



LOTHCAT Films.



La Città di Monstri e del Leone

The City of Monsters and the Lion

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THESIS STATEMENT

My project will reflect art and time through the city of Tuscania and a Winged Lion whose eyes have been closed for centuries in a short, animated narrative.

Abstract

This Project will raise the question of what would happen if the Etruscans were still spiritually with their tombs? Adapting mythological symbolism into a preproduction animation concept following a young girl who is visiting an old town on a field trip and a lion who lost his guardianship capabilities and as time passed, the souls he was supposed to guard became corrupted. This study will argue that such mythic imagery can enrich an animated narrative dealing with identity, memory, and belonging. This project will propose an original story with various concepts and a final storyboard and test animation that will reimagine the mythical landscape the Etruscans once walked on.



INSPIRATION

I knew I wanted to work on a storytelling project, especially since I'm aiming to become an animator. I've always loved telling stories—whether through still images or animation.

- The idea of a guardian creature and a small girl was a concept I've worked on previous and believed the idea would bring a stronger story.
- The “Winged Lion” came to mind after learning it's the symbol of Saint Mark in Italy. Visiting Tuscania really expanded that idea into something much bigger.
- While exploring the Etruscan tombs there, I noticed many were open or abandoned, which really stuck with me.

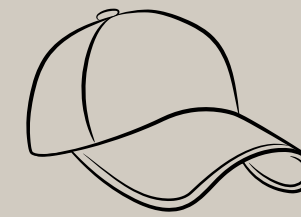
Pre Trip Inspiration

- **Delicious in Dungeon:** main antagonist being a Demon taking the form of a Winged Lion
- **Previous Illustration Concept:** of a Lion Statue becoming to life. (Referencing the NYC Public Library's Lion statues.)



YOUNG PROTAGONIST

- Lucia symbolizes the my experiences exploring a new country—feeling both nervous and excited.
- Her journey reflects personal emotions of isolation and discovery during travel.
- The story explores identity and how big life changes can impact one's sense of self.



- Originally, Lucia was going to be much younger.
- Inspiration for Lucia's Personal appearance was from the groups of kids we would see on big field trips in matching hats.



ANOTHER WORLD

Time works differently here, no time passes when Lucia gets lost in the spiritual realm.



The Winged Lion

Etruscans & Lions

Symbolization: Power & Protection

Often depicted at tomb entrances or on tombs/temple roofs.

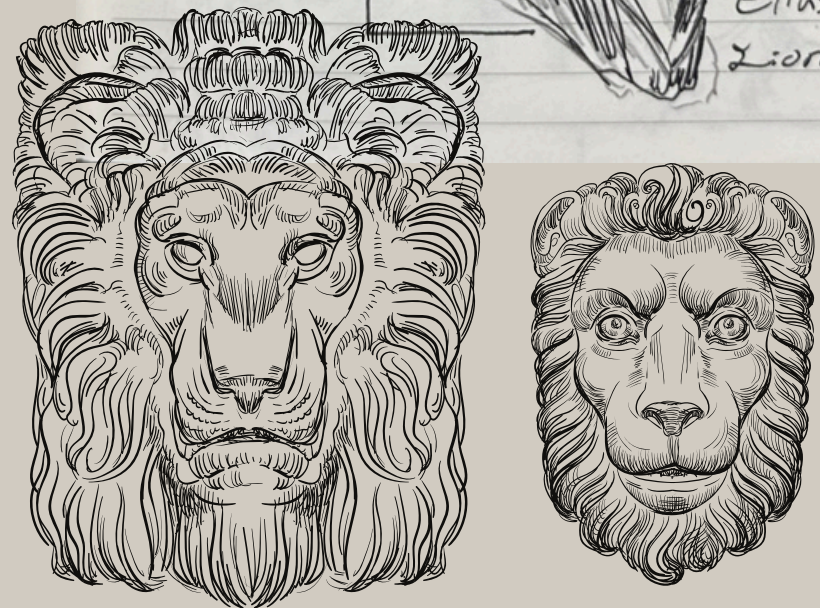
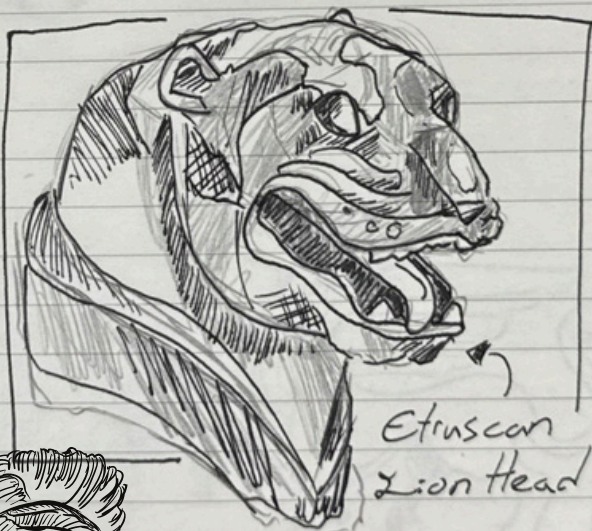
• Was a sign of Strength, Wealth and Spiritual meaning

• Mythology - inspired from the Greeks:

◻ Nemean Lion

* Guardians of the Afterlife *

Etruscan Lions were symbolized as soul guides



Lions Throughout History

- **Initial inspiration:** The Winged Lion was originally chosen due to its connection to Saint Mark before the trip began.
- **Historical influence:** Research in Tuscania revealed lions were ancient guardians of the dead in Etruscan, Roman, and Renaissance times.
- **Personal connection:** During the trip, the creator photographed lions in every city—some with Etruscan features, others saint-like with wings.
- **Symbolic detail:** lion statues had open eyes, reflecting the belief that lions never slept, making them ideal sacred guardians.

The Spark of the Story

- **Creative twist:** In the story, the Winged Lion is imagined as once Etruscan but evolves into a Heavenly Guardian over time.
- **Location significance:** The lion guards Saint Pietro, formerly an Etruscan necropolis, tying history to the narrative setting.
- **Narrative decision:** The lion's eyes are closed in the story—symbolizing his abandonment of duty as the people were forgotten.
- **Plot turning point:** Lucia's arrival reawakens the lion, who realizes his failure and decides to help her.
- **Character arc:** The Winged Lion takes on a supporting role with a redemption arc, helping Lucia return home and restore peace to the city.



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- A collage of 15 hexagonal images arranged in a honeycomb pattern, illustrating the theme of 'The Monster in the Middle Ages'. The images include: a green bronze sculpture of a winged creature; a black and white illustration of a smiling face with a wide mouth; a stone sculpture of a winged creature; a black and white illustration of a bird; a white marble sculpture of a man blowing a horn; a painting of a yellow figure on a black dragon; a stone sculpture of a winged creature; a black and white illustration of a bird; a stone sculpture of a winged creature; a painting of a dragon; a stone sculpture of a winged creature; a painting of a dragon; a stone sculpture of a winged creature; a painting of a dragon; and a stone sculpture of a winged creature.

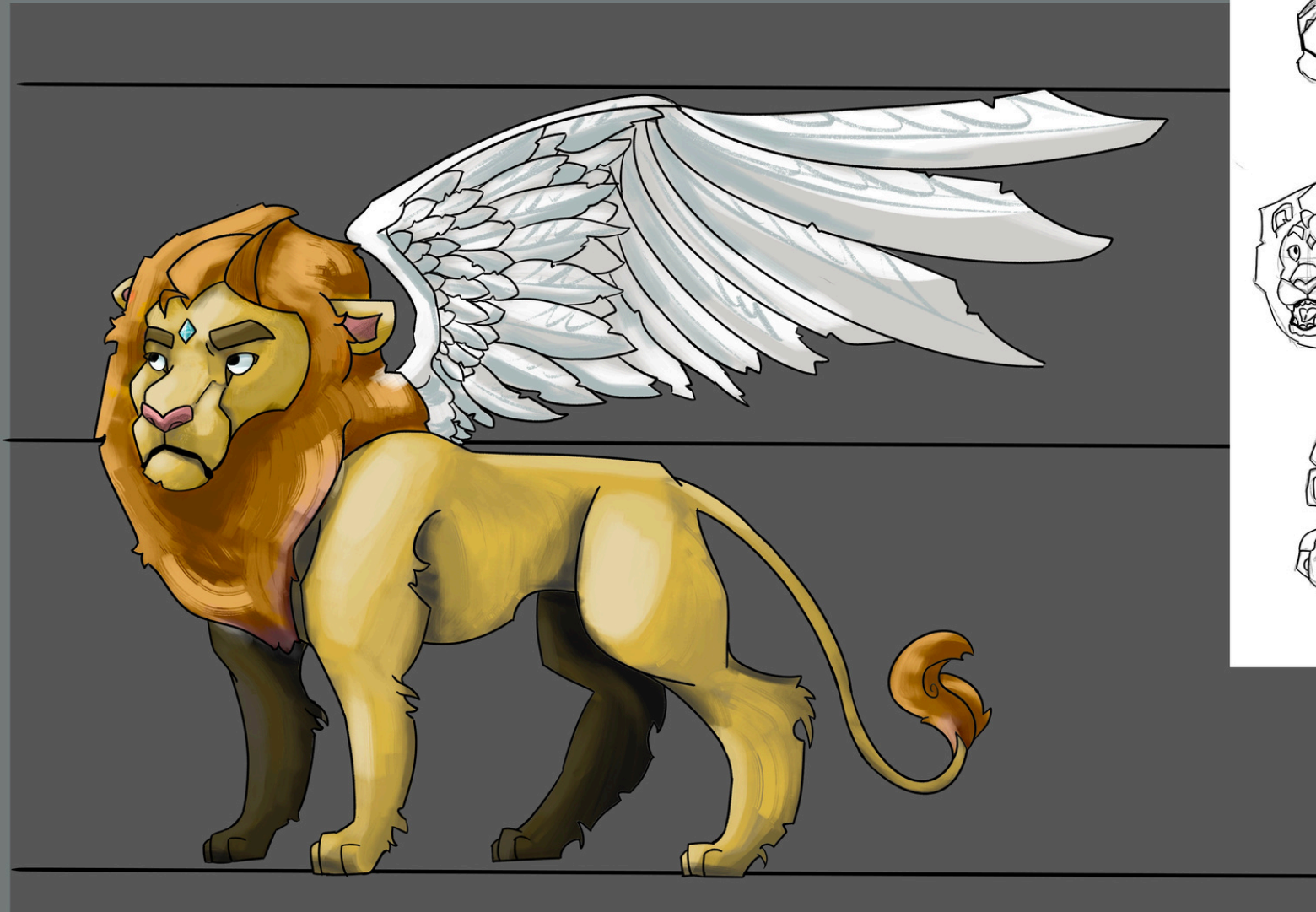


Creature symbolism: The serpent reflects chthonic (underworld) themes and appears in 4th-century Etruscan vase and wall art (Museo Civico).



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- A composite image featuring two distinct representations of a sphinx. On the left, a stone carving of a sphinx is shown, with a human-like face and a lion's body. On the right, a stylized drawing of a lion is depicted, with a human-like face and a lion's body. The drawing is in a sketchy, hand-drawn style with blue and grey tones. The background is a light beige color.

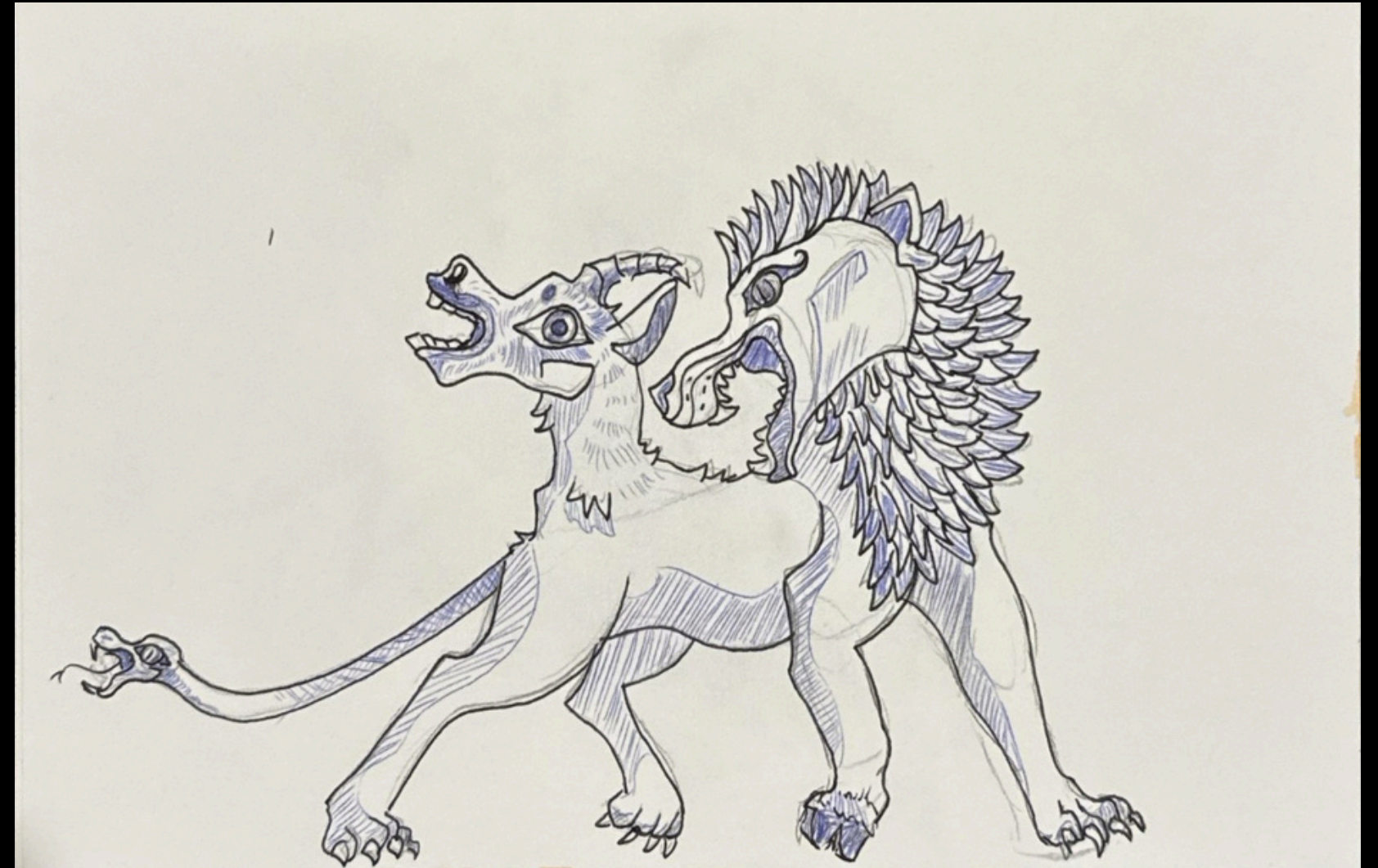
CONCEPTS



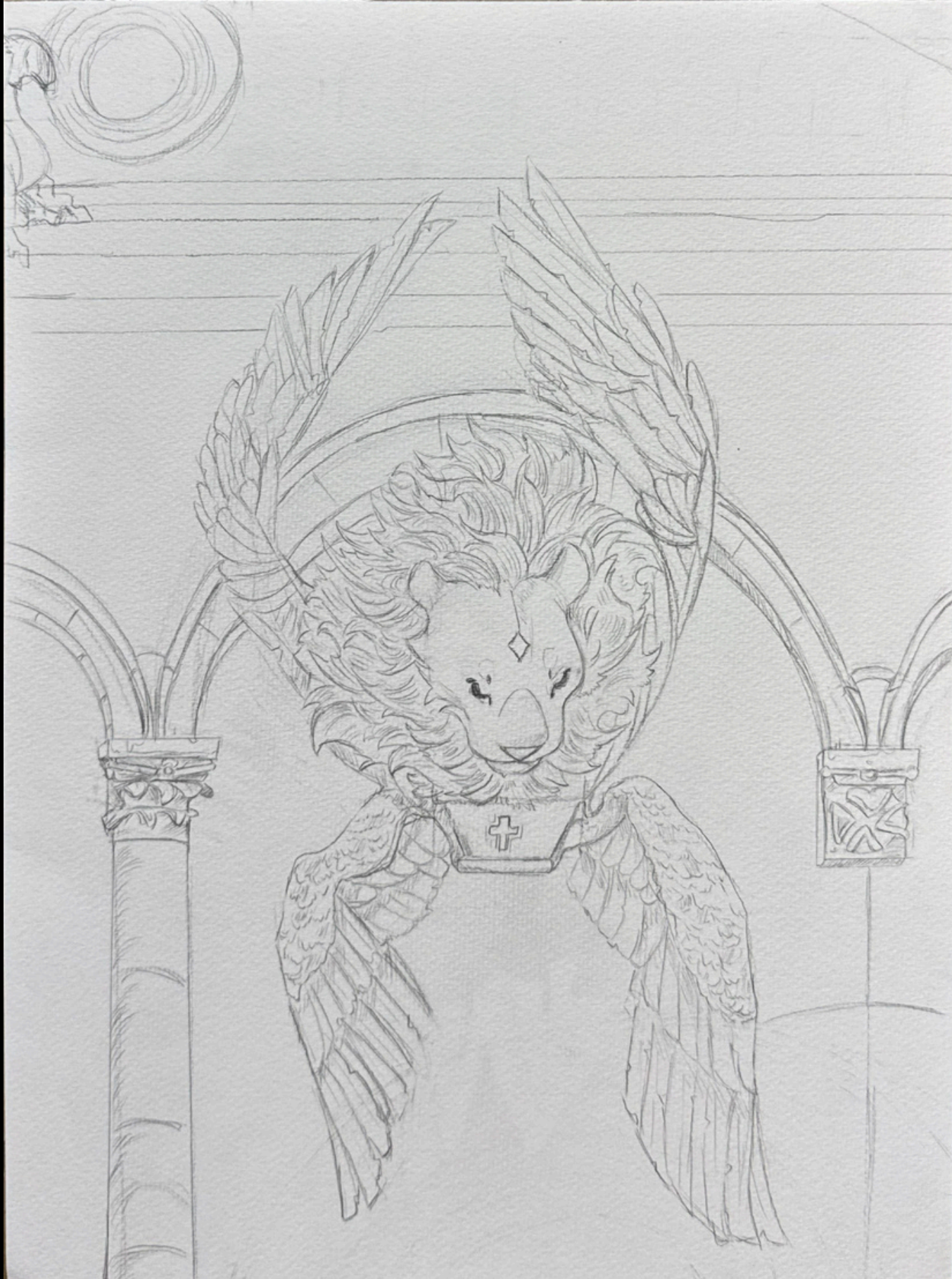
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CONCEPTS



PRODUCTION PROGRESSION & DISCOVERY PROCESS



Pre-Trip

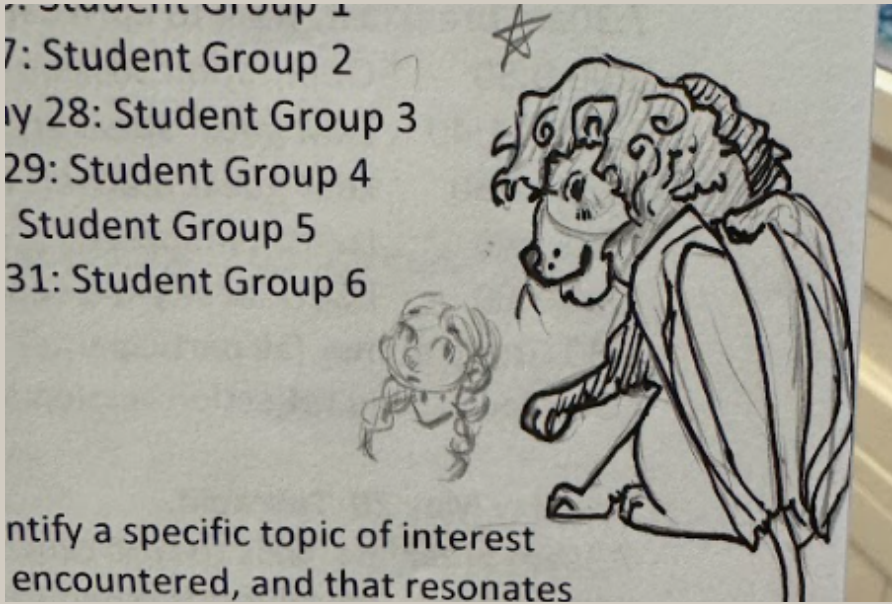
- Most research was completed on the trip, taking pictures and journaling observations.
- Throughout the whole trip, I continued sketching how I imagined the Winged Lion would look—starting before the trip, during, and now after with some finalized concepts.
- My plan is to create a full script, a storyboard, a few character sheets, lots of concept art, and a short test animation.
- This project is definitely something I want to keep working on even after this class ends, so I can dedicate more time and be able to add it to my portfolio.



Mid Trip

Past Trip

Final Designs



CONCLUSION

My project explores how identity—both physical and spiritual—can be interpreted through time. Lucia embodies my own feelings of discovery and uncertainty, while the Lion represents a lost past seeking purpose. Though the story carries darker themes, it ultimately offers hope: that remembrance can restore meaning, even to what was once forgotten.



QUESTIONS

THANK YOU FOR ENJOYING
THE PRESENTATION :3

