

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. ENVIRONMENTAL STORYTELLING

As stated, prior by (Webster, 2025) a background is the part of an image that lies behind the foreground. In animation it's part of the process and pipeline. As a part of a scene in grounds the scene and shows the setting and environment of the narrative. Without a background there is no visual anchor or context to connect the scene to the audience. According to (Darvideo Animation Studio, 2021) a background in the context of animation is a piece of art within the background of moving characters during an animation clip. It completes scenes with that visual anchor and context mentioned prior. In addition, it also enhances the composition of the scene aesthetically.

According to (Aestranger, 2018) environmental storytelling is the practice of minimalist storytelling in where it's conveyed visually as opposed to verbal exposition. To go more in depth (Vrendenberg, 2017) stated that environmental storytelling has the aspect of 'signposting'. Signposting is having a visual queue to guide the audience's eyes and convey a meaning. As an example in a scene, it's raining late at night, and an individual is trying to find shelter from the rain. In the background there's one open store in a street of closed buildings. The light from that one store is already a visual queue for the audience and tells the audience that there is 1 store that is still open.

With this concept in mind, it is reasonable to assume the various ways it can be applied within various contexts. For the sake of the film being discussed the main application would be for an important character's personal room. Signposting could be applied by the overall contents of the room like furniture, materials used, over all aesthetic and design tell the audience what kind of character lives within such a space.

2.2. ENVIRONMENT DESIGN

In addition to environmental storytelling, one of the more important things to mention is environmental design. Environmental design is a fundamental that need

not be overlooked as it is the basis of an environment and the process of making environmental art. According to (Hulatt, 2024) the process of creating environmental art starts with concept art. Concept art being initial ideas that visualize the architecture and mood within the setting.

The remaining steps mentioned are more in line with 3D art, however it can be analogous to the process of 2D art. The 2nd step is modelling which can be equated with the drawing and line art process to properly visualize what came from the concept art. The next step is texturing, which describes coloring the model and adding detail to surfaces, the same can be applied to 2D art. Color is an important aspect of all art, as in our lives we've associated colors with meanings, whether it be a more direct correlation with specific objects or more emotional and subconscious like how red in some instances can be seen as heightened emotion like love and another instance it represents rage. Color is important within an environment because it's palette might convey a specific mood. The last 2 steps are lighting and rendering which for the writer's film both are done in post-production.

One of the aspects mentioned is environment art themes, which is stated as the backbone of storytelling in art and design. The theme of the environment gives an aesthetic that gives context of its context in the story's world. A couple examples of environment art themes that are common are nature like forest landscapes, fantasy like magical creatures and ancient ruins. In this case it falls under urban which shows man made structures like rooms and offices.

2.3. MISE EN SCENE

As mentioned by (Studio Binder, 2024) mise en scene is the composition an arrangement of things within a given scene. Mise en scene is intrinsically linked with the concept of signposting mentioned in the environmental storytelling portion of this chapter. As signposting is a visual queue within a scene which falls under the purview of the arrangement of things within a scene. This concept can be described with another word, staging. As like a play in the theater staging is very important for a scene, it ensures that the environment doesn't obstruct the audience's view, however in film and animation this concept can be used in many more creative ways as it is not limited to a live performance on stage.

It is important to mention that mise en scene encompasses everything within a scene, more than just the environment, however for this discussion the aspects of mise en scene that directly involve the environment. Among them are location, color and staging. Location is simple enough as according to Studio Binder, it can say a lot about characters, intentions, obstacles and themes. Color gives mood and is important with setting the tone. Lastly staging establishes the world and conveys it to the audience.

It can be inferred that all 3 of these concepts are intrinsically linked to one another. A background is the visual that contains everything within the scene, the contents of that background and its arrangement is the mise en scene. And that mise en scene has a purpose to convey a meaning in which is the signposting that is part of the environmental storytelling. However, trying to convey environmental storytelling pertaining to a specific character within a narrative is not complete without an understanding of the character.

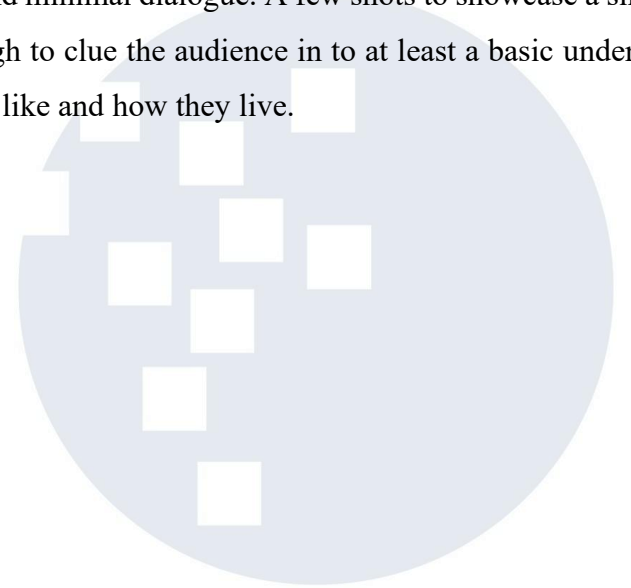
2.4 3-DIMENSIONAL CHARACTER

In the theory of Lajos Egri (1946) quoted from the study of (Utama, 2018) There Are 3 dimensions to a character which are Physiology, Psychology, and their sociology. The physiology of a character is to do with their physical appearance so things like, their age, gender, height, and other physical features. Their psychology would be to do with their personality, demeanor and tendencies. Lastly, sociology would be to do with social standings, what economic class, occupation, and relationships with others are like. In the direct words of Lajos Egri “Human beings have three dimensions: physiology, sociology, psychology. Without a knowledge of these three dimensions, we cannot appraise a human being.” (Pettersson, 2023)

To continue the point mentioned prior, a portrayal of a character’s personal space has to reflect their 3-Dimensional character, without the proper information, context, and understanding there might be some mistakes and disconnects from the intended vision. To give an example, it would be off-putting to showcase a character stated to be living a minimum wage job with financial issues to be shown living in

a private estate. Which is why the writer believes that this is a necessary part of the process.

The writer believes that applying 3-Dimensional character into environment design can signify to the audience said 3-dimensional character in a more subtle way. Showing and not telling is more important within this context due to the film's short runtime and minimal dialogue. A few shots to showcase a single environment should be enough to clue the audience in to at least a basic understanding of what this character is like and how they live.



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