

# Perfect Love Perfect Selfishness




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# ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

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“ I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgements is made in the acknowledgements.”



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Gizelle Manalo

October 7th, 2011

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Gizelle Manalo

October 7th, 2011

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# ABSTRACT

*Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* is a short digital film that explores as its subject the enmity that can grow within a disintegrating co-dependent relationship, which is represented by gestural movements derived from dance improvisation.

*Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness*' narrative is inspired by the concept of co-dependency and the project investigates and experiments with visual language to represent the emotional and psychological trauma that consumes the union of the film's protagonists. It is heavily influenced by the theme of expressionism and its aesthetics which is subjectively defined in relation to this project and is informed by the work of expressionist animator Chris Landreth and surrealist filmmaker Jan Svankmajer. *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness*'s work process is supported by the methodology of Pina Bausch and Martha Graham's *Lamentation* (1930) which developed a collaborative workshop environment.

# INTRODUCTION

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“I want to express something that I couldn’t express with words at all, something I have to say urgently but not verbally. There are feelings or questions I never have an answer for. I am dealing with something that we all sense, that occupies all of us in a similar language. I am the audience as well, and when I see, I feel something. I can only come from my own instinct. When I trust my feeling, I believe it’s not only mine. I share it with others.”

– Pina Bausch, n.d. (as translated by Climenhaga, 2009, p. 40)

This exegesis presents the narrative development and production process of my short animated film *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness*. The film is about the enmity that can grow within a co-dependent relationship. The project’s research investigation is to discover a visual language that can communicate the emotional and psychological turmoil of my characters in its most evocative moments and to make that turmoil visible on the surface of my characters.

## Chapter One: Critical Framework

This chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the project: expressionist ideology; the representation of the female passion by expressionist artist Edvard Munch; and the concept of co-dependency, which is central to *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* narrative development.

## Chapter Two: Methodology

This chapter outlines the narrative development and work process for the production of *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness*. It details experimentations that employed different techniques and processes. These directly fed into the central research investigation and helped develop the project’s visual language. It also discusses the collaborative environment of dance improvisation which was pivotal to the development of the project.

## Chapter Three: Technical Aspects

This chapter discusses the experimentation titled *The Blobs*, where gestural movements inspired by the dance improvisation were translated into digital format using motion capture techniques. The findings of this experimentation are discussed, as well as the limitations of this technical method, the problems encountered, and their solutions.

# CHAPTER ONE: CRITICAL FRAMEWORK

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My approach with this project is to use subjective experiences as a core foundation to inspire and influence my research investigation. With this practice, I aim to challenge and interpret my anxieties, irrational fears and anguish in order to create pieces that will instigate discussion among audiences about their own emotions and relationship with others. This practice of creating the psychological landscape is highly influenced by expressionist theme, which is “an attempt to show inner psychological realities” (Richie, n.d., p. 1).

My earlier investigation in my Honours studies resulted to a short animated film, *Mobius* (Manalo, 2010), wherein I explored a protagonist’s subconscious and emotional state of displacement. I aimed to present his psychological interior space and anguish through an expressive use of camera and light, as well as through psychological manifestations in character design and set design. This practice of bringing the psychological self of a subject to the surface is developed further in my research film project *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness*. My film is about the enmity that can grow within a co-dependent relationship and my investigation therefore seeks to develop a visual language that will emotionally and psychologically portray my characters. This chapter presents my research investigation and the theme of co-dependency and how expressionism – particularly the art of Edvard Munch and his representation of female passion – formed the framework for my research.

The expressionist cinema of light and shadow became a “commercial product of modernism” (Roberts, 2008 p. 4). Its unique look challenged the dominant cinema of Hollywood and was used as a reactionary tool against the bleak outlook of the post-war German social environment (Roberts, 2008). This is reflected by the underlying theme of retreat into fantasy and fear of the establishment or authority, as seen in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) and *The Golem* (1920). Manipulation of film images was used to deliberately blur the border between reality and fantasy through saturation and exaggeration of images (Roberts, 2005).

While the representations of expressionist art and cinema changed after WWI, its fundamental ideas remained the same. These ideas involve the fusion of the “visible world with the invisible” (Roberts, 2008, p. 14) which I incorporated into my research investigation.

Lotte Eisner (2008) describes the expressionist artist as “one who does not see, he has visions” (p. 10), which she supports with Kasimir Edshmid’s reading that the artist’s outer reality is not what he represents, rather it is the “interior vision they provoke” (Edshmid, n.d., as cited in Eisner). Exploring the representation of this interior vision is the core of my research investigation, and expressionism highly informed the making of the film, in the sense of Herwert Walden’s comment

that “ Expressionism is neither a fad nor a movement, it is a perception of the world” (Walden, 1912, as cited in Eisner, 2008, p. 12). Eisner (2008) further describes the expressionist artist as someone who isolates the most expressive expression, which is achieved by the penetration of an object’s physical representation through the “accentuation of its latent physiognomy” (Balazs, 1923, as cited in Eisner, 2008, p. 11).

I applied the same principle in the editing of *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* by isolating the most evocative movement vocabulary that the dancers created by positioning those shots off screen (see Figure 1), to let the audience experience the reach or the stretch of the dancers. I achieved this penetration of the physical representation by encasing the dancers in a plain white sheet (see Figure 2) in order to create a form of abstraction, with their movement vocabulary being created through dance improvisations. This use of abstraction as another tool of expressionistic storytelling technique is supported by Wilhelm Worringer, who sees expressionism as a perception of the world: “Abstraction.... Stems from the great anxiety which man experiences when terrorized by the phenomena he perceives around him, the relationships and mysterious polarities of which he is unable to decipher” (Worringer, 1921, as cited in Eisner, 2008, p. 13). Through editing and the repetition of the key moments in *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness*, I aim to encourage the audience to look past the physical representation of the dance and blur the line between fantasy and reality, the physical and the psychological.



Figure 1. Manalo, G. (2011). *The stretch and reach of the dancers* (Image).



Figure 2. Manalo, G. (2011). *Encasing the dancers with white sheet* (Image).

The shift from realistic portrayal of nature and reality towards a more expressionist style was first inspired by the Sonderbund exhibition in Cologne of the Dutch artist Van Gogh and the guest of honour, Norwegian artist Edvard Munch (Bassie, 2008). Ashley Bassie (2008) describes the reception of Munch's work as an intense rejection by a public who was used to realistic depictions of nature and historic battles. What Munch presented was a series of paintings, titled the *Frieze of Life*, on the themes of love and death, exploring his perceptions, albeit neurotic, of the world (Bassie, 2008). This exhibition was quickly shutdown but it did more for Munch's reputation than anything else – it inspired his fellow artists who had already started to rise against the Academy<sup>1</sup> which dictated what was worth exhibiting (Bassie, 2008).

Munch is well known for his “introspective synthesis of the taboos of sex, death and intense emotion” (Bassie, 2008, p. 14). His oeuvre presents his personal anxieties (Steinberg and Weiss, 1954) and his difficult relationship with women – the source of him being misinterpreted as a misogynist (Berman, 1997). Munch had a quiet nature and has hinted fears of intimacy (Steinberg and Weiss, 1954). Steinberg and Weiss (1954) further describe Munch's anxiety over projecting himself into his work – he also believed he was capable of being infected by the disturbing reality in his environment. “Munch believed that human beings are like empty vessels capable of being filled by waves which emanates from everything. By flowing into people, these waves affect their minds and change their bodies” (Steinberg and Weiss, 1954, p. 411). He would deal with the conflict in his psychological anguish or experiences from his childhood by recreating them in his paintings. (Steinberg and Weiss, 1954). This method of confronting the personal psychological and emotional conflict through art is something which I sought to explore in this project.

Apart from the inspiration to express conflicts and derive meaning from disturbing experiences through practice, I found Munch's portrayal of relationships significant in that they were often misread as highly misogynist. From my own reading of his work, he has portrayed these relationships as a man who is drowning in passion or the passion that both lovers get into

willingly. Bassie (2008) defines Munch's oeuvre as being “tied up with the idea of destructiveness of passion... a woman's passion had the power to enslave men, arouse jealousy and... eat into the strength of the individual” (Bassie, 2008, p. 13). His paintings such as “*Vampire*” (c 1895), “*Harpy*” (c1900), “*The Kiss*” (1898) in Figure 3 and *Death and the Maiden* (c1894) portray the passion of a woman's love as a predatory entity that enslaves men. Patricia Berman offers a different reading of Munch's portrayal of women and discussed it in the context of his real-life relationships with women and the social background against which Munch created his work.

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Figure 3. Munch, E. (c. 1898). *The kiss* [Painting]. Retrieved October, 7th, 2011 from: <http://camio.oclc.org.ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/u/?/MAV,288>

<sup>1</sup> A professional art institution in Wilhemine Germany in the late nineteenth-century (Bassie, 2008)

Berman (1997) suggests that Munch's portrayal of women is often conflated with his portrayal of the mythical "Woman", and thus historians who chronicle his life's work often see him as a misogynist. She reiterates that there was a difference between his portrayal of the living and breathing female companions in his life, and the "literary and artistic trope 'Woman', the collective invention of male cultural imagination" (Berman, 1997, p. 11). Berman (1997) see Munch's "Woman" as stemming from male fears and anxieties about the new-found sexual freedom of the new women of his day, who sought equality. This unbalanced their dependency on men, and in Munch often projected them as monsters, with sometimes androgynous forms or a slightly masculine figure.

Berman argues that Munch's portrayal of "Woman" emerged from the social crises that Elaine Showalter sees resulting from "sexual anarchy", and from the "cultural insecurity [that] was so strongly linked to anxieties about degeneration" (Berman, 1997, p. 13). She also declares that the Frieze of Life is not about the battle of the sexes, rather Munch "narrated the gulf between man and woman that he filled with ennui, frustration, loss, fulfilment and yearnings" (Berman, 1997, p. 14).

I projected my subjecting understanding of the "gulf between man and woman". These images are about the tension in a loving relationship: the engulfing passion that eats away at both lovers' energies in *Kiss* (Figure 4); the horrifying entrapment of a strong bond that lovers enter in copulation in *Mantis* (Figure 5); and the death of the individual identity in a marriage or exclusive relationship in *Regeneration* (Figure 6). I acknowledge the striking resemblance between these images and Munch's portrayals, however they were created during peer presentations when I couldn't articulate my desired narrative theme, prior to me having any knowledge of Munch's works other than *The Kiss* (c 1898) and *The Scream* (c 1893).



Figure 4. Manalo, G. (2011). *Kiss* [Image].

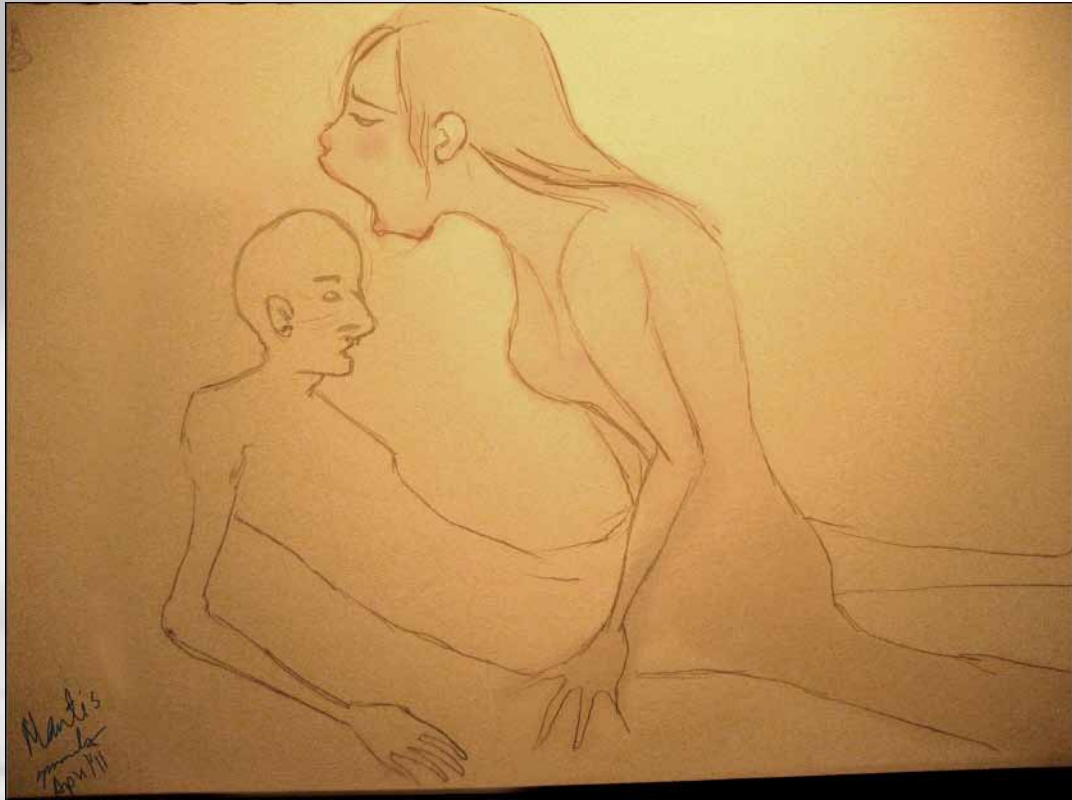


Figure 5. Manalo, G. (2011). *Mantis* [Image].



Figure 6. Manalo, G. (2011). *Regeneration* [Image].

These images, which transcribe my exaggerated personal experiences, began to evolve into fantastical forms and narratives with the effort to investigate their core. I constructed the physical form of two beings in a unified body in *Union* (Figure 7) to highlight their engulfing relationship. This was inspired by the portrayal by the relationship between two characters in Haruki Murakami's novel *Norwegian Wood* (2008). In the novel, the male protagonist falls in love with an enigmatic and broken woman whom he unsuccessfully tries to save emotionally. She felt that she was a second half of a whole, her former lover, who killed himself suddenly without reason. She felt compelled to follow him as her inability to fit in to society without him added to her psychosis, which caused her to withdraw into herself. I was empathetic towards her anxiety about defining who she was after he is gone, which I aimed to represent in my own work. As I interrogated my images to understand their core meaning, the concept of co-dependency began to define what I was searching for best.



Figure 7. Manalo, G. (2011). *Compiled sketches of "Union"* [Image].

My earlier understanding of this condition came from my interpretation of Murakami's characters and their inability to live without the other. Due to stigmatized portrayal of the passion of women as discussed previously, I strived instead to understand the condition of co-dependency. This highlights the shift in the project's narrative development from aiming to narrate a linear narrative that portrays a co-dependent relationship to wanting to produce a universal narrative that examines human relationships. I explored this by portraying the condition of co-dependency abstracted through an expressive movement vocabulary created through dance improvisation.

Co-dependency as a condition is hard to define as the literature tends to either define the characteristics of a person in a co-dependent relationship (Le Poire, Hallett & Gilles, 1998), an enabling behaviour of a person in a relationship with a substance-abusing partner (Wright & Wright, 1990) or the effects of oppression, which causes a person to have a powerless identity and to take responsibility for others (Haaken, 1990 as cited in Anderson, 1994). The closest workable definition of co-dependency that parallels my own experiences is David Treadway's: "Co-dependency is a pattern of painful dependence on compulsive behaviours and on approval from others in an attempt to find safety, self-worth and identity" (Treadway, 1990 as cited in Anderson, 1994, p. 678). Treadway's definition is supported by Hands and Dear (1994) who found in their research that although there are many differing meanings, there is a collective concept of co-dependency and central to this is the external validation or external focus. This idea of identity based on the approval of others reflects the obsessive component of the desire to be complete in a unified state, and highlights the painful separation that I accentuate in *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* as the most significant expressive moment.

To produce a rendition of the condition of a co-dependent relationship, I searched for the practice in which co-dependents operate. Le Poire et al. (1998) put forward the Inconsistent Nurturing as Control (INC) theory by which co-dependents sustain and deteriorate their relationship in the effort of trying to improve their partnership. Le Poire et al. (1998) describe this theory in terms of the problem that arises because of the competing goals of the co-dependent, to nurture and to control. Le Poire argues that the functional partner (not the substance-addicted partner) “uses both reinforcements (nurturance) and punishments (control attempts) to attempt to diminish the undesirable behaviour of the afflicted partner” (Le Poire, 1992, as cited in Le Poire et al. 1998, p. 157). Le Poire et al. (1998) classifies these nurturance and punishing behaviours as the expression of immediacy, which is defined by Mehrabian as “the extent to which communication behaviours enhance closeness to or nonverbal interaction with another” (p. 203, as cited in Le Poire et al., 1998).

These behaviours include posturing, interpersonal gaze, touch, body and facial orientation and vocalic cues (Coker & Burgoon, 1987 as cited in Le Poire et al, 1998) . The expression of immediacy immediately becomes a control strategy as it provides a reward-and-punishment interaction. By withholding affection (immediacy), the controlling partner inadvertently punishes the undesirable behaviour of the partner, while perpetuating this undesirable behaviour when they begin to give affection again, causing it to be a reward system (Burgoon, 1987 and Hale, 1984, as cited in Le Poire et al., 1998). Other types of using immediacy as control behaviour are convergence, a move towards uniformity, and divergence, a move against uniformity (Le Poire et al., 1998).

I used these key words<sup>2</sup> as a guideline to create a movement vocabulary with my dancers to portray the condition of co-dependency through dance improvisation. I designed a six-part narrative based on the condition of co-dependency and the scenes in chronological order are: Longing, Flirting, Harmony, Controlling, Separation and, lastly, back to Longing.

In a collaborative environment<sup>3</sup> we began to form movement that communicates the central theme of co-dependency, which is the longing to find another to complete one’s identity, in this case a partner that will translate and continue the energy that she created through her movements (Figure 8) in the Longing scene. This was followed by immediacy, which we thought was best described as flirting, using the same white sheet as a prop to highlight the dancers’ connection and the playful spirit of courtship (Figure 9). I used the term convergence to highlight the unified state of their relationship, shown through synchronisation and their responding to each other in Harmony (Figure 10); convergence was also expressed in the next scene, Controlling (Figure 11), which used the white sheet to physically engulf both of the dancers to symbolize their isolating existence.

Le Poire et al. (1998) identify an interesting aspect of the fragile co-dependent relationship. They conclude that “functional [partners]<sup>4</sup> actually destroy the relationship if they are successful at extinguishing the undesirable behaviour. Ironically, functional partners ultimately need the existence of the undesirable behaviour they are trying to extinguish in order to maintain the relationship” (Le Poire et al., 1998, p. 164). When these behaviours are confronted, they sabotage their relationship by confronting the taboo and breaking the silent agreement. This is shown in my work when the dancers, using divergence, attempt to control each other, which terminates their harmonious union with a painful separation (Figures 12 and 13).

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<sup>2</sup> Immediacy, convergence and divergence.

<sup>3</sup> Dance workshops that I conducted with the dancers where we explore the key words.

<sup>4</sup> The non-substance abusing partner (Le Poire et al, 1998).



Figure 8. Manalo, G. (2011). *Longing (from the workshop)* [Movie Clip].



Figure 9. Manalo, G. (2011). *Flirting (from the workshop)* [Movie Clip].



Figure 10. Manalo, G. (2011). *Harmony* (from the workshop) [Movie Clip].



Figure 11. Manalo, G. (2011). *Controlling* (from the workshop) [Movie Clip].



Figure 12. Manalo, G. (2011). *Separation (from the workshop)* [Movie Clip].

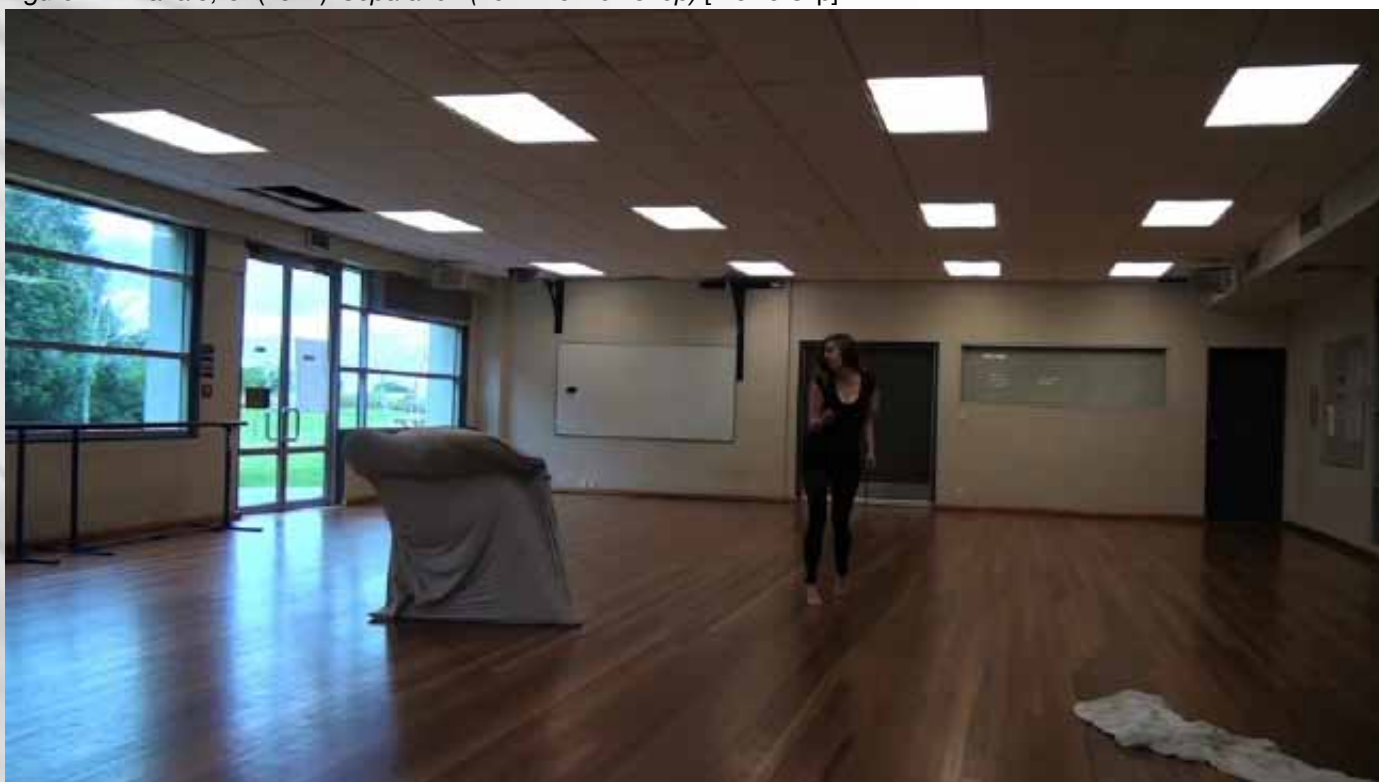


Figure 13. Manalo, G. (2011). *Longing II (from the workshop)* [Movie Clip].

My research investigation into the emotional and psychological aspects of a disintegrating co-dependent relationship through a visual language was achieved through my investigation of expressionism and the understanding of co-dependency as a condition. I was able to reify these ideas through the abstraction of the image, using editing to emphasize the most expressive movement created through the dance improvisation that took place during the collaborative workshop I attended with the dancers. My experimentations and the collaborative workshop will be fully discussed in the methodology chapter.

# CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

This chapter documents my work experiments that fed into the construction of my work process. I discuss the experimentations that shaped *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* in relation to key works of practitioners which helped me to revise my visualization and inspired the realization of my underlying theme and the construction of the project's visual language. These works include films by the Canadian expressionist animator Chris Landreth and those by the Czech surrealist director Jan Svankmajer (especially his short animated film *Dimensions of Dialogue* (1982)). The methodology developed by Pina Bausch and Martha Graham informed the collaborative workshop stage of the project, which help shape the final piece.

The narrative theme of *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* is the enmity that can grow within a co-dependent<sup>5</sup> relationship. Using art practice as a research method, I endeavoured to visualize and dramatize the encapsulating pattern and the torment of separation that the characters experience as their relationship ends.



Figure 14. Manalo, G. (2011). *Man and Wife* [Image].

In my first experiment, titled *Man and Wife* (Figure 14), I composed a linear narrative depicting a snapshot of the life of a husband and wife. I attempted to portray a loving relationship with a sacrificial undercurrent of carrying each other's burden, which exhausts the couple's relationship. In the climax the wife dissolves into nothingness as the husband realizes that he cannot survive without her. The visual presentation of this narrative was heavily influenced by the expressionist themes<sup>6</sup> I saw in Chris Landreth's contemporary animation. Landreth describes his approach as psychorealism<sup>7</sup> - he aims to present psychological personas on the surface of his 3D characters<sup>8</sup> (Robertson, 2004). He applies psychorealism in his short animations *Ryan*<sup>9</sup> (2004) (Figure 15) and *The Spine*<sup>10</sup> (2009) (Figure 16), which present his characters as surrealist creations brought to life. Bursts of emotion often spring forth as growths from the character's<sup>8</sup> heads (Lamb, 2004). Landreth also extends psychological expression to his depiction of the environment, particularly in *Ryan* (2004). He renders the cafeteria in that film (see Figure 17) as a "dreamy, disorienting space that reflects the skewed states that both Ryan and Chris experience in their shared environment" (Landreth, n.d., as cited in Robertson, 2004, p. 3).

<sup>5</sup> "Co-dependency is a pattern of painful dependence on compulsive behaviours and on approval from others in an attempt to find safety, self-worth and identity" (Treadway, 1990 as cited in Anderson, 1994, p. 678).

<sup>6</sup> Expressionism can be seen as an attempt to show inner psychological realities (Richie, n.d., p. 1)

<sup>7</sup> Psychorealism "expose[s] the realism of the incredibly complex, messy, chaotic, sometimes mundane, and always conflicted quality we call human nature" (Landreth, n.d., as cited in Robertson, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Computer generated characters sculpted and created using 3D computer software

<sup>9</sup> A film about the Canadian animator Ryan Larkin. The film is a pseudo-documentary; the script was taken from interviews between Larkin and Landreth

<sup>10</sup> A narrative about a man who gives up his spine for his marriage

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Figure 15. Landreth, C. (2004). *Ryan* (Image). Canada: Canada Council for the Arts.

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Figure 16. Landreth, C. (2009). *The Spine* (Film Clip). Canada: Canada Council for the Arts.

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Figure 17. Landreth, C. (2004). *Psychosis in environment design* (Image). Canada: Canada Council for the Arts.



Figure 18. Manalo, G. (2011). *Man and wife, connected with organic tubes* [Image].

I applied Landreth's psychorealism to the character design<sup>11</sup> of my protagonists to highlight their acute dependence on each other. as shown in Figure 18. I presented their dependence as literal organic tubes that spring from their backs and connect them together, suggesting a sustained, parasitic relationship. The characters' shapes alter and transform based on their emotional and psychological state. I envisioned this narrative to be visually raw, as the escalating violence between the two is mirrored in the distortion of their environment (Figure 19).



Figure 19. Manalo, G. (2011). *Raw, distorted environment* [Image].

Parallel to the development of the treatment<sup>12</sup> of this narrative, I created *Mantis*<sup>13</sup> (Figure 5), *Regeneration*<sup>14</sup> (Figure 6) and *Kiss*<sup>15</sup> (Figure 4) which explored the intangible emotional aspects of a relationship, derived from personal truths and collective experiences. However, these images were often misinterpreted as feminist criticism of male-female relationships, as the female is perceived as predatory, which is neither their theme nor the intention behind them. I began to broaden this representation of relationships beyond the female-male bond, to familial relationships and other social associations.

<sup>11</sup> The shape, colour, physiognomy, height, sex and age of a character. This usually refers to 3D characters but can also be applied to real-life characters.  
<sup>12</sup> A one-page story summary without dialogue.  
<sup>13</sup> Explores the idea of an entrapment in a strong bond that is created in copulation.  
<sup>14</sup> Explores the idea of death of the individual's identity in a marriage.  
<sup>15</sup> Explores the idea of an engulfing passion that consumes the lover's energy.

The experimentation of *Alpha and Omega* provided, at the time, a solution to this misinterpretation. I aimed for an abstract narrative that probed into the relationship of a partnership, rather than gender roles. I designed a 3D character<sup>16</sup> that consists of two individuals conjoined into one being, with their survival based on their reliance on one another. These characters I called Alpha<sup>17</sup> and Omega;<sup>18</sup> they are neither male nor female and are joined at the hips, each missing a component of their body crucial for their survival.



Figure 20. Manalo, G. (2011). *Alpha and Omega: the animatic* [Movie Clip].

The work-in-progress<sup>19</sup> pre-visualisation<sup>20</sup> shown in Figure 20 outlines the conflict that arises from Alpha's desire to leave their cave<sup>21</sup>. This cave is positioned at the depths of a tunnel and serves as both a prison and a safe haven. Symbolically it represents the encapsulating behaviour of a co-dependent relationship that protects and suffocates the individual and at the same time isolates them from society. Omega's restraining of the desire of Alpha to venture outside stems from his anxiety about losing his companion to the outside world, which can allude to a mother and child relationship as well as to romantic and social affiliations.

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<sup>16</sup> A computer generated character, sculpted and animated using a 3D computer animation program such as Autodesk Maya.

<sup>17</sup> A character who has no arms, attached at the hips of Omega.

<sup>18</sup> A character who has no legs and who relies on Alpha for nutrition, whom he carries with him.

<sup>19</sup> As this was a trial, I used (with permission) a fully articulated 3D model of my colleague to test the narrative flow of this experiment.

<sup>20</sup> A work in progress version of the animation to test the duration, flow and rhythm of the animation.

<sup>21</sup> The environment that represents both their physical and psychological domain.

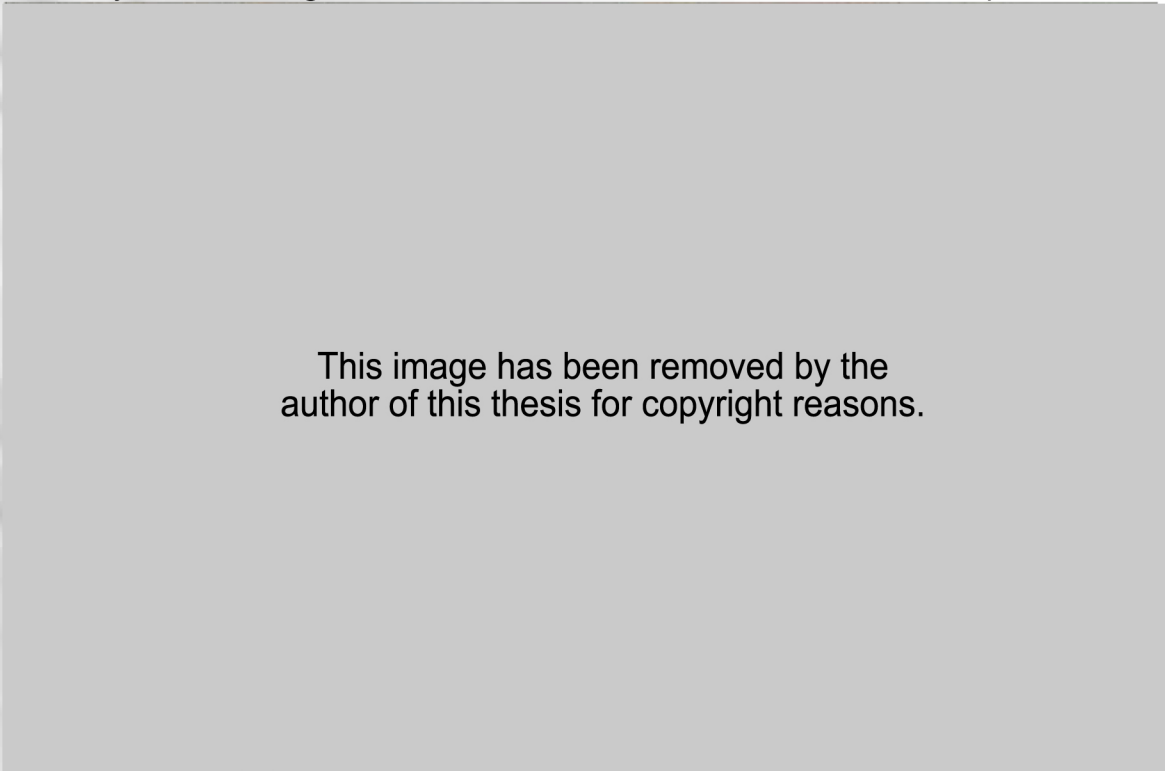
The climatic moment in *Alpha and Omega* as shown in Figure 20, is when Omega forcibly grows arms to restrain Alpha from extracting himself out of Omega, and Alpha's death when he dragged himself away from Omega. The finale has Omega cannibalistically absorbing Alpha as a ritual of forgiveness, and Alpha waking up again attached to Omega. Although this narrative fails to deliver the aesthetic and thematic goal of my research investigation, it highlighted the tension created by the pain of separation as a significant avenue of exploration which I utilized to get at the core of my theme.

In search of inspiration about how to utilize tension in a narrative, I examined the second episode of Svankmajer's<sup>22</sup> film *Dimensions of Dialogue*<sup>23</sup> (1982), particularly his representation of the orthodox cycle of relationships. Roger Cardinal (1995) offers a summary of this episode, called "*Dialogue Passionate*"<sup>24</sup>:

two clay figures, male and female, face each other at a table and enact a ... frenzied 'dialogue', embracing, erotically commingling, losing and recovering their shapes. As desire evolves into hatred, the two achieve mutual destruction and are reduced to amorphous clay.

(p. 88)

"*Dialogue Passionate*" is a subjective representation of the consequences of a dissolved relationship. The lump of clay, seen in Figure 21, suggests the aftermath of the passion or experience of this union, presented as an innocent child that neither individual takes responsibility for, resulting in the violence that ensues. This violence expresses the tension



This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons.

Figure 21. Svankmajer, J. (1982). *Amorphous clay, escalating to violence* [Video Clip]. USA: Kimstim Films

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<sup>22</sup> Svankmajer's films have both surrealist and mannerist tendencies.

<sup>23</sup> "Themes of communication breakdown" (O'Pray, 1995)

<sup>24</sup> The second episode of *Dimensions of Dialogue*.

that is present in a relationship and is emphasized elegantly by Svankmajer's editing of the film. According to Michael O'Pray (1995), Svankmajer echoes the montages<sup>25</sup> of Eisenstein, beginning with a theatrical point of view created by the use of mid shots<sup>26</sup> before escalating to an abrupt editing with extreme closeups. Svankmajer highlights the presence of the camera edits, which he uses to create "cinematic space and time" (O'Pray, 1995, p. 70). This proved pivotal to my work process as I aim to not simply document the dance, but instead create an evocative visual language in its most expressive moment derived from the dance.

Svankmajer's use of tactile objects in this film inspired me to experiment with physical objects to accentuate the tension in my narrative. Franstisek Dryje (1995) suggests that Svankmajer uses tactile objects to develop expressive elements in his film.. Svankmajer refers to these as "gestural sculptures":

Unlike gestural painting, the imprint of the gesture is not made by a tool ... the creation of gestural sculptures should involve the discharge of pent-up tension. Gestural sculpture is a form of tactile art, since the hand neither combines nor looks for analogical structures which best correspond to our feelings, but creates those structures directly, because it unloads immediate emotions into them... People are then forced to perceive the sculptures as something other than artefacts, and allow themselves to be directly affected by the artist's emotion (Svankmajer, 1995, pp. 140-141).

This tension was explored in the next stage of my experimentation, titled *Sheets* (Figures 22, 23, 24 and 25). This consisted of two models, a plain white sheet in the AUT black photographic studio, and single directional lighting. The goal of this experimentation was to visualize the emotion and the tension of splitting apart that I could not conceptualize through illustration, which I need to apply in animation of the *Alpha and Omega* experiment. The *Sheets* experiment produced expressive moments and poses, exuding despair and lamentation for the death of a union, created by the sheet and the physiognomy<sup>27</sup> of the models. These emotive poses was derived from collaboration with my models, Cameron Rule and Dannielle Chandler, using a mixture of pre-planned poses and improvisation inspired by the emotions we felt surrounding personal experiences of separation.

The result of this experimentation was a working collaborative environment that fuelled the creative and narrative drive of the project as we started to create poses derived from each other's ideas of a dissolving relationship. In its static form, This experimentation achieved at the time, its particular research and aesthetic goal as it created gestural sculptures. However, there was still huge potential to push these ideas further and additional experimentations were conducted to apply the findings to a digital remediation<sup>28</sup> to harness full control over these movements.

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<sup>25</sup> "The editing is so fast that it results in superimposition of the two images" (O'Pray, 1995, p. 69).

<sup>26</sup> A camera setup where the middle of the body to the head is shown.

<sup>27</sup> A person's facial features or expression.

<sup>28</sup> "[A] central idea for thinking about 'new' media since the concept of remediation suggests that all new media, in their novel period, always 'remediate'; that is, incorporate or adapt previously existing media" (Lister et al, 2003, p. 428).



Figure 22. Manalo, G. (2011). *Sheets experiment I* [Photograph].



Figure 23. Manalo, G. (2011). *Sheets experiment II* [Photograph].



*Figure 24. Manalo, G. (2011). Sheets experiment III [Photograph].*



*Figure 25. Manalo, G. (2011). Sheets experiment IV [Photograph].*

A vital work process was discovered from the Sheets experimentation. By using collaboration as a creative springboard, fresh and authentic movements were generated using the theme of emotive separation. My work process was then divided into two diverging paths, one being a digital representation supported by a fictional linear narrative, and the other a tactile art produced from the collaborative environment supported by themes of a dissolving relationship, in film form. I aimed to apply the success of the static images in a series of moving images and my colleague Chandler, who is a dancer, suggested that I reinterpret these narrative themes in a contemporary pas de deux<sup>29</sup> to create a seamlessly smooth sequence.

At this point, I participated in one of Chandler's experimentations involving a dancer and word association. In the role of the artist, she would narrate a word that her dancer then interpreted and which I in turn translated into a drawing. The result was gestural artworks that captured the vitality of the dancer and the essence of the word (Figure 26). I developed a strong affinity for dance improvisation, particularly the dancer's ability to generate and harness energy. This experience supported the idea of a collaborative environment as the best process for the creation of the most expressive emotions.



Figure 26. Manalo, G. (2011). *Gestural drawings* [Image].

The experimentation *Dancing with Sheets* was created next. I employed Chandler as my choreographer and together with her dancers she created a short pas de deux based on a narrative script I compiled (Figure 27). I deliberately removed myself from the creation of the choreography, as I wanted to test the communicability of the narrative script I provided. They presented a dance sequence using the keywords provided in the script: “the equal burden, struggle, love and the despair of surrender”. In the role of the director, this sequence was first filmed without the use of any props, resulting in a very tender rendition of the narrative (Figure 28). When the sheet was incorporated, the tenderness was lost and was replaced with implied violence (Figure 29). The edited film captures the tension created from the struggle and destructive passion of a disintegrating relationship; however, the narrative was fragmented because of lack of tenderness, which is pivotal to the relationship.

<sup>29</sup> “Pas de deux” is French for “step of two” and is what partnering is called in ballet (Beales, 2004).



Figure 27. Manalo, G. (2011). *Poster for initial collaboration* [Image].



Figure 28. Manalo, G. (2011). *Pas de deux with no sheet* [Movie clip].



Figure 29. Manalo, G. (2011). *Pas de deux enclosed in sheet* [Movie Clip].

This tension was not only present in the narrative but also reflected a critical aspect of the project's research investigation as the two paths of creative representation merged at a crucial moment. The *Dancing with Sheets* film took the focus away from the broader narrative of the project and isolated a single emotion that would not be comprehensible on its own. At the same time, the experimentations with digital art media using movement vocabulary created during the improvisation uncovered a huge potential for creating evocative abstracted pieces which I will discuss in the Chapter Three of this exegesis.

The work process then reverted back to the narrative construction of the project, focusing on the representation of co-dependency as a condition, instead of the cycle of a relationship. *Dancing with Sheets* (Figure 29) uncovered the importance of a collaborative environment in the form of workshops to produce a narrative that could be universally understood. The next stage of these experimentations applied the work processes of Pina Bausch and Martha Graham's performance *Lamentation* (1930), which informed the implementation of these workshops<sup>30</sup>.

According to Thoms (2008), Graham<sup>31</sup> used dance as a means to understand herself and communicated this method of her understanding to the world. She experimented with new ways of utilizing the energy produced by the body through movement that is focused on techniques that suggest empowerment (Reynolds, 2002). Her energetic movements as presented in *Lamentation*<sup>32</sup>(1930) conveyed to me a great sense of despair and grief via her treatment of the tubular sheet. She evokes an intense desire to break free from the constraints of her costume, reflecting an awareness of the physical skin that confines our powerful energy. Reynolds (2002) suggests that in *Lamentation*, Graham expressed yearning and grief through tension created using the constraints of the material that is imposed on the body. "The [sheet] converts the energy of stress and distortion into visible shapes and lines" (Siegel, 1985, as cited in Reynolds, 2002, p. 21). Siegel (1985) explains that the tension is derived from the conflict within the body, which at times defies the body's natural motion. Reynolds (2002) identifies that the tension is not only present in Graham's movement but also exists in the "spatial constraints" of the costume, which "intensif[ies] the audience's awareness of energy expended in conflict between internal impetus to move and external restraints" (p. 21).



Figure 30. Manalo, G. (2011). *Accentuated tension created with sheet* [Movie Clip].

<sup>30</sup> Hour-long sessions where the dancers and I created the choreography based on the project's narrative themes.

<sup>31</sup> A pioneer of modern dance in America, she influenced the growth of dance theory through her discipline and instruction (Horosko, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> Graham's performance in which she is encapsulated in a tubular sheet with pendular and fragmented movement that expresses grief.

Graham's treatment of the sheet as a representation of grief through tension influenced the way in which the sheet was used in this project. When the dancers created dynamic movements with the sheet, they were encouraged to pull, stretch and distort the fabric to translate their intense energy into evocative moments (Figure 30). The dancers' facial expressions was not as important at these moments, instead they are instructed to push their faces onto the sheet, dehumanizing otherwise clichéd moments and refashioning them as projected abstracted emotions. These emotions are not simply themes to be acted out, rather they must come from an emotional investment on the part of the dancers.

The collaborative workshops that formed the final choreography was heavily influenced by the work process of Pina Bausch<sup>33</sup>. According to Anna Kisselgoff, Bausch was one of the pioneers of "interaction between theatre and dance that have pushed the borders of their disciplines by adding expression, feeling and angst to the form" (Kisselgoff, 1985 as cited in Birringer, 1986, p. 85). Bausch famously declared when asked about her selection of dancers, "I'm not so interested in how they move, as in what moves them" (Bausch, n.d. as cited in Climehaga, 2009). According to Climehaga (2009), she placed emphasis on harnessing the "emotional ground" of her performers instead of their technique. He states that Bausch's interest in excavating the human experience would later be developed into a work process that she used to form her dance pieces. She would ask her dancers to transcend the objective role of a dancer and bring their subjective experiences to create authentic expression and provide material for her dance pieces.

"[Bausch would use a] technique of concentration on one essential image or gesture, probing it until it reveals the depth of its associations... she would draw on her own and her dancers personal experiences to create presentational movement patterns formed from emotive gestures and derived from a response to, rather than in service of, formal story structures" (Climehaga, 2009, pp. 10-11).

Bausch's method was applied in the creation of the movement vocabulary in this project because it was able to construct movement that transcends interdisciplinary understanding in a collaborative environment. The work process of this project at this stage was a cycle that consisted of a "workshop day", an "editing stage", a "shooting stage", and finally a "review" of the work. It was important at the beginning of the workshop for the dancers to understand the social pattern in which co-dependents operate, which involved concepts such as immediacy<sup>34</sup>, convergence<sup>35</sup> and divergence<sup>36</sup>, and which was used to construct the narrative theme of the project.

A "workshop day" would consist of an hour-and-a-half-long session where the project's narrative themes<sup>37</sup> were explored and documented with a digital camera. The dancers were provided with key words surrounding each theme, such as "desperation", "grief", "angst" and "eagerness" in the scene "*Longing*" (Figure 31), and would at times be given a scenario that could be used as a "background story" for each scene. The dancers were given a minute or less to communicate this idea and were given feedback during their dance improvisation. They were encouraged to move in their personal dance technique and at times had to move in response to each other's movements in a form of contact improvisation, which resulted in diverse movements that felt genuine because of their spontaneity.

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<sup>33</sup> A German dancer, choreographer and instructor who founded Tanztheater Wuppertal (Climehaga, 2009).

<sup>34</sup> "the extent to which communication behaviours enhance closeness to or nonverbal interaction with another" (Mehrabian, n.d., as cited in Le Poire, et al, 1998).

<sup>35</sup> A move towards uniformity (Le Poire et al, 1998).

<sup>36</sup> A move against uniformity (Le Poire et al, 1998).

<sup>37</sup> The condition of co-dependency. Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness has six scenes: Longing, Flirting, Harmony, Controlling, Separation and Longing II, as explained in Chapter One.

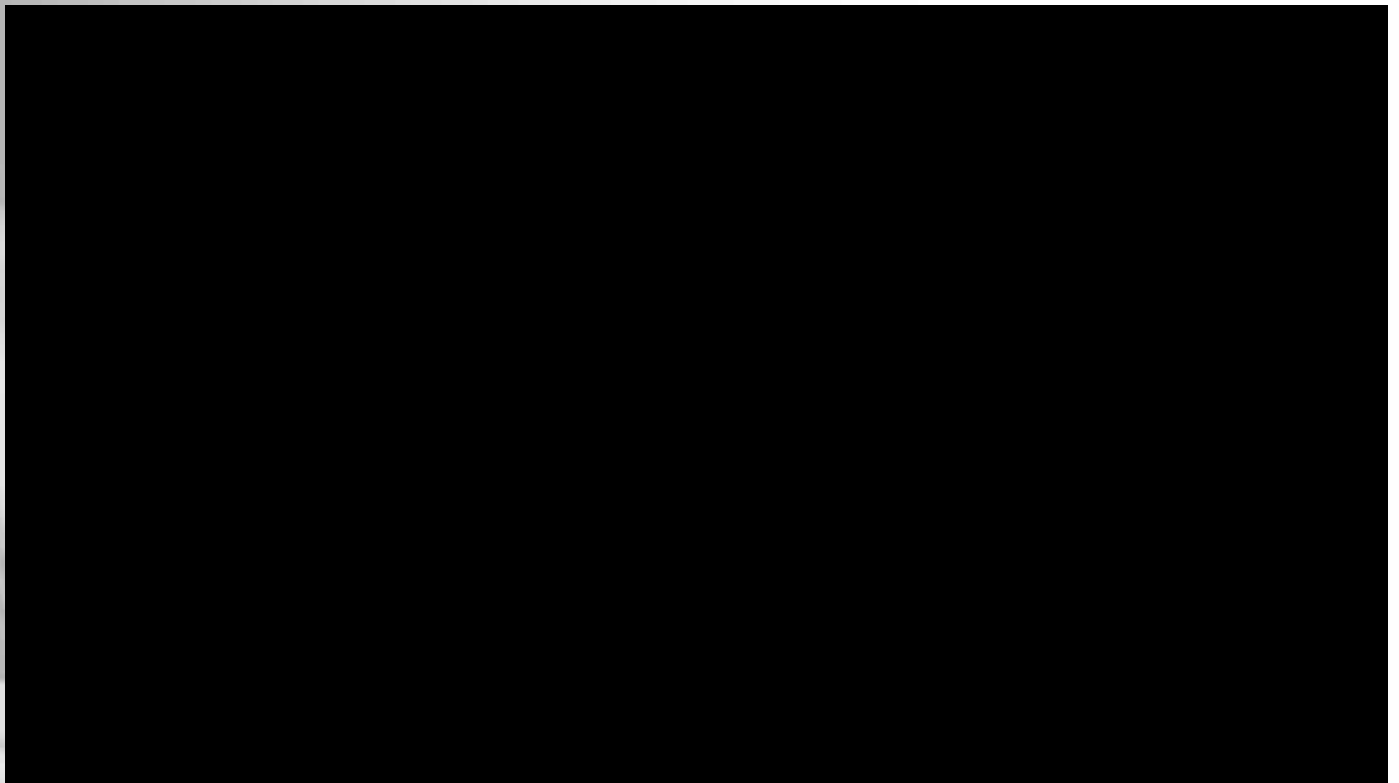


Figure 31. Manalo, G. (2011). *Longing II*, compiled version [Movie Clip].

The dancers' movement sequences were closely examined, and the key movements that were the most evocative isolated. They were asked to integrate these movements when they repeated the whole process. The dancers were restricted to four periods of improvisation to compose the sequence of each theme, so as not to overwork the expression and commodify the movements.

The collaborative environment achieved a breakthrough when the dancers were invited to share their personal relationship experiences, which were used to construct the key words for each particular scene. For example, Bella Ashby and TeMana Allen, the participating dancers in this project, were asked about how it feels when a significant relationship of theirs dissolved. Bella replied "regret", while TeMana said "freedom". Their different responses inspired the finale, "Longing II". This involved Bella continually returning to TeMana, desperately clinging to him and regretfully forming her own encapsulating shell. TeMana, on the other hand, continually moves away from Bella, periodically engaging with her but strongly rejecting her until he moves out of frame, defiant and intact. This technique of engaging personal experience with the narrative theme was used to inspire evocative movements that would otherwise not have been discovered.

The "editing stage" was when all the footage was reviewed and evocative movements isolated and compiled together for each scene. The selection process involved isolating all evocative movements, which were then examined and reduced to five sections under a minute in length (Figure 32).

This edited footage was then given back to the dancers and on the "shooting stage" of the cycle that they have to examine and perform, which is filmed for the visualisation of the possible final film. The last stage was the "review" of the final footage wherein this footage is examined and edited as the final film. The film is then assessed for narrative communicability and suitability for the research investigation. Inadequate sections were re-examined and we would then go back



Figure 32. Manalo, G. (2011). *Controlling, compiled version* [Movie Clip].

to the workshop stage of the work cycle. The subsequent workshop stages are not as strenuous as the initial workshop and the inadequate sections were interrogated and improved using other keywords when new movements were formed. This process of following a continuous cycle was used to refine the evocative movements that would best translate the narrative theme of this project.

The evocative movements in the narrative scenes of “*Controlling*” (Figure 32) and “*Separation*” (Figure 30) were genuinely disturbing moments as Bella feels the sheer masculine power of TeMana as she struggles against his control. The dancers were told to display physical strength and encouraged to resist the control of the other. It was disturbing because of the intense struggle displayed by the weaker partner, which was accentuated by the sheet which at times constricted them into unbearable positions. Climenhaga (2009) provides an explanation of the effect on the audience of the physical subjugation of the dancer in Pina Bausch’s *Bluebeard*<sup>38</sup> (1977):

“The movement is precise and highly developed out of emotive gestural patterns ... we are brought into the vulnerability of the image in part because the [dancer] herself is perceived to be at risk in some way. We are able to see the tortured relationship of the characters, to feel the connection and desperation they feel, through the immediacy of their stage presence and the way in which we feel along with the woman in the moment” (Climenhaga, 2009, p. 17).

<sup>38</sup> “[A]n experiment at presentational strategies” which combined opera, theatre and dance (Climenhaga, 2009).

The work process of *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* was developed from the experimentations conducted in search of the best communicative elements for my research and narrative investigations. Each experimentation had an underlying goal that fed into the project's central investigation. Some of these were discovered by chance and pushed the project in a different direction.

A scripted linear narrative was abandoned as it exhausted its potential to push the boundary of the research investigation and failed to deliver expressive evocative moments that would resonate with the audience. Dance improvisation, however, propelled the investigation as it opened new avenues of collective expression outside of the singular subjective perspective. Dance improvisation was best utilized through the adoption of Bausch's method, which "opens the door to new creative process which allows [the creative] to reach toward the center of an idea ... or a creative construct and articulate that heart through a variety of means" (Climenhaga, 2009, p. 35).

The project greatly benefited from the emotional participation and investment of the dancers from the very beginning. The collaborative environment was successful only because the dancers and I created a strong bond of trust and faith, enabling such a melancholic subject to be investigated with good intentions and the rhythmic inspiration created by their dance and my direction.

# CHAPTER THREE: TECHNICAL ASPECTS

This chapter discusses the digital art trajectory experimentation titled *The Blobs*, which amalgamated digital technology with movement vocabulary. I will discuss the process in which I translated the movement vocabulary into a digital art form with the help of motion capture technique and Autodesk Maya<sup>39</sup>. I will also outline the technical challenges this experimentation posed and the limitations of the digital technology.

The work process of *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* was an evolving one based on the result of each experimentation. As each exhausted its investigative potential, it led the project into another exploration with the same goal. Once the narrative theme of co-dependency was fully realized, the project diverged into two separate media of representation, digital film and 3D animation. The project eventually moved towards digital film production, as discussed in Chapter Two, the 3D animation direction had great potential to be utilize in achieving the project research goals.

In the experimentation titled *The Blobs*, solo gestural movements is inspired by the scenes of the experimentation *Alpha and Omega*, which was translated as digital motion<sup>40</sup> in AUT's motion capture<sup>41</sup> suite. Two renditions of each scene of *Alpha and Omega* were shot, one performed as traditional acting (as seen in the animatic in Figure 20) and the other using gestural movements inspired by dance as seen in Figure 32. The difference between the movements in the two reiterations was significant as we worked towards the goal producing the most evocative rendition. In digitizing the gestural movement, only a small percentage of graceful body motion was lost in the motion capture process – mainly the hand gestures and facial expressions as these sections of the body are not fully “mapped”<sup>42</sup> in a body capture setup<sup>43</sup>.



Figure 33. Manalo, G. (2011). *Digital dance movements* [Movie Clip].

<sup>39</sup> A 3D computer software program which animators use to build, sculpt and create a skeleton to drive digital characters and create 3D objects.

<sup>40</sup> This is created by the Motion Builder program by capturing the live performance and creating a digital data which can be applied to 3D programs such as Autodesk Maya to drive a skeleton of a character

<sup>41</sup> A technical process in which an actor dons a skin-tight black suit with a Velcro-like texture to which spherical reflective markers are attached. The actor enters a “capture” space where his performance is captured by eight (or more) infra-red cameras that directly feed into the capture program as a digital live performance, driving a digital actor.

<sup>42</sup> Strategic markers are placed on the body of the actor to map the physical body and track it with the capture equipment, translating these movements into digital data. The digital data is what the program uses to drive the digital actor based on physical performance

<sup>43</sup> A full-body capture setup will only track the whole body motion, while a facial capture setup will track the facial expressions. The facial capture will have markers on the performer’s face.

Motion capture has both positive and negative aspects; an important positive aspect is the ease of capturing and animating a large number of scenes in a short amount of time, which is of high importance to time-constrained projects such as this one. Another positive aspect is its ability to retain human motion in its translation of movement from a physical actor to a digital character. The limitations, which I will discuss below, could be due to AUT's motion capture suite as I have only had the opportunity to shoot there.

In the experimentation *The Blobs*, the dancer was limited to ballet-type movements as this dance style creates wide movements and clean lines that can be captured perfectly by the program. A limitation that we experienced was when the performer occluded a marker – the marker would disappear for that timeframe and at times will “snap”<sup>44</sup> the digital character's body. This limitation is a major inconvenience when performing a dance movement as the dancers' bodies twist and stretch to express an idea; it also limits the gestural movements to upright positions.

Another limitation was the dimensions of the “capture volume area”<sup>45</sup> of the AUT motion capture suite, which is restricted to the floor space of the room. This results in about 1-2 metres of safe capture area; if the body leaves the capture volume space, the digital body will “snap”. This limitation restricted the travelling movement that could have been used to accentuate the gestural movements, which is highly critical to dance movements. The performer is then restricted to a fixed position and must transfer all gestures to upper body movements to maximize the capture volume space. These limitations exhaust the visual investigation for an evocative presentation, and as the number of performers that can be captured at one point is limited to one, the gestural movements were felt to be languid, stilted and forced in a solo performance.

An elegant solution to these limitations that dehumanized the dancers' performances was to relinquish realism and create an abstract rendition of the performance. The digital motion derived from the physical performance was applied to abstract, non-human forms such as a sphere, a triangle and a line, as seen in *Figures 34, 35 and 36*. The result was moving gestural sculptures that hint at the body the performer, which mimics the elegant and engaging results of the *Sheets* experimentation. *The Blobs* was underdeveloped and could be further examined and explored. However, because of time constraints and the available resources, as well as taking the limitations discussed above, *The Blobs* was terminated at that stage.

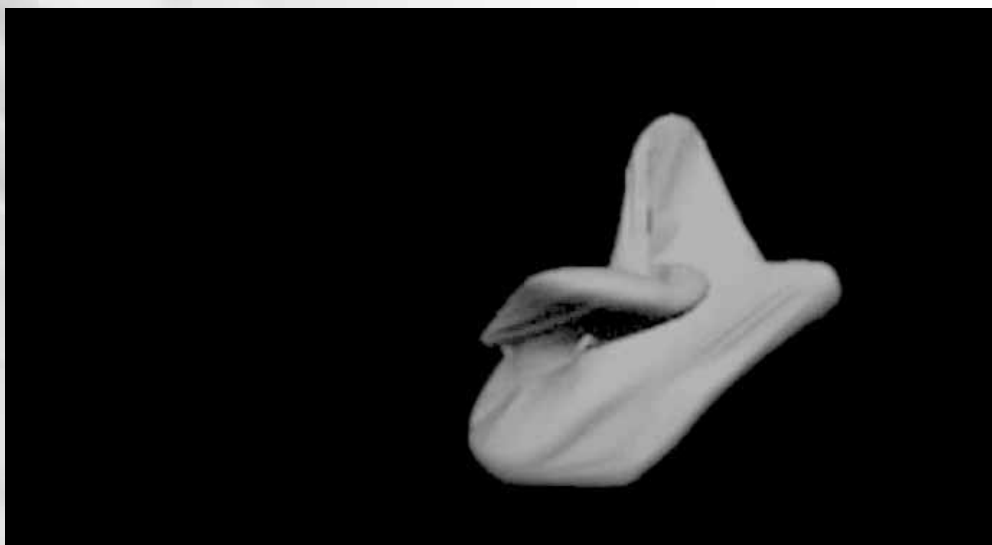


Figure 36. Manalo, G. (2011). *The Blobs III* [Image Clip].

<sup>44</sup> When a body “snaps” in motion capture, this refers to a limb of a digital character that has disconnected from the digital body and would sometimes be twisted or positioned at impossible angles

<sup>45</sup> A boxed area in which an actor must stay while performing which is at the centre of all the infra-red cameras.

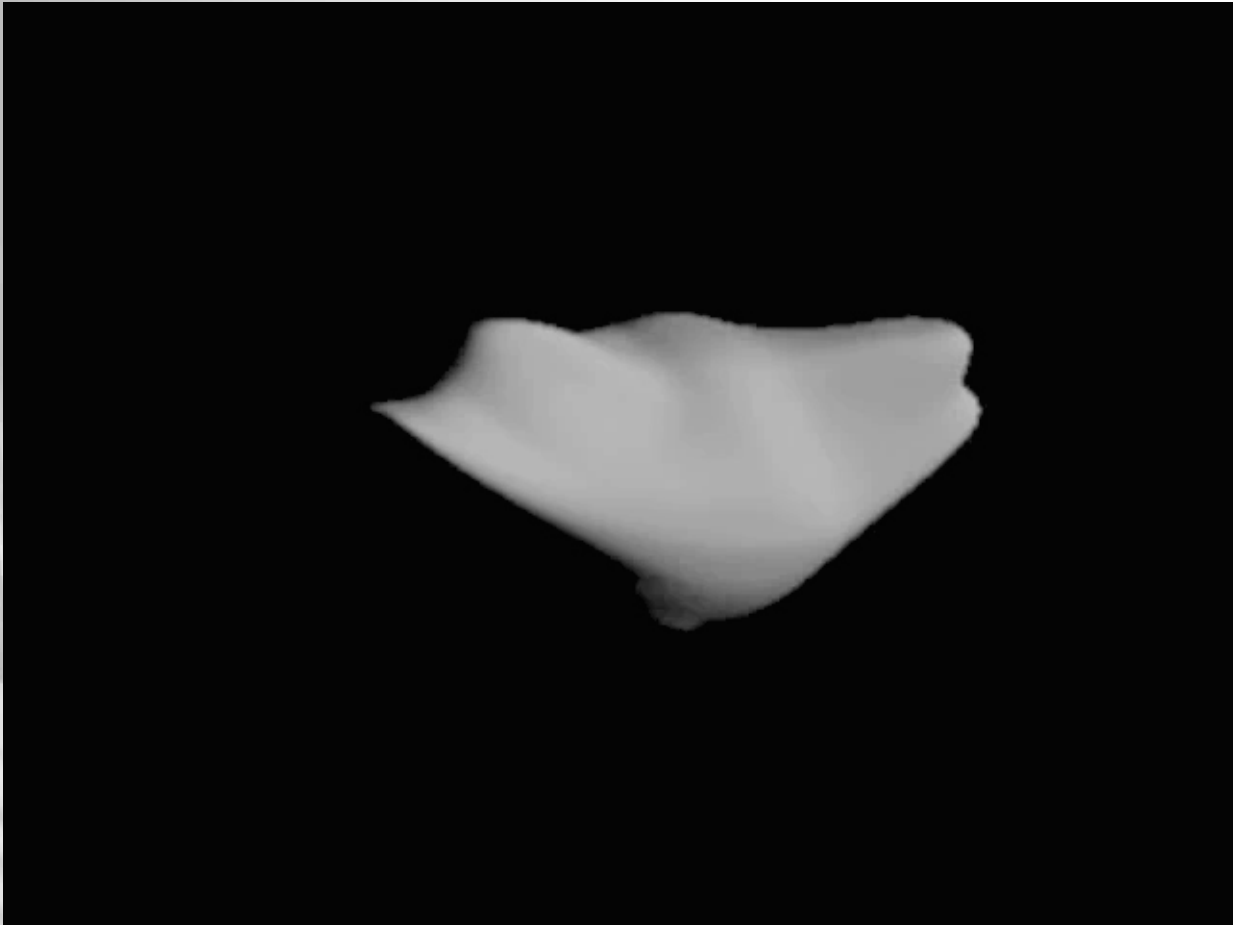


Figure 34. Manalo, G. (2011). *The Blobs I* [Movie Clip].

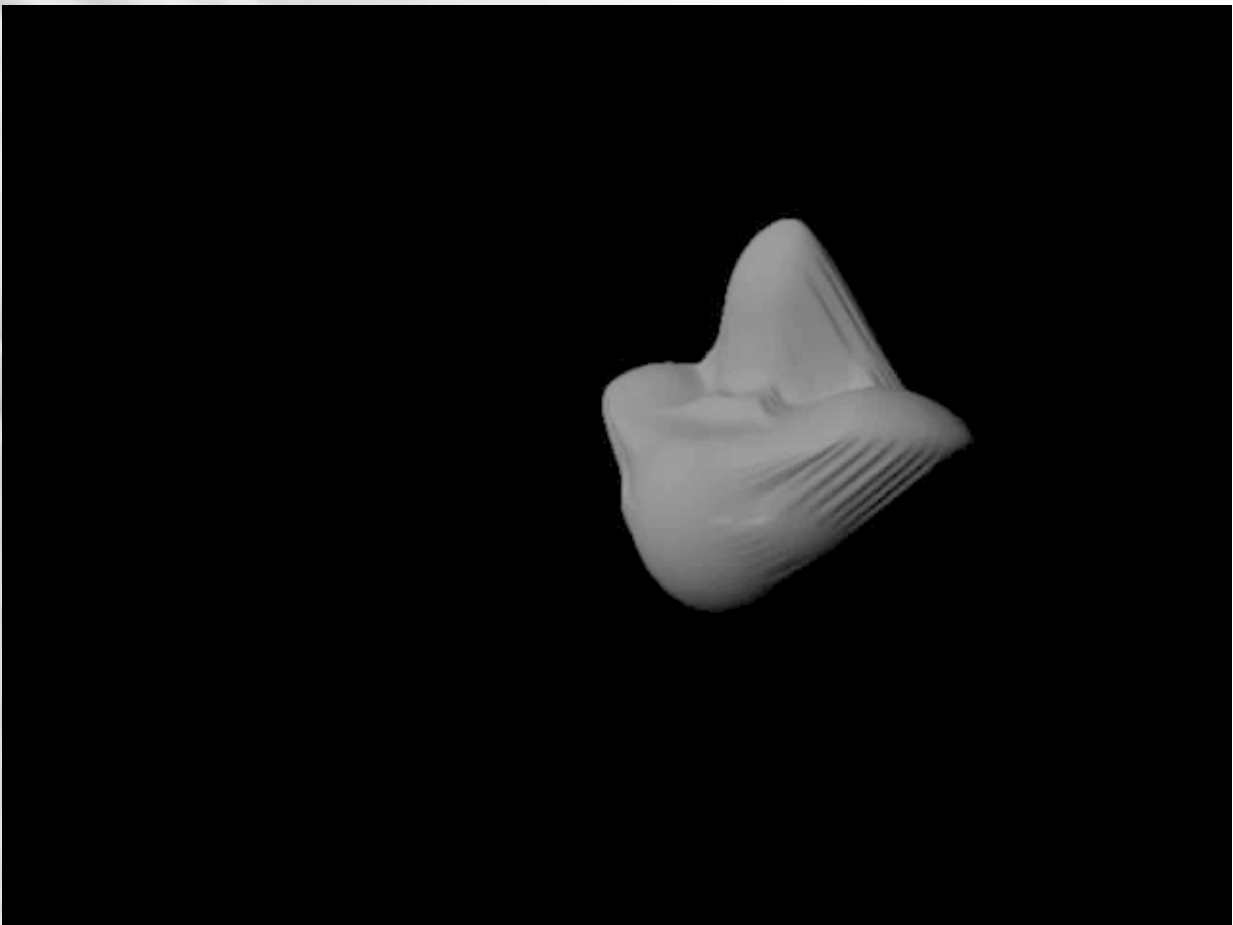


Figure 35. Manalo, G. (2011). *The Blobs II* [Movie Clip].

# CONCLUSION

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This research project explored and investigated the expression of emotional and psychological states on the surface of film subjects. The narrative theme of *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* was developed from understanding the condition of co-dependency, which was interrogated and examined to create a narrative that would communicate universally.

In this project's research investigation, I discovered a potential in the merging of gestural movements with digital art form that could have pushed the visualisation in a different direction. However, because of resources and time constraint, I was not able to pursue this exploration.

The visual language that communicates the psychological and emotional states of the characters in *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* originated from the experimentations the project was subjected to in order to find the most evocative expression. In particular, the aesthetic influence of expressionism present in abstraction of the human form and the portrayal of tension using a material to accentuate these emotions.

In my project, I found that the narrative improved because it was formed in a collaborative environment, rather than from a single subjective experience. The collective experience invested in the story allows for universal understanding of the narrative themes because it is inspired by different experiences.

There is great potential in interdisciplinary collaborations and *Perfect Love, Perfect Selfishness* highly benefited from utilizing the capacity of dance to inspire and bring great emotion to the surface, which was the project's research goal.

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# **APPENDIXES**

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- APPENDIX ONE: TREATMENT FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE**
- APPENDIX TWO: SCREENPLAY FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE**
- APPENDIX THREE: ALPHA AND OMEGA TREATMENT**
- APPENDIX FOUR: FACE REFERENCES AND MODELS FOR  
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WITH THE SHEET.**



# **APPENDIX ONE**

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## **TREATMENT FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE**

## HUSBAND AND WIFE TREATMENT

TURNER (60s) carries his wife ADELE (50s) on his back as they walk along the streets, passing a CLOTHES SHOP, a VETERINARIAN and a CEMETERY. The street is very circular so that all the shops that they pass seem to rise and fall.

The road slopes downhill, levelling just in front of their HOUSE. Turner carefully manoeuvres the slope, speeding up and stopping as to not fall over. He carries her inside their small cottage.

He sets her down onto the sofa, sitting directly behind her. The veins that connect their bodies together pulse. Adele starts crying. Turner looks at her with disdain. They get into an argument about being penniless because of Turner's stubbornness.

Adele inflates bigger and bigger until the walls creak and bend, everything breathing down on Turner. She reminds him how he would not have been successful if not for her. She sacrificed her dreams, her beauty and dignity for him. She was a beauty queen, destined to be famous; instead she took jobs to support his studies. She tells him to be realistic and that he is too old for regrets.

Turner explodes, his head growing bigger and meaner, his teeth snarl and his eyes bulge. He screams that he gave up his dreams for her.

Everything stops breathing. Adele lets out a moan and melts all over the floor. Turner immediately apologizes as he tries his best to gather her in his arms. But she escapes through the gaps of his fingers.

She dissolves through the floorboards and the door, leaving him alone in the empty living room.

He looks across to the mirror, and sees his reflection change. He becomes older and hunched. He sits back down on the sofa and stares at their family photographs. One by one they start to burn.

THE END



# **APPENDIX TWO**

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## **SCREENPLAY FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE**

EXT : SUBURBAN SHOPS : DAY

TURNER (60s) carries his wife ADELE (50s) on his back as they walk pass closed shops. He is very thin and small, while Adele is almost twice his size. Her weight crushes him onto the floor.

The street is surrealistically circular so that all the shops that they pass seem to rise and fall. Turner has to continually climb every step of the way.

They pass a CLOTHING SHOP, Adele gazes upon it, eyes darting every clothes on display. She sighs and sinks lower onto Turner's back.

They pass a VETERINARY CLINIC, Turner follows the window with his gaze and stops right in front of it. Adele follows Turner's gaze, she looks down on Turner, gives him a small but hard jab at his side with her foot. Turner looks ahead and continues walking, grumbling under his breath.

As they pass a CEMETERY, Turner looks over the headstones. Adele is also watching the cemetery and suddenly sighs and burries her face into Turner's back. She seems to deflate. Turner turns his head and rubs his forehead onto hers and with a bitter smile:

Turner

I'm here.

Adele smiles.

EXT : FRONT OF HOUSE : DAY

The road slopes downhill, levelling just in front of their small COTTAGE. Turner speeds up to fight the descent.

He carries Adele inside their small cottage.

INT: LIVING ROOM : DAY

Turner sets down his wife on backless sofa, then he moves around to sit directly behind her. The veins that connect their back together pulse.

Adele starts crying. Turner turns back towards her with disdain.

Adele

It shouldn't be like this. If you would have just-

Turner

What? It's my fault again is it?!

It's always my fucking fault!

Adele

It IS your fault!

You and your fucking pride!

Turner

Don't you dare talk to me about "Pride"!

Have you look at yourself lately?!

You disgust me.

Adele inflates bigger and bigger, the walls creak and bend and seem to grow bigger with her. It expands and deflate in time with Adele's breathing. Turner looks up, everything is breathing down on him, He is suffocating.

Adele

You've got some nerve... Have you forgotten!?

You are nothing without me. I gave up my dream for you.

With my looks, I was destined to be famous! Instead I chose you...  
you ungrateful bastard.

I swallowed my pride and took jobs, jobs that belittle me. I smile  
as others look down at me.

I did everything just so you can be who you are now.

And then you just drop and left everything for your stupid want?

"always wanted to be a vet... " WHAT ABOUT WHAT I WANT?!

WAKE UP! You're too old! We are too old. It's too late for regrets!

(she laughs bitterly)

This is the fucking "thanks" I get...

Suddenly Turner explodes. His head grows bigger and redder, his face twisted in contorted anger. His mouth snarl and his eyes bulge.

Turner

YOU gave up everything for me?! I gave my life to you!

I'm doing everything for you... don't ask me about what you want. I gave you all you want!

My biggest regret is listening to you instead of doing what I love

-

Turner stops talking. His last words hangs in the air. Everything stops breathing. Adele stares at him.

Adele lets out a low moan and she melts all over the floor.

Turner

Adele please, I'm sorry... I don't mean what I say...

You know when I'm angry I don't mean what I say... please...

*I love you...*

Turner tries his best to gather her in his arms. He scoops her in his palms and holds her close to his chest, but she escapes through the gaps of his fingers.

Turner lies on the floor in her puddle, gathering her but to no avail.

She dissolves through the floorboards. Leaving him alone in the empty living room.

He looks across to the mirror. He watches as his reflection change. He becomes older and hunched.

He sits back down on the sofa and stares at the photographs on the wall, chronologically narrating their life.

One by one they start to burn.

THE END



# **APPENDIX THREE**

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## **TREATMENT FOR ALPHA AND OMEGA**

A conjoined creature walks along a dark tunnel towards a windowless room with a single light bulb. The room is grimy and suffocating, it only has a chair and a bed with no bed sheets. There is light and hubbub of voices coming from the other end of the tunnel.

They are conjoined at the hips; alpha is carrying omega on his back. Omega caresses alpha's face as they walk. They get into the room and they head to a small counter. Omega prepares food in a bowl, He twists around and starts feeding the hunched alpha some nuts. He realises that Alpha has no arms. He chews his food slowly, while Omega him constantly.

They lie down on the bed, Alpha tucks his legs underneath him as he faces the wall. Omega hugs him from the back, caressing his shoulders and face. He closes his eyes to Omega's touch.

He pushes himself up with his hands, and whispered in the ear of Alpha. He is very excited that he speaks in fast hushed tones. Alpha quickly turns around to face him, and grimaces at him. He nods his head excitedly and points to the open door that leads to the light. Alpha shakes his head, and so Omega takes Alpha's shoulders and shook them more excitedly. Alpha screams at him and stomped his feet. Omega backs away, covering his mouth with his hands.

He puts down his hands and turns away from Alpha, he looks at the open door with longing. He turns around to look at alpha's face, alpha turns away his head ashamedly. He looks back towards the open door with fierce determination.

Omega grips the side of the bed and with all his might, he starts to pull himself out of Alpha. Alpha, startled, looks in horror at omega's face and hooks his leg onto the side of the bed. Omega screams in pain but keeps on pulling, succeeding only in stretching his body away from the other.

Alpha, with terror and desperation, pleads omega to stop. Omega stops pulling for a second, just to look at Alpha with fury and loathing, He spat and hissed at him as he continues to pull himself out of Alpha.

Alpha strains himself, and from his sides, a single arm starts to emerge, as Omega's body start to rip apart from the main body. They both scream in pain as the ripping occurs and

before Omega tumbles to the floor, Alpha catches his arm and pulls Omega towards himself.

Omega digs his nails at Alpha, and swipes at his face and arms. Alpha lets go in shock, steadying himself on the bed with his single arm. Omega falls on the floor, he drags himself with his arms, using the legs of the chair as support. He grimaces as he wills the stretched, long tendrils from their split to move. They slowly form into legs that are emacipated. He slowly tries to get up, and takes shuffling steps towards the open doorway. Alpha looks on from the bed, He stretches out his hand to Omega, and coaxing him back. Omega turns away from Alpha, and still with the support of the chair, he gets closer towards the doorway.

Omega steps away from the chair, and slowly walks. He stumbles and falls hard on the floor. He looks back at Alpha on the bed. His legs becomes more withered, and so does his body. He is slowly dying.

ENDING 1:

Alpha rises from the bed slowly and comes toward Omega dying on the floor, he stands over Omega as Omega looks up feebly. Alpha squats down beside him, and slowly, he takes chunks from the body on the floor and starts to eat it with one hand, until it was all gone.

A head emerges from his shoulder and an arm, it is Omega and he lies down his head against the Alpha's head. They both turn around to lie down on the bed.

ENDING 2:

Alpha rushes forward, grimacing as he pushes another arm out from his side. He cluthes Omega's face away from the floor and hugs him. He bends down and picks up Omega's body.

Omega painfully moved his withered leg, they both look at it and smile at each other.

He slowly walks out of the door painfully, while Alpha supports him every step of the way.



# **APPENDIX FOUR**

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**FACE REFERENCES FOR ALPHA AND OMEGA,  
CHARACTER DESIGN AND 3D MODEL.**

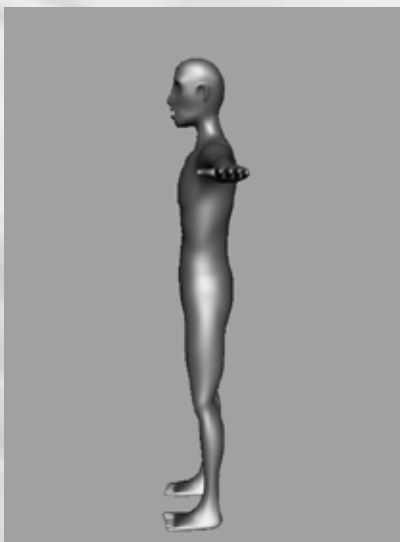
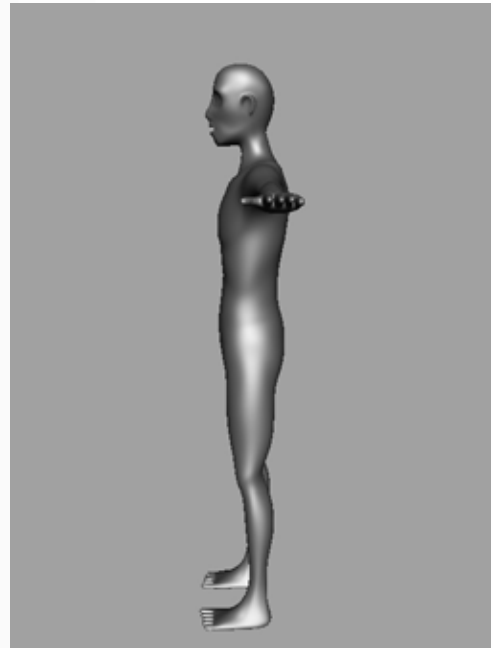
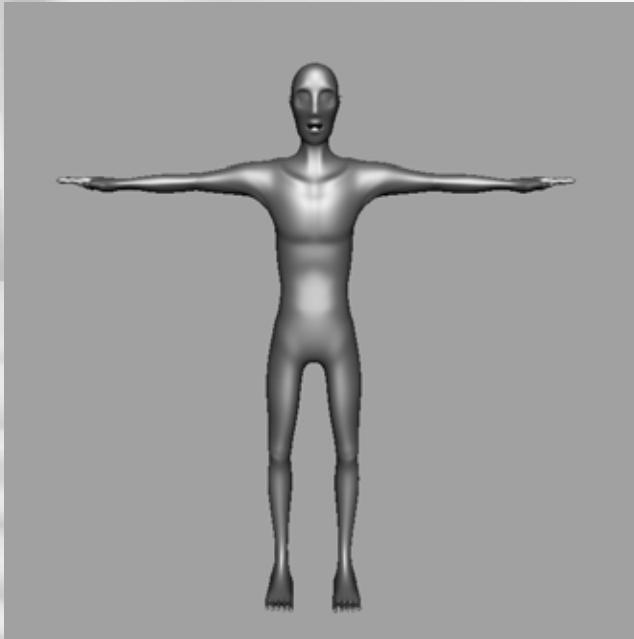
# FACE REFERENCES FOR 3D MODEL

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# SCREENSHOTS OF 3D MODEL AND CAVE

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# **APPENDIX FIVE**

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## **THIRTY SECOND EXPERIMENTATIONS WITH SHEET**



WOUNDS? IT WOULD BE BETT  
TO SAY THAT TIME HEALS  
EVERYTHING EXCEPT WOUNDS  
WITH TIME, THE HURT OF  
SEPARATION LOSES ITS REAL  
LIMITS. WITH TIME, THE DESIR  
BODY WILL SOON DISAPPEAR,  
AND IF THE DESIRING BODY W  
SOON DISAPPEAR, AND IF THE  
DESIRING BODY HAS ALREADY  
USED TO EXIST FOR THE  
OTHER, THEN WHAT REMAINS  
WOUND... DISEMBODIED.