Believe: A Motion Graphic Animation Brings Positive Power to Life

Yu-Hsin Chang

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses

Recommended Citation

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Thesis/Dissertation Collections at RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.
Believe

A Motion Graphic Animation Brings Positive Power To Life

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

Yu-Hsin Chang
Rochester Institute of Technology
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
School of Design, Computer Graphics Design
February, 2014
Thesis Approvals

Chief Advisor
Daniel DeLuna, Associate Professor, Computer Graphic Design, School of Design, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

---

Associate Advisor
Shaun Foster, Assistant Professor, Computer Graphic Design, School of Design, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

---

Associate Advisor
Chris Jackson, Assistant Professor, Computer Graphic Design, School of Design, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

---

Chairperson, School of Design
Peter Byrne, Associate Professor, School of Design, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

---

Reproduction Granted
I, Yu-Hsin Chang, hereby grant permission for Rochester Institute of Technology to reproduce my thesis documentation in whole or part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

---

Inclusion in the RIT Digital Media Library Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Archive:
I, Yu-Hsin Chang, additionally grant to Rochester Institute of Technology Digital Media Library the non-exclusive license to archive and provide electronic access to my thesis in whole or in part in all forms of media in perpetuity. I understand that my work, in addition to its bibliographic record and abstract, will be available to the worldwide community of scholars and researchers through the RIT DML. I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles and books) all or part of this thesis. I am aware that Rochester Institute of Technology does not require registration of copyright for ETDs. I hereby certify that, if appropriate, I have obtained and attached written permission statements from owners of each third party copyrighted matter to be included in my thesis. I certify that the version I submit is the same as that approved by my committee.

---

Date
00 ABSTRACT

01 INTRODUCTION

02 RESEARCH
2.1 Content Research
2.2 Visual Research
2.3 Technical Research

03 PROCESS
3.1 Thesis Parameters
3.2 Design Ideation
3.3 Production
3.4 Summary

04 CONCLUSION

05 APPENDICES
5.1 Production Timeline
5.2 Shot List
5.3 Thesis Proposal
5.4 Bibliography
Life is an adventure, and growing up is not always enjoyable. When life is filled mainly with struggles, sometimes people lose their confidence. They lack faith in themselves. Believe is a short motion graphic that comes directly from my own personal experience. This animation expresses my views on progress through life.

The motion graphics animation has had a significant impact on audiences. The story encourages people to build up their faith and self-confidence, because life is full of opportunity.

The project was made by using motion graphics design concepts and experimenting with current computer graphics integration technologies. The final delivery is an one minute and 30 seconds world of imagination motion graphic.

Sharing my personal experiences that may benefit others, as a motion motion graphic designer, I hope to convert my thoughts into creations meaningful to the universe.
01 INTRODUCTION

Life is not always as it seems. Some people worry from time to time when they grow up. In today’s digital media world, there are many types of positive videos everywhere on the web to motivate people. These videos usually show a song that has meaningful lyrics, or a collection of motivational quotes.

Those online videos inspire me to convey my personal story by using art, media, and technology to re-engage youth to think about putting their lives onto a positive path. Bringing the concept of positive thinking into motion graphics is a great inspiration and brings energy to the world. However, the positive videos don’t have enough visual style or an amusing story to attract young adults’ attention. For those reasons, this is a great opportunity for me to create a meaningful motion graphics animation to support the world in an interesting way.

I convey positive thinking by using symbolic meanings of life from Buddha. My motion graphic animation is both entertaining and informative. The animation uses visual storytelling to focus on the beauty and struggles of life.

The story is a metaphor for my personal journey of searching for the meaning of life. As a result, people’s thinking can evolve, and they can consider meanings of life in an engaging way to gain valuable, positive insights to inspire their lives.
02/
RESEARCH

2.1 Content Research
2.2 Visual Research
2.3 Technical Research
2.1 CONTENT RESEARCH

To see a summary of my pre-production research books and online researches, please see appendix 5.3 Bibliography.

As a Buddhist, I believe that sometimes Buddha used his way to tell people how to overcome specific challenges of our daily lives. There were several times when I was struggling with stress, and I believe that through dreams Buddha taught me or delivered to me. Based on this idea, I began my content research by finding the spirit of Buddha.

Positive thinking is a mental attitude that sees the bright side of things. People need to have a psychical attitude that expects positive results. The main idea of my story is “growing up is not always enjoyable, but you have to believe in yourself and get the right attitude in your life.”

Inspired by those dreams, I tried to make a story built on a fable. Two characters represent childhood and adulthood. Different seasons and environments symbolize how life is full of challenges and how people use the optimistic attitude to face their difficulties. The point of this animation is how important it is to have the right attitude in life.
The primary idea came from my personal dreams. In Chinese culture, dreams sometimes bring their own meaning of life. I started to research and try to understand the symbolism in dreams. In time, my studies also showed how dreams can be linked to one’s real life. Every visual detail that happened in my dreams was one of my big inspirations for creating each panel of my storyboard.

After I decided the main direction of my story, I started the pre-visualization of my motion graphic sequence. At the very beginning, I tried to build up a realistic looking dream world for my animated story. Unfortunately, this style didn’t represent the visual elements in an interesting way. To avoid having the dream world lose some visual detail while beginning to take a cartoon look, I reconsidered the visual style of this animation. I delved into both the Western and Eastern watercolor cultures, and I also started to look at multiple art and creative website such as fffound (http://fffound.com/) and Behance (http://www.behance.net/) for continuously refreshing my daily thoughts of the project.

At this point, I had a very clear construction of my story, and the next step was to make sure I maintained the proper visual style in order to lead the viewer through the imagery that I created.
2.2 VISUAL RESEARCH

Style Frame

My story has deep philosophic approaches to life, so I tried to find a unique style to transfer my central idea. I finally decided that it would be best not to render in the traditional 3D cartoon motion to deliver this dream world.

My primary essential reference was from one of my past illustration books (see Fig. 1); I used it to create the style frames that are some elements from my Chinese culture such as Chinese watercolor paintings and Chinese characters. They help deliver the fantastic dream world.

Fig. 1. Reference images from book “Believe”
I began my process with smoke effects and attempted to build a world based on a blend of the Eastern and Western cultures. However, the smoke was too abstract, and I couldn’t express my idea in the environmental aspect of my story. Instead, I began to focus on watercolors and integrating multiple layers of watercolor into the panels (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Style frames development

![Image of style frames development]
2.2 VISUAL RESEARCH
Motion Study

Watercolor was the main connecting object throughout the entire animation. I used watercolor ink to build a dream world, while attempting to make extensive watercolor development stemming from a single droplet at the beginning of the video. I researched both Western and Eastern watercolor paintings in order to help me to create some dream-like style frames. Following that I tested several times for an actual ink droplet by putting a real ink drop in water several times.

A commercial called “Ink” for CCTV (http://vimeo.com/6794856) was another reference that inspired me to make my thesis the way it is. The video showed how to build up a fantastic 3D world by only using an abstract style of ink. The commercial helped me to better grasp that it is possible to use the After Effects camera to create a believable 3D space with flat 2D watercolor graphics.

Another challenge was making a good liquid effect for the watercolor. Nokia Animation (http://www.glossyinc.com/psyop/nokia.html) has excellent watercolor effects that maintain good flow and made me want to make a similar liquid effect in my animation.

After doing some research online, I realized most of the better watercolor effects were created from a plugin for After Effects called Trapcode Particular. Since I didn’t have this type of plugin, instead I used liquefy and distortion effects to make a similar fluid effect for the flowing of the watercolor. The learning process was fairly extensive in finding a solution to make a satisfying liquid effect, but in the end I was pleased with the final result.
2.3 TECHNICAL RESEARCH

Production Workflow

Visual research was one of the most important aspects of my pre-production. I needed to focus on completing my thesis project. I had looked at multiple tutorial websites including greyscalegorilla (http://greyscalegorilla.com/blog/) and video copilot (http://www.videocopilot.net/) for developing my technical skills.

At this stage, I tried to define my three main characters, along with all of the other elements, in order to depict the completed outline of all the frames to help visualize the big picture of my project.

This is a vital aspect that allowed for good time management in my thesis project while going in the right path.
2.3 TECHNICAL RESEARCH

Character Rigging

I have three main characters in this animation: The Fish, The Deer, and The Lotus Flower. They were modeled and rigged within Maya. This was the first time for me to rig animal-based characters, and I consequently spent a large amount of time making the characters’ movement smooth.

I watched videos countless times online and read the book, “The animators’ survival kit” about deer walk cycles (see Fig. 3) and ocean fish swimming patterns before I began to animate my characters. Then I started to read the e-book, “Autodesk Maya Rig” tutorial to get to know the joint system, while Simpymaya (http://simplymaya.com/autodesk-maya-training/tutorial.mhtml?tut_id=87) and Creative Crash (http://www.creativecrash.com/maya/tutorials/) also really helped me to understand the principles of rigging an animal-based character in Maya.

Fig. 3. Deer walk cycle
For creating the fish's swimming animation, I used the Sine Deformer tool in Maya rather than using the standard Joint System. After some testing, I had found the correct wavy direction of the spine to make the fish swim naturally (see Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Fish swimming with Sine Deformer
For the deer, I developed my approach from an online video Advance Rig Character from Youtube (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWF9XOrZhlw) by Anusorn Tosuwan. It made the process much more efficient.

I created a head control that allows me to move the deer's head separately from the body, and I also used neck control in order to stretch and squash along the neck's length whenever necessary. (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Pre-Rigged Deer
I found IK spine to be most effective when I was connecting the body with head and legs naturally, and IK auto stretch allowed me to stretch the legs softly, I manually changed several custom settings to drive joints dynamically; this in turn gave me the deer movement I wanted. (see Fig. 6).

Fig. 6. Deer rigging process

The entire rigging process took more time than expected, but the learning experience was well worth it.
03/
PROCESS

3.1 Thesis Parameters
3.2 Design Ideation
3.3 Production
3.4 Summary
### 3.1 Thesis Parameters

#### Presentation

- **Delivery:** An Animated Story
- **Length:** 1.5-2.5 minutes
- **Audience:** General people

#### Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video:</th>
<th>Audio:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frame size: 720x 640</td>
<td>Channels: Stereo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect Ratio: 16:9</td>
<td>Sample Rate: 48 kHz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame Rate: 24 fps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hardware</th>
<th>Software</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mac</td>
<td>Autodesk Maya 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Adobe CS5 Illustrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adobe CS5 Photoshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adobe CS5 After Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Cut Pro 7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Story line

The story begins with The Fish exploring the ocean while trying to find its way. This represents Childhood and Youth, and how children are naturally curious.

As The Fish keeps traveling, a big transformation happens where it eventually takes on the body of The Deer. This transformation represents how youth and childhood must come to an end, and how people are forced to change and become adults.

As The Deer travels, his environment changes from winter to spring. This conveys all the problems that adults must face and eventually overcome.

When The Fish finally returns to the ocean, all the colors are back in his world, and The Lotus Flower begins to bloom. This represents Rebirth and the circle of life.

Think positively is what I’m trying to convey through this animation. Every difficulty you have in your life will eventually be resolved.
3.2 DESIGN IDEATION

Storyboards and Animatic

At the beginning, I sketched the three main scenes of my storyboards that represent Exploring, Frustration, and Rebirth. The reason for doing this was to help me clarify how to represent my thoughts for the connection of my story. From there I tried to figure out all the planned shots of my boards while improving camera movements and the characters’ action. Consequently all this pre-production work gradually built the structure of the story.

At first I didn’t adequately prepare for animatic this in step; I was just trying to show my first three animatic shots to my committee members. One of my committee members suggested that I stop revising the details of the shots and instead complete the animatic for the rest of story in order to see what the overall animation would look like. This step was integral toward finding the best version of the story.
3.2 DESIGN IDEATION

Style Frame Development

When I started to design my style frames, I was struggling to define the style I saw fit. Since the book “Believe” that I created in the past was my original style reference, I always knew watercolor was the primary element of my style frames. With this in mind, I decided to create a 3D environment in Maya and combine with watercolor image in Photoshop. Unfortunately, the style frames that resulted were not poetic enough and had lost the spirit of my thesis. One of my committee members strongly suggested that I reconsider stylizing frames without any 3D elements.

I experimented with combining traditional hand coloring and Photoshop brush to create a painting effect of watercolor backgrounds; at the end I was satisfied with the final result (see Fig. 7).

Fig. 7. Style Frames Exploration
Color choice was another critical aspect of my style when developing frames. The color tone I chose helped to convey a dream-like feel to an animation. I chose not to make the color saturated, because it would make the animation too sharp and realistic. The transitions I used were based on environmental and emotional changes that happened throughout the story. At this step, the overall look of the story was clearly defined and ready to be animated (see Fig. 8).

Fig. 8. Color tones
3.2 DESIGN IDEATION

Character Design

I chose three different characters based on their personalities to represent different periods of their lives. This was done in the main scenes of the animation to express three emotions evolved in my real life.

My first character, The Fish, was originally modeled in a previous class known as Poly&subd Modeling. The Fish represents youth. He lives in the ocean, free of responsibilities, and is consequently curious about the outside world (see Fig. 9).

Fig. 9. Fish 3D model
I began to model my other two characters while I was laying out the frames. My second character, The Deer, represents adulthood. He lives in the forest; he has the strength to survive in the cold season. He likes to explore, but at the same time he is also confused and hesitant (see Fig. 10).

Fig. 10. Deer 3D model
My final character is The Lotus Flower. The Lotus Flower represents rebirth because it’s able to become beautiful even in the dirtest of waters (see Fig. 11).

I applied texture to The Fish and The Deer in After Effects and made the cloudy texture moved randomly. Doing this gave a dreamy feeling to the character. I was trying to use the same method to apply the cloud texture for The Lotus Flower in After Effects, but unfortunately it made The Lotus Flower look very flat. For this reason, I rendered the leaves separately in order to apply the cloud texture in After Effects. This helped resolve the flat graphics problem for The Lotus Flower.

After I had my basic style frames for the scenes, I decided to transfer my 3D models with 2D visuals. This made the characters more fitting with the watercolor background (see Fig. 12).
Fig. 12. 2D and 3D texture
3.3 Production

Pre Visualization

Since the backgrounds were created by flat 2D watercolor images in Photoshop, I brought their Photoshop layers into After Effects and started to create 3D cameras to experiment with the depth of layers from the images. This made the backgrounds more dynamic by giving them more dimension. This step gave more design choices to render appropriate angles for my main characters from Maya in order to match them with the 3D space backgrounds (see Fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Compositing in After Effects
3.3 Production  
Integrating 3D and 2D Elements

I animated the camera in After Effects for all the 2D backgrounds. This was the first time I created the 3D space inside After Effects. The 3D camera worked fairly well to give the 2D backgrounds a simulated 3D effect. It was also easier for me to adjust and preview the scenes with more flexibility (see Fig. 14).

Fig. 14. Camera adjustment in After Effect
I started by rendering some still images and importing them to After Effects to composite with the backgrounds in order to determine whether or not they fit well in the scene. After I found the best angle of the view, I went back to Maya to render the image sequence for the actual animation.

Finally, I layered the image sequence in After Effects to composite with the camera movement in 3D space. This testing process was also took a good amount of time (see Fig. 15).

Fig. 15. Final render in After Effects
3.3 Production

Editing and Audio Mixing

During the last month of producing this animation, I had weekly meetings with my committee members to discuss the final details of my thesis. I kept revising some transition shots. Although I worked continuously on all my transitions, I began to focus my efforts on the shot between The Fish and The Deer. In the beginning of this process, the blending of the transformation between The Fish and The Deer wasn’t very fluid the way I wanted it to be. The shot was one of the key points of my story, and I needed to perfect it. So my committee asked me to match the shape perfectly and consequently helped me refine the direction for the style of the transformations. Although it took a while, I figured that the most effective approach was using the liquefy effect in After Effects to match the shapes from The Fish to The Deer (see Fig. 16), and I manually indicated the camera motion in After Effects, adding additional elements in addition to their feedback and suggestions. I was having greatly changed for my final result.

Lastly, I rendered the decisive version in After Effects and edited the music in Final Cut Pro. I found some different music from royalty free songs online and mixed them into one song.

The story is very poetic. For this reason I found soft, piano-based music that I thought was a perfect fit for my animation. The music changed appropriately when the transition shots came across. I believe this musical transition could lead the viewer into becoming more involved in the story.
Fig. 16. Transition shot from Fish to Deer
3.4 SUMMARY

After reviewing the full process of my project, I have come to the conclusion that in order for me to solve a problem, the key was to be resourceful and find as many solutions as possible. I am grateful that my committee members gave me some key advice that helped the whole process of my thesis. Because of their support, I was able to complete and polish my project.

When I shared the animation with some of my friends, they enjoyed watching it. My story was very abstract; I had to explain this to some of my friends before they started to watch. Everyone had their own thoughts after they watched the animation, but the overall results were positive, and I am glad most people liked the idea behind the animation.

This thesis project is similar to the on-going story of my own life. Good and bad things are always coming and going, and it describes how life is a continuous circle to me. While I was making this project, I did have some moments of difficulty. Then I would think about my point for creating this project, and I know I have to always believe in myself; this is something I really want to share with everyone.
04/
CONCLUSION
04 CONCLUSION

Believe, my first motion graphic animation that has a deliberate plan, possesses a much deeper meaning than simply attempting to catch the viewer's attention through visual appeal. Although the pre-production took six months and the production itself took another six months, the project gave me a great experience learning the entire design process of a short motion graphic animation from beginning to end.

The project gave me several challenges, which turned out to be harder than I thought. The main purpose of my thesis was to tell a compelling story with motion graphics. It was clear that my biggest challenge was to visualize my abstract concepts. In the beginning, I was only focusing on applying my artistic expressions to each and every frame. I wasn’t considering the level of coherency in the transition shots. In addition to beautiful images, I had to educate myself on what I wanted to communicate. I took inspiration from an illustration book, “Don’t worry, Be happy.” It does a great job for conveying meaning and emotion.

In order to create a message and convey my metaphors visually, I started to clarify my thoughts for the script. This process gave me an excellent understanding on how to create a visually stunning but also highly conceptual design that can communicate my message to the viewers.
Since this project was integrating both 2D and 3D elements together, I encountered several technological issues. Using paint effects in Maya, I was trying to animate a growing 3D sakura tree. At first I thought creating a sakura tree by using paint effect seemed quite easy, but as I adjusted the ‘grow’ attribute on the tree, some of cherry blossoms began to ‘jitter’ for no apparent reason. I reset the attribute several times, but it still wasn’t blending smoothly. In the end I decided to just delete some geometries from cherry blooms, fixing the problem and allowing me to move forward.

This step took me some time to get to know the paint effects better. Digital –Tutors (http://www.digitaltutors.com/11/index.php) and cg tutu s (http://cg.tutsplus.com/) are two online tutorials that really helped me to understand more about Maya, especially the complex tool known as paint effects. During this step, I also experimented with exporting 3D camera data from Maya into After Effects and compositing in After Effects 3D space. This learning process has opened up many possibilities for me to use this technique in other creative ways.

However, at the very beginning of making this project, I sometimes struggled with some technique issues; I always tried to solve the problem before I went onto the next step. This mentality sometimes trapped me from going to the next steps for a week or even longer. I finally figured out this way would delay my production timeline.

Consequently, the more exposure I had to this project, the more I developed the ability to think and solve problems effectively. I started defining much clearer parameters for the goal; at some points this skill has helped me manage my time more productively.
From creating *Believe*, this thesis project, not only have I gained more knowledge of how to apply my motion graphic design works with aesthetic principles, but I’ve also become more focused on what a motion graphic piece can convey and share with people. The entire work process has improved my workflow and has further inspired me to constantly push my creativity to new levels. Throughout my thesis study, I believe that my endeavors helped to enrich my background as a better motion graphic designer.

Fig. 17. Ending Shot from “Believe”
APPENDICES

5.1 Production Timeline
5.2 Thesis Proposal
5.3 Bibliography
5.1 PRODUCTION TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/10 – 11/10</td>
<td><strong>Concept Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storyboarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/3/10</td>
<td><strong>Thesis Proposal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thesis Proposal Submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/10 – 10/11</td>
<td><strong>Visual Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building 3D Assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Style Frame Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre Visualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/10 – 5/12</td>
<td><strong>Production</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Character Design &amp; Setup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animating, Compositing, Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audio Mixing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/15/12</td>
<td><strong>Thesis Defense</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/25/12</td>
<td><strong>Thesis Show</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2 THESIS PROPOSAL

Background

I used to be a shy person and always thought negatively. I was easily depressed if I saw things were not going to be the way they should. I didn’t know how to share my feeling with others. I know there are a lot of young people out there feeling exactly the same as me. People who are like me have a difficult time socially. Why do so many of us lack belief in ourselves?

I lost all my confidence until I had dreams that I think were sent from Buddha. He was trying to tell me “Believe in yourself, no one can help you except yourself.” Buddha gives me positive thought. It’s pretty simple but teaches me a big lesson. Sharing my personal experiences that may benefit others, as a motion graphic designer, I hope to convert my thoughts into creations meaningful to the universe.

Situation Analysis

Keyword: Encouragement, Positive thinking, Motion graphics, Storytelling

Emotions make us human. Growing up is not always enjoyable. Especially young adults have a difficult time dealing with stress. They have a hard time sharing their thoughts with friends or parents. Sometimes young adults don’t know how to defeat the frustration, so they hide their feelings and become introverted.

Life is not always as it seems. Some people worry from time to time when they grow up. In today’s digital media world, there are many types of positive videos everywhere on the web to motivate people. The video usually shows a song that has meaningful lyrics, or a collection of motivational quotes.
Those online videos give me an inspiration to convey my personal story by using art, media and technology to re-engage youth to think about putting their lives onto a positive path. Bringing the positive concept of positive thinking into motion graphics is a great inspiration and brings energy to the world.

**Problem Statement**

However, the positive videos don’t have enough visual style or have an amusing story to attractive young adults’ attention. For those reasons, it is a great opportunity for me to create a meaningful motion graphics animation to support the world in an interesting way.

Being a motion graphics designer, I have powerful storytelling skills and tools to express a positive attitude to the world. My motion graphic animation has to be innovative and effective. From my self-experience, I plan to convey positive thinking by using symbolic meaning of life from Buddha. My motion graphic animation is both entertaining and informative. The animation is using visual storytelling to focus on the beauty and struggle of life. The story will build on a fable that I created to illustrate the meaning of life to the viewer and teach a lesson in order to enhance the story. As a result, young adults thinking can evolve and they can consider meanings of life in an engaging way to gain valuable positive insights to inspire their lives.

The motion graphics animation has shown a considerable impact on audiences. My goal is to encourage young adults to build up their faith and self-confidence, because life is full of opportunity.
Project Description

I am going to create a short 1 minute 30 seconds motion graphics animation, based on a personal dream that included the simple meaning of life. The animation will be a motion graphics animation to send the idea all over the world in a fast way. The viewers can get the idea immediately and I hope will change to a positive frame of mind.

Outputs

A Public Service Film
It will be a motion graphics design, including 2d and 3d animation and information design. In the main area of my project, I would like to use AutoDesk Maya and Adobe AfterEffect to create a 2d and 3d space. All the objects will be 3 dimensional models created and animated using AutoDesk Maya.

The motion graphic animation will be an encouragement tool and through social networks like vimeo, twitter and facebook will be available over the world.

Posters
I would like to use Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop to create a poster that representing the stages of life as my promotional item.
Story Line

The structure will be split into four parts: Exploring, Frustration, Fear and Faith based on a stage of life focusing on late childhood to adulthood, 13 years to 30 years. The style of my project is based on my past illustration book believe. I would like to use some elements from my Chinese culture, such as painting and Chinese characters.

Image of Believe
Script

Exploring:

{ Life is exciting if you explore it. }

1 The fish is in the water, it sees the pretty lotus flower outside of the water.
2 The fish wants to go outside to explore its life.
3 The fish jumps out of the water and then realizes he can’t breathe without water.
4 It is afraid and panics until it dies.
5 The lotus flower touches the fish and gives it wings.
6 The fish tries to fly with its newborn wings.
- Fish isn’t afraid to experience new things.
  The fish represents childhood / The lotus flower represents knowledge of life

Frustration:

{ You lose courage to explore this pretty world because of your frustrations. }

7 The fish hits the fence
- Life can be difficult and scary.
8 The buck looks at the fish and eats it.
9 Outside of the fence, the pretty lotus flower world is there.
10 The buck looks at the fence and makes it sad.
  The fence represents stuck / The Buck represents your teenager
Face the Fear:

*Bad things might happen, and we all have the power to solve them, but even the way you know how to solve problems doesn’t work, you should try different things even if your are not used to them. eventually you will get over the frustrations.*

11 The buck runs into the fence and hits the fence and gets stuck.
12 The buck breaks its horns by trying to pull back.
   - We all have power, sometimes it doesn’t work the way you know how to use it.
13 It feels sad because he lost his horns.
14 It thinks how can I get across the fence?
15 It realize it can use its horns and uses as stair case to jumps to outside.
16 The buck finds out it is light and it has a soft chicken tail.
   - Always see beyond your life, you will find out there is always another window open for you.
   *The horns represents power*

Faith

*Life is a circle, bad things might happen when you are explore life. It’s like a old saying: “No pain, No gain.” Always take the courage to face your frustrations. Confronting your fear would confident is the way to success.*

18 The buck walks close to the Lotus flower; Its expecting the flowers horns back.
19 The lotus flower transform the buck into a fish.
20 The fish jumps back to the river.
Idea Sketches
Target Audiences

The target audience for my public service film would be male and female young adults in the age range of 18 to 30. The common habit of my viewers is they all have various social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. They usually get information from friends, school and Internet.

The themes and issues presented in my film would be most relatable and helpful to the young adult range. But older audience could also view my film for a bigger demographic.

**Personas**

**Mike Lee / 18 years old / College student**
Mike is an intentional student who studies in the United States. He is not good at speak English. He can’t make any good friends in the school. He never talked to his parents because he doesn’t want to his parents worry about him. He feels lonely but nobody can listen to his sadness.

**Sara / 27 years old / Female / Graduate student**
Sara broke up with her boyfriend recently. She couldn’t figure out what happened between her and her boyfriend, so she lost her confidence and thinks she cannot do anything good. She disconnects with anyone and stays at home all the time.
Survey of Literature

Books
1 Minds of Billy
Daniel Keyes. Minds of Billy Milligan. Bantam Books. year of publication
This is a true story that describe a person who has 24 different personalities because of his painful childhood.

2 The Milligan Wars
Daniel Keyes. The Milligan Wars, Taiwan:Xiao Zhi Tang,1994. print
From these two books, I figure out all people need a window to relieve their depression, if people ignore or hiding their real feelings, they will have a big chance to get sick.

3 The Secret
This book helps lots of people face their future in a positive way. When I feel upset, all I need is just to read The Secret. The book gives me a powerful feeling for maintaining positive thoughts.

Website
4 Jessica’s “Daily Affirmation
web <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qR3rK0kZfkg>
I like how this cute little girl speak those positive words loudly. She gives me an idea of how we enjoy our life when we was a child.

5 Positive Planet: Friends of the earth short film.
web <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q81pMNtldio>
From this motion graphic piece, it gives me a sense of positive colors which reminds me of bright colors bring happiness.
6 Every day is a gift
Unknown. Every day is a gift. The Be positive project. 8/18/10
web<http://www.youtube.com/user/TheBepositiveproject#p/u/2/b4eaCespM68>
This video shows exactly what the quote says. A very simple concept but gives people an idea of positive thoughts.

7 Happiness - What Would You Do For Love?
web< Date of Access for www: http://vimeo.com/4996184>
This motion graphic piece collects all kinds of possibilities for Love. I think it’s a pretty great idea for me to think about how can I evoke happiness to the viewer.

8 Hannah Montana The Movie
This movie has given me a different perspective of view for my life. I got many great quotes and deep thinking from this movie. If people lost their confident, it might be worth it to watch it some time. One of my favorite quote is: "Life is a climb, but the view is beautiful."

9 Life of Buddha
I am sure people can get simple concept of positive thinking through Buddha’s story.

10 Motionspire
web<http://motionspire.com/>
This website has many great resources that keep my eyes wide open while looking for get the inspiration I need for my project.

11 SimplyMaya
web<http://www.simply3dworld.com/>
Sometimes when I have some technological problems, SimplyMaya is a great website for me to fix the problems in a fast way.
Marketing Plan

My motion graphic animation has a meaningful life story behind to bring optimistic thinking to young adults. The animation will also deliver on some of famous social networks, such as facebook, twitter, vimeo and youtube.

Evaluation Plan

My story is based on a dream that has included symbolic meaning. Sometimes it will be abstract to the viewers. After I have a completed storyboard, I will interview my target audience to get to know what they think of all the symbols. I want to make sure they can understand the meaning behind my project. According my viewer’s suggestion, I believe I can create an interesting and meaningful motion graphic piece

Budget

Printing $150
Including 3 posters, DVD package, and Business cards
Blank DVD $ 8

$158
Technical Tool

Hardware
Personal and school computer Mac

Software
Illustrator / Photoshop / After effect / Maya / MudBox

Bibliography

Books
Minds of Billy
Daniel Keyes, Minds of Billy Milligan, Bantam Books, year of publication
The Milligan Wars
Daniel Keyes, The Milligan Wars, Taiwan: Xiao Zhi Tang, 1994, print
The Secret
Rhonda Byrne, The secret, USA: TS production Limited Company, 2007, print

Website
Tig organization
web<http://orgs.tigweb.org/canada-world-youth>
MentalHelp.net
http://www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view_doc.php?type=doc&id=13047&cn=8
Families for Depression Awareness
http://www.familyaware.org/
Time Line

2010

October
Thesis proposal draft
Rough storyboard
1st committee meeting

November
Thesis proposal defense
Submit Proposal and a work process blog
Break down shots and complete story board
Rough animatic with sounds

December
Storyboard revised
Style frame testing
Main character modeling 50% completed

2011

January
Anamatic revised
Modeling completed
Stars animation
2st committee meeting

February
Anamatic 50% completed
Start rendering

March
Anamatic completed
Rendering 50% completed
posters completed
April
Rendering 50% completed
Rough music and sound effect
Compositing completed
3st committee meeting

May
Music and sound effect completed
Editing
Thesis defense at May 11, 2011
Thesis show at May 20, 2011
4st committee meeting
5.3 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Producing Animation (2nd edition)
  Catherine Winder, Zahra Dowlatabadi, Tracey Miller-Zarneke
  Published 2011 by Focal Press
- The Digital Designer: 101 Graphic Design Projects for Print, the Web, Multimedia, and Motion Graphic
  Stephen Pite; Published 2002 by Delmar Cengage Learning
- Rest is Up to You: A Boy Named Cohen Morano, 118 Artists, and a Watercolor Revolution
  Morano, Cohen; Published August 26th 2009 by Chronicle Books
- The animators survival kit
  Richard Williams; Published 2001 by Faber and Faber
- Don’t Worry, Be Happy! | illustration Art
  Jimmy Liao (Chinese edition); Published January 28th 2011 by locus-publishing

Online resources

- Vimeo. vimeo.com
- 3D World. www.3dworldmag.com
- Ink for CCTV. http://vimeo.com/6794856
- Desmond Leung http://portfolio.d-map.net/
- WWF http://www.boutiq.ch/?p=2486&lang=en
- Glossy http://www.glossyinc.com/psyop/nokia.html
- For the Wild. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4YoRmNc-5w