

Concept Art

Alyssa Bawgus

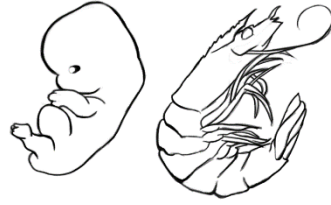
AHS Capstone Archive

Context

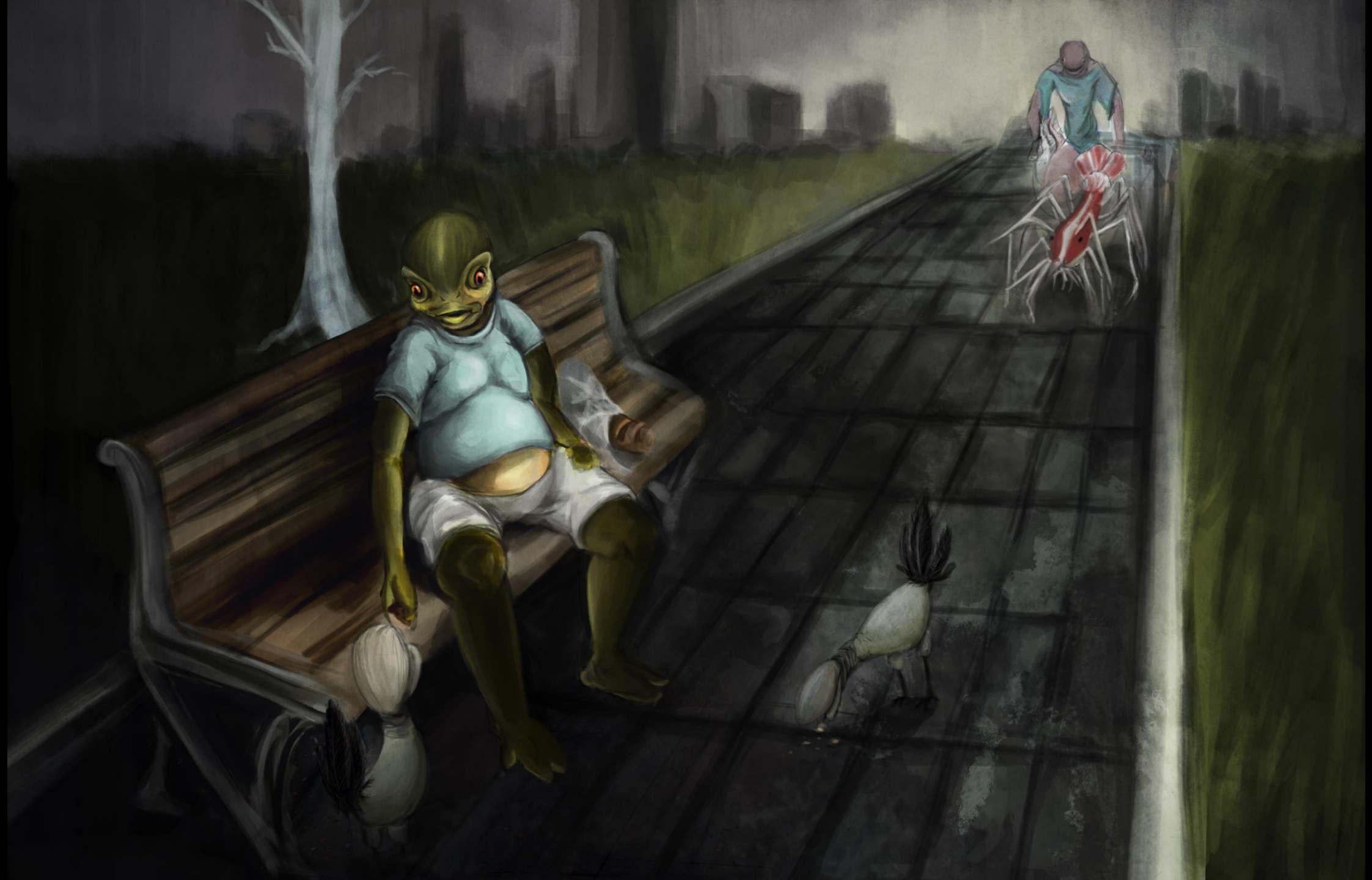
This project is an exercise in digital painting, world building, and self-indulgence. My goal for it has always been to take a 'pet' idea I've had and expand on it as much as I could within a semester. While I've done digital art for a few years, I wanted to do an original project with a cohesive environment that conveyed something on a narrative level; both things that were new to me, as prior to this I was mainly concerned with rendering detail or primarily character focused.

Through exposure in the gaming and film industry, I wanted to do the work of a concept artist, who creates illustrations of areas that do not exist to be used in media. For this project I created three large paintings as well as an array of sketches of a world built over human society dominated by fish-people. I defined the world of the compositions to be one where a race of humanoid fish creatures emerged from the sea, killing all humans, and integrating into the human infrastructure around them.

Artist's Statement



This work aims to create a surreal environment through the juxtaposition of the normal and generic with ichthyic humanoids. By using fish-like creatures, I hope to emphasize the lack of relatability humans have with non-mammalian creatures. Fish are cold, alien creatures we do not interact with in our lives. In fact, they are necessarily totally separate. They cannot live, or function with us and we cannot live with them. Being in the other's world totally robs one's ability to maneuver and perform the basic operations it takes to survive. My goal with this series is to recreate domestic and familiar scenes with fish-human creatures that we cannot relate to. The lack of the mammalian divorces our sense of empathy and creates a world that unsettles the viewer.







Park

For the first composition I worked with, the design element I rolled forward with was the notion of the open mouth of clams sharing similarities with the open mouth of baby birds about to be fed. One of the earliest sketches is hybridizing those images, which brought me to these clam birds with bodies like geoducks. The composition in general was the earliest commitment to a domestic, friendly and open environment now inhabited by strange creatures.

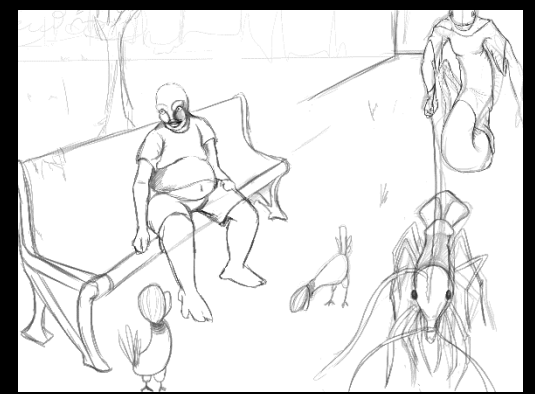
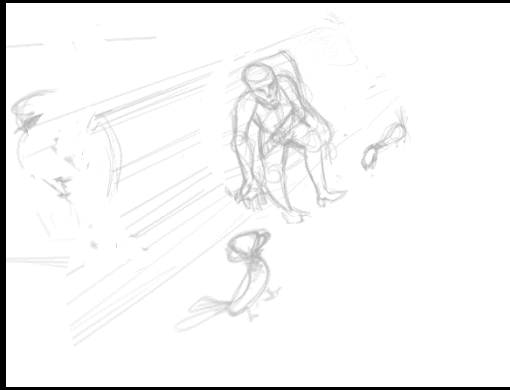
Park Pre-work



Park Pre-work



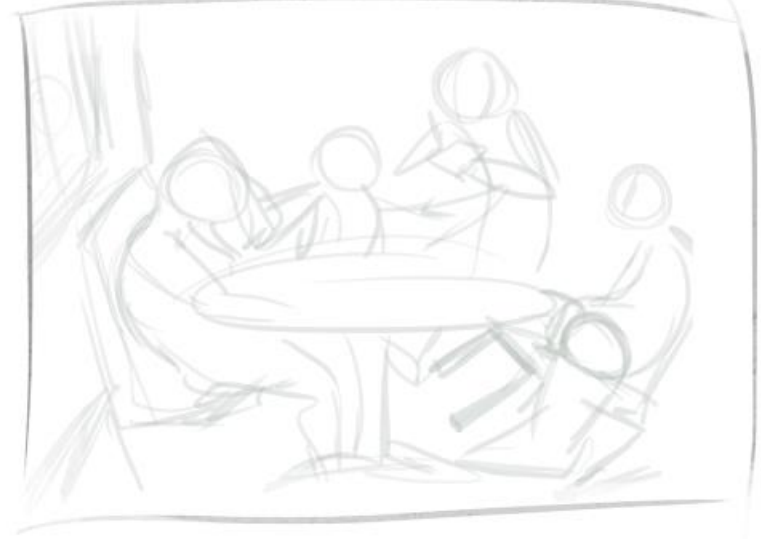
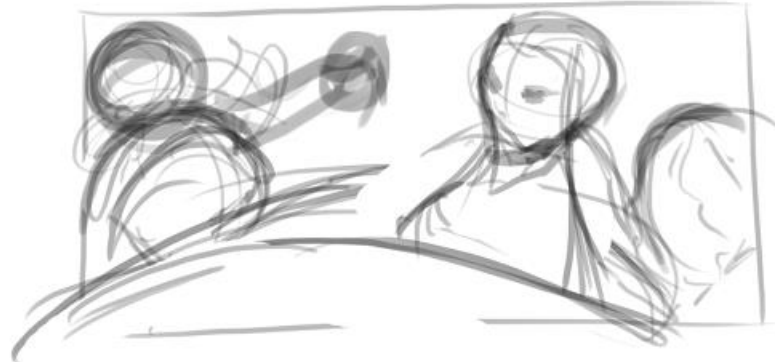
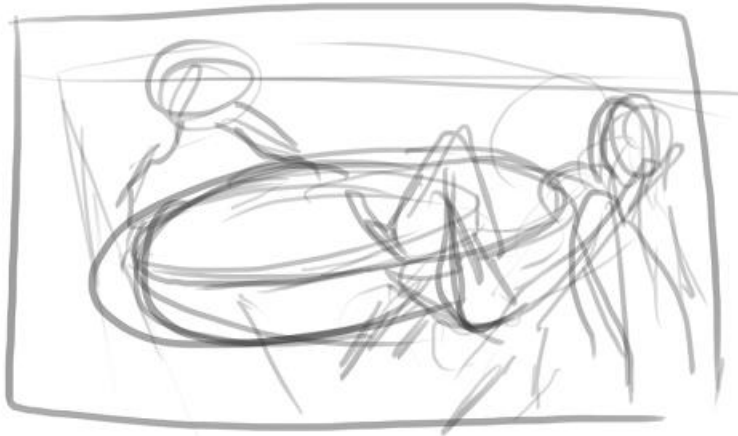
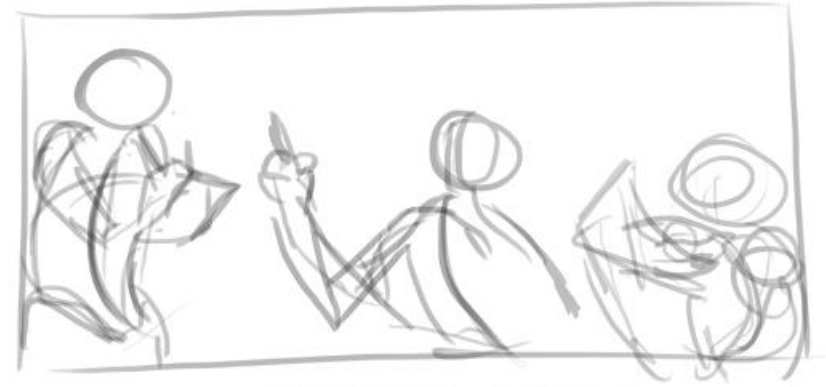
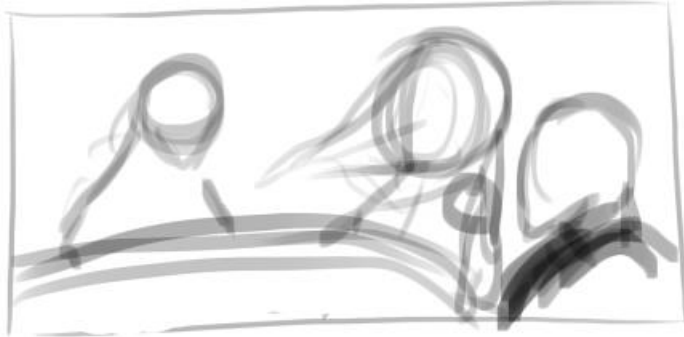
Park Progress Shots



Dinner Out

The second composition was done concurrently with the *Park* piece, and process-wise, was a reaction to frustrations dealing with the first piece. The creature design in the first were more high-concept, and for this one, I ended up doing the original sketch in one sitting without knowing what I wanted out of the piece. I had made thumbnails to try and plan the composition, but 'went rogue' when it came to sketching it out. This led to characters that were less designed after specific fish, but had more generic fish/aquatic elements. Overall, it piece is looser than the first, and I feel it ended up with a greater sense of narrative of the moment because it evolved more naturally.

Dinner Out Pre-work





Destitute

The final composition was the fastest, but had some of the most refined moments of detail in the rendering. I learned a lot from the first two about my tendencies in arranging elements in an image, and made many more considerations towards interacting with the frame, and elements overlapping.





Supporting Sketches







