TRÈS
MAKIAS

THE ART OF TRES MARIAS

By Raquel Ramos

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Title: Art of Três Marias.
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MA in Digital Fashion.

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FOREWORD

I always knew I was much more drawn to costume design than to fashion. So, it made a lot of sense to explore how the digital universe could be a part of costume design for my masters' journey.

With my term 1 project, I felt a bit restricted since I was recreating an existing movie, so I decided I wanted to explore creating costumes from scratch, for never before seen characters.

In order to do so, I would require a story. This is a part of my project that escapes the costume designer role, but I knew I could have a lot of fun exploring this side of animation as well.

I do not have what it takes to be a writer or even a character developer, but it was an interesting challenge coming up with my version of an animated movie's pitch.

After reading a bit about how an animated movie is made and also speaking to industry professional Brie Henderson, I knew it would be a bit task ahead.

So not only due to my skills, but also the time constraints, I decided to create a short teaser that would feature a fashion transformation scene, which I believed would better showcase the outfits.

I chose to work with 4 characters, playing on the idea of 3 fairy godmothers, but a Brazilian interpretation of what they could look like. I was not sure which cultural element I was going for, but after a bit of research on cultural representation for wider audiences, the topic of recognition arose many times.

My biggest goal with the project was to avoid stereotyping, but I knew the chosen reference had to be recognizable for most people, which then led to the decision of exploring Carnaval.

So, during the project proposal, I started brainstorming ideas for what could make for an interesting movie. It was around this time that the Pixar's movie "Inside Out 2" was about to be released and I got this idea to explore a young girl, going through a lot of emotions, but instead of these internal characters, she would get help from the godmothers.

Playing on the whimsy that animation allows, I thought it could be interesting to have the fairy-godmothers be fantastical creatures that come from the stars when someone needs their guidance. But to tye Carnaval in, I felt it could be an interesting plot to have them look like Rainhas da Bateria.

With the overall idea, I wrote a short description of the plot, which would guide me to create the teaser.

My project ended up encompassing much more than just digital fashion and it allowed me to do a lot of research. I did my best to summarize my findings on the next pages of the journal, but I could have probably developed an entire PHD thesis given how fascinating the subject was. This was a true passion project.

Not only did I get to explore some topics that I have been greatly interested in, but it also helped me better understand an industry that I hope to one day be part of. So, research did not feel like work and I ended up discovering far more than what I had even set out to find.

With the format allowing us to break from the very structured format of an essay, I believe I put a lot of "me" throughout the journal. My project was much more about the journey than the actual results, given that the costume designer does not necessarily make the clothes, much less the digital garments.

They use their skill, life experiences and creativity to

enhance the storytelling and help those characters express who they truly are. But as costume designer Brie Henderson so beautifully told me, what makes a good costume" is just how much of themselves the designer can add to the costume".

Of course it's not about personal preferences , but what unique aspects of your identity and creative choices add humanity to a design. Paying attention to little details and suggesting unique and creative ways to explore a personality trait in an outfit are what makes costume design in animation such an exciting field to explore.

By working with costume design and Carnaval, I knew I had a lot to contribute personally and, even though I knew there would be many technical challenges ahead, I was very excited to turn my ideas into an actual project.

And that was how I got to create “Três Marias”.

TRÊS MARIAS

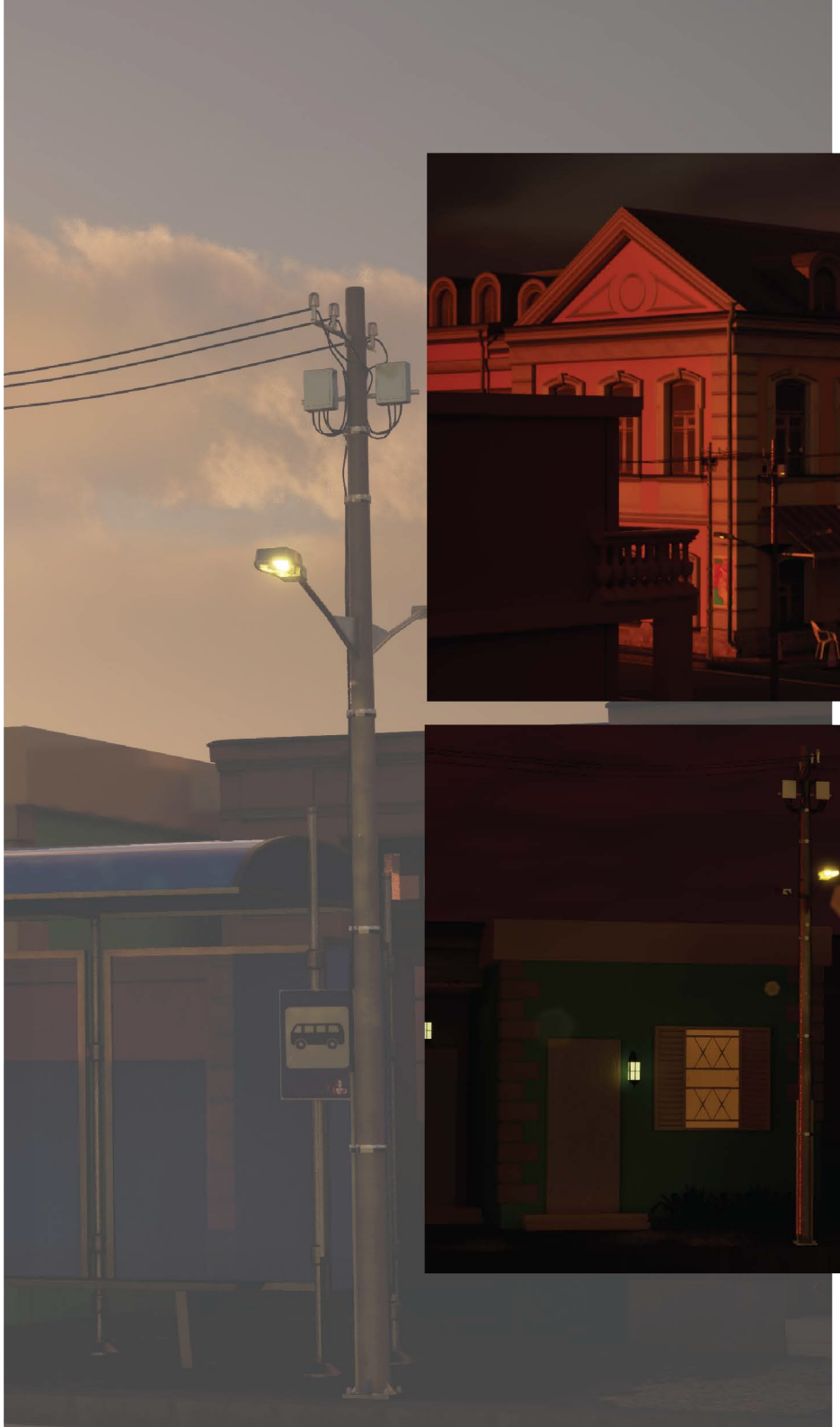
Joana is your average 14 year old teenager. She is very introverted and is going through her definition of a hard time - she hates school, doesn't hang out enough with her friends, and her parents are too controlling - all the classic angsty teenager's issues.

However, this night she decided things were going to be different. All because she was asked out by an older boy to go to a "bloquinho" - a Brazilian street party that takes place during the Carnaval week. Of course her mom would not let her go to a street party by herself with a boy she never met, so she didn't even bother trying to tell her. What she actually did was sneak out with a makeshift cat costume, without even being able to get proper shoes on.

On her way, someone steps on her flip flops and as the straps break (very common in Brazil), she trips and drops her phone in a muddy puddle. Without her working phone, Joana is not able to find her way to the party. While in distress, not knowing what to do and with no one to turn to, she looks up and sees the constellation her ancestors used to guide themselves when lost. With zero astronomical navigation skills, all she could do was wonder "how the heck did they get help from stars?"

She is then surprised by the same tree stars descending from the sky and transforming into human figures right before her eyes, introducing themselves as her 'starry'-godmothers - Maria-Um, Maria-Dois and Maria-Três. They then proceed to give her a makeover and help her get to the party.

RIO DE JANEIRO



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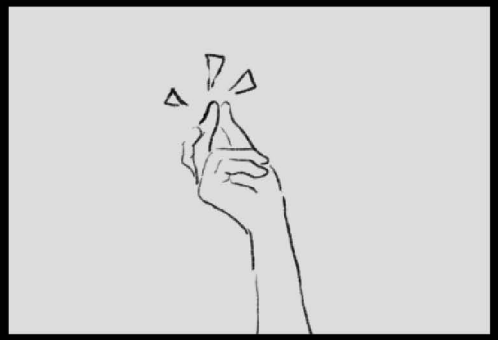
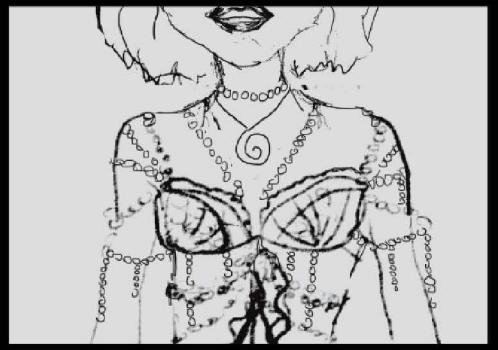
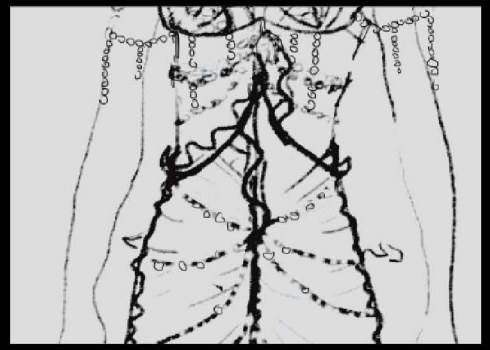
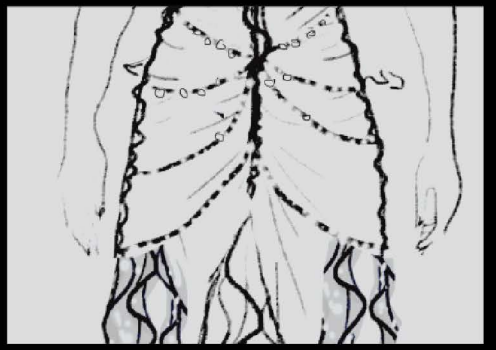
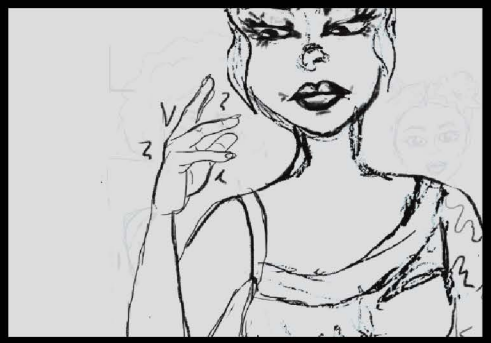
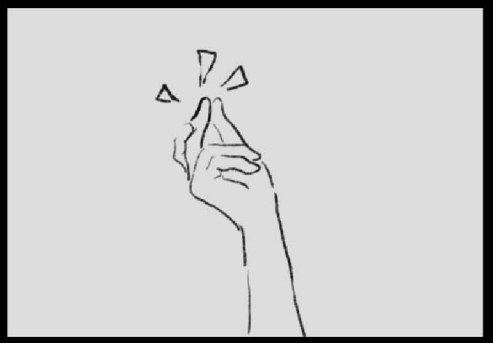
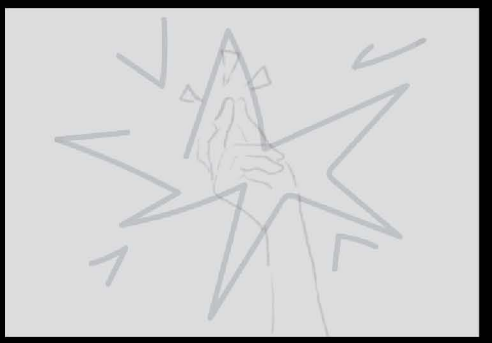
STORYBOARDS





TRÈS
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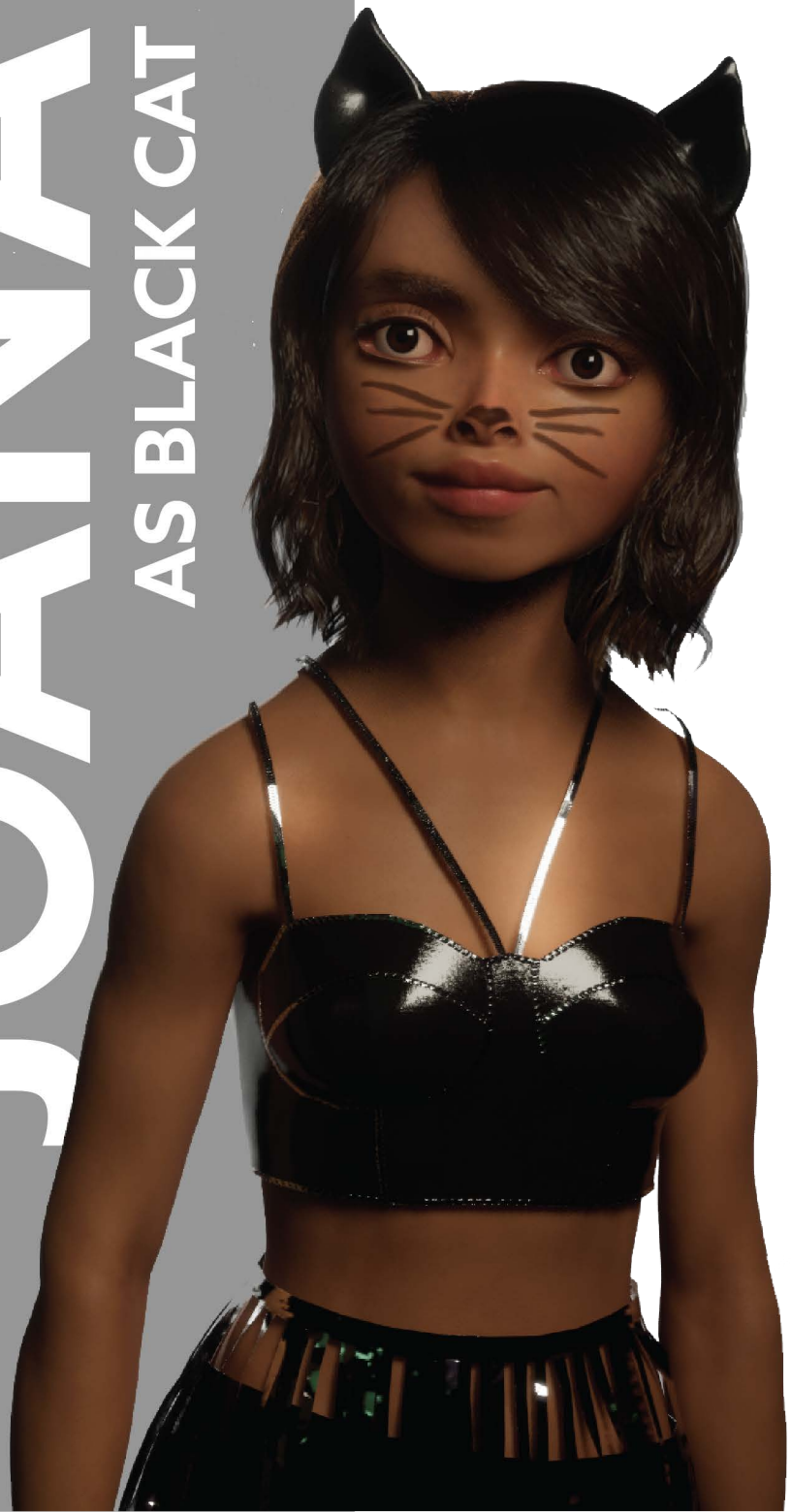
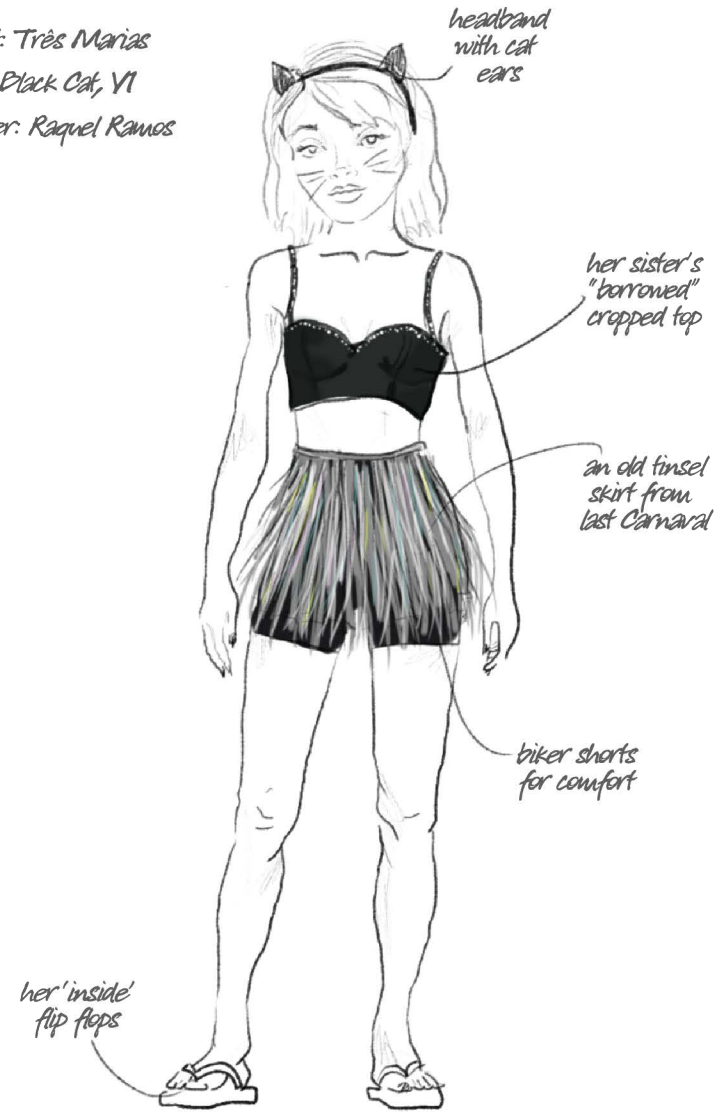
JOANA
AS BLACK CAT

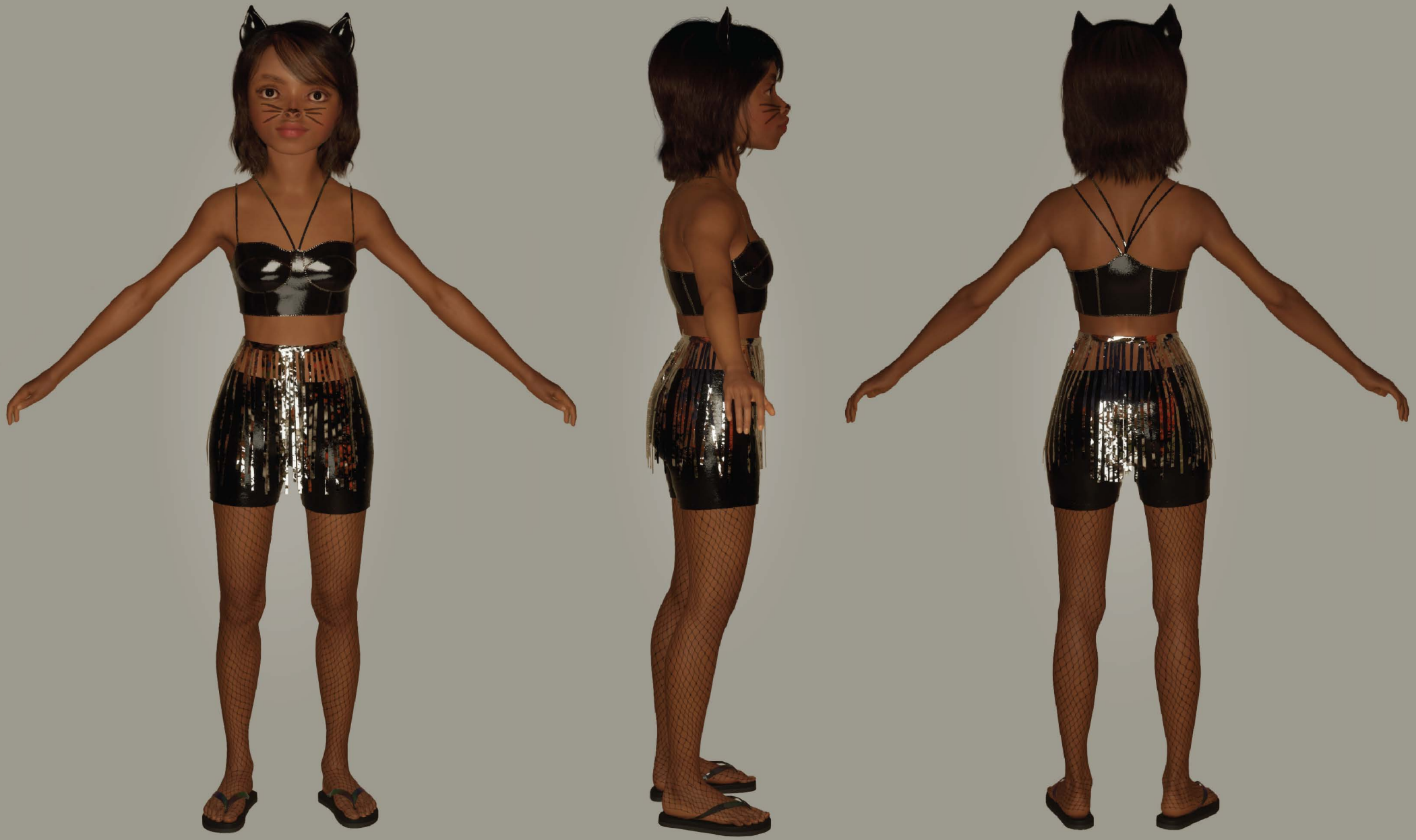


Project: Três Marias
Joana, Black Cat, V1
Designer: Raquel Ramos

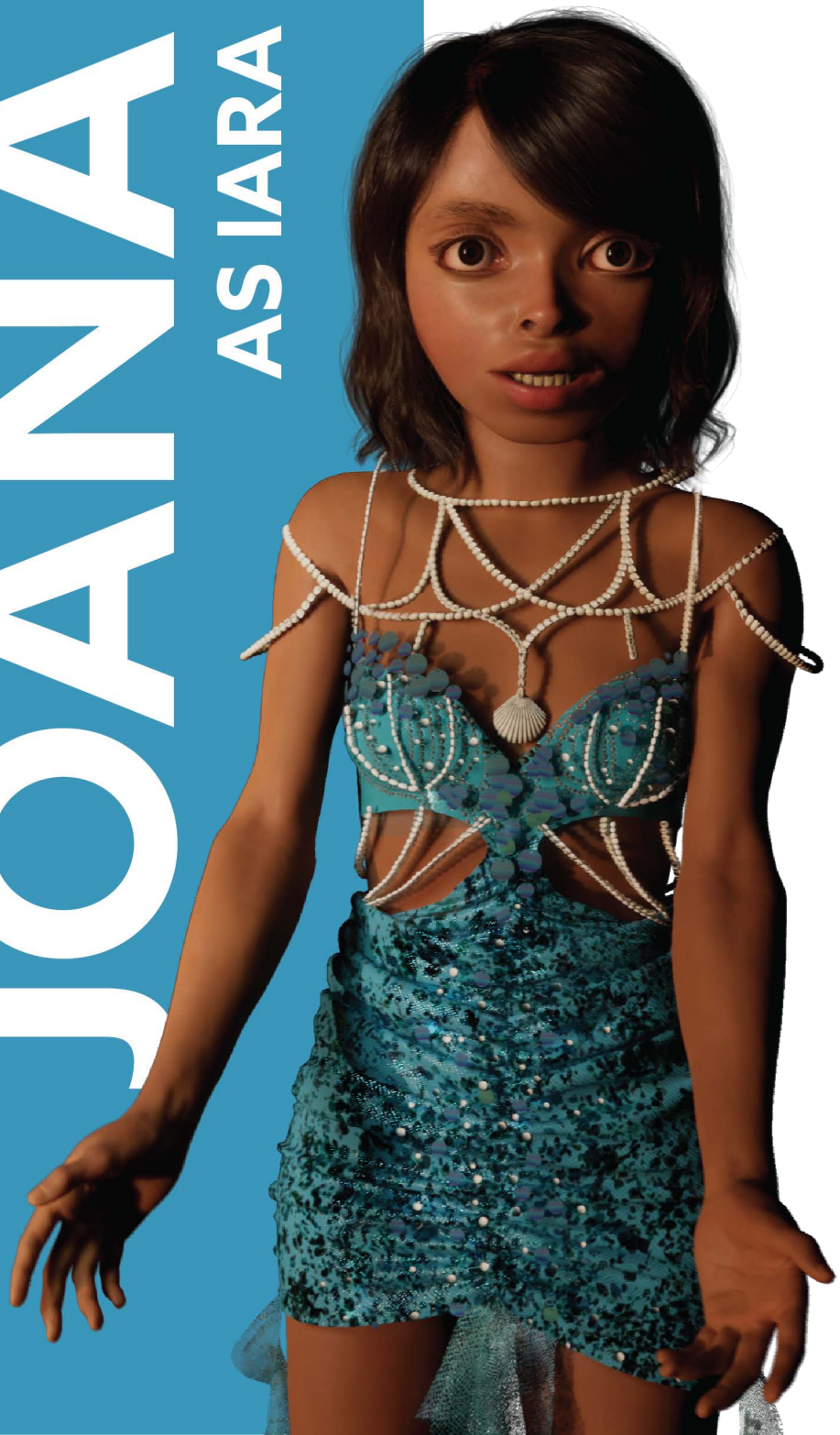


Joana is you typical teenage girl- some angst and a bit of fear, all mixed with the desire to have fun - for her improvised costume, the stray black cat was a perfect match, since it is a very common DIY costume in Carnaval, but also represents where she stands mentally.

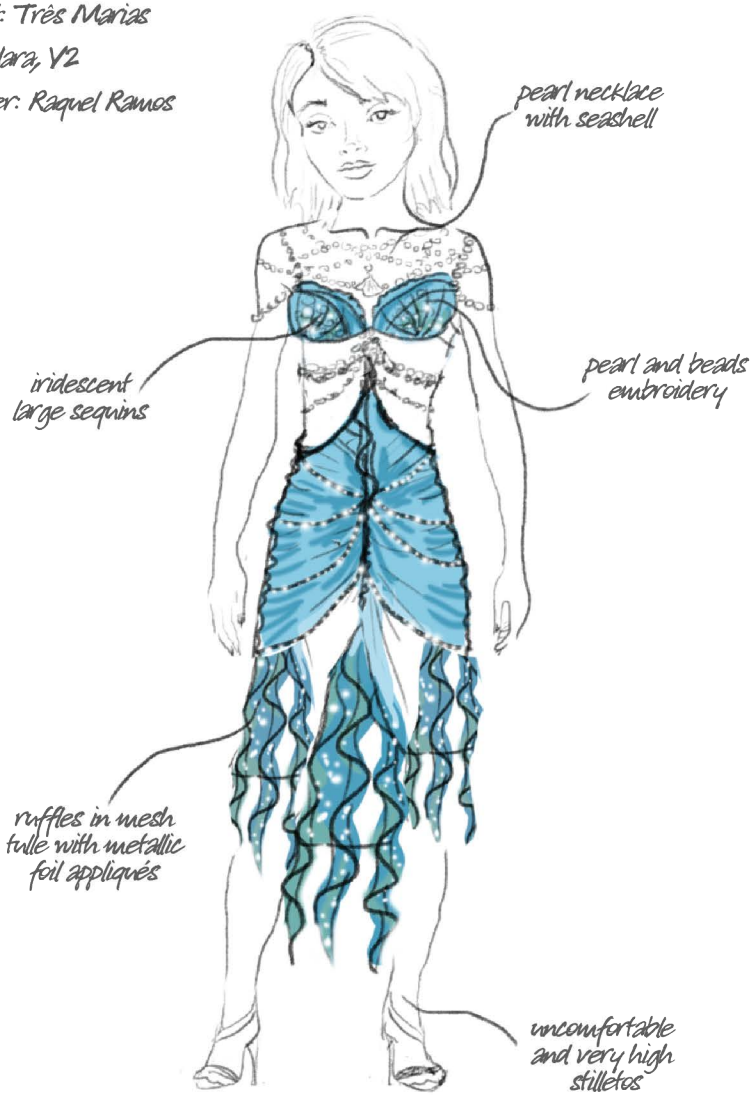
Joana’s costume as a black cat



JOANA AS IARA

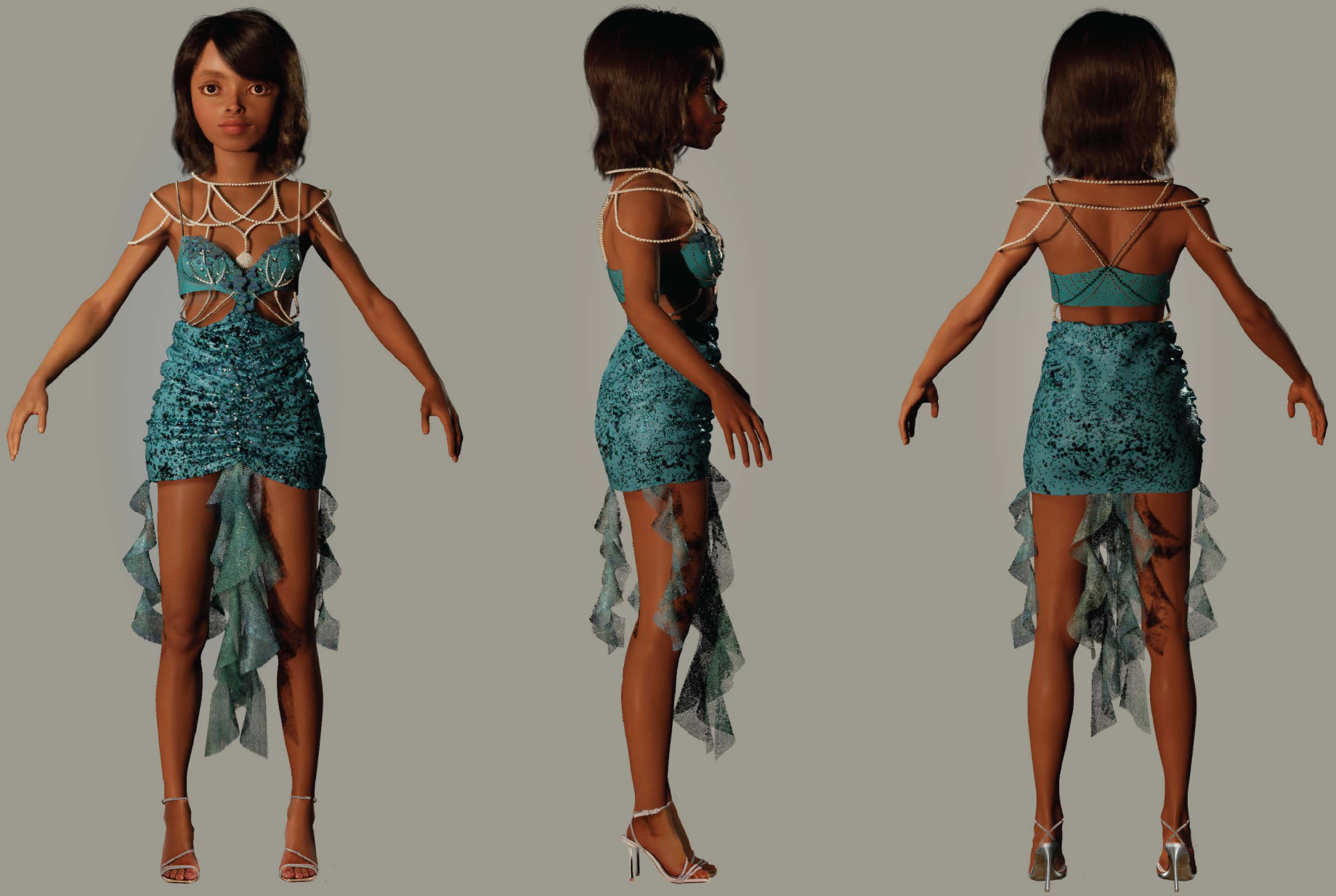


Project: Três Marias
Joana, Iara, Y2
Designer: Raquel Ramos



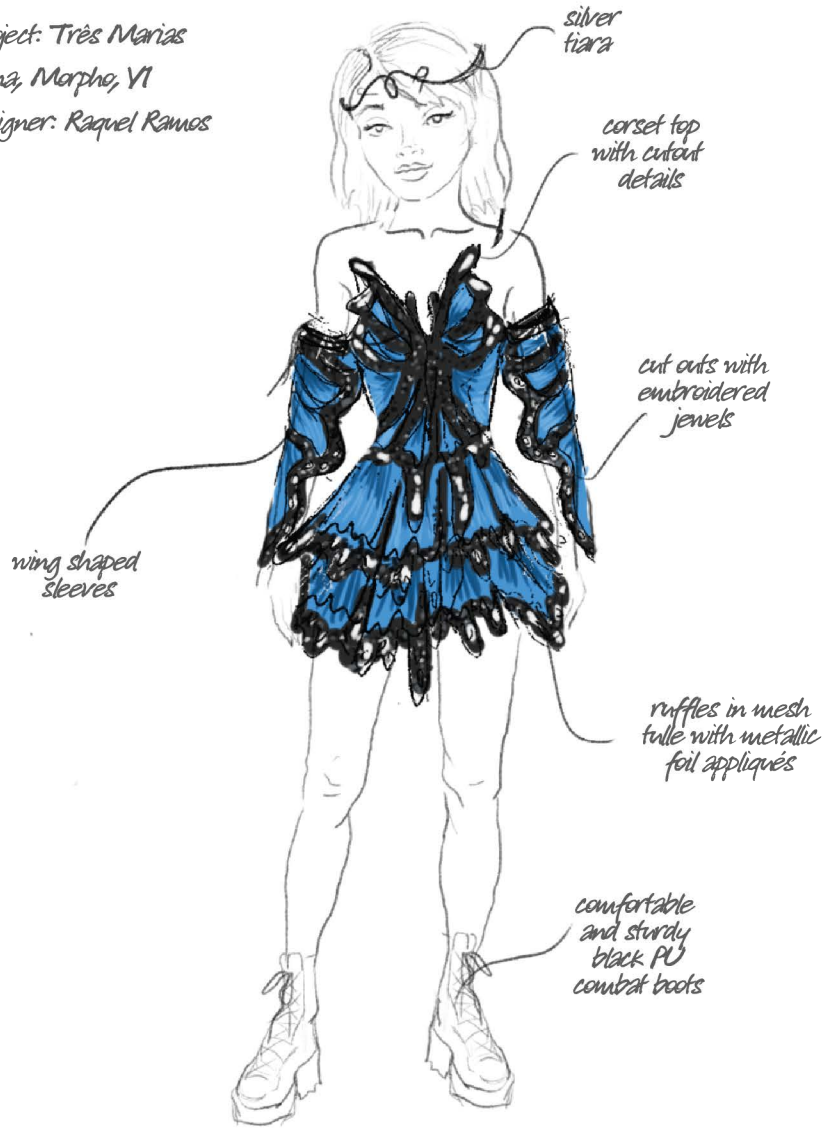
As the story goes, she doesn't act quite like herself -she is trying to appear more grown-up, a little more alluring - so she is represented by Iara - a known siren from the Brazilian folklore, that lures men to their death with her beauty and song (not exactly an animal, but something in between).

Joana’s costume as Iara



JOANA AS A BUTTERFLY

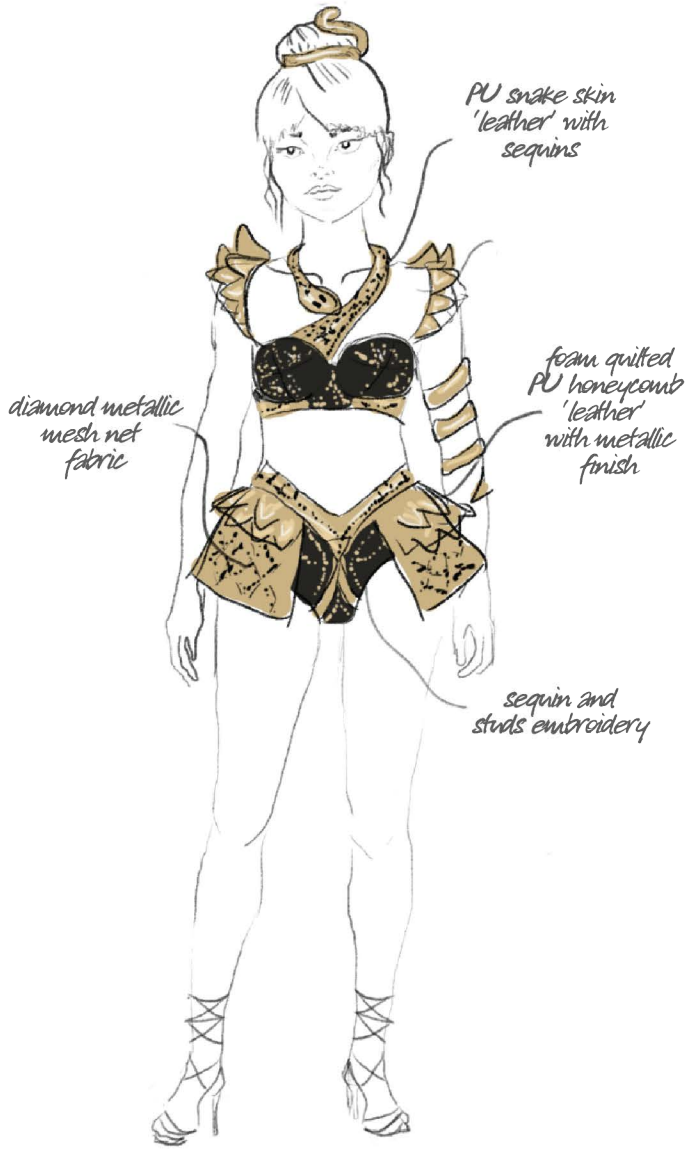
Project: Três Marias
Joana, Morpho, V1
Designer: Raquel Ramos



By the end, she realizes her internal turmoil is simply because she is growing, and consequently, changing. Joana is no longer just who she was, but not exactly who she was trying to be - and it's okay to be both and neither at the same time.So her final garment is inspired by the Morpho butterfly - a symbol for transformation.

Joana’s costume as a Morpho butterfly

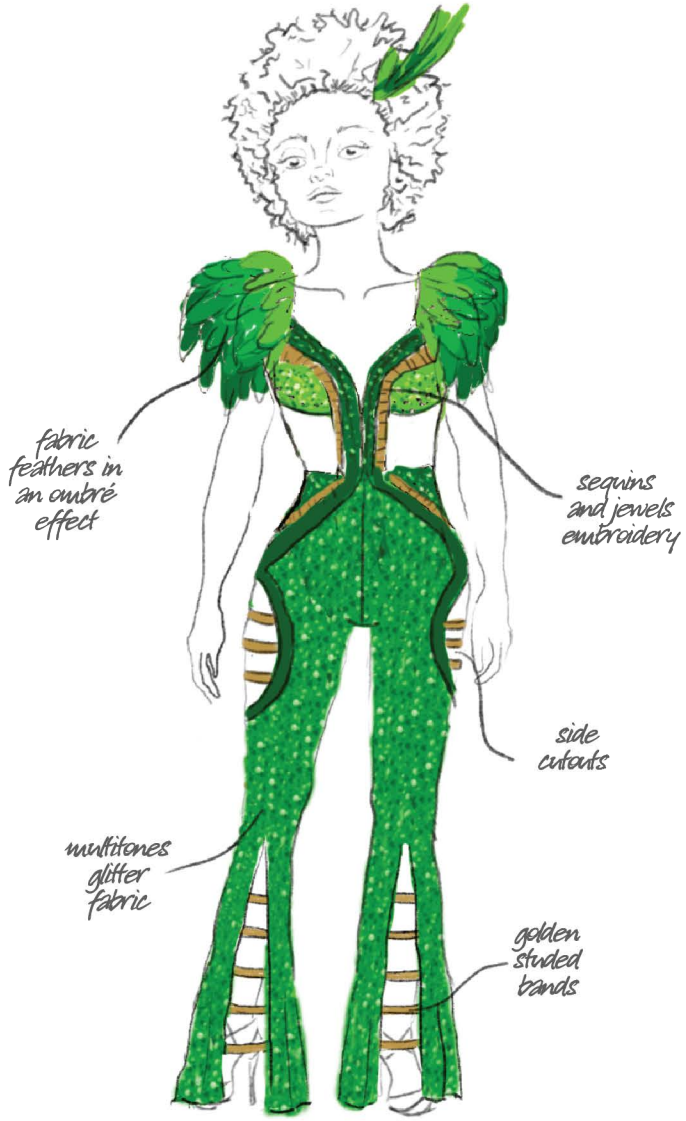
MARIA -UM



Maria-Um is the leader of the trio. She is glamorous and more serious.Her outfits were made with golden tones and snake print and motif, inspired by two very powerful predators, the 'Jaguatirica' feline and the 'Jararaca' snake.They do inspire a little fear, but are exquisite to look at, and I am sure have the best intentions when it comes to helping and protecting those they care for - same as Maria-Um.

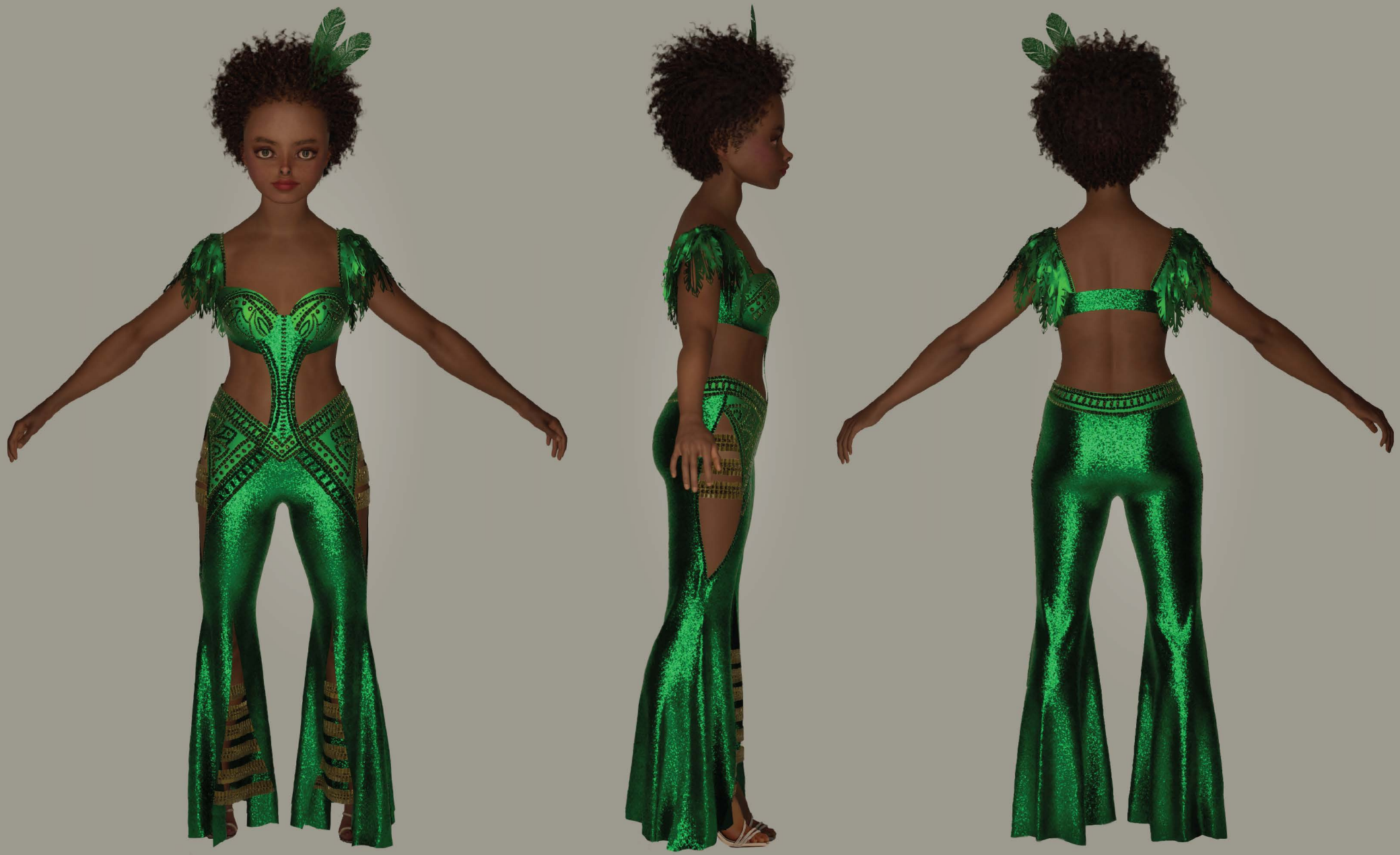
Maria-Um’s costume

MARIA -DOIS

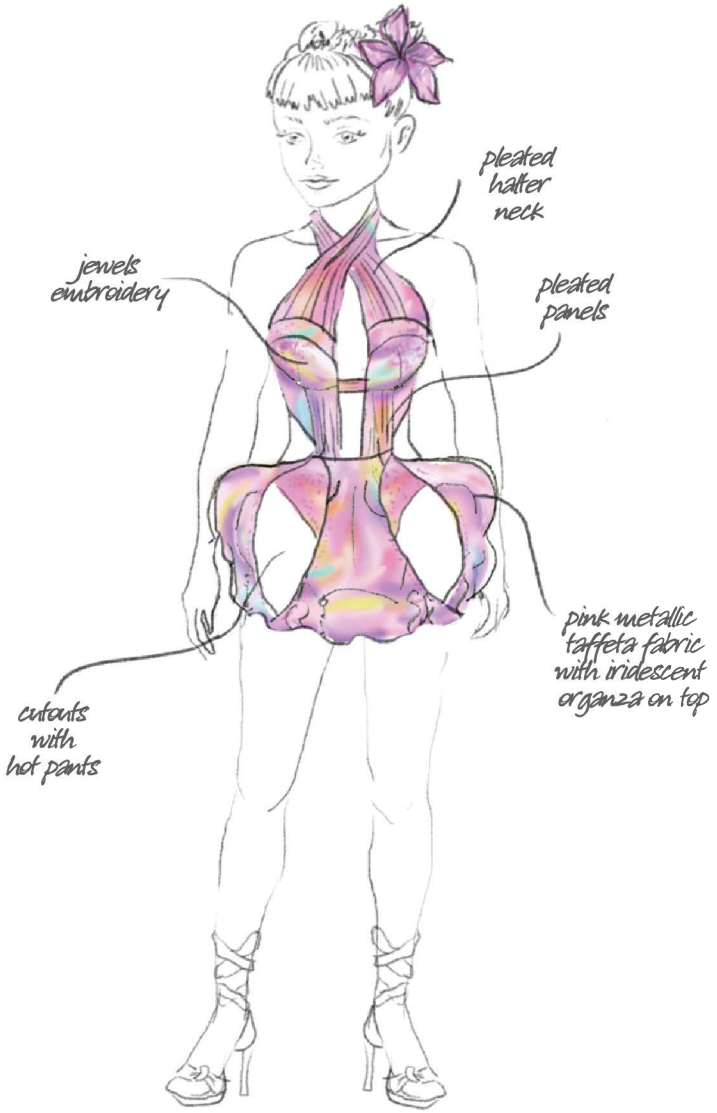


Maria-Dois is much more welcoming, bright and fun. Despite this outgoing side of her, she is very wise and careful. She was inspired by the Brazilian green parrot, which is called 'Papagaio-de-nuca-amarela' - and it is one of the smartest bird species (Custodio, 2021). She is a balance of the other two fairies, bringing a little bit more sensibility to their magical blessings.

Maria-Dois’costume



MARIA -TRÊS



And lastly, but certainly not least, we have **Maria-Três**, who is very bubbly, lady-like and a bit naive, almost ditzy.

Her animal is the pink dolphin or 'boto-cor-de-rosa' - which is an actual animal but also a folklore character known for being a bit of a flirt.

Maria-Três’costume

FRAMES

COLOR STORY