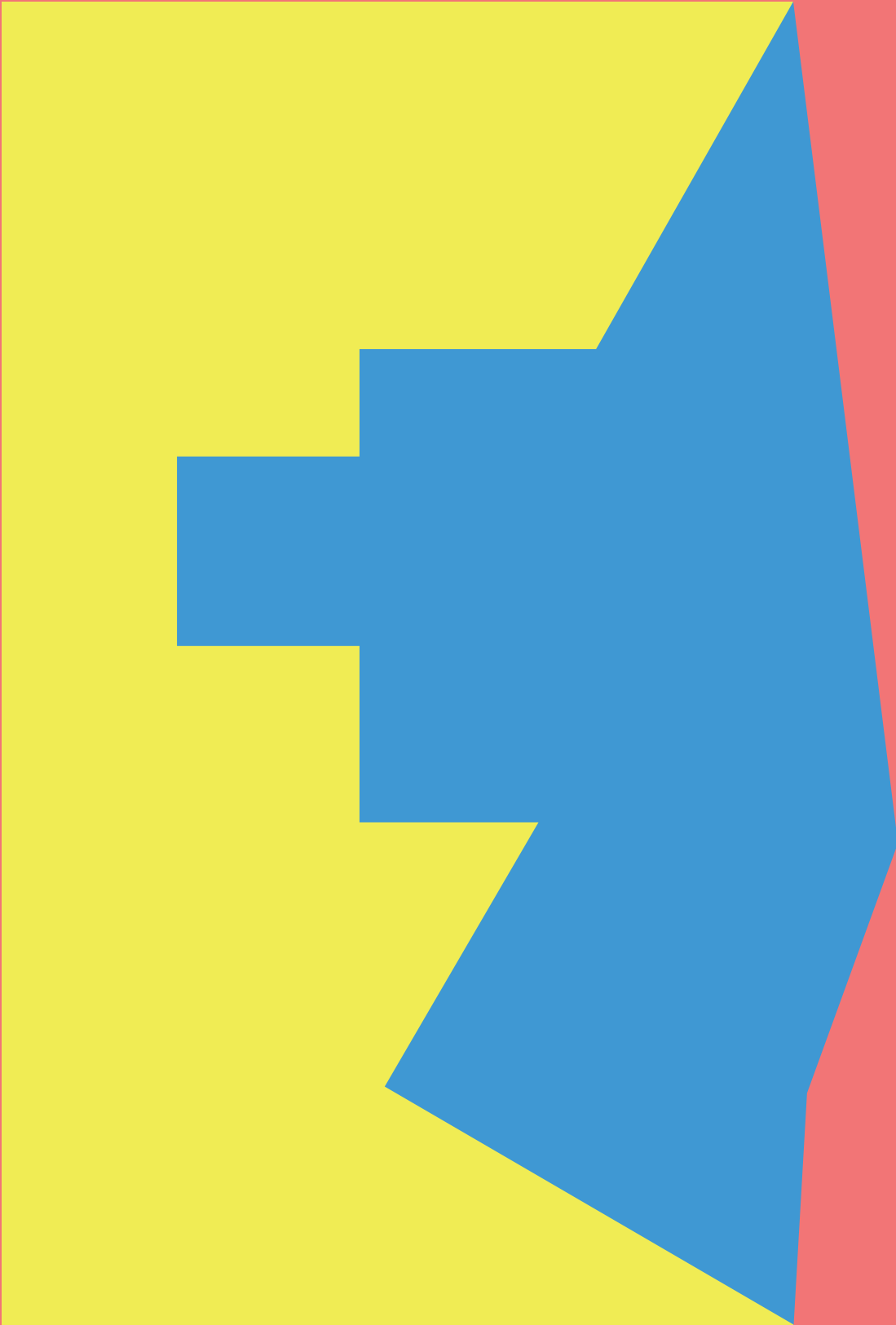
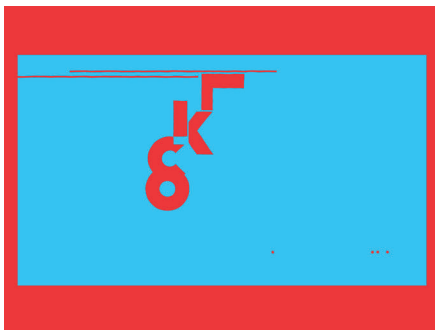
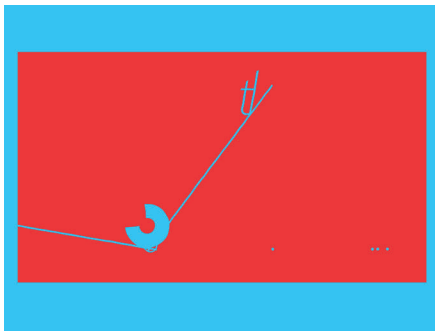
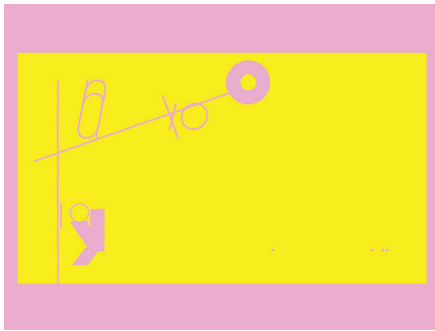
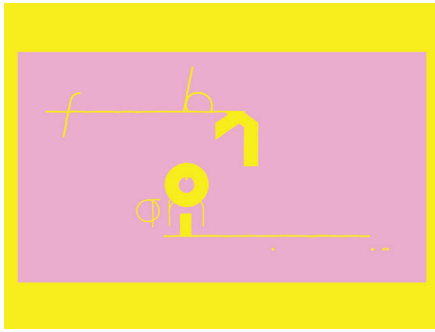


THREE PRONGED WIDGET

2



AN EXCITING AUDIO-VISUAL FEAST



Experience a mesmerising audiovisual journey like no other with Functional Block Diagrams. This bold and innovative animated film takes you on a hypnotic exploration of shape, color, and sound, where the boundaries between order and chaos blur in captivating ways. Crafted by a visionary artist, this experimental work is a true feast for the senses. The visuals are a kaleidoscope of geometric forms and vibrant hues, seamlessly blending minimalist elegance with a playful, maximalist flair. Each frame is a carefully choreographed dance of shapes, reminiscent of the avant-garde aesthetics that have inspired generations of artists.

But Functional Block Diagrams is more than just a visual spectacle – it's a symphonic fusion of movement and music. The intricate patterns and rhythmic motions of the animated elements are perfectly synchronised with an entrancing soundscape, creating an immersive experience that transcends traditional boundaries. Prepare to be transported into a realm where the organic and the mechanical coexist in harmonious complexity. The characters and objects that populate this world are not mere static forms but dynamic entities, each with its own unique personality and purpose, interacting in ways that captivate the imagination.

Whether you're an animation aficionado, a music lover, or simply someone who appreciates artistic innovation, Functional Block Diagrams is a must-see. Brace yourself for a cinematic odyssey, albeit a short one, that will entice your curiosity, ignite your senses, and leave you utterly spellbound. Don't miss your chance to experience this groundbreaking animated musical sensation – a true masterpiece that pushes the boundaries of what is possible in fusing visual and auditory media.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Michael Rostig is a multi-media artist living in Adelaide, South Australia (Kurna Country). Primarily working in animation, Michael has produced many works for public building projections, music videos and video art for galleries. His work is one of a wide-ranging oeuvre, spanning from comedic, satirical writing to scathing social critique to whimsical, family-friendly endeavours.



THREE PRONGED WIDGET

DING BUZZ BRRRRRRR-CHCK

(ORIGINS AND INSPIRATIONS)

Functional Block Diagrams is almost definitely the quickest I've gone from start to finish on any project. Inspired by my 2023 viewing of Schömb's, Hasting and Verden's 1970 filmed edition of Oskar Schlemmer's *The Triadic Ballet*. I was so taken with these works that it inspired me to think of ways I could combine the same minimalist movements with stark soundscapes. I decided not to watch the film again, to make sure my influence remained just that and didn't become emulation. Being animated I did not have to constrain myself to humanoid forms. Some dancers are made in shapes that are figurative machines, others are literal devices or objects. The influence of the Bauhaus melded with colours and patterns reminiscent of Memphis design, my hope is that there is an oxymoronic maximalist minimalism in it, a work that is both modernist and post-modern in its construction.

The name is from another interest altogether, I'm strangely enamoured by types of graphical notation (I'm also working on a film called 'Schematics'); electrical drawings, Langer lines, Aresti catalog and, one of the best and least known, labanotation. A functional block diagram is just a more technical term for a flowchart or other such system drawing. They show the interrelation nature of different components and functions. My characters in this film move in repetitive, mechanical ways that seem completely orderly. However, just like a flowchart with too many boxes or a polyrhythmic piece of music, the organised nature soon becomes chaotic and the internal logic becomes increasingly opaque whilst remaining, hopefully, hypnotic.

Perhaps my favourite thing about this work is the fact that my son who was only 18 months old when I started has enjoyed watching each element added along the 14 months of production. My hope

to create something that can be enjoyed on different levels by all ages seems to already come true.

WOO-WOOO

CK-CK-CK-CK CK-CK

(SOUND)

As a composer my interest is almost purely about conjuring a feeling, this has been my primary driver in my film score work and other compositions. Much like the music of Functional Block Diagrams, I favour hitting the right progression of notes and chords to achieve this feeling with subtle changes throughout. The music of Functional Block Diagrams is different primarily because of the lack of 'subtle changes throughout' once I managed to create the music that fit the repetitious movements I made it a rule that I was not allowed to change them unless the movement of the character also modulated too. This meant the composition came from making the different character sounds *fit* like puzzle pieces; this is probably the purest expression of where the title of Functional Block Diagrams is derived from. The different *puzzle pieces* of music slot together in ways that could result differently depending on how I answered the questions on a flow chart. There are small joys when this works. Like when the drum beat of the Stubby fitting perfectly in the gap between the Leapers' verses which simultaneously are counter-harmonised by the spurts of the Pumpers' spout.

On a more technical level: as the music needed to be precise but mechanical. I decided to produce the animation at 30 Frames Per Second, ultimately to be output at 24. This was primarily because 30 is a much more robust divisor. I could compose accurately at 30, 60, 90 or 120 beats per minute and be assured that it would line up correctly. The aural focus was to

think about sounds that weren't organic but not overly complex. Something that sounded more like seventies-style synths trying to replicate actual instruments but failing somewhat - either by having a filter-sweep or a strange lo-pass filter. I was basically taking virtual instruments and iterating on them slightly to get a unique but not overly distinctive sound. These are for the *melodic* pieces, to fit with the industrialised idea most of the instruments chosen were percussive ones, which were sometimes sampled at different pitches to create harmony.

CREEEK-FOOSH BRRR-PCK

(DESIGN AND MOVEMENT)

When designing the characters I was thinking of it in a conflicted way. I wanted both to think about the Schlemmer ethos of limiting body movements to enhance artificiality *but also* to create forms that are inherently inhuman. In this way I feel like Functional Block Diagrams achieves a fairly pure form of what Schlemmer called 'choreographed geometry' (it could have been an alternate title).

It is notable though that when looking at the designs that I've created they aren't particularly modernist in their construction and certainly not in their colouring. I wanted to achieve a oxymoronic state of minimalist maximalism and influences both modern and post-modern. The characters are textured and simple looking, the intention of the design is to at least make it seem like every element of the design is functional in some sort of way (if you imagine them as robots or machines) which would lead you to think of these constructions as elegant and modernist forms, however, the constructions are exaggerated, illogical and, if real, would be completely superfluous. In this way I also tip my hat to Ettore Sottsass and the Memphis Design Group. His designs like the *Carlton Room Divider* or the *Vetrinetta di Famiglia Cabinet* are simultaneously playful and illogical in

construction. The colours are bright and the shapes bold.

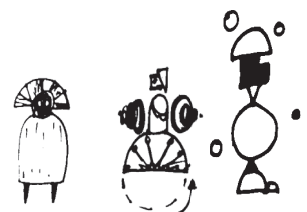
I started the construction of these figures with some simple sketches (you can see some of these at the bottom-right hand corners of some of these pages) and small descriptions of what they did. I included diagrammatic elements to show moving parts or changing elements. I then redrew these shapes in Adobe Photoshop and redrew each element as a separate layer. In some cases I created overlay features to give the flat objects a three dimensional quality (particularly visible on the head of the *Dancer* and *Twirler*) in some instances characters were made with explicitly three dimensional elements (most notable in the *Kite Pivoter* and *Leaper*).

All of the characters were animated in Adobe After Effects, being placed together like puppets with split pins, layered specifically to obscure some of the functional elements that make the movements work. Each shape was pre-composited into its own file where they were animated with key frames to perfectly time to the music track. These pre-compositions were given an effect similar to a traditional line boil that you would see in cel animation and a textural layer over the exacerbate the hand-made feel. With all of these elements in place the compositions could start to be placed together in various configurations to achieve the desired result. I would offset characters that matched each other by starting them a few frames off of each other so there was still a sense of imperfection to the movements. Like they weren't working completely in concert with one another.

DOO-DA-DOOO EEE-PFFFFF

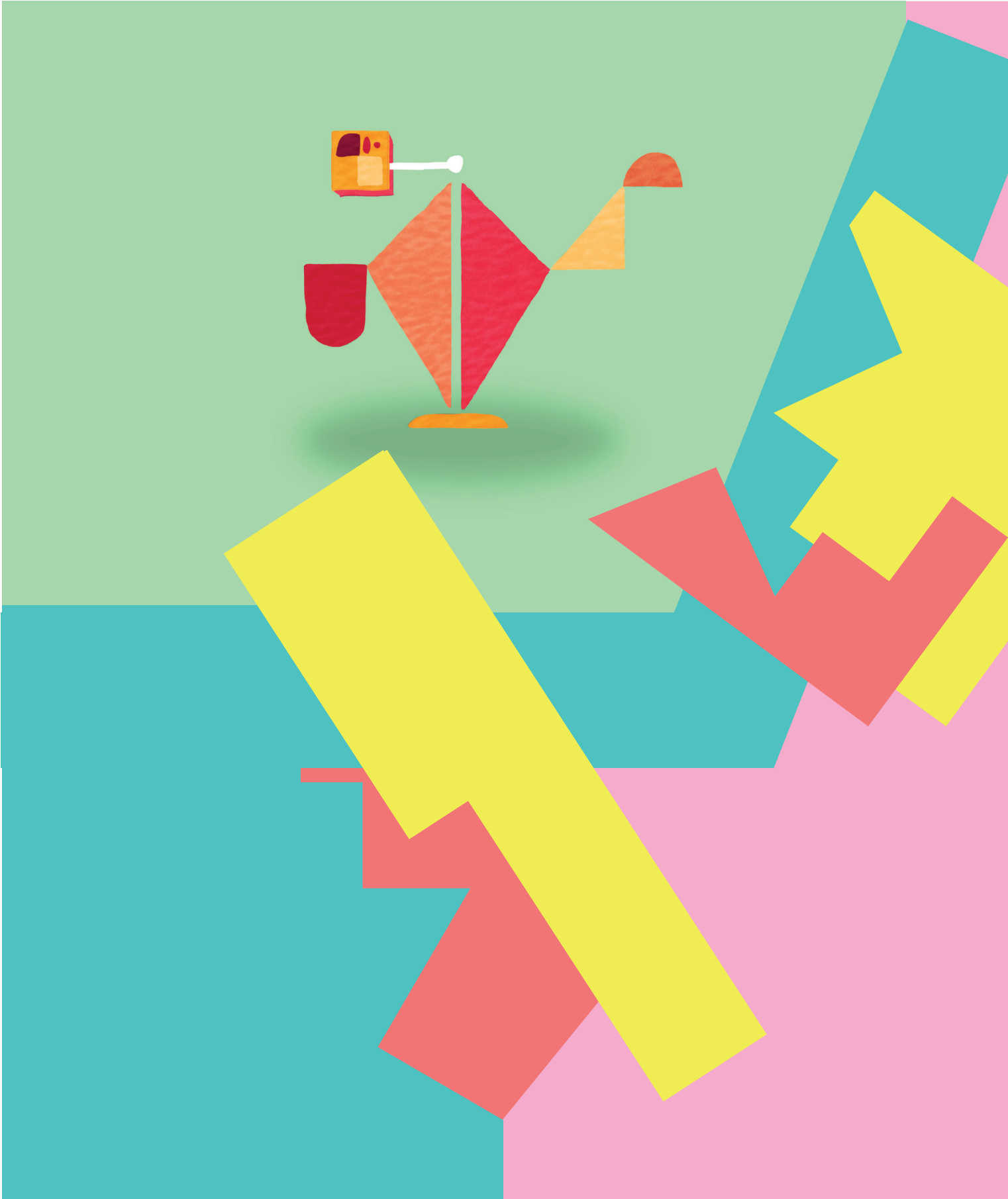
(THANK YOU AND ENJOY)

-MICHAEL ROSTIG



THREE PRONGED WIDGET

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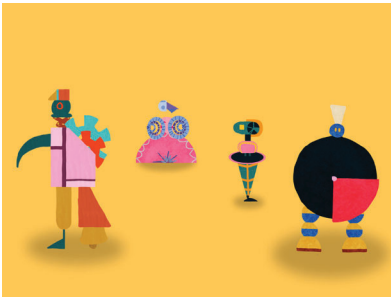
THREE PRONGED WIDGET



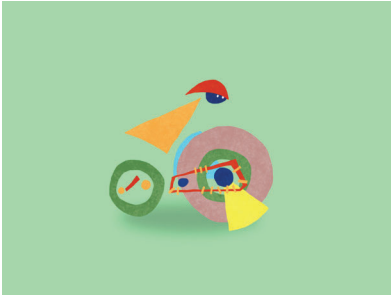
DA-LALALA LA LA DA-LALALALA LA

WOO OO-WOOO

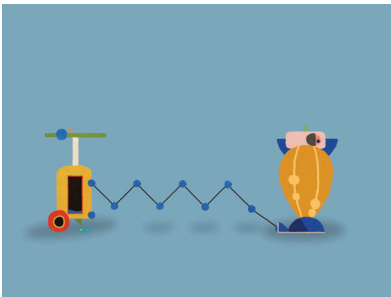
(SCENES)



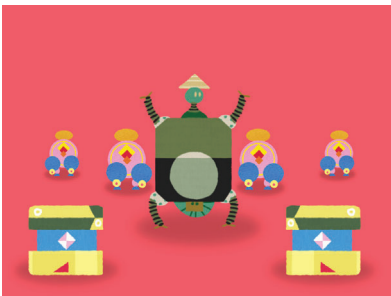
- 1 ***Oh, Look at the Time*** The hustle and bustle of the morning is too much for the Clocker and their busy compatriots.



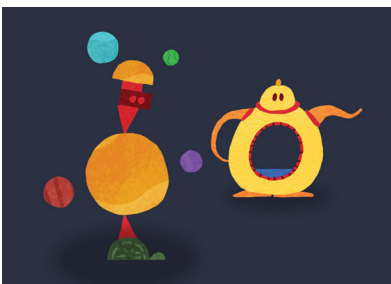
- 2 ***An Eventful Cycle*** Peddler goes about their daily cycle encountering more than they bargained for.



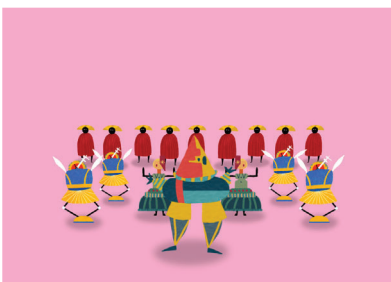
- 3 ***Air, In Two Senses*** Pumper lets out its reedy gas as the Leaper demonstrates how they got their name.



- 4 ***Card Flipper's Carnival*** Every move of Card Flipper's performance is watched by inescapable eyes.



- 5 ***Sonambulant Shuffle*** Kettle encounters two solar systems along their late-night stroll.



- 6 ***Ensemble Assembled*** A troupe of dancers dance in repetitive cycles until interrupted and reconvened.



Clocker. Spinner.
Leaper. Stubby. S
Pivoter. Kettle. Ca
Cog. Dancer. Twi
er. Stretcher. Hoo
Clocker. Spinner.
Leaper. Stubby. S
Pivoter. Kettle. Ca
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licer. Orbiter. Kite
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rler. Drum Danc-
per. Bocksy. Pupil.
Peddler. Pumper.
licer. Orbiter. Kite
ard Flipper. Bell +
ler. Drum Dancer.
er. Bocksy. Pupil.

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