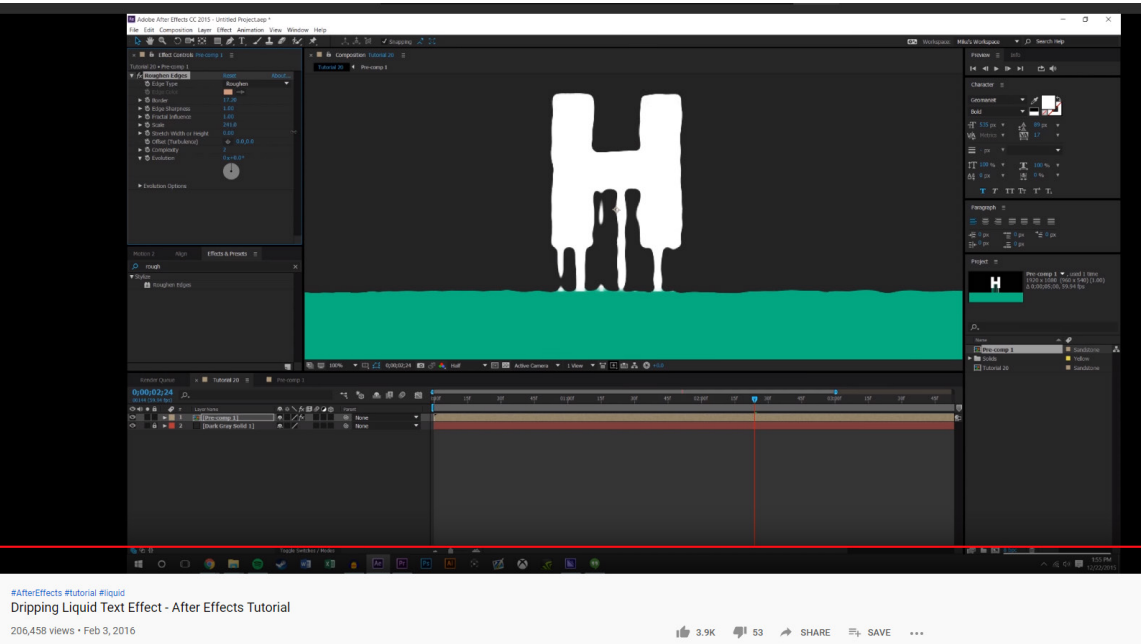
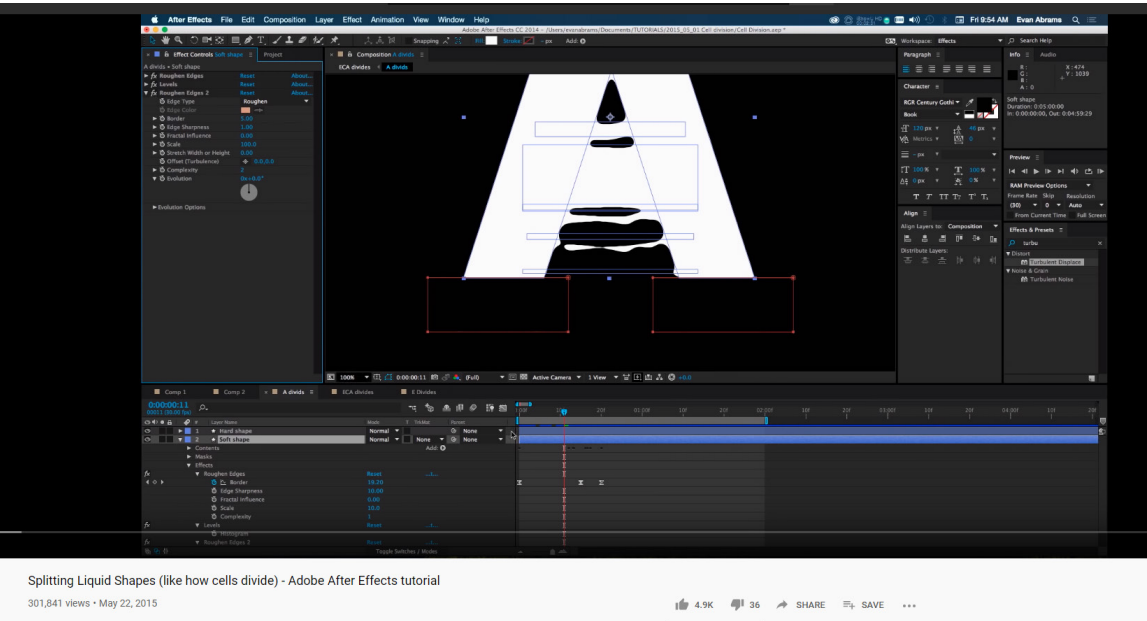
“Movement #1” by Sylvain Gaussens



3. Roughen Edges



“Movement #1” by Sylvain Gaussens







Overall, I think this project turned out great! I love the colours and the aesthetic that the fringing makes on to the white text. I think moving forward I can experiment with different colours besides black and white, and I definitely want to complete the full song one day and add some bunny aesthetic to it so that hopefully, Sleep Party People can appreciate the project.