

The focus for my senior project was a study in Flash animation. After considering many ideas, I chose to base my animation on the idea of an animated landscape painting or photo. I produced a basic landscape vista, hand-drawing each element in Flash, using vectors. I brought the static image to life by animating a fully looping day/night cycle.

In pursuing this animation, I found that, more than anything else, this project was an immense lesson in animation timing. Due to the many elements in the image, I had to take extra care, not only animating each, but also ensuring that the image as a whole flowed simultaneously and believably. In addition to focusing greatly on the timing of my animation, I also needed to pay close attention to layer ordering, and use masks where necessary.

The final product is very much what I had initially envisioned, but it is far from perfect. Issues that I ran into during the course of production included mask layers not working properly, issues with inaccurate shape and motion tweening, and most importantly, horrible optimization/speed problems. The latter of these issues still persist in the final version of the animation. I found, without a doubt, that the cause of the extremely sluggish framerate was the procedurally rendered blades of grass I used. I lessened the number of blades, with somewhat positive effects, but the issue is still very much present. Removing the grass layer entirely allows the animation to play smoothly, but I opted to retain the grass, as I felt not having the animated grass hurt the overall image far more than it helped.



