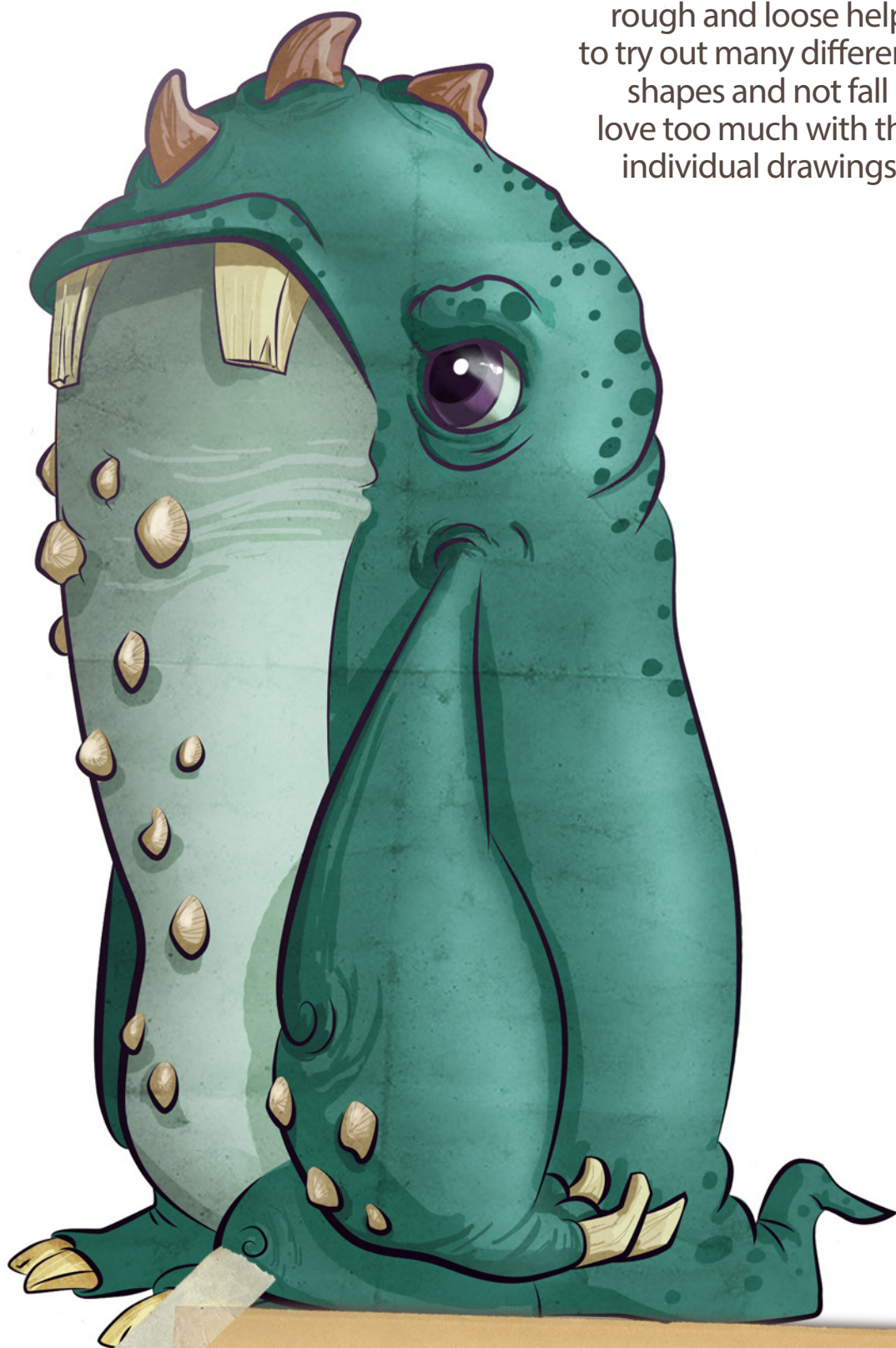


"Keeping the sketches rough and loose helps to try out many different shapes and not fall in love too much with the individual drawings."



SKETCHBOOK

Of Claudia Kleinheinz

Character Animator Claudia Kleinheinz shares her creatures and fantastical designs in this month's Sketchbook.



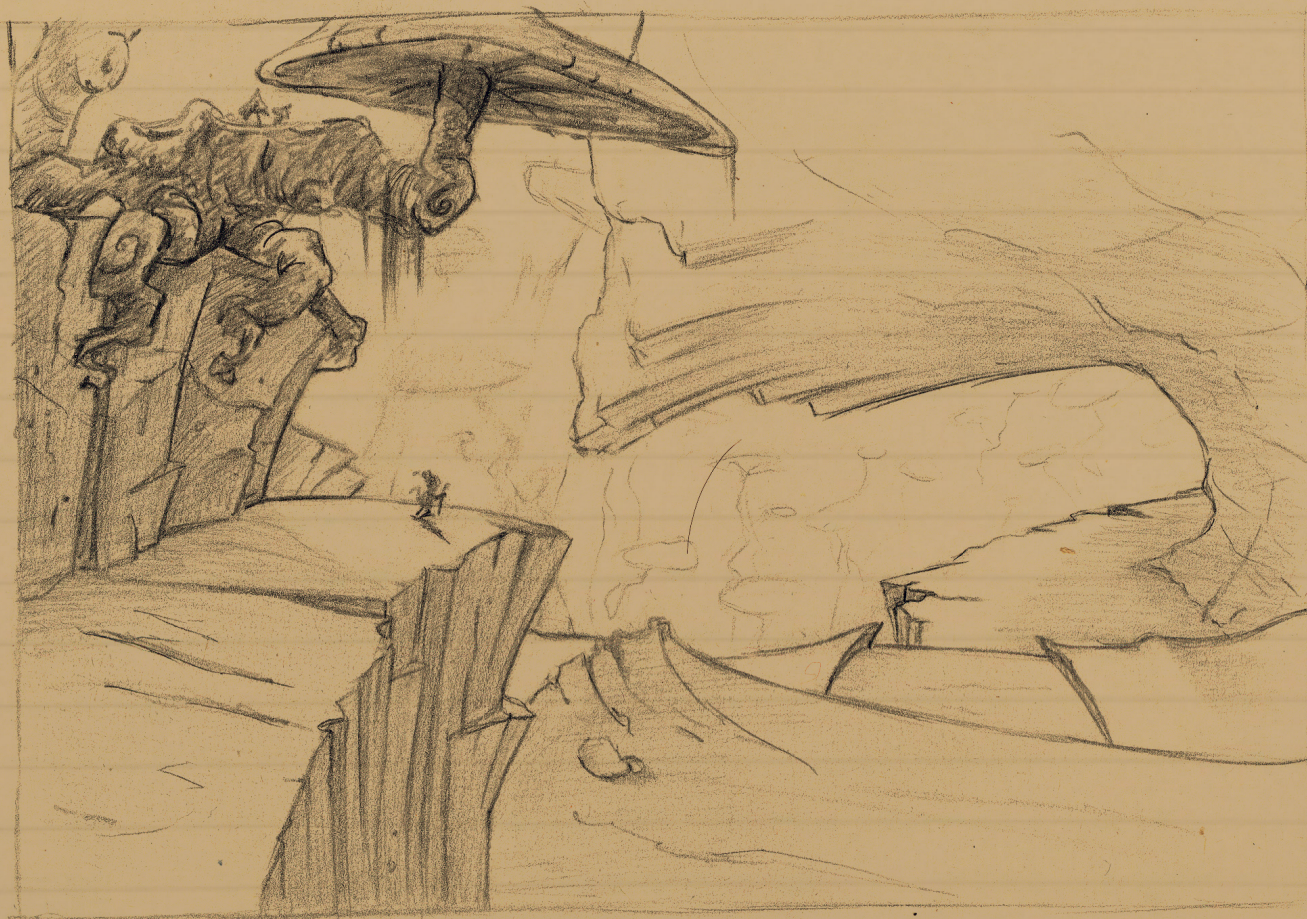
Sketchbook of Claudia Kleinheinz

In **Fig.01** I was looking into different kinds of fungi growing on trees. I used watercolor pencils and black pen on paper.

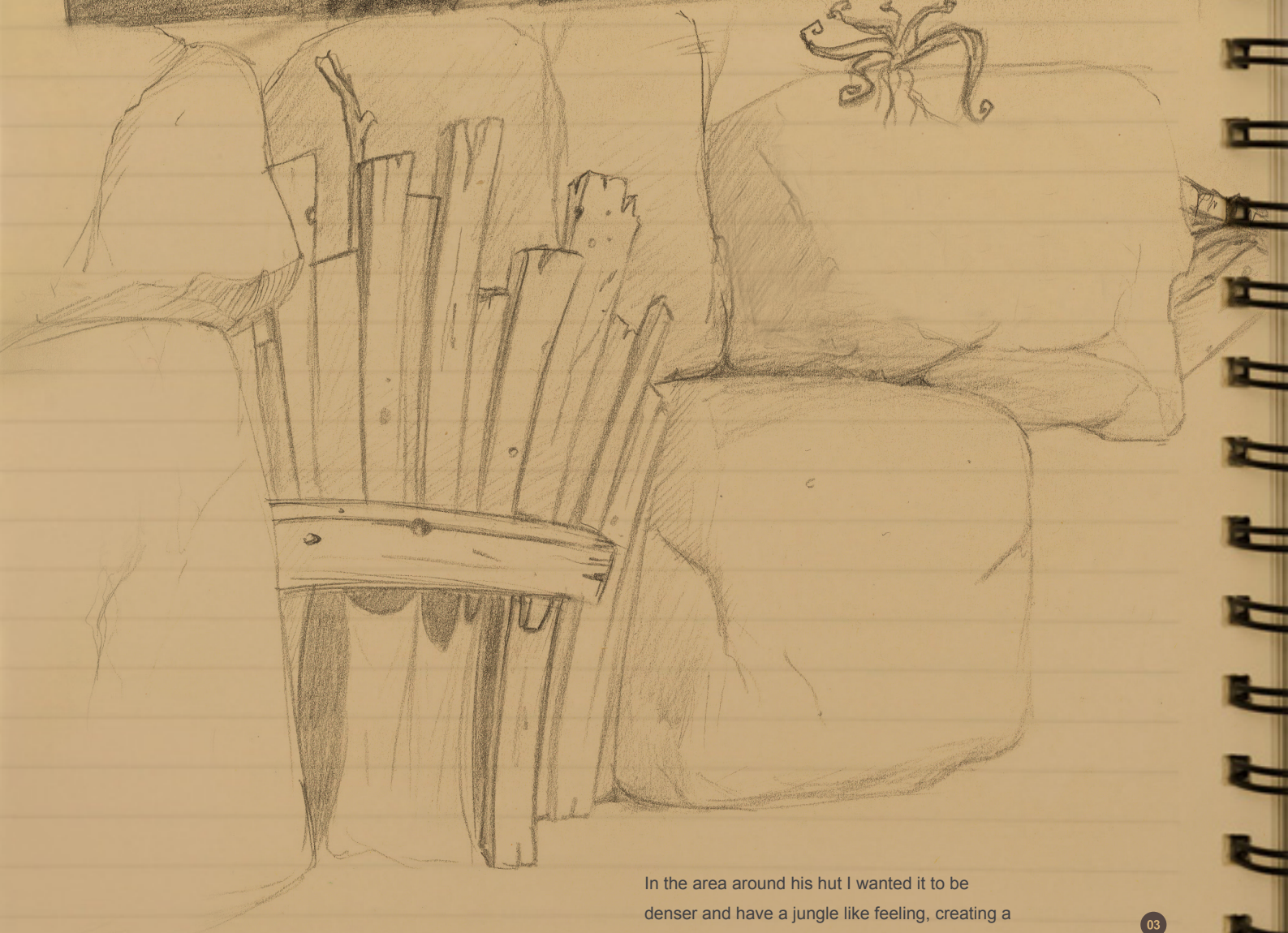
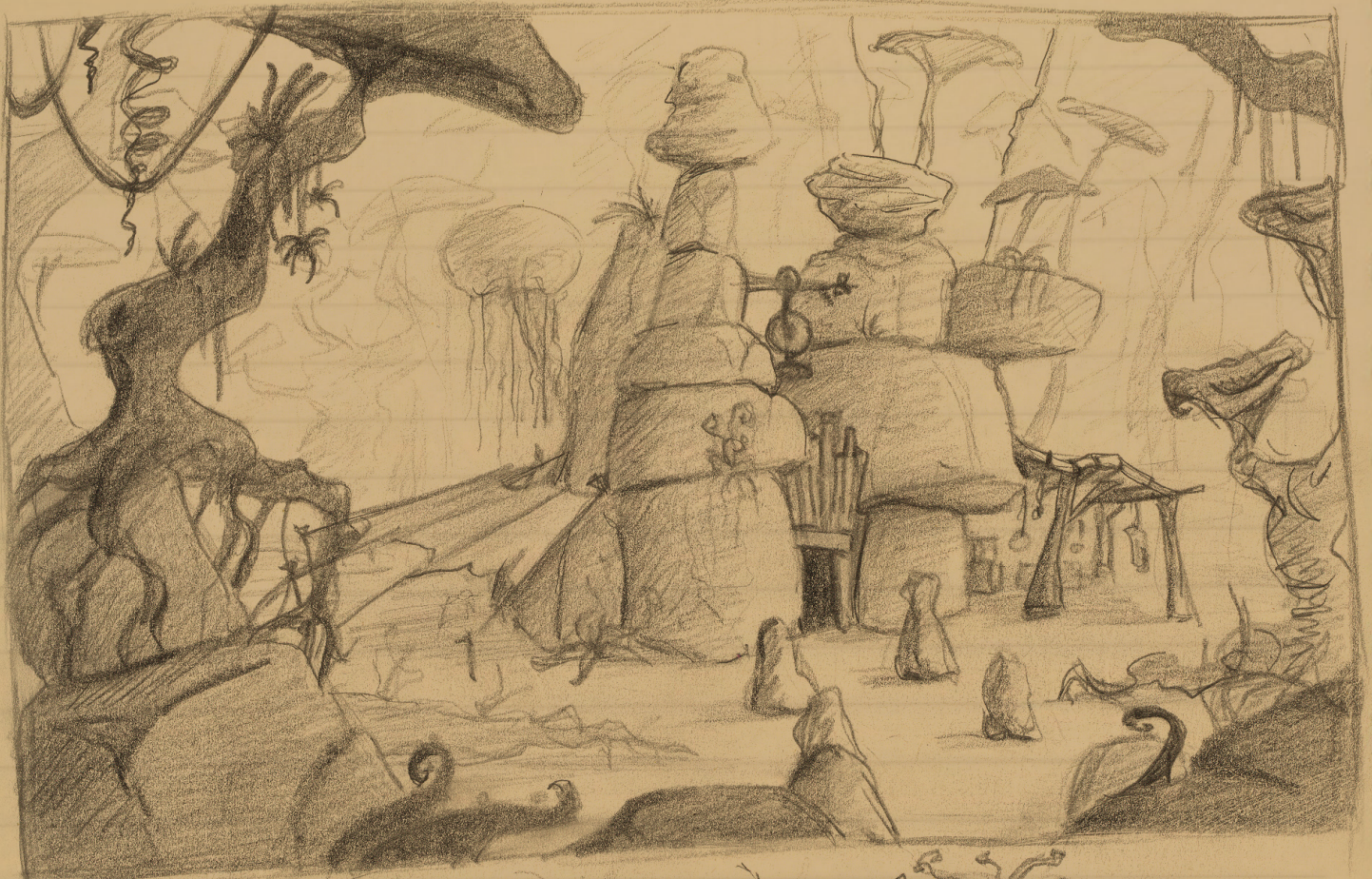
Here are some quick environment sketches to explore the composition and shapes for a personal project. I wanted to create a nice feeling of scale for the scene where our hero walks back to his hut, as well as creating contrast with the vast openness and rocky structures that give the eye some lines to travel along (**Fig.02**).



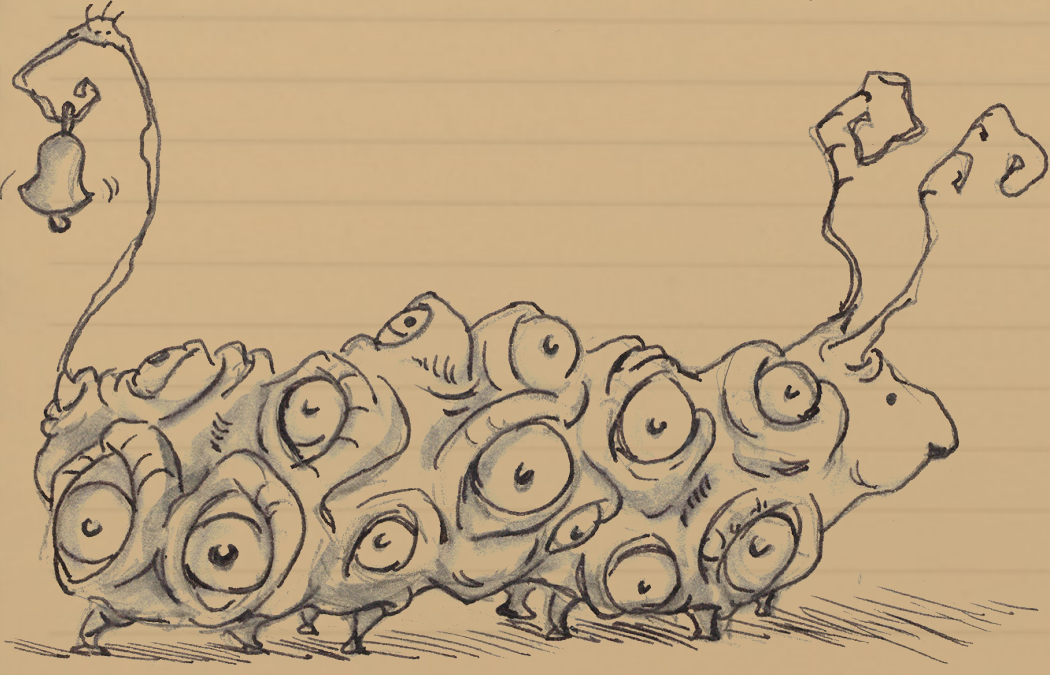
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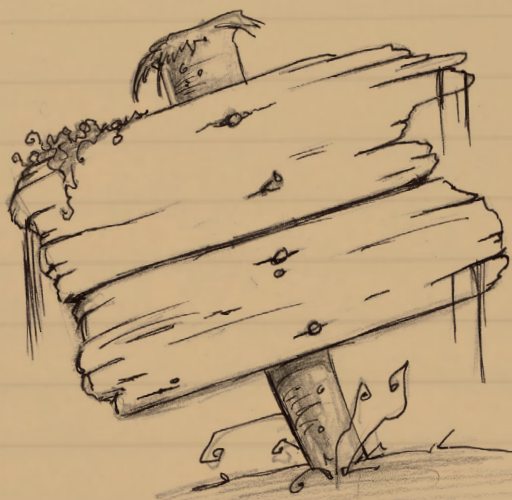


In the area around his hut I wanted it to be denser and have a jungle like feeling, creating a cozier and closed off atmosphere (Fig.03).



Exploring different plants and critters, inspired by photos of real life ones, but then pushed to fit the fantastical universe that the story is set in. I find that it always helps studying the real thing first, as it adds believability to your designs (Fig.04).

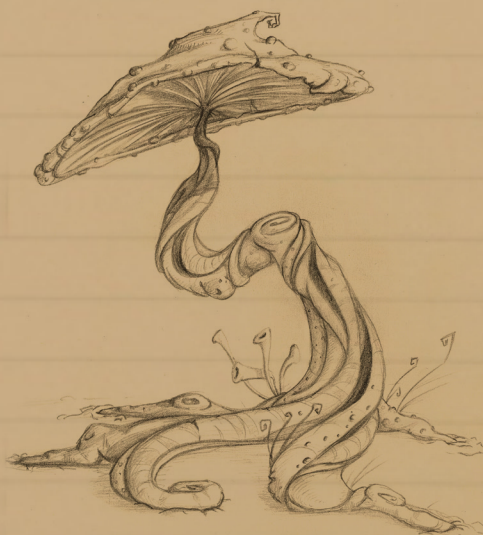




In Fig.05 I was looking into shapes and designs for the warning signs that the main character puts up around his hut.

The treesrooms are an attempt of creating plants for my short film project that will fit into a fantastical and appealing environment. I wanted them to be big enough to form a kind of jungle, replacing trees and thereby avoiding the problem that their leafy tops cause once you have to recreate them in 3D.

Also the mushroom caps offer a great variety of shapes and color that were fun to explore. When I researched mushrooms some of their caps reminded me of jellyfish and so I started introducing some underwater inspired details that not only show in the jelly top tree, but also in some of the other plant designs (Fig.06).

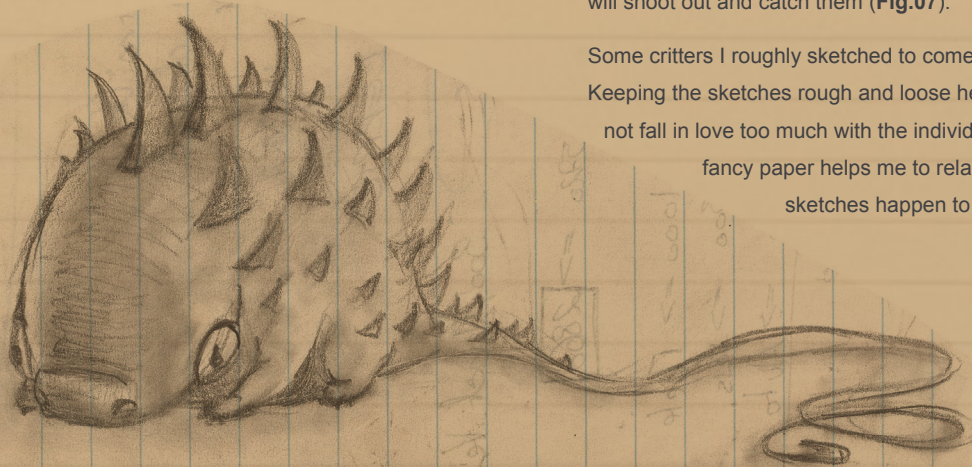




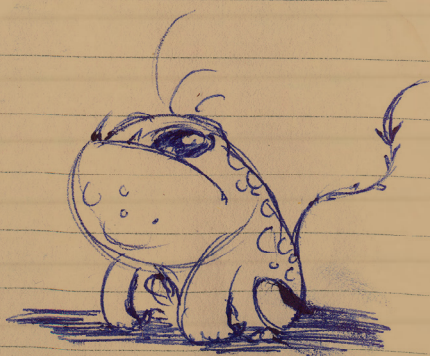
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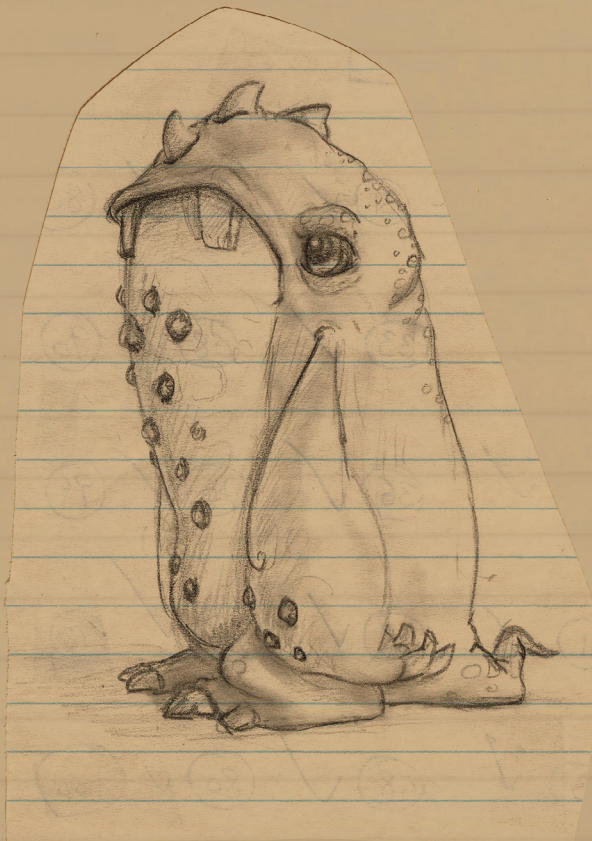
The Clownpillar: A carnivorous caterpillar that can flatten itself to the ground, attracting insects with the red flowerlike hairs on his back. Once the insects come close to his bright red nose, thinking it's the biggest of the flowers; his long tongue will shoot out and catch them (**Fig.07**).

Some critters I roughly sketched to come up with design ideas for my short film. Keeping the sketches rough and loose helps to try out many different shapes and not fall in love too much with the individual drawings. I also found that not using fancy paper helps me to relax and stay loose, and sometimes my best sketches happen to be on the scrappiest bits of paper (**Fig.08**).

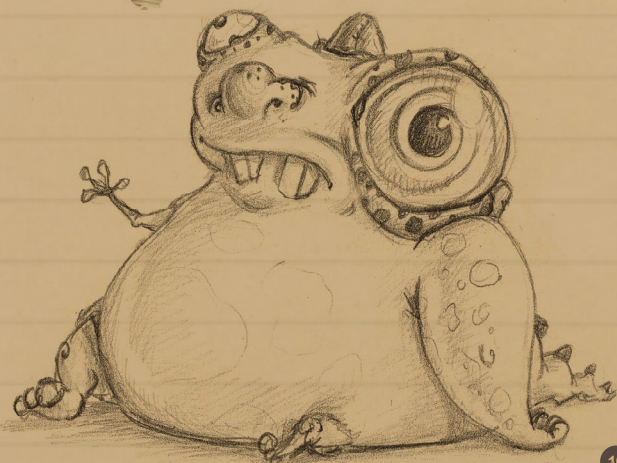
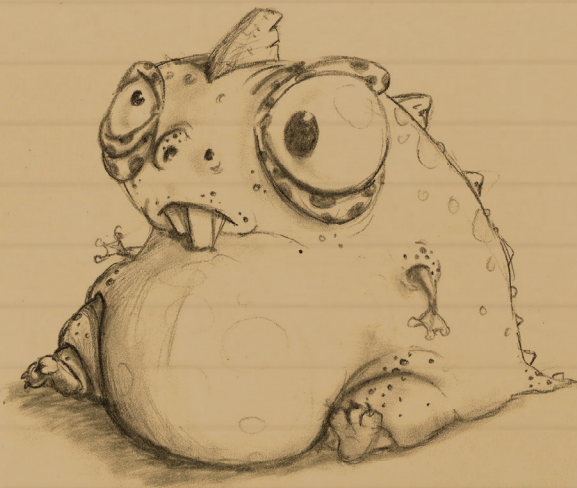


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09



10

I was looking into many different animals, taking parts and combining them in different ways, to find interesting shapes, while still keeping in mind that each design would have to make sense and be able to move and survive in its universe (**Fig.09**).

Fig.10 is an idea for a critter that I developed further. The basic idea behind it is that it was once a cute, fluffy critter that has been 'uglified' by a forest creature, who then realizes that it makes squeaky noises when

he squashes it and decides to take it home for his pet to play with. I tried approach the design like the hunchback of Notre Dame, breaking up symmetry and taking away some of the cute attributes while still keeping the design appealing.

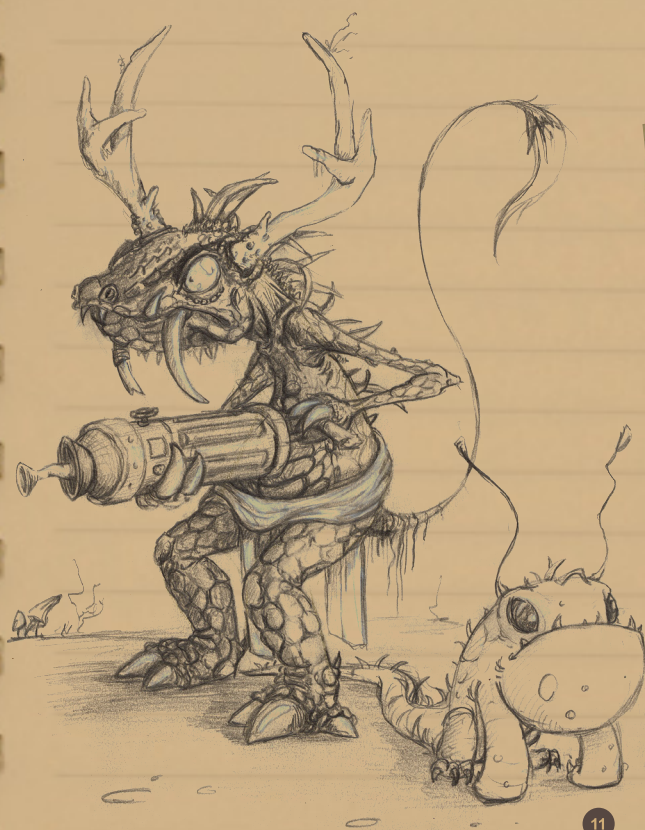


Fig.11 is a very early sketch of our main character and his pet. The pet design hasn't changed very much since then, but the main character has undergone a few major changes. This shows that some characters come more naturally or easy, while others need more work to take shape. On the side there are a few horn and ear studies where I was exploring possible solutions as quick thumbnails. That way I could bring them into Photoshop, cut them out and try them on our character to quickly see which shapes could work and which wouldn't.

In **Fig.12** you can see a few expressions for the critter using colored pencil and chalk on brown paper.

Design sketches for a book project about tree and forest dwarfs. As it's a kid's story I was going for simple and appealing shapes. Below are some random doodles, looking into different character types and drawing styles (**Fig.13**).



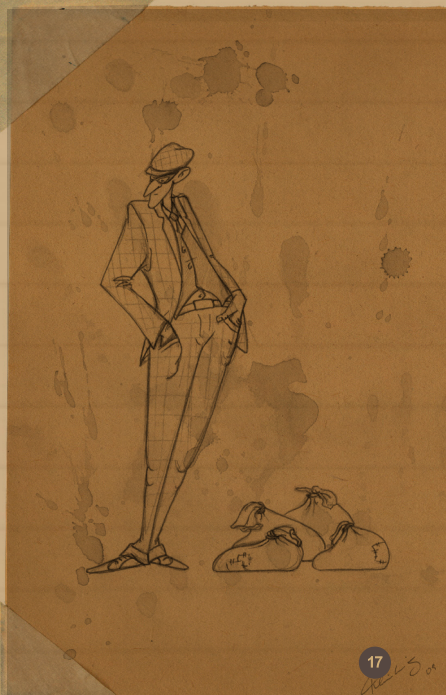


Dogs are a great subject for sketching as they come in so many different shapes and sizes, and can have very distinct personalities (Fig.14).

It's also good to have a sketchbook in your bag, in case you see something interesting on your way to work, or have to wait for the bus, but I am always a bit shy when it comes to drawing strangers and end up having many sketches that show people from behind (Fig.15).

Character design studies for a job application.

The brief was that the characters were for a movie describing the lives of the famous French criminal anarchist group called the Bonnot gang. The style was meant to be slightly gritty and should incorporate the style and design of the Belle Époque (1911-1912). I experimented with coffee stains, colored pencil, and pens and added some effects in Photoshop (Fig.16-19).





A couple of personal sketches developing an idea I had about a grumpy beaver being woken up when he really wants to sleep. Again, I do some realistic sketches first, trying to figure out the characteristics of a beaver to then be able to stylize it while still being clearly recognizable as a beaver (Fig.20–22).

In Fig.23–24 I am playing around with different shapes for creating cute and appealing kids.

An assortment of sketches I did in Zoos trying out different tools and techniques from pencil to ink (Fig.25–31).

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