Communicating graphic design career experiences using feature film screenplay and production design

Garman C. Herigstad

Iowa State University

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Communicating graphic design career experiences using feature film screenplay and production design

by

Garman Herigstad

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Major: Graphic Design

Program of Study Committee:
Anson Call, Major Professor
Maurice Meilleur
Charles Richards

The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this thesis. The Graduate College will ensure this thesis is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2021

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Inge, who has been bugging me for years to write my stories down. And to Lydia, whose father spent too much time flying around the world when he should have been home with her.
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<tr>
<td>Act</td>
<td>The major divisions of screenplay.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Character</td>
<td>The characters in the screenplay, most often seen, but sometimes only heard in voice or discussed by other characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>The process of assembling all the live action and visual effects shots for story flow and continuity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FX</td>
<td>An abbreviation for 3D visual effects such as destruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HJK</td>
<td>The designation of the three seats on the starboard side of wide-bodies aircraft.</td>
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<td>Hero</td>
<td>A VFX loosely used industry slang used to refer to the main item or character in view in an individual shot. The hero is not the protagonist, although in many shots it could be. A falling rock can be the hero in one shot, and a construction worker can be referred to the hero in the following shot if they are the main item in camera view.</td>
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<td>Location</td>
<td>The site of the story, whether actual, filmed in a studio, or created by visual effects.</td>
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<td>The stage after the filming of the live action where visual effects, sound production and editing takes place.</td>
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<td>Point of View</td>
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<td>Pre-Production</td>
<td>The planning stage after the screenplay is approved and before filming takes place.</td>
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<td>Production</td>
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<td>Scene</td>
<td>A collection of shots within a sequence.</td>
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<td>Screenplay</td>
<td>The story in a format written for feature film/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sequence</td>
<td>The collection of shots which have a flowing relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Shot</td>
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<td>Set</td>
<td>Where filming takes place. Can be inside on a stage or outside at a location.</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Anson Call, my committee chair, was the link to my return to graduate school as an older student, on the edge of retirement rather than a career. He helped me with my idea of writing about my career, and a wise choice as he is both a 3D artist as I am and a published writer, which I hope to become. Maurice Meilleur is my in-department committee member. While he tried his hardest to change my topic to our mutual love for lettering and typography, he used his keen observation skills to help me think about and identify the necessary prop and background visual. Chuck Richards is the outside-department committee member and my unexpected discover. Chuck has helped me immensely with the development of my story and the storyboard of select scenes. All three have never done what I am attempting, yet have been an essential guiding team.

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ABSTRACT

52-1/2 Feet is a fictionalized feature film screenplay based on actual events in the early 1990s. This account is a way to communicate how a graphic designer's career can go from design methods and skills to be engulfed by the business world's realities. The story is formatted as a feature film-style screenplay with additional treatment notes for storyboard and prop identification. It does differ considerably from the traditional readers-format layout. I supplemented my position as the writer of the story with the role of concept artist, production designer, location scout, and some of the responsibilities a director may undertake.

After the story was written, storyboards were produced. As an aid to the storyboards, 3D models of key locations were created. At first, these served as aids for the perspective drawings. As more details were added to these models, the props being added influenced the story writing. It became a looping process where the design influenced the story, and the story would influence the design.

This story is a period piece set in 1991. The protagonist of the story, Christopher Rigs, has been working in Hong Kong for two years and frequently travels to Bangkok and Beijing. He struggles with the pace, the demands of the work, the cultural and language barriers, and the ethics of clients and associates.

East Asia is a different environment from where he grew up in Iowa. He struggles to maintain his standards and live his own life apart from a career in which he excels.

A feature film is a story told by dialogue, action, technology, communication, transportation, architecture, graphics, location, props, clothing & apparel, sound effects, visual effects, and music. The visuals included in this work uncover the intentions of the visual
elements, the props, the modes of transportations. Visual elements are a part of the story as much as the characters, action and dialogue.

The final visual elements are presented in the form of a 3D gallery to lead the reader through this screenplay's visual aspects.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

"I am flying high over Tupelo, Mississippi, with America's hottest band, and we are all about to die." – Cameron Crowe

The above quote from the feature film Almost Famous was editor Ben Fong-Torres reading from William Miller’s article for Rolling Stone Magazine.

There are various methods of telling one's personal career story: autobiography, memoir, fictionalized novel. Cameron Crowe used the fictionalized screenplay to write about his early career as a Cream and Rolling Stone magazine writer. In this movie, the protagonist William Miller embodied the teenage Crowe along with fictionalized composites of people he met and events he encountered as a young writer. (Crowe, 2000)

I grew up with parents who were storytellers. My father told tales of growing up in the great depression, working for United Airlines during World War II, working in Afghanistan and India during the 1947 partition. In the 1960’s he operated a regional sales manager for Motorola back when a salesman had to be able to repair the radio. He would use these stories to teach me principles of business and maintaining high ethics.

My mother told tales of her first ride in an open-seat airplane in the 1930s, going through WWII in occupied Denmark, and working in fashion design in Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris, and New York. She taught me to appreciate design, be adventurous, explore the world, and endure hardships when they come across.

By example my parents showed me how to communicate their life principles in oral stories. I often tell tales about my career in the same way my parents taught me. Tell an account
with a life or work principal. I’ve used these to communicate to my students or work colleagues how to navigate their careers.

Our careers as designers are complex. Part of being a graphic designer is the nuts and bolts of the design process; the technology and the tools; the business aspects of dealing with clients, budgets, and colleagues; and the finished collection in a portfolio. These parts are the life events of family, friends, and even the mundane day-to-day that frame our career.

I have long felt compelled to write about my career, putting my own stories on paper. Like Cameron Crow, I have chosen the screenplay format. This style has advantages; it restricts my account to roughly 120 minutes of screen time. I would need to be selective in what I cover. I would have to make it entertaining, and dialogue, actions, and visuals would tell the story.

Intent of this work:

- Express my experiences as a young (30-ish) graphic designer, working internationally and multi-culturally
- Identify the period of the story visually, starting in January 1991
- Use locations and props to define characters and story
- Identify cultural and ethical conflicts

Creative components included:

- A screenplay titled 52-1/2 Feet
- Character design of storyboarding quality with character profiles
- Storyboards of key sequences
- Posters with information about the locations
- Posters of significant props with define period, character, technology, and transportation
- 3D models of key locations
- 3D virtual exhibition of these materials

By words and visuals, I will lead you through an early era of my career. You may wonder, as Ben Fong-Torres questioned William Miller in *Almost Famous*, “Did this all really happen?” And as my mother remarked that if I wrote a good enough story, perhaps I could get back the money I’ve lost.

*Figure 1. 52 1/2 Feet Poster*
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Story Telling

As soon as the book hit the shelves, I read the memoir by former director of the FBI, James Comey. I was interested in what had been going on in Washington politics and interested in how he would tell his story. It reveals Comey’s motivation for a career in public service and his views on the subject. As the title states: *A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership*. (Comey, 2018)

Comey’s memoir appealed to me because he explained his reasons and motivations for conducting himself and his feelings about himself. I came away inspired to create a work that discusses the stages of one’s career, one’s ethics, and the difficulties of working with others.

Another set of influential works were by the actor Michael Caine. In his 2010 autobiography, Caine wrote about growing up, his family, marriage, and career. (Caine, The Elephant to Hollywood, 2010). Nine years later, he wrote a memoir specifically about his acting career. (Caine, Blowing the Bloody Doors Off: And Other Lessons in Life, 2019) The first work covers how his entire life shaped him as a person. The second took antidotes from life and reformed them as advice for aspiring actors. Essentially an actor’s instruction manual disguised as interesting tales.

In an interview about *Almost Famous* (Crowe, 2000), Cameron Crowe shares how important people identified with the movie and felt it was made for them. (Nathan, 2020)

The rock writer Lester Bangs was a real-life character in *Almost Famous*. In the film, Bangs was portrayed by the late actor Phillip Seymour Hoffman. In an interview, Bangs talks about what makes rock stars interesting. He states rock stars would not be heroes if they were
infallible, and to be interesting, rock stars needed to be “miserable, wretched dogs, the pariahs of the earth” (Bangs, 1988), p.253.

I was asked by a classmate which genre I was writing in. I replied my work was a drama. David Mamet’s Master class brings up aspects of writing that the sole purpose of drama is to entertain and not teach (Mamet, 2019), which is different from writing a memoir as a teaching tool. There may lie the possibility it could be both. But not according to Mamet.

**Screenplay**

Following the format of the on-page screenplay is important for the screenwriter. There is a strict convention used in Hollywood feature film screenplays. The font style, line spacing, margins, capitalization, and abbreviations require adherence to guidelines. Even the amount of non-dialogue detail has a limitation. The goal is to produce what is called a "reader's script." The result is a document that is one minute per page of screen time. Guidelines for the screenplays are published in the book by Judith Haag and Hillis Cole. (Haag & Cole, 1995)

For production purposes, additional screenplay forms add details for production, art direction, and directing. These variations vary by the individual as they are a version of the screenplay with production notes.

Syd Field discusses the form of the screenplay as to how to develop the story and characters. He goes into great depth on the subject, creating a character, building a character, story, endings, and beginnings, setting up the story, the two incidents, plot points, the scene, the sequence, building the storyline, form, writing, and more. (Field, Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting, 2005) He details the three-act screenplay's purposes as set-up, confrontation, and resolution of the two plot points, which pivot these transitions.

A screenplay based upon another work is called an adaptation. The process of turning a novel, memoir, or another form of story into a feature film screenplay can be a considerable
effort. Francis Ford Coppola documented how he and Mario Puzo adapted Puzo's novel *The Godfather* (Coppola F. F., *Godfather Notebook*, 2016). In *The Godfather Notebook*, Coppola has detailed notes about reducing the complex book into a feature film. His comments were created before he wrote the screenplay in his method of preparation. After his extensive notes on adapting the story, he worked with Puzo on the script to condense or eliminate characters and plot points.

Syd Field discussed the adaptation process in his review of four screenplays. (Field, *Four Screenplays: Studies in the American Screenplay*, 1994) In the adaptation of Thomas Harris's 1988 novel *The Silence of the Lambs* (Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs*, 1988), Field examines how Ted Tally adapted the novel for film. (Tally, 1991). The novel is a more detailed story. In the adaptation, Tally chose to tell the story primarily through the protagonist, FBI Agent Clarice Starling. In the screenplay, for the most part, the audience knows what Starling knows.

The Masterclass video courses are a treasure trove of advice. Dan Brown covers his specialty: the thriller. Brown discusses how to create interest by adding conflict. There should be an increasing level of difficult situations the hero must accomplish. Brown also introduces the idea of morally gray areas, which lead to conflict. He makes use of specific historical events as background in the story. He uses locations to serve the story and provide the reader insights, almost as if the reader were on vacation. (Brown)

**Storyboarding**

In her Masterclass, the director Jodie Foster uses storyboards to plan her visual thinking to transition from shot to shot. (Foster, 2020). They serve as an aid to communicating with the director of photography what she hopes to accomplish. Foster’s sketches are not be considered production design. Simple drawings to communicate camera position with the cinematographer.
In contrast, Ron Howard’s Masterclass made no mention of storyboards. He relies heavily on shooting coverage, so the editor can later assemble the shots into a complete scene. (Howard, 2019)

Steven Katz goes to great length to describe the storyboarding visualization process in his book, Shot by Shot (Katz, 1991). A storyboard is a visualization tool for planning, continuity, and a means for the director to communicate his intentions with all involved in the process, from production design to cinematography, effects, sound, and editing.

In his book Making Comics, Scott McCloud covers the range of human emotion drawing for a quality level used in graphic novels, which is helpful for storyboarding but could approach a higher level of detail not necessary (McCloud, Making Comics: Storytelling Secrets of Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels, 2006).

In storyboarding the expressions of the characters, I would often refer to the acting of Matt Damon as Jason Bourne in The Bourne Identity (Gilroy & Herron, 2002) and The Bourne Supremacy. (Greengrass, 2004)

**Culture**

Across the world, international culture is introduced by books, television and feature films. From the 1950 through the 1970s many works were produced about East and Southeast Asia which contributed to an interest in the region. That, along with the conflict in Vietnam the US was entering and the ever-growing Cold War with the Communist Block.

There are several influential novels regarding my understanding of Hong Kong and China. Two are Tai-Pan and Nobel House, both by James Clavell. Working in Hong Kong and Bangkok, an English expat insisted that I read these books to gain insight into the cultural conflicts of where we were working.
Nobel House is about a British trader working in Hong Kong. Tai-Pan is set in 1842 when it first became a British Territory just after the First Opium War. The story centered around a fictionalized British opium trader, Dirk Struan, and his interactions with the Chinese and other English, French and American traders (Clavell, Tai-Pan, 1966). Nobel House continues the trading business of the descendants of Struan in 1963 Hong Kong (Clavell, Nobel House, 1981). I had been in the region for two years when I started to read Clavell's books and found the cultural interactions reflective of my own experience.

These books by a non-Asian were not always well viewed. I encountered a Japanese man in Bangkok regarding Clavell's novel Shogun (Clavell, Shogun, 1975). I had met the man before, the Japanese announcer for Radio Thailand World Service. As I entered a bar, he saw me with the novel and said it was a terrible book. He did not explain as the music in the bar was loud. But his body gestures showed a dislike for this book. I assumed he didn't like how Clavell portrayed Japanese or was inaccurate in the telling of Japanese history. This view may have been based on the television drama version of Shogun starring Richard Chamberlain, (Bercovici, 1980). As common for adaptations, the broadcast versions does not reflect well on the original work.

The protagonist of Shogun, John Blackthorne, was a fictionalized account based on the early 1600's historical exploits of the English navigator William Adams. The novel uses fictionalized versions of all characters, Blackthorne, the Japanese, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Spaniards. I believe that Clavell’s intentions was to portray the difference between these cultures. His accounts are not faltering to any of the parties in Shogun and the rest of Clavell's Asian Saga series.

Another novel that increased my awareness of Hong Kong life was Richard Mason's, The World of Suzie Wong (Mason, 1957). This was the first novel I read about Hong Kong before my
relocation. The story of Robert Lomax, a British expat, comes to Hong Kong from Malaysia to pursue his career as an artist. Lomax sets up residence in the Wan Chai district of Hong Kong Island near the harbor. The story introduced me to a world that was vastly different from my experience growing up in Iowa. It proved to be a suitable warning as my first office location in Hong Kong was only blocks away from where this story was set.

Canadian author Christopher G. Moore wrote three novels about contemporary Bangkok of the era I was living there. *A Killing Smile* (Moore, *A Killing Smile*, 1991), *A Bewitching Smile* (Moore, *A Bewitching Smile*, 1992), and *A Haunting Smile* (Moore, *A Haunting Smile*, 1993). Detective novels with a film noir stylization follow Vincent Calvino's investigations, an American living in Bangkok. These novels also reveal cross-cultural conflicts between tourists, expatriates, and Thai. As many of the locations in his books were those I frequented, there is little doubt I had inadvertently rubbed shoulders with Moore on occasion between 1990 and 1992. As a detective novel, the locations focus on a sinister side of Bangkok and not reflective of the society at large.

Before I read these works of fiction, in the months leading up to my move to Taipei in 1988, I read books about China from the Chinese perspective. Watchman Nee (Ni Tuosheng) was a Chinese Christian teacher in the early 20th Century who was persecuted and imprisoned following the Cultural Revolution. His book, *The Normal Christian Life* (Nee, 1957), was a compilation of Nee's sermons from the 1940s and described the faith from the Chinese perspective. Being a Christian in China at that time was a decision not without consequences. And Nee's words helped me to understand the challenges of faith and culture.

Another book that helped me understand cultural challenges was *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* (Taylor, 2015), which is the biography of the British Protestant Christian
missionary to China and founder of the China Inland Mission. This is the classic biography of Hudson Taylor, the missionary to China and the founder of the China Inland Mission. An essential book for those considering missions or already engaged.

Taylor's approach to missions took a vastly different approach from his predecessors. He had moved inland, away from the coastal cities where foreign influences were prevalent. And he dressed as Chinese and spoke the language. By his choices, he became closer to the local culture and eliminated as many differences as possible for a non-Chinese.

On the political spectrum is Red Star Over China by Edgar Snow (Snow, 1937), where Snow recounts his travels with the Chinese Red Army in 1936. An American journalist, Snow accompanied Mao on the Long March, the first to report to the West about the Chinese revolution. Snow had direct contact and interview with Mao Zedong. Snow’s works may be criticized for political bias, yet his first-hand accounting was critical for an understanding of the political upheaval in China.

By reading Mao’s own words, Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tun (Mao, 1964), commonly known as The Little Red Book, I was able to read the saying that had a massive impact on several generations of Chinese. After reading Snow’s book I wanted to gain a perspective closer to the source. My Hong Kong and Taiwan associates did not approve of me reading his book, which demonstrated the lingering bitterness after the 1949 revolution.

The novel, The Ugly American (Burdick & Lederer, 1958), is a collection of short stories by Eugene Burdick and William Lederer. It is considered one of the most influential American political novels, and does not depict a flattering view of US Diplomacy highlining insensitivity to local language, culture, and customs. As Greene’s The Quite American, The Ugly American is about Vietnam, but only refers to the country using a fictional name Sarkhan. The story uses
fictional accounts that demonstrate US foreign policy failures in the region. The title of the book is commonly misunderstood by those who have not read the book. The man described as ugly is by appearance, not by action. He is viewed as helpful in meeting the real needs of the local culture. His actions are viewed as ugly by US interests who are concerned with spending tax dollars on project which can profit American business while not addressing true needs. The lessons in the story remain true extending to US involvement in Afghanistan.

Hong Kong was an early film capital of East Asia. The Sha Brothers Hong Kong action films from the 1960s profoundly influenced the American film-director Quentin Tarantino. Tarantino’s films are sensational and follow the style of the popular Hong Kong martial arts and crime stories.

A significant film about China was The Last Emperor (Bertolucci, The Last Emperor, 1987), about the life of Puyi and the transition of China in the early 20th century. (Bertolucci, The Last Emperor, 1987). While working in Beijing in the late 1980s, there was little to do for entertainment, and I visited the forbidden city many times before the onslaught of international and Chinese tourism.

Lulu Wang was the screenplay writer and film director of The Farewell (Melia & Turtletaub, The Farwell, 2019). In a YouTube video, Wang overviews her writing process. She struggled with writing Chinese dialogue and the difference between how those who settled in American speak at home and how her grandmother back in Beijing speaks. She also discussed the differences in the screenplay format between the Hollywood standard (Haag & Cole, 1995) and the format used by the China film industry. Wang also referred to the cultural difference within a family: between parents, grandparents, and grandchildren (Wang, 'The Farewell' Screenplay Breakdown: Lulu Wang Compares First To Final Drafts | Vanity Fair, 2019).
The 2011 film *The Hangover Part II* (Phillips, 2011) is a story of three Americans in trouble in Bangkok. The film describes the city as a dangerous and sinister place. As does the film *Bangkok Dangerous* starring Nicolas Cage and directed by the Pang Brothers. (Pang & Pang, 2008). The depiction of Bangkok by these two American films overcasts a dark perception of the city. On a side note, I worked with Oxide Pang in Bangkok, and his brother married one of the real-life characters who is fictionalized in my screenplay.

Another film about westerners in another culture is *Sheltering Sky* (Bertolucci, *The Sheltering Sky*, 1990), a film about the exploits of an American couple traveling in North Africa. In my personal experience, I had met western travelers like these depicted in the film, but I did not enjoy their company. They would have an aroma of adventure with the stench of superiority and entitlement.

These fictionalized accounts of east Asia focus on the seedier aspects of life. The biographies took a very different view on the experience between expatriates and locals.

It is one thing to read about the accounts of others. It is different to emerge into the local culture. I had married into a Hong Kong family and became well acquainted with typical family life. In Bangkok, I chose to associate closely with lower- and middle-class Thai. My associations were not typical to the usual expat experience of being sequestered in their group only to venture out into the local culture on a shallow basis. My views are based on these deep personal experiences.

As Graham Greene wrote in *The Quiet American*, (Greene, 1955), "They say you come to Vietnam, and you understand a lot in a few minutes, but the rest has got to be lived."
**Props**

In her Masterclass, Helen Mirren discusses the importance of props for an actor. Her emphasis is on the actor's need to interact naturally and use them to help define character and intention. (Mirren, 2020)

Another aspect of writing a story and working with production design is getting the terminology correct. Several scenes take place inside aircraft and airport terminals. While the reader does not need to know the exact time, it is critical for production design.

The National Academies of Science, Engineering Medicine in Washington, D.C., publishes a report on airport terminal planning. This document provides terminology and a glossary for accurate naming of locations within an airport. For example, the passenger loading bridge uses the synonymous aerobridge, air bridge, jet bridge, Jetway®, passenger bridge, and passenger boarding bridge. (Airport Cooperative Research Program; Transportation Research Board; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2010)

The modeling of Hong Kong buildings for props should follow the visual aspects of standards and building practices. The Hong Kong Institute of Architects' mission is to raise the bar of architecture in Hong Kong and the standard of professional architectural services. They provide resources for finding standard practices for Hong Kong. (The Hong Kong Institute of Architects, 2019). As with airport design, these details are critical for production design. And for visual storytelling, conscious or not, a viewer may be aware when a structure is not consistent with Hong Kong practices.

Jane Barnwell wrote two books about production design, *Design for Screen* (Barnwell, Production Design for Screen: Visual Storytelling in Film and Television, 2017), and *Production Design* (Barnwell, Production Design: Architects of the Screen (Short Cuts), 2003) with insights on the consideration for period pieces, which concerns this screenplay.
Costume could consume an entire investigation by itself, and requires an entire department in film production. Early in the screenplay the dress the protagonist and that of the Cathay Pacific flight crew helps set period.

The South China Morning Post archives feature a story about Cathay Pacific flight crew uniforms: How Cathay Pacific's uniforms have evolved through the ages, (SCMP Reporter, 2014).

Dutch steward Cliff Muskiet has a detailed website of flight crew uniforms, including period clothing for Cathay Pacific. (Muskiet, 2021)

Figure 2. Wall animation of Cathay Pacific jet approaching the boarding gate.
The flight attendant uniform designed by Hermes (Nguyen, 2020) is an example of the crew uniform from 1983-1990 for the period just before the beginning of this screenplay. This was the outfit I saw during my first two years in Hong Kong.

Figure 3. Animation of the Cathay Pacific flight on approach to Hong Kong.

Figure 4. Animation of the view from the Cathay Pacific jet in gallery the back room.
CHAPTER 3. CASE STUDIES

Lost in Translation (2003)

Lost in Translation (Katz R. & Coppola, Lost in Translation, 2003) is a feature film written and directed by Sophia Coppola starring Bill Murray, Scarlett Johansson, Giovanni Ribisi, Anna Faris, and Fumihiro Hayashi with production design by K.K. Barrett and Anne Ross, cinematography by Lance Acord, and color timing by Bob Fredrickson.

Murray plays Bob Harris, an aging American actor on a trip to Tokyo to be the advertising spokesman for a Suntory Whiskey promotion. Bob meets Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson), a young American woman who accompanied her photographer-husband on a working trip in the hotel bar.

Bob is busy acting in television commercials, photo-shoots, and interviews while Scarlett explores Tokyo while her husband is shooting on location.

Both characters feel alone, awkward and isolated in Japan. Bob becomes frustrated with an inability to communicate. Charlotte confronts the differences between the culture of the Japanese and her own. They form a relationship around these experiences and begin to explore Tokyo together.

Awkward in Asia

The film reflects the difficulties of working and some simple aspects of living in a different culture. The characters in this film are on a short trip to Japan. The protagonist in 52-1/2 Feet had two years to settle into Hong Kong, yet confronted with constant cultural and language changes by his frequent travels.
Figure 5. Color study of Lost in Translation, directed by Sophia Coppola.
In an interview, Murray, together with Coppola, shares views on acting and how story and dialogue are revised on set. (Murray & Coppola, 2003) That the screenplay is not finished until the final film has been cut.

The production design, cinematography, and color timing set the visual mood of the film. Figure 1 depicts the overall color flow of every shot in the movie. The production designer determines the location colors; the cinematographer directs the lighting, and the color timer ensures each shot used in the final edit has color consistency. Figure 1 illustrates the color theme of the entire movie with several schemes throughout the film.

**Strangers (2018 TV series)**


A murder mystery set in Hong Kong, protagonist Professor Jonah Mulray (Actor John Simm) goes to Hong Kong to identify and claim his wife's body after being killed in a car accident. Mulray becomes suspicious and launches his investigation when he finds the police uncooperative.

The opening establishes Hong Kong as the location. The first shot of the film is a wave rolling onto a beach with islands in the distance. The second shot is of the Hong Kong harbor skyline with the name "Hong Kong" appearing as a text over the image. This is followed by shots of men fishing at the harbor, high-rise buildings looking up from ground level, the giant Buddha on Lantau Island. The opening credits cut to images of the Hong Kong skyline at night, with the opening credits appearing over the image. Various angles with red graphic background
blocks overlay and match the buildings' perspective, ending with the title "White Dragon" (used by Amazon Prime) over the morning sky with the camera looking directly up from the street between the high-rise apartment buildings.

**Establishing Location**

In 52-1/2 Feet, Hong Kong is established using a Cathay Pacific airliner as the location with Hong Kong Island in the background. In the following scenes inside the protagonist's flat, Hong Kong is revealed by the news radio broadcast and South China Morning Post newspaper.

The protagonists of both stories, Jonah Mulray (*White Dragon*) and Christopher Rigs (*52-1/2 Feet*), are in Hong Kong for very different reasons. Both men do encounter the frustration of dealing with culture, ethics, and language.

**Almost Famous (2000): Defining a Career**

*Almost Famous* (Crowe, 2000), written and directed by Cameron Crowe, is an American comedy-drama. The protagonist, William Miller, is played by Patrick Fugit and starring Billy Crudup, Frances McDormand, Kate Hudson, and Phillip Seymour Hoffman.

**Building a Career Under Fire**

William Miller is a young writer sent by Rolling Stone Magazine to follow a rock band on tour. Miller is determined to become a writer seeking truth yet excited about the adventure that lay ahead of him. His mentor, Lester Bangs (Hoffman), warns Miller. “It’s going to get ugly. They are going to buy you drinks; you’re going to meet girls. They’re going to try to fly you places for free, offer you drugs. And I know it sounds great. These people are not your friends.” He continues, “You have to make your reputation on being honest and unmerciful. And if you get into a jam, you can call me. I stay up late.”

Christopher Rigs (*52-1/2 Feet*) is relatively young in his career and determined to do a good job. His boss, Jack Teo, advises Christopher on how to navigate in this new world.
The Godfather (1972): From Story to Screenplay


The screenplay is written by Coppola and Puzo. An adaptation of Puzo's book employs more characters and plot points than the movie. The novel is too complex for a feature film.

Coppola published "The Godfather Notebook" (Coppola F. F., Godfather Notebook, 2016) of original notes and images of his novel's analysis. The notebook was used to guide the screenplay writing, along with Puzo's input. This text was so valuable to Coppola that he used it on-set during production along with the screenplay.

**Adaptation Process**

*52-1/2 Feet* is an original screenplay, while an adaptation of life experiences—the need to reduce a more extensive content to fit within the framework of a feature film length story. In preparation for my writing, I made extensive notes of significant career events. These were culled, re-ordered, characters combined, and locations modified to create an adaptation of real life to a fictionalized account of life.

Extensive notes were created for the writing of *52-1/2 Feet*. Lists were made of career and life events. Simultaneously while writing, sketches and storyboards were created to describe locations and props visible in the film but not detailed in the screenplay. The building of the 3D models, intended initially as an aid to the storyboards, became part of my notebook, helping me to return and rewrite scenes in the screenplay based on these visualizations.
CHAPTER 4. CREATIVE COMPONENT OVERVIEW

Process

The components fall into two large categories: story and visuals. The story is the development of characters, dialogue, story aspect of locations, and events selection. Visuals are the details of city and country locations seen by the viewer—the props which define location: characters, clothing, and visual effects. Then there are the visuals used in planning: storyboards, production art, mood boards, animatics, and previsualizations.

The images generated by this process were incorporated into posters for display in an online gallery.

Project Development

My position as the screenwriter evolved into storyboard artist, location scout, production designer, and aspects of a director.

The process started with the idea for the story: how to communicate a thirty-year career. Initially, the idea was a career guide style book. I made categories and lists like: "how to learn technical skills" and "working with clients." Under each would be a long list, based on my personal experience. Each item in the list was essential and based on life experience. Yet, the more these lists grew, the less attractive this work seemed.

The list was peppered with anecdotes to illustrate select items. The stories became more interesting than the index and led me to consider the form of the memoir. After a discussion, one professor suggested I prepare the story as a graphic novel and work with an artist for the drawings. This comment triggered my previous work with storyboards in commercials and feature films. A storyboard's detail is to communicate what is seen from the camera angle and valuable for directing actors, action, cinematography, production design, and visual effects.
Screenplay Format

Part of my career was working in feature films in Los Angeles, Beijing, and Vancouver. At Digital Domain and Sony Pictures Imageworks, we were required to read the screenplay when we started on a new project. Understanding the story would inform us of how our elements are used to communicate the story. At first, I was surprised that an action-based screenplay does not take long to read. A screenplay is primarily dialogue with a limited description of the visuals.

Communicating a career into a screenplay is condensing thirty-plus years into roughly 120-minutes of screen time. This limits which aspects of my work experience could be shared. The concentration should be on lessons unique to my experience. And going-without-saying, with a screenplay being shorter than a memoir or novel, would enable me to finish within the three years allocated for my studies.

I navigated numerous major cities, states, countries, languages, and cultures in my thirty-five-year career. The most intense period in my travels was from 1988 through 1997 while working in Hong Kong, Beijing, Bangkok, and Singapore with business trips to London, Taipei, Tokyo, and Shanghai. My US Passport from this era has five sets of extension pages.

I framed a story based on events roughly fall within 1991-1992, starting with an accurate timeline and real characters. This was my first time writing a screenplay and learning to adapt my life into a story. As the writing progressed, the events became fictionalized. Characters were combined, omitted, or added. Locations were adjusted for visual interest. The resulting story was a condensed timeline covering six months.

Character Development

Character profiles were helpful in preparation for writing, identifying details that could be illustrated by props or add flavor to the story.
Character sketches were created for storyboarding. These were of quality for the characters to be recognizable frame-to-frame but not of graphic novel quality. An initial set of twenty-five-plus the protagonist was identified in the early stages of writing the story.

Figure 6. Early character sketch of Christopher Rigs, the protagonist.
Figure 7. Initial set of twenty-five supporting characters from early in the screenplay writing.
As the story developed, new characters were added and some combined or eliminated. The complete list of “non-extras” approaches eighty and is listed in the appendix by order of first appearance.

**Character Visualization**

![Marker style sketch used for "Mr. Ho's Bubbles" storyboard sequence.](image)

**Action**

Two computer animators, CINDY and DAVY, rush into the client presentation room just as Mr. Ho is escorted to the doorway of the client presentation room by the receptionist. Mr Ho is about 55, bald and chubby. Suit pants, white shirt with undershirt and open collar. He's been sweating which seems odd for winter.

The visualization of characters utilized different tools during the process. The variations were experiments in finding each method's advantages: the ink-line and watercolor the style used in the preceding figure. The "Mr. Ho's Bubbles" sequence uses grayscale markers. It is relatively quick but limited in detail.
The “Beijing Hotel Bar” sequence uses scanned pencil drawings colored digitally in Photoshop. The two main characters in this scene had similar body features, so distinguishing between them was important. The thin line drawing allowed for greater detail than the markers. The flat colors enabled the characters to be identified as well as define the depth in the scene.

**Figure 9.** Scanned line drawings colored in Photoshop style used for the "Beijing Hotel Bar" storyboard sequence.

**Figure 10.** Prop of Swatch Grand-Prix watch which aid to define period.
Figure 11. Early computer line rendered style used for "Opening Dream" storyboard sequence.

Figure 12. Full color rendered style using Modo.
The "Opening Dream" sequence uses Houdini VFX software to set up the camera framing and generate images with a line rendering tool. Houdini was chosen as downstream this would be the software for the aircraft's exterior visual effects, the ocean, and the rooster tail spray (Figure 7).

The 3D characters were initially added to the virtual gallery to check the poster placement's height on the wall. The side effect is to make the gallery exhibition look attended rather than empty. These characters were imported into the 3D models to show the human scale of the 3D locations. The results were effective and more characters were added to make the framing compelling.
Location Visualization

Three locations in the story are essential for defining the characters and the dramatic action: the interior of a Cathay Pacific Airlines aircraft, the protagonist's Hong Kong flat, and the principal business investor's office.

Concept work for the office was done with traditional drawing methods: An orthographic and isometric sketch of the floor plan, one-point, two-point, and three-point perspective drawings of the interior. Initially, these drawings were to be the final visualization, yet they evolved into three-dimensional models.

My career utilized 3D visualizations, not a new skill that I needed to learn. It becomes an aid in visualizing the story while refining the screenplay. The 3D structures would be built to the correct relative scale. The floor plan for the flat in Heng Fa Chuen was found on a real-estate site. The floor-plan of the investor's office in Mong Kok was created from memory and based on Hong Kong architectural standards. The aircraft's interior was available as a sourced 3D model, accurate to scale and approximate to the type of wide-body aircraft.

These variations of images are pre-production visualization and not a final product. The methods can be combined as long as they meet production planning needs.

Figure 14. Lockheed L-1011 Tristar asset from the Sketchup Warehouse.
Figure 15. Two-point perspective sketch of Mong Kok office.

Figure 16. Isometric Sketch of Mong Kok office.
Figure 17. Floor plan of Mong Kok office.

Figure 18. Three-point perspective sketch of Mr. Chau's Office.
Figure 19. One point perspective sketch of Mong Kok office.

Figure 20. Mong Kok office exterior. This model was created in Sketchup.
The initial 3D models were intended to be simple, used as an aid for accurate perspective and camera framing. Interior furnishing geometry was assembled from the Sketchup Warehouse (Sketchup Website, 2021), Foundry.com, or purchased from Turbosquid.com. All sourced models were modified with different geometry or rebuilt from scratch.

These models effectively described the characters and were individually rendered to be included in the props posters described in a later chapter.
Figure 23. Mong Kok Office rendered in Modo.

Figure 24. Refinements, textures and lighting were added to the Sketchup model in Modo.
Figure 25. Accurate perspective is created using the 3D software.

Figure 26. Heng Fa Chuen flat 3D model.
The models evolved into fully furnished locations with high-quality geometry. The process of creating the 3D props created a feedback loop which helped develop the story. Movies are stories told by dialogue, by action, by location, and by props. These visuals became essential to tell the visual aspects of the story by defining the characters. Refinements to the models led to new ideas and a return to adjusting the screenplay. Often, significant revisions to dialogue or a scene were a result of this process.

An example is a fax from the Bangkok AK&S client. In the story's opening, while Christopher has breakfast, the fax arrives with notes on changes to a television commercial in production. The fax is a visible demonstration of the client, Miss Bum's, attention to detail. Although we have yet to meet her, this action of sending the timely notes defines her character. Later in the story, when notes were not taken at a meeting, a chain of events results in costly
revisions and time loss for Christopher. The breakfast fax was added later after the later sequence was already written: a visual setup for what would transpire later.

*Figure 28. Setup: The fax from Miss Bum in Act 1 of the story was added in later revision of the screenplay.*

*Figure 29. In Act 3, the result of Miss Bum not taking notes creates a setback for production and a considerable profit loss.*
CHAPTER 5. SCREENPLAY COMPONENT

Story Creation

The story is a fictionalized account of 6 months starting January 1991 based on actual events which happened over an extended period, stretching into four years. Characters were fictionalized and combined with locations modified, and events shifted in time. These were necessary to tell the story within the format's limitations.

Figure 30. The first indicator of the exact date seen on the Motorola pager.

The resulting story starts on Monday, January 14th, 1991, the beginning of Christopher's third year living in Hong Kong. Work had taken him regularly to Beijing, China, and Bangkok, Thailand. These cities differ significantly in politics, economics, language, ethics, dress, and views toward outside cultures. Conveying these differences is primarily accomplished visually.

In all three places, the ethnic group Christopher deals with in business is primarily Chinese. Yet, there are significant differences between these cities that defy stereotypes.

Screenplay Format

The screenplay format has a personal advantage. I have previous screenplay reading experience and seeing a story refined while in the post-production stage. Second, a feature film screenplay's duration is roughly 120 minutes and requires the story's scope to be concise.
For many years I have wanted to write about my working experience. I collected anecdotes on work and personal events. My original intent was to write a detailed memoir, a "do and don't" career guide. Writing this was a challenge: It tended to come off as dull despite peppering it with tales from the field.

It was the visualization process of the stories that helped me settle on the screenplay format. When I looked at the visuals, the idea of creating storyboards became appealing. I understood the form working both with broadcast commercials and feature film VFX production.

Storyboards could become preparation for a graphic novel as well as a feature film or syndicated series. The time limitations of a feature film cull the number of events and characters.

During my years working in Los Angeles, I discovered a bit of truth to the myth that every taxi driver wants to become a director and every security guard a screenwriter. (Miyamoto, 2018)

While working at Sony Pictures Imageworks, we would walk past the main door security guard every morning on our way back from dailies. One morning as we stopped to chat, he pulled out a substantial three-ring binder with his screenplay and made his pitch. The myth was true! Aspiring screenwriters and directors are everywhere in Los Angeles. We had as much to do with green-lighting a script as he did. But he tried.

I would often joke about those wannabe screenwriters. Until now. As my Los Angeles visual effects colleague Steve Blakey wrote, "Screenplay? You can remove Garmy from Hollywood, but you can't remove Hollywood from Garmy!" (Blakey, 2020)
Figure 31. Mong Kok office with the only scene in the screenplay without the protagonist Christopher Rigs.

**Point of View**

*52-1/2 Feet* is written exclusively through the eyes of the protagonist, Christopher Rigs. There is only one scene in the screenplay where Christopher is not present, and that scene has indistinct Cantonese dialogue. This viewpoint was intentional as I wanted Christopher to encounter those events as I had experienced them. As Syn Field noted about the adaptation of *Silence of the Lambs* (Demme, 1991), the story was primarily told through the eyes of FBI Agent Clarice Starling. This form of storytelling was selected for this work, with few scenes providing information which Christopher would not know.

Christopher would struggle with the complexity of the projects, the fast pace and looming deadlines of advertisings, four languages (Cantonese, Thai, Mandarin, and localized English), culturally correct interaction, local politics, ethics, and business practices different from his upbringing. The mentor for helping Christopher rise to the occasion is Jack Teo. Jack is a Singapore Chinese, is one year older than Christopher. Jack has learned to be a savvy
businessman in the video production industry. Jack is also a bit out of place. Originally from Singapore, Jack developed his career in Jakarta, Indonesia, and came to Hong Kong because of its preeminence in Southeast Asian video production. Jack is an outsider with an insider’s view of Hong Kong. Showing Christopher the ropes, he also introduces us to the role superstitions play in business decision-making. Business and ethics are Christopher’s biggest challenges.

**Screenplay Breakdown**

As noted earlier by Haag and Cole, the screenplay formatting to be read for consideration requires strict formatting. Once production begins and the director, cinematographer, visual effects supervisor, production designer, editor, and sound effects get the script, the notations added can be precise to those requirements.

In my career, I encounter both kinds of screenplay formats. The readers' version is primarily dialogue with minimum notes on location, props, camera angles, etc. Some productions had modified screenplays along with storyboards, drawings, and detailed notes.

The visual effects production I worked on was after production, and filming started at the stage where rough cuts of the movie were made using placeholder VFX. My experience with screenplays was far down the production line from when they were first submitted for consideration. The screenplays I encounter were broken down into sequences and shots with sequential numbering.

When I started writing, I added the shot numbers, camera angles, and details about the action I encountered in the breakdowns I experienced while working in Los Angeles. As I began working on my screenplay, I became aware of the difference between the reader's format and a director's breakdown.

The figures below show how the first page of the story appears with my breakdown notes and then using the standard reader's formatting.
INT. MONG KOK OFFICE 2ND FLOOR – MOMENTS LATER

Christopher steps out of the dark stairway following the construction foreman. Most of the lights are off with only enough light for him to make his way.

The door to Mr. Chau’s office is half-close with his desk-lamp illuminating into the main room. Mr. Chau’s eldest son is standing in front of the desk blocking the view of his father.

MR. CHAU
Indistinct Cantonese

The construction foreman motions Christopher to the conference room on the right.

INT. MONG KOK OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM – CONTINUOUS

The room is small with similar dated office furnishing as the rest of the office. Chinese paintings on the walls. A Chinese bent-wood chair next to coffee table by the window. A cold florescent light in the ceiling. Wind and rain hitting the windows.

The construction foreman motions for Christopher to sit at the chair with his back to the door. The table for eight seems large for the room.

André Rosário is seated to the left. The three seats to his left are empty. In the other seats are men with stern expressions dressed in work clothes. Intimidating. The construction foreman stands against the wall to the right.

André Rosário looks up at Christopher with a blank expression.

MRS. FOK
Good evening, Mr. Christopher.

Christopher stands and Mrs. Fok moves behind André Rosário. She does not look at him as she moves to the far empty seat, her look, pugnacious.

MR. CHAU
Indistinct Cantonese

Figure 32. Readers script page 1.
Mr. Chau enters the room as Christopher stands. He is the only one. Mr. Chau looks at the others who remain seated and pleased with Christopher's respect.

He is followed by his eldest son who sits next to André Rosário.

MRS. FOK
We hope we can come to a mutual agreement this evening.

She speaks without looking at Christopher has she takes a seat to the left of Mr. Chau.

MR. CHAU
Is everyone here?
(speaking in Cantonese)

There is no translation for Christopher.

Chau seats himself at the far seat, opposite to Christopher between Mrs. Fok and his son.

Mrs. Fok offers a plastic smile at them, and then at Christopher, the first time looking directly at him. A dagger.

MR. CHAU (CONT'D)
Please sit down.
(Speaking in Cantonese)

Mrs. Fok translates as Christopher sits. Mr. Chau speaks with a neutral tone as Mrs. Fok simultaneously translates. All eyes are on Christopher.

MR. CHAU (CONT'D)
We meet tonight regarding the future of our relationship.
(a pause for translation)
Your business has been very good. Over the last six months, you have generated a half a million US dollars in new work, just from Thailand.

Mrs. Fok speaks dry as if this is not significant.

Christopher looks directly at Mr. Chau, avoiding eye contact with Mrs. Fok.

MR. CHAU (CONT'D)
We have a listing of all your projects and expenses.
André Rosário slides a paper over to Christopher.

MR. CHAU (CONT'D)
It is time to share the profits.

Christopher studies the document. He looks up at André Rosário, then to Mr. Chau.

CHRISTOPHER
I don't have a problem sharing profits.

Christopher pauses for Mrs. Fok's translation. The rain blows against the window.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
I want to know about our agreement. To create a partnership with the 60-40 share of the profits.

As Mrs. Fok translates, Mr. Chau's expression becomes firm.

Christopher starts to sweat. His eyes dart around the room.

MR. CHAU
We have made huge investments in this company. In Kornhill and in China.

Mr. Chau presses his palms into the table.

MR. CHAU (CONT'D)
For the last two years we have only seen profits from one part of the company. Your part.
(pauses for Mrs. Fok)
All the business in China has been a huge loss.

Mrs. Fok considers how to translate. She looks stressed yet remains cunning.

MRS. FOK
The last two years have been unprofitable. We have made great investments. I am sure you can appreciate that.

André Rosário fidgets because of Mrs. Fok's inaccurate translation.

Christopher looks at André Rosário and senses the error in the translation. He raises his eyebrow in question.
As stated earlier, I worked first with the breakdown version, and then did the redactions to create a reader’s script. This was because of my prior experience working with scripts which have already been in production and accompanied by extensive notes and storyboards.

In this example, the difference between the readers script and the director’s breakdown include the following:

- A slight rewording of the text, both in dialogue and in description.

- The readers script omits the following:
  - The sequence number
  - The shot number
  - The description of props and graphics
  - The camera information
  - Each page times for one-minute per page

- The breakdown includes:
  - The act, sequence numbers
  - The shot numbers
  - A breakdown description including:
    - Additional scene information
    - List of props
    - List of graphics
    - List of 3D extensions
    - Camera framing details for storyboarding
  - No correlation between the page number and the timing

The following figures are the extended breakdown version of five pages.
INT. MONG KOK OFFICE 2ND FLOOR

ACT-3: SEQ-010

Breakdown:

CHRISTOPHER arrives for meeting which determines the fate of his relationship with MR. CHAU. The air is thick with anticipation.

PROPS: Papers from MR. CHAU's accountant. CHRISTOPHER'S checkbook and stamp for signing checks. Decorations on the meeting room wall.

GRAPHICS: Details of check and accounts for insert shots.

SHOT-001: WIDE-SHOT 2ND FLOOR MAIN OFFICE.

CHRISTOPHER steps out of the dark stairway following the CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN. Most of the lights are off with only enough for him to make his way.

SHOT-002: WIDE-SHOT MR. CHAU'S OFFICE CHRISTOPHER'S POV

At the far left is MR. CHAU's office. The door is half-closed with his desk lamp illuminating into the main room.

SHOT-003: FULL-SHOT CHRISTOPHER AND CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN

The CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN motions CHRISTOPHER to a room at the right.

CUT TO:

INT. MONG KOK OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM

The room is small, similar dated office decorations as the other room. Chinese paintings on the walls. A Chinese curved chair next to table by the window. A cold florescent light in the ceiling. Wind and rain hitting the windows.

SHOT-004: REAR FULL-SHOT CHRISTOPHER IN DOORWAY

CHRISTOPHER stands, framed by the doorway, dark walls on the sides. The the cold florescent light brightening the silhouette of his shape.

Figure 35. Breakdown script, page 1, with the addition of shot numbers, props and details.
SHOT-005: FULL-SHOT CHRISTOPHER ENTERS THE ROOM.

CHRISTOPHER steps into the room. The room is small for the
table size. There’s an empty chair near to the door. ANDRÉ
ROSÁRIO is seated at the chair to the left. He looks up,
indicating the chair is for CHRISTOPHER.

A few men dresses as construction workers stand at right of
the door. Intimidating. The sit down only after CHRISTOPHER
has been seated.

SHOT-006: MID-SHOT CHRISTOPHER

CHRISTOPHER stands when he hears MRS. FOK speak.

MRS. FOK
Good evening Mr. CHRISTOPHER.

SHOT-007: MID-SHOT MRS. FOK

MRS. FOK is comes into room and squeeze past ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO.
She moves to a seat at the far back right of the table. The
construction FOREMAN follows and sits to her left. She looks
pugnacious.

MRS. FOK
We hope we can come to a mutual
agreement this evening.

She does not offer CHRISTOPHER to sit.

SOUND FX
We hear footsteps and indistinct
Cantonese from behind.

SHOT-008: FULL-SHOT CHRISTOPHER WITH ELDEST SON AND MR.
CHAU.

CHRISTOPHER steps aside to allow MR. CHAU and his ELDEST SON
to squeeze past, behind ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO.

MR. CHAU
Is everyone now here?
(Cantonese)

No translation.

SHOT-009: MID-SHOT ELDEST SON, MR. CHAU AND MRS. FOK

MR. CHAU seats himself at the far end, directly across from
CHRISTOPHER. The seat of honor. His son sits to his right. MRS. FOK to his left.

MR. CHAU’s ELDEST SON is in his late twenties. His hair is on the long side and he’s wearing white pants and a floral shirt. Apart from the otherwise drab dress of the other men.

MRS. FOK shows a plastic smile toward them, then at CHRISTOPHER. A dagger.

SHOT-010: MID-SHOT MR. CHAU

MR. CHAU speaks to CHRISTOPHER with simultaneous translation by MRS. FOK.

    MR. CHAU

    Please sit down.

MR. CHAU is slightly impressed that CHRISTOPHER has waited to sit until he has. To the shame of all the others in room.

CHRISTOPHER is position directly across the table from MR. CHAU. His back toward the door. The most vulnerable from behind.

SHOT-012: MID-SHOT MR. CHAU WITH MRS. FOK TO HIS LEFT.

MR. CHAU looks at CHRISTOPHER with a neutral expression. MRS. FOK translates.

    MR. CHAU

    We meet tonight regarding the future of our relationship.

    (pause)

    Your business has been very good. Over the last six months, you have generated a half a million US dollars in new work, just from Thailand.

She speaks drying as if this is not important.

SHOT-013: MID-SHOT CHRISTOPHER

CHRISTOPHER looks directly at MR. CHAU, avoiding eye contact with MRS. FOK.

SHOT-014: MID-SHOT MR. CHAU WITH MRS. FOK TO HIS LEFT.

Figure 37. Breakdown script, page 3, with the addition of shot numbers, props and details.
MR. CHAU
We have a listing of all your projects.

SHOT-015: MID-SHOT ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO
ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO slides a paper before CHRISTOPHER.

SHOT-016: MID-SHOT MR. CHAU

MR. CHAU
It is time to share the profits.

SHOT-017: MID-SHOT CHRISTOPHER
CHRISTOPHER looks up from the paper.

CHRISTOPHER
I don’t have a problem sharing profits.

CHRISTOPHER pauses for MRS. FOK’s translation. A beat passes. We hear the rain blowing on the windows.

SHOT-018: MID-SHOT MR. CHAU AND MRS. FOK

CHRISTOPHER
I want to know about our agreement and the formation of our partnership.

As MRS. FOK translates, MR. CHAU’s expression becomes firm.

MRS. FOK
Continues translation of what CHRISTOPHER said.

SHOT-019: CLOSE-UP CHRISTOPHER
CHRISTOPHER starts to sweat. His eyes dart around the room.

MR. CHAU
We have made huge investments in this company. All the money spent in China and Kornhill.

SOUND FX
MR. CHAU slams his hand on the table.

Figure 38. Breakdown script, page 4, with the addition of shot numbers, props and details.
No translation by MRS. FOK into English. A beat passes.

SHOT-020: MID-SHOT MR. CHAU

MR. CHAU offers a faint smile, but not with his eyes.

For over two years we have only
seen profit from your part of the
company.
(pause, no translation)
All business in China has been a
loss.

SHOT-021: MID-SHOT MRS. FOK

MRS. FOK thinks about how to translate. Uncomfortable pause. She looks stressed yet cunning.

MRS. FOK
The last two years have been
unprofitable. We have made great
investments while losing money.
(pause)
I’m sure you can appreciate that.

SHOT-022: MID-SHOT ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO

ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO fidgets in his seat at MRS. FOK’s inaccurate
translation.

SHOT-023: CLOSE-UP CHRISTOPHER

CHRISTOPHER looks from MRS. FOK to the ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO. He
senses an error in the translation. He raises his eyebrows
in question.

SHOT-024: MID-SHOT MRS. FOK

MRS. FOK speaks to MR. CHAU.

MRS. FOK
He asks about the partnership
agreement.

No translation.

MR. CHAU turns to MRS. FOK and speaks indistinctly, sounding
impatient.
CHAPTER 6. CITY POSTERS COMPONENT

From 1991 to 2021

The story takes place in three cities, in three countries: Hong Kong, a British Territory in 1991, Bangkok, Thailand, and Beijing, China. The story's specific locations are structurally unchanged since then, although the cities at large: iconic sites, signage, vehicles, and clothing fashion have.

The Hong Kong business district skyline has added many new iconic office buildings. Bangkok has added many high-rise buildings and above-ground light rail transportation.

Beijing has changed most of the three. Between 1990 and 2021, it seems as if an economic bomb has demolished much of what I encountered in the 1980s. Many ancient structures have been demolished to make room for roads and modern buildings. There were few buildings above four stories. In 2021 the landscape is littered with structures over twenty levels.

The international airports in all three cities have changed. The Hong Kong International Airport (HKG) is now located on Chek Lap Kok Island, referred to as Chek Lap Kok International Airport. The Bangkok International (BKK) airport has moved from Don Muang, north of the city, to Suvarnabhumi, east of the city. The Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK), referred to as Terminal 3, was constructed between March 2004 and March 2008.

The Don Mueang International Airport (DMK) in Bangkok and Beijing Airport Terminal 1 are still used for domestic and close-range international flights. The Kai Tak airport has been reclaimed for business, residential, and recreation.

My research's original intention was to pay significant attention to how these cities have changed structurally to create a period film. The COVID-19 pandemic made it challenging to collect the reference materials needed. I did have friends and associates in these locations who
were willing to help locate materials and photograph sites. As these are high-population areas and protective measures should be taken, it was best to refrain from this investigation. Indicators of period change since 1991 in this thesis are the responsibility of the props.

**City Posters**

The information in these posters is intended as a light introduction—a visual reference of iconic imagery and basic information. The details in the poster are a combination of current statistics and some indicators of the past. These posters include map locations of some scenes in the screenplay.

While this information is provided, it is not intended to be studied. The intent is to introduce visual images which the viewer may have seen before but not connected directly with the city name. Especially true for those unfamiliar with this region of the world.

*Figure 40. Rickshaw still used in Hong Kong in 1991.*
Figure 41. Hong Kong location poster.
Figure 42. Bangkok location poster.
Figure 43. Beijing location poster.
CHAPTER 7. LOCATION POSTER COMPONENT

The appendix includes a list of all the locations by the first appearance in the story. The two locations detailed here are significant for defining characters and the site of dramatic action.

**Heng Fa Chuen Location Poster**

The opening sequence occurs inside a Cathay Pacific jet bound for Hong Kong, continuing to the protagonist Christopher Rigs' flat. There is no dialogue in the first few minutes of the story except for the jet's inflight announcements and the apartment's radio broadcast. Props, action, and location tell the story for the first few minutes.

The location of Heng Fa Chuen itself is significant for impacting the intended audience. For an Iowan, the densely spaced high-rise buildings with little space in-between can be claustrophobic. For Hong Kongers, it is spacious and peaceful: a clean and contemporary area away from the noise and busyness of the main places people live and work.

Christopher rented this furnished flat after separating from his wife. She and his daughter live in Tai Koo Shing, two MTR (Mass Transit Railway) train stops away. His building is close to the harbor and the Heng Fa Chuen Promenade park with trees and benches. It is a very comfortable place to live.

The exception being that Heng Fa Chuen is very close to the south approach flight path for aircraft landing at Kai Tak Airport. Otherwise, the view is lovely and relatively quiet. In the early morning, he can hear the comforting drumming of fishing boat diesel engines as they head out along the Tathong channel. He starts his day with coffee while reading the South China Morning Post. He checks his work remotely using a WYSE terminal and dial-up modem connected directly to his office workstation.
**Mong Kok Location Poster**

The Mong Kok office is the location of two dramatic confrontations where Christopher wonders what he has gotten himself into.

In sharp contrast to Heng Fa Chuen, Mong Kok is where businesses occupy the lower floors, and residential spaces tower over thirty stories above congested narrow streets. The buildings are close together, with companies on the ground level and residential flats on the floors above, reaching 40 stories. A significant business district, Mong Kok, has been described by the Guinness World Records as the world's busiest business district. It boasts a population density of 130,000/km² or 340,000 per square mile (2019), in contrast to Roland, Iowa, with 1224 people per square mile (2019), 277 people in Hong Kong for each person in Roland.

![Old furnishings help define Mr. Chau's superstitions.](image)

*Figure 44. Old furnishings help define Mr. Chau's superstitions.*

Props in the Mong Kok office define Mr. Chau. Although a very wealthy businessman, he had chosen to remain in this old office and retain the furnishings when he first became successful. A successful businessman, his office looks like a throwback to the 1960s when his
company became successful. Because Mr. Chau believes in Feng Shui, he has kept much of the original furniture and office equipment. Old typewriters sit idle, having been replaced by the PC. The decor is a mix of 1960's era metal desks with beautiful Chinese bent-wood furniture.

Christopher's computer workstations and broadcast-quality video equipment have been moved here while he was in Beijing. His team was able to keep working while a new office in neighboring Sham Shui Po is being renovated.

**Mong Kok at Night Location Poster**

Christopher is summoned to a meeting with Mr. Chau, Chau’s assistant Mrs. Fok, and the accountant André Rosário. Also present are Chau’s eldest son, the construction foremen, and several goons. In the meeting, Christopher’s back is toward the door, which is the most dangerous seat. Surrounded and intimidated, Christopher is extorted for the total amount of profits produced over the last six months.

With nothing left to gain, Christopher walks away from a legal partnership that never happens. Surprised, Mr. Chau and André Rosário had expected Christopher to peel profits before reporting. After all, that’s what they would do. But those are not the ethics that define Christopher. And he allows the relationship to dissolve.

The second night scene at Mong Kok Office is where Mr. Chau blames the accountant and Mrs. Fok for killing the golden goose. This is the only scene in the screenplay without Christopher’s presence.
Figure 45. Christopher enters the Mong Kok office not knowing what to expect.

Figure 46. Mong Kok conference room with Christopher's back to the door.
Heng Fa Chuen Flat

Figure 47. Heng Fa Chuen location poster.
Figure 48. Mong Kok office location poster.
Figure 49. Mong Kok office at night poster.
CHAPTER 8. CHARACTER POSTERS COMPONENT

Character Posters

Character drawings have been grouped into five sets. Each poster has basic information about the character with the drawings set at a location within the screenplay.

The first is Christopher Rigs with his poster. The second poster is of Christopher’s crew: secretary Lindsey, senior animator Cally, and the other two animators Cindy and Davy. The third poster is of the KWTL company staff. Christopher’s boss Jack Teo, the principal investor Mr. Chau, the assistant to Mr. Chau, Mrs. Fuk, and the accountant André Rosário. The fourth poster is of the Bangkok clients. Ratana, the AK&K advertising agency owner. Her assistant Miss Bum, and her client Khun Prasert and the architect Mr. Smith. In the final poster is Christopher’s
daughter Leslie. His new girlfriend Nit. The Canadian businessman from the Beijing hotel bar.

And the Hong Kong client Mr. Ho.

There are variations between how these characters look in the character posters, the storyboards and the 3D renderings. The 3D geometry models of the characters are placeholders and at times the same model is used for different characters.
Figure 53. Character poster for the protagonist of the story with a revised sketch of Christopher Rigs.
The Crew

Christopher’s Hong Kong Animation Team

**Name:** Liddy Loi
**Nationality:** Hong Kong Citizen
**Locations:** Kowloon Office, Mong Kok Office, Sham Shui Po Office, Din-San Restaurant
**Languages:** English, Cantonese
**Age:** 22
**Occupation:** Secretary

**Name:** Dora Kim
**Nationality:** Naturalised Australian
**Locations:** Kowloon Office, Mong Kok Office, Sham Shui Po Office, Hang Hau Ocean Promenade, Deep Water Chicago Grill, Lan Kave Fong Bar
**Languages:** English with Australian Accent, Fluent Cantonese
**Age:** 27
**Occupation:** Computer Animator, Photographer

**Name:** Cindy Weng
**Nationality:** Hong Kong Citizen
**Locations:** Kowloon Office, Mong Kok Office, Sham Shui Po Office, Din-San Restaurant
**Languages:** English, Cantonese
**Age:** 29
**Occupation:** Computer Animator

**Name:** Cathy Lam
**Nationality:** Hong Kong Citizen
**Locations:** Kowloon Office, Mong Kok Office, Sham Shui Po Office, Din-San Restaurant
**Languages:** English, Cantonese
**Age:** 24
**Occupation:** Senior Animator

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*Figure 54. Character poster of Christopher animation staff.*
The Company
Mr. Chau and KWTL Staff

Figure 55. Character poster KWTL company staff.
The Clients

Christopher’s Clients in Bangkok

Figure 56. Character poster of Christopher’s Bangkok clients.
Various Characters

Daughter, Girlfriend, Client, Canadian

Figure 57. Character poster of additional characters.
CHAPTER 9. PROPS POSTERS COMPONENT

Props Which Define Character

The Character Props for Christopher Rigs

We encounter character clues about Christopher in the opening sequence. Seated in the business class cabin of a Cathay Pacific Airways flight indicates something about his budget for travel expenses. He is casually dressed in his characteristic worn blue jeans, t-shirt or hoodie, suspenders, and Reebok Pumps with the iconic red dot. This ensemble contrasts with most business class travelers who prefer a formal business dress or nice casual. His footwear choice indicates this is a period piece as these Reebok’s became popular in the late 1980s.

The next set of props that define the character are the tools he is working with at his seat. He has a scientific calculator, a notebook, an open passport, and a boarding pass, along with a pen and complex-looking notes. We could assume these are for his work as they imply technical skills. Only later in the story do we become aware of the purpose of these calculations.

He stores these carry-on items in a Danish book bag, not in a briefcase as a typical businessman, nor a backpack, as would a tourist. The book bag is one of several indicators of his background. By the US passport, we know he is an American. The book bag is the first clue that he is of Danish heritage.

After waking from this dream, next to his bed are several Time Magazine issues, a framed photograph of a baby, and binoculars. Each a clue about the character. The magazines enforce his being an American with an interest in the US and world events. And even the possibility he may have trouble falling asleep. The photograph close to the bed indicates a person whom he thinks of often. He uses binoculars to look out into the harbor to watch the fishing boats—an interest in learning more about his environment rather than spying on his neighbors.
Defining Character

Christopher Rigs

We first encounter details about Christopher in the opening sequence. Seated in the business class cabin of a Cathay Pacific Airways flight, his style indicates something about his budget for travel expenses. He is casually dressed in his characteristic worn blue jeans, t-shirt or hoodie, suspenders, and red Roots boots with red laces. This ensemble contrasts with most business class travelers who prefer a formal black suit or dress and nice casual.

His footwear choice indicates this is a period piece as these Roots boots became popular in the late 1980s.

The next set of props that define the character are the tools he is working with at his seat. He has a scientific calculator, a notebook, an open passport, and a boarding pass, along with a pen and complex-looking notes. We can assume these are for his work as they imply technical skills. Only later in the story do we become aware of the purpose of these calculations.

He stores these carry-on items in a Danish book bag, not in a briefcase as a typical businessman. Nor is he a backpack, as would a tourist. The book bag is one of several indicators of his background. By the US passport, we know he is an American. The book bag is the first clue that he is of Danish heritage.

Company Kit, known as the green box. This box contains the storage of the memorandia & articles, the common seal, signature chops, round chops, share certificates, the statutory.

Easter Eggs

Some items are included for those who are in-the-know.

James Clavell’s epic novel “Tai-Pan” is inside Christopher’s Danish booklet. Clavell Asian Saga books were essential for the screenwriter’s understanding of Hong Kong’s British, Chinese, and expat cultures.

Rod Stewart’s album cover “Every Picture Tells a Story” refers to how visuals help tell the story. And, as a complex character, Christopher has a few skeletons in his closet.

Christopher’s dining area and living room are a treasure trove of character-defining props.

The Paul Heringer PW lamp on the dinner table is iconic of Danish design. These are complemented by two Danish chairs and a Danish dining set.

The rest of the furnishings were provided by the linoldor, many pieces bought in a Danish shop.

Besides household items, additional props define Christopher’s character. His fat appears more like an office than a home. Where a sofa usually would be is a desk with a WYSE terminal for connecting to the computers and working with a dial-up modem. A fax machine for business communications is next to the door. The fax has a plain cover and is filled with files of business documents.

His bookcase is a Hong Kong

Gibson Les Paul in the second bedroom but his work pace leaves him little time to play. His wristwatch, a Swiss Grand Prix, represents a type of counterculture style in Hong Kong.

Figure 58. Props which define character.
Close to the bed is a radio clock with the alarm set to play the RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong) English news broadcast. An indicator that he is interested in following local events and the first indicator that establishes his location as being in Hong Kong.

Another clue in the bedroom is the Danish lamp, a prop that may go unnoticed by most viewers. The Danish items indicate his design sensibility. Christopher’s dining area and living room are a treasure-trove of character-defining props. The Poul Henningsen PH-lamp over the dinner table is iconic of Danish design. These are complemented by two Danish chairs and a Danish dining set.

The rest of the furnishings were provided by the landlord. Many came from IKEA. While Scandinavian, they were influenced more by budget than by design.

Besides household items, additional props define Christopher’s character. His flat appears more like an office than a home. Where a sofa usually would be is a desk with a WYSE terminal for connecting to the computers at his office using a dial-up modem. A fax machine for business communications is next to the door. Boxes are filled with files of business documents. On his bookcase is a Hong Kong Company Kit, known as the green box. The box contains the storage of the memorandum & articles, the common seal, signature chops, round chops, share certificates, the statutory book, certificate of incorporation, and business registration certificate. The visibility of the green box is an indicator that Christopher has his own limited liability company. Personal items like the Fender Telecaster and Fender amp show he has an interest in playing music. There’s even a Gibson Les Paul in the second bedroom. But his work-pace leaves him little time to play. His wristwatch, a Swatch Grand Prix, represents a type of counterculture style in Hong Kong. Swatch watches were well made and relatively inexpensive compared to the
luxury Rolex, Cartier, Omega, and TAG Heuer status symbols heavy advertised on the Hong Kong English language television stations and billboards in the tourist areas.

**The Character Props for Jack Teo**

While occupying a short duration in the story, Christopher’s boss helps define Christopher’s dramatic need. A video production executive from Singapore via Jakarta, Jack dresses in the lighter-colored suits characteristic of those warmer regions. While a mentor, Jack does not insist that Christopher dress as an executive. Jack is aware of the distinct casual style of the video production industry.

Concerned with the perception of his executive status, Jack is adorned with symbols. He wears an authentic Rolex watch, uses a new Motorola DynaTac phone valued at USD 15,000, and smokes Djarum Super clove-scented cigarettes from Indonesia. Jack drives a Porsche in a city that does not have any roads worthy of this much horsepower. And as we learn on the ride to the airport, parking this expensive car costs more than the rent for Christopher’s comfortable apartment.

**Easter Eggs**

Some items are concealed in these visuals for those who are in the know. James Clavell’s epic novel “Tai-Pan” is inside Christopher’s Danish book bag. Clavell’s Asian Saga books were essential for the screenwriter’s understanding of Hong Kong’s British, Chinese, and expat cultures. Rod Stewart’s album cover “Every Picture Tells a Story” refers to how visuals help tell the story. And, as a complex character, Christopher has a few skeletons in his closet.

**Props Moving Story Forward**

See first, understand later. In the 52-1/2 Feet screenplay, props are used to move the story forward. We experience them first in one scene and learn their significance to the story later.
Perhaps the most significant props in the story are the aircraft—the Cathay Pacific Lockheed L-1011 Tristar in particular. The air travel establishes Christopher as a frequent traveler who dreams about troubles on his flights.

Figure 59. Lockheed L-1011 Tristar with Cathay Pacific markings.

Figure 60. Prop of Jack Teo’s Porsche 911, a character defining symbol of status.
Driving Story Forward

See First, Understand Later
In the 22-1/2 feet screenplay, props are used to move the story forward. We experience them first in one scene and learn their significance to the story later.

Perhaps the most significant props in the story are the aircraft— the Cathay Pacific/Lockheed L-1011 TriStar in particular. This jet establishes Christopher as a frequent traveler who dreams about troubles on his flights.

The aircraft is symbolic of his constant moving between Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Beijing. These trips keep him away from his daughter.

The dream of the low-flying aircraft over the water is the metaphor for the pace of his work, feeling that he could crash at any moment.

The account executive at M & S Advertising in Bangkok sets up a critical thread leading to dramatic tension by sending Christopher a fax. While having breakfast, a fax comes in from Miss Bum with notes from a meeting on the previous day.

She is efficient and responsible for sending the notes before Christopher leaves on his trip. Her thoroughness offers him time to pass change requests on to his staff. These meeting notes are critical for a smooth-flowing project.

While checking his files on the WISE terminal from his apartment, Christopher demonstrates impatience/frustration by digging his keys into his desk. We will see him do this a few times when he needs to remain silent but express frustration.

Ultimately the keys and the notes from Miss Bum come together in a dramatic confrontation. There is a quirk set of props that work together to drive home the busy schedule Christopher faces. The pages, the kitchen clock, the trash bin, and the refrigerator.

While Christopher decides to take up Angela’s offer to help clean his flat. He wants to make his home presentable to hit when she visits. The cleanup problem requires professional attention.

While being distracted by a conversation with the maid next door, Christopher realizes he is running late and doesn’t have time to dispose of the trash properly. He throws the bag in the freezer to keep it from rotting while away. The props we have seen so far are resisted for the most part. While we don’t know when the trash is removed from the freezer, the garbage did setup his bachelor housekeeping.

The equipment racks with the video gear will be seen at three different locations. The original site at the Kornhill Metro Tower office, next at the Mong Kok office, temp storage, and finally, at the remodeled Sham Shui Po office.

At Mong Kok, Christopher notices the equipment has been moved while he was in Beijing. He sees it again after the guns crackled the monitor’s protective screen. And finally, he inspects the equipment after being set up by the video engineer in Sham Shui Po.

Without this expensive gear, his team is unable to finish these expensive cutting edge projects.

Figure 61. Props which move story forward.
The aircraft is symbolic of his constant moving between Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Beijing. These trips keep him away from his daughter. The dream of the low-flying aircraft over the water is the metaphor for the pace of his work, feeling that he could crash at any moment.

As mentioned earlier, Miss Bum, the account executive at AK&S Advertising in Bangkok, sets up a critical thread leading to dramatic tension by sending Christopher a fax. While having breakfast, a fax comes in from Miss Bum with notes from a meeting on the previous day. She is efficient and responsible for providing the notes before Christopher leaves on his trip. Her thoroughness offers him time to pass change requests on to his staff. These meeting notes are critical for a smooth-flowing project. In a meeting later in the story Miss Bum fell asleep and didn’t take notes regarding an important guarantee her boss makes to Christopher. Without these notes, he has no evidence, and this error becomes costly.

While checking his files on the WYSE terminal from his apartment, Christopher demonstrates impatience/frustration by digging his keys into his desk. We will see him do this a few times when he needs to remain silent but express frustration. Ultimately the keys and the notes from Miss Bum come together in a dramatic confrontation outside the AK&S office. These props drive story forward.

There is a quirky set of props that work together to drive home the busy schedule Christopher faces. The pager, the kitchen clock, the trash bin, and the refrigerator. We know from the pager that his flight to Bangkok has been delayed, so he takes extra time at home before leaving for the office. Having been distracted by a conversation with the maid next door, Christopher realizes he is running late and doesn’t have time to dispose of the trash properly. He stows the bag in the freezer to keep it from rotting while away.
While we don’t know when the trash is removed from the freezer, the garbage set up his bachelor housekeeping. Christopher decides to take up Angelita’s offer to help clean his flat. He wants to make his home presentable to his future girlfriend, Nit, when she visits. The cleanup problem requires professional attention.

Additional props are the technologies Christopher uses at his office. We see another WYSE terminal at his desk, a Mac SE computer, and another room with broadcast-quality video equipment. The Mac SE sets the period and establishes that Christopher is using cutting-edge design technology.

The video equipment racks with the video gear will be seen at three different locations. The original site at the Kornhill Metro Tower office. Next at the Mong Kok office temp storage. And finally, at the remodeled Sham Shui Po office. At Mong Kok, Christopher notices the equipment has been moved while he was in Beijing. He sees it again after the goons cracked the monitor’s protective screen. And finally, he inspects the equipment after being set up by the video engineer in Sham Shui Po. Without this expensive gear, his team is unable to finish these cutting-edge projects.

**Color Moving Story Forward**

Although not a prop, color is a component which relate segments of the story. While color and a color scheme are not discussed in detail, the dream sequences should have a distinct colorization from the rest of the film. These should be identifiable if a color analysis were made similar to the one created in the study of Coppola’s *Lost in Translation*.

**Props Which Define the Story Title**

The protagonist Christopher Rigs is working in international business. In the opening sequence he is seated in the business class section of a Cathay Pacific flight bound for Hong
Kong, working on a diagram with numbers. His passport is open, he writes in his notebook and uses a scientific calculator.

Not detailed in the screenplay, Christopher is flying to a different country about once every four days. He wondered what his average height off the ground might be. He frequently travels between Hong Kong and Bangkok. A trip to Beijing every few weeks and a time or two to Tokyo and Taipei. To supervise a project, he made four trips to London from Hong Kong in one month. The flight alone was 17 hours each way. He stayed only 18-hours.

The advertising world requires fast turnarounds and immediate feedback. In 1991, the quickest means of image communication was by fax machine; black and white, and low quality—suitable for a storyboard. Sending a videotape from Hong Kong to Bangkok by DHL would take a day if not delayed in customs. It was a six-hour trip door to door, Hong Kong to Bangkok.

These props, the clothes, the notebook, the passport, the calculator and the diagram explain some of the details about the pace of his career lifestyle. They do setup the consequences he faces because of the career he has chosen.

*Figure 62. Prop for Christopher's Reebok shoes help define period.*
52½ Feet

Christopher was flying to a different country on average once every four days. He wondered, on average, how high he might be off the ground.

A Constant Traveler

The story. In 1991, Christopher was working in international business. He traveled frequently between Hong Kong and Bangkok. A trip to Beijing every few weeks and a times or twice to Tokyo and Taipei. To supervise a project he made four trips to London from Hong Kong in one month. The flight alone was 17 hours each way. He stayed only 18-hours.

Communications

The fastest means of image communication was a fax, black and white, and low quality. Good at best for a storyboard. Sending a video tape from Hong Kong to Bangkok by CIM, would take a day if the tape didn’t get hung-up in customs. The advertising world had fast turnaround and required immediate feedback. It was a six hour trip door to door, Hong Kong to Bangkok.

Figure 63. Props which define the story title.
Props Which Establish Period and Time of Day

Establishing Time of Day

The opening sequence of 52-1/2 Feet occurs on a Cathay Pacific Airways flight arriving in Hong Kong on the south approach. The map on the in-flight video establishes location. With the sun pouring in the port-side windows, the time of day would be mid-afternoon. Time of day is established by the sun’s direction. Experienced people with a strong sense of determining North and aware of their location on the earth can fix an accurate time within an hour or two. In this sequence the accuracy of an exact time of day is not essential. Most people pick up time-of-day clues instinctively and only raise an objection when the clues don’t sync. Keeping those clues consistent becomes the filmmaker’s responsibility. The determination of the time of day is critical to the entire production process: filming the interior shots on a stage, planning visuals, editing the finals, so the timeline flows logically.

The sequence following this flight has a different time of day. Christopher wakes from sleep. In his dream, he was flying toward Hong Kong. It is an assumption he wakes up in Hong Kong. The sky is dark, which in Hong Kong is roughly after 8 pm and before 5 am.

The next clue about the time of day comes by sound. From the bed, he hears the drumming of the fishing boat diesel engines. Prior experience tells him it’s around 4 am. He turns for to next time indicator, and this one is concrete. He checks the alarm clock. It’s precisely 4:24 am. The stories in movies are told by dialogue, actions, locations, props, sound effects, and music. And this scene uses them all. Christopher looks out the window to see fishing boats headed out for the day’s catch. He seems comforted and falls back asleep.
A Period Piece

Establishing Time
In the opening sequence of 52½ feet, the time of day is established by the sun’s direction.
Experience people with a strong sense of determining north and aware of their location on the earth can fix an accurate time within an hour or two.

In this sequence, accuracy isn’t essential. Most people pick up time-of-day clues instinctively and only raise an objection when the clues don’t sync. It becomes the filmmaker’s responsibility to keep those clues consistent.

The opening sequence occurs on a Cathay Pacific Airways flight arriving in Hong Kong on the south approach. The map on the in-flight video establishes location. With the sun pouring in the port-side window, the time of day would be mid-afternoon.

The determination of the time of day is critical to the entire production process: filming the interior shots on a stage, planning visuals, editing the final, so the timeline flows logically.

The following sequence has a different time of day. Christopher wakes from sleep. In his dreams, he was flying toward Hong Kong. It is an assumption: he wakes up in Hong Kong.

The sky is dark, which in Hong Kong is roughly after 8 pm and before 1 am.
The next clue is sound. From the bed, he hears the drumming of the diesel engines of fishing boats. Prior experience tells him it’s around 4 am.

He turns to the next time indicator, and this one is concrete. He checks the alarm clock. It’s precisely 4:24 am.

The stories in movies are told by dialogue, actions, locations, props, sound effects, and music.

In the story, Christopher looks out the window to see the fishing boats headed out for the day’s catch. He seems comforted and falls back asleep. He wakes again to a new time of time indicator—the roar of a Singapore Airlines Boeing 747.

Every morning SQ-1 from San Francisco arrives in Hong Kong around 6 am with a roar. Sunshine is pouring in the window. And the alarm does a double-check. The time reads 6 am. And the radio alarm goes on, starting with an on-the-hour news broadcast from RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong).

So far, the indicators of an exact date have been vague. The markings on the Cathay Pacific jet are those used between 1963 and 1994. Cathay Pacific retired the Lockheed L-1011 in 1996. The uniform of the cabin crew is from the early 1990s.

Establishing Date
It is the radio broadcast that sets the date within a day. The top news story: The male British news announcer establishes that we are in Hong Kong, and Iraq has invaded Kuwait.

“This is RTHK News. These are the headlines. There are few details of Soviet special envoy Yegory Primakov’s discussion with Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on Kuwait’s possible coalition invasion. In the news from around the Territory…”

Christopher checks his work at the office from his home. Props and sounds work together.

In the era just before the INTERNET became widespread, he would connect to his computer at work using a WYSE terminal and a telephone modem. The modem has a distinctive sound when dialing and connecting, sounding very electronic.

Additional Indicators
While talking with the maid next door from his kitchen window, Christopher checks his kitchen clock and realizes it is morning.

The Time magazine in the bedroom establishes a period by covers leading up to the second week of January, 1991.

Beyond date, the magazines indicate an interest in world news, that he may be an American, and that he may have trouble falling asleep.

All these are all components of visual storytelling.

Understanding the Scene

Figure 64. Props which define period.

PROPS
He wakes again to a different type of time indicator—the roar of a Singapore Airlines Boeing 747. Every morning flight SQ-1 from San Francisco arrives in Hong Kong around 6 pm with a roar. Sunshine is pouring in the window. And the alarm does a double-confirmation. The time reads 6 am. And the radio alarm goes on, starting with an on-the-hour news broadcast from RTHK.

**Establishing Date**

So far, the indicators of an exact date have been vague. The markings on the Cathay Pacific jet are those used between 1983 and 1994. Cathay Pacific retired the Lockheed L-1011 in 1996. The uniform of the cabin crew is from the early 1990s.

It is the radio broadcast that sets the date within a day. The top news story? The male British news announcer establishes that we are in Hong Kong, and Iraq has invaded Kuwait. “This is RTHK News. These are the headlines. There are few details of Soviet special envoy Yevgeny Primakov’s discussion with Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on Kuwait’s possible coalition invasion. (Pause.) In the news from around the Territory...”

Christopher dresses while listening to the news and sits at the breakfast table. Two confirmations for the exact date. First is the newspaper, the South China Morning Post, with the same headlines from the RTHK Radio news. Second is Christopher’s pager with a message that his flight for the day has been rescheduled. The date is January 14, 1991. The pager itself sets period. Pagers had their heyday but would soon be replaced by the afford-ability of mobile phones. He uses a Motorola Advisor, a multi-language pager capable of displaying English and Chinese. He has the same for Bangkok, which we will find out in a few hours with a similar pager capable of English and Thai notifications.

Christopher checks his work at the office from his home. Props and sounds work together. In the era just before the INTERNET became widespread, he would connect to his...
computer at work using a WYSE terminal and a telephone modem. The modem has a distinctive electronic sound when connecting to the remote computer.

**Secondary Indicators**

While reading the newspaper he is drinking coffee. As much of an indicator that it is morning as well as his being an American. While talking with the maid next door from his kitchen window, Christopher checks the kitchen clock and does not want to be late. The Time magazines in the bedroom establish a period by covers leading up to the second week of January, 1991. Beyond date, these magazines indicate an interest in world news, that he may be an American, and that he may have trouble falling asleep. All these are all components of visual storytelling.

**Transportation Props Define Period**

Among things that define that period are the aircraft, airline logos and markings, and even the airports. This helps determine the year when the story takes place.

**Airline Travel**

Four airlines are featured in the story. Cathay Pacific Airways (CX), Thai Airways International (TG), Singapore Airlines (SQ), and China Southern Airways (CZ).

For flights between Hong Kong and Bangkok, Christopher alternates between Cathay Pacific and Thai Airways. For flights to Beijing, he would fly China Southern Airways and occasionally Dragon Air. Singapore Airlines flight SQ-01 is Christopher's alarm clock, passing near his flat every morning at about 6 AM. And China Southern Airways is included in a story Christopher shares with Davy over beers.
Transportation Defines Period

The story of 52' 1/2 feet is set in 1991. Among things which define that period are the aircraft, airline logos and markings and even the airports. These help define the year when the story takes place.

Airlines

Four airlines are featured in the story. Cathay Pacific Airways (C), Thai Airways International (TG), Singapore Airlines (SQ) and China Southern Airways (CZ).

For flights between Hong Kong and Bangkok, Thai Airways flies both Cathay Pacific and Thai Airways for flights to Beijing. In 1991, the logos and aircraft markings have been significantly updated on Cathay Pacific and Thai Airways. Modern changes have been made to Singapore Airlines and China Southern Airlines. These markings as well as the aircraft themselves define the period.

Aircraft

The aircraft used by these airlines in 1991 have since been retired. Cathay Pacific Hong Kong to Bangkok flights retired the Lockheed L-1011 TriStar. This aircraft featured the distinctive rear engine under the vertical stabilizer. Thai Airways retired the 737-200. Singapore Airlines and China Southern Airlines have also retired their 707-300s. These aircraft were used for domestic routes.

Airports

Kowloon Airport was a main airport serving Hong Kong. It was used for low-cost flights to Southeast Asia.

Tuk Tuk

In Bangkok, the tuk-tuk is a common form of transportation. It is a small, three-wheeled vehicle with a roof and is powered by a two-cylinder engine. The driver sits at the back, and passengers sit at the front. The tuk-tuk is a cheap and efficient way to get around the city.

Rickshaw

The rickshaw was also a common form of transportation in Hong Kong. It was a人力车, which was pulled by a person. The rickshaw driver would pull the vehicle along the street while the passenger sat in the seat at the front.

Ground Transportation

Hong Kong has a well-developed public transportation system. The MTR (Mass Transit Railway) is the main metro system. The city also has a bus system and a tram system.

Figure 65. Props for transportation which define period and location.
Since 1991, the logos and aircraft markings have been significantly updated on Cathay Pacific and Thai Airways. Modest changes have been made to Singapore Airlines and China Southern Airways. These markings, as well as the aircraft themselves, help define the period.

The aircraft used by these airlines in 1991 have since been retired. Cathay Pacific Hong Kong to Bangkok flights retired the Lockheed L-1011 Tristar with its distinctive third rear engine under the vertical stabilizer. Thai Airways has retired the Airbus A310-200, which was their primary mid-range aircraft. Singapore Airlines, as have international carriers, has retired their entire fleet of Boeing 747 aircraft. China Southern Airways has retired its fleet of Boeing 737-200, a comparatively smaller aircraft used for domestic routes.

Kai Tak Airport in east Kowloon extended from the peninsula into Kowloon Bay. Because of the awkward flight path imposed by the Eight Mountains of Kowloon, modern aircraft approaching from the northwest would have to make an abrupt 47-degree right turn just before touchdown. This sharp turn just before landing gave Kai Tak the consideration of being one of the world's most dangerous airports. This western approach was popular with tourists as Hong Kong was known for the iconic photographs of large body aircraft flying low over buildings. The south-east approach over the Tathong Channel was used in the early morning or when weather conditions required the south-east approach.

**Ground Transportation**

Hong Kong uses color coding for the taxi. The two most common are red for Hong Kong Island and Green for Kowloon. Color coding is also used for the buses. The Hong Kong Island CityBus Ltd. Company operates on Hong Kong Island with routes to the airport. It employs a distinctive blue color. The Kowloon Motor Bus Company (KMB) uses a light copper color. As there is some overlap in their routes, the colors make it easier for locals and tourists to identify the correct general destination.
The rickshaw’s presence remained at the Hong Kong Star Ferry Terminal in Central District well past 1991. A means of transportation of a bygone era, its popularity waned among tourists because of the perception of cruelty. It was allowed to continue as it was the only source of income for the drivers.

In Bangkok, we find a type of transportation not found in Hong Kong: the tuk-tuk. Since the period of this screenplay, the tuk-tuk appears to have changed little. Its compact size makes it well suited for maneuvering in traffic and traversing meandering back-alleys. While the tuk-tuk doesn't define the period in the same way the aircraft or even bus or taxi, it does specify location and culture.

Figure 66. Prop of tuk-tuk with colors unique to Bangkok, Thailand.
CHAPTER 10.  3D MODEL COMPONENT

A Visual Planning Tool

Story and Prop Development Cycle

Adding the prop assets in 3D and viewing them from a camera had a recycling effect of adjusting the story, continuity, consistency, and planning. On several instances, after seeing the shot through, the camera revealed what items were missing in the background. And adding those assets often resulting in modifying the story.

The model of Christopher’s flat in Heng Fa Chuen is based on the exact location where the screenwriter lived in Hong Kong. Being able to position walls, doors and windows accurately helped recall details and events. And this recall helped shape the character, defining his character by these props, often leading to adjustments to the screenplay.

The Mong Kok office location was built completely from memory. In this example, the floor plan was built in reverse of the Heng Fa Chuen model. Standard size tables and chairs were positioned relative to the screenwriter’s memory of location. This led to the position of the walls to be determined by the space around furnishings. The size of this office is not accurate by any means, nor is accuracy important. The space of the 2nd floor office is most likely slightly larger than memory, but still works well for the telling of the story. The more important factor is the older, even outdated style of the furnishings in the office which made it remarkable.

3D Technology

The extent to which these models grew in complexity would not have been possible without the aid of the 3D software Sketchup which as its strength in architecture mock-up modeling. Sketchup works well in setting the geometry to the correct scale so all the relative objects and camera angles resemble what we would find on a feature film set. Building plans
were found at a Hong Kong real-estate website so the Heng Fa Chuen apartment could be framed accurate to scale.

These models were imported into Modo, a 3D modeling, animation, and rendering software by Foundry (UK). With Modo, geometric details were added to models from Sketchup as well as textures and lighting. Most of the imported geometry required mild to extensive adjustments. The finished 3D renders were created in Modo.

Several additional models were created from scratch using Modo and Houdini, such as the Danish Book Bag, the picture frames, the kitchen trash.

The exception is the interior of the aircraft for the opening sequence storyboards, which used models exported from Sketchup and imported into Houdini by Side Effects Software to take advantage of Houdini’s “wren” line rendering tool and ability to deal with large amounts of polygons.

**3D Model Library**

Included are Sketchup’s 3D Warehouse library of assets used to populate the set. Many of these were based on real life geometry and scaled accurately to the rooms. Another source of free assets were from Foundry community shared meshes and shaders. There were specific items available for free or by purchase from TurboSquid. These included some vehicles and the 3D guests in the virtual gallery.

All of these assets were imported into Modo requiring the assigning of new shaders and creation of new texture maps.

**3D Characters**

3D models of humans in various poses were introduced for use as aids in the storyboarding process. These representations became more valuable for telling the story,
especially in the scenes at the Mong Kong office where Christopher and his crew witness thugs enter the office and threaten Mr. Chau.

Figure 67. The dramatic effect increased by using 3D character models in the Mong Kong office CG room.

Figure 68. The dramatic effect increased by using 3D character models in the Mong Kong office CG room.
CHAPTER 11. STORYBOARD POSTERS COMPONENT

Three sequences from the screenplay have been storyboarded. The first is the beginning of the story that shows the protagonist on a flight bound for Hong Kong on Cathay Pacific Airlines. The second is the client interaction with Mr. Ho and his bubbles. And the third is the Beijing Bar encounter with the Canadian Businessman.

Opening Sequence

The opening sequence begins a story thread that weaves throughout the screenplay. A live-action photo-realistic visual effects sequence of the type I would have worked on during my film production days. This dream establishes a vital premise for the story. Just as the jet is flying fast, dangerously low over the water, Christopher's business could collapse at any moment, ending in disaster.

The process for these shots was my first use of 3D graphics as an aid for storyboarding. The repetitive pattern of airline seats is difficult to draw and painful when camera angles are adjusted. And the exterior shots of the aircraft over the water in accurate perspective to the landmasses easier to visualize. This manner of thinking comes from my days working on shots considered set-extensions where the desired look is a photorealistic representation.

The models of the interior and exterior were imported assets from Sketchup software. This geometry was exported as an obj file and imported into Houdini for animation. The exterior frames were imported into Modo to create 3D concept art still images. The Hong Kong terrain and building model was purchased and imported into the 3D packages. The exterior jet was texture-mapped with images I created in Photoshop based on 1991 era Cathay Pacific Tristar jet markings.
The jet's interior was based on a generic wide-body model for a coach cabin of three portside seats, an aisle, four middle seats, an aisle, and three starboard side seats. The business class section had a corresponding 2x3x2 seating arrangement. The models of the characters were purchased from Turbosquid.com.

**Mr. Ho’s Bubbles**

This sequence is based on a story that David Cheung passed along to me about his experience working with Hong Kong clients (Cheung, 2020). In the original story, the client was in a foul mood having lost money at the racetrack, an event the animator was not aware of at the time. He didn’t like the specific changes he had requested in an animation of the bubbles.

With permission, I used David’s story and inverted the outcome. The bubbles became linked to a winning racehorse rather than a loss. The client was pleased with his gambling success and related that to the animation—a reflection of the local culture.

These shots are also a VFX sequence that is visible on the video monitor in the client presentation room. To retain period authenticity, the effect used on-screen could not be of photorealistic quality. It would need to resemble the quality of rendering available in 1991. While not an easy effect, this type of bubble animation is possible to create to look photorealistic in 2021 by an individual animator using a modest laptop with industry-standard software. In 1991 this would not have been possible no matter the budget. Each bubble would have been animated by keyframe individually and made to look as if the bubbles interacted with each other. Today this would be creating using simulation methods. Understanding this adds significance to the statement the secretary Lindsey makes about the animators working all weekend and Cindy making the request, “can I go home now.”

The sequence is more than a history of visual effects. The scene sets up the cultural differences between Christopher and the people he works with.
Beijing Hotel Bar

This sequence came from the same mini-research project I did with Mr. Ho’s Bubbles. I asked my former colleagues from Hong Kong days about their work experiences as an expat. Canadian Shaun Chapman related a story about his compensation being changed after his first few weeks in Hong Kong. Shaun’s event led him to relocate to Singapore (Chapman, 2020).

With Shaun’s permission, I placed the Canadian in a bar in Beijing, having relocated to China. After Christopher had discovered the Hong Kong salesman Rollo had misled the weather service in the purchase of expensive equipment, this sequence takes place, leaving the omission for someone else to clear up.

This scene in Act-1 sets up the coming chain of ethical differences between Christopher and his clients and investors.

Figure 69. Porsche dream sequence visualization.
Opening Sequence

Act 1 Seq. 1 & 2
The protagonist, Christopher Rigs, is on a Cathay Pacific Airways flight bound for Hong Kong Kai Tak Airport.

Figure 70. Act-1 Sequences 1 & 2, Page 1
Opening Sequence

Act 1 Seq. 1 & 2 • Continued
As the Lockheed L-1011 Tristar approaches Kai Tak, he jet flies dangerously low over the water. Before crashing into the sea, Christopher wakes.
Opening Sequence

**Act 1 Seq. 2 & 3 • Continued**

Christopher wakes up in his flat in Heng Fa Chuen Hong Kong and gets ready for the day.

**Act 1 Seq. 3**

Views of Christopher's apartment.
Mr. Ho’s Bubbles

Act 1 Seq. 10

Christopher’s client Mr. Ho comes in to check on the animation of bubbles for a Perrier commercial. He is in an exceptionally happy mood.

Action
Mr. Ho

Action
Christopher

Action
Mr. Ho

Action
Christopher

Action
Christopher

Action
Mr. Ho

Action
Christopher

Action
Christopher

Action
Christopher

Action
Christopher

Action
Christopher

Figure 73. Mr. Ho’s Bubbles, Act-1 Sequence 10, Page 1
Act 1 Seq. 10 Continued
Cindy and Davy have a hard time following Mr. Ho's discussion as he compares the bubbles with his winning racehorse.

Figure 74. Mr. Ho’s Bubbles, Act-1 Sequence 10, Page 2
Beijing Hotel Bar

Act 1 Seq. 29
Christopher returns to his hotel from the China Meteorological Administration. The snow is falling hard.

Figure 75. Storyboard Act-1 Sequence 29, Page 1
Beijing Hotel Bar

Act 1 Seq. 29 Continued
Christopher is listening to a Canadian businessman who is also holed-up in the hotel.

A Constant Traveler

“There was never a plan to have traveled so much. It was at the intersection of technology, need and availability. I just let it happen.” — Guzman

Figure 76. Storyboard Act-1 Sequence 29, Page 2
CHAPTER 12. VISUAL EFFECTS POSTER COMPONENT

Jack Teo has been Christopher's mentor for the last two years, teaching him how to work and navigate the business world of Hong Kong. Jack is imparting the cultural knowledge needed for this young American to survive. Jack has money for a sports car in a city not car friendly. Along with his Rolex and Motorola mobile phone, another status symbol.

As they ride to the airport in Act 1, Sequence 12, Christopher's mind is preoccupied with his projects. He is oblivious to Jack's worries. Christopher is trying to juggle all the work going on. He is concerned about the design and technical aspects of the work. All this on top of learning to navigate Asian business culture and ethics. Plus, his daughter is on his mind.

The location is King's Road in Quarry Bay, near the Kornhill office and along the route to Kai Tak Airport.

This sequence is a combination of live-action elements and 3D. An efficient way to build the sequence is to shoot the car as live-action with the actors and the Porsche's interior. The Porsche's exterior would be painted green with the other vehicles, the roadway, signage, buildings, Heng Fa Chuen flat, and parking garage replaced with 3D extensions. Using a photorealistic render would allow for more flexibility while remaining economical.

Physical props would include the Porsche 911 interior, the Motorola DynaTAC mobile phone, Rolex watch, Djarum Super cigarettes. The poster with the film crew is a lighthearted look at the filming of the live-action elements.

Figure 77. Porsche daydream sequence humorous production mock-up.
Day Dream

Act 1, Sequence 12
Jack Too has been CHRISTOPHER’s mentor for the last two years, teaching him how to work and navigate the business world of Hong Kong. Jack is imparting the cultural knowledge needed for this young American to survive.

JACKIE is buying an expensive car in a city, not car friendly. Along with his Rolex and Motorola mobile phone, another status symbol.

As they ride to the airport, Christopher’s mind is preoccupied with his projects. He is oblivious to Jack’s worries.

CHRISTOPHER is trying to juggle all the work going on. He is concerned about the design and technical aspects of the work. All this on top of learning to navigate Asian business culture and ethics.

Plus his daughter is on his mind.

Location
Kings Road, Quarry

Props
Porsche 911, Motorola DynaTAC mobile phone, Rolex watch, Ogiun Super cigarettes

VFX Animation
3D models of Porsche 911, Delivery Truck, Sedans, Hong Kong flat, REA furniture in flat, Guitars, Amps, Bookshelves, Photography, Dinner Table, Kitchen, Parking Garage, etc.

3D Set Extension
Hong Kong streets, Road signage, period posters, period advertising, parking garage.

Figure 78. Daydream sequence from Act-1, Sequence 12.
CHAPTER 13. GALLERY COMPONENT

Figure 79. Gallery tour, exterior view with traditional movie theater marquee.

A Virtual Gallery

This gallery presentation was arranged to introduce the story in a specific order and serve as a screenplay pitch. The ultimate target audience is feature film studio executives or those connected with them. Central Iowa is not an ideal location to attract producers from Los Angeles, New York, or Hong Kong, especially within the short duration of a typical MFA show. This is the advantage of a virtual gallery.

The years 2020 and the beginning of 2021 have been exceptional worldwide. The Corvid-19 virus has resulted in extreme precautions in social interaction and limited travel. This alone makes a virtual show imperative.
Figure 80. Gallery layout with entrance at the bottom.
Figure 81. A-01 Gallery tour entrance.

Why 3D

Why create a 3D gallery rather than 2D? The best reason is I have the ability. Since 1986 my career has been working with animation—an opportunity to use these skills for my works rather than for advertising agencies or film producers. Also, by creating a virtual 3D gallery space, I have control over space, layout, content, and the order in which these things are presented to a viewer.

Figure 82. Prop of a South China Morning Post newspaper front page.
My original intention for using 3D was an aid for storyboarding, allowing for experimentation of the camera angles. 3D proved to become a helpful tool for production planning of sets that need to be built with removable walls and ceilings to accommodate lighting and camera placement. In the 3D-printed visualization model in the gallery, I added the production crew's comic addition around the Porsche-in-Apartment model.

Perhaps the most exciting result from creating the 3D space would ricochet and serve the story. As my visualization of the apartment and office space for the 3D models became more detailed, it helps me deal with the questions the production designers face. How does the environment contribute to defining the character and telling the story?

In turn, this transformed my original 2D pencil sketch of the layout for my Thesis show into a 3D model for the planning of the show, which is to reveal the story through the images.
Gallery Layout

The layout of the gallery is critical for understanding the screenplay. The placement of items and their proximity unwraps the elements in a deliberate sequence.

The following considerations were made for how the viewer would move through that space. These descriptions are worded from the point of view of someone previously unfamiliar with the screenplay story. As one would walk through the gallery, the layout is intended to generate curiosity. The story unfolds as one moves through the space. The goal is to create interest in reading the screenplay as the view sees the interconnection of all the elements.

Exterior

The exterior of the gallery suggests an earlier period. Using a movie theater for an MFA exhibition establishes the subject matter being about the feature film. The wording on the marquee, “52-1/2 FEET, SCREENPLAY AND DESIGN, GARMAN HERIGSTAD,” establishes the name of the screenplay and that it is written and designed by myself.
The exterior architecture resembles an older style of a movie theater. The marquee bears a name and symbol linked with Iowa State. In the 1970s, there were two movie theaters in the Ames campus town. One was named the Varsity, which I used as the name for this space. The Iowa State Cyclone mascot is the older style of the Cy character, establishing a period.

The glass entrance doors are flanked by movie posters for the screenplay “52-1/2 Feet” with credits in feature film style at the bottom. Above the entrance is the marquee with blazing lights and the name of the show and theater.

A sizeable three-dimensional version of the same poster on the rear wall is visible through the glass doorway. The poster will be backlit and visible even from outside with the gallery lights off.

Figure 85. A-04 Gallery tour, location and props to the left.

An Entrance

Upon entering the space, the viewer has the option of proceeding in three directions. Near the entrance is a counter with stanchion retractable belt barriers. Above each end is a small sign
directing traffic. The first sign contains the wording “Location & Props,” with an arrow pointing to the left. The second reads “Story & Characters” with an arrow pointing to the right.

The third option is to step forward where the viewer will be confronted with a curiosity: a structure resembling an airline check-in counter.

Figure 86. A-05 A structure resembling a Thai Airways checking counter serving as the gallery reception.

Figure 87. Prop for the boarding gate number used at the rear of the gallery to direct attention to the backroom.
Establishing Air Travel

This structure is based on the Thai Airways check-in counters at Bangkok’s Don Mueang airport. Above the counter is a listing of flight TG-638 to Hong Kong. To the left is a suitcase tagged for HKG (Hong Kong.) On the counter is a sign-in book for visitors, brochures for the show titled “What did I get myself into.” Next to that, a Thai Airways 1991 flight schedule establishes a period. The viewer knows this exhibit has something to do with Thailand, something to do with Hong Kong, and something to do with air travel.
The protagonist checks into a Don Mueang Airport Thai Airways flight bound for Hong Kong in the story. The gallery viewer would connect this imagery after reading the screenplay. The counter becomes a teaser for discovery. The intention is to arouse curiosity using a slight amount of bewilderment in anticipation that the screenplay reader will recall the counter with appreciation.

The first implementation of this show is hosted on a website. A sign-in book links to a contact/comment form, a link to a downloadable PDF of the exhibition catalog.
Figure 92. Tour image A-08 with a close-up of the exhibition catalogue.

Figure 93. Tour image A-09 of the suitcase.
Summarizing Story

Looking up from the counter, the viewer would see four large posters on the wall. These posters are titled “Story” with an elevator-pitch worded description of the screenplay.
The first gray background poster reads, “A young American graphic designer starting his second year working in East Asia is in, over his head, adjusting to culture, language, ethics, and life.”

The second blue background poster reads, “The protagonist, Christopher Rigs, frequently travels from Hong Kong to Bangkok and Beijing. Career demands make it difficult for his personal life.”

The third green background poster reads, “Having formed a great team of eager young Hong Kongers, success becomes the enemy. Investors are impatient for their cut of the pie. Clients refuse responsibility.”

And the fourth red background poster reads, “We hope you enjoy living in Tai Koo Shing. We hope your daughter enjoys going to Quarry Bay School. We wish you a long and happy life. –Please sign the check.”
Figure 97. Tour image B-03 of the story posters.

Figure 98. Tour image C-01 of the character posters.

Character Sketches and Profiles

The viewer moves behind the counter to read the story. The flow of this wall is from right to left (front to back). The following posters are drawings of the main characters in the
screenplay with brief profile information. These start with the first protagonist and in groups of four characters.

The second character set is Christopher’s animation team.

The third set is members from the KWTL company.

The fourth set is the clients in Bangkok. And the last is a collection of various characters, including Christopher’s daughter, his girlfriend, a Hong Kong client, and a Canadian he meets in Beijing.

Figure 99. Tour image C-02 of the character posters.

Figure 100. Check-in counter.
Figure 101. Tour image C-03 of the character posters.

Figure 102. Tour image C-05 of the character and story posters.
Figure 103. Tour image D-01 of the 3D models in the left center area of the gallery.

Figure 104. Tour image D-02 of the Mong Kok office 3D model.
Figure 105. Tour image D-03 of the 3D models.

Figure 106. Tour image D-04 of the Porsche dream 3D model.
Figure 107. Tour image D-05 of the Heng Fa Chuen flat 3D model.

Figure 108. Tour image D-06 of the Google Earth image. © Google.com 2021 (Google Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GERCO Landsat / Copernicus SK telecom IBCAD, 2021)
The Space Working as a Unit

As the viewer reads the character descriptions, they will notice related wording and images in the other walls' posters. The proximity is to increase curiosity, unite the works in a close relationship, and draw the viewer to investigate further.
Rear Center Area

As the viewer would turn from the posters, they would encounter an airport-style boarding area bench. On the far wall is the large 52-1/2 feet three-dimensional poster.

Three-Dimensional Models

The left-side center area has four display tables, three with a model. The models are of white materials with objects significant to the story with color. Limited use of lights is embedded in these models. The type used for model railroads and buildings. These lights draw attention to spaces significant to the screenplay—those covered by the ceiling in the model or take place at night in the story.

The viewer would examine the left-back model first, a 3D-printed layout of the Mong Kok office of the protagonist's investor. The viewer may recall seeing some of these objects in the character profiles.
Figure 112. 3D model of the Mong Kong office.

Figure 113. 3D model of Christopher's Heng Fa Chuen flat.
The second three-dimensional model is the Hong Kong, Heng Fa Chuen apartment of the protagonist. This location is in the early pages of the screenplay and related to the images in the protagonist's character profile.

![3D model of the Porsche VFX daydream sequence.](image)

The third model is a disorienting combination of vehicles embedded in the walls of the previously viewed apartment. Overhead is a traffic sign marks the route to the Hong Kong Kai Tak Airport. This model includes movie cameras, cranes, and camera operators, a clue this has something to do with movie production—another curiosity—a visualization for the Porsche Daydream sequence.

**Table Map Defining Region**

Proceeding, the viewer finds themselves near the entrance on the left side. Again, they would look at the table map and see the video loop cycle between the locations previously highlighted in the story and character information. Google Earth and Google Maps of the sites
appear in the order in the story. The table map is a video monitor laying horizontally. (Google, 2020)

Figure 115. 3D model of Porsche Daydream sequence from window.

Figure 116. 3D model of Porsche Daydream sequence from window.
Figure 117. 3D model of Porsche Daydream sequence.

Figure 118. Aircraft drink cart from the Cathay Pacific Lockheed L1011 Tristar.
Figure 119. Tour image E-01 of location posters for Hong Kong, Bangkok and Beijing.

Figure 120. Tour image E-02 of the location posters.
Figure 121. Tour image E-03 of the location posters Hong Kong, Bangkok and Beijing.

Figure 122. Tour image E-04 of the location posters for Heng Fa Chuen, Mong Kok Office and Mong Kok at night.
Figure 123. Tour image E-05 of the prop’s posters.

Figure 124. Tour image E-06 of the prop and story title explanation posters.
Locations Defining the Story

On the left side wall are posters subtitled location at the bottom. The first three are three cities in the story: Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Beijing. The posters contain visuals and facts from a tourist’s perspective: geographic, demographic, and iconic imagery. The purpose is to orient the viewer to the screenplay locations.

Continuing the flow from left to right (front to back), these posters introduce the locations. The Heng Fa Chuen flat, the Mong Kok office, and the same office at night.

Props Defining Character and Story

Following the locations are a series of posters describing props significant to the story. These are grouped by those which establish location. Those indicate period, date, and time. Those which define the characters. Those which define culture. And those which contribute to the unfolding of the story.
Figure 126. Tour image F-01 of the movie poster.

Figure 127. Tour image F-02 of the movie poster.
Figure 128. Image Outside space.

Figure 129. Tour image G-01 of the Transportation props poster.
Explanation of the Screenplay Title

The viewer has moved to the back wall and the last poster, a description of the meaning of the screenplay title.

52-1/2 Feet Poster

The last item in this room a closer view of the large movie poster. The poster printed on translucent paper and backlit a full-size LED panel. The entire poster glows.
Figure 132. Tour image G-03 of the boarding gate sign.

Figure 133. Tour image G-04 of the boarding gate.
Figure 134. Tour image G-05 of the boarding gate.

**Boarding Area**

Looking up to the poster's right, the viewer would see another back-lite sign with the big, bold letters "2B" over a glowing yellow background, visible in low light. The style of gate numbering is from the Hong Kong Kai Tak Airport. Moving around the corner, the viewer would see a flight departures sign, the type used in the Kai Tak Airport.

In the far back-right corner, the viewer is confronted with a life-size image of a stewardess supported by foam-core. The woman is wearing a 1991-period Cathay Pacific flight-crew uniform, designed by Hermes (Nguyen, 2020).

She is standing before a window frame with a wall-size video monitor playing a loop of a Cathay Pacific Lockheed L-1011 Tristar passenger jet moving toward then away from a gate. The aircraft is significant to period as this model of aircraft was retired in 1996. The Cathay Pacific logo and graphics on the vertical stabilizer were used from 1983-1994. The Hong Kong Kai Tak airport was decommissioned in 1997 when the new airport moved to Lantau Island.
These boarding area items establish air travel, the region of the world, and set the period to a date before 1994. While these clues would be unknown to those not familiar, they lead to credibility in the visualization of the story to those familiar with Hong Kong.

At the cutout-stewardess's left is a sign with the text "CX 653 Bangkok" with the pre-1994 Cathay Pacific Logo at the bottom. We are leaving Hong Kong and traveling to Bangkok.

Figure 135. Tour image H-01 of the storyboards.

Figure 136. Cathay Pacific Airlines Lockheed L-1011 Tristar operational in 1991.
Figure 137. Tour image H-02 of the storyboards for the opening sequence.

Figure 138. Tour image H-03 of the opening sequence storyboards.
Figure 139. Tour image H-04 of “Mr. Ho’s Bubbles” sequence.

Figure 140. Tour image H-05 of “Beijing Hotel Bar” sequence and the “Porsche Daydream” VFX sequence.
Figure 141. Tour image H-06 of the video display.

Figure 142. Tour image J-01 of the Cathay Pacific business class.
Figure 143. Tour image J-02 of the Cathay Pacific business class.

Figure 144. Tour image J-03 of the Cathay Pacific business class.
Figure 145. Tour image J-04 of the Cathay Pacific business class close-up.

Figure 146. Tour image J-05 of the Cathay Pacific business class close-up.
Figure 147. Tour image J-06 of the Cathay Pacific business class.

Figure 148. Tour image J-07 of the Cathay Pacific business class.
Figure 149. Tour image J-08 of the Cathay Pacific business class.

Figure 150. Tour image J-09 of the Cathay Pacific business class exit.
Life-Size Business Class

Entering the backroom, we encounter another curious site similar to the check-in counter at the entrance. There are two rows of life-size business-class seats on the right. Outside the port-side windows, we see moving clouds. Another animation looped on a large video screen. The area receives light from the video beyond the windows.

Only one of the overhead lights is turned on. That isle seat has the tray table opened with a calculator, pen, passport, and notebook. On the floor are a pair of high-top basketball shoes and a Danish bookbag. The viewer would recognize the items on the tray table from the poster describing the title's meaning. And they would recognize the items on the floor from the poster depicting props significant to the protagonist.

There is a video player on the bulkhead of the front business-class wall, a map indicating the plane on landing approach to Hong Kong.

Figure 151. Tour image K-01 of the main gallery upon exit.
Figure 152. Tour image K-02 of the main gallery upon exit.

Figure 153. Tour image K-03 of the main gallery upon exit.
Figure 154. Tour image K-04 of the main gallery upon exit.

Figure 155. Tour image L-01 of the main gallery upon exit.
Video Player

Just beyond the business-class seating in the far corner is a video wall. The video would loop between the following.

First will be a “temp” trailer for the promotion of the movie. Rough images, audio, and music with voice-over and images would introduce the main character and story. Following would be an animatic of the opening sequence of the movie. Following are select previsualizations from the sequence. The last being the previsualization of the Perrier bubbles from the client meeting.

Figure 156. Tour image L-2 of the main gallery upon exit

Figure 157. Image of Christopher’s keys, a significant story-flow prop.
Figure 158. Tour image L-3 walk to the non-thesis works gallery.

Figure 159. Tour image L-4 of the non-thesis works gallery.
Storyboards

The remaining two walls contain storyboards of select sequences from the screenplay: the opening sequence, Mr. Ho’s bubbles client meeting, the Beijing Bar, and a Porsche day-dream visual-effects description.

Gallery Traffic Flow

This flow of viewer traffic between sections, as described, is a suggestion, not a requirement. The viewer could and perhaps most likely go in any direction. They may head straight back with the stewardess standing before what would look like a life-size approaching plane. That alone, visible from the outside, would indeed generate great curiosity.

The proximity of the sections would allow the viewer to examine one area, then turn back to a previous area and understand that all these visual works have unity. The room is small, and the viewer may turn around while en route. They would see text and imagery relating across the room. As they proceed, they would know the room unifies around the story.
Curiosity and Inconsistency

The layout is not designed to tell the story in order of the screenplay. The Thai check-in counter occurs late in the story, while the Cathay Pacific business class is the film's first shot. The boarding gate sign lists a flight to Bangkok, while the bulkhead's video map indicates a plane landing in Hong Kong. These are all elements within the story, not to be interpreted in sequence. The imagery and supporting text informs the viewer what the story "looks like," so they have a visual reference when they read the screenplay.
CHAPTER 14. CONCLUSION

I am a different person than when I started in the fall of 2018. I made good on my promise to begin writing my war stories. I learned essential skills for screenwriting by doing. I learned new technology and techniques which I had not mastered before. And I was able to use my 35+ years of technology and organizational methods to produce a unique work of a very personal nature.

Within the start-to-finish timeline of feature film production, this work is near the beginning. It is more than a screenplay yet less than a complete production design. Essentially it is an elaborate pitch presentation to sell the story and move the project along. The work could proceed in several directions.

**Future Work**

**Animatics and Previsualizations**

Additional components could include animatics and previsualizations of the visual effect’s sequences. These are the items that would be playing on the monitor in the back room of the virtual gallery. These would be the opening of the story and the Porsche daydream.

These low-quality visualizations could also encompass a set of trailers for the promotion of the film. Each trailer could have its emphasis. One could be the opening dream sequence. Another could start with Mr. Ho’s bubbles. Each would address a different set of story points for the potential viewing market.

**Virtual Gallery**

Time had not allowed for my gallery presentation to be a 3D virtual experience. The geometry, texturing, and lighting were created to import into a game engine like Unreal Engine by Epic Games. This process of importing the assets and adding the interactivity of the camera
itself could take months and a strong consideration to pursue. And without a doubt, virtual galleries is a precursor to what the future will be.

Figure 163. Gallery illuminated only by the posters.

**Screenplay Revisions**

Screenplays are revised all through production. The editing process can move and omit dialogue without the original screenwriter consulted. There is the common Hollywood phrase “saved in editing.” Or, as some writers may state, “destroyed by the director.”

This screenplay included as part of this thesis would be expected to evolve as it would move into production and editing.

**Additional Formats**

Written as a feature film screenplay, these written and visual works could be adapted into a graphic novel. This adaptation would require rewriting as the graphic novel allows thoughts to
be included in the text. This work could also be reversed from the typical flow and adapted into a novel or the memoir, which was the original intention of my work at the beginning.

**CNC Routing**

While the experiments to visualize a 3D CNC router poster were intriguing, the results were not finished enough to reflect actual construction methods. As the COVID-19 pandemic restricted my being able to work with the equipment at the College of Design I was not able to prototype the design. The look is still intriguing and a type of material I hope to explore more in the future.

**Further Written Works**

Regardless of how these works are revised in the future, this experience has prepared me to develop new stories in a variety of formats. As it should be, this is only the beginning.
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## APPENDIX A. CHARACTER PROFILES

Table 1. Characters by Screenplay Order of First Appearance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act 1</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Rigs</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Protagonist, KWTL Animation Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CX STEWARDESS A</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Cathay Pacific Stewardess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CX STEWARDESS B</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Cathay Pacific Stewardess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CX PURSER</td>
<td>Female Chinese</td>
<td>30 (Voice Over Only)</td>
<td>Cathay Pacific Stewardess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGELITA</td>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>FILIPINO MAID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HENG FA CHUEN SECURITY GUARD</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONG KONG TAXI DRIVER A</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWTL RECEPTIONIST</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>KWTL Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACK TEO</td>
<td>Singapore Chinese</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>KWTL Director</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR. CHAU</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>KWTL Investor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STACEY TEO</td>
<td>Chinese Age 31</td>
<td>KWTL Director. No dialogue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALAN NG</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>KWTL Director. No dialogue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KATIE MOK</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>KWTL Director. No dialogue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STACEY’S SECRETARY</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>KWTL Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LINDSEY LOH</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Christopher’s Secretary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALLY LAM</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Christopher’s Crew Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINDY WONG</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Christopher’s Crew Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAVY KOO</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Christopher’s Crew Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR. HO</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Christopher’s Hong Kong Client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Act 1  ROLLO WONG: Chinese, Age 55  KWTL Salesman. Only spoke about.

Act 1  LESLIE RIGS: American-Chinese, Age 5  Christopher’s Daughter

Act 1  BANGKOK TAXI DRIVER: Thai, Age 50

Act 1  AK&S RECEPTIONIST: Thai, Age 22  AK&S Staff

Act 1  MISS BUM: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 24  AK&S Staff

Act 1  RATANA: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 40  AK&S Owner

Act 1  NAOWARAT: Thai, Age 34  AK&S Producer

Act 1  MISS NU: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 23  AK&S Staff

Act 1  MISS AI: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 21  Rio Resident Hotel Staff

Act 1  HOTEL RESTAURANT CASHIER: Thai, Age 25  Rio Resident Hotel Staff

Act 1  HOTEL BELLBOY: Thai, Age 19  Rio Resident Hotel Staff

Act 1  THAI STEWARDESS A: Thai, Age 28  Thai Airways Stewardess

Act 1  KHUN PRASERT: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 45  Property Developer, Client of AK&S

Act 1  YOUNG ASSISTANT: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 26  Khun Prasert’s Assistant

Act 1  THAI BUSINESS ASSOCIATE: Thai-Chinese, Age 60  Businessman

Act 1  BAR WOMAN: Thai, Age 28

Act 1  BEIJING AIRPORT FEMALE TAXI VOUCHER CLERK: Chinese Age 40  Beijing Airport Staff

Act 1  BEIJING AIRPORT MALE TAXI VOUCHER CLERK: Chinese Age 30  Beijing Airport Staff

Act 1  BEIJING TAXI DRIVER A: Chinese Age 50

Act 1  GINGER: Chinese, Age 28  KWTL Staff

Act 1  BEIJING HOTEL BELLBOY: Chinese Age 17  Beijing Hotel Staff
Act 1  DR. WONG: Beijing Chinese, Age 55          CMA Staff
Act 1  DR. WONG’S ASSISTANT: Chinese Age 25    CMA Staff
Act 1  NEWS DIRECTOR: Beijing Chinese, Age 40  CMA Staff
Act 1  WEATHER PRESENTER: Beijing Chinese, Age 30 CMA Staff
Act 1  CAMERAMAN: Chinese Age 40               CMA Staff
Act 1  NEWS DIRECTOR: Chinese Age 45           CMA Staff
Act 1  YOUNGER TECH WOMAN: Beijing Chinese, Age 28 (CMA) CMA Staff
Act 1  OLDER TECH WOMAN: Beijing Chinese, Age 48 (CMA) CMA Staff
Act 1  BEIJING BARTENDER: Beijing Chinese, Age 32 Beijing Hotel Staff
Act 1  CANADIAN BUSINESSMAN: Canadian, Age 30  Beijing Hotel Guest
Act 1  MRS. FOK: Chinese, Age 45                KWTL: Mr. Chau’s Assistant
Act 1  HOTEL BELLBOY: Chinese, Age 21          Beijing Hotel Staff
Act 2  BEIJING HOTEL WAITER: Chinese, Age 45   Beijing Hotel Staff
Act 2  BEIJING HOTEL CONCIERGE: Chinese, Age 35 Beijing Hotel Staff
Act 2  KOREAN BUSINESSMAN: Korean, Age 55      Beijing Hotel Guest
Act 2  KOREAN WIFE: Korean, Age 28              Beijing Hotel Guest
Act 2  WOMAN ON BICYCLE, Chinese, Age 40       
Act 2  CLERK AT 7-11: Chinese, Age 21          
Act 2  CHRISTOPHER’S EX-WIFE: Chinese, Age 30  
Act 2  MID-AGE OFFICE WOMAN: Chinese, Age 55   KWTL Staff
Act 2  ANDRÉ ROSÁRIO: Portuguese-Chinese, Age 30 KWTL Accountant
Act 2  MR. CHAU’S ELDEST SON: Chinese Age 28   Mr. Chau’s Eldest Son
Act 2  CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN: Chinese Age 40    KWTL Staff
Act 2  VIDEO ENGINEER CHAN: Chinese Age 35     Freelance Video Engineer
| Act 2 | MR. SMITH: Canadian, Age 32 | Architecture Firm Principal |
| Act 2 | THAI BUSINESSMEN: Thai-Chinese, Ages 50-60 | Business Investor |
| Act 2 | HOTEL CASHIER: Thai, Age 20 | Rio Resident Hotel Staff |
| Act 2 | ARCHITECTURE FIRM RECEPTIONIST: Thai, Age 35 | Architecture Firm Staff |
| Act 2 | THAI GROUND STAFF: Thai woman, Age 28 | Thai Airways Ground Crew |
| Act 2 | NIT: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 28 | Thai Airways Stewardess and Christopher’s Girlfriend |
| Act 2 | KEVIN LIU: Chinese, Age 35 | SGI Workstation Salesman |
| Act 3 | STEWARDESS NOI: Thai-Chinese, Age 28 | Thai Airways Stewardess |
| Act 3 | TG CHECK-IN GROUND CREW: Thai-Teochew Chinese, Age 30 | Thai Airways Ground Crew |
| Act 3 | TG BOARDING-GATE WOMAN, Thai, Age 30 | Thai Airways Ground Crew |
| Act 3 | OLDER AMERICAN MAN: American, Age 65 | Tourist |
| Act 3 | OLDER AMERICAN WOMAN: American, Age 65 | Tourist |
| Act 3 | THAI STEWARDESS C: Thai, Age 30 | Thai Airways Stewardess |
| Act 3 | BRITISH BUSINESSMAN: Age 45 | Businessman |
| Act 3 | ICAC RECEPTION OFFICER: Chinese, Age 30 | ICAC Officer |
| Act 3 | ICAC DETECTIVE BEDI: HK-Indian, Age 35 | ICAC Officer |
| Act 3 | ICAC DETECTIVE LIU: Chinese, Age 45 | ICAC Officer |
| Act 3 | INLAND REVENUE RECEPTIONIST: Chinese, Age 30 | Inland Revenue Staff |
| Act 3 | NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN: Chinese, Age 40 | Inland Revenue Client |
| Act 3 | INLAND REVENUE AUDITOR: Chinese, Age 45 | Inland Revenue Auditor |
| Act 3 | TEXAS BUSINESSMAN: American, Age 60 | Businessman |
## APPENDIX B. LOCATIONS

Table 2. Locations by Screenplay Order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Larger Location</th>
<th>Specific Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Sea Waters, Hong Kong</td>
<td>Tathong Channel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight over Tathong Channel</td>
<td>Interior Cathay Pacific Lockheed Tristar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tathong Channel</td>
<td>Exterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Island</td>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen</td>
<td>Christopher’s Apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Flat</td>
<td>Bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Flat</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Flat</td>
<td>Living Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Flat</td>
<td>Kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Building</td>
<td>Main Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Lobby</td>
<td>Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen</td>
<td>Exterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen</td>
<td>Taxi Stand, Ching Hong Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen</td>
<td>Heng Fa Chuen Promenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Hong Kong Island</td>
<td>Island Eastern Corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kornhill, Quarry Bay District</td>
<td>Kornhill Metro Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kornhill Metro Tower</td>
<td>Taxi Stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kornhill Metro Tower</td>
<td>Building Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kornhill Metro Tower</td>
<td>KWTL Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWTL Office</td>
<td>Floor Lift Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWTL Office</td>
<td>Reception</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KWTL Office
Conference Room

KWTL Office
Stacy’s Secretary

KWTL Office
Main Office

KWTL Office
Linsey’s Desk

KWTL Office
Christopher’s Office

KWTL Office
Computer Graphics Room

KWTL Office
Client Presentation Room

Quarry Bay
King’s Road

King’s Road
Jack’s Porsche

King’s Road / Heng Fa Chuen Flat / Parking Garage
Daydream Sequence

Causeway Bay
Cross Harbor Tunnel

Kai Tak
Kai Tak Airport

Kai Tak Airport
Passenger Dropoff

Kai Tak Airport
Airport Boarding Area

Kai Tak Airport
Boarding Gate Telephone

Kai Tak Airport
View of Runway

Tai Koo Shing
Tai Koo Shing Road

Tai Koo Shing
7-Eleven

Tai Koo Shing
Tai Koo Shing Road Crossing

Tai Koo Shing Flat
Leslie’s Flat

Tai Koo Shing Flat
Lift Lobby

Tai Koo Shing Flat
Living Room

Tai Koo Shing Flat
Kitchen

Tai Koo Shing Flat
Leslie’s Bedroom
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Place</td>
<td>Marriott Hotel at Pacific Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriott Hotel</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Island</td>
<td>MTR (Mass Transit Railway) Island Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTR Island Line</td>
<td>Rail Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai Koo Shing</td>
<td>Tai Koo City Plaza Exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok</td>
<td>Prince Edward Entrance at Playing Field Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok</td>
<td>Boundary Street at Cheung Sha Wan Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok</td>
<td>Lion Head Factory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok</td>
<td>KWTL Mong Kok Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>Exterior Ground Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>Ground Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>Stairway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>2nd Floor Main Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>Computer Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>Mr. Chau’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Office</td>
<td>Conference Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok Area</td>
<td>Dim Sum Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Kok East</td>
<td>Flower Market Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po</td>
<td>Sham Shui Po Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po</td>
<td>Sham Shui Po Office Exterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po</td>
<td>Stairway to Sham Shui Po Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po Office</td>
<td>Empty Factory Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po Office</td>
<td>Remodeled Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po Office</td>
<td>Main Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po Office</td>
<td>Video Equipment Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham Shui Po Office</td>
<td>CG Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsim Sha Tsui</td>
<td>Tsim Sha Tsui Star Ferry Pier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Harbor</td>
<td>Star Ferry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Harbor, Central</td>
<td>Victoria Harbor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Island</td>
<td>Central District Pier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Place</td>
<td>Dan Ryan’s Chicago Grill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central District</td>
<td>ICAC, Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAC Exterior</td>
<td>Taxi Drop-off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAC</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAC</td>
<td>Hallway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAC</td>
<td>Investigation Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central District</td>
<td>Lan Kwai Fong Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wan Chai</td>
<td>Inland Revenue Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cityplaza</td>
<td>Cityplaza Ice Palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cityplaza</td>
<td>The Spaghetti House Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Revenue</td>
<td>Lift Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Revenue</td>
<td>Reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Revenue</td>
<td>Hallway to office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Revenue</td>
<td>Auditor’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok</td>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Taxi Stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Thai Airways Check-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Exit Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Destination/Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Departures Concourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Departures Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Jet Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Business Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Mueang Airport</td>
<td>Baggage Loading into Aircraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Don Mueang District</td>
<td>Choet Wuthakat Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Lumpini District</td>
<td>Soi Ruamrudee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Lumpini District</td>
<td>AK&amp;S Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK&amp;S Office</td>
<td>Entrance Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK&amp;S Office</td>
<td>Parking Lot and Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK&amp;S Office</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK&amp;S Office</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK&amp;S Office</td>
<td>Conference Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Sathon District</td>
<td>Rio Residence Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok to Hong Kong Flight</td>
<td>Thai Airways Business Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Airways Business Class</td>
<td>Dream Sequence Flight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Airways Business Class</td>
<td>Meeting Nit Flight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Lumpini District</td>
<td>Bangkok Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Lumpini District</td>
<td>Thai Style with Ratana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok Sukhumvit 55</td>
<td>Cozy Small with Nit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok Sukhumvit 55</td>
<td>Bangkok Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok Sukhumvit 55</td>
<td>Tuk-tuk Ride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Lumpini District</td>
<td>Central Chidlom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok, Lumpini District</td>
<td>Mr. Smith’s Architecture Firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location/Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>Beijing Capital Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Capital Airport</td>
<td>Terminal 1 Arrival Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Capital Airport</td>
<td>Taxi Booking Stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Capital Airport</td>
<td>Taxi Stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xicheng District, Beijing</td>
<td>Beijing Hotel (unnamed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Hotel</td>
<td>Guest Drop off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Hotel</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Hotel</td>
<td>Hotel Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Hotel</td>
<td>Hotel Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Hotel</td>
<td>Hotel Lift Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing Hotel</td>
<td>Beijing View from Hotel Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xicheng District, Beijing</td>
<td>China Meteorological Administration (CMA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>Formal Meeting Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>News Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>Video Production Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight between Beijing and Hong Kong</td>
<td>Southern China Airways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern China Airways Flight</td>
<td>First Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern China over Jiangxi Province</td>
<td>Outside View of Southern China from First Class Window</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The movie poster is a critical component for the promotion of a film. It must grab attention and convey enough information about the story for potential viewers to investigate.

Several significant iterations of the poster were developed over twelve months. Initially, I had wanted to include the Hong Kong harbor as it looked in 1991 with the image made of tiny airport codes. The most flights I had taken in one year were slightly above ninety. This number would not produce an adequate resolution to create the image from the small codes. The first figure's poster contains thousands of repeating airport codes from every airport I had ever traveled. The Hong Kong skyline and the Chinese junk were difficult to decipher unless one was familiar with that image. And the face concealed in the sky behind the 52-1/2 Feet title, intended to be subliminal, did not help the title's readability.

The second approach was to limit the number of codes to those I had flown in a peak year and explore CNC routing. The next iterations shows this reduction in codes and exploration into visualizing dimensional poster design. The 2nd and 3rd posters were my first attempt to present the poster in a gallery space. The 3D relief of the routing created an enticing effect and would require specific lighting and be expensive to produce and install. The investment could be offset by the innovative approach and attention-grabbing aspects of the implementation.

The complexity of the airport codes remained a problem, and I experimented with reducing the number of codes to fewer instances of each airport. The green and blue versions have two layers of code. The bottom layer is a single column of HKG, BKK, PEK, and HGK, representing the first circle of flights in the story. The second layer is two columns wide and has a plausible arrangement of codes from airport-to-airport.
Figure 164. Early version of the movie poster made of thousands of small airport-codes.
Figure 165. Movie poster experiments with CNC routing.

Figure 166. Experiments with CNC routing concepts.
Figure 167. The reduce number of codes using a green color scheme.
Figure 168. Final version of the movie poster with credits.
Figure 169. The CNC poster is cut from a translucent material and backlit by an LED panel.

Figure 170. CNC poster from the side the relief is visible.

The final form of the large poster in the gallery was 2D as the level of detail of the CNC simulation was not adequate to resemble actual construction results.
APPENDIX D. 3D MODELS

Following are a collect of images of the 3D models of the Heng Fa Chuen flat and the Mong Kok Office.

These renders were created at various stages in the process and may have some variation and inconsistencies from the final gallery version.

Figure 171. Heng Fa Chuen 3D model various renders.
Figure 172. Heng Fa Chuen 3D model various renders.
Figure 173. Heng Fa Chuen 3D model various renders.
Figure 174. Heng Fa Chuen 3D model various renders.
Figure 175. Heng Fa Chuen 3D model various renders.
Figure 176. Mong Kok Office model various renders.
Figure 177. Mong Kok Office model various renders.
Figure 178. Mong Kok Office model various renders.
Figure 179. Mong Kok Office at night model various renders.