

# How to Make Electronic Music

By Rob Thompson

# [1/5] Introduction

Music that I've made acts as contextual timestamps, denoting specific moods and emotions at specific times in my life. With eight years of music experience behind me, the songs I've made symbolize the overwhelming change, mentally and stylistically, that I've gone through. As I continue to evolve my sound and genre, I become nostalgic for what my music used to sound like. Many times, I've obsessed over reconstructing that past sound – only to realize I can never return to it.

I wanted to make a piece that embodies the fears, failures, and hopes that come with stylistic, organic change, both visually and auditorily. My thesis acts as a personal message to myself: a depiction of being forced to move forward with a process, the failures that come with that change and the beauty of leaving something different in its place.

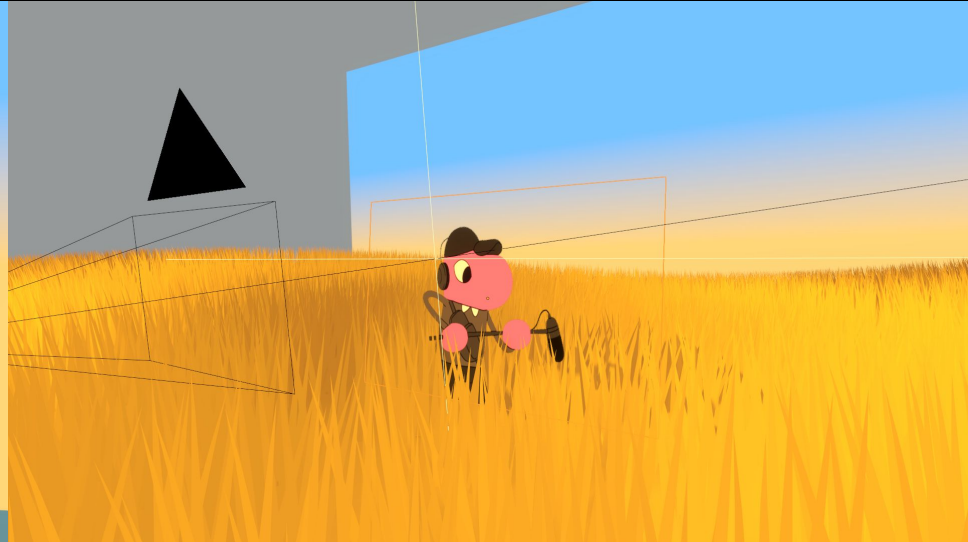
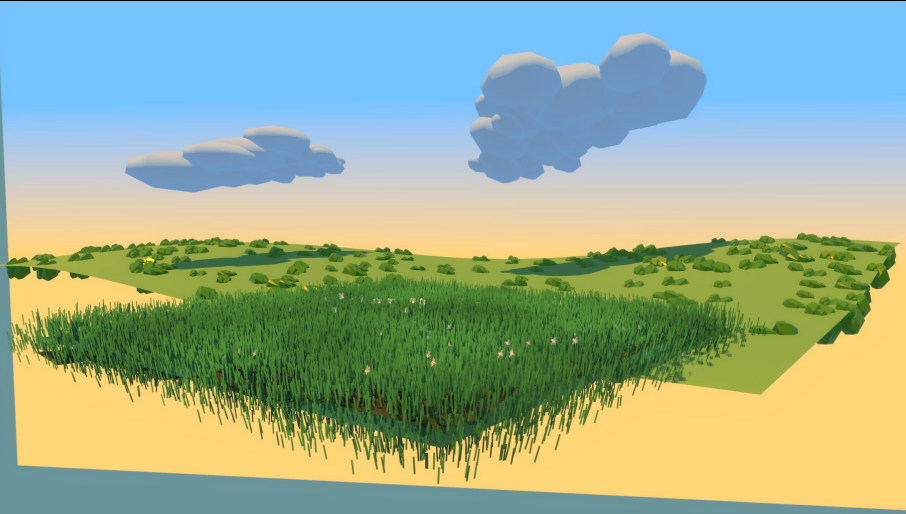
**[2/5] Process**



In the beginning I had a difficult time realizing the story, medium and message. I felt that I might be too strategic with my process and going against the entire intention for organic change with the project. I thought that it would be entirely 2D, but soon realized that approach could never pull my interest long enough for me to stay invested. Because of this, I decided to utilize 3D world building in Blender halfway through the second semester.



Instead of thinking of ways I could elevate my current facility with 2D animation, I was able to use Blender to experiment with 2D in 3D space, and perpetuate the sense of curiosity that diving into an unknown program holds. Similar to how I make music, I felt free to act intuitively and creatively within a new program rather than strategically and limited by rules or a manual.



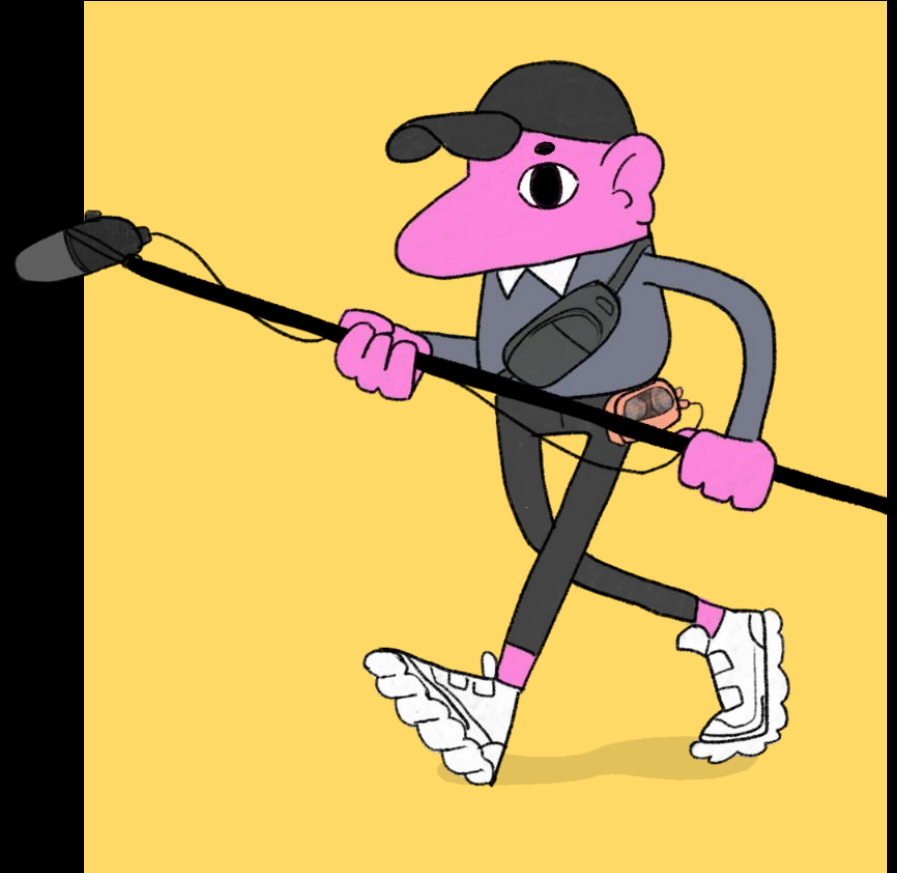
Using Adobe Photoshop, I animated 2D character cells and environmental elements and transferred them into a 3D space with Blender. I wanted the 2D and 3D to be incorporated seamlessly – and the most effective way I preferred was to only use 2D elements and play with 3D lighting and camera positions. Blender allowed me to render the 2D animations with full range of motion within the 3D space.

**[3/5] Characters**

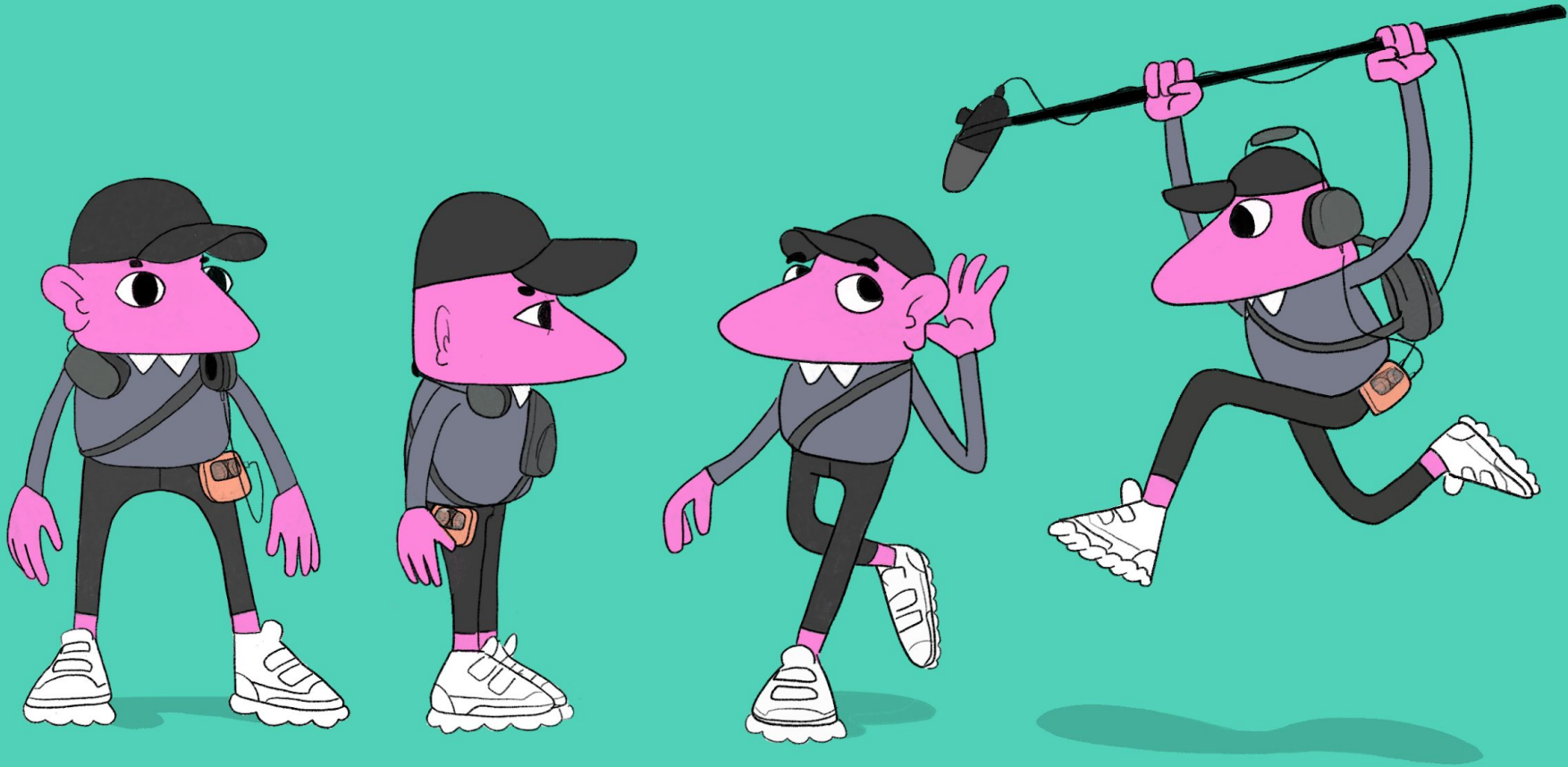
## [No\_Name]

[No\_Name] is a character loosely based on myself, but used more as an open ended embodiment for any independent music producer going down the same path of evolving creatively while being intimidated by their fear of sounding “inauthentic to their sound,” and the potential failure to stand out stylistically.

The name [No\_Name] is his moniker, almost like his online SoundCloud profile username, that lives for everything audio and music. Unlikely spots for electronic instruments are prime locations for his best material. Hearing the world differently with his equipment, he utilizes the environment to manipulate his music.







**[4/5] Environments & Sound**

[1/3]



[2/3]



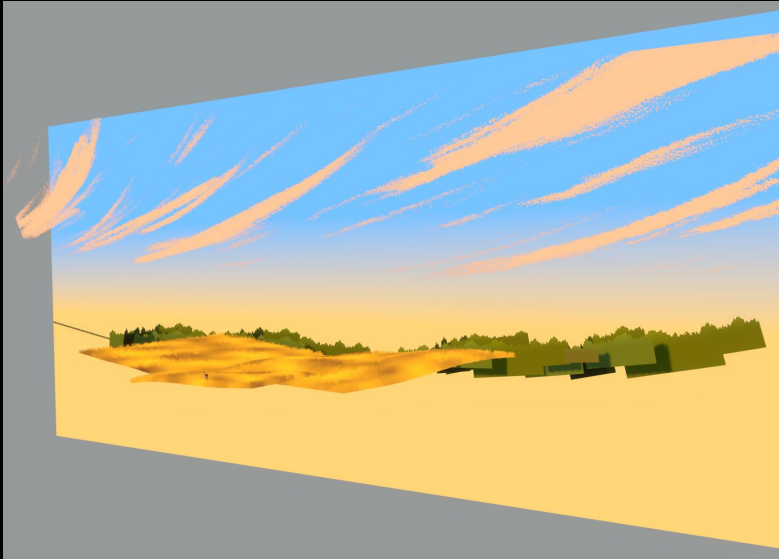
[3/3]



Each environment was separated into acts to help structure and integrate the built instruments that I personally approach and associate with music production. Each element represents the deconstruction of my songs and the layers that bind my style of music together. I wanted to “keep it simple” with the rules of each environment – to not get too technical with musical terminology like leads or arps. It was critical to maintain the freedom of combining and eliminating elements according to my preference.

## Grass

The first chapter, Grass, acts as an introduction to the properties of the world and its sounds. Not only do the soft pads and chords ease the viewer/listeners auditorily, but it enables me to conceptually ease into the project. Using pads as a soft and not overly complicated start to the film allowed me to focus on learning the basics to Blender.



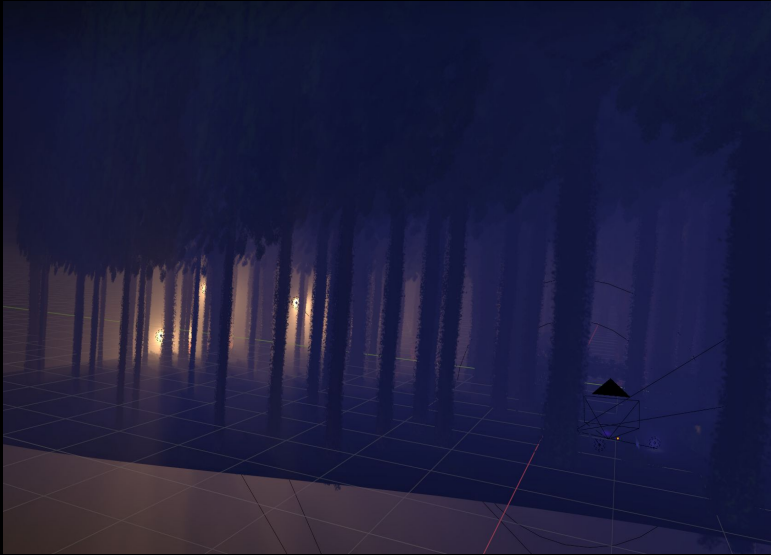
Viewport Render



Final Render

## Fungi

This chapter, Fungi, is intended to show my growing enthusiasm while immersed in the creative stage of the project, mirroring my process working on the film. The instruments begin to blend with each other, creating a more concrete melody and beat. The visual elements imported in the space become more dense, more detailed, and precise. As I'm getting more comfortable with Blender, the complexity in the fungi environment emulates the enthusiasm in both its music and visuals.

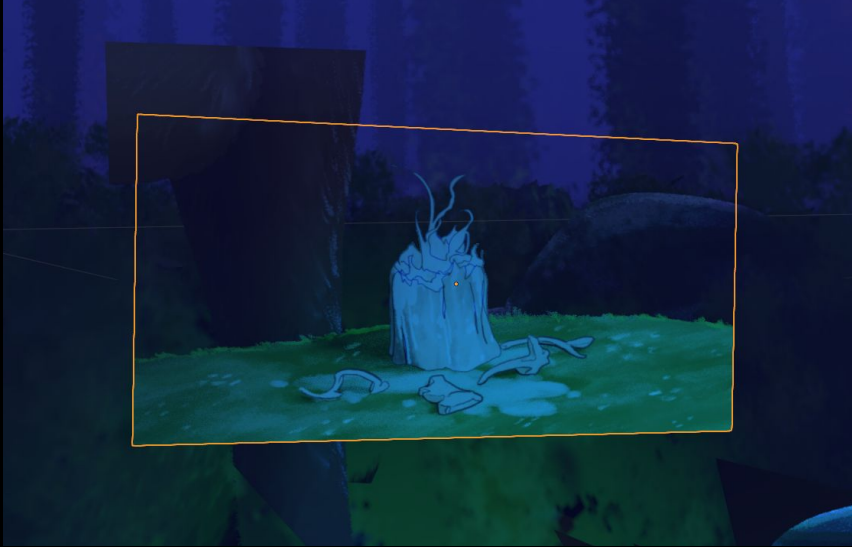


Viewport Render

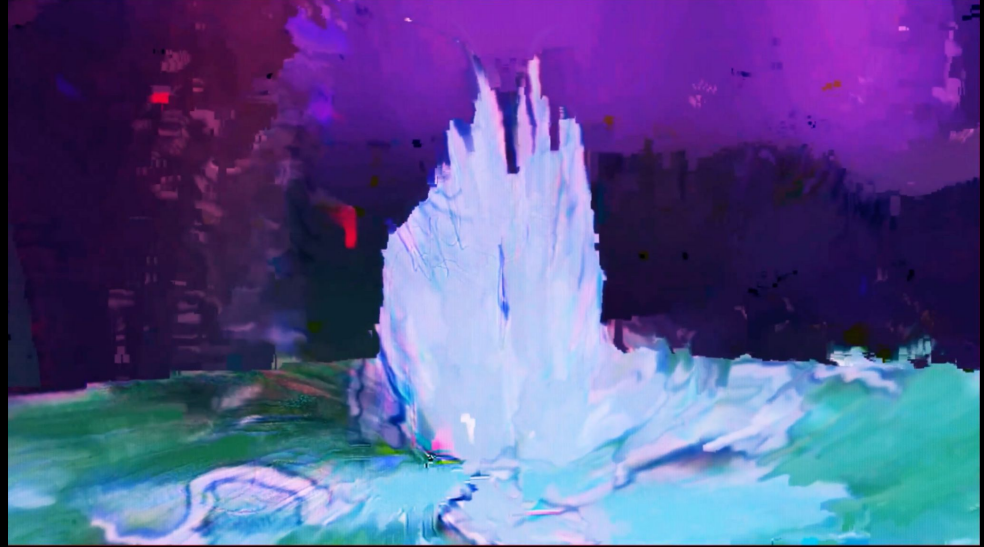


Final Render

Viewport Render



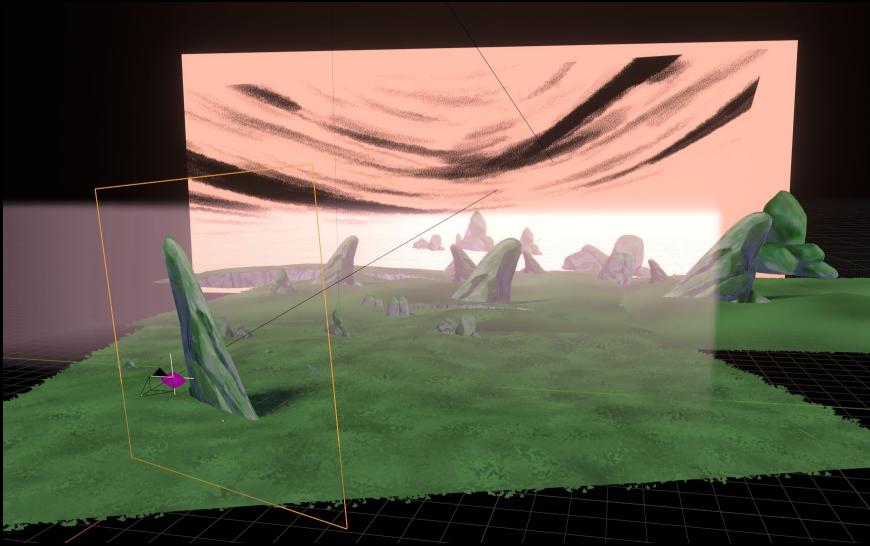
Final Render



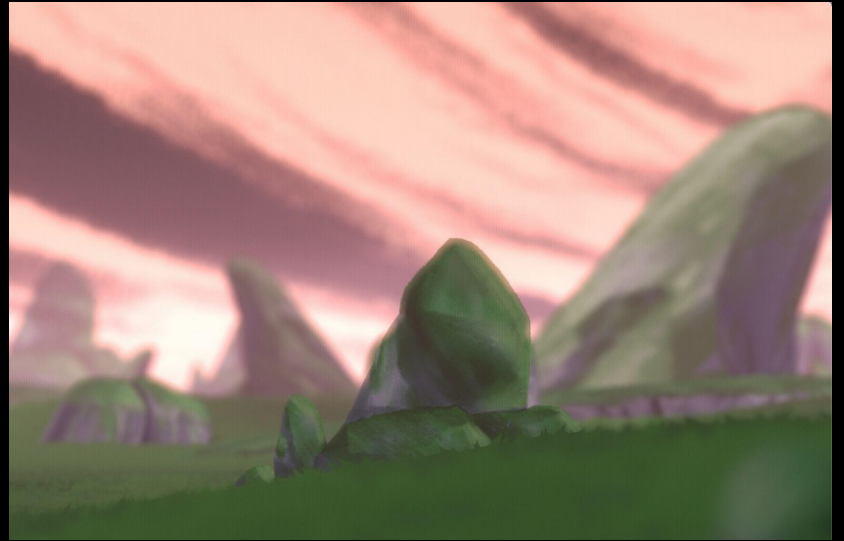
Towards the end of this chapter, this inspiration is momentarily threatened by a reminder of the fear of changing, of not staying consistent within a creative project. Although, as the sounds of digital screams echoed and distorted, there is a beauty in its destruction; I allow the environment to become corrupt within itself, uncontrollably and naturally.

## Rocks

The last chapter, Rocks, focuses on bassline and percussion. This chapter symbolizes the haunting, sudden drop in confidence and enthusiasm with my music I can experience after experimentation or stylistic changes. Although the music continues to build, it feels lighter, less confident. Yet it still holds true to its original bubble-like melody. Focusing on the rock's rigid and static properties as a central focal point allowed me to remind myself how sedentary my songs can be if not given the space to evolve in form and sound.



Viewport Render



Final Render

**[5/5] Reflection**



This film represents and externalizes my fears of stylistic change while acknowledging the beauty in failure, and the contrast of clarity and distortion within my process. I wanted this film to achieve a seamless combination of 2D and 3D, similar to how I wanted to combine sound and animation.

When I look back on this project years from now, it will encapsulate my style in sound and art at this moment. As I continue to shape and change my music and art, I am no longer fearful of moving past what I used to sound and look like; instead, I am looking forward.



## Artist Bio & Contact

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