

Escape
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Fashion Imaging and
Illustration
13 May 2025



Introduction

This project stems from my personal interest in the relationship between humans and nature, connecting to broader contemporary issues. Recently, I've become increasingly aware of how plants and nature positively influence my emotions. Reflecting on past experiences, I recognize that moments spent hiking away from the city or simply gazing at the plants on my table have provided a refreshing escape from the chaotic pace of urban life. These interactions with nature have allowed me to momentarily pause, take a mental break, and reset amidst the overwhelming responsibilities of daily life.

As cities and technology continue to develop, many of us find ourselves increasingly detached from nature, whether due to environmental destruction or the physical distance created by urban living. We are often caught in a fast-paced, work-centric lifestyle, burdened by responsibilities and pressure. Through this project, I aim to explore the connection between humans and nature, specifically focusing on houseplants and the rising trend of plant ownership among younger generations. My goal is to examine both the psychological and physical bonds that people form with plants and to highlight how these relationships can enhance emotional well-being.

Ultimately, I want this project to serve as a breath of fresh air, temporarily alleviating the weight of social responsibilities while reminding us of the essential role nature plays in our lives as well as the importance of embracing the responsibility we take on when we choose to invite greenery into our spaces. To support my exploration, I will employ research methodologies, including interviews, archival research, and primary research, which together will provide a comprehensive analysis of my findings. Each step of my design process will involve experimentation with different methods, particularly emphasizing 3D elements, and will ultimately lead to my final outcome reflecting the contemporary issues mentioned in my research while including initial purpose of this project which is to serve as a break for those of us constantly living in urban cities thus my title of the project, *Escape*.

Psychological connection

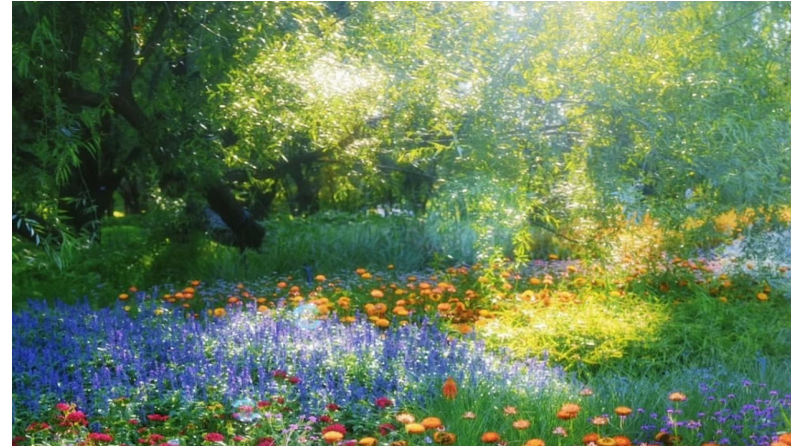
Before I dive into design based research, I want to actually understand the connection between humans and plants, the reasons people feel the need to keep and interact with plants and some of the contemporary issues.

Plants form the foundation of terrestrial ecosystems, providing the structural framework that supports the diversity of life on Earth. They are essential to human survival, offering food, warmth, clothing, shelter, and even the air we breathe. Our physical reliance on plants is undeniable, deeply rooted in our everyday existence.

Beyond these physical needs, our connection to nature runs deeper on a psychological level. From an evolutionary perspective, humans have spent most of their history in natural environments. It is only in recent centuries that we've moved toward an urbanized lifestyle, creating a growing gap between us and the natural world. This historical background helps explain why many people still feel drawn to nature today.

The concept of **biophilia** captures this idea, suggesting that humans have an innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life. Modern research supports this, showing that exposure to nature can reduce stress, elevate mood, enhance cognitive function, and even accelerate healing. Specifically, interacting with plants has been found to reduce both psychological and physiological stress, especially when compared to more mentally demanding tasks.

These findings highlight not just our dependence on nature for survival, but also the profound emotional and mental benefits it continues to offer in our increasingly urban lives.



From a biological standpoint, humans are seen as integral components of the ecosystem, emphasizing our interconnectedness with the natural world rather than viewing ourselves as separate from it. This perspective helps explain why many individuals, regardless of whether they identify as "plant people," feel a profound connection to nature.

While the psychological connection between people and plants is still being explored, numerous studies have demonstrated positive outcomes in this area. To further support the notion of a beneficial psychological relationship between plants and humans, I will conduct interviews with those around me to gather their experiences and insights. These personal accounts will complement existing research and provide a deeper understanding of the positive effects that plants can have on our mental well-being.

Academic Research: Interview

I created two sets of questions, each tailored to a specific age group. I interviewed a total of 4 participants: 2 individuals aged 40–55 and 2 from Gen Z, aged 21–23. **All interviewees were informed about the purpose of the project and gave their consent for their responses and names to be used.**

Set 1: For Obvious Plant Lovers / Plant Owners

1. What drew you to start owning plants?
2. How many plants do you currently have, and what is your favorite one?
3. What kind of emotional or mental impact does caring for plants have on you?
4. Do you see your plants as purely decorative, or do they feel more like companions? And Why?
5. How does having plants in your space influence your daily routine or mood?
6. Do you think your interest in plants connects to a deeper relationship with nature?
7. Have you found that caring for plants changes how you interact with other living things?
8. Do you feel part of a wider plant-loving community—online or offline?
9. How do you respond when a plant dies? Does it affect you emotionally?

Set 2: For People Who Aren't Clearly Plant Connected (designed to explore unconscious or indirect connections)

1. Do you currently have any plants in your living space? If not, have you ever had one before?
2. Would you say you feel connected to plants or nature in any way?
3. Do you find the idea of owning plants appealing, tedious, or somewhere in between?
4. If you've had plants before, what was your experience like? Did you enjoy it or find it stressful?
5. Do you ever feel the urge to spend time in green spaces like parks, even if you don't think about it consciously?
6. When you pass by a plant shop or see a well-designed green space, do you notice it? How does it make you feel?
7. Do you think being around plants would have any impact on your mood or mindset?
8. Do you think your lifestyle just doesn't suit plant ownership, or is it more about personal interest?
9. Have you ever associated nature with relaxation, even without actively thinking about it?

Responses relevant to research topic:

Those whom are obvious plant lovers

What kind of emotional or mental impact does caring for plants have on you?

- “It forces you to like slow down, think, when you're taking care of it. And it forces you to take your mind off of like other things, just like life, work, school”
- “Growing plants can make people feel calmer and more relaxed. When you see plants thriving and blooming beautifully, it brings joy and satisfaction, helping to relieve stress and anxiety.”

How does having plants in your space influence your daily routine or mood?

- “Keeps me grounded, I think especially in a big city like London when you step into back in your house and there's like a plant there or there's just some greenery around you it feels better keeps you more grounded.”
- “Seeing them full of life can fill you with energy too.”

Those who aren't obvious plant lovers

Do you ever feel the urge to spend time in green spaces like parks, even if you don't think about it consciously?

- “Yeah, actually. Sometimes I just want to get out and walk in the park or sit on the grass. It helps me clear my head. I don't plan it, but I notice I feel better after.”
- “Im relaxed when in nature, I feel, I feel like earth should be that way”

Physical Connection, Usage of Plants (2600 BC to late 20th century)

Plants have been used in designs throughout history for both functional and aesthetic reasons. From ancient civilizations to modern times, plants have been incorporated into interiors, exteriors, and even the creation of artificial forms, reflecting changing tastes and societal values. This will be supported with archival research.

Ancient Civilization

- The history of keeping plants indoors is intertwined with the histories of both container-gardening and indoor-gardening which find their roots in ancient Egypt
 - They were the first to use containers or flower pots as a way to securely move plants from one location to another
 - Indoor gardening was at first mythical and were designs as central features of temples. Later was associated with wealth which promoted widely indoor gardening.
 - Egyptian gardening had a significant influence on the development of gardening and plant design in later cultures.
- The Greeks and Romans were particularly fond of using plants in wreaths and garlands, often worn during religious ceremonies and festivals. These decorations were also depicted in art, showcasing the widespread use of floral elements.

Medieval and Renaissance period

- Medieval gardens were not only functional for growing food and herbs but also served as places for recreation and contemplation.
- Renaissance gardens featured elaborate layouts, with plants playing a significant role in creating formal and picturesque landscapes

Modern Eras

Victorian Era:

Homes were adorned with floral patterns on wallpaper and fabrics, showcasing a strong interest in botanical designs.

Early 20th Century:

Modernism saw a shift away from plant-heavy interiors, with cacti and succulents becoming popular for their geometric shapes.

Mid-20th Century:

Houseplant popularity saw a resurgence, influenced by Scandinavian design and the rise of apartment living.

1970s:

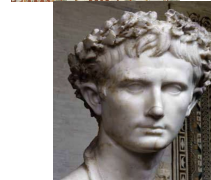
Indoor plants became increasingly integrated into homes, with hanging baskets and creeping vines softening architectural lines.

Archival Research

Ancient Civilizations: Egypt and Rome



Funeral ritual in a garden, Tomb of Minnakht, about 1479 - 1425 BC, The Met Collection (Egypt)



"Augustus Bevilacqua". Bust of Augustus The Emperor wears a wreath of oak, the corona civica, which was bestowed on him by the Senate in 27 BCE for preserving the lives of Rome's citizens. Photograph by Renate Külling. Courtesy of the Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München. (Rome)



Spiraling flora Ara Pacis Augustae (Augustan Atrium of Peace) detail, dedicated 9 BCE, Rome. Photograph by Annette Giesecke (Rome)

Medieval and Renaissance Periods



Border of a page from the *Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne*, c. 1508



Emilia in the rose garden from Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, French, c. 1460.



The reconstructed chateau park of the *Château de Villandry* in France with its ornamental geometric and kitchen gardens

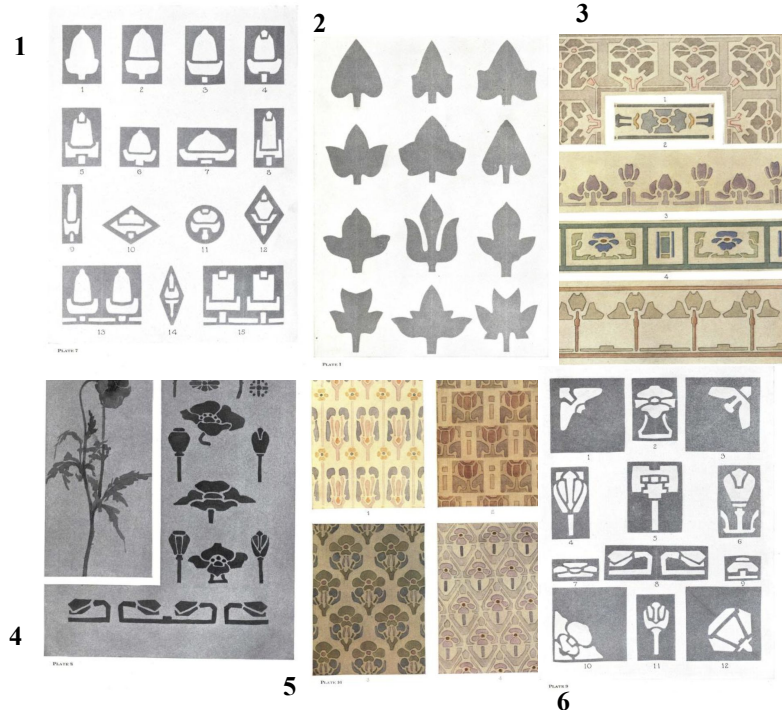
Modern Eras



An entry parlor of a Victorian home. Photograph of an Entry Parlor, 1880-1890, Winterthur Library. Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera Coll. 182.

Physical Connection, Usage of Plants (Archival)

During the 20th century, plant decoratives started to shift away from the realistic shapes of plants and used geometric shapes developed from those plants (Figures 1-6).



1. The development of a stencil pattern from an acorn motif.
2. Stencil patterns from a leaf motif.
3. The unit patterns are suggested by parts of the cowslip. The color schemes are planned to harmonize with the color of the material to which each is applied.
4. The painting of the plant shows its characteristics of growth and appearance — its leaves, blossom, and seed pod. The natural shapes or details, found in the various parts of the plant, furnish excellent motifs for patterns.
5. Patterns made from the plant stencils.
6. Stencil patterns developed from the poppy motif.

I like the break down of a realist plant shape to a graphic design style and I plan to experiment with this approach later on in a style that I like, potentially incorporating it into my own work.

Images and information from “*The use of the plant in decorative designs*”. By Maude Lawrence, Caroline Sheldon

Contemporary Connection

For the contemporary issue and connection, I want to focus my study on people from my own generation, those within the Gen Z age range. From what I've observed, plant ownership has traditionally been associated with older generations, but in recent years, there's been a noticeable rise in interest among younger people. I'm interested in exploring the reasons behind this growing trend of indoor plant ownership among Gen Z, this will also be supported with interview

Factors Driving the Trend:

Pandemic Influence:

Covid led to more time spent indoors, prompting people to seek ways of interest and connect to nature as well as creating a more comfortable space.

Aesthetic

Plants add color, texture, and interest to home décor, making them a popular choice for those seeking to create visually appealing spaces.

Social Media Influences:

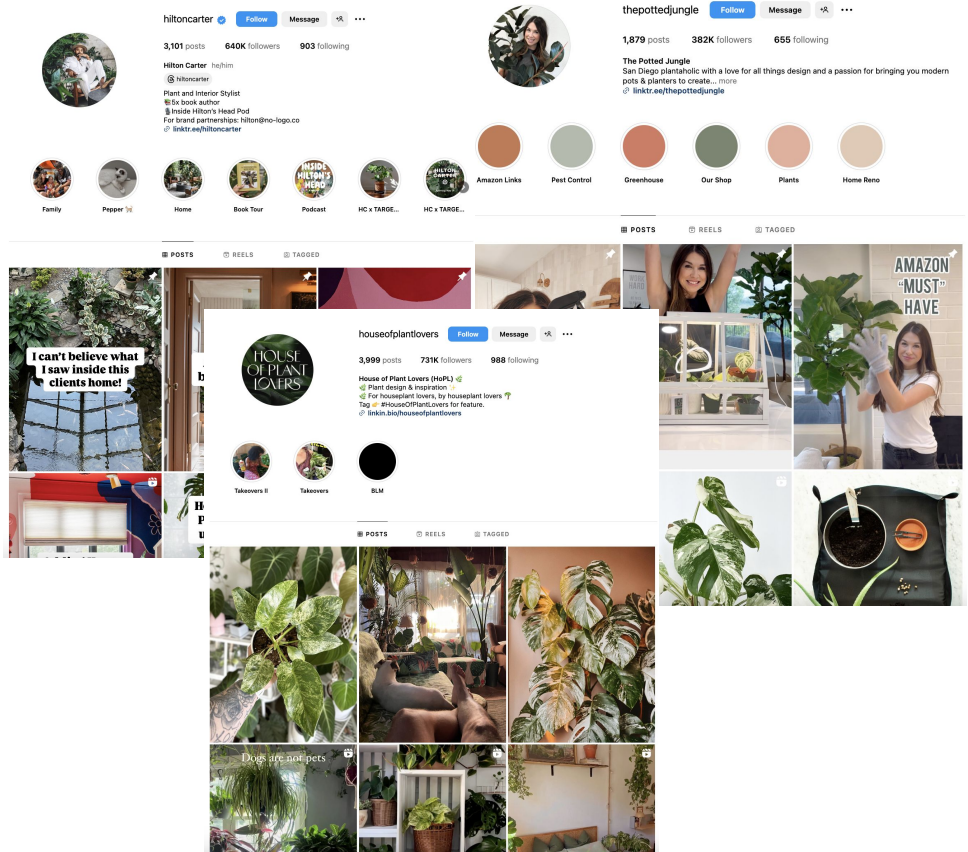
Social media platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest have amplified the trend, as this generation are more connected socially through the internet people are often influenced by those online

Alternative to animals:

For some, plants are an alternative to pets, offering both companionship and responsibility without overcommitment.

Mental Health Benefits:

Caring for plants has been linked to reduced stress levels and increased mindfulness as interviewee Emily said "I just kind of stop thinking about other things when I'm taking care of my plants"



Contemporary Issues (Environmental)

The contemporary issue I'm focusing on is environmental in nature, but not on a large industrial scale, like pollution caused by major industries. Instead, I'm interested in smaller, more personal actions that reflect a kind of neglect or disregard for the environment. Specifically, I want to examine how people treat houseplants and outdoor greenery, not as living beings, but more as objects or decorative items. These everyday choices raise important questions about our moral relationship with nature and how we value the lives of plants.

The "buy and kill" trend refers to the fact that while houseplants are popular and frequently purchased, a significant portion of them are also killed by their owners

"19.90% of 25-34-year-olds said that they'd killed more than half of their recent plant purchases, compared to just 8.61% aged 65+"

Lack of Experience:

Many new houseplant owners lack the experience and knowledge needed to properly care for their plants, leading to mistakes like overwatering or neglecting them.

Desire for Aesthetics:

Some individuals buy plants primarily for their aesthetic appeal, sometimes prioritizing appearance over plant health

Shifting Priorities:

As people become more aware of the time and effort involved in plant care, some may choose to reduce their collection

Primary Research



1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Photos 1–5: Real Life Examples of Plant Neglect

1 & 2. These two photos were taken during my Easter break in China.

- *Photo 1* shows a woman standing on top of a plum tree to take photos.
- *Photo 2* captures the aftermath of a group of tourists trampling over a flower bed for the sake of getting better pictures.

3. This photo shows a plant that belonged to my internship roommate. She picked it up at an event, but when her internship ended and it was time to go home, she simply threw the plant away.

4. This image was taken at the home of one of my interviewees, Nina. She forgot to water the plant, and as a result, it died.

5. I took this photo at a barbershop in China. I noticed the plant was dead, so I asked the barber what happened. He said, "I forgot to water it." When I asked why he got a plant in the first place if he wasn't going to care for it, he replied, "Because I saw other shops had plants, so I thought I should get one too."

Contemporary Issues (Social)

As previous research has shown, keeping houseplants and spending time in nature can help reduce stress and clear the mind. With the growing interest in plant ownership among younger generations, I'm interested in exploring the underlying stressors that may be contributing to this trend, particularly in relation to increasing urbanization and our reliance on technology

Usage of Technology

- Almost all adults aged 16 to 44 years in the UK were recent internet users (99%), compared with 54% of adults aged 75 years and over
- While there has been little change in internet use for adults aged 16 to 44 years in recent years, the proportion of those aged 75 years and over who doubled since 2013, from 29%, to 54% in 2020.
 - This further shows the impact of technology of our livelihood not only towards younger people but also those who are older.

Urbanization

- For most of human history, people live in small communities, it wasn't until recent decades where the transition from rural living area to urban areas has been dramatic.
- Many people moved from rural to urban areas to get jobs in the rapidly expanding industries in many large towns and cities.
 - London's population grew from 7.2million to 9.8 million from 2000s to 2025
- By 2007 the number of people living in urban cities outnumbered the amount living in rural areas.
- Massive and rapid increase in urbanization led to pollution, lost of green space, congestion and overcrowding as well as mental health challenges due to the pressure of urban living.

Primary Research



While researching urbanization and city development, I was reminded of a recent trip back to China to visit my uncle in the countryside. It had been seven years since my last visit, and I returned with a sense of excitement and a longing for the nostalgia of my childhood.

However, when I arrived, I was met with a deep sense of disappointment and loss. The river was being filled in, the winding paths had been paved over with cement, and many of the old houses had been torn down to make way for modern apartment buildings. While these changes are often seen as signs of economic growth and social progress, I couldn't help but feel disheartened.

Primary Research



These are photos of indoor plants that I took either during my Easter break or earlier, including ones from my friends' homes and some of the plants I used to own. I picked out the plants that had special textures and shape like the spiky cactus and twirled bamboos. I would like to use these plants as reference images for the final project that I am working on.

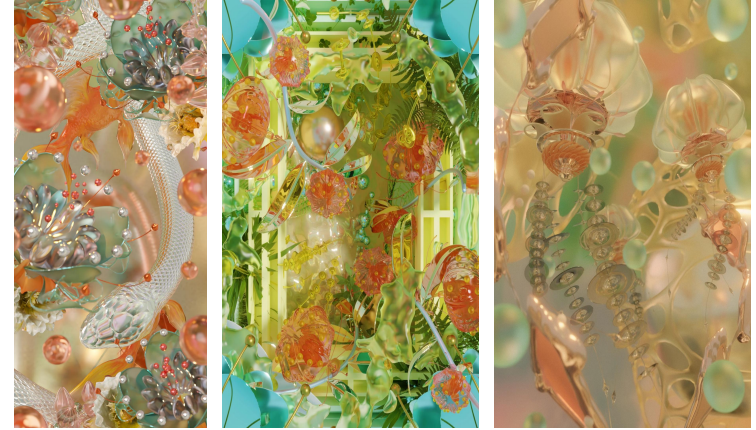
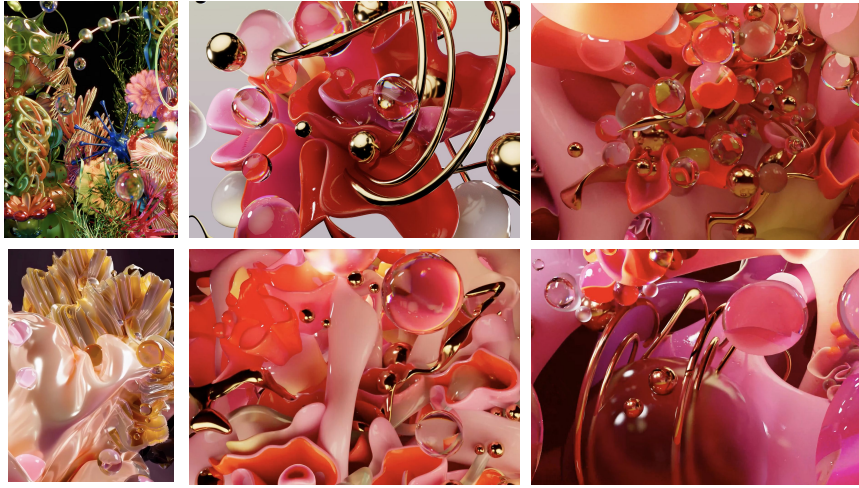
Fashion Research Material and Style



For this project, my target research audience is gen z, so I want the fashion style to reflect aesthetics and preferences associated with that generation. Since my theme also centers around indoor plants, I've chosen **loungewear** as the core style, something that resonates with the comfort and lifestyle of Gen Z, especially in indoor or home settings. I also want to keep the fashion aspect simple to avoid making the final outcome feel overwhelming.

In terms of material, I want to contrast the natural, calming presence of plants with the overwhelming presence of technology and urban living. To reflect this, I plan to use **metallic and robotic inspired fabrics** that evoke a technological, industrial feel. This choice symbolizes how we are becoming increasingly numb and disconnected due to the fast-paced nature of urban life and constant digital exposure.

Artist research: Mikaela Stafford & Szt



For this project, the two main artists who have inspired me are **Mikaela Stafford** (right) and **Szt** (left). What initially drew me to their work was their bold and imaginative use of plant forms. I was fascinated by how each artist reinterprets plants, giving them a futuristic and otherworldly quality. In particular, I'm drawn to the overall aesthetic of Szt's work, her use of pastel tones creates a soft, mythical atmosphere that adds a dreamlike quality to her visuals.

For my own project, I plan to incorporate primary research using photos of plants I've collected, transforming them through my design approach. However, I may choose not to make my work as visually complex as the two artists, as I don't want the environment to overpower the character I'm designing. I also intend to experiment with materials to strike the right balance, ensuring the setting supports the narrative without overwhelming the central figure.



Artist research: XI'an Studio and Siyin Chen



I want to use both of these artists as references for how I plan to present my project. The image on the left is an AI-generated visual by Xi'an Studio, which features a platform-like plane that grounds the scene, I'd like to create a similar base for my own environment to build upon. The image on the right is a 3D animation by Siyin Chen. Despite the detailed modeling in her scene, she kept the camera work simple, allowing the viewer to take in the full composition without distraction. I'm considering using a similar approach once my model is complete.

Industry Research



Zongbo Jiang — Digital heroes
inspired by Earth's most
endangered species



Extinction Songs

Plants generate 'biodata' from environmental factors such as light, sound and temperature. Music producer, DJ and sound artist Jason Singh, uses this biodata to **give threaten plants a voice** in his series Extinction Song.

Building on my previous research into how and why we feel connected to nature, I want this project to serve as a gentle form of environmental activism. If someone chooses to bring a plant, whether indoor or outdoor, into their life, it should come with a sense of responsibility and care for the piece of nature they've welcomed in. This message is inspired by the approaches seen in the two projects above, by Zongbo Jiang (left) and Jason Singh. At the same time, I hope the project provides a moment of calm and escape for those constantly immersed in the fast-paced rhythm of urban life. To evoke this feeling, the overall atmosphere will be light and dreamy. I'll avoid using high-contrast colors, instead opting for a soft, harmonious palette that supports the project's gentle and reflective tone.

Initial Moodboard/ Remix Workshop



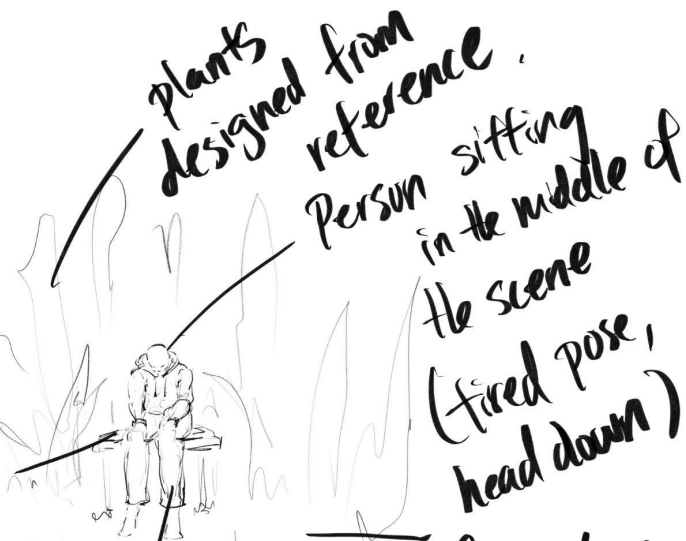
Mind Map and Draft

Rough Ideation
Scale: plants bigger than char.

Plants surrounding character

Sitting on desk chair

May add a bit plant movement / animation



plants designed from reference.

Person sitting in the middle of the scene (tired pose, head down)

lounge wear / Ground: Grass

Comfortable clothing
↳ character material: metallic to reflect exsu. tech

This is a very rough ideation and mind map for my project that plan to create. The details are in bullet points below.

Scene

- Plants and nature surrounding the character but not blocking the front view
- Plants designed from primary research references
- Ground is covered in grass
- Overall scale of the plant will be bigger than the character
- May add a bit of plant animation such as movement in the wind.
- Light background

Character

- Sitting still in a tired pose in the middle of the plant scene
- Sitting in an office or desk chair
- Head down
- Metallic material

Character Design (Pose and Reference)



Pose 1

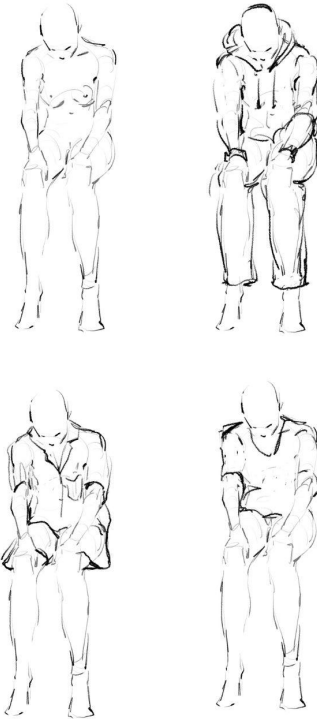


Pose 2



For my character design and pose, I aimed to reflect contemporary issues such as the excessive use of technology and the impact of urbanization. Through the character's posture, I wanted to convey a sense of exhaustion and low energy, symbolizing our collective need to disconnect from urban life and reconnect with nature. To express this, I focused on poses that are curled up and head-down, suggesting fatigue and introspection. Since my project is intended to be gender-neutral, I excluded gendered body features such as hair and chest definition. Additionally, I removed the hair to emphasize the character's metallic 3D material for later on, which visually represents the dominance of technology in modern life.

Character Fashion Experiment (Pose 1)

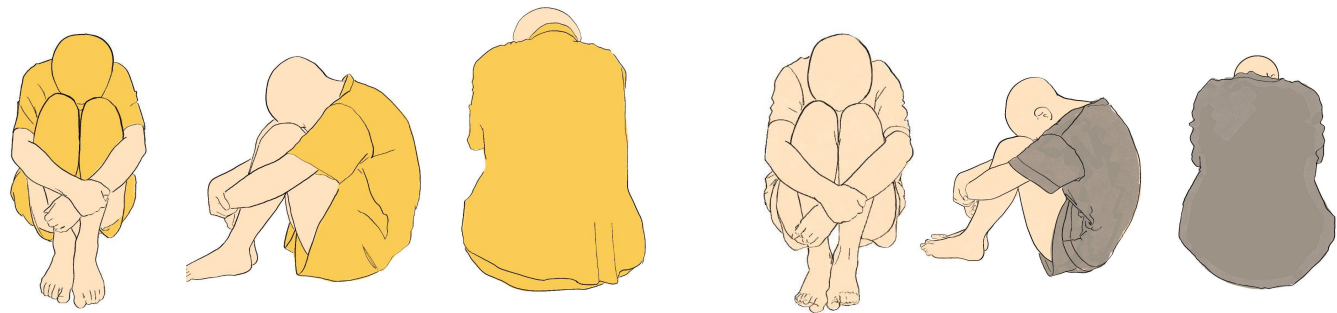


I've chosen to focus on these two specific character poses for the fashion element and final outcome because they present the clothing more clearly. While some of the other poses offer more intricate body positioning, I'm concerned that once the 3D model is created with a metallic material, too much detail could overshadow the fashion aspect I want to highlight.

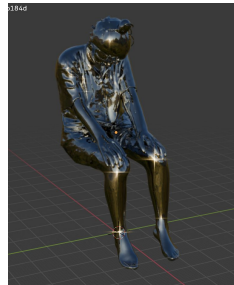
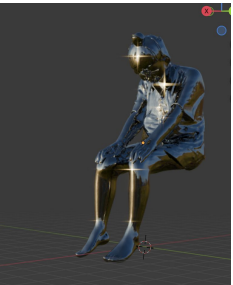
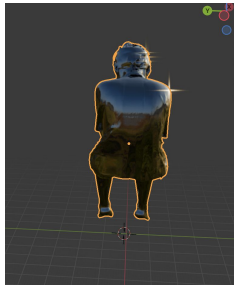
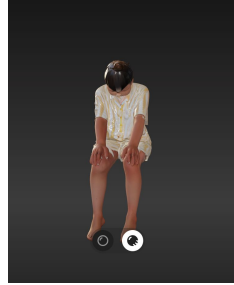
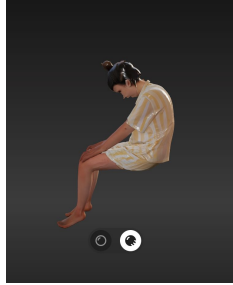
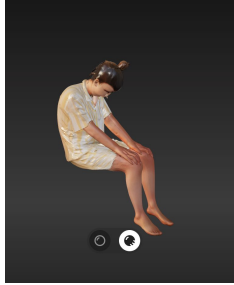
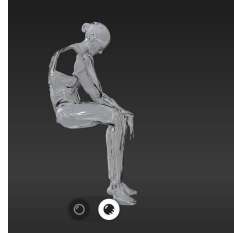
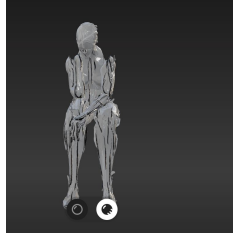
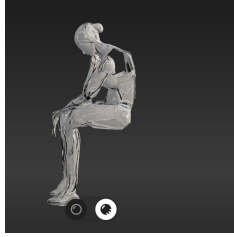
For the fashion exploration, as mentioned earlier, the project centers on Gen Z and their connection to indoor plants, so the clothing is designed around homewear. Rather than drawing inspiration from online sources or fashion brands, I chose to reference people in my own life, friends and my roommate, who are close to me in age. I selected three outfits and photographed them in the chosen poses to guide both the illustration and the 3D modeling process.

The reason I chose to photograph on a table instead of a chair like I've said in my draft is because I want to capture the nature hanging of the feet and it was much easier to take photos on a straight eye level from all angles.

Character Fashion Experiment (Pose 2)

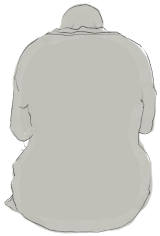
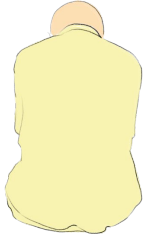


Character Design Pose 1 (Tripo 3D)



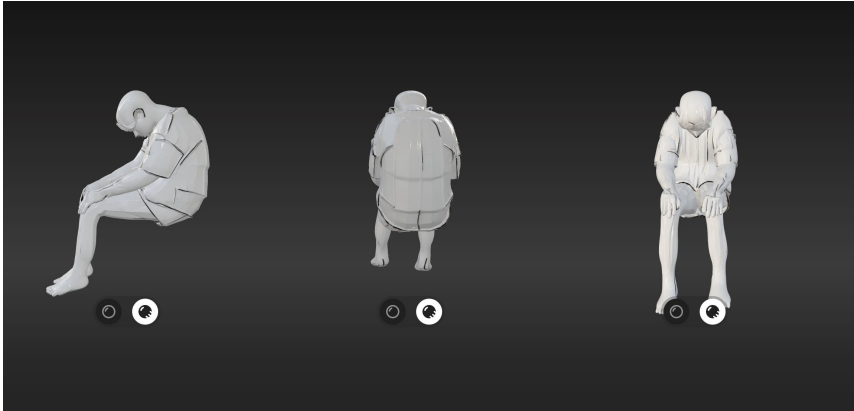
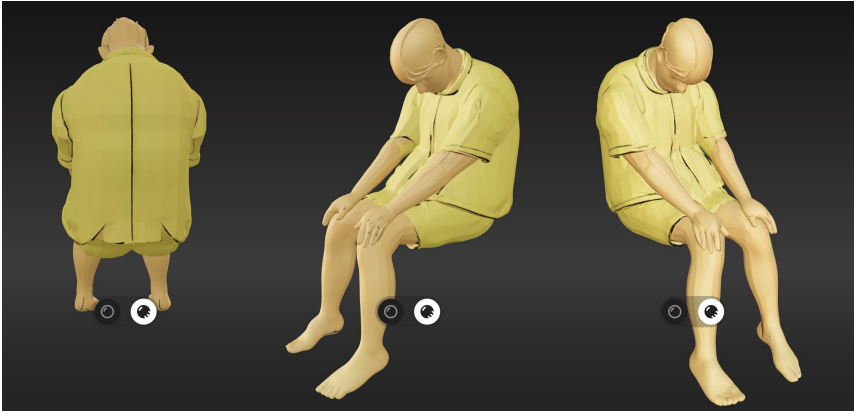
I experimented with Tripod 3D to transform my character from an illustration into a 3D mesh that I could modify in Blender. My first attempt used a rough, unrefined illustration, and I quickly realized that many of the sketchy lines were carried over into the 3D model, which made the result look messy. To address this, I edited the pose I wanted in Photoshop, creating a cleaner version before importing it. However, once I applied the metallic material in Blender, the model started to resemble a park or library statue, something that didn't align with my vision for this project and I also couldn't change the hair. Moving forward, I plan to experiment with illustrating cleaner version of the poses I picked and more refined line work to better control the final aesthetic.

Character Design Pose 1 (Tripo 3D)

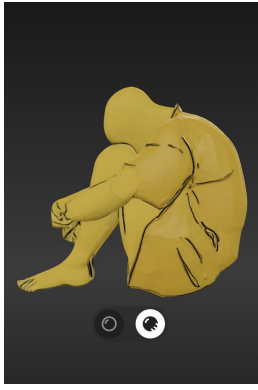
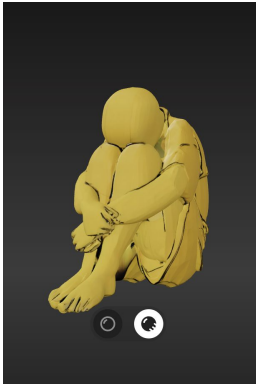
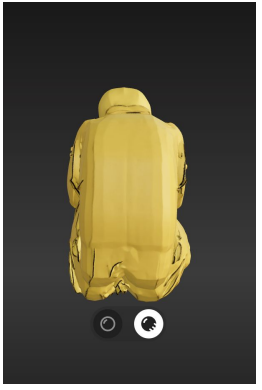
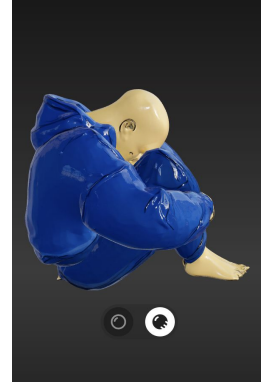
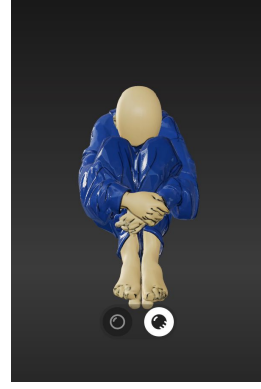
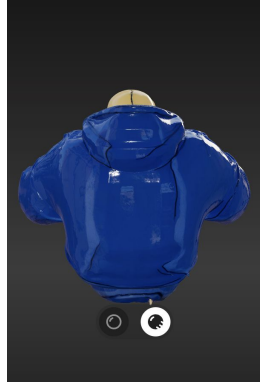
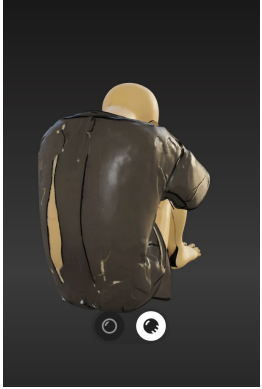


I imported all three sets of illustrations into Tripo 3D, and I found that the outfit in blue stood out the most. Its combination of a hoodie and sweatpants communicates the concept of homewear fashion more clearly. So I will be using this outfit instead of the other two. The other two models can be seen on the next slide.

Character Design Pose 1 (Tripo 3D)

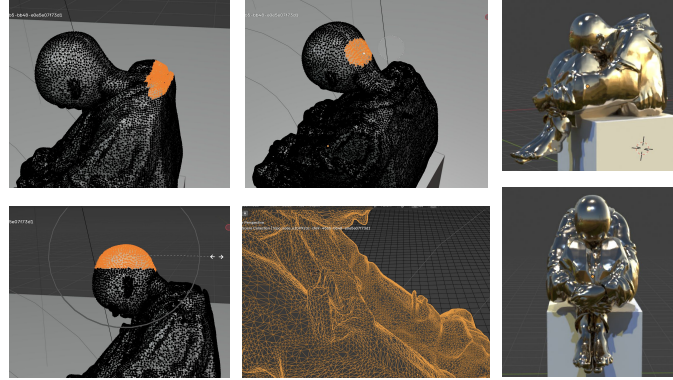
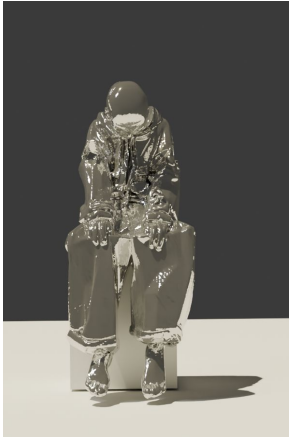
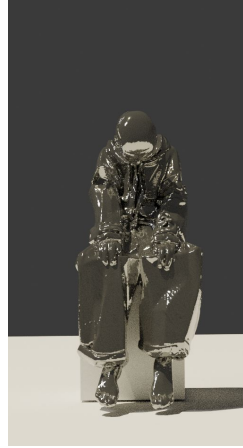
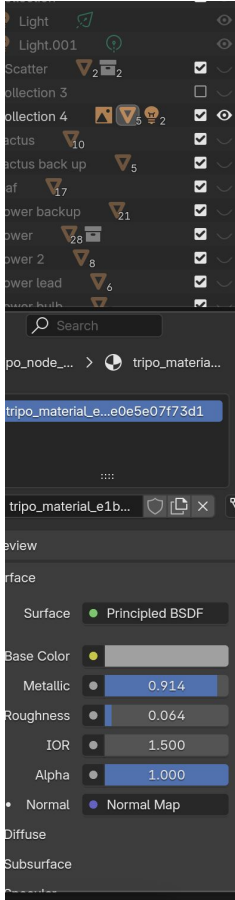


Character Design Pose 2 (Tripo 3D)



These are the Tripo 3D result for pose 2

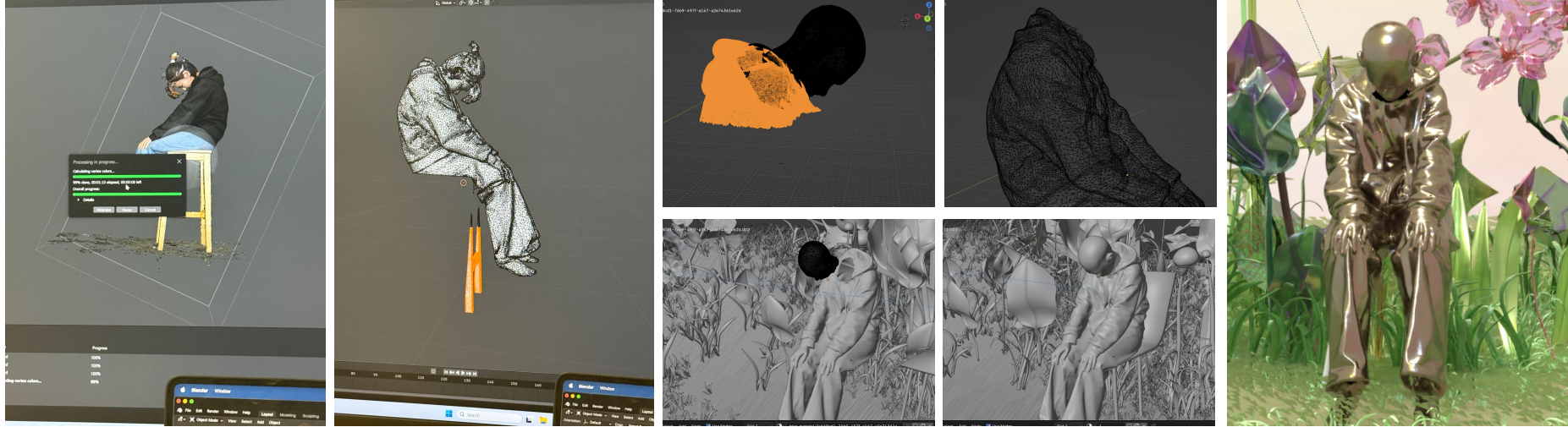
Character Design Blender



I imported the models generated in Blender and applied a new material to them, adjusting both the metallic value and base color to strike a balance, making the material visibly metallic while still allowing the fashion details to come through clearly. Since the model was created from an illustration, some of the proportions were slightly off. I corrected this by smoothing and rescaling areas in Edit Mode to create a more polished and complete form. However, there are still a few details I wasn't able to refine within Blender. As an alternative, I'm considering using photogrammetry to scan myself and explore a more accurate and flexible model.

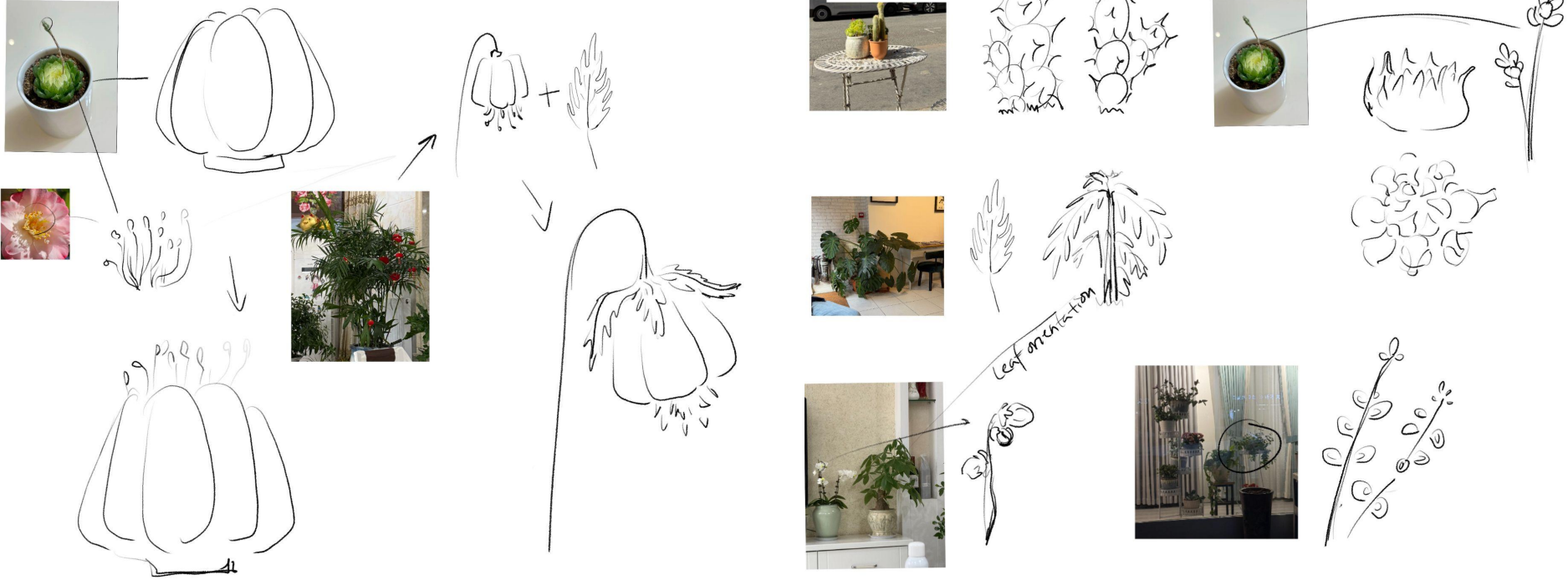
I decided to continue my project using Pose 1. In my opinion, Pose 2, especially after applying the metallic finish, appeared too tense and conveyed more negative energy than I intended. Additionally, the curled-up position made it difficult to clearly see what the character was wearing, which limited visual information.

Photogrammetry



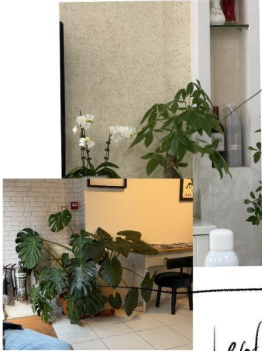
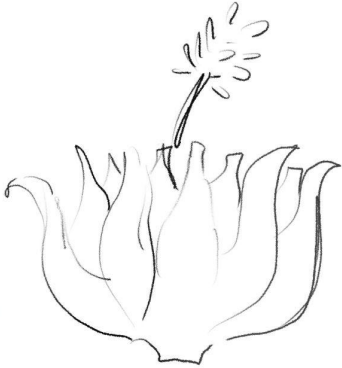
I used the photogrammetry rig to scan myself in the pose 1 and outfit then cleaned up the mesh, including the stool I was sitting on. After refining the model, I imported it into Blender. Since photogrammetry captures everything exactly as it is, I wasn't able to make myself appear hairless in the scan. To fix this, I took the head from a previous model I created using Tripo 3D, which had a more accurate representation of my character's head. I deleted the body from that model and replaced the scanned head with it, attaching it to the photogrammetry body. Overall, I think the result turned out well, and I plan to use this model in my final outcome.

Plant Design



These are some of the plant designs I created based on my primary research. For several of them, I combined elements from different plants, such as using the leaf orientation from one species and the leaf shape from another, to develop more unique designs. I was also particularly drawn to the form of the cactus, which led me to create multiple variations inspired by its shape.

Plant Design continued



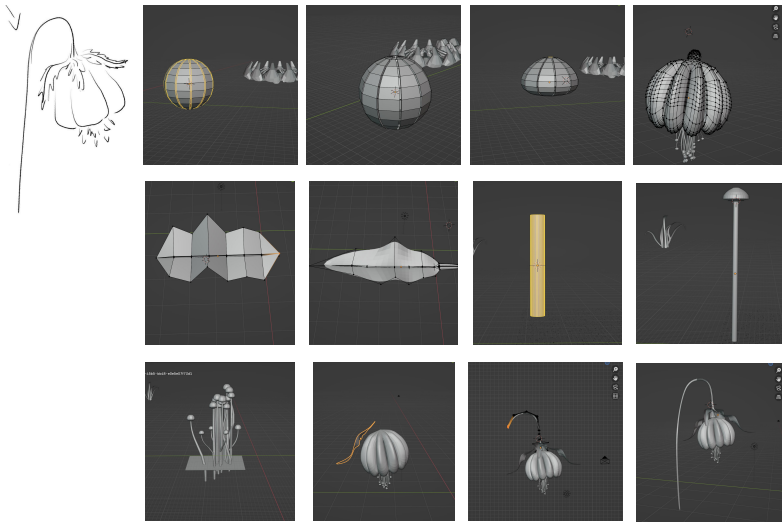
Leaf shape & orientation



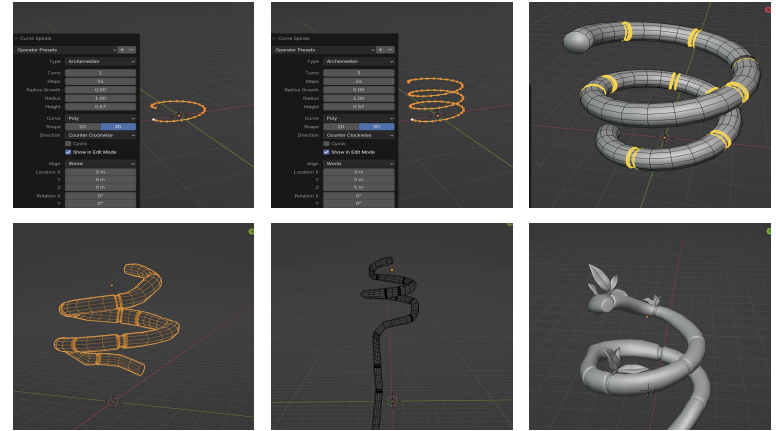
Leaf pattern



Blender Plant Process

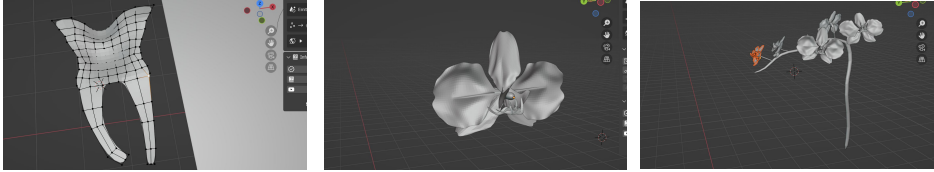


For this flower/plant model, I started by creating a sphere and adding bevels to allow for smoother creases when scaling and shaping the form. I then modeled the stamens using a cylinder, extruding and scaling the top to form a rounded shape. These were duplicated and slightly reshaped to form a clustered group at the center of the flower. Additionally, I created leaves from a plane and positioned them both at the base of the flower and along the stem to add more detail and natural variation.

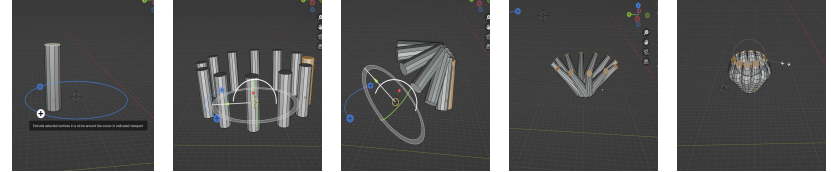
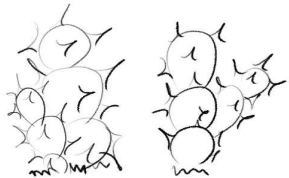
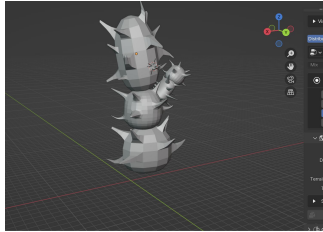
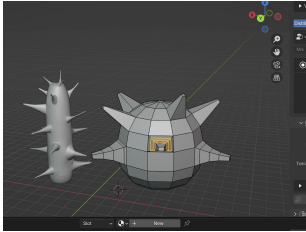


For the bamboo, I decided to keep its overall shape because it provides a strong visual contrast to the other plant forms I've designed. I created it using a spiral curve, then extruded the segments and adjusted the curves in edit mode to break away from the systematic look and give it a more organic, natural feel. To complete the model, I reused leaves from a previous plant, scaled them down, made slight adjustments, and placed them along the bamboo to enhance its detail.

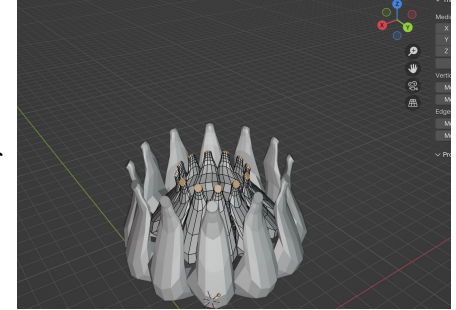
Blender Plant Process



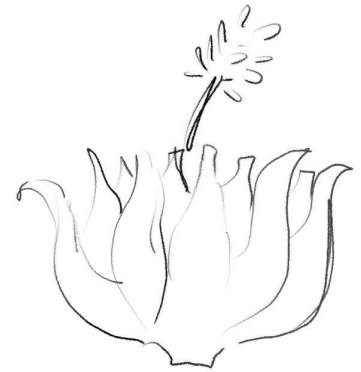
This is a model that I created based on the orchids in my primary research, I quite like the shape of the flowers and plants already, so I won't be changing it much but I'll experiment with the colors afterwards. Below the cactus created according to my design illustration.



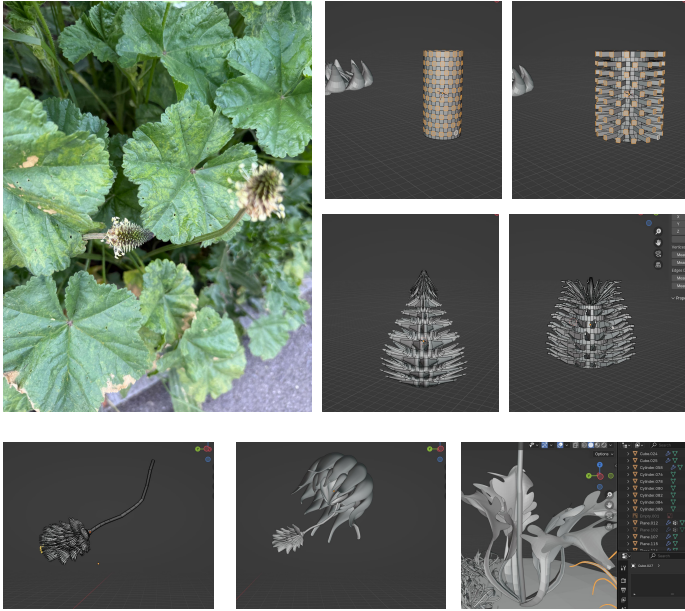
For this flower/plant model, I started with a cylinder and used the Spin tool in Edit Mode to create a symmetrical, circular arrangement of duplicates. I then scaled down the base of each piece to connect them at the center.



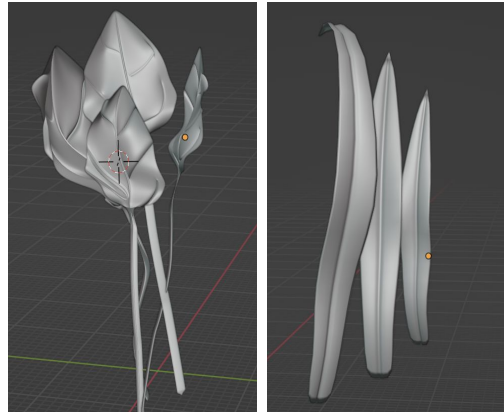
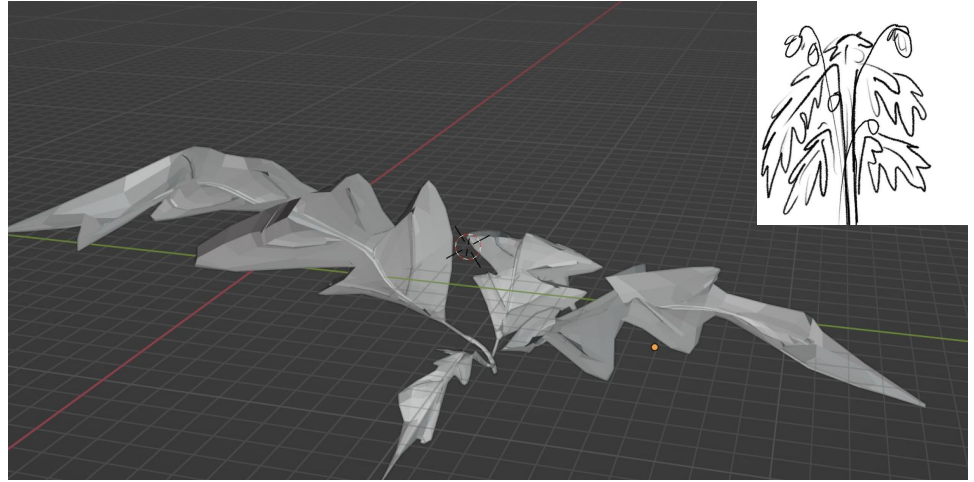
After duplicating the mesh and scaling it down, I used it to form the inner layers of the flower. Finally, I adjusted each petal individually to give the flower a more natural and organic appearance.



Blender Plant Process

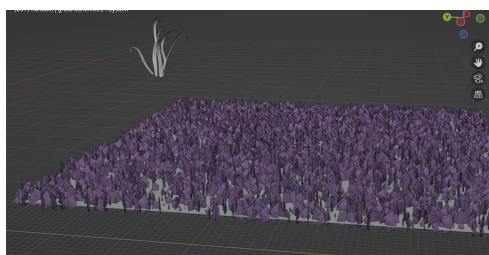
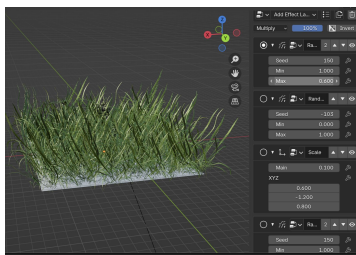
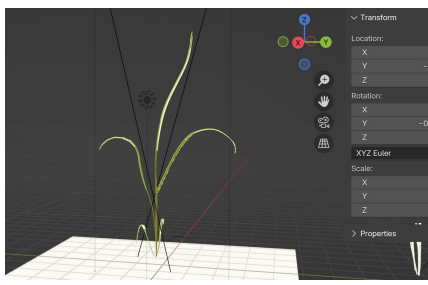
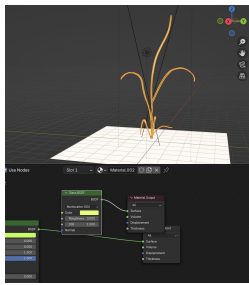
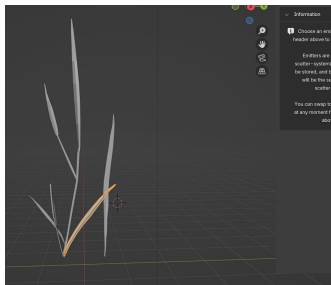
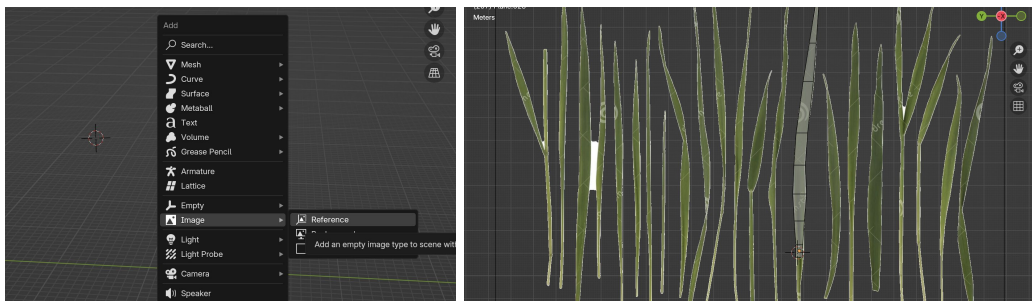


This flower stamen was inspired by a photo I took of a plant growing by the side of the road. I was drawn to its spiky shape and interesting texture, so I decided to recreate it in Blender and incorporate it into the flower model I had previously made. I then Added leaves at the bottom to make the plant look more complete.



I also created several variations of leaves and smaller plants to give myself more options for filling in the negative space between the larger, primary plant models.

Blender Plant Experiment : Gscatter

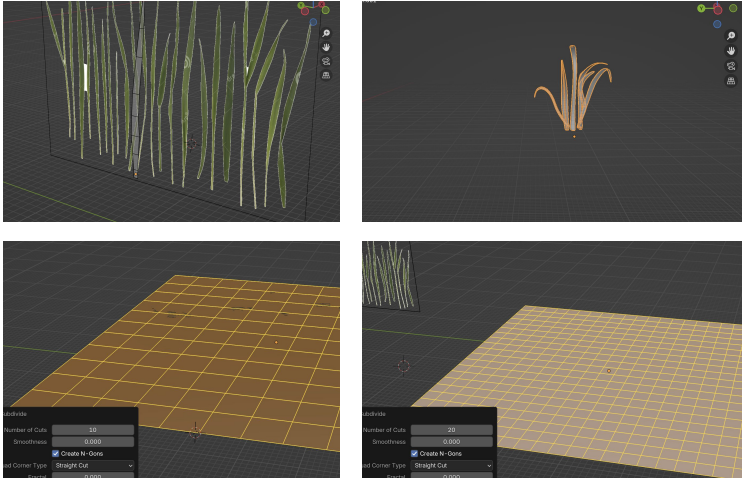


For the grass plane, I decided to use a Blender plugin that allows me to select a model and scatter it across a chosen surface. I found this method far more efficient than manually creating and duplicating individual grass models. I began by finding a reference image of a grass blade and set it as a background in Blender to use as an outline. After modeling a few individual blades, I combined them, adjusting their rotation and scale to form a single grass clump. To color it, I used a high-resolution grass image as a texture, plugging it into the material output so Blender would use the image directly instead of manually shading the model.

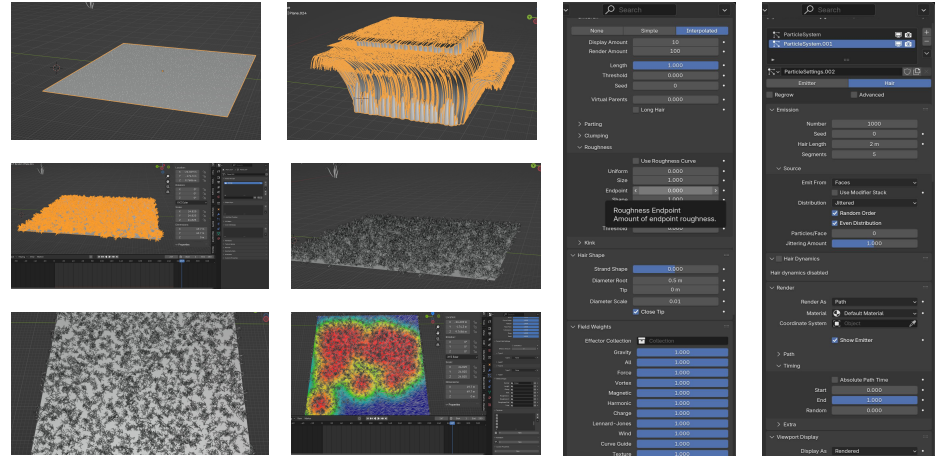
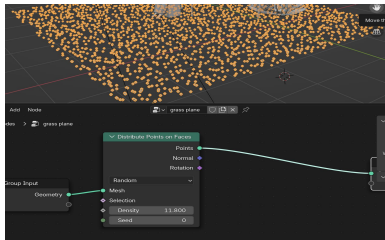
I then applied the Gscatter plugin, which successfully scattered the grass model across the plane with randomized rotation and scale. However, I realized that my original grass model was too curled, and when densely scattered, it created a messy and unrealistic look. I'll need to remake the model with a straighter and more natural shape.

Later, I discovered that my Blender had auto-upgraded to version 4.4, which is not fully compatible with Gscatter. This caused the scattered grass to distort and lose the intended shape (last image). I now need to either find an alternative scattering method.

Blender Plant Experiment : Geometry Node and Weight Paint

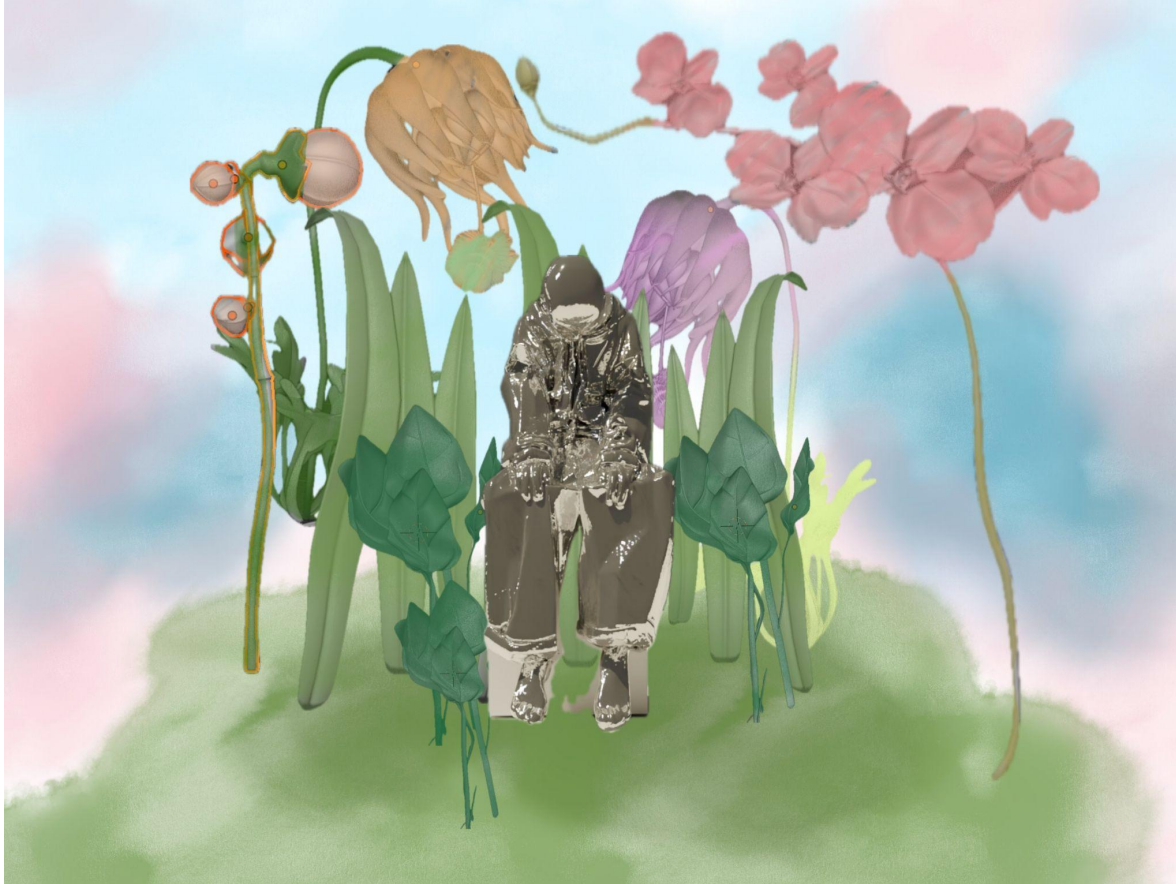


After creating the second version of the grass blade, I experimented with using Geometry Nodes to scatter the model across the plane. I manually set up the node system to distribute the grass blades individually. However, I found this method too performance-heavy for my computer, Blender frequently froze during the process. Due to the strain on my system, I decided not to continue with this approach.



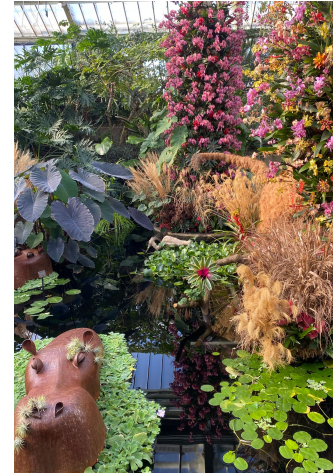
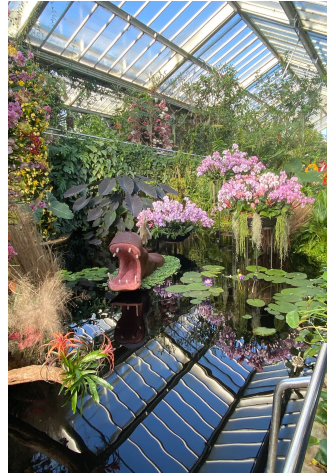
This weight paint method was more time-consuming than the previous two approaches, but it gave me greater flexibility and control. I began by creating a particle system and assigning it to emit the grass model I had designed. I then adjusted parameters such as count, rotation, and render scale. Next, I entered weight paint mode to create a vertex group linked to the particle system, allowing me to paint specific areas of the plane where I wanted the grass to appear. To add more variety, I layered a hair particle system on top, which helped introduce different grass types for a more natural look. I'm quite pleased with the result and plan to use this method for the final project. For now, I'm viewing everything in modeling mode, as rendering mode causes significant lag and makes it difficult to preview the details clearly.

Moodboard 2



Now that I've completed the main plant elements and the character, I created a second version of my moodboard that more closely reflects the final outcome I'm envisioning, including the overall scene composition and background color. I haven't applied colors to the 3D models yet because I want to evaluate the entire scene before making decisions about the color palette and potential adjustments. Additionally, the materials assigned to each object will affect how the colors appear, and applying them too early can cause significant lag on my computer. For this moodboard, I took screenshots of my 3D models and added color using Procreate. I really like the watercolor style background and may try to replicate that effect in Blender.

Layout Research



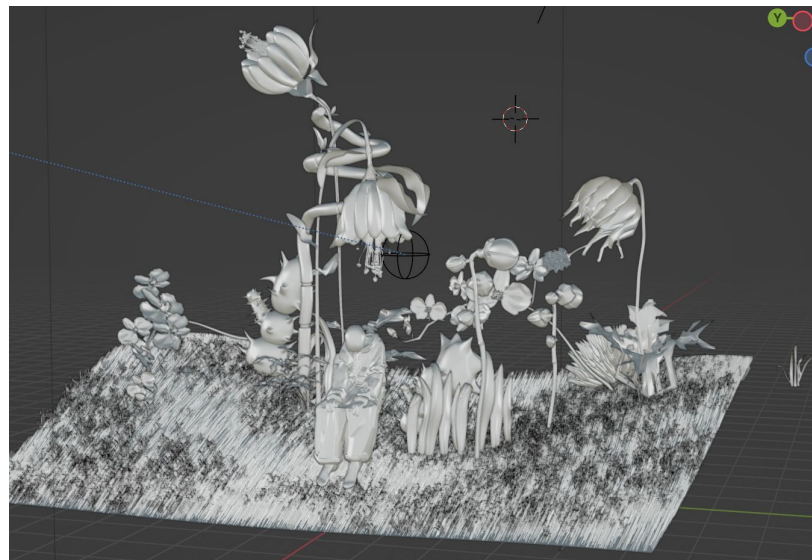
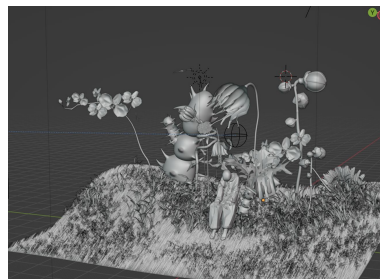
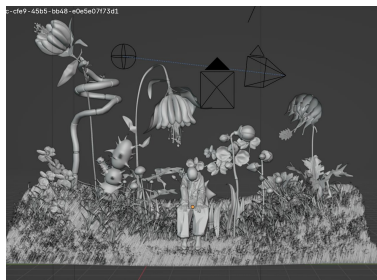
The top three images are photos I took at Kew Gardens, while the bottom two are from Studio Ghibli Park, where they've recreated natural scenery from the films. Although both are outdoor plant layouts, I find them valuable references for my project's composition. The plant arrangements at Kew Gardens are more complex, with a wide variety of species and shades of green. While rich in detail, the overall effect can feel somewhat chaotic. In contrast, the Studio Ghibli images tend to focus on a single, dominant plant with subtle variations surrounding it, creating a more intentional and serene layout. I'd like to take inspiration from both approaches and aim for a balanced composition some plants will be scaled up to serve as focal points, while others will remain smaller to support the overall structure.

Layout Experiment



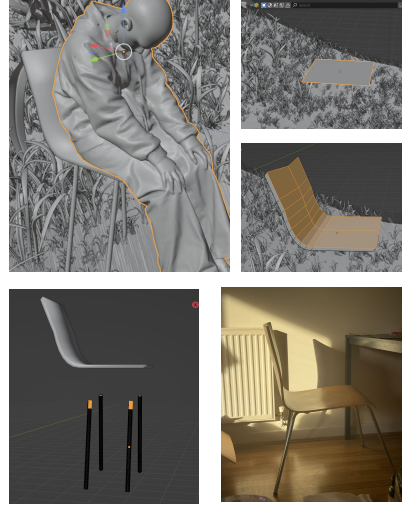
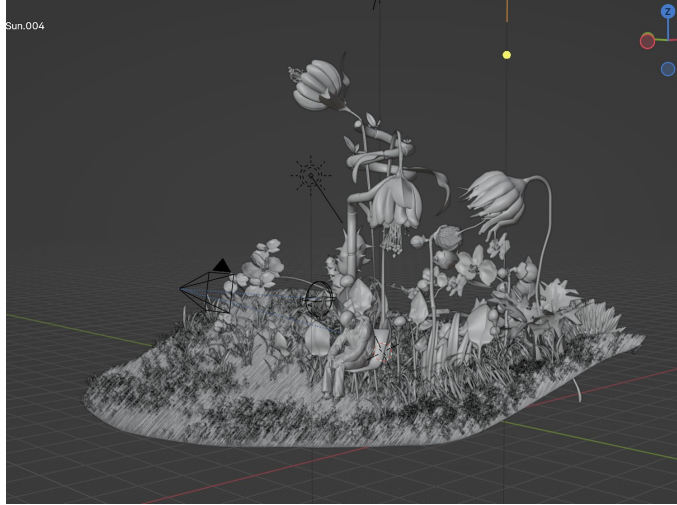
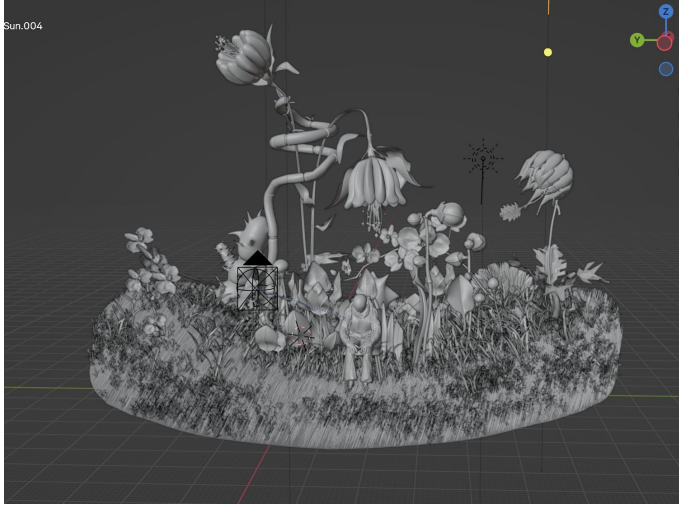
As part of my initial experimentation, I created several layout sketches to explore different composition ideas. I began with rough sketches in procreate before moving into Blender, as I wanted to plan the scene without accidentally disrupting or misplacing my existing 3D models. In these sketches, I experimented with various character positions, plant arrangements, and scaled up some of the plants to test their visual impact. The top-left sketch is my favorite so far, it feels cleaner and more cohesive than the others. However, I still think the plant distribution could be more balanced. I'll continue refining the layout in Blender, with a focus on scale, placement, and eventually, color.

Layout Experiment



I experimented with a few layout options in Blender and found that I really liked the effect of making the plants larger than the character. This contrast challenges the typical scale we associate with indoor plants, where people usually tower over them. By reversing these proportions, I aim to not only make the viewer focus on the character but also the plant elements, encouraging them to be noticed. The enlarged image shows the layout I liked the most. However, it still feels a bit empty, so I plan to add some of the smaller leaf and plant variations to help fill in the negative space and create a more balanced composition.

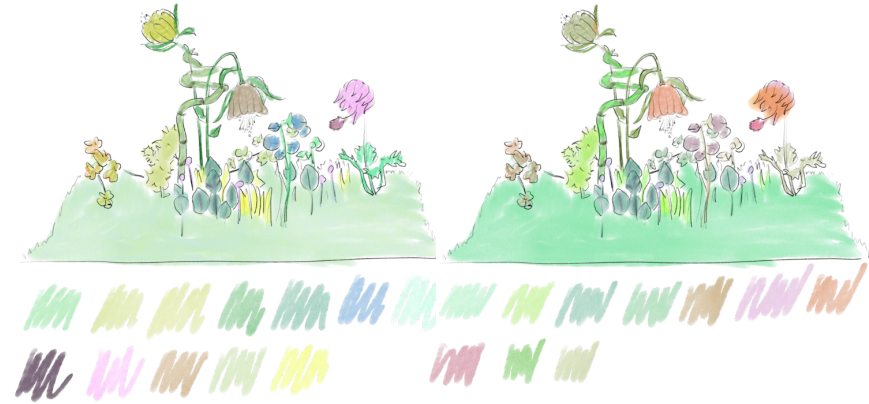
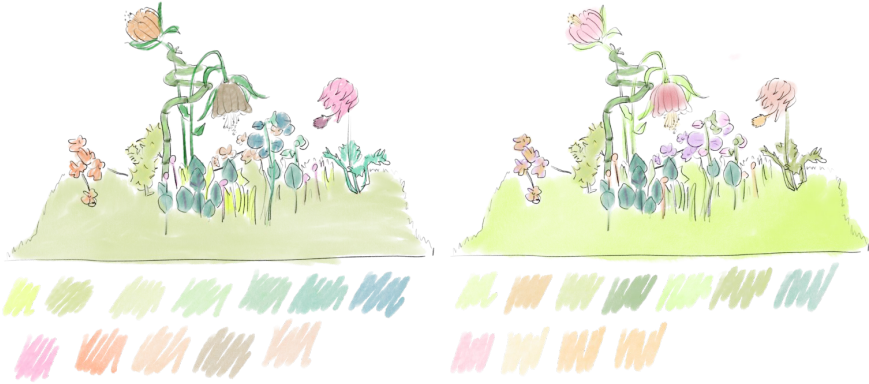
Layout



This is the final layout I've chosen to move forward with for adding color and developing the background. I also added more shape and variation to the bottom plane to give the overall scene greater depth and dimension.

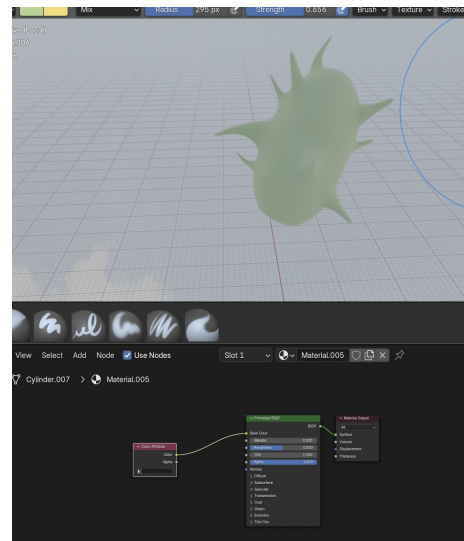
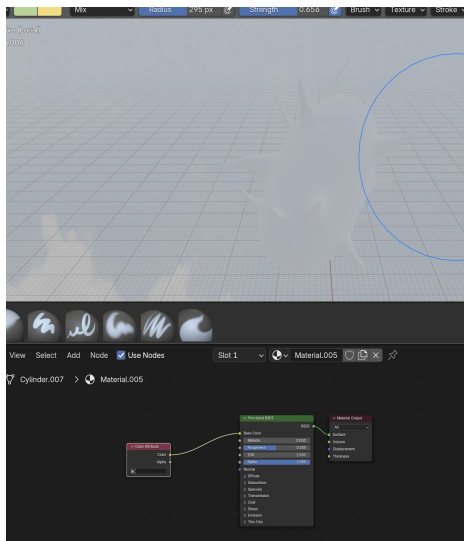
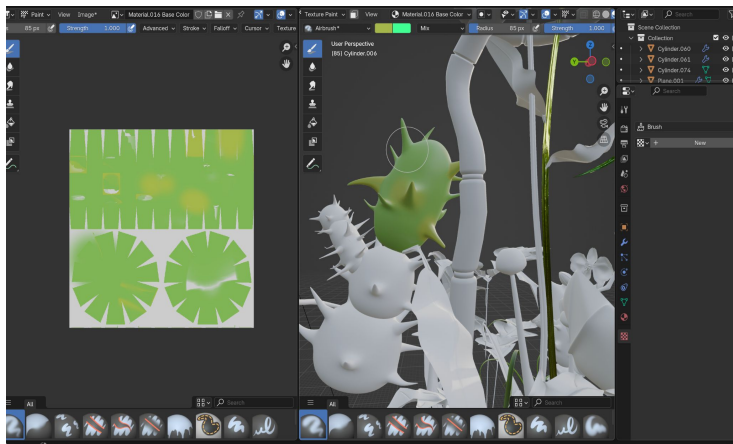
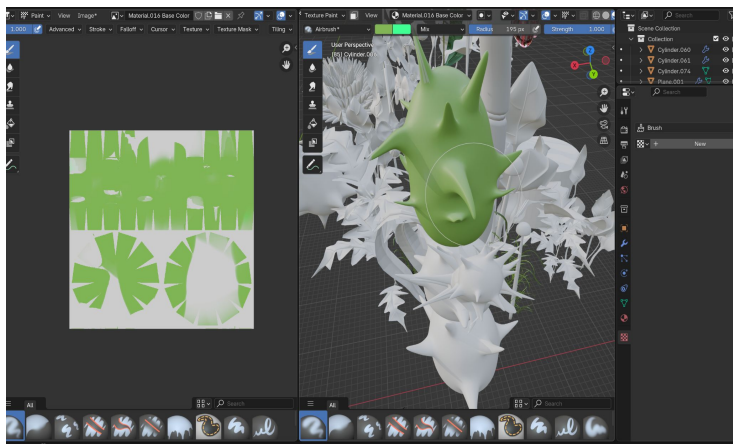
I've also created a chair for the character to sit on using the chair that I sit on at home when I am working.

Color Palette



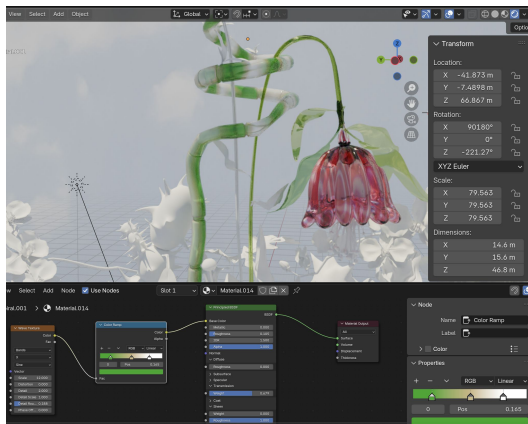
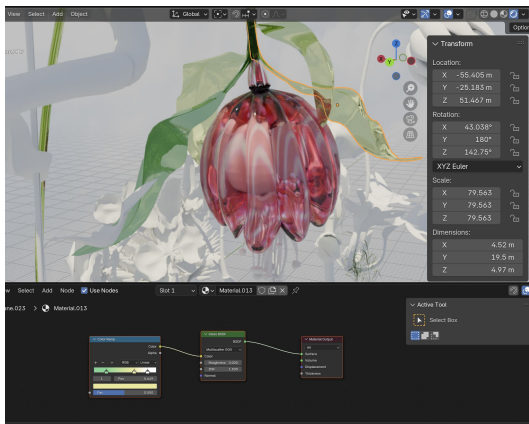
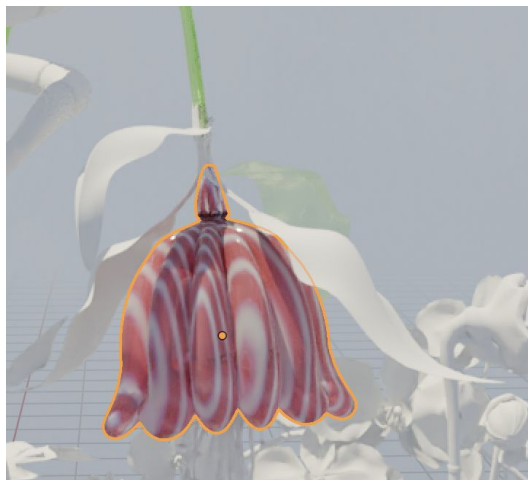
For this project, I want viewers to recognize that the plants are inspired by or transformed from real-life species. While I aim to maintain a sense of realism, I also want the overall scene to have a dreamy, atmospheric quality, similar to the artists I researched. I chose not to overcomplicate the color palette, knowing that assigning materials in Blender can already alter the final appearance. For plants that closely resemble those in my primary research photos, I kept the colors fairly true to life, with slight exaggeration for emphasis. For the more stylized plants I designed myself, I experimented more freely with color. I kept the overall palette soft and pastel to enhance the light, dreamy mood, and found that using mostly analogous colors with one or two contrasting shades, like in the color study at the top right, helped create a cohesive and visually balanced scene.

Color Experiment Texture Paint



After finalizing the overall color palette, I began experimenting with texture painting in Blender. In this mode, the object is unwrapped into a flat mesh, allowing me to paint directly onto the UV layout. However, I found it challenging to achieve a smooth gradient from green to yellow, especially at the tips of the spikes. If I discover a more effective method for blending colors, I'll give that a try, otherwise, I'll continue to adjust and work within the limitations of the current approach.

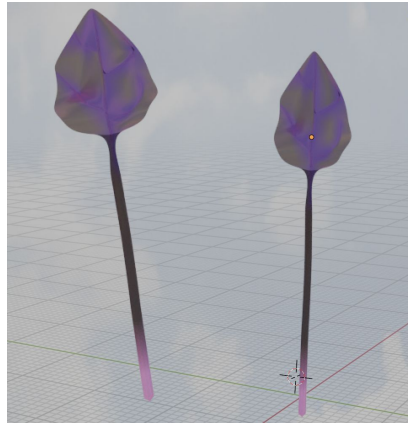
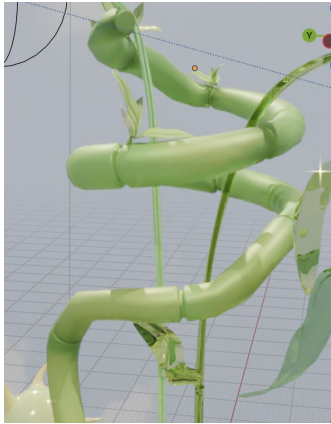
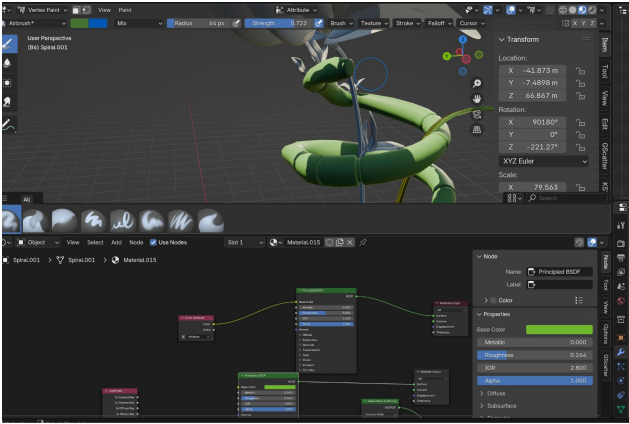
Color Experiment Color Ramp



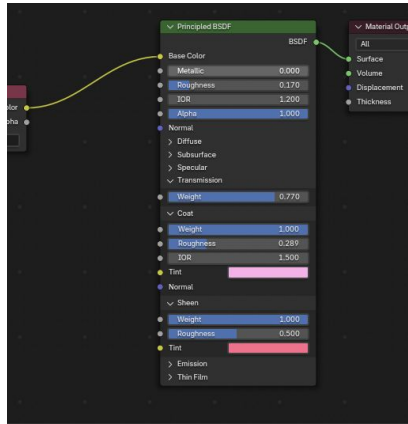
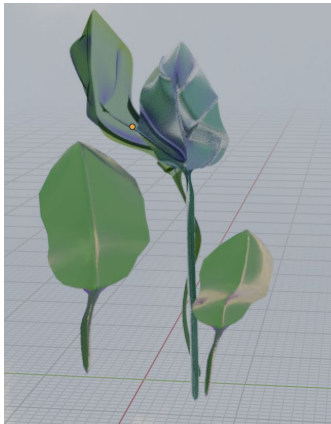
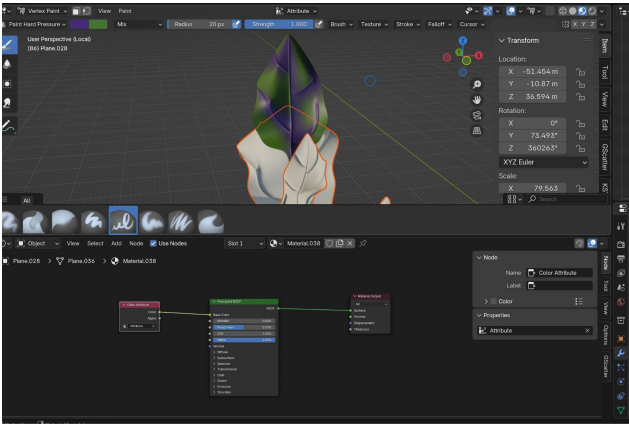
The color ramp method worked well on objects that are rounded and have more volume, as seen in the first three images. For the drooping flower, I adjusted the color ramp to match my chosen palette and also fine-tuned the transparency and metallic weight, which I think produced a strong result. However, the color ramp was less effective on the spiral bamboo in the last image, it created harsh, segmented transitions with visible borders between colors. Because of this, I plan to experiment with alternative coloring techniques for that model.

None of the colors or textures are finalized yet, as I'll need to view the entire scene together before making final adjustments.

Color Experiment Vertex Paint



The vertex paint method was the most effective for me and gave me the greatest level of control. Using Vertex Paint mode, I was able to directly paint onto the 3D model with a brush of my choice, it felt very similar to painting in Procreate, but in a 3D space. This allowed me to match the plant colors closely to my 2D designs. To add more variation and visual interest, I also adjusted the tint and surface properties, such as the coat on certain plant elements, to introduce subtle diversity in color.



Overall color and texture



Rendering the scene in Eevee gave it a soft, watercolor-like and dreamy effect, which I really liked. However, the overall image appeared too flat and somewhat artificial, the colors and models lacked depth and realism. Because of this, I've decided to use Cycles for the final render to achieve a more natural and dimensional result.

Overall color and texture



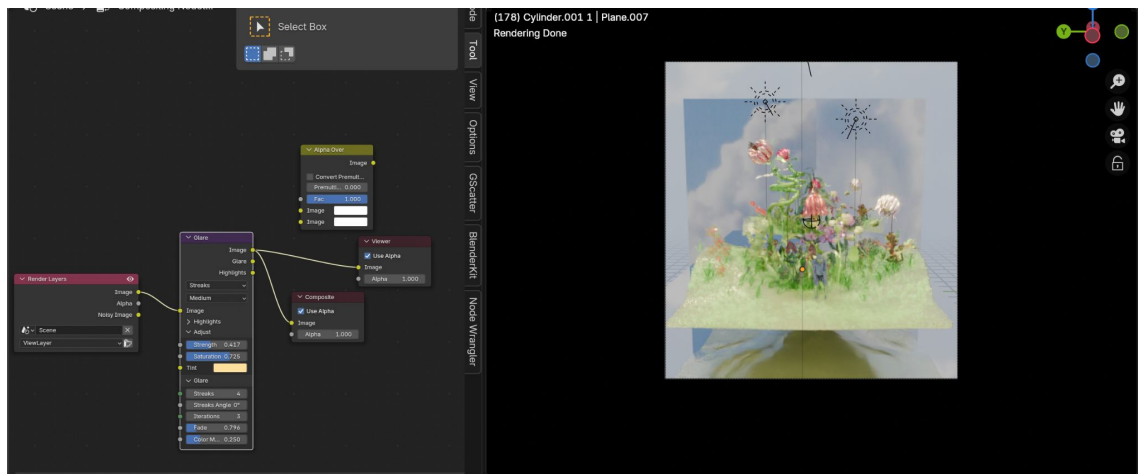
After finalizing the overall color palette, I began adjusting the textures and materials across the entire scene. I gave some models a rougher surface, while others were more metallic and shiny to introduce variation in both texture and visual tone. For the larger, focal-point plants, I kept the base color consistent but varied the material properties, demonstrating how different finishes can affect the way a single color renders. I think this approach resulted in a more cohesive and visually interesting scene.

I also felt that the grass plane looked a bit empty, so I added larger grass elements along with purple leaves in the center to create more depth and balance. Additionally, to avoid the plastic-like appearance that Blender materials can sometimes produce, I made careful adjustments to roughness and reflectivity throughout the scene.

Blender Glare Node and Lighting



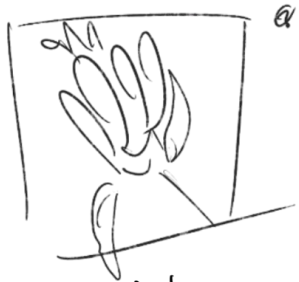
For the lighting in the scene, I chose to use sunlight instead of point or area lights. Point and area lights tend to create more localized illumination with harsh, defined edges, which didn't suit the soft, atmospheric look I was aiming for. I positioned sunlights at the front and on both sides to create a balanced, even lighting across the scene. Additionally, I added a glare effect in the compositor, which enhanced the overall outcome and contributed to the dreamy aesthetic I'm trying to achieve. I plan to use both the sunlight setup and the glare effect in the final render.



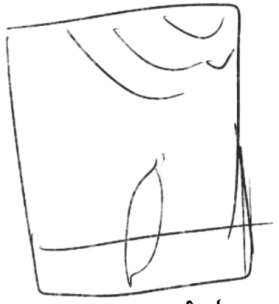
Camera animation/Storyboard 1



Start at top flower



leaf falls



Camera follows leaf at the center of the lense



following cont.



Leaf falls to the ground
Camera pauses 1-2sec



Zooms out



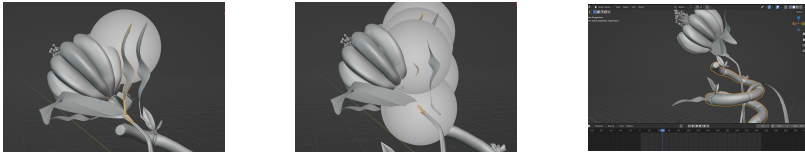
Camera rotates towards character / Rotates around



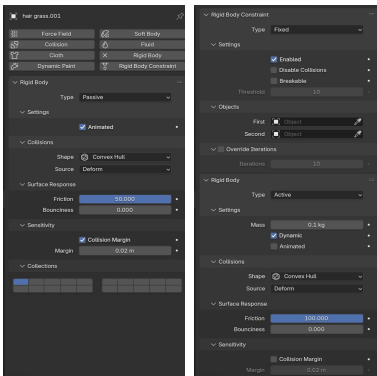
Zooms out & end of full scene w/plant animation

Instead of using the camera work in my artist research, I've decided to incorporate some of my own camera work and animation design into the scene. I also didn't want to rely on a simple rotation around the model, which would feel too similar to the camera movement I used in my previous CEP project. My plan is to animate a falling leaf and have the camera follow its descent, creating a more dynamic introduction to the scene. The camera will then rotate to reveal the character and finally zoom out to showcase the entire environment, including subtle animations of the surrounding plants.

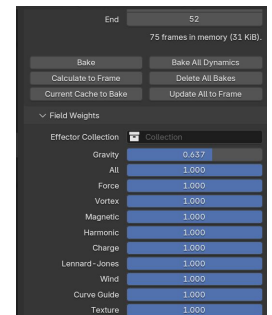
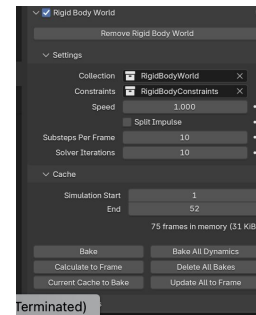
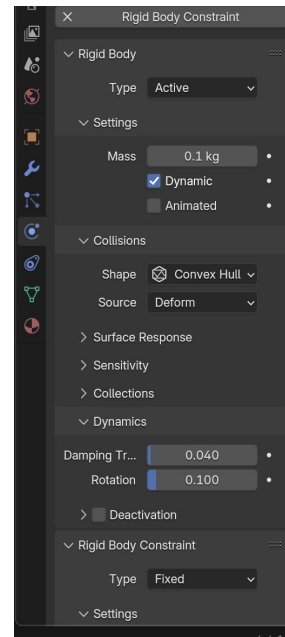
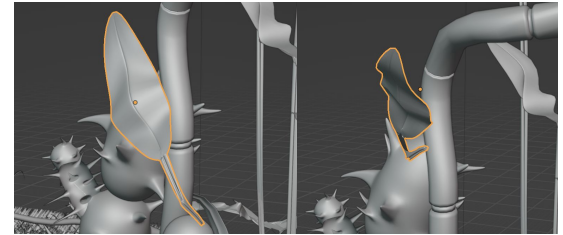
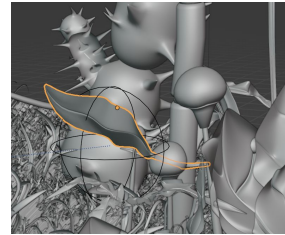
Leaf Animation



I first tried to create a leaf animation by using the particles system, but I realized that in blender you are unable to put rigid body physics (turns mesh into solid) on top of each other, so I decided to try a different way.



When rigid body physics is applied to a mesh, it automatically generates realistic physical interactions. So, I added rigid body physics to both the bamboo and the grass plane. This way, when the leaf falls, it interacts naturally with the objects in its path, creating a more believable leaf-fall simulation.



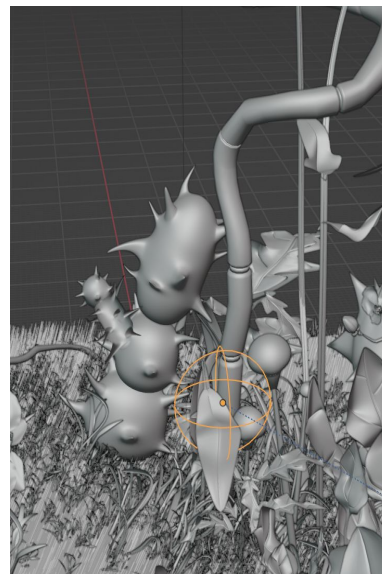
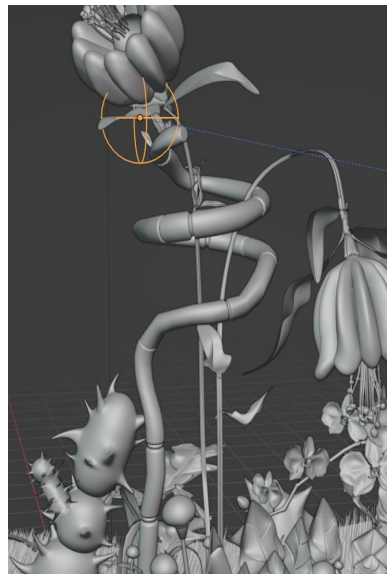
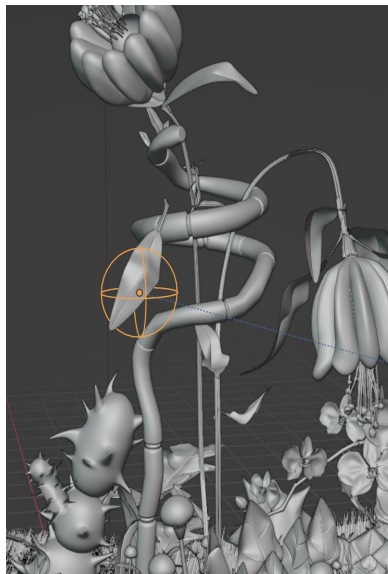
After I applied rigid body physics to the objects in the pathway of the leaf that I want to animate, but for some reason when the leaf falls to the ground it bounces out of control. So I adjusted the mass of the leaf, gravity scale in the scene and ended the fall simulation at the frame which I thought looked most natural.

Plant animation

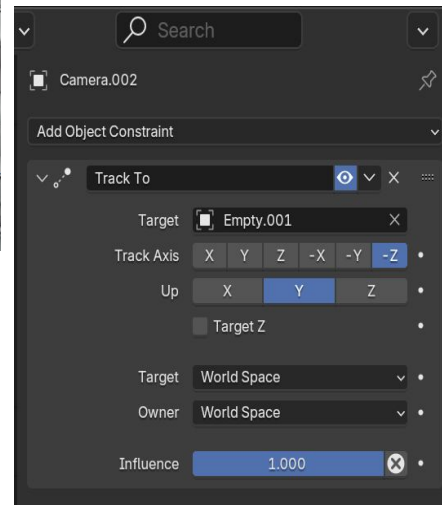
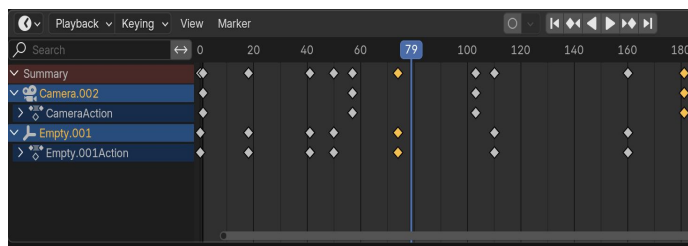
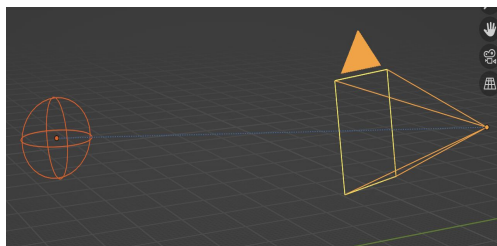


I didn't want the single falling leaf animation to feel disconnected from the rest of the scene, so I added simple animations to the focal-point plants to mimic gentle movement in the wind. To do this, I first combined the plant parts into a single object, then applied a Simple Deform modifier and manually entered the movement commands in Blender. I adjusted the frame rate and movement axis to ensure the motion felt natural and integrated well with the overall scene. I'm pleased with the result and plan to include this animation in the final outcome.

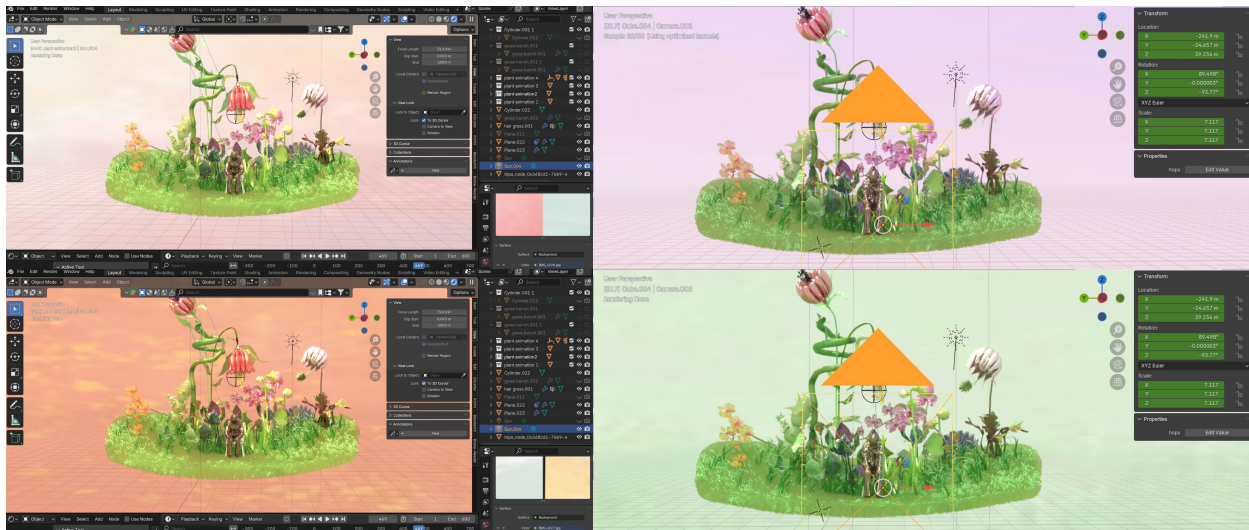
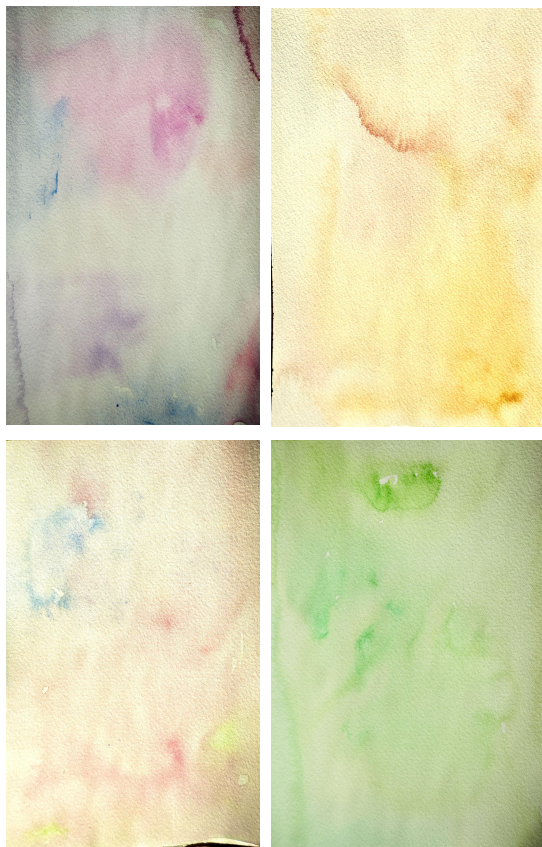
Camera Animation



For the camera animation, I first created an empty object to control the movement and match the speed of the falling leaf, as well as the shift toward the character and finally the center of the scene for the wide shot at the end. I then added the empty object as a constraint to the camera and keyframed the motion at a speed I felt suited the pacing of the scene.



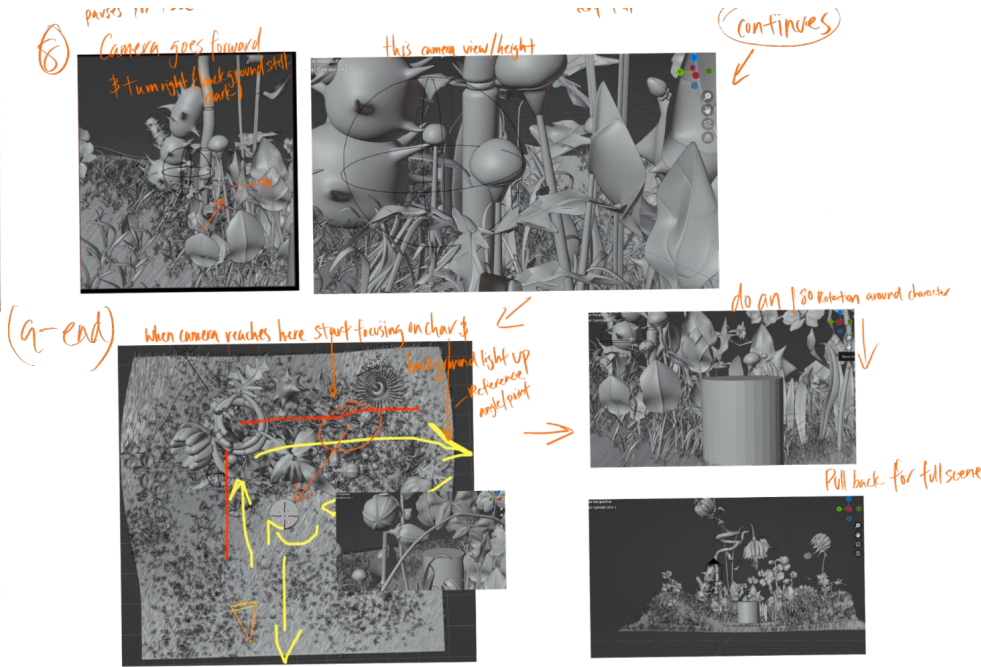
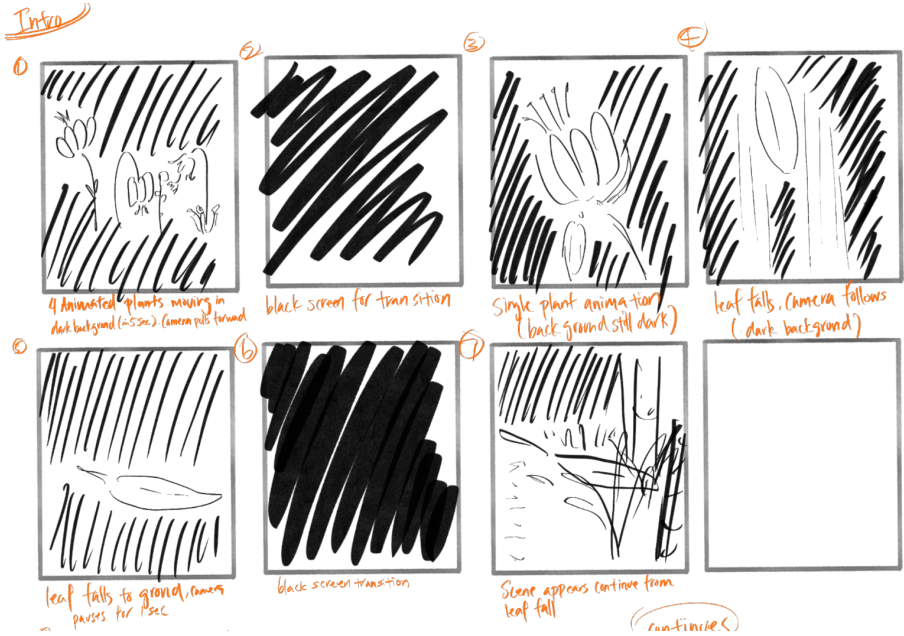
Environment Color/ Background



I wanted to maintain the light and dreamy color palette for this project, so I chose to create watercolor backgrounds. I experimented with different color combinations and varying levels of color dominance, then imported the results into Blender to see how they interacted with my scene. Among the four versions, I found that the 3D image in the top left worked most cohesively with the overall composition, so I've decided to use that as my final background.

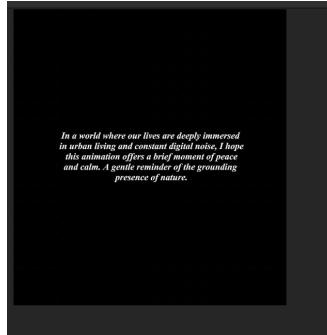
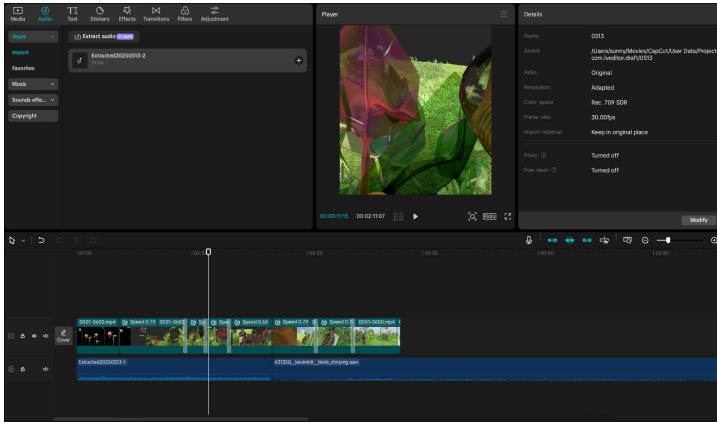
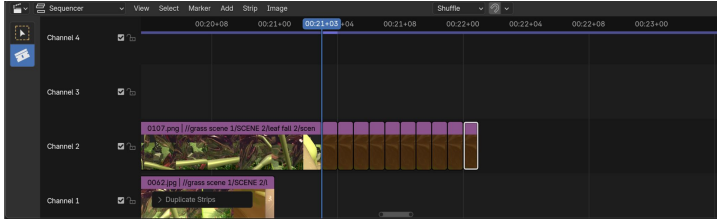
The backgrounds shown in the previous image were used as placeholders to test how my model would appear in light environments in terms of color balance and material interaction.

Camera animation/Storyboard 2



After a tutorial with Kate and Alex, I developed a more detailed second storyboard and decided to not to go through the initial shot plan. I plan to keep the background dark at the beginning of the animation, layered with urban sounds to reflect the stress and negative energy often associated with urbanization. As the full character and scene are revealed, the background will transition to the chosen color (as shown on the previous page), accompanied by nature sounds to evoke a sense of relief and represent the idea of taking a restorative break.

Video and Audio Editing



I originally began editing my video in Blender, following the sequence from my second storyboard. However, I found that using a solid black screen for transitions felt too abrupt, it made the animation seem like it was glitching rather than transitioning smoothly. To resolve this, I exported the layout animation from Blender into CapCut and replaced the black screen with a black gradient transition. This provided a much smoother and more natural flow between scenes.

For the audio, I layered in an urban ambient track that I recorded from the patio of my flat, capturing the white noise of the city. Since I wasn't able to record pure nature sounds myself, I sourced a royalty-free track from Freesound, choosing a mix of bird chirping. I felt this sound clearly signified nature and created a strong contrast with the urban atmosphere. The animation begins with the city noise, and as the scene visually transitions from dark to light, the audio shifts from urban sounds to birdsong, reinforcing the change in mood and setting.

When I shared my animation with classmates, several of them asked about the concept behind the project. This made me realize the need to include a brief summary of my idea at the end of the animation. I chose to present this text in italicized Times New Roman, as I felt it offered a clean yet artistic aesthetic that suited the tone of the piece.