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BAKOD

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BAKOD

by

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled, <u>BAKOD</u>, is prepared and submitted by John Eric Torres Sendon in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Film and Audiovisual Communication, is hereby accepted.

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ABSTRACT

Sendon, J. E. T. *Bakod,* Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication.

The film tells the story of three hamsters that live together, but stick to their own territories. One day, new hamsters arrive and make the three realize how much better it is to share, help one another, and live together as friends. *Bakod* is an allegory to the dynamics of society where the actions and beliefs of individuals are influenced by their interaction with, and the behaviour of others in the same social system.

In *Bakod,* the filmmaker uses the hamster enclosure as a microcosm of society, and the factors playing include friendship, locality, and social values. Society will only work if all the members are fully integrated, and are working together. There needs to be collaboration among its members for the benefit of everybody, which would not be possible if every individual keeps to himself.

The film is grounded on Virgilio Enriquez's theory of *pakikipagkapwa* which talks about the unity of the self and others, and Erik Erikson's Stages of Development which explores the development of a person's identity based on his interaction with other people.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is about the important points as to how and why the film was made. Everything about the film is relevant to the filmmaker, and it is the purpose of this chapter to expound on the message and concept of the film, the medium utilized in telling the story, the relevance of the film to society and the film industry, the reasons behind every creative decision, and the filmmaker's aspirations for the film.

A. BACKGROUND

The filmmaker has always been fascinated with animation, and has from the start decided to use it as the medium for storytelling. In a world where developments in technology dictate what is best, people everywhere are jumping in the bandwagon of what is popular and current. However, looking at the history of animation, we can see that in every timeline, filmmakers are able to use what's currently available to fully express what they mean to say through the film.

Animation started around 2,000 years ago in China with a device they called Zeotrope, which when spun, made images appear as though they were moving (Lealos, 2011). A similar device was invented by Joseph Plateau in 1831 which was called the phenakistoscope, a disc with a series of images and slots evenly spaced around the center of the disk. In order for the animation to work, the viewer needs to look through a slot in the disk at the reflection of the drawings in the mirror (Kumar, 2013). In 1868, flip books were introduced by John Barnes Linnett, and patented as the kineograph. These are basically books with images drawn near the

edge of the pages. The viewer needs to flip the pages rapidly in order to make the images look like they are moving. In the early 1900s, animation in film started as greyscale pictures having no color and sound. One of the most well-known animators during that time was Emile Cohl, who made "Fantasmagorie," which was considered to be the first animated film. When sound in film was introduced in 1928, Walt Disney saw the opportunity to create something new in the history of animation. During that time, he was working on "Steamboat Willy", which was the third Mickey Mouse cartoon he ever made. With the help of two boys who could read and play music, he produced the first animated film with synchronized sound. In 1932, Disney made the first animation film to use 3-strip Technicolor, entitled "Flowers and Trees", winning himself his first Academy Award. With all the developments in film so far, Walt Disney produces his first animated feature film, entitled "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in 1937. From here, animation continued to develop and flourish all around the world, and different techniques were discovered along the way (McLaughlin, 2001).

At present, different animation techniques have been made available for anyone who wants to venture into animation. Aside from the traditional animation, there is also stop motion animation and computer generated imagery (CGI) animation, in which everything is manipulated using a computer, one frame at a time (Lealos, 2011). CGI animation includes 2-D and 3-D animation, the latter being the preferred style of most film studios at present. In fact, in 2002, Michael Eisner, the corporate Disney CEO closed their 2D animation studio in Burbank. This closing down did not only mark Disney's failure in 2D animation, but also served as a message that traditional animation was at an end, at least in the United States. Outside the country, traditional animation still thrives especially in Europe, where there is a yearly event called

"Cartoon Movie", and Japan, which is well-known for its Anime. Aside from these two, India and China are also venturing into 2D animated films (White, 2010).

Even though 3D animation is currently the most technologically advanced, and preferred way of creating animated films, other techniques are still available, and are waiting to be explored. In the blog "1957 Time Capsule," it is mentioned how John Lasseter explained that it is not the technology that entertains the audience, but the story (Jenny, 2013). This means that without a good material to work on, the medium used will not really amount to anything. With regard to this, the filmmaker decided to focus on 2D animation as the medium for storytelling, even though it is already considered as an "ancient" style (White, 2010).

Aside from the medium, the filmmaker also took into consideration the character design that would be used for the story. Animals have been used a lot in films to portray human characteristics. This process is called anthropomorphism, which is defined by Collins English Dictionary as the "attribution of human form or behaviour to a deity, animal, etc." The role of anthropomorphism in storytelling is described as a "deliberate warping of reality to suit the ends of the story that needs to be told. Animals are assigned personalities and physical features to help them undertake the needs to the actions in the narrative." (Jardim, 2011, p. 9). Using this process, the animal characters are used to make powerful messages become easier to understand. In line with this, the filmmaker decided to use hamsters as the characters in the film, specifically the dwarf hamsters, which are sociable animals.

Dwarf hamsters are sociable animals. Unlike Syrian hamsters that are used to living solitary lives, dwarf hamsters prefer to be in the company of its own kind. This distinction between the two kinds of hamsters led the filmmaker to create a story about dwarf hamsters living together in the same enclosure.

B. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION

The filmmaker chose to make an animation film about hamsters living inside an enclosed setup in order to show how society works on a basic level. The enclosure serves as a spatial representation of society, with the hamsters, having varying personalities, as its members. The filmmaker wants to show how society will only work when all of its members engage in a relationship that is at the very least civil and friendly in nature. Every action that each member of society does triggers a feedback or reaction from the other members, and there is developed a structure and routine that is grounded on familiarity with each other. When the members keep only to themselves, their growth is very limited, and they will not be able to realize their full potential. Self-actualization does not happen in isolation. It involves human interaction, and going out of one's comfort zone. The self is a very limited entity, and there is a lot to learn in going outside and interacting with other people. In every social system, there should be collaboration between the members, and they should have a common goal that is geared towards the growth of the whole system, and not just for specific individuals.

The filmmaker also took into consideration the medium to be used for the storytelling. The filmmaker used 2D animation for interpreting the concept for several reasons. The simplistic

style used in 2D animation doesn't try to look real, or be as realistic as 3D. It is a gives a sense of distance from reality, emphasizing the fact that film is a form of escape from reality. Aside from this, it also gives more focus to symbolism.

The filmmaker also wants to encourage other people, especially those who are interested in animation to treat each style of animation such as the traditional hand-drawn animation, stop motion animation, 2D and 3D animation as art forms, regardless of the advancements in technology. Each one of these animation styles can be fully utilized in telling a story, and in creating a good film. Another important reason why the filmmaker used animation is to cater to a wider audience. Through the use of colors, and utilizing the cuteness of the characters, the filmmaker hopes to catch the attention of both children and adult, and make it easier to relay what the film is trying to say. The filmmaker hopes to balance the seriousness of the story by the colorful scenes, cute characters, and the up-beat musical score.

C. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There have been very few animated films being shown in the local cinema, and a lot of artists in the Philippines that are doing animation are focused on gaming, if not working for international companies. While it is good that the local talents are recognized internationally, it would also be better to develop the appreciation of the craft locally by producing more animated films and making them available to the local public.

In line with this, the filmmaker looks forward to contribute to the development of Philippine animation with the help of the film, and to encourage more people, especially the younger generation to venture into this art form, most especially 2D animation. The filmmaker hopes to follow the steps of other countries such as Europe, Japan, India and China in continuing the tradition of 2D animation. Hollywood no longer produces 2D, declaring it as dead after helping it grow and mature for over 100 years (White, 2010). However, the filmmaker believes that it still has a lot to offer, given a chance to flourish again.

In the Philippines, animation only started in 1986 with the TV series, "Panday", by Gerry Garcia, who also brought to life the first Filipino full-length animation film entitled, "Adarna" in 1997, and "Urduja" in 2008. While there were many talented individuals in the Philippines who were into animation, most of them worked for international companies, using their talents for other countries. Even local companies are focused mostly on outsourcing, instead of contributing to the local animation history (Barrios, 2011). There is not much to know about the Philippines' animation history, but if the local talents were to start now, there is a lifetime supply of available

material to work on. A lot of the stories told in books have not yet been shown on screen, and the Philippines' rich culture has not yet been fully explored by the local filmmakers. The local talents in animation do not need to follow Hollywood's direction in focusing on 3D animation. While the advancements in technology allow animators to create 3D, it is still difficult to produce one due to the heavy hardware requirements of a quality 3D film. On the other hand, 2D films are easier to create. With this in mind, the filmmaker hopes that the film would urge the local talents to also do their part in helping the Philippine animation develop and thrive more in the years to come. The filmmaker also hopes that more talented animators will be focused in the craft, focused in producing animated films for Filipinos.

In terms of social relevance, the filmmaker wants the viewers not only to appreciate animation more, but also through the film develop a sense of responsibility as a member of society, coming out of their comfort zones, and contributing to the betterment of the community. Social interaction is not just a requirement in order for an individual to be accepted as a part of society. It also serves as a bridge towards understanding among individuals, and their relationships as co-members of the same system. The filmmaker also wants the audience to see where they stand in society, and develop their own self-concepts and perceptions. Hopefully, the film would inspire the viewers to reflect on their views of themselves as well as of other people in society, to grow more in the aspects of friendship and togetherness, and come out victorious in every conflict of life. Sharing with other people and helping them does not hinder personal growth. On the other hand, it contributes to the self-actualization of every individual.

The filmmaker is aware that rodents are considered pests in some countries, and that they are also being used in laboratories for scientific experiments. However, it is the wish of the filmmaker for the viewers to have a different opinion of hamsters. He wants to encourage them to see these cute little creatures as living beings, deserving of proper care and love. Based on the input of different members of the online pet groups, a lot of people do not like hamsters because they think that they are biters, and might contain rabies. This is not true at all. Hamsters are tamed very easily, and can be really entertaining to have as pets. In line with this, the filmmaker wants to encourage the viewers to also be part of the growing community of pet lovers in the Philippines and elsewhere in the world. It is the desire of the filmmaker to also reach out to them, and through the film strengthen their interest.

Through *Bakod*, the filmmaker also wants to show that even though some hamsters are able to live in a group, they also need to be properly introduced to each other, just like human beings in a new environment. Without proper introduction, the hamsters would just fight, and there would be instances of death. Whenever these kinds of situations happen, pet owners would think that hamsters are barbaric creatures, and they are bad. They do not know that while these are intelligent beings, they also have animal instincts, which can be controlled by proper handling. Hopefully, after watching the film, viewers would take the time to research about hamsters and other pets in order for them to have the proper knowledge of taking care of pets.

II. CONCEPT

The film tells the story of three captive-bred hamsters living inside an artificial habitat, prepared for them by their pet owner. The enclosure is big enough to accommodate a lot of hamsters, but the accessories inside are meant to be shared. The hamsters however live separately from each other, and only stick to their own territory. One of the hamsters stays in the hamster wheel, while another stays by the hamster slide. The third hamster, which was the newest of the three, lives behind a fence, where most of the food is placed. One day, new hamsters arrive and try to make friends with everyone, making the three realize how much better it is to live together as friends, and share everything.

At the onset, the film is a simple narrative about the lives of three different hamsters living inside an enclosure. We see the routinary life of each of the three hamsters in each of their own territories. As the story unfolds, however, we see how the blue hamster watches from behind the fence how the other hamsters are living. We see the longing on its face, and the sadness in its eyes as it contents itself by eating the food that is abundantly provided in his territory.

In the next part of the film, we see three new hamsters being placed inside the enclosure. There is a lavender hamster, a yellow hamster, and a white hamster wearing sunglasses. They are dropped from inside a box, and land in the space on the other side of the fence. After briefly checking out the place, the white hamster approaches the other two new hamsters and shake hands with them. Afterwards, they approach the blue hamster, which is the one nearest them. The blue hamster acknowledges them, seeing that they seem to have no ill intention towards him.

The new hamsters then try to encourage the blue hamster to join them in making friends with the other two hamsters in the enclosure. However, the blue hamster shakes his head in refusal. This triggers a flashback of the blue hamster's past experience.

In the flashback, the blue hamster has just been dropped into the enclosure from inside a box. He lands near the hamster wheel, where the brown hamster stays. The blue hamster immediately wants to run in the wheel, and gestures to the brown hamster to let him play. To his horror, the brown hamster attacks him, leaving him bruised and wounded. The blue hamster runs away, and comes upon the purple hamster by the slide. Still shaken from his previous encounter, the blue hamster gets scared thinking that the evil-looking purple hamster will also attack him. The flashback ends with the blue hamster running away from the purple hamster.

In the next part of the film, the newcomers leave the blue hamster to try and make friends with other two hamsters in the enclosure. The blue hamster watches as they leave, and is shocked when the white hamster trips and drops its sunglasses. The blue hamster watches as the white hamster drops to the ground in search for its sunglasses. After finding its sunglasses, the newcomers continue on with their mission.

The new hamsters approach the purple hamster by the slide, and try to make friends. They white hamster tells the purple hamster that they would be enjoying the abundant food supply, and the wheel if they would become friends. The purple hamster thinks for a while, and comes down the slide to shake hands with the white hamster, happiness reflecting in its eyes. The new hamsters, along with the purple hamster then leave to approach the brown hamster by the

wheel. The white hamster also tells the brown hamster the same thing about sharing everything so that everyone will have fun. However, the brown hamster shakes its head in disapproval, and gets angry. The white hamster asks the other hamsters to come near, and tells the brown hamster that if he tries to attack, the four of them will be able to overpower him. The brown hamster is surprised by the white hamster's reaction, and reluctantly agrees to join them. They leave the wheel to approach the blue hamster again. The blue hamster waits behind the fence as the rest of the hamsters approach him. They greet him and wait for him to join them. The blue hamster climbs over the fence and joins the other hamsters.

In the last part of the film, all of the hamsters enjoy the enclosure by playing together, and sharing everything. The lavender and yellow hamsters use the slide with the purple hamster, and the blue hamster runs in the wheel while the brown hamster eats beside it. The white hamster watches them and leaves to get some food by the fence. As the film comes to an end, the white hamster sits behind the fence and eats. It removes its glasses, revealing his undeveloped eyes.

The concept is about society in general, and how people live in their own comfort zones. They have a perceived notion of the people around them, and act according to these perceptions. They give meaning to the interactions they have with others, and build their reality around these meanings. In the film, the filmmaker shows how staying within the small boundaries of one's comfort zone is not enough for an individual to fully enjoy the society he or she is in. It takes social interaction, and going through the process of building a relationship with others members to fully enjoy being a part of society.

At first look, the film would seem to be a story about hamsters just going into their usual routine, and having no problems. However, as the story unfolds, the hamsters are seen adjusting and developing a kind of relationship with each other just like how people do in real life. Through animation, the filmmaker shows how hamsters can be used to portray human relationship. Hamsters are intelligent and sociable animals, and the filmmaker finds it fit to utilize these characteristics in the creation of the film. The premise is based on the filmmaker's own experience with hamsters, supplemented by some studies online, and a hamster book. It was not difficult for the filmmaker to identify with the hamsters' way of life because it is similar to human experience, and the fact that the hamster's reactions to stimuli and situations mirror human behaviour made it easy to create characters that people would be able to relate to, and understand.

In the Bible, the Apostle Paul says in one of his writings that we "have one body with many members, and these members d not all have the same function" (*New International Version,* Rom. 12:4). In another, he further elaborates that a "body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body" (1 Cor. 12:12). This is analogous to how society has many members, and while all of those members do not have the same function or purpose in life, they have a shared identity as members of the same social system. In the film, the hamsters belong to the same social system, but refuse to acknowledge one another. This is similar to a passage in the Bible that tells us that "if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of

smell be?" (1 Cor. 12:16-17). In society all members play an important role, no matter how small it is.

The film showcases different levels of personalities, which is represented by how the hamsters look like, the expression of their eyes, and the role they are playing. The blue hamster has drooping eyes to show that he is a sad hamster. The white hamster is presented to look cool to add to the believability of his charismatic role, and the brown hamster is designed with red eyes and dark coat in order to give him a villainous look. On the other hand, one of the characters was made to look as if he has a certain personality, but is really not. The purple hamster has a villainous look to it, but in the story, he was not really a bad character, and that the other hamsters only needed to approach him properly. This is an allegory to how people judge other people on the surface.

The film also shows some kind of social structure. We see the brown, aggressive hamster running in the wheel, at the farthest view of the aquarium, the purple hamster running up and down the slide in the middle, and the blue hamster sitting by the fence, sadness apparent on his face. Such hierarchy was not determined by the hamsters' achievements in life, but simply by chance and the fact that the other hamsters were in the enclosure first. Because of the lack of social interaction and proper communication, the three hamsters live without caring about each other, and keep to their own territories.

Another thing to note in the film is the arrival of the newcomers. In the flashback, the blue hamster tries by himself to get a chance to run on the wheel, but he is attacked by the brown

hamster. In another scene, however, we see the white hamster, along with two other newcomers, and the purple hamster confront the aggressive, brown, hamster. The brown hamster eventually gives up, and agrees to share the wheel in fear of having to face the strength of their number. If we compare the two scenes, we will see the importance of the two other newcomers. Without them, the second scene would not be as effective visually because it would not emphasize the strength in numbers.

There is also a character in the film whose role is to be the catalyst for change or unifier in the story. In a lot of movies, this character is played by some ordinary guy with an extraordinary destiny. However, in the film, it is played by someone with a handicap: an eyeless, toothless, white hamster. This is to show that sometimes people tend to underestimate themselves, and live in self-pity, not knowing that someone else is experiencing worse, and overcoming it. This character is important because it shows that success in life is not determined by the advantages or disadvantages we have at the start, but by how we deal with those.

The filmmaker also created the hamsters' world with the implication of a larger, outside world. The hamsters are placed in an aquarium using a box from an unknown owner, and through the glass, the interior of a room can be seen. Just as how the hamsters should not only limit their lives living in their own comfort zones, the society should also see itself as a part of something bigger. This is important because it shows that there is something bigger out there, and that the society we live in is a part of something else. Self-actualization is a continuous process of interaction and realization.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND FILMS

The filmmaker is aware that there are already a lot of academic literature and creative works that have been created and published in the past that speaks about society and togetherness, and that there is also a long list of films that uses animation as the medium in interpreting stories. The filmmaker acknowledges that *Bakod* is merely an addition to this existing pool of works. In this chapter, the filmmaker takes a look into some of these works that are relevant to his own.

A. Academic and Creative Literature

The filmmaker was able to study two previous thesis works that speak about society and its people. These two theses got the attention of the filmmaker because while they speak about two different sides of society, the combination of these aspects in a way sums up society as portrayed in *Bakod*.

World Ipis (Barrameda & Ubaldo, 2012) is about a cockroach that gets tired of being treated as a pest. He gathers his fellow cockroaches in order to cook up a plan for revenge against humans. In the end however, he dies after being sprayed with insecticide, and his plans result to nothing. This thesis reflects the hierarchy and social order that exists in a social system. It explores the power struggle between the marginalized sectors of society and the elite, and how the minority try to be heard, but fail to be understood by the majority. In this thesis, the division between social classes is emphasized.

Isang Juan (Raynera & Grajo, 2008) is a short animated thesis film about *bayanihan*, a popular Filipino trait that highlights group effort in order to accomplish a task. The story revolves around Juan who tries to build his house on his own, with the help of machines. However, he does not succeed and things get messed up. In the end, his neighbors come and help him build his house. In this thesis film, the positive side of society is being showcased. This is important because it shows that in the Philippines, togetherness is a part of the society's structure. Even though at present, social classes exist, and there are marginalized sectors everywhere, there are people who have not forgotten the important values that the Filipino people are supposed to have such as togetherness, respect, and helping one another.

The filmmaker also came upon a study online that was used in an educational conference in Australia entitled *The Playground as a Microcosm of Society* (Burke, 2010). This presentation is very similar to what the filmmaker is trying to say through his film because it also presents a spatial environment as a microcosm of society. In the presentation, Burke starts by saying that the playground is a place that mirrors society. She further elaborates that the playground is the gathering place for children who are not necessarily familiar with each other, where they learn about social values through interaction with each other. This kind of social environment helps develop the children's attitude and values regarding a lot of things. They get the idea of community life through their interactions with children outside the home or school. The presentation also speaks about how disability is socially constructed and that in order to overcome disability, the barriers to participation need to be removed. The physical condition of

individuals does not disable them. It only shows their functional limitation, and as long as there is something provided to overcome that limit, disability ceases to exist.

Timothy Goes To School (Wells, 2000) is a book about a raccoon named Timothy who is excited about going to school. However, in school, he meets Claude who becomes the center of all praise and attraction. Timothy feels down because Claude teases him, until he meets Violet, who also has the same problem like him. Violet feels down because of Grace, who can sing, dance and do a lot of things well. The two students find comfort in the fact that they are not alone, and together they laugh at how silly it is to feel down because of their imperfections. In the end, the two kids become friends.

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten (Fulghum, 1989) is a book of short stories about the lessons that are learned in the kindergarten classrooms. The book speaks about the basic things that people learn in kindergarten, and sometimes forget once they grow and face the "real world". In the book, Fulghum explains that if adults would go back and apply the basic rules as set in kindergarten, the world would become a better place. In the first essay of the book, Fulghum lists these basic rules, which include sharing everything, playing fair, not hitting people, putting things back where they are found, and other basic things like taking a nap in the afternoon, holding hands and sticking together.

The two books both speak about the early stages of life experiences. *Timothy Goes To School* (2000) shows that at an early age, children already experience conflicts, and there is already some kind of social order formed even in a place like the school or playground. It also shows the importance of identifying with somebody else, and making friends. In the midst of

insecurity, knowing that there is someone you can relate to, and who you can be yourself with is important. *All I Really Need To Know I Learned In Kindergarten* (1989) shows that the basic things that are learned in the kindergarten class are also the same things that can be applied in the adult life. In the book, Fulghum says that we can take any of the rules learned in kindergarten, and apply it in whatever situation we have in our lives, and it would still hold true. He also emphasizes how it is best to hold hands and stick together, no matter how old people are. This example of interdependence is also one of the main points in *Bakod*. It is also one of the key ingredients in building a society. Man is a social being, which means that interpersonal relationship is essential to his life.

B. Films and Creative Works

1. Animals in Film

Animal Farm (Halas & Batchelor, 1954) is an animated film based on George Orwell's book of under the same name. The story begins on a farm where the animals are tired of how the farmer always takes away what they produce. Because of this, the animals start a revolt and drive the farmer away. The farmer tries to get back on them with the help of other humans, but the animals are able to fight them. With the farmer now gone, the animals work together to achieve equality among them. However, things change and the animals that are given leadership positions become corrupted and selfish. The pigs in particular feel that they are superior to the other animals, and thus deserve more. The other animals realize that even though they have

kicked the farmer out of the farm, the same thing is still happening, and the animals again unite in order to overthrow the pigs' rule.

Among the films that the filmmaker has reviewed, *Animal Farm* (1954) is very set apart because it is used as a social commentary, and does not focus on personal issues. It does not delve on family problems or personal relationships alone, but how there is a power struggle existing in society. The film is used as a social critic, and has a very serious in comparison to the animated films produced for example by Walt Disney Pictures, or Pixar. On the surface, it may seem to be a cute story about animals living in a farm, but once you go deeper into the film, you will see that it is more than just an animal story. The filmmaker likes this film in particular because this is the direction that *Bakod* also wants to go. Although the filmmaker uses cute hamsters as the characters, he wants to show that there is something deeper to see beyond the surface of the film.

In the next two films, the filmmaker would like to look into animals that have experienced living in captivity. In one of the films, the animals were born and raised in captivity, while in the other; they were captured to become pets.

Madagascar (Darnell & McGrath, 2005) is a film about a group of captive-bred animals living in a zoo. One day, one of the animals goes missing, which leads the others to break out of the zoo, in order to look for him. In their search for their missing friend, they come aboard a ship bound for Africa. The ship is hijacked, and the animals find themselves in the wild jungle of Madagascar. Not being used to the wild, the animals take time to adjust in the new environment.

During this time, the animals' natural instincts start to return, and they find themselves having to choose between the freedom and dangers of the wild, or going back to the zoo, where they can find comfort, and eat meals regularly.

Finding Nemo (Stanton, 2003) is a film about the journey of a clown fish in search for his son Nemo who got captured by a boat, and sent to a dentist in Sydney, who places him in an aquarium. Nemo meets the other fish in the aquarium, and they become friends. However, the fish discovers that Nemo would be given to the dentist's niece, who was known for killing her pet goldfish. Because of this, the fish plans an escape in order for them to go back to the ocean. The plan backfires however, and the fish are not able to escape. The dentist prepares to give Nemo to his niece as a present, but Nemo plays dead. With the help of one of the aquarium fish, Nemo was able to escape through the sink's drain and go back to the ocean.

In these two films, we see the difference between captive-bred and captured animals. The captive-bred animals have no problems with living in captivity because it the home they are born into. However, the captured animals struggle to be set free. They find it hard to entrust their lives to the pet owner, and long to be with their families in the wild. On the other hand, the animals, both captive-bred and captured recognize the shared identity they have with each other. In *Madagascar* (2005), they have already considered the other zoo animals to be their family, while in *Finding Nemo* (2003), they acknowledge the fact that they are sea animals captured against their will. Because of this, they are able to act in unity towards a common goal, which is to break free.

2. Changing One's Fate

Another theme in animated films that the filmmaker also wants to give attention to is about going against tradition, and taking control of one's fate. In the next two films, the filmmaker looks into the protagonists' attitude towards the role that has been given to them by the people around them.

Wreck It Ralph (Moore, 2012) is about Ralph, a character in the video game Fix-It Felix, Jr. He plays the bad guy whose role is to destroy things, which Felix fixes after him. One day, there was a celebration for the game's 30th anniversary at the top of the building where the citizens of the game reside. Ralph is not invited, but still went to celebrate with them. The other characters reject him, saying that he should earn a hero's medal first before they acknowledge him. Because of this, Ralph becomes all the more determined to change his role as the bad guy, and be a hero instead. He goes out of Fix-It Felix, Jr. and went to other games in order to get himself a hero's medal. However things turn ugly and chaos breaks out even in other games. In the end, the game characters along with Ralph fix things, and even though Ralph does not get a good guy role for himself, things get better and he becomes closer to the other characters in his own game, even getting a nicer house to live in.

The movie is a good example of the differences between being "the other" and "one of us". Ralph goes out of his own game because even though he was "one of them", the other characters made him feel like he didn't belong with them. While Fix-It Felix, Jr. is the game where he is supposed to be in, it did not give him the feeling of being at home. There was a

certain degree of separation between him and the other characters. Because of this, he tried to go into other games, as an "other". However, despite his efforts of joining and conforming to the rules of the game, he only caused destruction because he simply did not belong there.

This movie can be related to *Bakod* in many ways. They both show the apparent social order among members of a community. Ralph, just like the blue hamster is at the bottom of the hierarchy, while the others enjoy themselves at the top, without any consideration for them. They also have a heroic character in the forms of Fix-It Felix and the white hamster. One thing to notice, however, is that while Ralph alludes to the blue hamster, they have opposite roles. Ralph's role is that of a bully, while the blue hamster is the one being bullied. Both films end with the unity of "the other" and the "one of us" being actualized, and the characters realizing the importance of each individual member.

Brave (Andrews & Chapman, 2012) is about princess Merida who wants to follow her own path instead of becoming the proper princess her mother Elinor wants her to be. Determined to defy her mother's wishes for her life, Merida foils her plans of finding a husband for her, which led to a heated argument and Merida running away; only to come upon a witch whom she asked to create a spell that will change her fate. The witch then conjured a cursed cake for her in exchange for her pendant. Merida thought that the cake will change the way her mother thinks, not knowing that it will change her mother into a bear. As she tries to break the curse, Merida discovered some of the past history of the kingdom, and how not only to break the curse, but also to unite the divided kingdom. According to the witch, the key to breaking the curse was in a form of a riddle, which says, "Fate be changed, look inside, mend the bond torn by pride." At first,

Merida thought that it means she had to mend the tapestry that she tore, but it was really talking about mending her relationship with her mother. In the end, Merida apologizes to her mother and the curse was lifted. Elinor turns human again, with the different clans united again.

The movie is a good example of how every person's individual characteristics may come in the way of achieving a good working relationship with other people. There was a conflict between Elinor's plans of making the perfect princess out of Merida, and the latter's adventurous and free spirit. This conflict led to more problems, which was only resolved in the end through mutual compromise, adjustment, and acceptance. In the movie, there is told a legend of how a prince ruined and divided his own kingdom because of his ambitions and pride. This legend was the basis of how there came to be four different clans in the land.

3. Unity Against a Common Problem

The movie *Seven Samurai* (Kurosawa, 1954) is a period film by Akira Kurosawa. It tells the story of a small village who was anticipating an attack from a group of bandits. Being defenceless and having nothing to offer but food, they sought for samurai who would help them defend the village in exchange for a full stomach. A lot of accomplished samurai turned them down, until they meet Kambei who agreed to help them. Along with a few other samurai, they went to help the villagers. Despite their differences, and not being used to living with each other, the farmers and samurai worked together to protect the village from the bandit attacks. Throughout the film, we see people die because of impulsive decisions made by some greedy individuals, and get to know some of the stories of different characters. In the end, the villagers,

with the help of the samurai were able to defeat the bandits, with most of the samurai getting

killed in the process.

   Bee Movie (Smith, 2007) is an animated film about Barry, a bee who leaves his hive due

to the fact that he does not want to work just one kind of job forever, which happened to be the

way things are in their honey-making company. Once outside, he develops a good relationship

with a human being named Vanessa Bloome. He also discovers how the humans take the bees'

honey and sell them in the market. He immediately goes to work and files a lawsuit against

Honey Farms, which was the company who harvests the bees' honey. During the trial, the

defense tries to show the less-lovable side of the bees, while Barry shows how humans use

smoke machines to drug and subdue the bees. This turn of events lead to Barry's victory, and all

the honey is returned to the bees. Because of the abundance of honey received by the bees, they

stopped from working, and the balance of nature is destroyed. Without the help of bees, flowers

are not pollinated properly, and a lot of plants die. With the help of Vanessa, Barry tries to save

the last of the remaining flowers, and spread the pollens all over the world. The other bees also

helped and they were able to return the balance of nature.

   In the two movies mentioned above, there are two different types of characters working

together in order to defeat the oppressors/overcome the problem. In *Bee Movie* (2007), a bee and

a human being worked together to save the world, while in *Seven Samurai* (1954), villagers and

samurai worked together to save the farming village. In *Bakod*, the new hamsters, along with the

purple hamster confront the brown hamster in the wheel. At first, the brown hamster refuses to

cooperate and share the wheel with them, but when the white hamster indicates their number and strength, the brown hamster gives up and agrees to share in the end.

4. The Unlikely Hero

The animated musical film *The Hunchback of Notredame* (Trousdale & Wise, 1996) is Disney's version of Victor Hugo's classic story. It was somehow altered to cater to a younger demographic, but remains dark and strong, which might not be fit for younger kids. The story revolves around Quasimodo who despite his physical deformities showed great courage and heroism in saving the life of Esmeralda and other gypsies. Even though he was raised by Frollo, the antagonist in the film who tried to imprison his kind, Quasimodo grew to be a kind young man, with a positive outlook and determination in life. Even when he learned the cruel reality of life, he still managed to remain intact and all the more develop to be the hero that he is.

The movie *Shrek* (Jenson & Adamson, 2001) is similar to *The Hunchback of Notredame* (1996) in that it features an unlikely hero in the form of an ogre named Shrek. Unlike Quasimodo however, Shrek preferred the isolation and comfort of his swamp. He was only forced into the life of a hero because of the fairy tale characters exiled in his swamp. Incidentally, this brought something good in his life, and he was able not only to save the world, but also find the love of his life, Fiona.

The characters of Quasimodo and Shrek are similar to that of the eyeless, toothless, white hamster in *Bakod* in that all three of them did not seem to be qualified to become a hero, or a

person to look up to. However, despite their being different and having handicaps, they were able to reach their full potential by coming out of their comfort zones. One thing to notice, however, is the fact that there was no history written for the white hamster. Instead, he is shown as an enlightened individual already. One of the reasons for this is to show that sometimes, people look up to the successful and celebrities, and aspire to be like them, sometimes even becoming envious of them, not really knowing how they achieved that kind status. They only tend to see the surface of things when assessing other people, without considering the hardships that they may have gone through. On the other hand, it is also to show that we do not really need to know what others have gone through. Sometimes acceptance is the only thing needed, just like how the townspeople in *The Hunchback of Notredame* (1996) welcomed Quasimodo's appearance during the festival, and how the yellow and lavender hamsters treat the white hamster normally.

5.   Character Style and Art Form

Going to the way the characters were drawn, there were two notable films, and two television series that the filmmaker was able to look into. In *Shrek* (2001), here are characters that are similar to the eyeless, toothless, white hamster in *Bakod*. These are the three blind mice, made famous by the nursery rhyme of the same name. They are white, blind, and wearing sunglasses. These mice, while blind, were also able to live normally using their other senses, and were considered to be friends with Shrek in the movie series. The difference of the eyeless, toothless, white hamster however, is that it is showcased as more than just a decorative character. It happens to be the catalyst for the coming together of the hamster society.

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In the film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Hand et al., 1937), the seven dwarfs are named after their individual characteristics. Happy is often seen laughing, Sleepy always appear tired, Bashful is often embarrassed when attention is given him, Sneezy has a really powerful sneeze, Grumpy is strict and looks grumpy, Doc wears glasses, and Dopey is clumsy and mute. In relation to this, the filmmaker created *Bakod'*s characters with a certain look that would portray their emotion. The aggressive hamster has a menacing look, red eyes, and dark skin. Another character has sad eyes and blue skin, to emphasize his mood, while another one looks relaxed and neutral. However, one of the characters was drawn to break the stereotype. The purple hamster living by the slide has red eyes and a menacing look. However, despite his appearance, he is shown to be approachable in the end, and easily made friends with the newcomers. This is important in the film because it adds more weight to one of the messages that the filmmaker wants to say through *Bakod*, which is not to judge according to appearance and what one has or does not have.

The animated series *Hamtaro* (Nabeshima, 1997) is about a hamster named Hamtaro and his different adventures with other hamsters of different sizes, shapes, and colors. In every episode, he is seen with his other fellow hamsters going out on an adventure, and making friends along the way. This series is made up of very cute characters, pretty good 2D animation, and a clever script. It also caters to a younger audience, having cute little animals, and the innocence of kindergarten. It is a very adorable show, and showcases how pets are fun to have.

Just like in the TV series, *Bakod* is also about cute hamsters, and making friends. However, as much as it wants to cater to young viewers, it is also speaking to the older ones

through its message of social awareness. Behind the cute facade of colors and little animals, the film is really about society in general. The film breaks away from the usual dosage of mindless cartoons being shown in television that provides humor from idiotic characters and stupid jokes, and yet still be enjoyable. It also hopes that the audience will be able to relate to it in their own different ways.

In the animated series *Adventure Time* (2010), Finn, a 14-year old boy, and Jake, a dog with magical powers go on adventures in the post-apocalyptic land of Ooo. This series is produced using hand-drawn images, and a single episode, running roughly 11 minutes takes around 9 months to complete. This series is one of the main reasons why the filmmaker used 2D animation as the medium for *Bakod*. It proves how an art form is inexhaustible, and that it is how you use it that makes it work, and not how advance the technique is. Using hand-drawn images gives the viewers something more raw-looking, and "imperfect" as opposed to the calculated 3D graphics. In a way, it adds to the entertainment value of the series and allows the viewers to relate more to the art form.

IV. FRAMEWORK

In one of his works on Filipino Psychology, Enriquez (1994) argues that togetherness is the unity of the "self" and "the other". It is recognizing that we have a shared identity with those around us, and emphasizes the equality among members of a society, saying that we are no different from other people. This does not mean, however, that we should see other people as ourselves, and expect them to be like who we are. Everyone possesses individual characteristics that are unique to every person. The important thing is that we understand that while we are all different from each other, we are still all human beings, living together (Enriquez, 1994).

Enriquez (1978) enumerates in detail the stages undergone by "the other" in terms of togetherness. First is *pakikitungo* (civility), followed by *pakikisalamuha* (mingling with other people), then by *pakikilahok* (joining), *pakikibagay* (conforming), and finally *pakikisama* (being united with the group). Being united with a certain group does not mean necessarily mean a person is already a part of that group. Unless "the other" becomes "one of us", a person can only end up with *pakikisama* instead of *pakikipagkapwa*. Enriquez further explains that once a person belongs to the "one of us" category, three more stages are added at which end *pakikipagkapwa* happens. These three stages are *pakikipagpalagayang-loob* (the act of mutual trust), *pakikisangkot* (involvement), and *pakikipagkaisa* (being as one with the others). In going through these stages, people use their inner perception or *pakikiramdam* as a guide, to help them know where their place currently is with regard to relationship with other members of society (Enriquez, 1978, p. 263-276).

In relation to Enriquez's theory of pakikipagkapwa, we will see in the first part of the film that the characters are living together, but still manage to live apart from each other. They operate in a very small space where they avoid conflicts produced from interaction. Risking nothing, they live with only what they have and are not really fully happy. In relation to what Enriquez mentioned in his essay, we will see that the hamsters do not even engage in the most basic form of interaction, and thus do not develop even civility towards each other. They remain inside their own comfort zones, and disregarding the "shared identity" they have with each other. Their growth remains stagnant, and fails to develop and realize their full potential.

In the book *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge,* Berger and Luckmann (1991) define the reality of everyday life as a phenomenon that is dependent on the subjective experience of different individuals living in a specific social system. "The most important experience of others takes place in the face-to-face situation, which is the prototypical case of social interaction." (p. 43). They also emphasize how social interaction is important in the construction of reality. There needs to be at least two individuals and an interchange of meanings through continuous interaction. Each person has a set of meanings and interpretations of things as received by his or her consciousness. With social interaction, there is created a shared meaning of things, and shared experiences that would lead to familiarity between members of the same social system. These repetitive and continuous exchanges of action and meaning, lead to the creation of a shared identity. Every day, people interact with others, and they get into different roles that are played and reciprocated by other members of society. People form habits out of these interactions, until the latter becomes routinary, and are institutionalized by the system as part of the structure of society (70-71). One

thing that is also a result of the creation of meanings is the creation of social order (p. 69).

Through interaction, a person creates a self-image in relation and contrast to another's. Because

of the meanings that people create out of daily activity and interaction, there forms a kind of

order of hierarchy among individuals. There are those people that are perceived to be better, and

some others who are perceived to be inferior (Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

In relation to Berger and Luckmann's theory, we see three levels of living in the film. In

one level, the hamster gets to eat all it wants, with lots to spare. In another, the hamster gets to

run up and down a slide, and hide inside the tower. However, he only has a small supply of food.

In the third level, the hamster gets to run inside the hamster wheel, which is considered to be the

most favourite toy of hamsters, since they love to run. This kind of social order is formed as a

result of how the brown hamster has been living by the wheel before the blue hamster was

introduced to the enclosure, and how the brown hamster didn't allow the latter to use the wheel,

making it settle for the space by the fence instead.

In the process of self-actualization, there needs to be a balance between self and society

in order to fully recognize one's potential. In the *Stages of Life* according to Erikson (1971), it

has been discussed how a person discovers his identity by going through eight different stages in

life. Infancy is a stage of *Trust vs. Mistrust* where the infant experiences being dependent on its

mother for the provision of its basic needs. In this stage the child develops a sense of hope

regarding the reason of his existence, and where he belongs in the universe (p. 96-106). In early

childhood, the person goes through a stage of *Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt* where the child may

grow to develop a sense of strong will and take charge of his life. On the other hand, the child

may become defensive and controlling. This is a result of experiencing shame, and makes the child compulsive and manipulative in nature (p. 107-114).

The next stage is *Initiative vs. Guilt* where the child learns to play and be a part of the family. Here the child learns to develop a sense of initiative and responsibility, and learn to cope with minor obstacles and challenges in life (p. 115-121). The fourth stage is *Industry vs. Inferiority*. This usually starts when the child enters school. His world is no longer about only his family, but now includes the community, and school. In this stage the child may develop a strong personality driven by a sense of competence. However, the opposite may also happen, and the child could develop an inferiority complex due to lack of achievement and seeing how the others are doing (p. 122-127).

In puberty, Erikson said that a person undergoes the stage of *Identity vs. Identity Confusion*. In this stage, the development of the person is highly dependent on his peers, and other groups that would show different kinds of identities which the teenager might possibly try out in order to discover if any of them would fit his personality. There is also a chance however of the person not being able to settle on one as he moves on to the next stage of his life, which is young adulthood (p. 128-135). In this stage, the person experiences *Intimacy vs. Isolation* wherein he or she would seek a relationship with someone in order to share the different aspects of life. On the other hand, the person may also fall into isolation, and the relationship that he or she would have might be that which does not involve intimacy (p. 136-137).

Upon entering adulthood, a person experiences *Generativity vs. Stagnation* where he has to think about what he can contribute for society, and how to can provide and take care of the family. This involves having a job, and mingling with other professionals as well (p. 138). After this stage, the person goes into the stage of *Integrity vs. Despair.* In this stage, all of the things that the person did in the past comes rushing back to him, giving him either a sense of fulfilment, or regret, as well as lessons learned that would result to wisdom (Erikson, 1971, p. 139-141).

Going through all these stages in life does not exactly mean that a person needs to be of a certain age or demographic to belong to a certain stage. Looking at the process, we see that development happens with the involvement of other people, and is dependent on what kind of society he or she lives in. Some people arrive at one stage early, while some get there late. This happens depending on how long people resolve their conflicts, and how their interactions with other people affect them.

In *Bakod,* we see the hamsters unwilling to participate in social interaction with each other. They content themselves with the provisions supplied by their owner, and with the territories they have claimed for themselves. In relation to Erikson's *Stages of Life*, the hamsters can be seen to be at the first stages. The blue hamster's attitude towards the other hamsters in the enclosure is derived from what he experienced on his first day. He thinks that he cannot trust himself to get along with the two other hamsters because of the aggression he received from the brown hamster. Likewise, the other two hamsters also do not trust the blue hamster, not really knowing who he is or what he is like.

With the arrival of the new hamsters, we see how the blue, purple, and brown hamsters' lives are pushed into a different stage. The white hamster, through his efforts of making friends with everybody, was able to take them out of their comfort zones, and start interacting with each other. Because of this, the blue, purple and brown hamsters experience having to cope with being a part of a family, and at the same time develop a sense of identity within the society they live in. In terms of what they have, they also learn how to share and contribute to society. The hamsters experience the conflicts in the other stages of life no longer one at a time, but all at the same time, and are forced into some kind of growth and maturity.

V. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A. PRE-PRODUCTION

The concept was conceived in October of 2011 after buying some hamsters for the first time. There were three different kinds of hamsters back then: Syrian hamsters, Campbell's Russian dwarf hamsters, and Roborovski dwarf hamsters.

There was a dwarf hamster that was sold as a male, but was found out to be a female after it gave birth to three pups. One of the pups is a white hamster, which seemed to be just like any other hamster during its infancy. However, it turned out to be an eyeless, toothless white hamster.

When the hamster grew bigger, they were introduced to other hamsters with the intention of making them live together. It was not easy because some of the other hamsters were bullying the new ones. However, the white hamster did not seem to mind and would just continue running and running and playing inside the cage. It was then decided that the story will involve a white eyeless, toothless hamster.

The concept started as a story about a runt being inspired by the eyeless, toothless hamster and was supposed to talk about developing the self perception, but it later developed, and now includes friendship and togetherness in society. The filmmaker first decided to make it a

clay animation and bought a lot of materials and a DSLR. Not being at peace with this decision, he decided to make it in 2D instead, as this is something that he can relate to better.

It took a few months before animators were found who had the time and would be willing to help with my project, but it so happened that they were also busy with school. It was a good thing that one of the filmmaker's brother's classmates in high school was knowledgeable in Flash, and so she became the animator. Everything was relayed to her, and she started working immediately.

B. PRODUCTION

In the second week of November 2012, the filmmaker started sketching the hamster characters for the story on paper. Two sheets of paper were used in the sketching of the hamsters. On the first sheet, the filmmaker sketched the eyeless, toothless, white hamster, and the bullied hamster. The eyeless, toothless white hamster was drawn wearing sun glasses to make him look cool. Aside from that, the sunglasses were drawn to signify its being blind. The bullied hamster was drawn with drooping eyes, and a sad face. On the second, he sketched two cynical looking hamsters. These hamsters have angular shapes, and sharp-looking eyes. Since there's still some space on both sheets, the filmmaker sketched two ordinary looking hamsters, making a total of six. After finishing the sketches, the filmmaker scanned the sketches and uploaded them on the computer's hard drive.

In the third week of November 2012, the filmmaker started to draw the digital versions of the hamsters using Photoshop. Using the pen tool, he traced the outlines of the hamsters, and

saved them on separate files. After finishing all six, the filmmaker started to work on the colors one at a time. The first hamster was colored white, with black sunglasses. The insides of the ears were colored pink. The second hamster was colored blue to give more emphasis to its sad character. The two cynical looking hamsters were colored brown and purple respectively in order to emphasize their bad image. Their eyes were also colored red. The last two hamsters were colored lavender and yellow to give them a very ordinary look. The hamsters were saved with a 300 pixels per inch resolution.

In December, the filmmaker was able to contact three students who were into animation. The character sketches and storyboard were sent to their emails for reference. The animators were supposed to work on the animation in January, and requested character turnarounds from the filmmaker. These turnarounds were made using Adobe Photoshop, and sent to the animators. However, it was already February but the animators have not yet started working due to their busy schedules. Because of this, the filmmaker told them that he is going to look for someone else instead since a lot of time has already been wasted. Luckily the filmmaker was able to speak to Ms. Alexandra Sagrado who was knowledgeable in 2D animation. The filmmaker sent Ms. Sagrado all the files needed for her to be able to start as soon as possible on the animation.

In the third week of February, Ms. Sagrado finished the vector designs for the characters, as well as the other elements needed for the animation such as the background, props, and hamster bedding. Aside from this, she also created a 360-degree spin for each character. In the fourth week of February, animatics were made to show some of the hamster movements. Ears, eyes, nose, and mouth twitches were added to make the characters look more alive.

By the second week of March, the filmmaker and Ms. Sagrado were already working on the scenes. Three computers were used for this. Two of the computers were owned by the filmmaker, and the third one was owned by Ms. Sagrado. The character movements were prioritized since the framing and background elements can be adjusted easily. By the third week of March, movements for all of the scenes were finished, with only some minor revisions left to do. The filmmaker then checked the scenes for any revisions, and polishing so that they can be fixed by Ms. Sagrado. In the last week of March, all of the scenes were finalized and ready for edit.

C. POST-PRODUCTION

In March 22, 2013, the filmmaker had a meeting with his adviser, Prof. Jose Gutierrez III. In the meeting, Prof. Gutierrez referred Mr. Nicco Saliva for the musical scoring, saying that he works fast, and gives output promptly. The filmmaker contacted him the following day and made arrangements, saying that after the scenes are finalized, he would be sending YouTube links for Mr. Saliva's reference.

In March 25, 2013, the filmmaker sent links for the first three sequences of the film. The following day, Mr. Saliva uploaded a sound track on SoundCloud, saying that it was what he made for the first sequences. The filmmaker was happy about the track because it supplied the correct mood for the scenes. At this time, the next sequences were being finished. After uploading them again on YouTube, and sending the links to Mr. Saliva, the next track was

immediately created. It was a more upbeat sound, and gave the next sequences a sense of action. Because of some delays in the finalization of the next sequences, they were finished by Friday, March 29, 2013. With the sequences finally done, the filmmaker edited them together, without the transition effects and credits, and uploaded the output on YouTube, for the Mr. Saliva's reference. The following day, Mr. Saliva contacted the filmmaker saying that he would be finishing the score on or before Sunday, March 31, 2013.

In April 1, 2013, the filmmaker met with Mr. Saliva in SM North to discuss the musical score and sound effects. Mr. Saliva gave the filmmaker separate copies of the tracks he made for the film. There was a third track he made, which was appropriate for the flashback scenes in the film. Aside from the musical scoring, he also provided sound effects for the whole timeline, and rippling sounds for the flashback.

In April 2, 2013, the filmmaker started editing the film with the music and sound effects from Mr. Saliva. The music tracks fit perfectly with the scenes, and the filmmaker did not have a hard time applying them. However, the sound effects needed to be rearranged and edited a lot because they were patterned on a rough edit of the scenes. The filmmaker divided the sound effects into different tracks and removed some parts. He adjusted the volume of some of the sounds as well, to give a sense of depth and space with regards to the scenes. The filmmaker also downloaded some free sounds from freesounds.org to add to the available sound effects provided by Mr. Saliva. The editing was finished by Thursday, April 4, 2013, and the defense copy was submitted the following day.

D. PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

1st Semester 2011-2012:   Conceptualization

                                           Scriptwriting

November 2012:   Concept Revisions

December 2012:   Looking for animators

January 2013:   Storyboard

                                           Character turnarounds

                                           Script revisions

                                           Thesis paper revisions

1st week of February 2013:   Animatics

2nd week of February 2013:   Test Animation

1st to 4rd weeks of March 2013:   Animation

4th week of March 2013:   Editing

                                           Musical Scoring

1st week of April: Sound Editing

E. PRODUCTION BUDGET

Computer Setup	P30,000.00
Flash Drive	P900.00
Hamster Accessories	P600.00
Beginner's Guide to Animation (book)	P629.00
Supplies	P1,500.00
500GB Hard Drive	P2,500.00
TF for Animator and Sound Designer	P10,000.00
Food and Transportation	P1,000.00
TOTAL	P47,129.00

VI. THE SCRIPT

SEQ 1. POPSICLE FENCE

A big, blue hamster with black eyes is sitting on a bedding of shredded wood, which covers every inch of the enclosure he is in. Behind him is a fence made out of Popsicle sticks cut in half, and joined together by strong adhesive. The hamster massages his cheek, and a peeled sunflower seed comes out of his mouth. He eats it quickly and licks his fingers afterwards. He searches the ground around him and picks up a safflower seed. He nibbles on the shell, and stores the meat in his cheek pouch. He lets out sigh, stretches his arms and stands up, walking towards the other end of the fence. There is a water bottle here, from which he laps a few drops.

SEQ 2. PLASTIC TOWER SLIDE

A purple hamster with red eyes is running up and down a slide. He stops, takes a look around him, and runs up and down the slide again. The slide is connected to a short tower block, with a hollow interior. Inside is a small pile of seeds and grain. Beside the slide is a hollow cylinder lying down on the floor. It is glued to the floor, and surrounded by hamster bedding.

SEQ 3. PLASTIC HAMSTER WHEEL

A brown hamster with red eyes is running as fast as he can inside a hamster wheel. He stops for a while, and runs again. He stops for a second time and sits down, still inside the wheel.

SEQ 4. POPSICLE FENCE

The big, blue hamster is standing by the Popsicle fence, and is looking at the hamster running up and down the slide. He heaves out a sigh and walks to the other end of the fence, to look at the hamster running inside the hamster wheel. He sits down by the fence and takes out a piece of oat from his cheek and starts to eat. He hears some noises from behind the fence and stands up to check it out.

SEQ 5. BEHIND THE FENCE

Three hamsters drop from an opened box and stand behind the Popsicle fence. There is a lavender-colored hamster and a yellow one. The smallest of the three is white, and wearing a pair of sunglasses. Despite being small, it stands tall, and confident. It shakes hands with the other two hamsters and they approached the blue hamster by the fence.

SEQ 6. POPSICLE FENCE

The newcomers are encouraging the blue hamster to join them in making friends with the other two hamsters by the slide and wheel. The blue hamster shakes his head in refusal. He gestures towards the area of the hamster wheel.

SEQ 7. PLASTIC HAMSTER WHEEL

A younger, smaller version of the blue hamster is running towards the hamster wheel. A brown hamster sees approaching hamster and glares at him. The blue hamster smiles and tries to join the brown hamster in the wheel. The brown hamster attacks him and he runs away.

SEQ 8. PLASTIC TOWER SLIDE

The blue hamster runs towards the slide. A purple hamster comes out from inside the tower and looks at him. The blue hamster runs away fast.

SEQ 9. POPSICLE FENCE

The white hamster shakes its head and tells the blue hamster to wait while they approach the other hamsters themselves. They leave the blue hamster by the fence, and start to walk towards the hamster by the tower slide. The white hamster trips and its glasses fell off. It immediately picks them up and wears them again.

SEQ 10. PLASTIC TOWER SLIDE

The newcomers are standing by the hollow cylinder near the tower slide. The purple hamster is standing at the bottom of the slide, looking at them. The white hamster slowly approaches the purple hamster and points towards the hamster wheel, the abundant food supply by the fence,

and the slide. The purple hamster stares for a while before reaching out its hand towards the white hamster. The white hamster takes its hand and shakes it in agreement. Together they walk towards the hamster by the wheel.

SEQ 11. PLASTIC HAMSTER WHEEL

The hamsters are standing a few inches from the hamster wheel where the brown hamster is sitting in. The white hamster, together with the purple hamster comes nearer and gestures towards the wheel, and then points towards the slide and the food supply by the fence. The brown hamster shakes its head and points towards the wheel, and then to itself. The white hamster points towards the other hamsters, and then gestures towards the brown hamster with its fist. The brown hamster looks shocked, and nods his head slowly. Together they leave the wheel.

SEQ 12. POPSICLE FENCE

The hamsters approach the blue hamster by the fence. They stop a few inches away, and the white hamster, along with the two hamsters from the wheel and the slide comes near. One by one, they reach out a hand to the blue hamster. The blue hamster hesitates for a while, and then climbs over the fence to join them.

SEQ 13. PLASTIC TOWER SLIDE

The purple hamster is being pushed by the yellow hamster down the slide. The lavender hamster climbs up the tower and waits until the other hamsters reach the ground.

SEQ 14. PLASTIC HAMSTER WHEEL

The blue hamster is running in the wheel while the brown hamster eats beside it. The white hamster is standing a few inches from them. It turns and walks away.

SEQ 15. POPSICLE FENCE

The white hamster is sitting down by the fence. It is nibbling on the shell of a sunflower seed. It pops the meat inside his cheek, puts its arms behind its head, and smiles.

VII. THE STORYBOARD
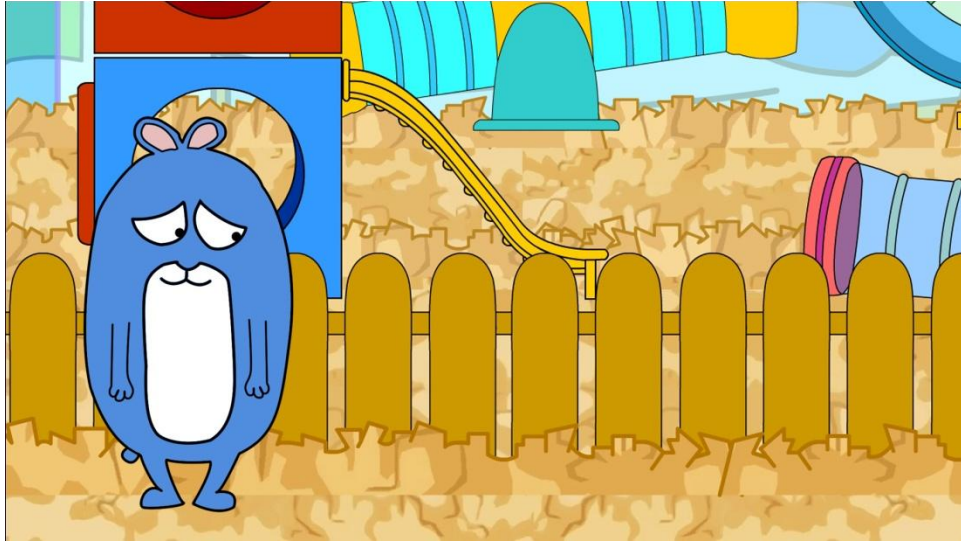
The blue hamster is standing by the fence.
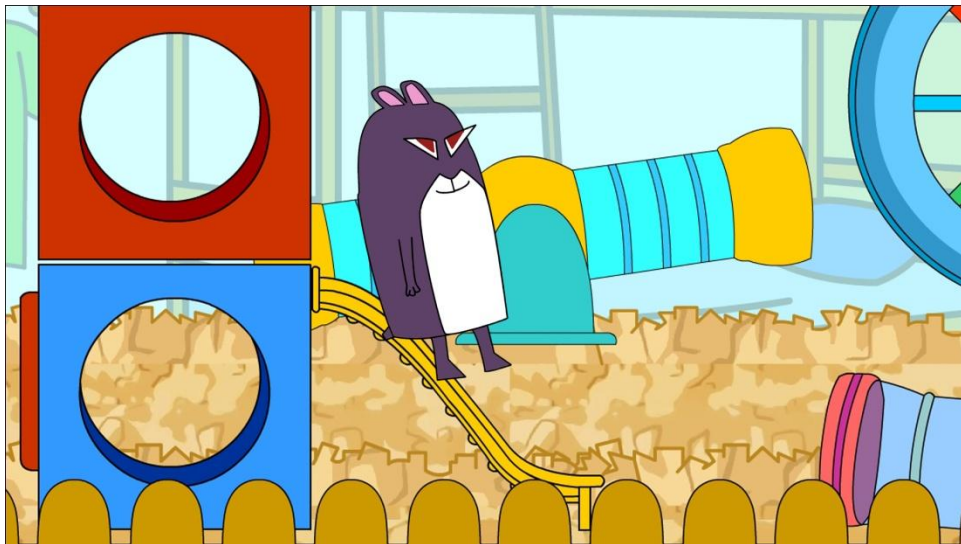
The purple hamster is running up and down the slide.

The brown hamster is running on the wheel.
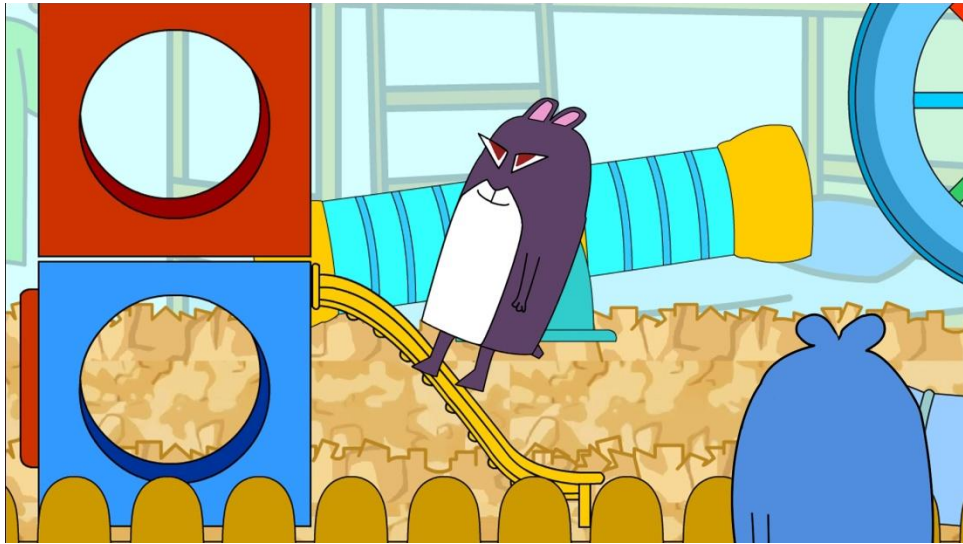
The blue hamster looks at the purple hamster.
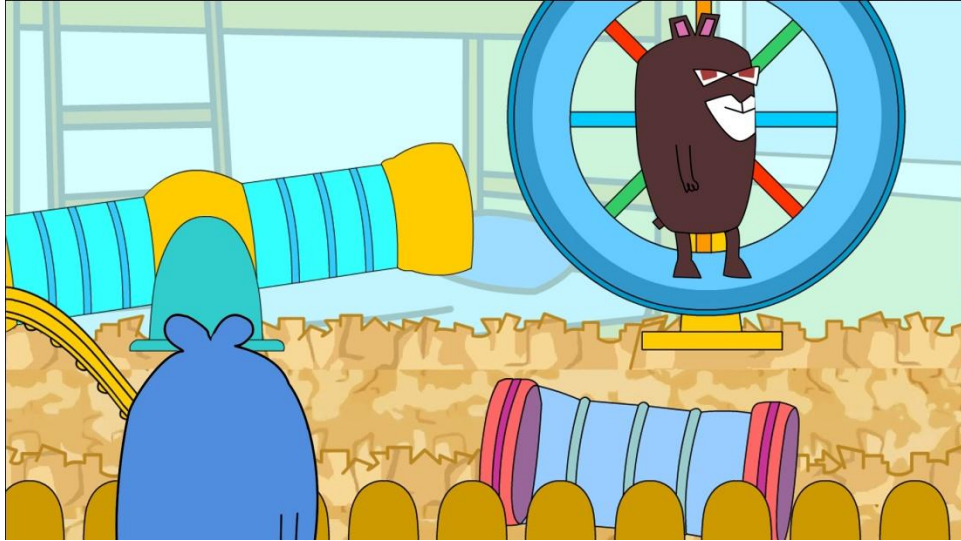
The blue hamster is looking at the brown hamster.
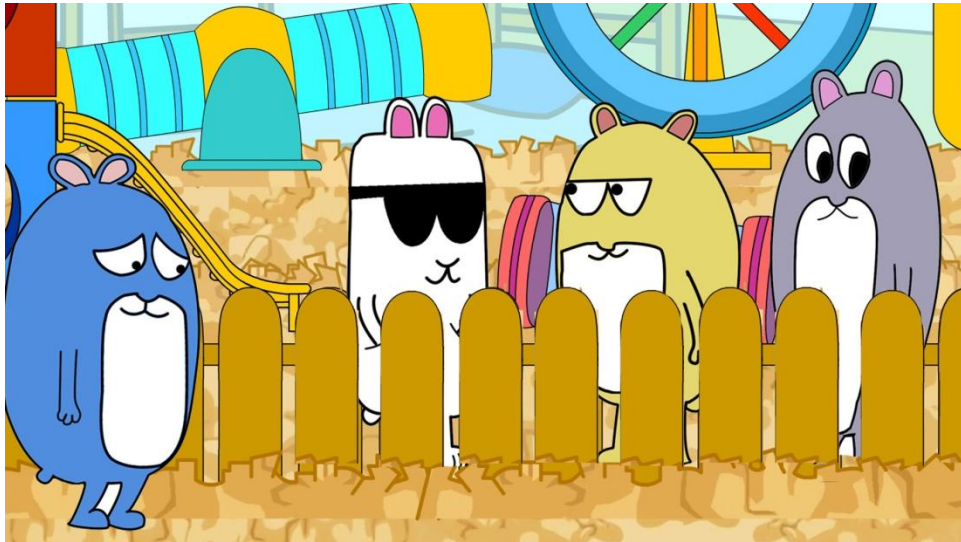
Newcomers arrive behind the fence, near the blue hamster.

The blue hamster recalls approaching the brown hamster.
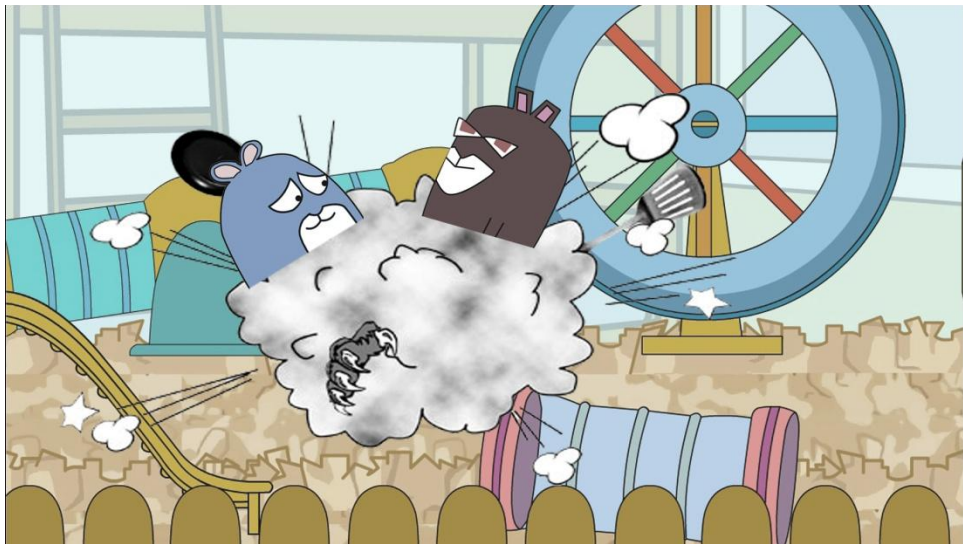
The blue hamster is attacked by the brown hamster.
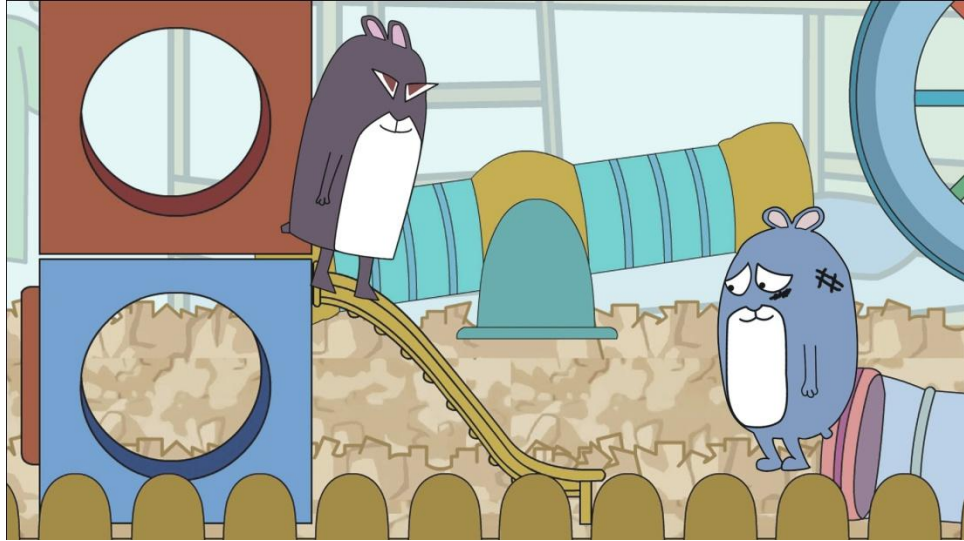
The blue hamster approaches the purple hamster.
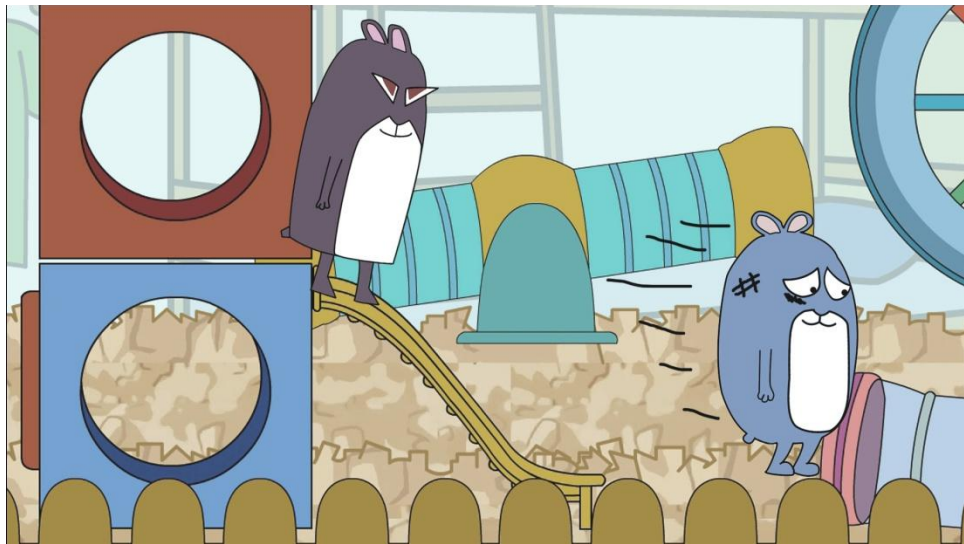
The blue hamster got scared immediately and ran away.

The newcomers tell the blue hamster to wait by the fence.
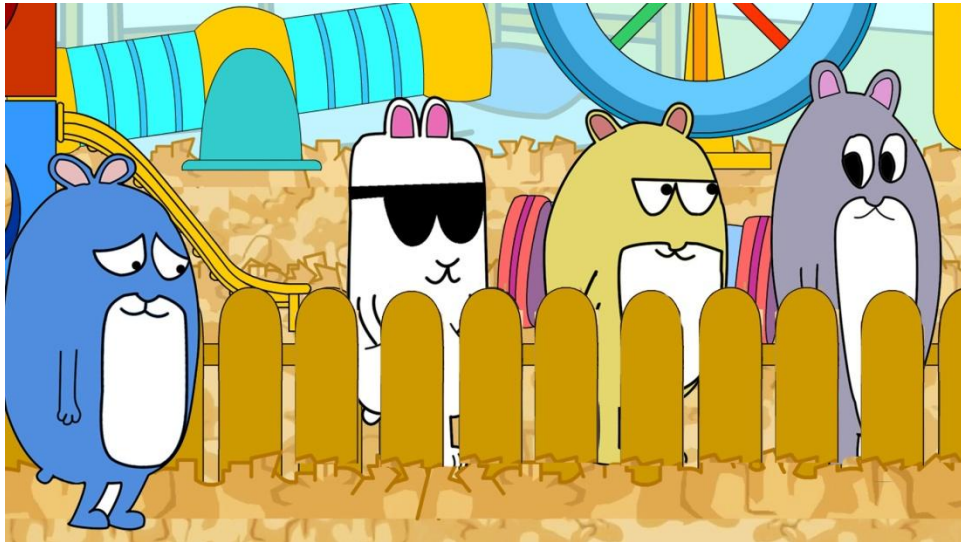
The newcomers leave to talk with the other hamsters.
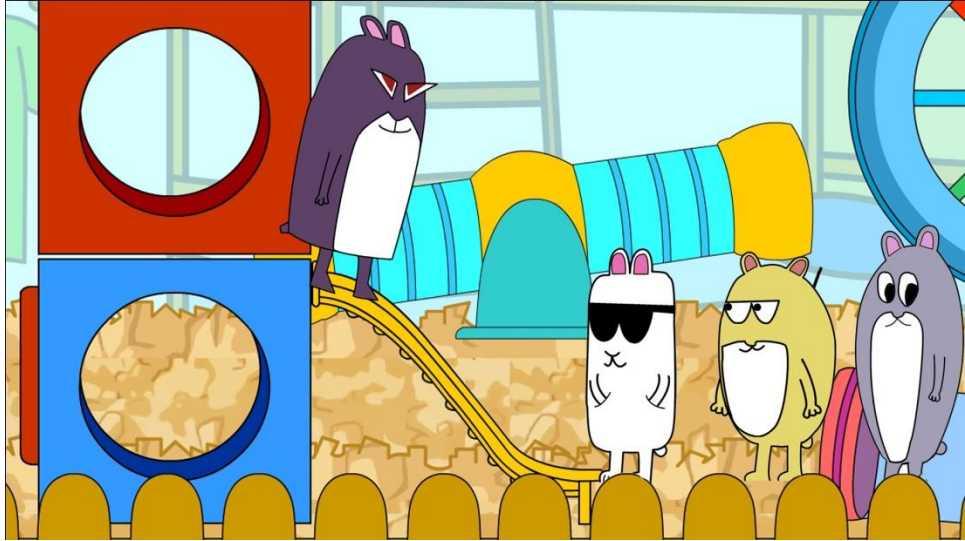
The newcomers approach the purple hamster.

The newcomers approach the brown hamster.
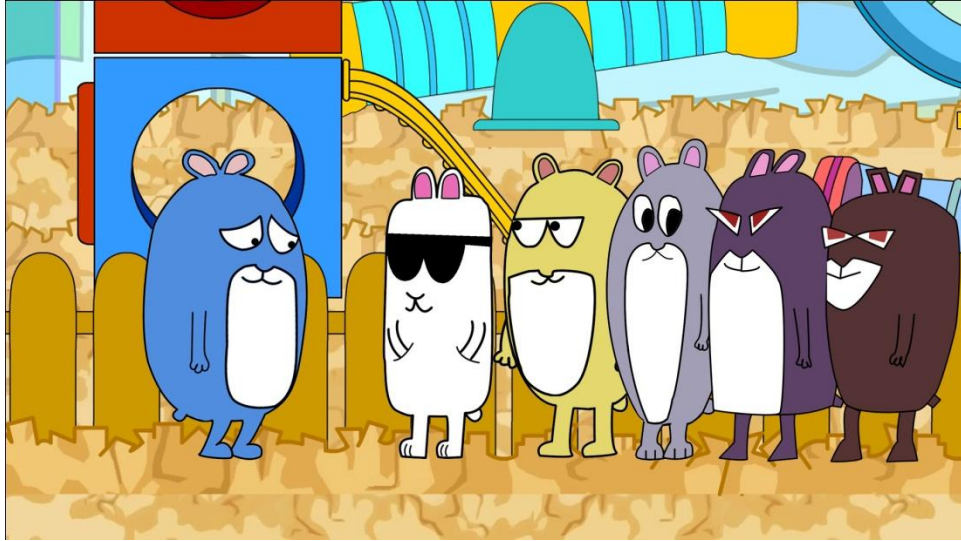
The newcomers approach the blue hamster, along with the purple and brown hamsters.
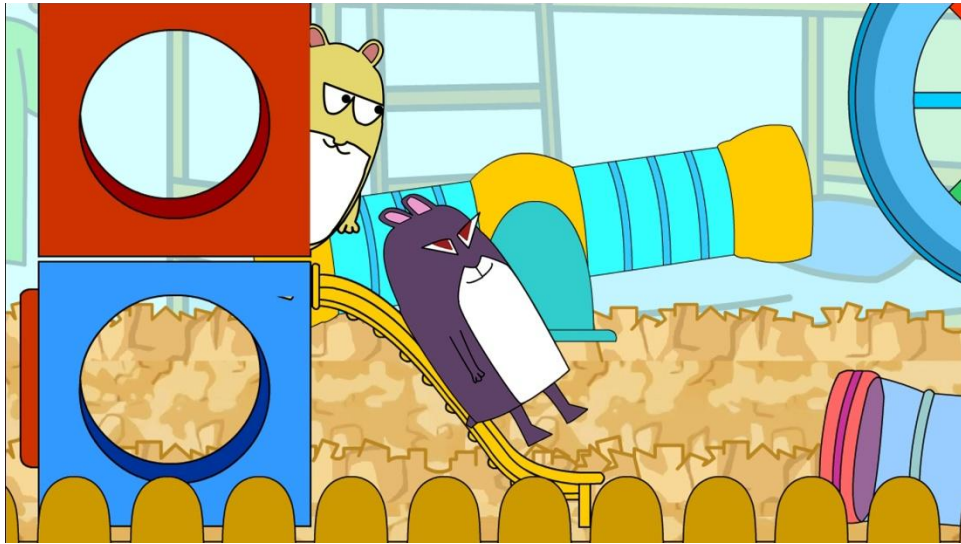
The yellow hamster and the purple hamsters are taking turns using the slide.
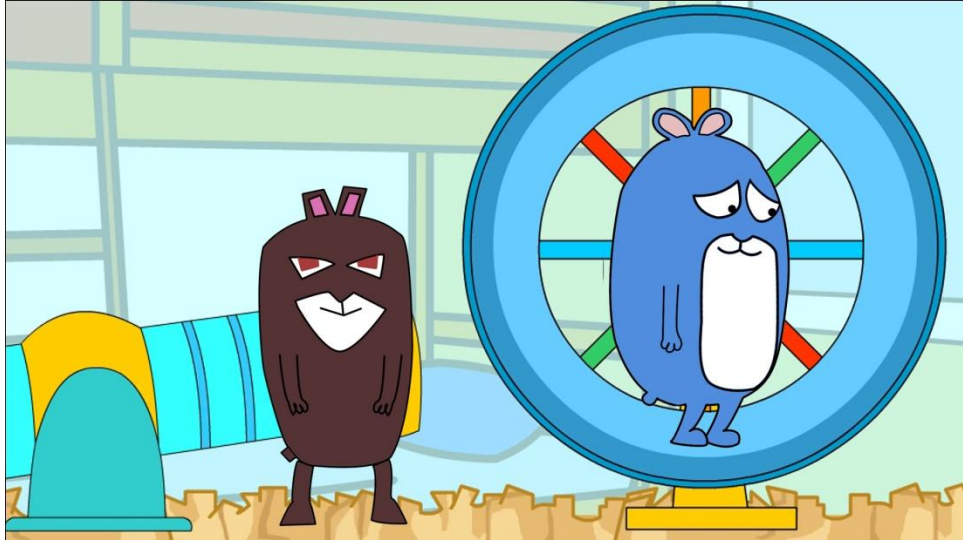
The brown hamster waits as the blue hamster uses the wheel.
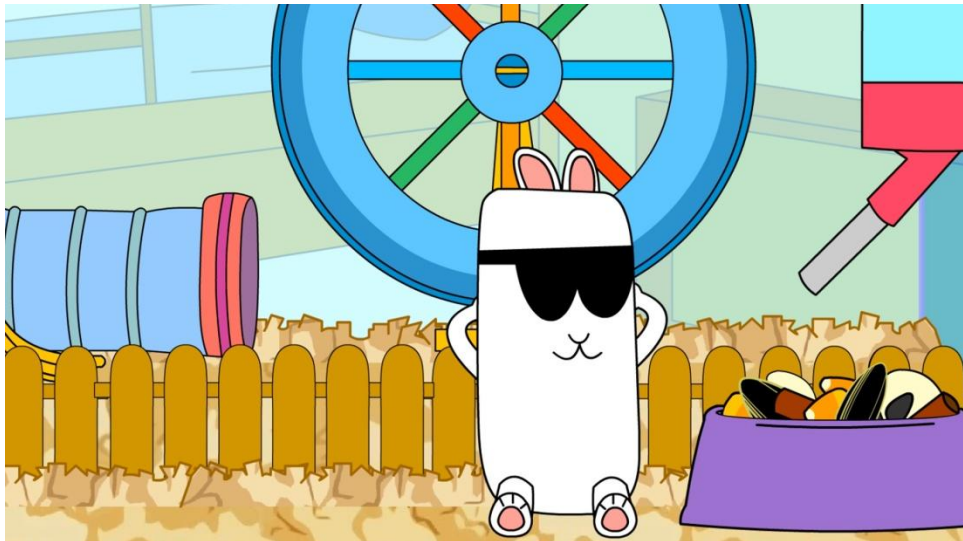
The white hamster is eating, and relaxing by the fence.

VIII. FACULTY CRITIQUE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The faculty acknowledged the hard work and effort placed into the creation of the animation. They said that the animation was cute and well-made, and the story it is trying to tell was clear. There were, however, some points that need to be considered and looked into for future animation projects. There were four members of the faculty who gave their comments and recommendations regarding the film.

The first two faculty members were Prof. Arminda Santiago and Prof. Olivia Cantor, who mentioned that the cute style of the animation did not quite agree to the message the filmmaker was trying to say. They further explained that the film made them want to see something more beyond the cuteness of the characters, something that would give a greater impact regarding society.

Another faculty member who commented was Dr. Grace Javier Alfonso. She was curious as to which character was the main protagonist. The filmmaker answered that there was no main protagonist in the film, but that each of the characters have an equal role to play. Dr. Alfonso then commented that the white hamster was the main protagonist, being the unifier in the film, while the others were all supporting characters.

The last faculty member who commented was Dr. Rolando Tolentino. He said that the film seemed to cater to a younger demographic, and he had a hard time relating to it because of its form. He mentioned previous animation theses that used radical images, and were more

ambitious in terms of their statements. One of the films he mentioned used crabs as characters to make a statement about crab mentality. In line with this, Dr. Tolentino said that the film seems to be very utopian, and recommended that for future works, the filmmaker should be more ambitious, and make an animation film that would also cater to a more mature audience, and use more radical and strong images.

CHAPTER IX. THESIS DEFENSE EVALUATION FORMS

CHAPTER X. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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    Symbolic Use of the Animal to Portray Personality. Retrieved April 9, 2013 from

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CHAPTER XI. APPENDICES

A. Appendix A Thesis Proposal

"Bakod"

Disability results not from physical impairment, but a negative self concept, and looking away from the self or changing our focus leads to self improvement, without us being aware of it. Whatever lack that we have should not be an excuse for self impairment or self limitation, nor should we be burdened by it.

"Bakod" is a story about a hamster who has resigned to a life of sitting idly by while other hamsters enjoy themselves. He watches, expecting other hamsters to go through the process of trying to adapt in a new environment, only to give up just like him, until he encounters a very unlikely hamster that changes his way of thinking.

Through *Runt*, the filmmaker wants to say that even though there will always be people who have a bigger advantage in life than us, it doesn't mean that we don't have any right to live alongside them, and enjoy life as much. It is not always the strong, or able-bodied who survives, but those who have the will to do so. Having a handicap also doesn't mean that you can do less. It sometimes means that you can do better in something else. Being at a disadvantage is only a minor setback which can be overcome by perseverance and strong will. Taking for example the eyeless, toothless white hamster; she did not take her disability as a disadvantage to living her life. In her mind, she has accepted that they are not created equal, but still continues to do her best.

B. Appendix B Film-199 Defense Critique and Recommendations

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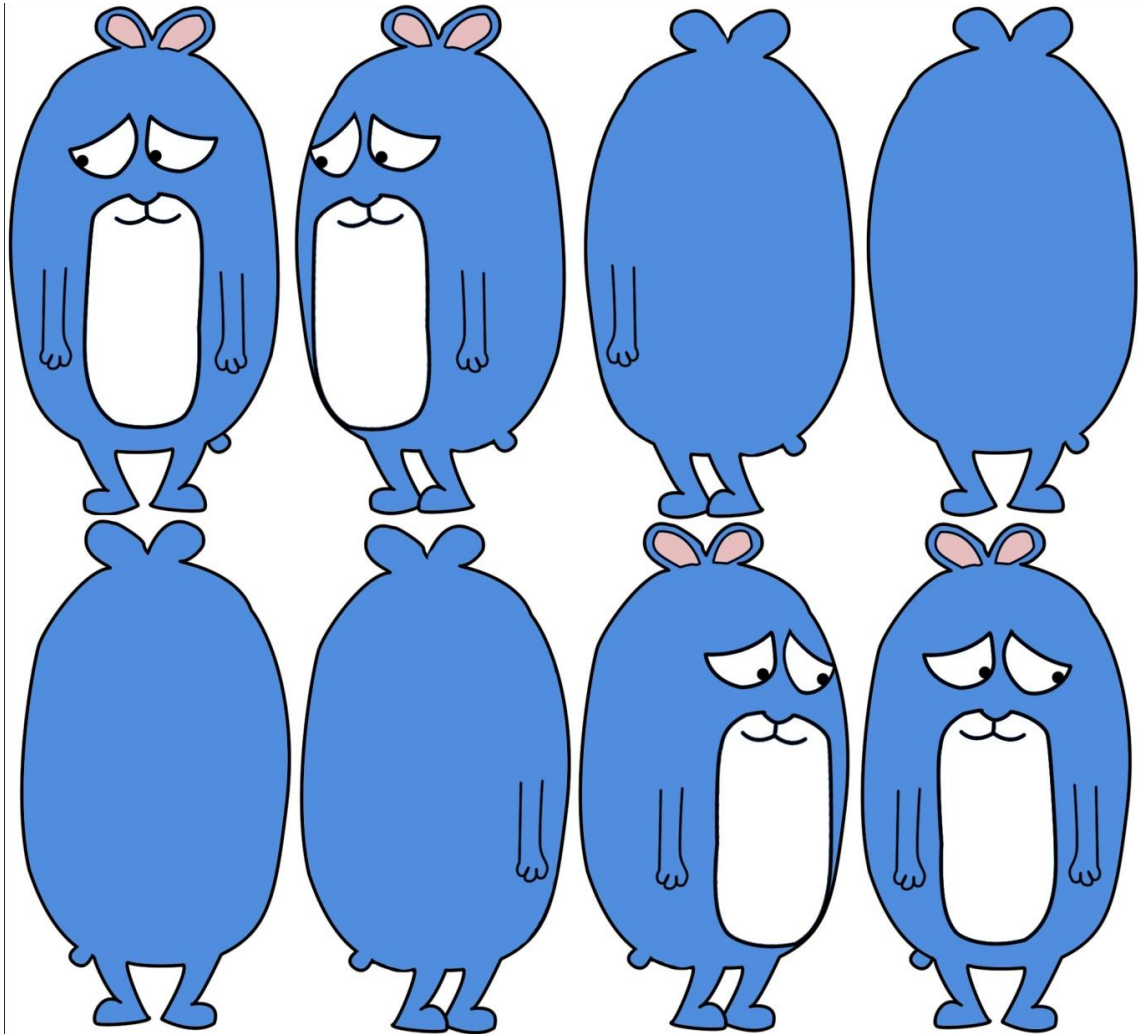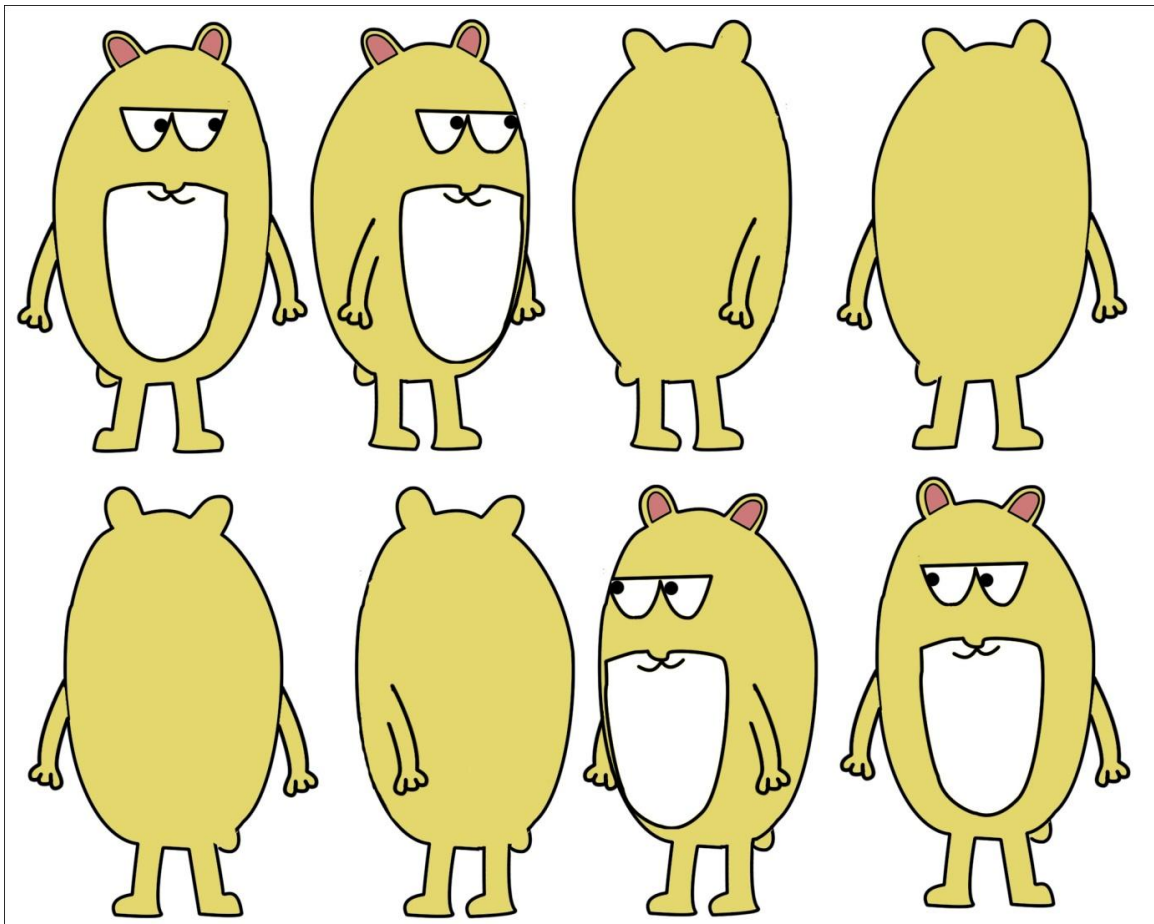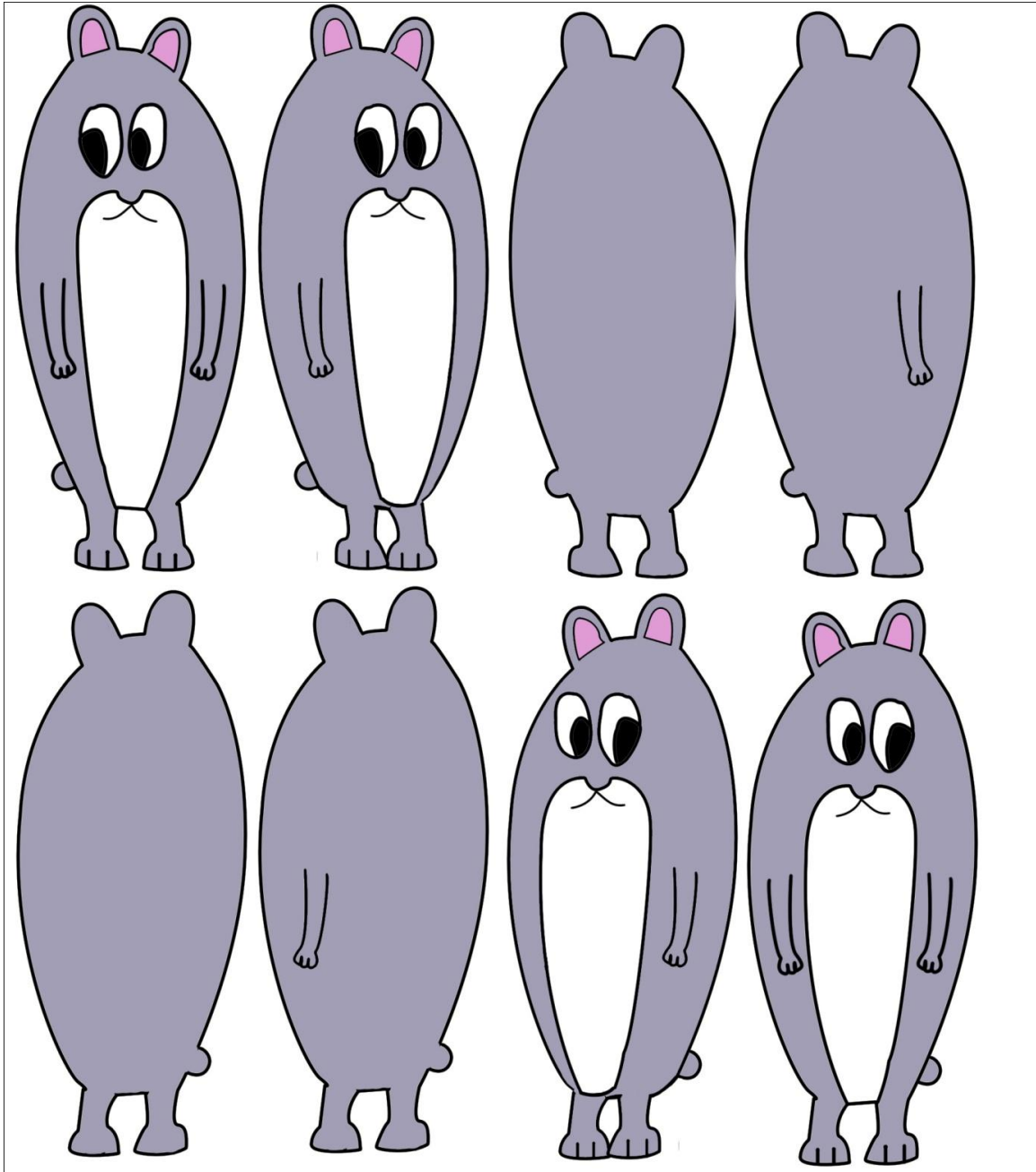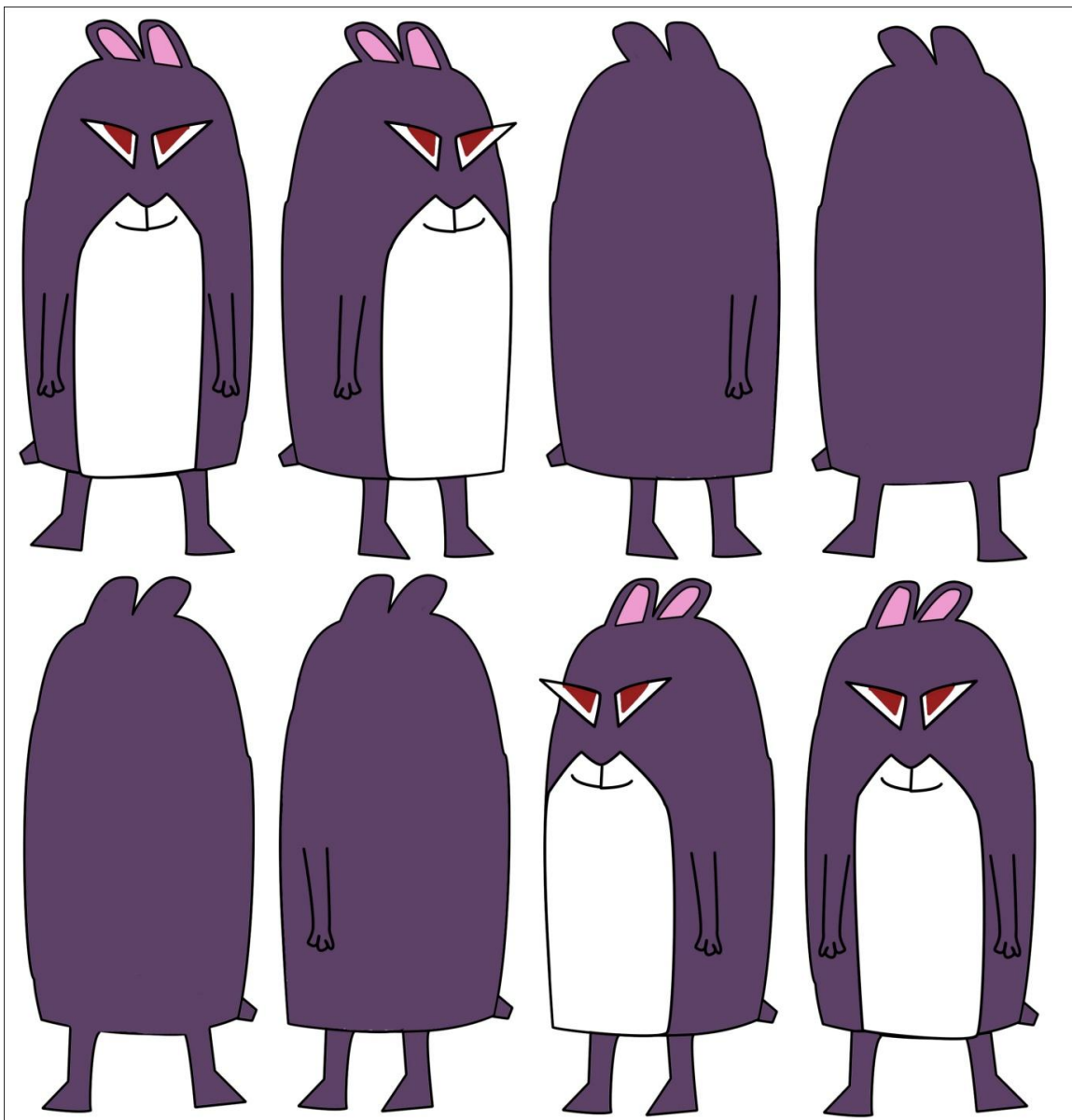
C. Production Design Plan
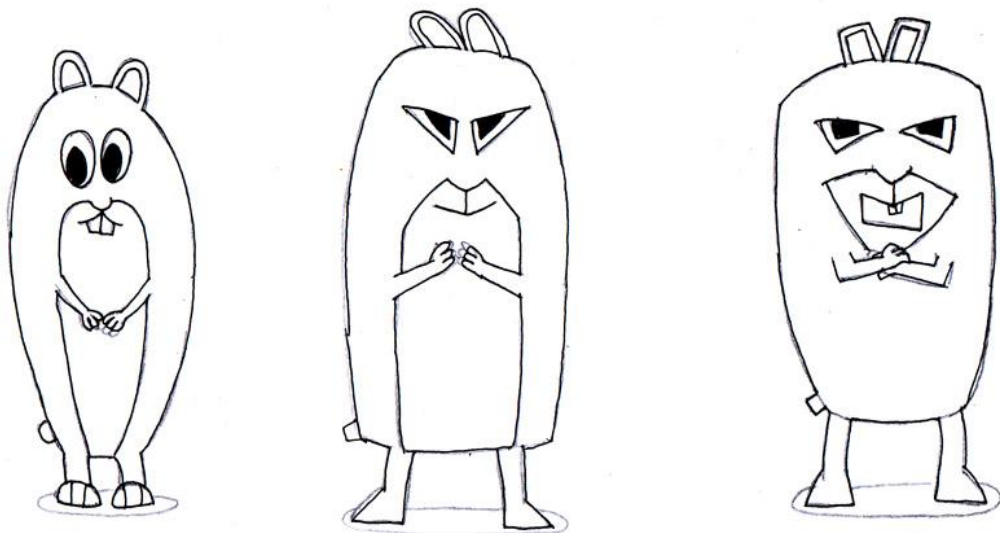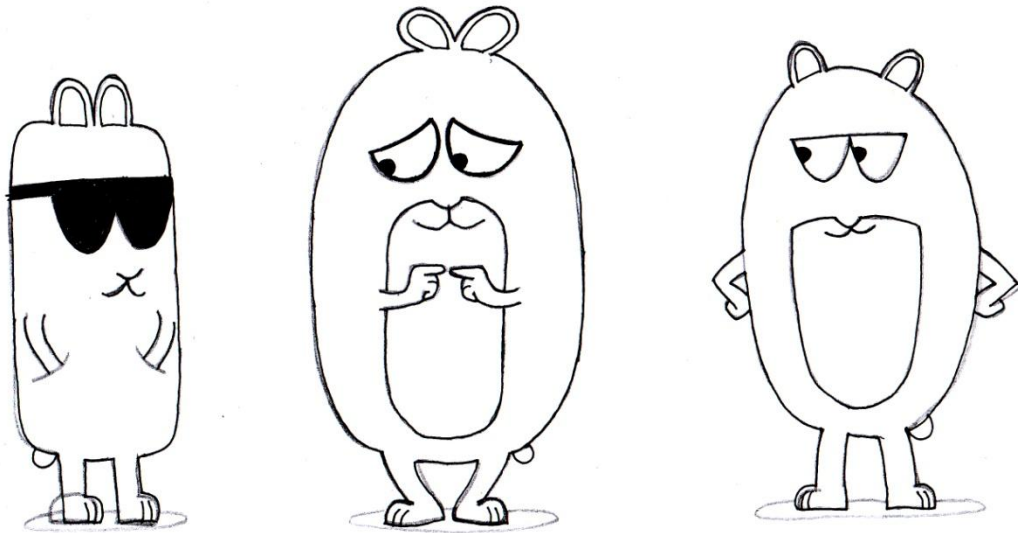
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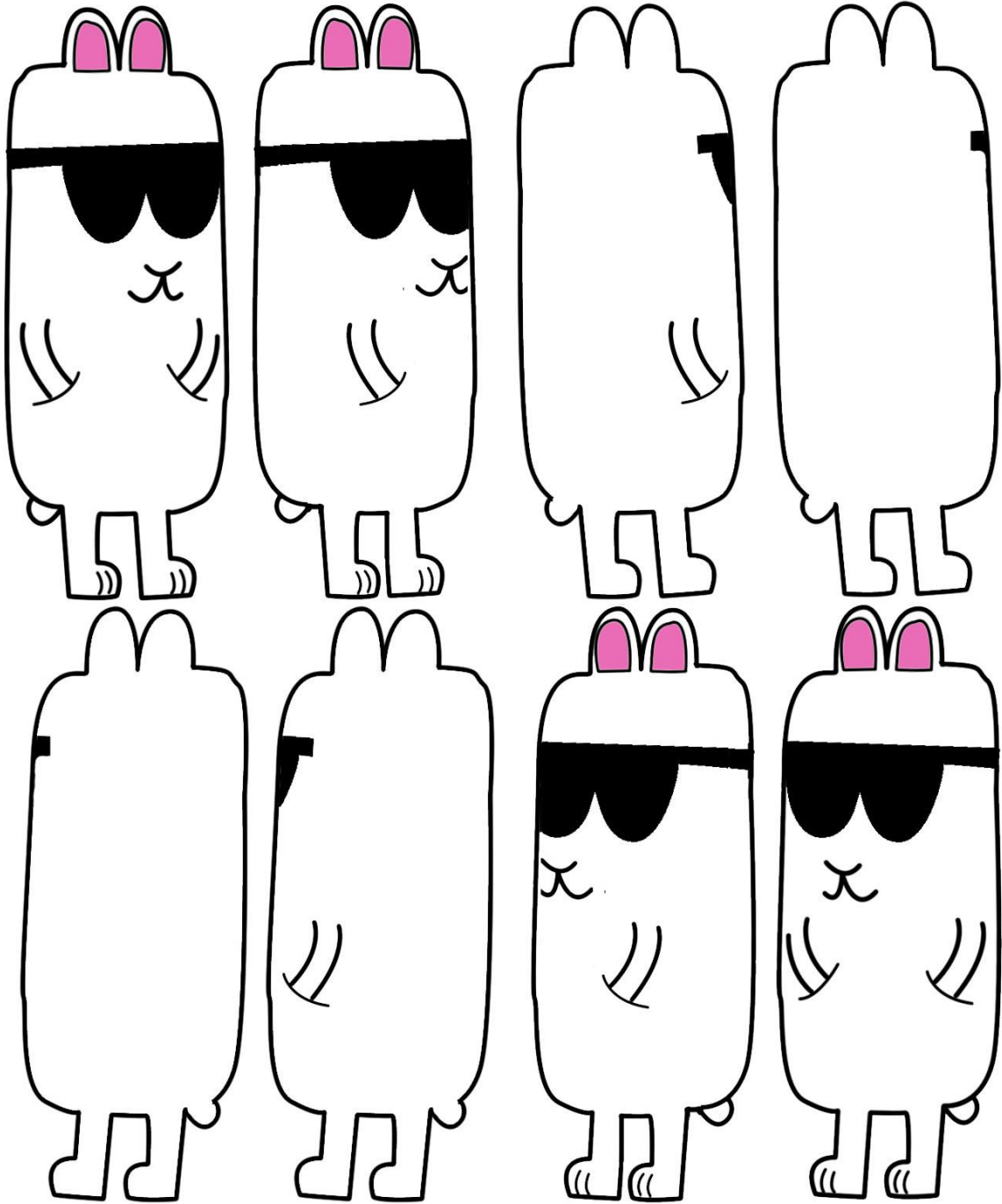
2. Second Hamster
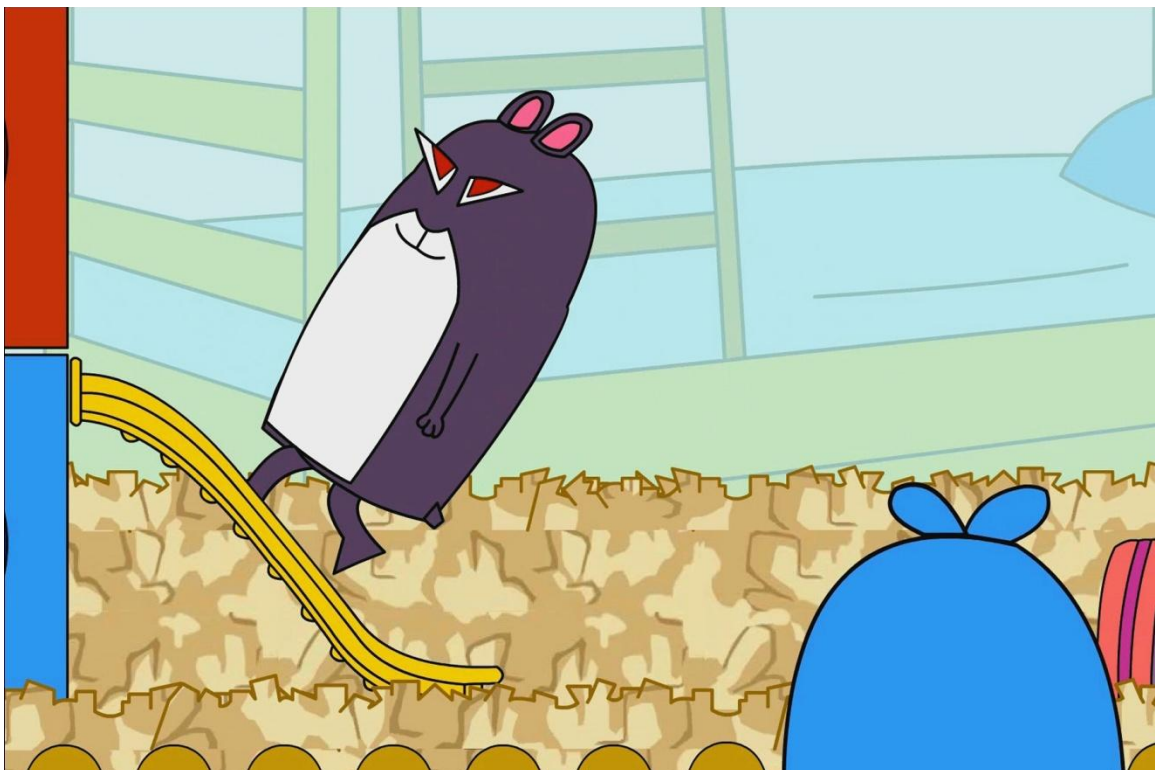
3. Third Hamster

4. Fourth Hamster

5. Fifth Hamster

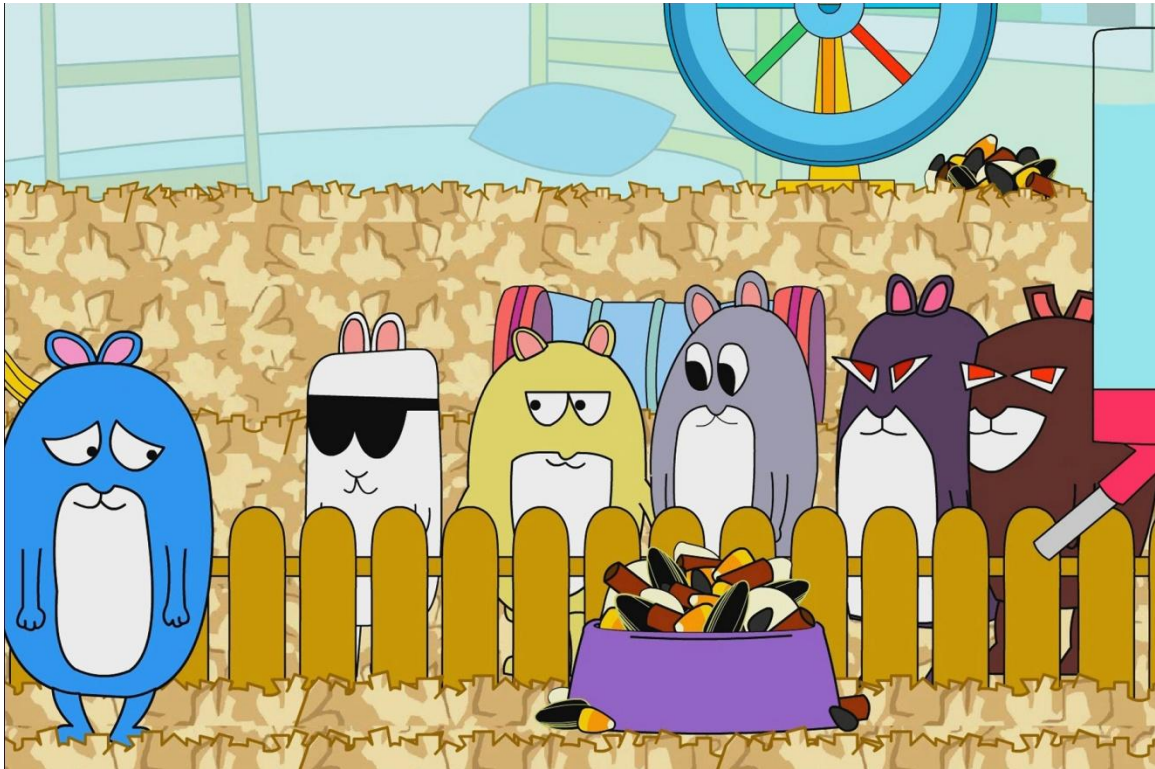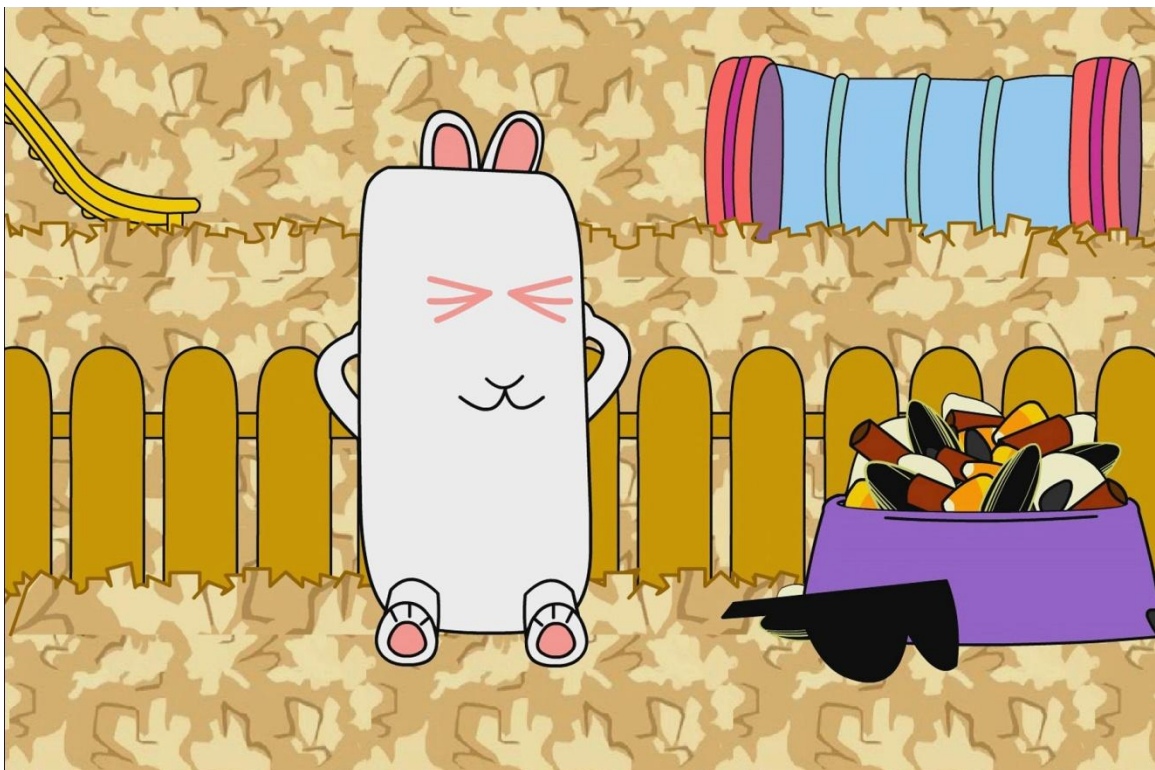6. Sixth Hamster
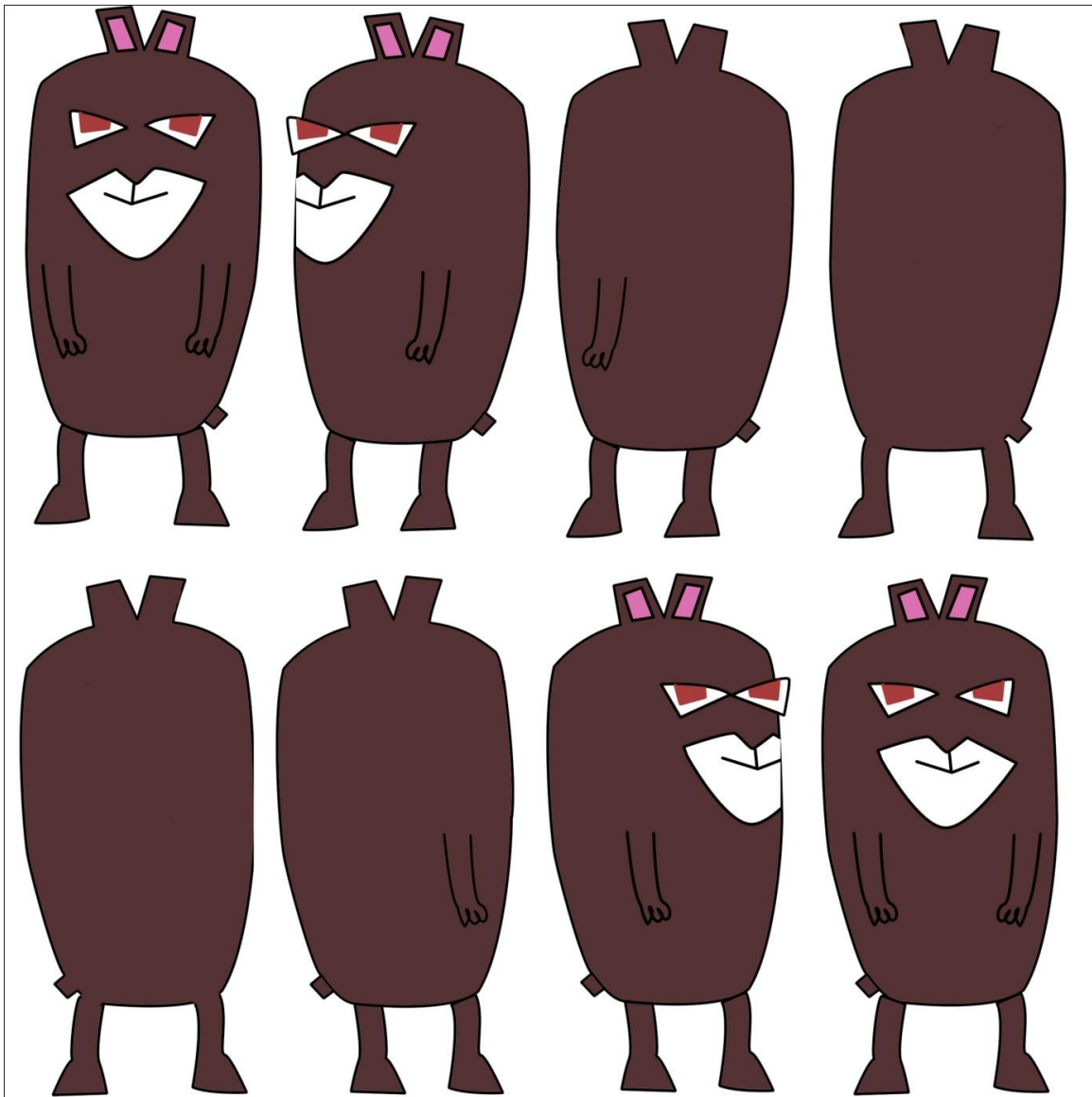
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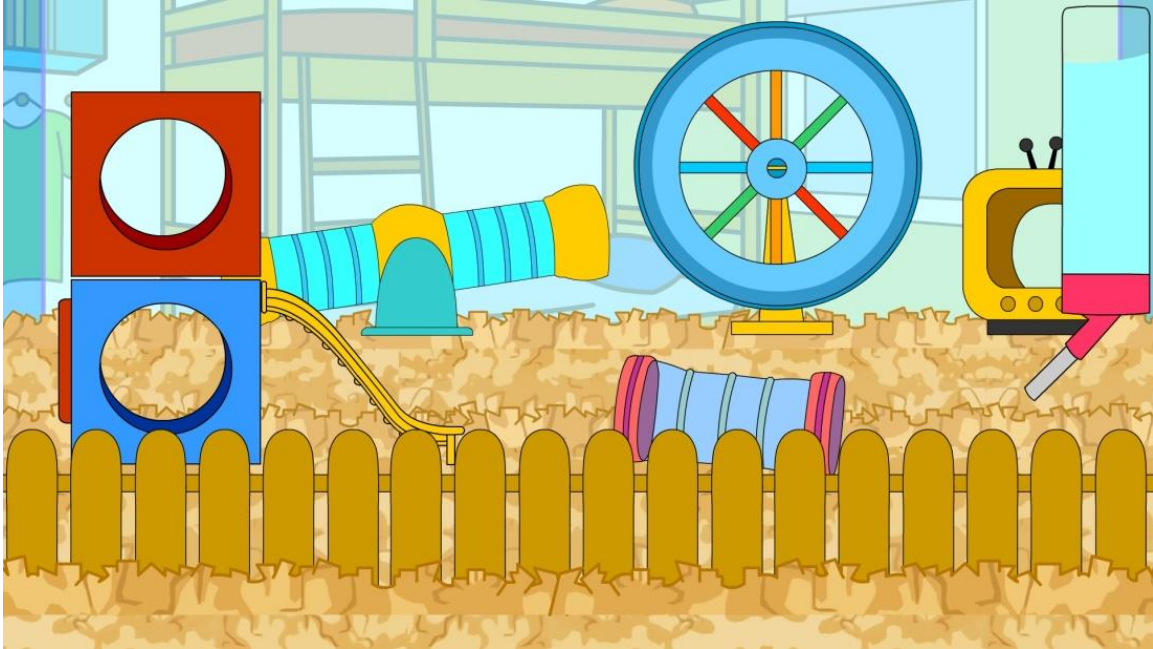
D. Production Stills

THE FACULTY OF THE U.P. FILM INSTITUTE

Prof. Eduardo Lejano, Jr.

Director

Prof. Jose Gutierrez III

Thesis Adviser

Dr. Grace Javier Alfonso

Prof. Yason Banal

Prof. Patrick Campos

Prof. Olivia Cantor

Prof. Sari Raissa Dalena

Prof. Anne Marie de Guzman

Prof. Shirley Evidente

Prof. Roehl Jamon

Mr. Cenon Palomares

Dr. Arminda Santiago

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