

figure 1

**THIS IS NOT
A MOCKERY**



From the very beginning,

New unit, new portfolio, new subject, but the same old me not knowing how to start the introduction. However, this time the approach is a little different. As we were allowed to choose our own topic and come up with an outcome, I wanted to do something that resembles me when “I’m thinking out loud” and don’t have a particular answer to it.

For instance, this spring break when everyone was back home or traveling to a new place or busy fulfilling one of their weirdest side quests, I was just chilling in London with a couple of my stupid friends. We would wander around all day and then end up watching an old cartoon every evening. After three days, it became a routine—whatever we did throughout the day, we would end up watching cartoons. It was a back-and-forth of recommendations between us, with literally no relation between the consecutive shows.

Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
		<p>But one thing in common with all the shows was that one of us had watched them at some point. The common observation was that, now, watching all those animations again, we realized the shows had so many hidden, underlined meanings that we could never understand as kids. Now, they make so much sense—or maybe we’re just overthinking. Fun fact: most of the realizations came from really normal scenes laced with satire or very subtle dark humor.</p> <p>But one thing is for sure: I realized that I really wanted to know what goes on behind the scenes of these shows. Do the creators really know what they are doing, or is it just a coincidence? Little did I know I was committing myself to something much deeper than I initially thought. I was barely surfing around the shore, and it had so many layers to be discovered.</p>	<p>So, it became a whole new side quest for me to watch as many cartoons as possible, look at different publishers, and see what goes into the making. Over the course of four weeks, I must have watched somewhere between 200-300 episodes from over 40 shows. Not gonna lie, it was the most fun I had during a research period. This entire rewatching felt like data analysis—like doing data analysis for an F1 race or a tennis match. If you still didn’t understand, I was just trying to say: “It was fun.”</p>
		Page 4	



figure 2

Research Statement

EXPLORING THEMES OF SATIRE, SOCIAL COMMENTARY, AND ABSURDITY BY PUSHING BOUNDARIES OF CONVENTIONAL STORYTELLING.

As fun as it was to watch all those cartoons with no bounds, not even my mom telling me “it’s too many hours in front of the TV,” I had to find a real statement to follow; otherwise, it would just be an endless quest.

My first understanding led me to this research statement: *Exploring themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity by pushing the boundaries of conventional storytelling.* I know it sounds sophisticated, but as I started uncovering what goes on behind the scenes, it became much clearer to me.

I believe the research statement suggests a deep dive into storytelling that isn’t just about telling a story but making a statement. By combining humour with creativity, we can craft new narratives that are not only entertaining but also rich with social commentary. We can break free from traditional storytelling molds, offering fresh perspectives on familiar themes. This integrative approach allows us to explore and highlight the absurdities of the human condition and society at large, making the work both unique and impactful.



figure 3

I would like to shine a little more light on some of the various attributes we are discussing, to make more sense of how it all ties together with the topic of the hour:



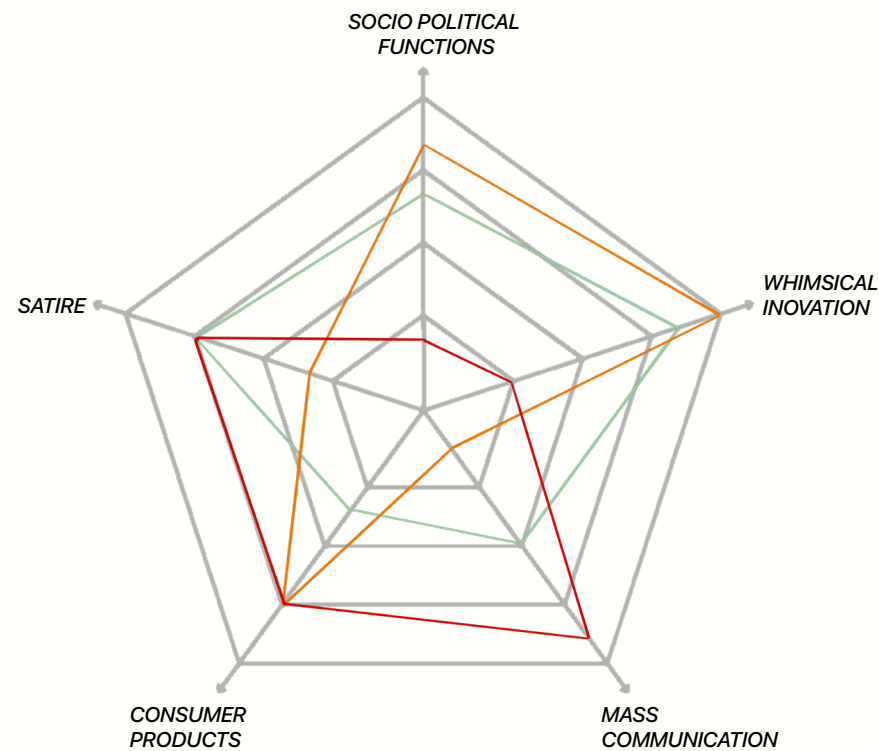
figure 4



figure 5

Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
		Humour	Creativity
		<p>Humour plays a crucial role in the exploration of satire and absurdity. It serves as a tool to engage the audience, make complex or uncomfortable topics more accessible, and provide a unique perspective on social issues. Through humour, I can highlight the ridiculousness of certain societal norms or behaviors, encouraging the audience to question and reflect on these aspects. This approach not only entertains but also subtly educates and provokes thought.</p>	<p>Creativity is at the heart of pushing the boundaries of conventional storytelling. It involves inventing new narrative techniques, experimenting with structure, and blending genres to create original and thought-provoking works. Creative storytelling can include nonlinear narratives, breaking the fourth wall, or integrating multimedia elements. By being creative, I explored and express themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity in ways that are fresh and unexpected, capturing the audience's imagination and challenging their perceptions.</p>

Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
	Social Commentary	Experimentation	Unconventional
	<p>Social commentary is a significant aspect of your research focus. Through satire and absurdity, I can critique societal norms, politics, and cultural practices. This commentary often involves exaggeration, irony, and juxtaposition to highlight the flaws and contradictions within society. By doing so, not only entertain but also inspire dialogue and reflection among my audience, encouraging them to think critically about the world around them and consider alternative viewpoints.</p>	<p>Experimentation is essential for pushing storytelling boundaries. It involves trying out new techniques, formats, and methods to see what resonates with my audience and effectively conveys the themes. This could include experimenting with narrative voice, playing with time and space within stories, or using unconventional mediums like interactive media or performance art. Experimentation allows me to discover innovative ways to blend satire, social commentary, and absurdity, making your work stand out and leave a lasting impact.</p>	<p>Unconventional storytelling defies traditional norms and expectations. It can involve subverting genre conventions, creating unpredictable plots, and developing complex, multifaceted characters that defy stereotypes. By embracing the unconventional, I can challenge your audience's expectations and push them to think outside the box. This approach aligns perfectly with the themes, as it allows you to present satire, social commentary, and absurdity in ways that are surprising, engaging, and thought-provoking.</p>

Initial Projection

My research statement suggests a deep dive into storytelling that isn't just about telling a story but making a statement. By combining humour with creativity, you can craft narratives that are not only entertaining but also rich with social commentary. Experimentation and an unconventional approach enable you to break free from traditional storytelling molds, offering fresh perspectives on familiar themes. This integrative approach allows me to explore and highlight the absurdities of the human condition and society at large, making your work both unique and impactful.

Research
Development phase
Launch phase

Research family “Politics and Disruption”



figure 6

My research group focused on the politics and disruption under the guidance of Bruna Montuori. While my topic was not overtly political, it was fascinating to collaborate with others in the group whose topics initially didn't seem political either. Through our discussions, we discovered how politics subtly influences our everyday subjects, often in ways that aren't immediately visible.

Working within this group opened my eyes to various ways in which political themes can permeate various forms of storytelling and media, including cartoons. For instance, as we analyzed different topics, we began to see the underlying political messages and critiques embedded in content. This realization helped my understanding of how satire, social commentary, and absurdity can serve as powerful tools for political discourse, even in unconventional storytelling formats.

Our group discussions often revolved around identifying and deconstructing these hidden political elements. We examined how different creators use humour, creativity, and unconventional narratives to comment on political and social issues. This interdisciplinary approach allowed us to draw connections between our diverse topics and understand the broader impact of political discourse in media and culture.

Integrating Politics and Disruption into My Research

By situating my research within the framework of politics and disruption, I was able to add another layer of depth to my analysis. I began to see how the themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity in cartoons not only entertain but also challenge political norms and provoke thought. This insight helped me refine my research statement and approach, ensuring that my work not only explores storytelling techniques but also their political implications.

The collaborative environment constructed by Bruna Montuori helped us to push the boundaries of our respective topics. We learned to appreciate the subtle ways in which politics intersects with various forms of media, and how disruption can serve as a catalyst for change. This really helped with my research direction and my understanding of the relationship between politics, media, and society.

Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
	Yes i did a bit of Research too		
	<p><i>Understanding Audience Engagement:</i></p> <p>Cartoons can influence attention and comprehension differently depending on the level of product involvement. This insight is important for my research, as it underlines the importance of context and audience engagement in storytelling. By understanding how cartoons can construct attention and aid comprehension, I can better understand how these things are used in satirical and absurd narratives to engage audiences effectively.</p>	<p><i>Role of Satire and Humour in Advertising:</i></p> <p><i>Thought the main focus is advertising, exploring the effectiveness of humour and cartoons directly relates to my investigation of satire and absurdity. Satire in cartoons often relies on humour to make social critiques. Understanding the working behind why certain cartoon ads capture attention and allow comprehension can provide good insights into how similar tricks can be applied in storytelling to make social and political commentary more impactful.</i></p>	<p><i>Design ideas and Medium Considerations:</i></p> <p><i>Cartoon design and use is very important for its effectiveness on the general public. This also relates to my exploration of unconventional storytelling, where the choice of medium and creative design are very important . By examining successful ad designs maybe I can draw parallels to effective storytelling techniques that utilize satire and absurdity to challenge conventional narratives and engage audiences.</i></p> <p>(Rakrachakarn and Moschis, 2014)</p>



figure 7

Themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity can be observed by pushing the boundaries of conventional storytelling. Key characteristics of satire, such as mockery, play, and laughter, aligning with my focus on humour and absurdity. By analyzing these things, I can better understand how they are connected in cartoons to deliver impactful social commentary and critique. Additionally, satire can also serve as a tool for social commentary and criticism, which also supports my investigation into how cartoons can provide deeper meanings and critiques of societal understandings. The idea that unconventional storytelling can be a form of disruption, aligning with my group's theme of "Politics and Disruption."

By incorporating these insights, my research can demonstrate how satire can approach to social commentary, criticism, and humour, multiplying the impact of unconventional storytelling, making the work both entertaining and impactful.

(Lichtenstein and Nitsch, 2022)

Holm's exploration of Adult Swim connects with my research on exploring themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity through unconventional storytelling. Adult Swim's approach to humour, Characterised by its complex and disruptive elements, parallel to strategies I need to analyze within cartoons.

Concept of a "political aesthetic" model aligns with my interest in understanding how cartoons can explain social and political messages. By adopting this model, I can explore how cartoons' humorous elements are shaped by wider socio-political contexts, influencing their effectiveness in challenging ideas and critiquing structures.

We can also tell the Cultural shift in Politics by how economic and technological changes impact the political relations of humour. This helps my investigation into how cartoons' content and reception evolve over time.

By referencing Holm's analysis of Adult Swim, I can help my study by examining specific examples of how cartoons utilise humour to engage audiences in critical reflection. This strengthens my argument that unconventional storytelling forms, like cartoons, play a vital role in current conversations by questioning conventional narratives and exploring alternative perspectives.

(Holm, 2022)



figure 8



figure 9

Animation engages viewers on cognitive and perceptual levels, which is crucial for analyzing how cartoons convey satire and provoke critical thought. Animation captures and directs viewers' visual attention. Understanding these working helps in evaluating how cartoons strategically use visuals to enhance satire and absurdity, influencing audience engagement.

I can identify gaps in current knowledge regarding animation's psychological effects. This informs potential areas for expanding my research on how satire and social commentary can be further used through innovative animation techniques.

By reviewing these statements, my research can include the impact of cartoons as a medium for exploring satire, social commentary, and absurdity.

(C. K. Praveen and Kathiravan Srinivasan, 2022)



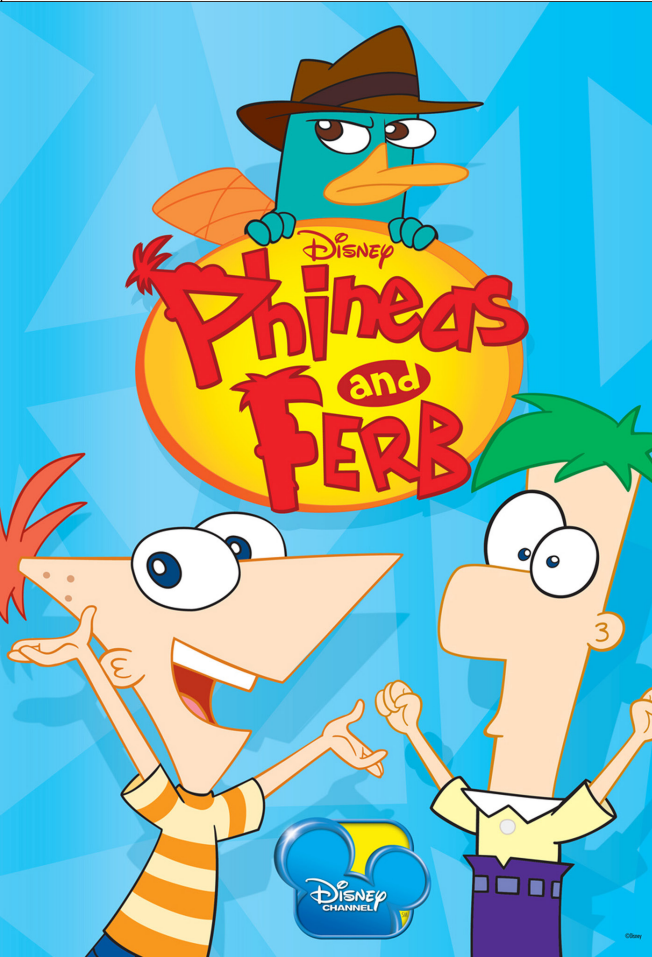
figure 10

MSCHF is renowned for its provocative and satirical approach to cultural commentary through innovative projects, as highlighted in the article “The Cynical Conceptualism of MSCHF: Big Red Boots” from ArtReview. The brand’s method challenges conventional norms and perceptions by mixing satire with conceptual art, creating pieces that often create controversy and critical reflection.

Their work embodies satire by playfully critiquing societal trends and norms. Their projects, such as the “Big Red Boots,” use humor and irony to provoke thought and challenge established ideas, similar to how cartoons employ satire to highlight absurdities in everyday life.

The brand’s use of conceptual art techniques allows unconventional storytelling in cartoons. MSCHF’s approach involves blending creativity with critical observation, mirroring how cartoons experiment with narrative forms and visual storytelling to convey complex themes.

By examining MSCHF’s conceptual approach, my research can draw parallels between their provocative tactics and the techniques used in cartoons. (Jana, 2023)

Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
		<p>Throughout my research journey exploring themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity in cartoons, one particular phrase from the animated series “Phineas and Ferb” really got stuck to me. In the 2nd season, 4th episode, there’s a seemingly innocent song about gelatine, where the lyrics exclaim, “come on kids, let’s squirt the gelatine monster.”</p>	<p>As a child, I never understood the underlying satire embedded in this phrase. However, after rewatching it years later, the cartoon took on a completely different meaning, revealing subtle layers of commentary that went unnoticed when I was a kid.</p>
	<p>COME ON KID LETS SQUIRT THE GELATIN MONSTER</p>		<p>The phrase explains how cartoons can cleverly disguise societal critiques and absurdities within seemingly plain narratives. It serves as a perfect example of how humor and innocent imagery can be used to subtly challenge norms and reach deeper reflection. Incorporating this phrase into my project speaks to the transformative power of cartoons as a medium for social and political discourse. It highlights my quest to uncover and analyze such hidden meanings, demonstrating how cartoons, like “Phineas and Ferb,” navigate between entertainment and such deep critique, shaping perspectives and questioning established truths. This personal realisation not only enriches my exploration of satire in cartoons but also magnifies the relevance of animated storytelling in conveying complex themes to various audiences.</p>

Why toys?

I'm exploring satire, social commentary, and absurdity within cartoons through collectibles. Inspired by artists like KAWS, who revolutionizes collectibles with relatable motifs and deep societal critiques, I aim to use this medium to provoke thought and dialogue.

KAWS is known for reinterpreting pop culture icons, making art accessible and relatable. His sculptures often explore themes like life and mortality through familiar characters in contemplative states. This resonates with my project's goal of using satire and absurdity to not just entertain but also convey meaningful messages.



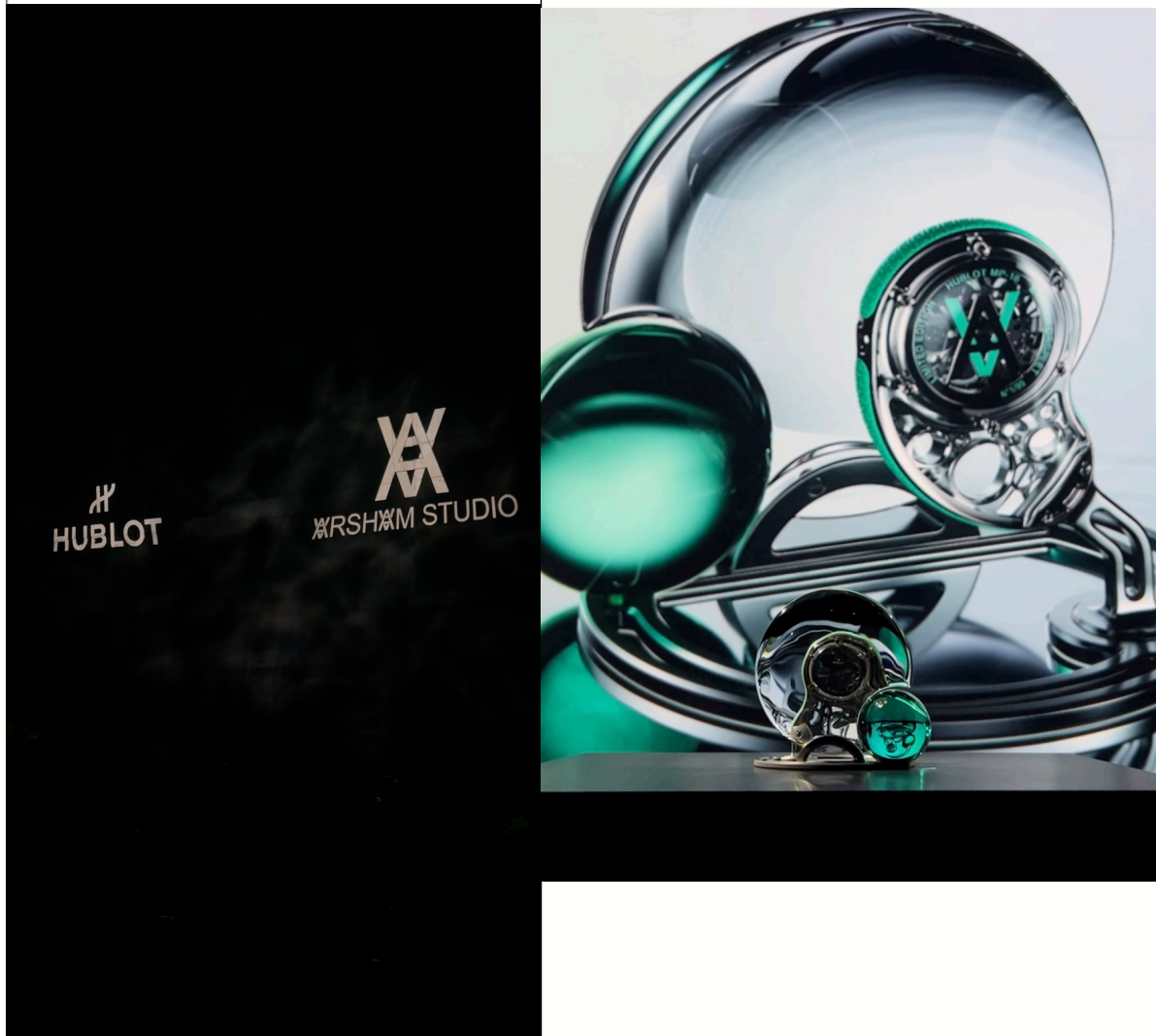
Like KAWS, I'll translate my research into collectibles to showcase cartoons' dual nature—simple on the surface yet carrying complex social commentary. These collectibles will visually and tangibly convey perfect narratives and critique societal norms, engaging viewers in thoughtful reflection.

This approach lets me explore how collectibles can be powerful tools for cultural commentary and artistic expression, inspired by KAWS' innovative blend of popular culture with deeper reflections on human experience.

(Smith, 2019)

Daniel arsham

Additionally, my exploration is influenced by attending Daniel Arsham's exhibition, where I found inspiration in his approach to presenting art. Arsham's work, known for blending sculpture, architecture, and conceptual art, resonated deeply with my interest in using art as a medium for social commentary and reflection. His immersive installations and use of unconventional materials challenged traditional views, encouraging viewers to reconsider their perceptions of reality and time. Drawing from Arsham's ability to reveal contemplation through visual storytelling, I aim to incorporate similar techniques in my project on satire, social commentary, and absurdity in cartoons.

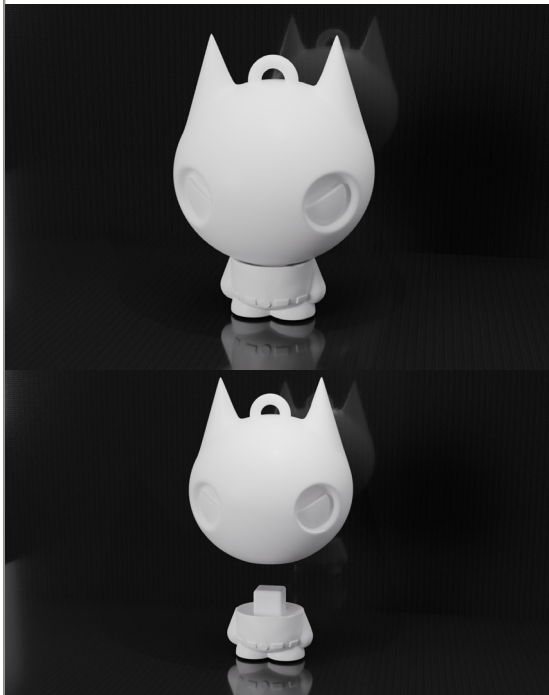


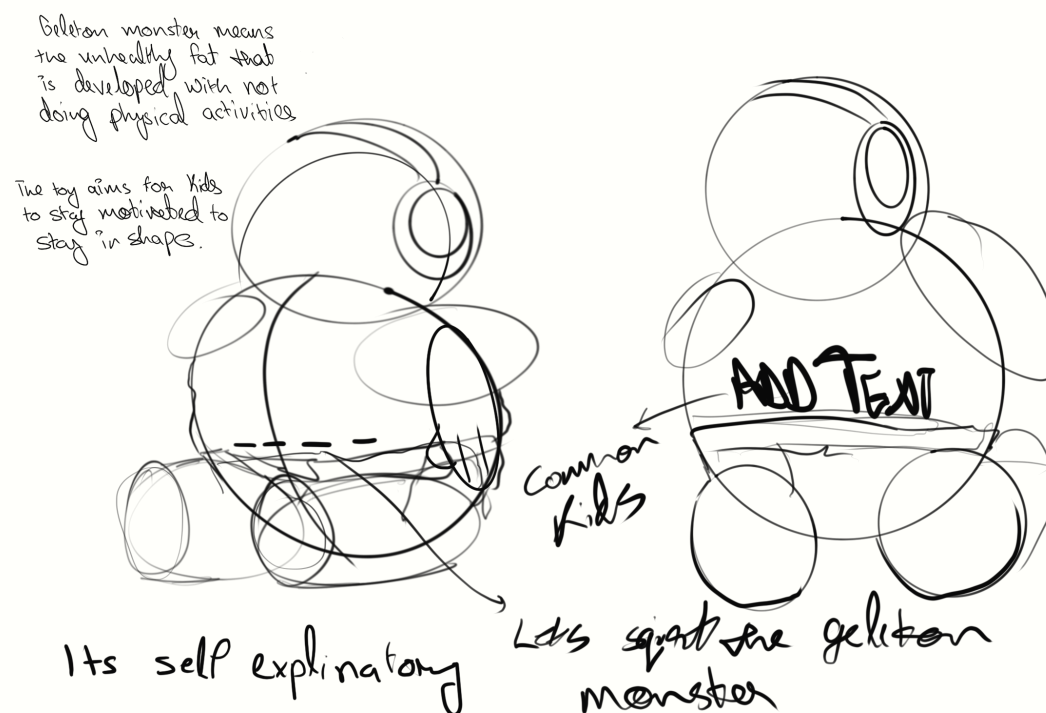
Initial Development for the figure

After conducting extensive research, I realized the need for an equally visually powerful artifact to complement my findings. I began by designing an object that I thought would embody the concepts I had developed. The initial render was my first attempt at visually representing these ideas.

However, feedback from both my peers and faculty members made me realize that visual appeal alone wasn't sufficient. It became clear that the artifact must also embody the principles and themes I have been discussing throughout my project. Consequently, I decided to scrap the entire initial idea because it lacked the attributes central to my topic.

My goal now is to create something that engages a child's mind while simultaneously containing an underlying tone that only adults can fully comprehend. This approach will help bridge the gap between the childlike innocence of cartoons and the deeper, often satirical or socially critical themes that have been the focus of my research. This shift ensures that my artifact not only visually impresses but also serves as a meaningful representation of the concepts explored in my project.




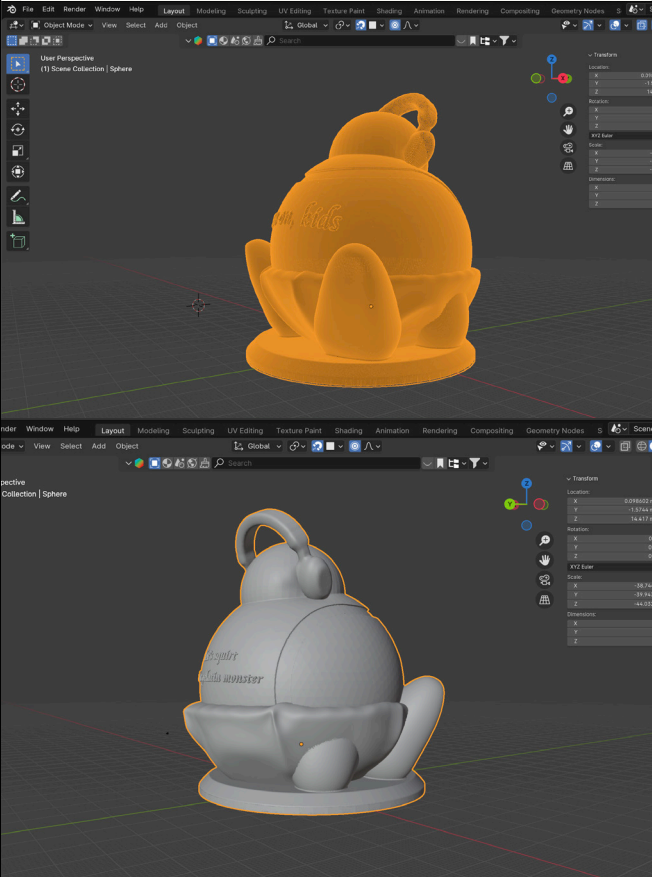



I decided to design the figure with a chubby body, reminiscent of many kids' cartoons I've referenced. However, I wanted this character to convey a deeper message. The main body resembles a tennis ball, symbolizing sports, while the character also sports headphones, connecting it to the digital era. This juxtaposition aims to highlight how today's children are engrossed in the digital world, often neglecting physical activities like sports.

The figure incorporates two layers of meaning derived from my research. Firstly, it echoes the phrase "Come on kids, let's squirt the gelatine monster," which suggests that by engaging in outdoor activities and sports, children can stay fit and reduce "gelatine" (body fat). This message encourages physical activity over sedentary digital pursuits.

Secondly, the message is imbued with innocence but also carries a subtle double entendre. It serves as a playful joke that adults can interpret differently, reflecting the satirical and socially critical themes explored in cartoons and artworks like those of KAWS and Daniel Arsham.

This design not only visually aligns with the attributes discussed in my research but also integrates profound themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity, as seen in cartoons and contemporary art. It aims to provoke thought about societal norms and the balance between digital engagement and physical well-being, encapsulating the essence of my research journey.

Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
	<p>To create the collectible, I started by making a 3D render of the toy. This step was essential for visualizing how it would appear in real life and was integral to preparing it for printing on a 3D printer. I believed this process was necessary to accurately represent and justify my creative journey.</p>		
			

The initial prints were made using the Ultimaker, followed by the final outcome produced on a resin printer. I chose to begin with the Ultimaker due to its affordability and its ability to provide a preliminary understanding of the product's appearance.

The first model was printed without any accessories, featuring only the text. For the second model, I added accessories such as headphones and a diaper. In the final iteration, incorporating all these additions, I also changed the font for the text. This adjustment was crucial as I felt the initial font did not align well with my project goals.

Prototyping played a significant role throughout this process, allowing me to refine and iterate on the design until it effectively communicated the intended message.





I also experimented with spray painting the object to assess its appearance with color. Using a spray can, I applied full color to one model and half color to another to determine the best approach. However, I ultimately found that the article looks best without any color at all. This decision preserves a raw essence that aligns with my inspiration drawn from Daniel Arsham's designs.



KEEP IT OUT OF CHILDREN'S REACH I GUESS ?
 GARDER HORS DE PORTE DES ENFANTS ?
 아이들의 손이 닿지 않는 곳에 보관하세요
 お子の手の届かないところに保管してください。
 मुझे लगता है इसे बच्चों की पहुँच से दूर रखें?




1/1

This is not a mockery.



THIS IS NOT A TOY /
 PULL THE BOX TO SEE THE
 ARTICLE.

 This is not a mockery.



1/1

KEEP IT OUT OF CHILDREN'S REACH I GUESS ?
 GARDER HORS DE PORTE DES ENFANTS ?
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 मुझे लगता है इसे बच्चों की पहुँच से दूर रखें?

These are all the various print files used to develop different assets, including packaging acrylic, a certification booklet, and some stickers. All the attributes are either inside the box packaging or on it.

THIS IS NOT A MOCKERY



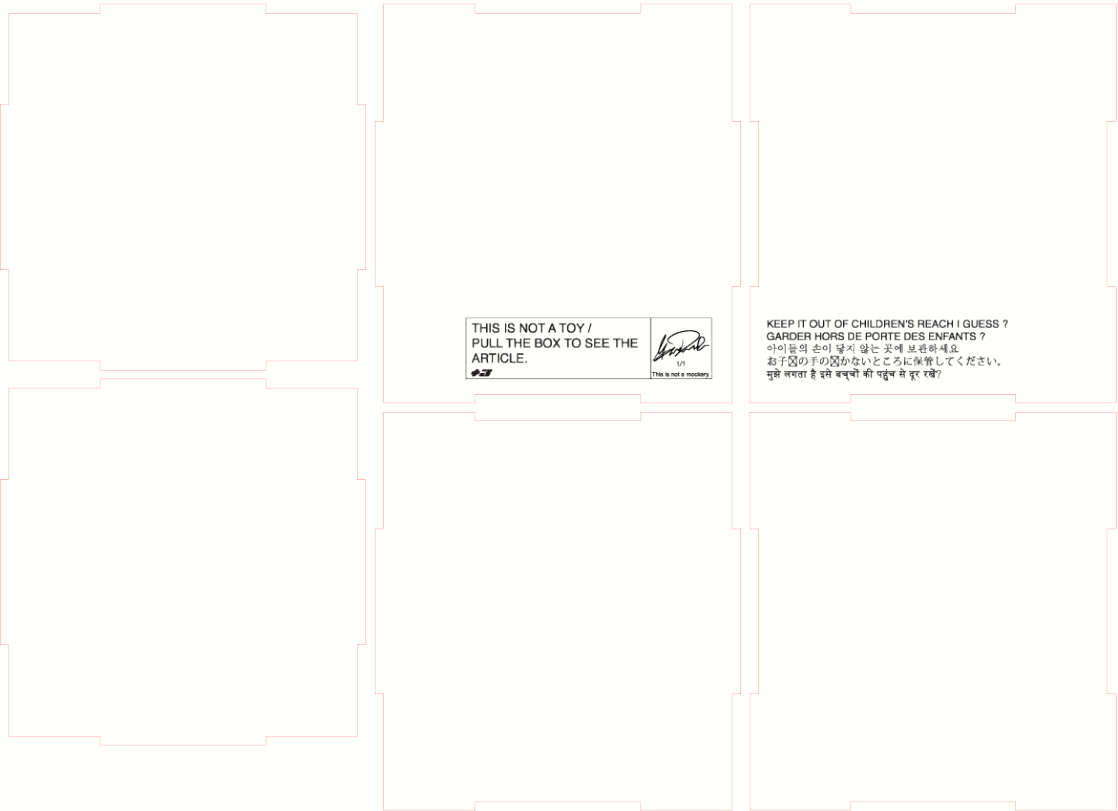
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THIS IS NOT A MOCKERY



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For the final packaging, I used an acrylic sheet, which was cut to create the case for the article. This print file was used to create the box with the help of a laser cutting machine. All the details were also printed using this method.





Here are some pictures of the final artical in flesh including the pack-aging. I decided to do a orange packing as it acts like an accent color with the rest of the figue and its podium. The podium is also designed to keep and booklet and stickers inside it.





Unit 4		This is not a mockery	Specialist Practices for Art Direction
	<p><i>Overview</i></p> <p>In this project, I explore themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity within cartoons, culminating in the creation of a collectible figure. The journey began with a deep dive into cartoons, uncovering hidden, underlined meanings that go beyond mere entertainment. Inspired by the works of KAWS and Daniel Arsham, I aimed to develop a collectible that embodies the same depth and thought-provoking qualities found in their art.</p> <p>The research phase was a transformative process, heavily influenced by rewatching classic cartoons during a spring break in London. This experience revealed the layers of satire and social commentary embedded within these shows. The project is grounded in the realization that cartoons often carry deeper meanings that resonate more profoundly with an adult audience.</p> <p>The research statement, “Exploring themes of satire, social commentary, and absurdity by pushing the boundaries of conventional storytelling,” guided the exploration. The aim was to create a narrative that is both entertaining and rich with social critique, utilizing humor and creativity to challenge societal norms and encourage critical thinking.</p>	<p>Inspired by the democratizing approach of KAWS and the conceptual depth of Daniel Arsham, the project integrates these influences to create a unique collectible. KAWS’ ability to blend familiar pop culture icons with profound societal reflections provided a blueprint for using collectibles as a medium for deeper messages. Similarly, Arsham’s innovative presentation techniques influenced the visual and conceptual design of the final artifact.</p> <p>The design process involved several iterations, starting with a 3D render to visualize the collectible. Initial prints were made using the Ultimaker for cost-effective prototyping, followed by final prints on a resin printer. This iterative approach allowed for continuous refinement of the design, incorporating feedback from peers and faculty.</p> <p>The figure itself features a chubby body reminiscent of classic children’s cartoons. It has a tennis ball body symbolizing sports and head-phones representing the digital era, highlighting the tension between physical activity and digital engagement. The phrase “Come on kids, let’s squirt the gelatine monster” serves as a playful yet poignant message, encouraging physical activity to combat sedentary lifestyles.</p> <p>The final collectible is accompanied by carefully designed packaging and supplementary materials, including a certification booklet and stickers. The decision to leave the figure unpainted preserves a raw aesthetic, aligning with the conceptual purity inspired by Daniel Arsham’s work.</p>	<p><i>Conclusion</i></p> <p>This project encapsulates a journey from initial curiosity about the hidden depths of cartoons to the creation of a visually and conceptually rich collectible. By blending satire, social commentary, and absurdity, the collectible serves as a medium for engaging both children and adults, provoking thought about societal norms and the balance between digital and physical worlds. The result is a testament to the power of unconventional storytelling and the influence of contemporary art on shaping meaningful narratives.</p>

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Figure 1- <https://movieweb.com/adult-swim-checkered-past-is-a-big-deal/>

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Figure 3- <https://www.vulture.com/2019/11/courage-the-cowardly-dog-john-dilworth.html>

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Figure 10- <https://hypebeast.com/2019/6/mschf-first-flagship-seoul-store-inside-look>

Figure 11- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0852863/>

Figure 12- <https://readfoyer.com/article/meet-kaws-family>