

Kenny Tran

Interphase

2019

Digital cel animation and mixed media.

1 minute 50 seconds

Interphase is a visual poem that metaphorically depicts the reconciliation of past experiences and trauma through the act of deconstruction, repair, and reflection, in which these emotions are conveyed through an anthropomorphic figure that is born and covered by the surrounding flora. As the self-made figure rips, bursts, and morphs between different bodily states, a balancing act between the human and abstract, the figure is ultimately able to find solace as result of this reformative process. The constructed organic composition of the figure acts as a catalyst for these moments, to constantly propel oneself learn, grow, and mature in an vivid nature that can lead to personal discovery and growth. The viscous and undulating forms are intended to represent the metamorphic events when maturing into a new stage in one's life, with the animation concluding with the figure creating something beautiful to reflect upon overcoming this process. My overall intention with this work is to help portray some of the personal issues that I am moving past in my own life as something to be experienced and reflected upon, hopefully to normalize the multitude of emotions and stresses involved when moving through different moments in our life.

The stylistic inspirations for this coming-of-age film is drawn from my Chinese-Vietnamese ancestry and interest in biology. I invested my time into researching eastern-asian painting and influences due to the complicated nature of my family history, and was particularly interested in the significance of nature and landscape in many of the works. As someone who has never visited my homeland, I felt the need to capture these lush expansive landscapes as a way to express my personal feelings of diaspora. The setting and backgrounds of my animation are based upon the expansive lotus fields from Vietnam, in which I have chosen to render them in graphite and finishing them in digital. The figure navigates aimlessly within this lush sea of leaves, this is to reference the mystical and veil-like atmospheres seen in eastern-asian silk painting, and highlight the organic and natural composition of the character.

The title *Interphase* is a scientific term that describes the very first stage in which cells are preparing for cell growth and division. The title is not only used to accentuate that the trauma of past experiences in any shape or form are felt at a cellular level, but to reflect and frame the events of the animation in a manner that anticipates an inevitable change. The accumulation of emotions and cells initiates the events of my animation, reflecting the bodily changes of the protagonist. These depictions of morphing and splitting shapes are intended to evoke and reflect the transformational processes involved in cell division. The word *interphase* also alludes to a specific moment in time, ranging from the moment of metamorphic change in the figure, to the linework and abstractions involved between each individual drawn frame of the animation.