

M A P r o j e c t - B e t h a n y G a l e c k y j

Creating
JULIA
(N i n e t e e n E i g h t y - f o u r)

G r a p h i c P r o p D e s i g n



CLASS OF SERVICE
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
DL=Day Letter
NL=Night Letter
LT=International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination.

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How are graphic props an essential
component in the construction of a story
and the formation of worlds in sci-fi
horror films?

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Graphic Props are the unsung heroes
of the cinematic world,
silently shaping narratives
and enriching the visual tapestry
of film.

Annie Atkins 2021

R a t i o n a l



A pivotal point in my life that I believe had kickstarted my creative journey, was the day I got to visit the Warner Brothers Studios in London.

I was a fifteen year old film enthusiast, a storyteller who spent a lot of their free-time conjuring up elaborate characters and worlds in their head as a way to escape the tedium that often came with living in a tiny village in the depths of the countryside.

I still remember how that visit had impacted me, and how it had taken this intrigue for what I saw on the screen and transferred it into a fascination for what happened behind it; the production from beginning to end, the extensive design decisions, the meticulous work and the intricate details that went into bringing the extravagant wizarding world of 'Harry Potter' to life.

That, I thought, was where the true magic really resided.

The more I explored, the more I found myself enthralled by the power of production design, the idea of 'world-building' and overall, what it takes to successfully immerse and wholeheartedly invest an audience into the story, the world and the characters that reside in it.

My understanding of production design, the various roles within the art department, and the significance of 'mise-en-scene' had developed further throughout my undergraduate Film Production course, but it wasn't until my MA Graphic Design course where I was challenged to think of the ways in which graphic design and film production could collaborate, that I started to focus my attention on one of the smaller yet equally significant segments of the department; the understated craft that is graphic prop-making.

This project has allowed me the opportunity to take my passion and interest in the graphic prop-making art and process further,

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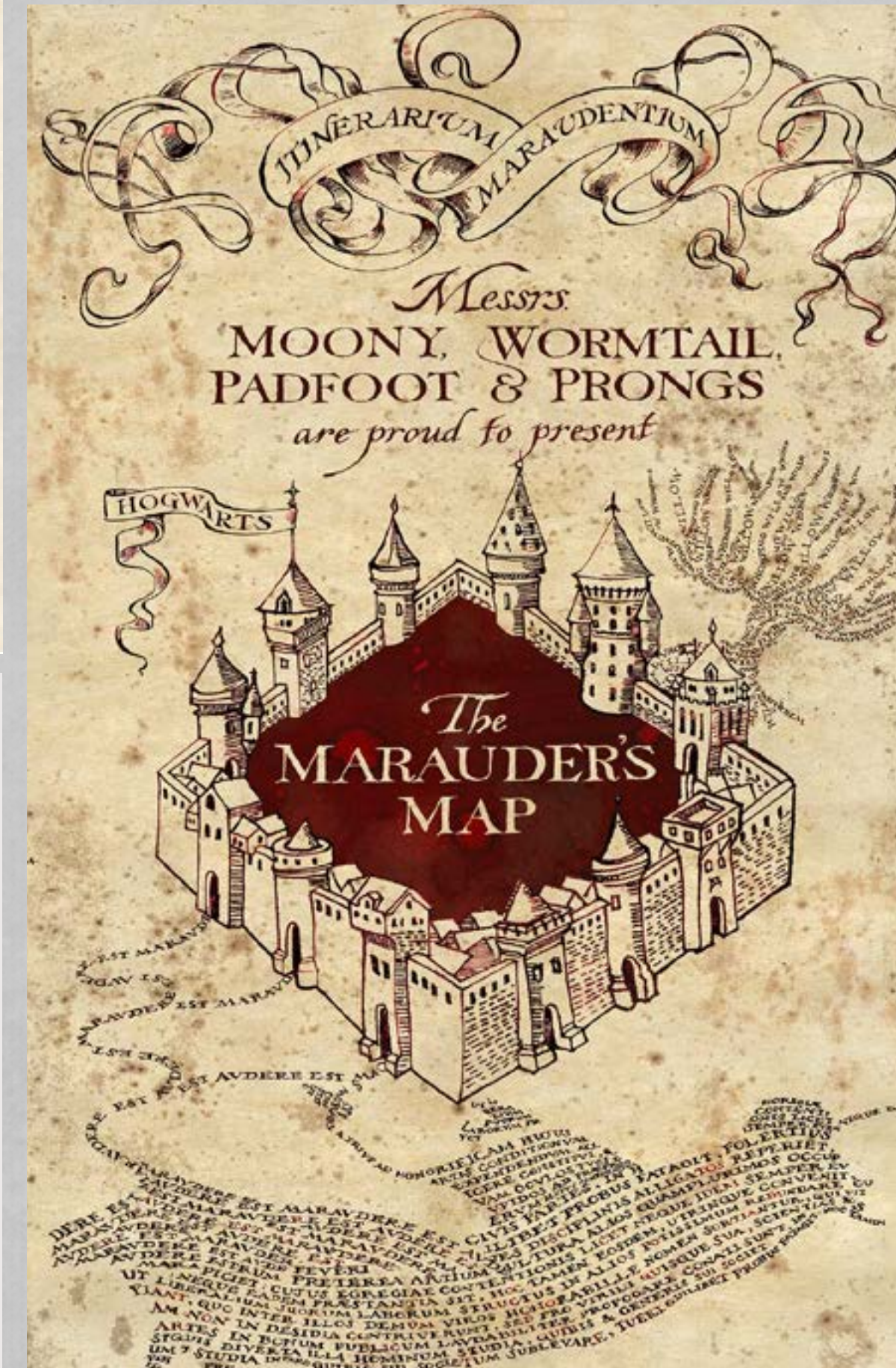
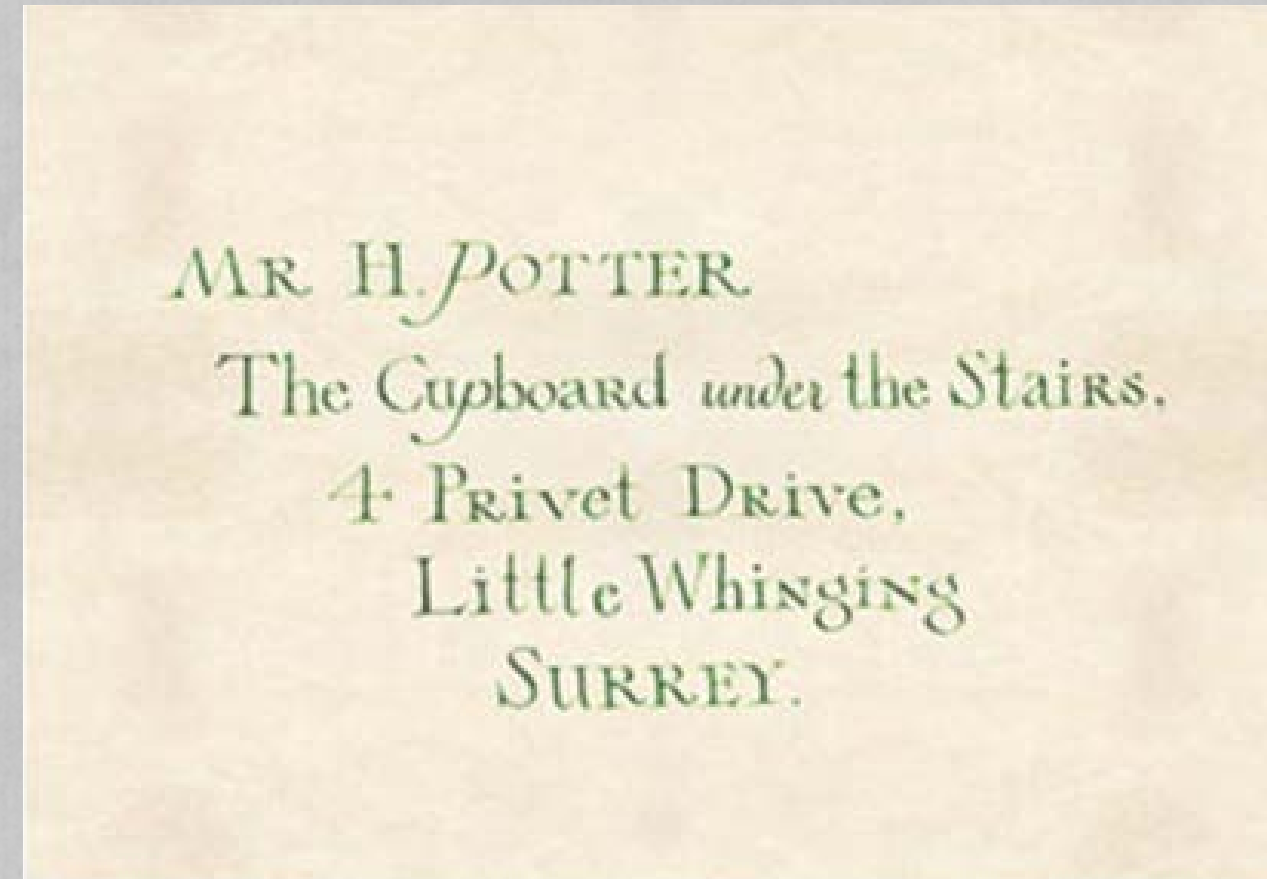
Research

Mina Lima

As mentioned at the start, the first instance where I truly started to show an interest in film production was when I visited the Warner Brother's Studio.

I remember being amazed by the graphic props, seeing the iconic envelope, the Daily Prophet newspapers, the Marauder's Map in person felt monumental to me, knowing that these pieces are what made the magical world of Harry Potter feel that much more real.

With my research, I knew I needed to start from the beginning, and so I decided to investigate into the work of Miraphora Mina and Eduardo Lima- the graphic prop makers of the Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts franchise.



The reason why I was so drawn to these graphic design pieces is because of its ability to maintain this balance between reality and fantasy.

Although there is nothing normal about letters that are delivered by owls and addressed literally to a boy that lives in a 'cupboard under the stairs', or a map that can tell you the current whereabouts of everyone in Hogwarts school, its the little design features such as Dumbledore's fanciful cursive handwriting or the Marauder's little illustrations that make it seem almost believable.

This is what I would love to achieve with my own graphic props, finding those little details that can really help immerse an audience into any story or world, no matter how far-fetched it may seem.

Research

Annie Atkins

It was inevitable that during my research I would stumble upon the works of the renowned graphic prop-maker Annie Atkins.

Not only was I drawn to Atkins because of the work she did, especially on Wes Anderson's *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, *Isle of Dogs* and *Bridge of Spies*, I was drawn to her work ethic and methodology. She is incredibly open about the way she works and her tips and tricks for working in the industry which is both inspiring and insightful.

Her design book 'Fake Love Letters, Forged Telegrams & Prison Escape Maps' (Atkins, 2021) only solidified my interest in the subject matter as it is filled with various work she's done throughout the years, as well as areas of consideration in regards to the practice- elaborating on the importance of details, research, continuity, and language etc.



There is no pressure in trying to create something that looks visually flawless as it's not about making something look perfect, **it's about making something look authentic.** Atkins explains that with graphic prop making, 'you don't want things to look like they were created by a designer'.

Each prop should allow you to **'step into the shoes of the character- or the time or place'**, meaning that each prop should reflect upon the character that uses it and the world around them- it **should add relevant detail to the story and its context.**

To achieve absolute authenticity in her pieces, Atkins will **use both analogue and digital methods-** but she will also make a habit of using traditional crafting techniques, tools and methods or collaborating with real crafts people to achieve the desired effect.

It's not about designing, building and creating something that is unique, instead Atkins describes the prop-making process as 'forgery'- copying, referencing and **drawing a lot (if not all) inspiration from real life.**

Annie Atkins references the Prop-master Robin L Miller, who had said that **'if you're noticing the props, you're doing your job wrong'.**

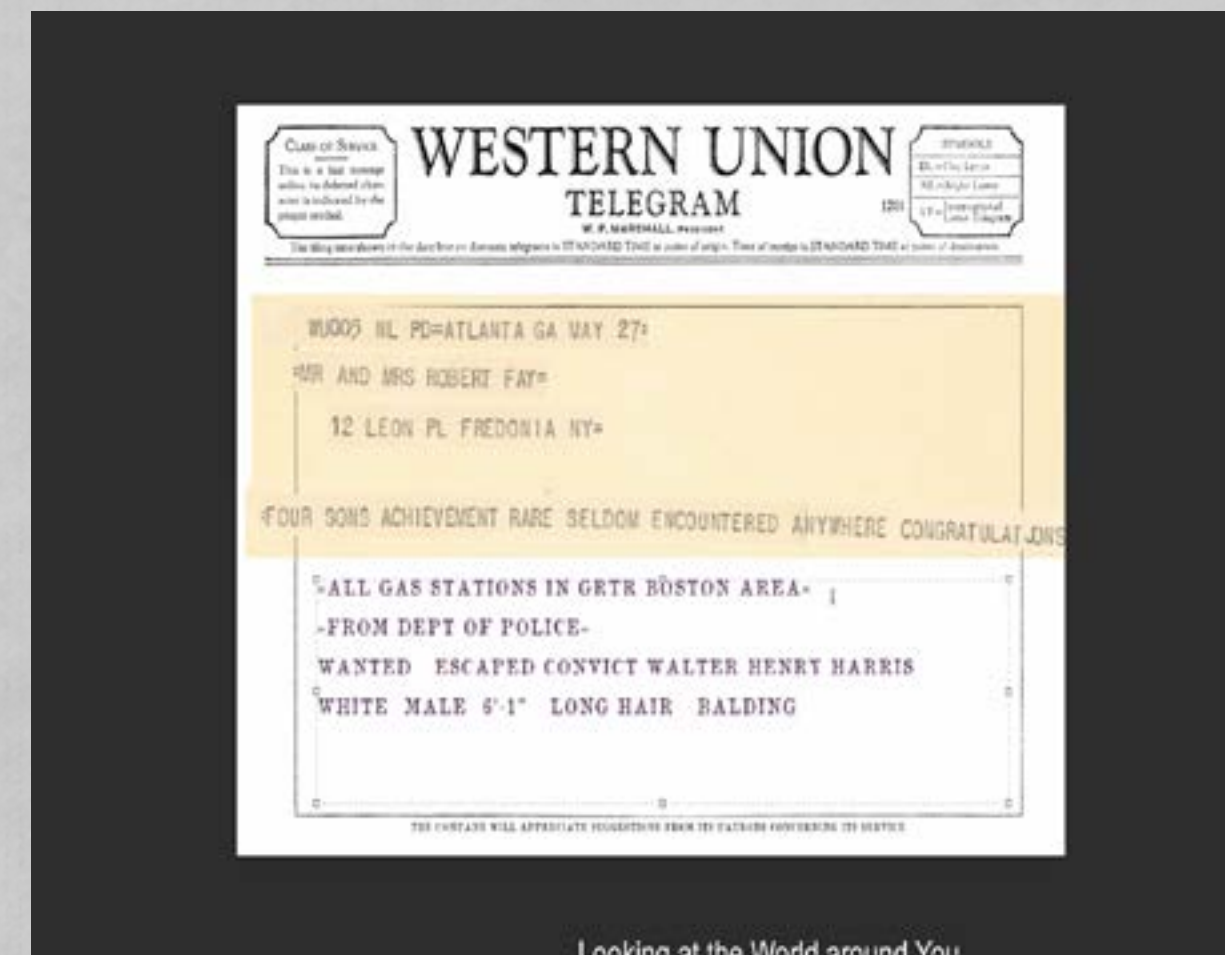
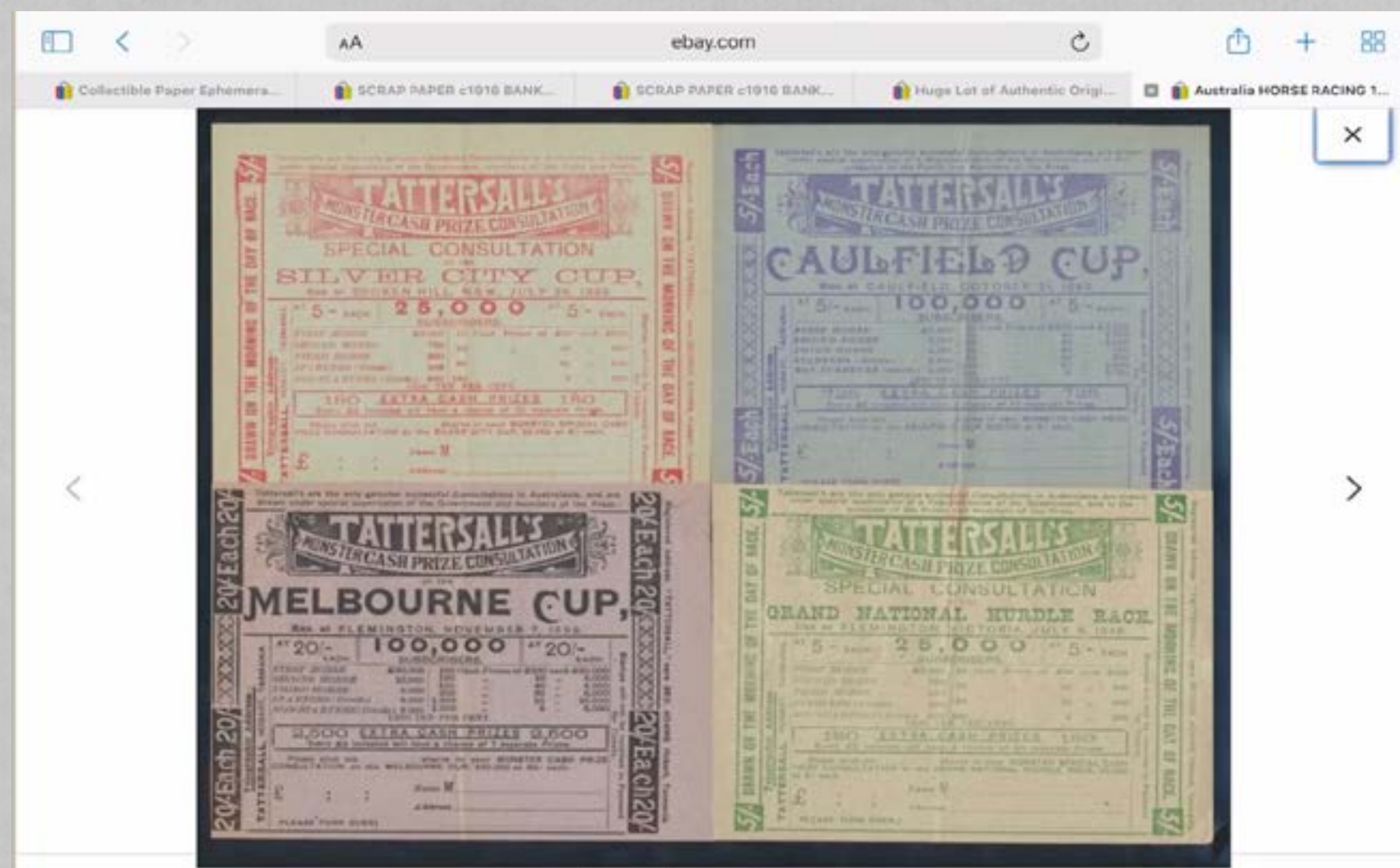
Research

Methodology

Annie Atkins has an online course on a website called Domestika, which I decided to investigate into over the course of this project.

This course has a series of videos and tutorials that explore the different parts of the graphic prop-making process, such as the ways in which you could research and resource props, and the process of drawing inspiration from real-life artefacts and ephemera and translating that inspiration into your own work.

She uses online resources such as Pinterest, Etsy and eBay to source some of her props. eBay in particular is good as there is an option to search and bid for people's ephemera. She emphasises how useful it is to start collecting these pieces, as you never know when you might need them as references for your future film projects.



She demonstrates the way in which she uses both digital and analogue design techniques, explaining that if something had been made by hand at the time, that she should try and make it by hand now, And if something had been made by a machine at the time, then she can cheat and use her machine now- her machine being her computer.

Often, anything that has been created using a letter/ printing press is recreated using digital tools, whereas anything like handwriting must be done by hand in order to maintain authenticity.



She notes that sometimes It's okay not to be too stuck on realism, especially when the plot of the films are often about something that is quite fantastical or far-fetched. We can use real references to elevate the believability of the story, but we can also elevate our pieces to make them that bit more dramatic- because in the end of the day, its the movies, its supposed to be cinematic.

Research

Horror Films

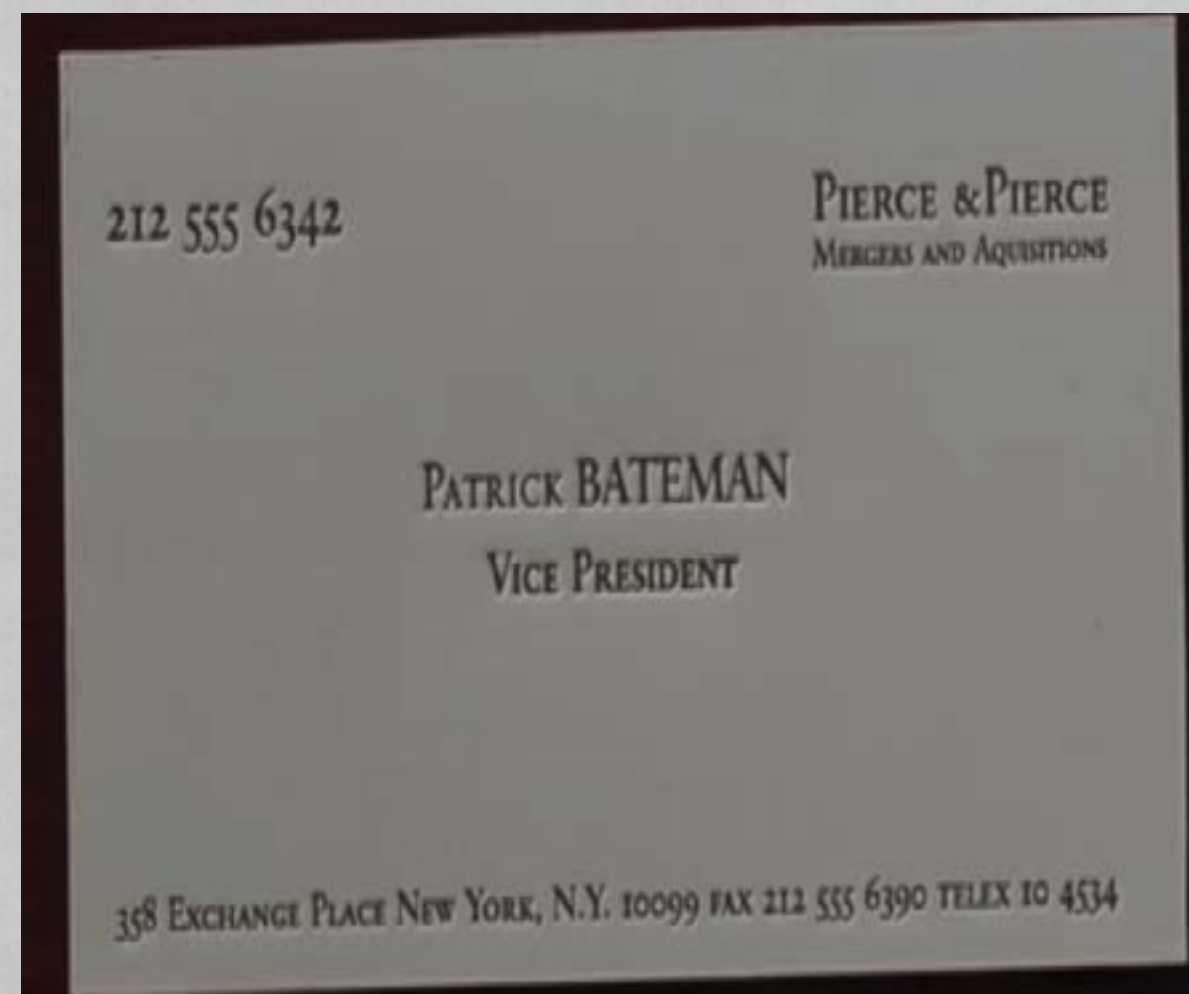
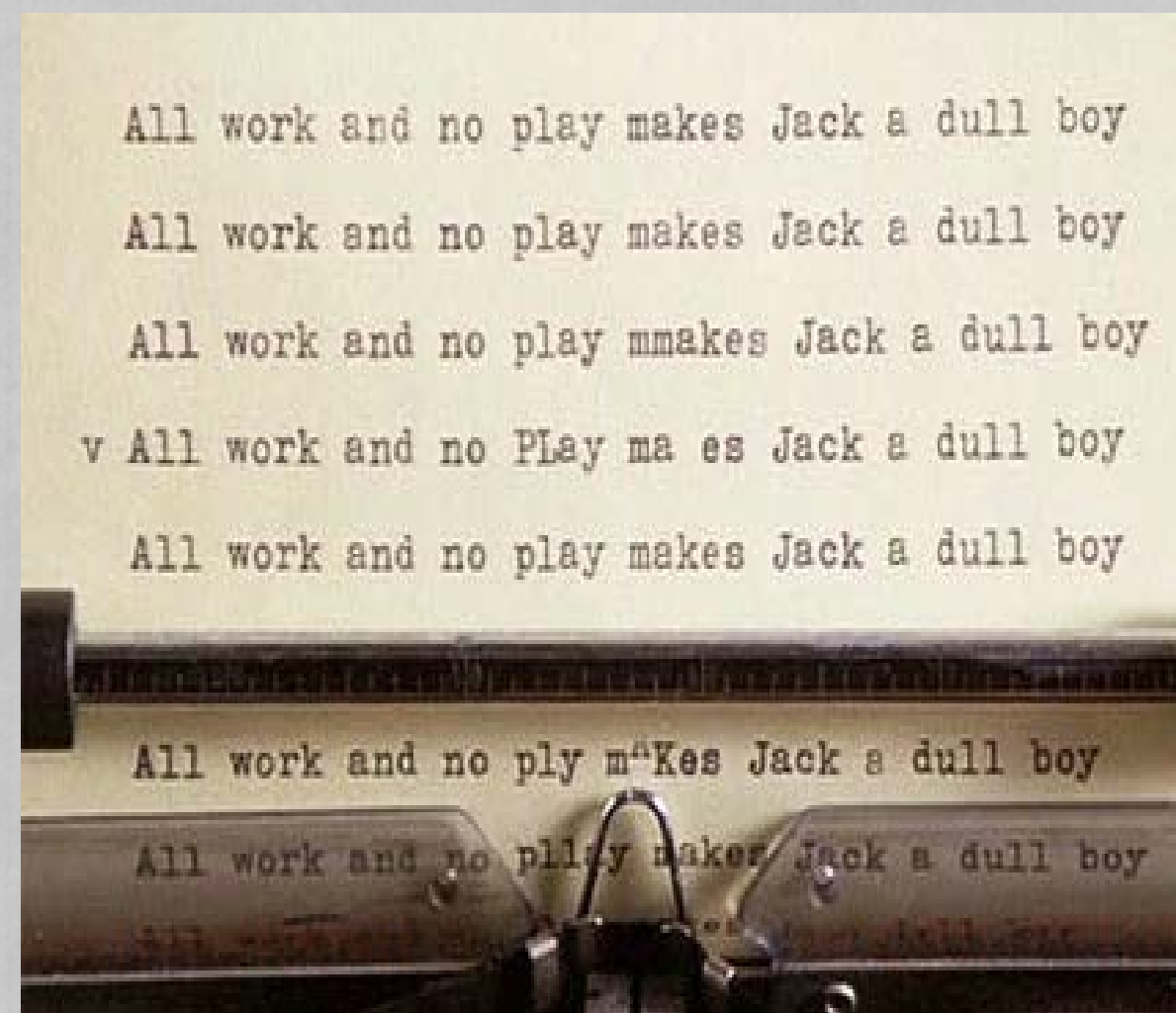
I decided early on that I wanted to focus my study on the horror genre, looking into the ways that graphic props play an essential part in the making of the story and the world of horror films.

One of the reasons why I chose horror films, is because of my personal fascination with them.

Since my time studying Film Production for my undergraduate degree, my eyes have been opened to the ways in which horror films can be integral in our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Since its conception, the horror genre has allowed us, both as storytellers and consumers, to explore our deepest and darkest fears and issues, as individuals, and as a society.

It often uses visual aids such as its mise-en-scene to get across its message, to communicate context and establish style and tone.



Some examples of the most notable graphic props in horror films:

The famous manuscript in *The Shining*, showcasing the extent of Jack's descent into madness as the line 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy' was typed out repeatedly over a hundreds of times.

The scene in *American Psycho* where they compare the sleek design choices of their business cards.

The disturbing popup book in the *Babadook* that foreshadows the dreadful events that transpire later on in the film.

The *Necronomicon* or the book of the dead from the *Evil Dead* franchise, filled with cryptic and foreboding symbols and incantations (originally created by famous fictional horror writer H.P Lovecraft).

All of these props are considered 'hero' props as they not only help to establish context such as the time and place, but they also act as narrative devices in the story, making it all the more important that these props can pass the scrutiny of the camera and the audience watching.

Research

Sci-fi Horror

The horror genre has allowed a multitude of storytellers, writers and filmmakers to delve deep into our fears, not just as individuals but as whole societies.

The sci-fi horror genre is particularly effective as it allows us to thoroughly explore our fears of the unknown and the anxieties we have generated around the evolution of modern-day technology.

It can be argued that the conception of the sci-fi horror genre started with Mary Shelley's novel 'Frankenstein', which had brought us tropes such as 'science gone wrong', and archetypes such as the 'evil scientist' and the 'man-made monster'.

Since then, as technology has evolved, the genre has brought us terrifying concepts such as hostile extraterrestrial life, inventions that end in disaster and destruction, and dystopian worlds that we hope never come to fruition.

Production design and effective mise-en-scene is essential for the sci-fi horror genre; it supplies context, it strengthens characters, and elaborates on story- but perhaps most importantly, it allows us to bridge the gap between the fictional world and our reality, helping to make even the most far-fetched of stories believable.

I wanted to use this opportunity to explore the ways in which I can draw inspiration from real life and implement them into my graphic props for the sci-fi horror genre- exploring the ways that I might be able to help bridge that gap.



Research

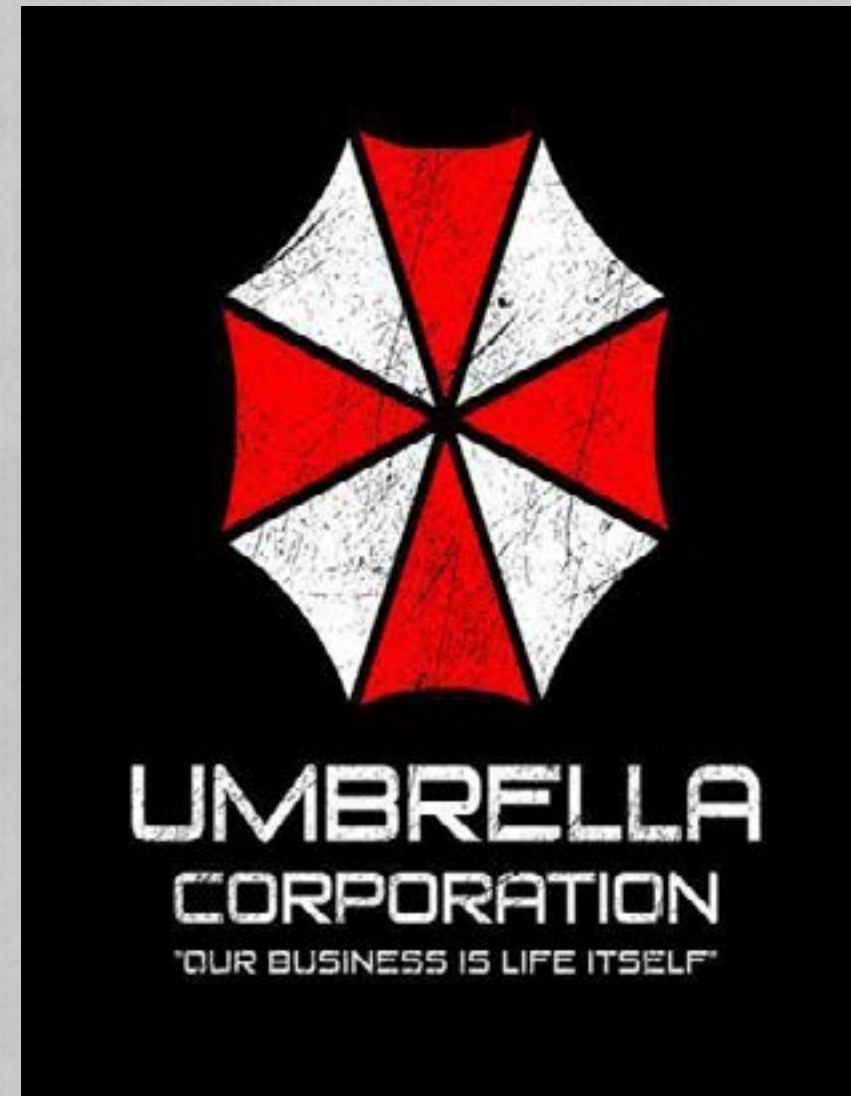
Conventions

Following or conforming to some genre conventions can be incredibly useful as it allows the audience that ability to understand the kind of content they are watching.

Like with any genre, the sci-fi horror genre has a range of typical conventions which can be seen in the plot, as well as the design choices in its mise-en-scene.

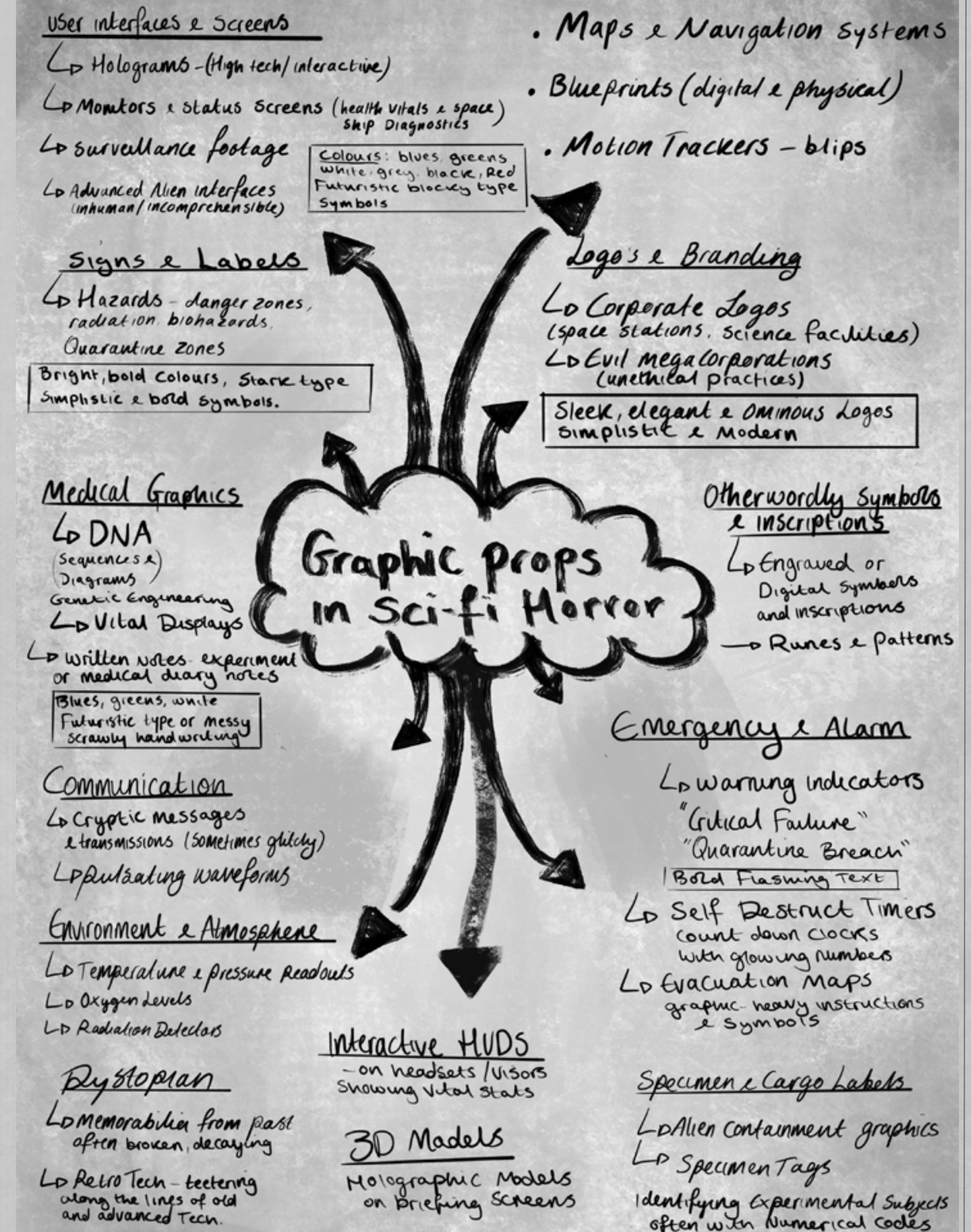
Graphic props are particularly good for communicating genre, and especially with the sci-fi horror genre as it can utilise graphic design elements such as futuristic type/lettering, colour, symbolic icons and imagery, patterns and textures to communicate context or get across a specific tone or message.

A good example is Ridley Scott's *Alien*- one of the most iconic and pivotal examples of graphic design, was the message from the AI system MU-TH-UR 9000. This message was simple yet effective with its glowing green futuristic text, yet it very quickly marked the second act break of the film, showcasing the point where Ridley realised just how in danger she really was.



Another example is the Umbrella Corporation Logo from the Resident Evil films, its ominous and cold design and its subtly sinister wording reflecting upon the corporations unethical practices.

PRIORITY ONE
INSURE RETURN OF ORGANISM
FOR ANALYSIS.
ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS SECONDARY.
CREW EXPENDABLE.



Idea

Graphic Prop Lookbook

As a result of my research and some brainstorming, I decided that the best outcome to my research question was to create a graphic prop lookbook.

I was given the idea to find a horror text such as a script or a book, break down the story and create the props for its film adaptation.

This idea was really exciting to me, as it would allow me the opportunity to investigate into the process of graphic prop design; taking the text, understanding its context and the story it is telling, taking a description and interpreting it into a prop.

For the lookbook itself, I wanted to draw my inspiration from Craig Oldham's book 'They Live: A Visual and Cultural Awakening', as well as Annie Atkins' 'Fake Love Letters, Forged Telegrams & Prison Escape Maps'.



Im also drawing inspiration from John Berger and his visual essay 'Ways of Seeing' as I really like the way that he presents his work- through images and brief captions.

I felt like his method would be the best option for presenting my work. It is important that graphic props are able to get across the context of the story quickly and efficiently to the audience- I shouldn't need to include a lot of (if any) written explanations or else it would defeat the objective of the prop.



Considerations



Story

There are so many different sci-fi horror stories out there to choose from and I want to make sure that the story I choose to base my project on is a story that inspires me, aligns with my interests and values, answers my research question and gives me a lot of material to work with when I create my graphic props. Ideally, I want to try and find a story with a female author, or in which contains a strong female protagonist/ character. I also want to try and find a story that explores themes, horrors and issues that I believe to be relevant to our modern-day society.



Authenticity

Once I find the story, I need to plan out the props I want to make. In understanding what kinds of props I'm going to design, it will then give me a guideline for my research so that I can try and make them as authentically as possible; I hope to replicate Annie Atkin's methodology and draw inspiration from real-life artefacts. It's important to remember that while authenticity is important in order to make the story more believable, I shouldn't let it dictate all of my design choices as it is more important that the prop is true to the story and provides the audience with an effective cinematic experience.



Methodology

After my research, it's important that I consider the methods in which I'll be designing and making these props and if I will be making them using analogue or digital techniques. It's important at this stage to consider my current capabilities and limitations, not just in terms of my own skills and abilities, but the tools I have access to. This will impact the kind of props that I will be making for the final project.



Format

As I am planning to make it into a lookbook of sorts, I need to consider the way in which I will format and present my props once I've designed them. I then aim to consider the ways in which I might distribute said lookbook to prospective employers such as art directors, prop houses and studios, considering the ways that I might be feature this lookbook digitally on my online portfolio/website, and how I might be able to produce physical hard copies.

Definne

Julia

Sandra Newman

After a lot of consideration, I decided to base my project on the 2023 book *Julia* by Sandra Newman, known for being the ‘feminist retelling’ of George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

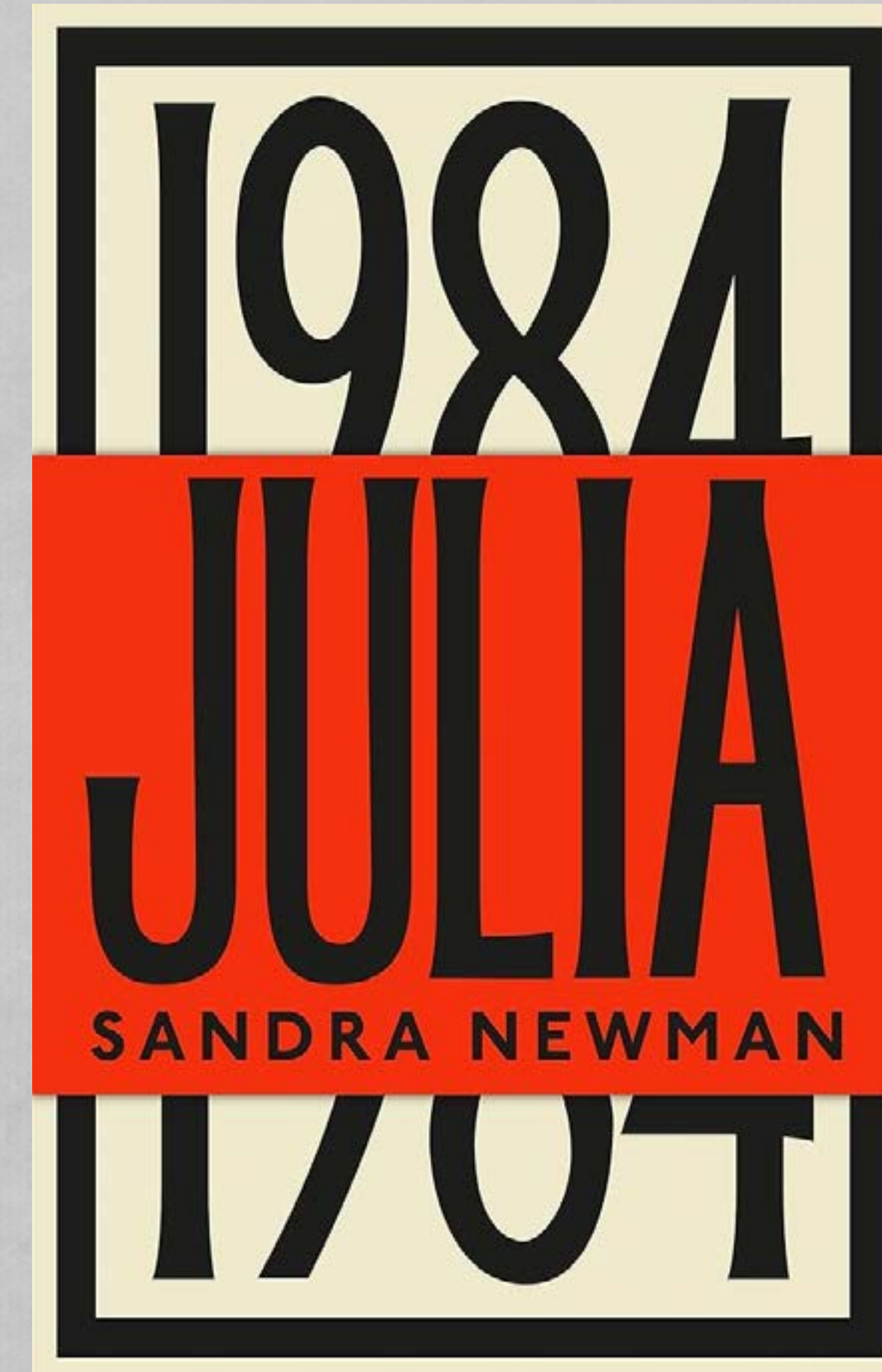
These dystopian, sci-fi horror novels are based in a hypothetical version of London in the year 1984, exploring the bleak and brutal consequences that come with living in an oppressive totalitarian society where your every move, action and choice is being monitored and dictated by the government- under the reign of a seemingly omnipotent and omniscient figure known in the story as ‘Big Brother’.

The original text by George Orwell was written in the perspective of Winston Smith, an minor party member (outer party) that works in the Ministry of Truth as a writer- rewriting history to fit the governments narratives.

At the start, Winston is already secretly rebelling against the brutal totalitarian government by keeping a diary, but he is eventually seduced into an illicit affair with Julia, a young free-spirited woman who works as a mechanic at the same ministry.

Both Winston and Julia are eventually betrayed, caught and tortured at the Ministry of Love by O’Brien, a member of the inner party who was secretly a spy for the government and had set them up.

At the end of the original novel, Winston is eventually released from the Ministry of Love (after begging O’Brien to instead inflict his torture on Julia instead) once he is successfully brainwashed into adoring Big Brother.



Although set in the same world and time period as the original text, Newman’s retelling revolves around the character of Julia.

And yet it is through this story that she gives us a lot of new insight, not just into the character by supplying her with more depth, complexities and dimension, but in the world and the story.

We see what life was like for woman in this barbaric, bleak and male-led totalitarian world, we see the horrific trials and tribulations they would have to face in order to survive, and ultimately, what Julia had to do to keep herself safe and maintain her sense of self.

The story ends a lot differently compared to Winston’s, her arc of transformation opposing his as despite it all, she eventually ends up realising her strong hatred for Big Brother and the governments regime.

Why Julia?

There are a few reasons why I decided to choose Julia instead of George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Already having been a big fan of the original novel, I was really intrigued to read the same story but from Julia's perspective.

I found myself drawn to Newman's version of her character; from the very beginning, I couldn't help but admire and sympathise with her,- a strong-willed, free-spirited woman that had slipped under Big Brother's radar for many years. She smuggled inner party goods from the black market, got involved in illicit affairs with other party members, and maintained this rebellious attitude towards Big Brother and the government.

Intelligent, cunning, resourceful, sensual and real, you couldn't help but empathise and route for her throughout her story. Upon further research into Sandra Newman's commentary, I didn't quite realise just how misogynistic the original text was until she pointed it out in her analysis.

"Misogyny runs through the book, both as a theme and as a nasty background smell. We're told Winston "disliked nearly all women," and that "it was always the women, and especially the young ones, who were the most bigoted adherents of the Party, the swallows of slogans, the amateur spies and nosers-out of unorthodoxy."

Any hint of feminism is seen as totalitarian: women having short hair, not wearing make-up, working with machines, are all framed as an unnatural oppression imposed by the Party.

Freedom for Winston is speaking the truth; freedom for Julia is putting on scent and showing herself to her boyfriend in a pretty frock"
(Newman, 2023)

The more I thought about it, the more I realised how important this text was, not just because it goes back and adds more dimension to Julia's character, but how the text really highlights some really pivotal and relevant societal issues that we are still having to deal with in today in regards to womens representation and womens rights- especially in regards to their own autonomy.



Story Context

When considering the mise-en-scene or production design for any film, it is always important to consider its context- the tone, the time and the place the story is set in.

For this particular story, I believe it to be even more important due to the fact that it is a satirical text with many of its themes and elements inspired by the things Orwell had witnessed during WWII and the rise of Stalin's totalitarian regime as it swept across Europe.

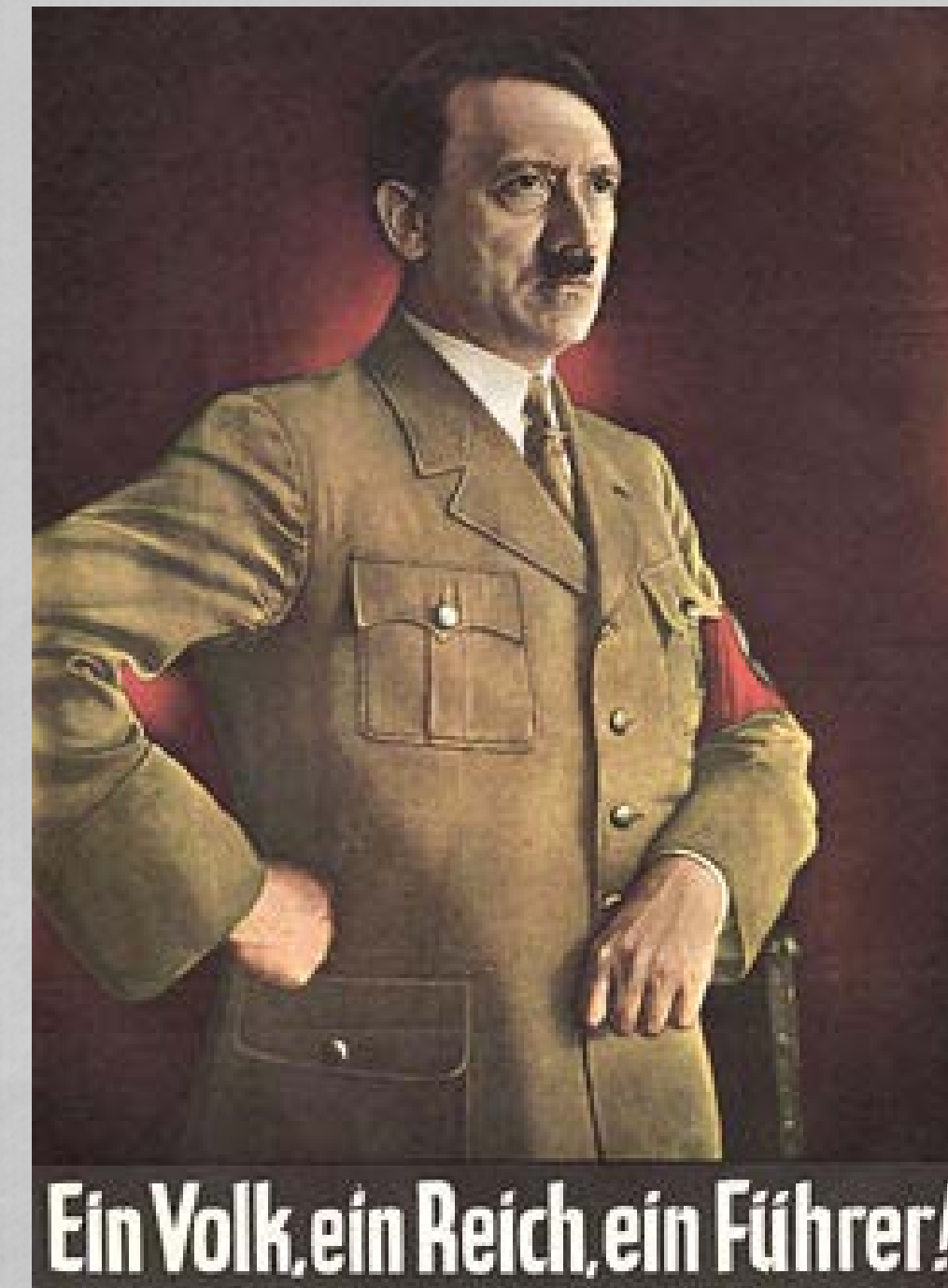
There are a lot of correlations between reality and fiction in this text, which is going to be really helpful in my research, and then in my design decisions when I create the props. I want to consider the type of imagery that was used- especially in regards to the propaganda and the party/ campaign posters.

In my opinion, one of the biggest correlations between reality and the fictional world in Nineteen Eighty-Four, was the figurehead of Big Brother.

He was described as a omnipotent, ominipresent and omniscient being, (almost superhuman) that everyone should love, follow and abide by unconditionally. The same way in which people were made to think and follow the fascist dictators such as Josef Stalin and Adolf Hitler.

Another big example of the correlation between reality and fiction, was the youth groups that had formed as a result of the party.

In the novels, children are welcomed into youth spy groups that are persuaded and encouraged by the government to act as spies for their cause, going as far as betraying their own parents for rewards.



“One People, One Nation, One Leader”

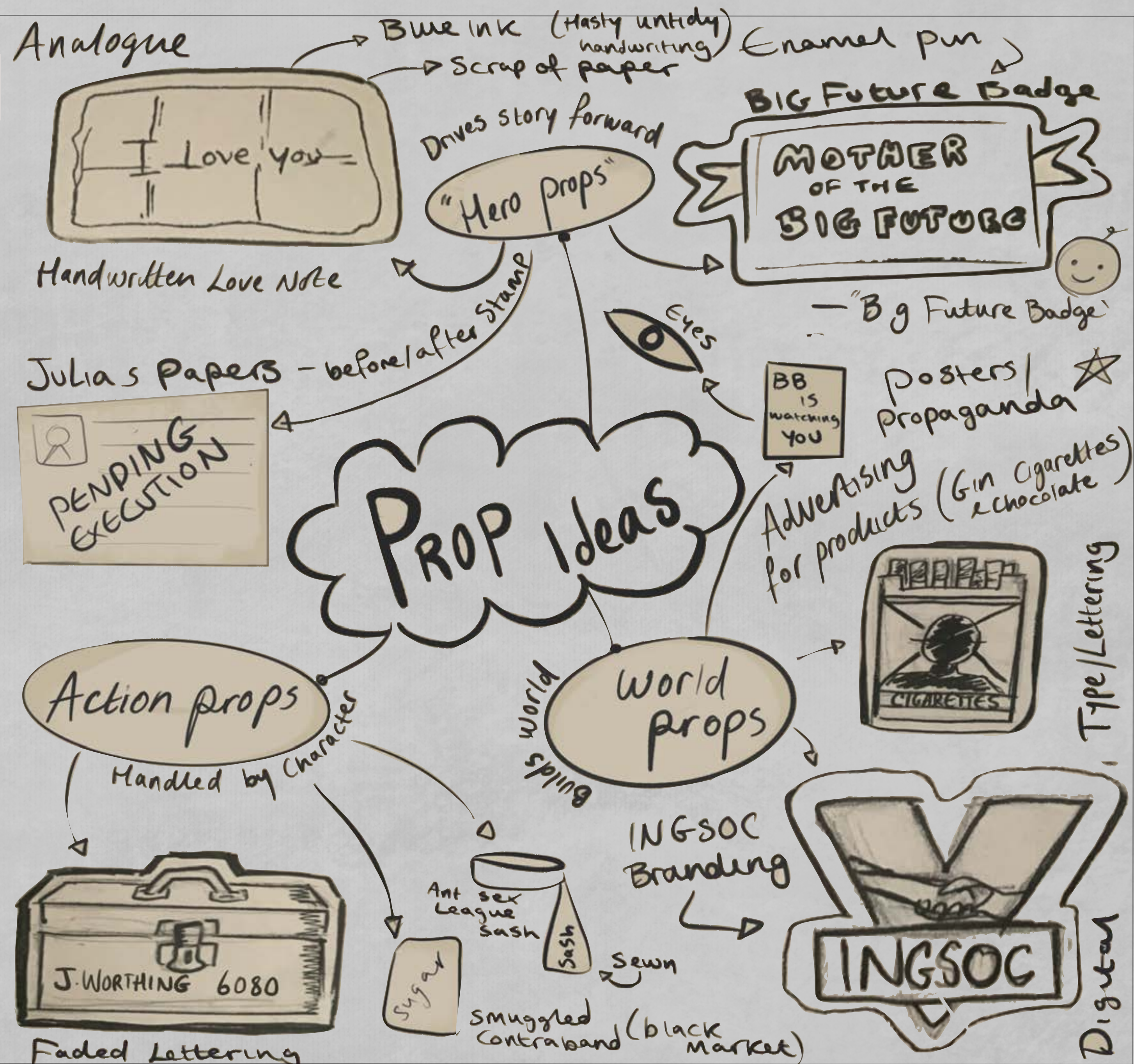


“Youth serves the Führer! All ten-year-olds into the Hitler Youth.”



“Forward to the victory of communism!”

I found myself really drawn to the idea of designing the world props such as the propaganda, the party logos and slogans, the advertising and the branding etc.



D e v e l o p

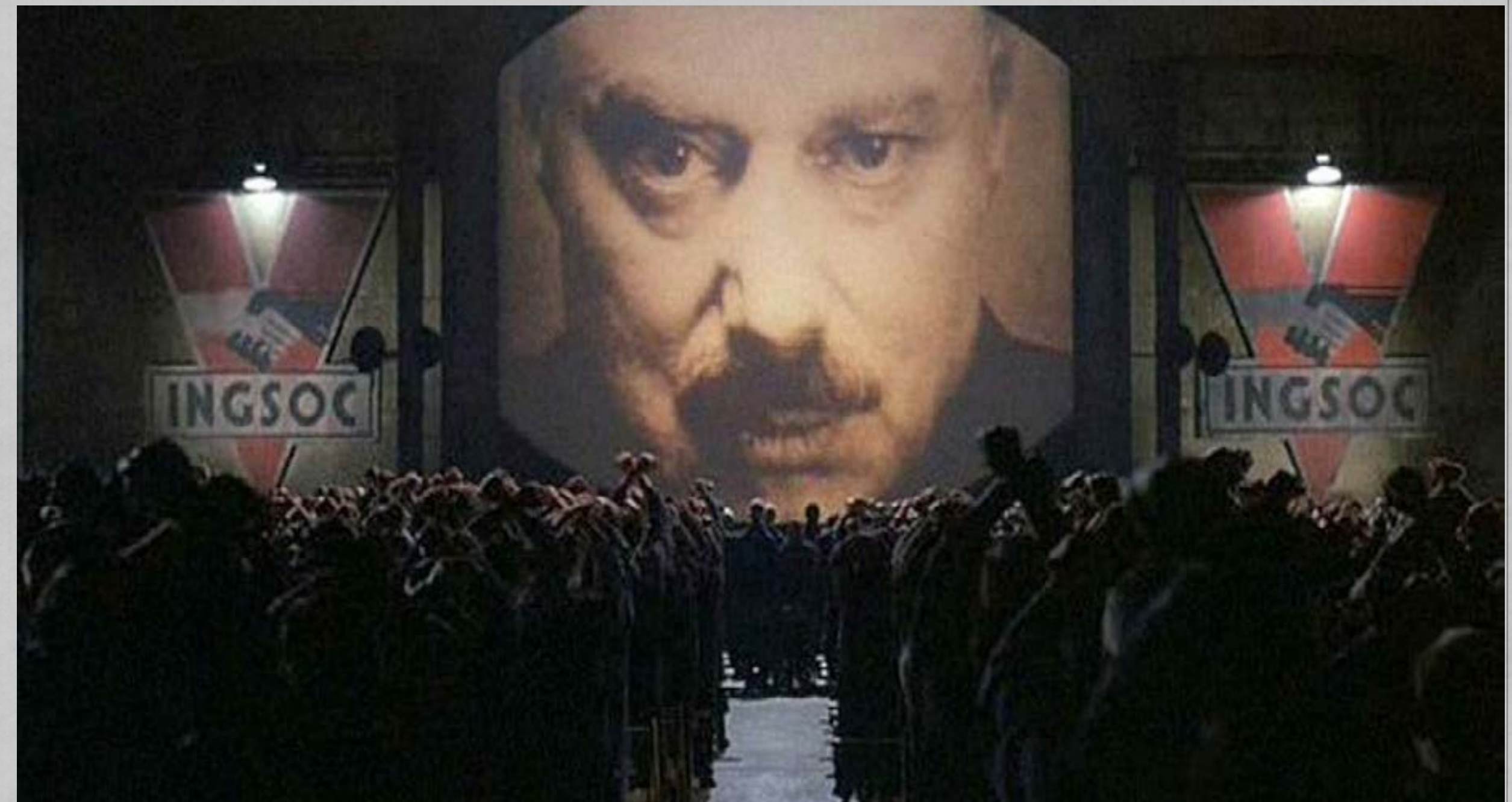
I n s p i r a t i o n

1 9 8 4 - M i c h a e l R a d f o r d

I decided to have a look at the 1984 film directed by Michael Radford, wanting to use the film as inspiration for some of my design choices.

I took a lot of inspiration from the visual style of the film, the griminess of the mise-en-scene really highlights the bleakness of the plot and the setting.

I was also inspired by elements such as the blocky text and architecture of the building, the sharp lines, the colour palette and the unusual 'futuristic' shape of the screens- deciding to try and find ways in which I can implement those elements in my own design work.



Inspiration Vintage Posters

It's known that in the creation of Nineteen Eighty-Four, that Orwell was heavily influenced and inspired by the events, systems and media that he saw throughout World War 2, and the rise of Stalin's totalitarian regime that proceeded afterwards. With this in mind, I decided to research and explore the various posters and propaganda that existed in that time.

I initially stuck with predominately British content since the text was set in London, but I eventually ventured into propaganda/ posters from across Europe, America and China- noting down the motifs, types, and iconography that was commonly used.

I found myself drawn to the illustrative style in some of them, finding it both eye-catching, effective and vaguely disturbing which is a style I believe would work incredibly well with the posters I want to create.



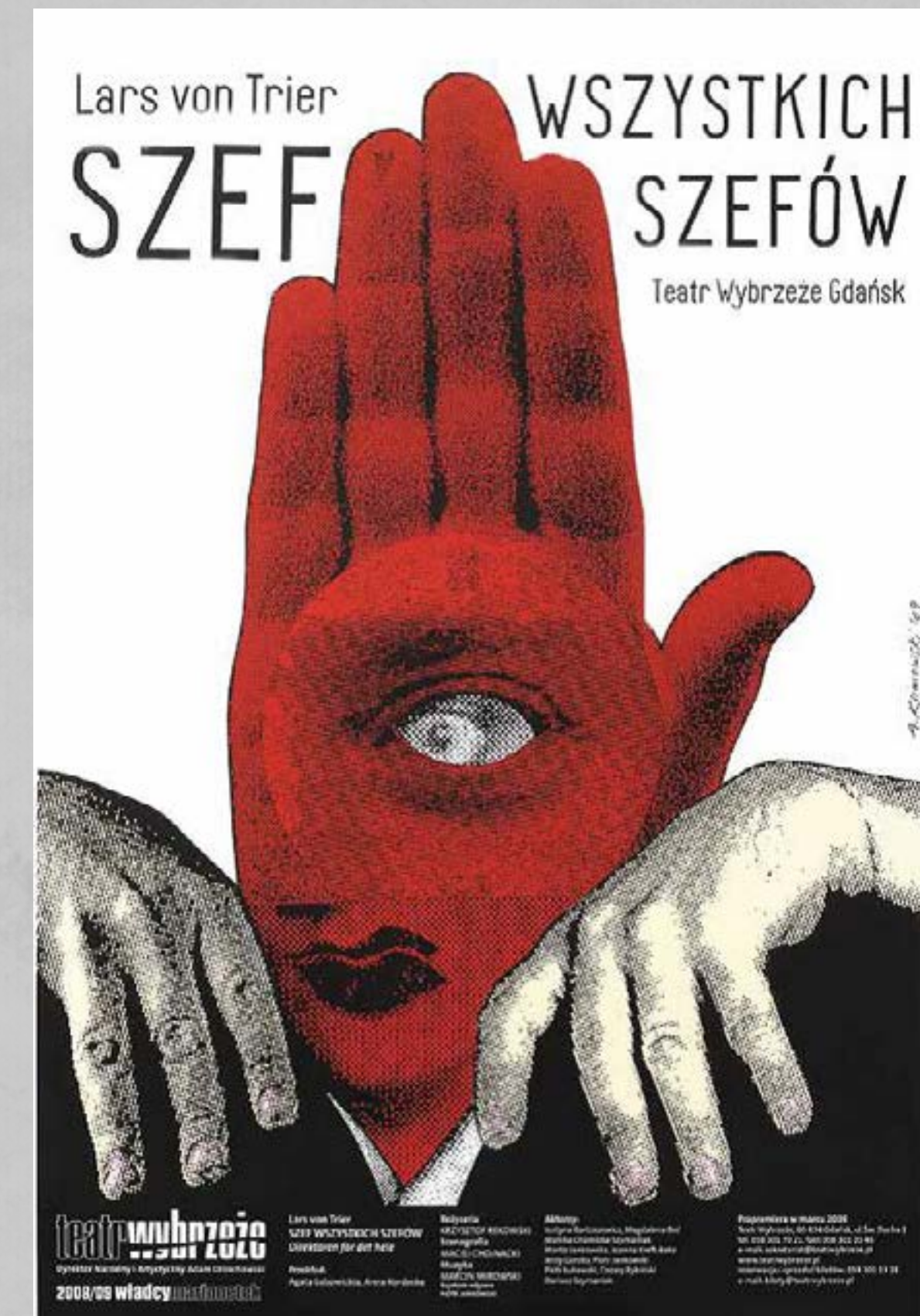
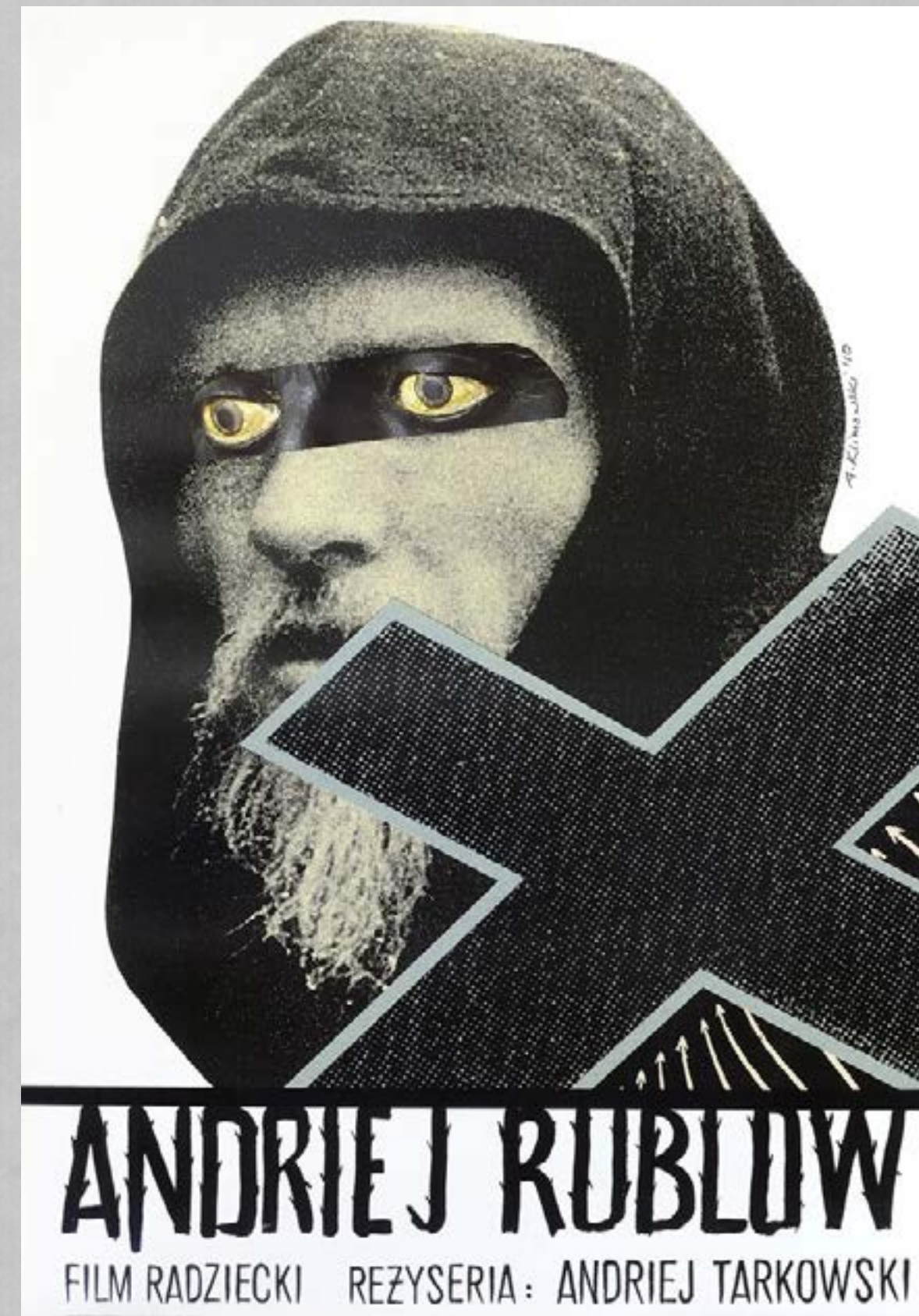
Inspiration

Andrzej Klimowski

As illustration is one of my core strengths, I knew that I was going to be using it a lot in my work.

And it was during a tutorial where I was directed to look into Andrzej Klimowski, a graphic designer and illustrator who has designed posters for theaters and film distributors in Poland, and book covers and illustrations for UK publishers.

I was really drawn to the graininess of his illustrations and the unique texture it created, making his work feel dark and a little unnerving- which is something I wanted to try and replicate in my own work, especially when illustrating the ominous figure of Big Brother.



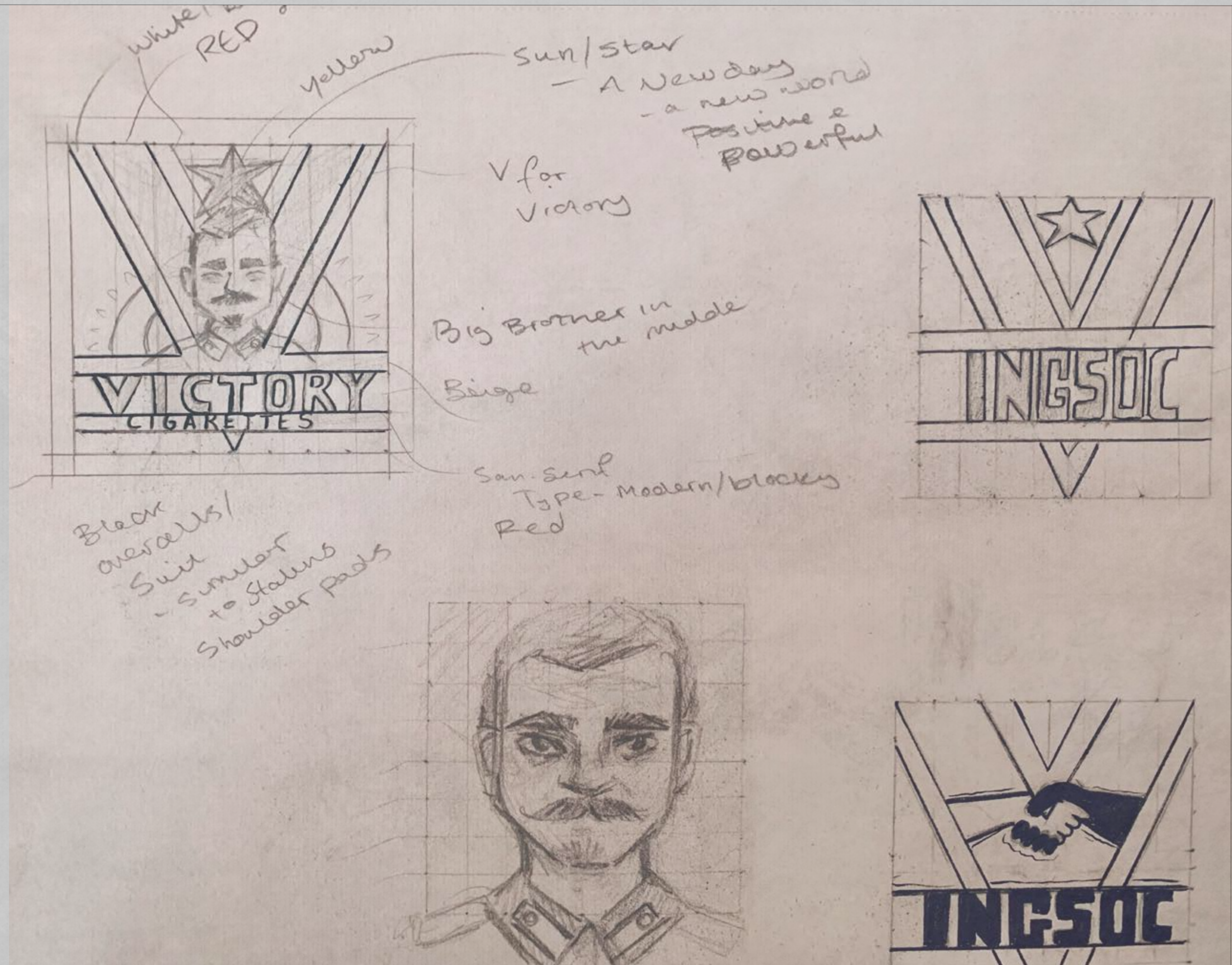
Initial Sketch

In order to make some of my props, the first thing I wanted to do was establish a logo, as well as a housetyle with a consistent colour palette and type. I also wanted to try and establish Big Brother's visual identity, using my skills in illustration to bring him into fruition.

The logo in particular is important as it represents the ruling political party in charge of Oceania.

('INGSOC' is the newspeak, a word in the fictional propagandistic language which stands for "English Socialism".)

When creating the propaganda, I want to try and include the logo in my designs.



T y p o g r a p h y

The first thing I decided to do was establish a type. Initially I thought about finding one that had already been made but I was inspired to try and create one myself that I could use in my various props.

I took a page from Atkin's book, deciding to consider the kind of machinery that would exist in the world of Oceania (dystopian London) in 1984.

Given the context of the story, I wanted to create a blocky type that looked like it would have been printed, but at the same time was reflective of the illustrative style common in war propaganda.

Creating this idea that although they are supposed to be living in a progressive time and space, that in reality they are stuck in an oppressive past.

A B C D E F G

H I J K L M N

O P Q R S T U

V W X Y Z

D e v e l o p

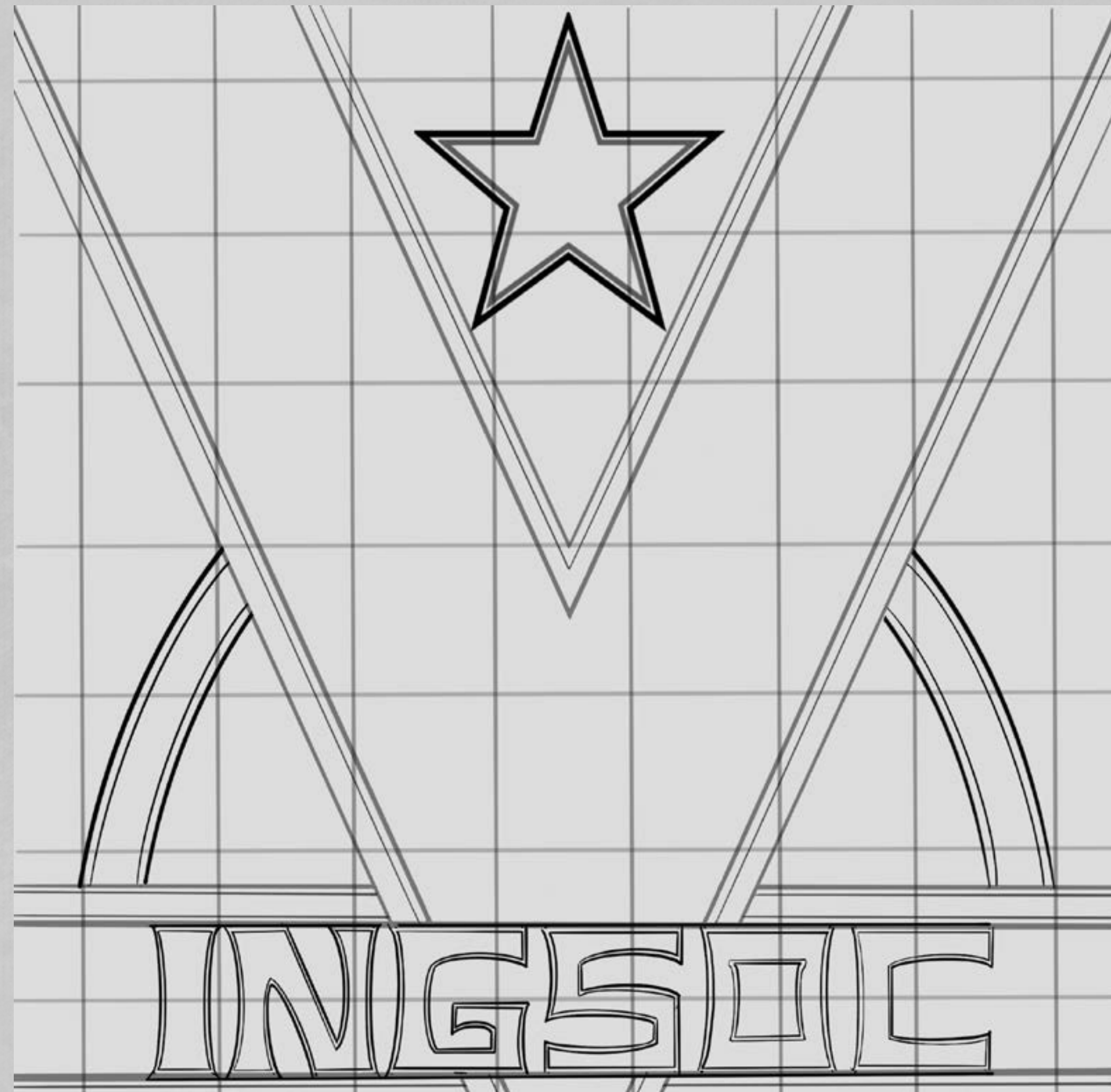
M o t i f

I decided that in order to start making my props, I needed to first establish a recurring theme, motif or a housestyle of sorts that represented the government party.

The reason being was that I wanted to maintain this idea that everything and everyone is being monitored, controlled and owned by the government.

All of the posters, banners, flyers, branding will have these motifs on them, using the same colours, the same kind of type/ lettering, and the same kind of imagery and icons.

I drew a lot of my inspiration from WWII and Soviet Propaganda, as well as from the original 1984 film by Michael Radford, using a similar colour scheme as well as icons such as the letter 'V', stars, hands, circles and banners to get across this feeling of authority and power.



Big Brother

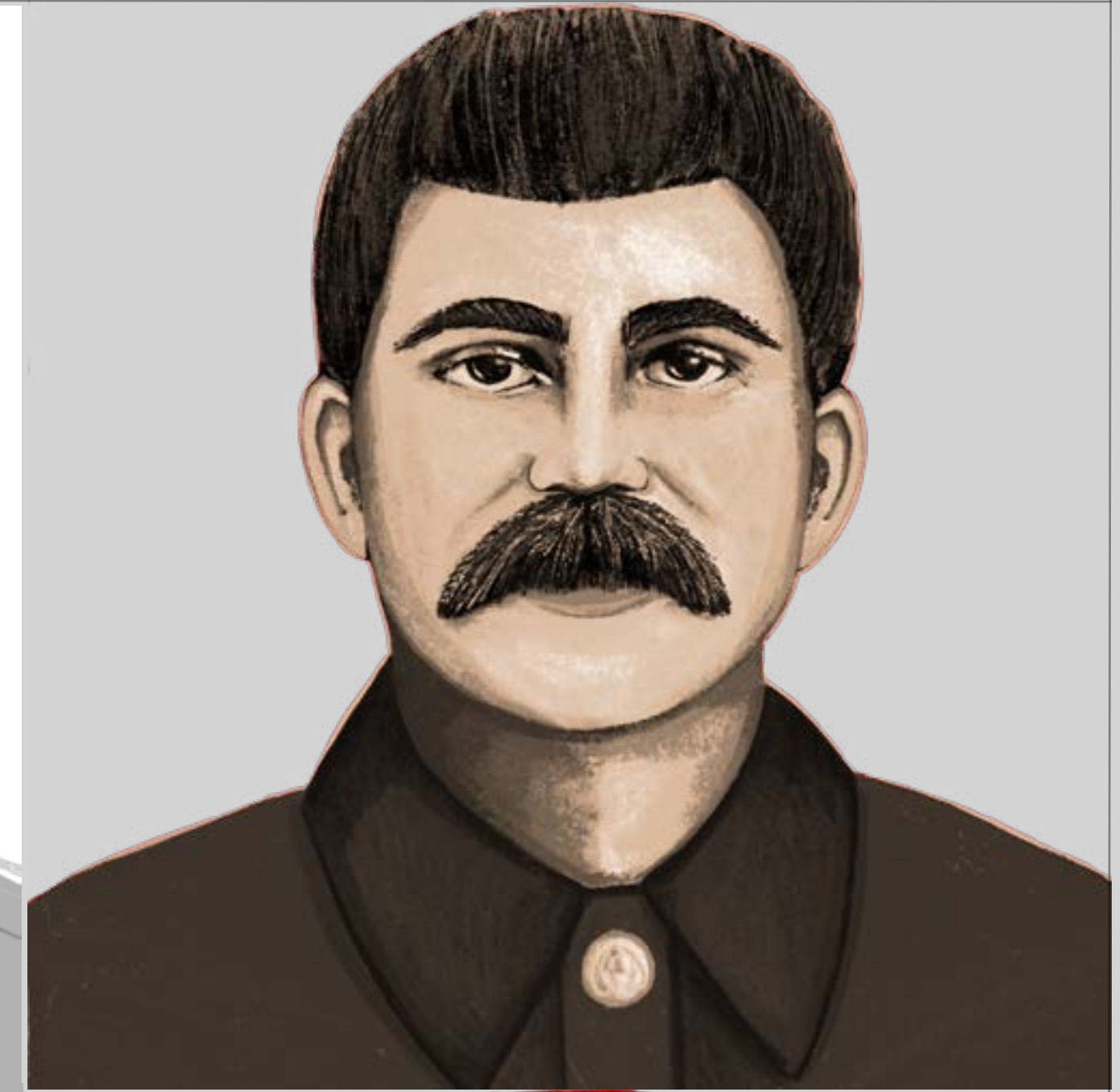
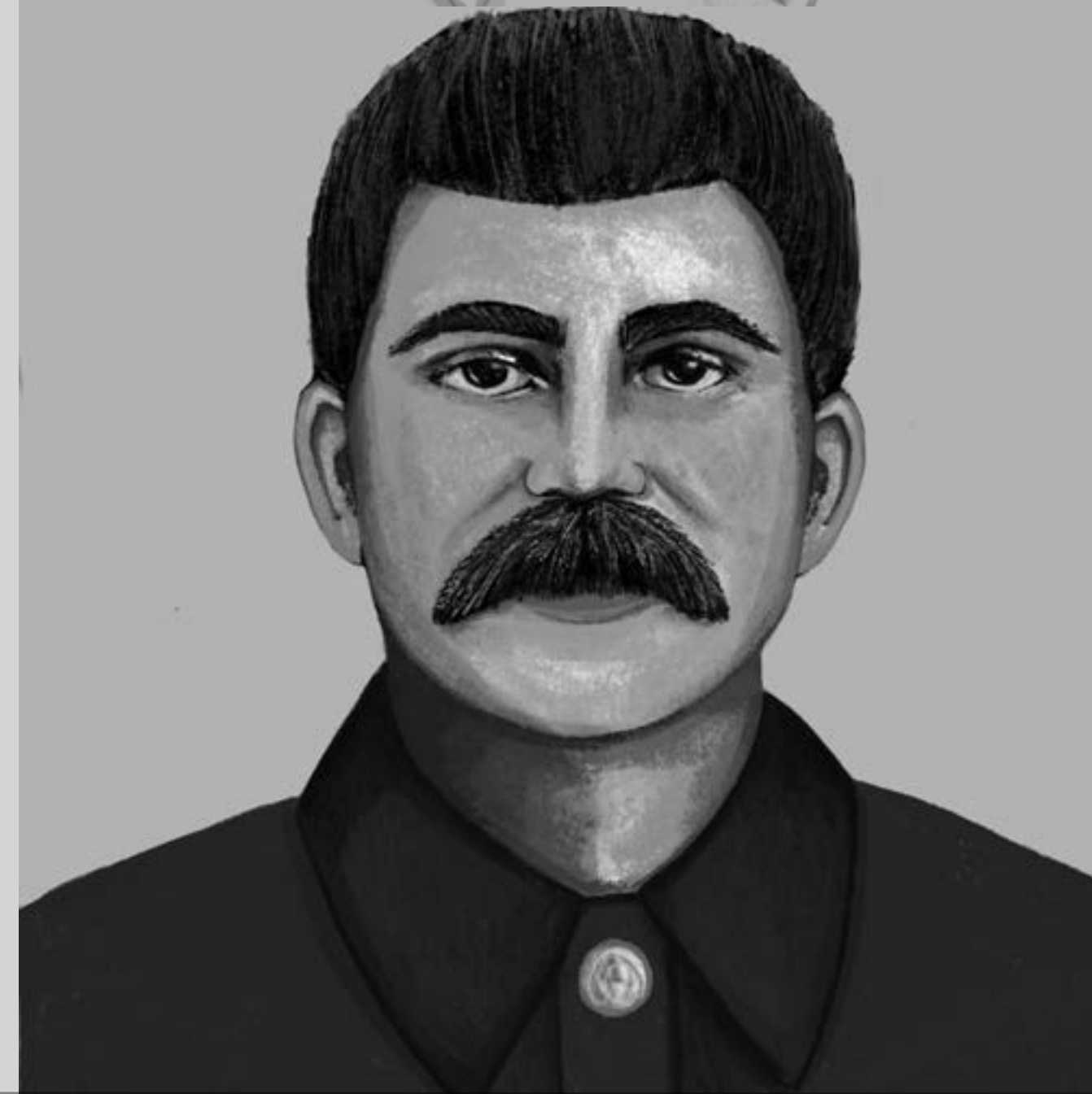
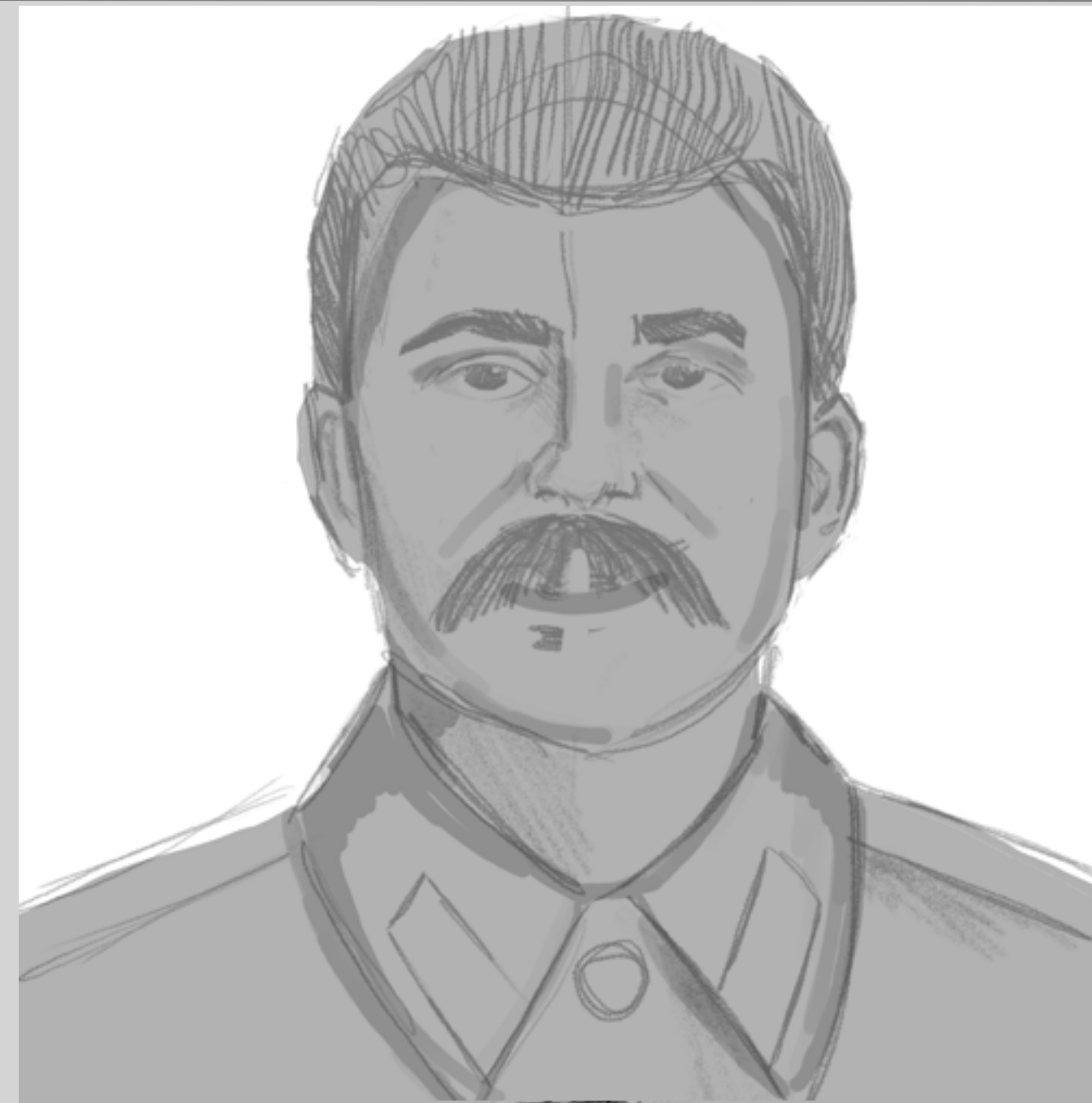
In the development of the logo and the branding for INGSOC, I decided I would have a go at illustrating Blg Brother.

I followed the description from the book and took inspiration from the fascist dictators such as Stalin and Hitler, but also from icons seen in WWII recruitment posters.

"This Big Brother was both like and unlike the young, bare-armed Big Brother on army recruiting posters, or the child Big Brother who appeared on Spies badges.

The mature leader was handsome and supremely masculine in a clean, reassuring way"

(Julia, Page 16)

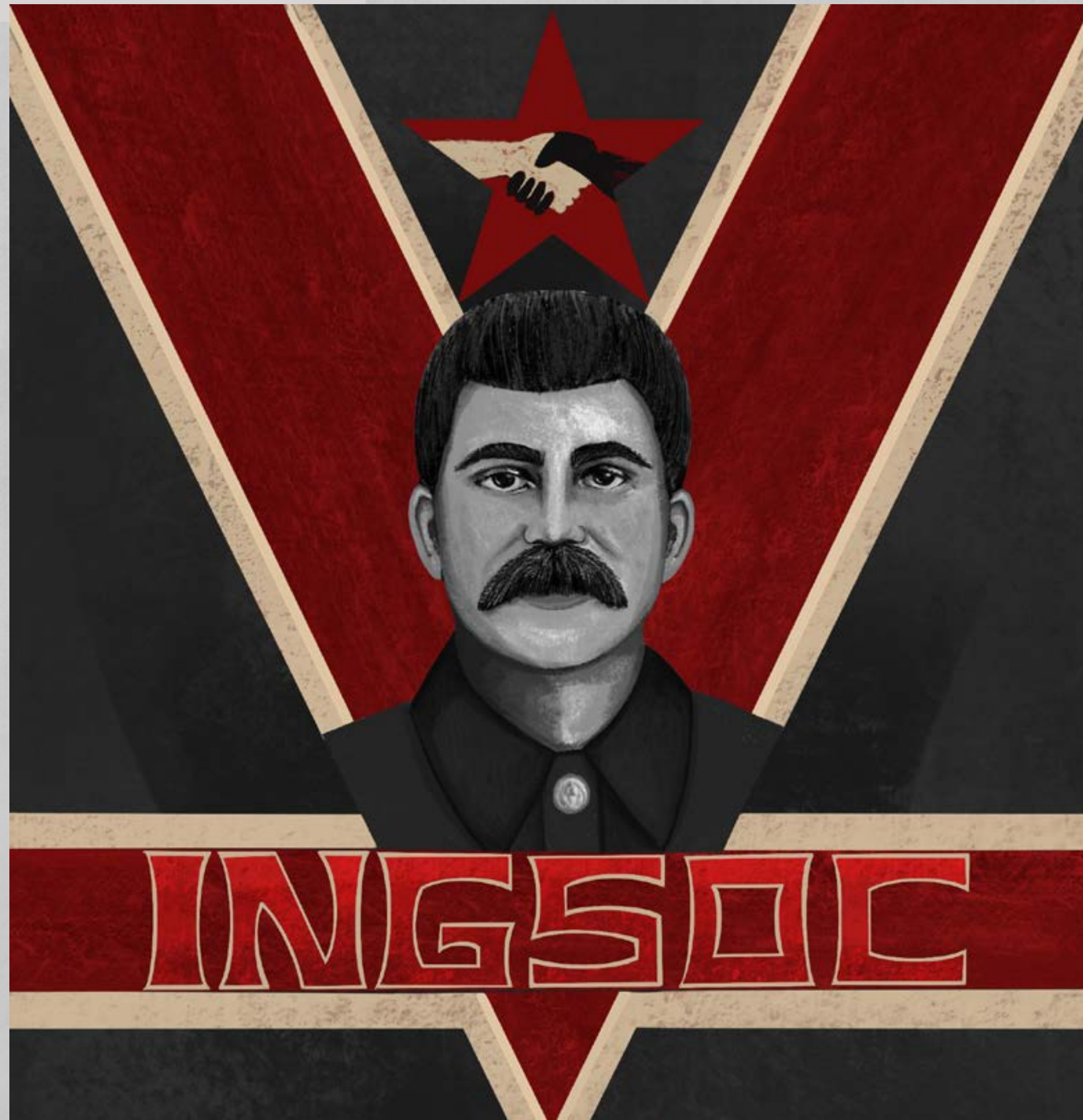


Logo Development

Draft 1

With my first drafts of the INGSOC logo, I just decided to play around with the different motifs to see what worked.

The hands are in reference to the original logo in the film and I really wanted to try and incorporate it in my final draft.



D e v e l o p

L o g o D e v e l o p m e n t

D r a f t 2

I decided to develop further on my designs by adding an eye. At first I wasn't sure if it was too obvious to add, but after considering the kind of world they live in (the fact that they are always proudly and unabashedly stating that they watching the people of Oceania), to me it made sense and seemed to add that extra layer of unease that I felt it was missing before.





P r o p a g a n d a

P o s t e r 1

One of the main posters mentioned at the start of the book is the party slogan. “Thick black letters on red” although a very simplistic visual description, it was enough for me to envision what it could look like and so I went back and used the type, the colour schemes and motifs that I had established the beginning.

"Three Core Party Slogans
written in thick
black letters on red:

War is Peace.
Freedom is Slavery.
Ignorance is Strength."

(Julia, Page 16)



P r o p a g a n d a

P o s t e r 2

This is one of the posters that was mentioned at the beginning; hanging up in the dorm room of Julia's accommodation "Woman 21" between the bunks.

My idea was to use an illustration of a sleeping woman, along side the INGSOC logo (as well as the circles) to signify the literality of the message.



"Between bunks were strung
propaganda banners:

Sleep Is Vigilance, Six Hours For
Health, Big Brother Watches Over
Our Peaceful Rest"

(Julia, Page 41)



Propaganda Poster 3

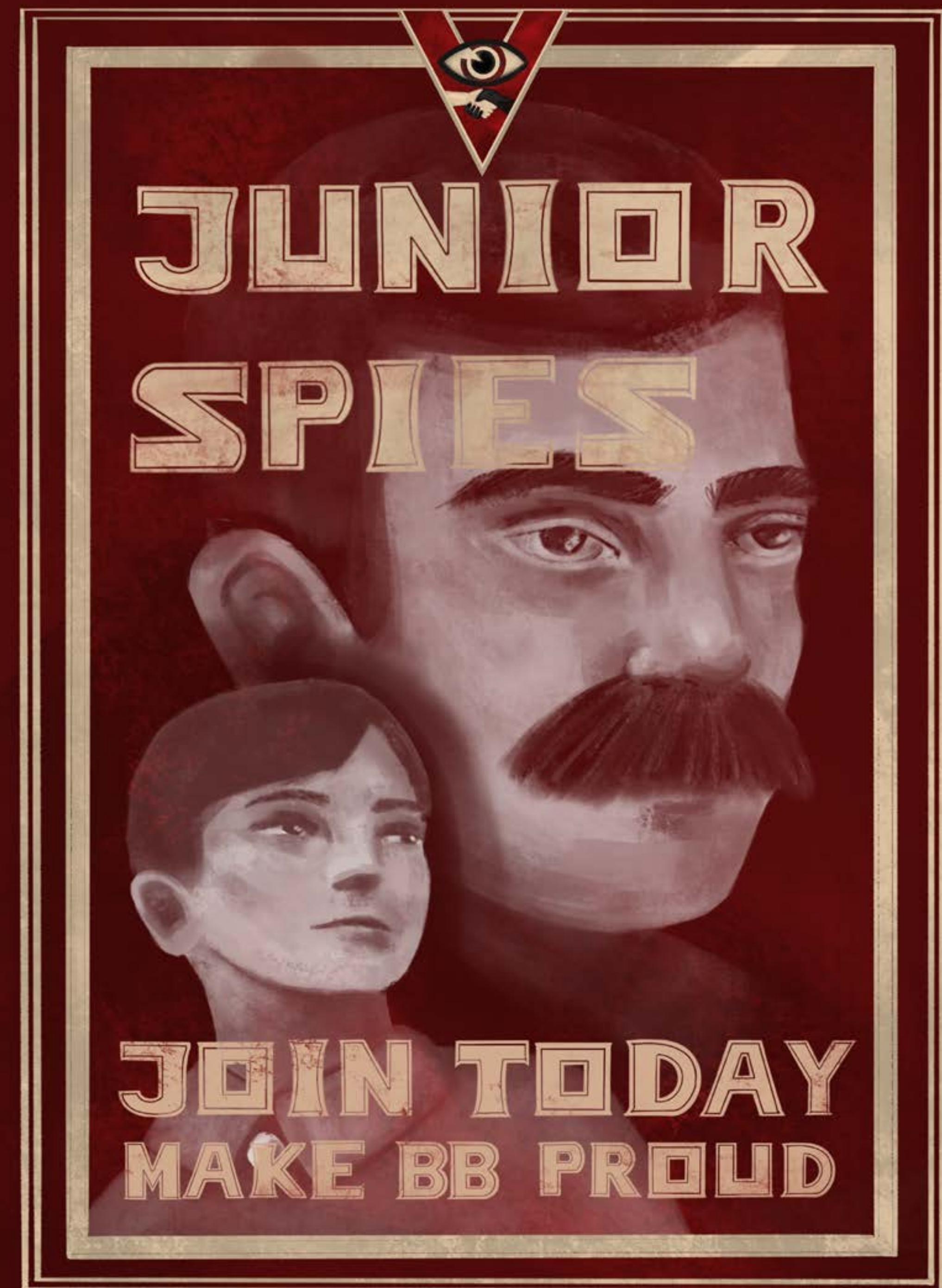
One of the posters I really wanted to try and make was the 'Junior Spies' propaganda.

The 'Junior Spies' in the story are in reference to the "Hitler Youth" organisation that was set up by the Nazi party before and during the events of World War 2,

The aim was to indoctrinate the youth and instil them with their principles and ideologies at a young age- it was known that members of the organisation would even 'denounced their parents when they behaved in ways not approved of by the Reich' (Blakemore, 2023).

In the story, the members of the Junior Spies would be encouraged to betray their own parents if they did anything that went against INGSOC's principles.

As a result, I decided to draw a lot of inspiration from the real propaganda that was used to advertise the youth organisation and meld it to suit the story.



B B P o s t e r

D r a f t 1

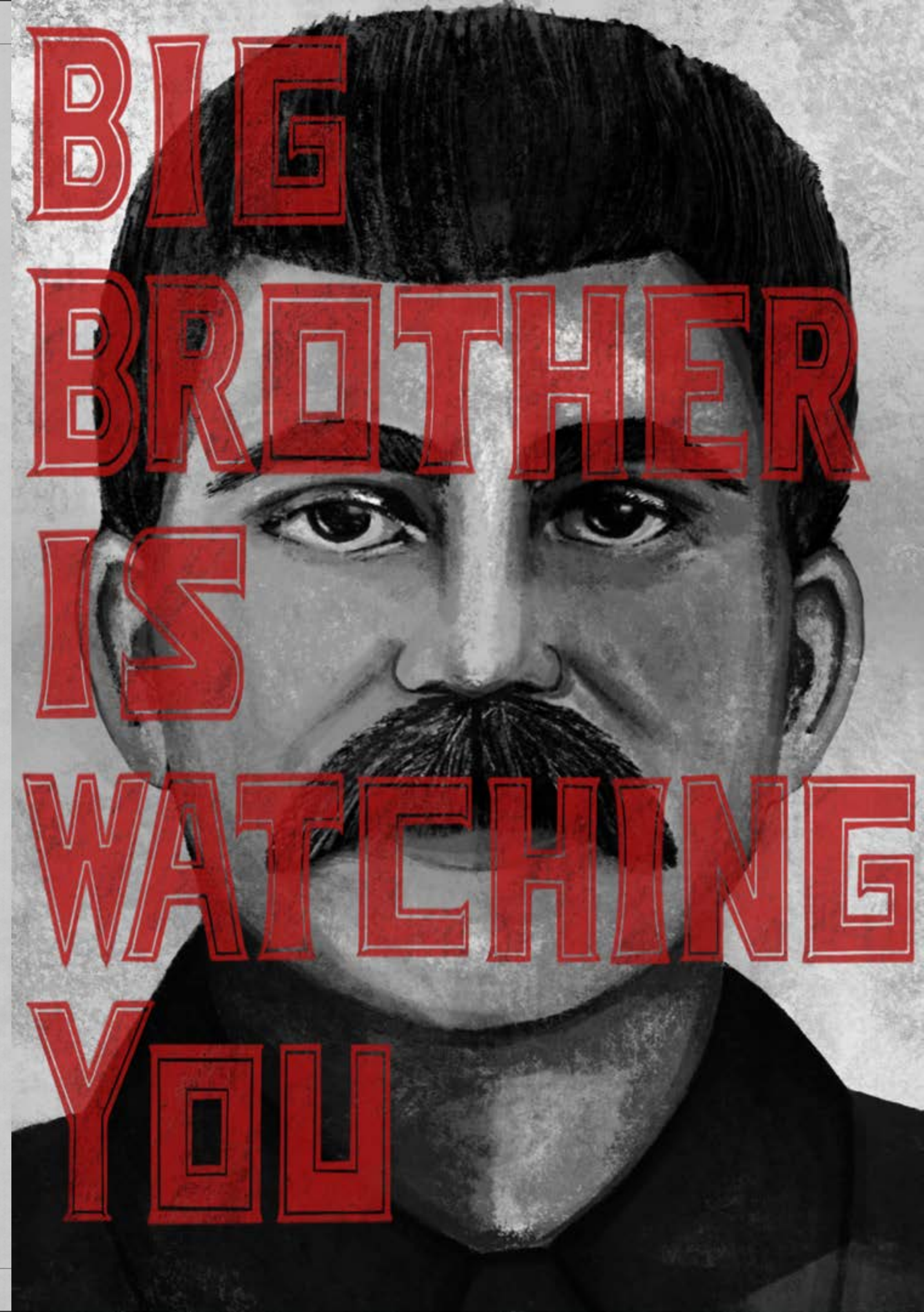
The main poster I wanted to focus on was the official and well-know “BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU” poster. The description of the posters in the book was really helpful and I could really visualise what they might have looked like within context. Overall, I knew that the key features would be the text and the photo/ illustration of Big Brother, and so I started experimenting around with the format.

“The walls of the other nearby
buildings had ranks of B.B posters:

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU,
BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU,
BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU,
BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.

It was the only words and his grave,
caring face, which filled the poster
so it seemed to expand beyond
its bounds and rush towards you”

(Julia, Page 20)

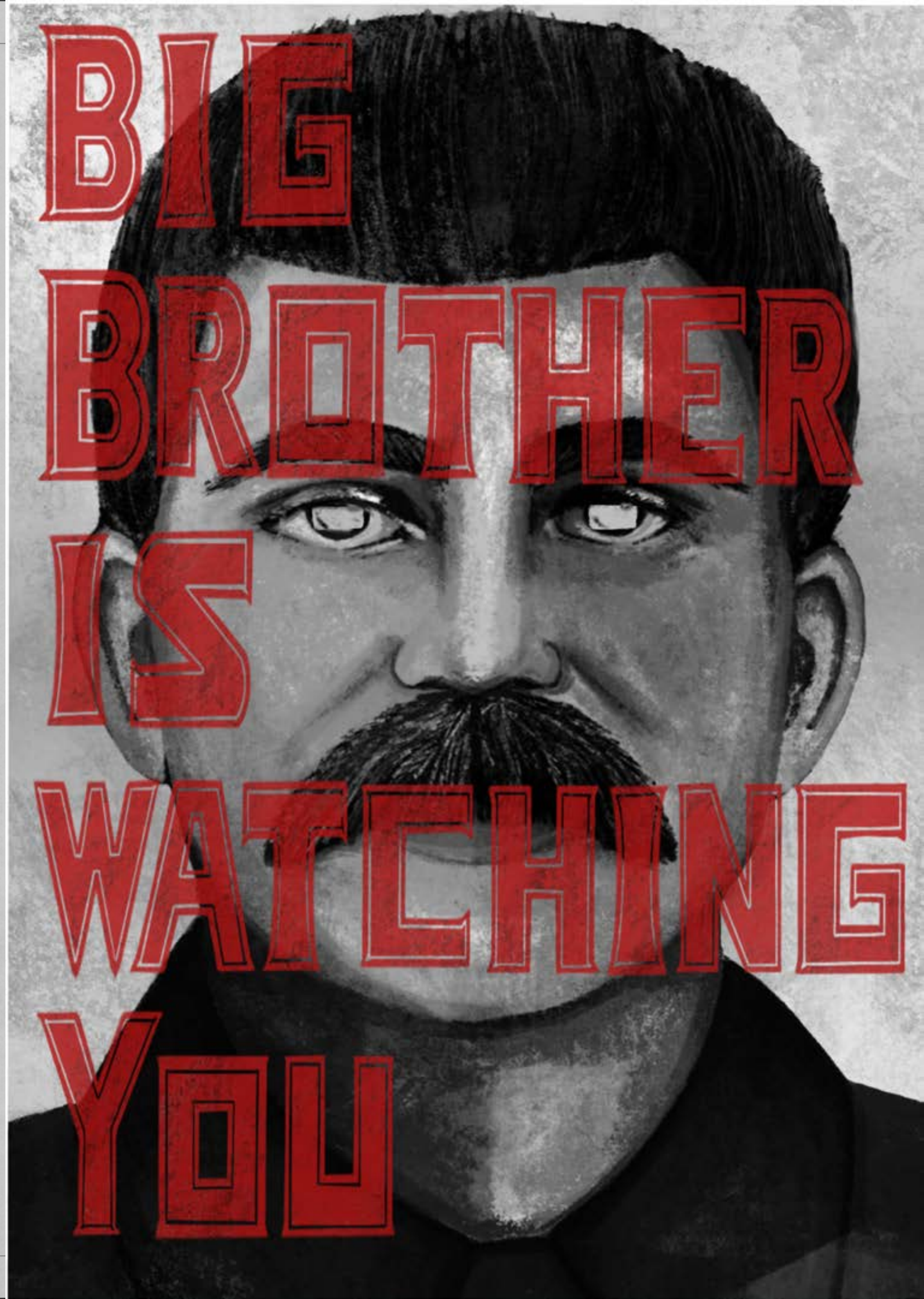
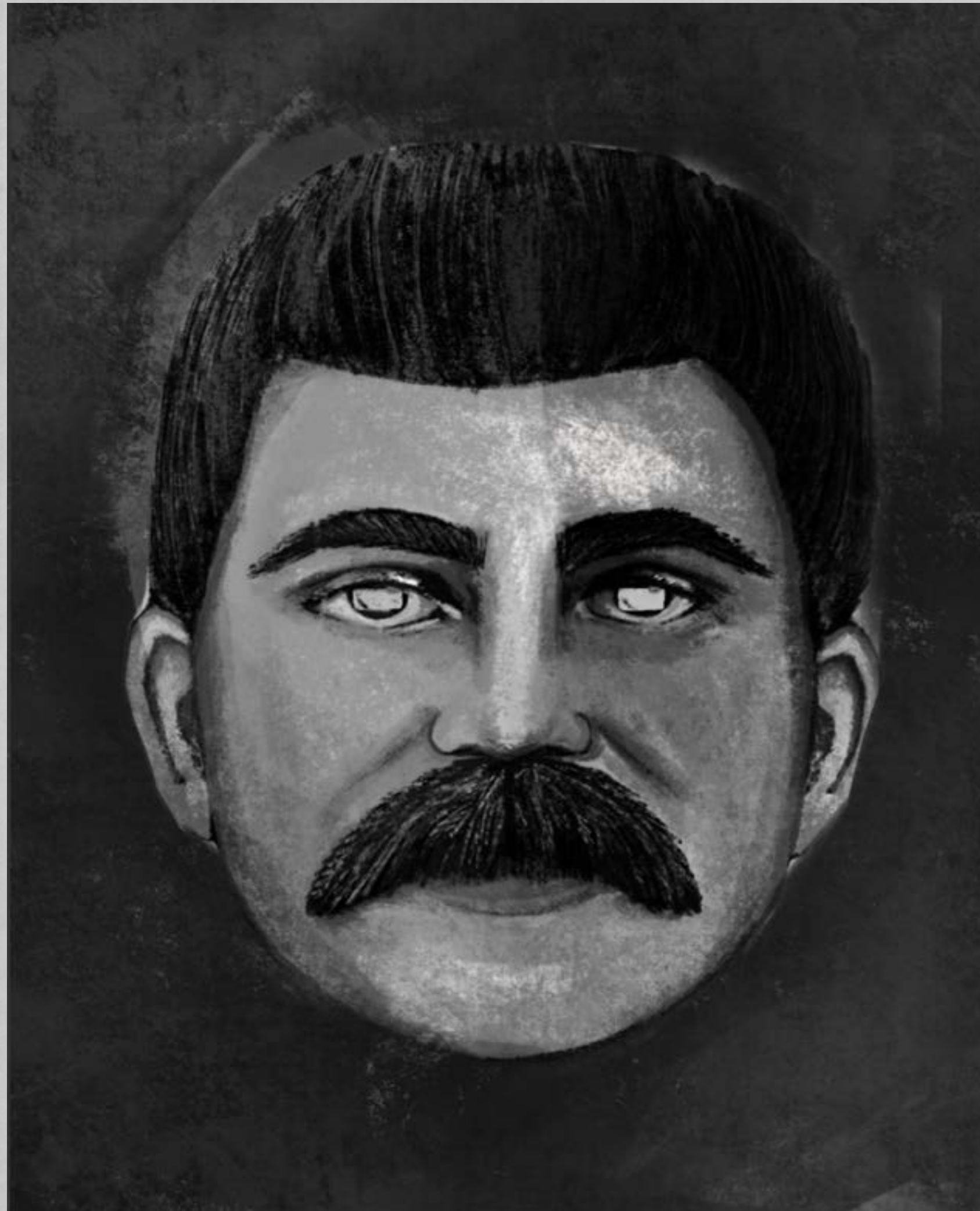


D e v e l o p

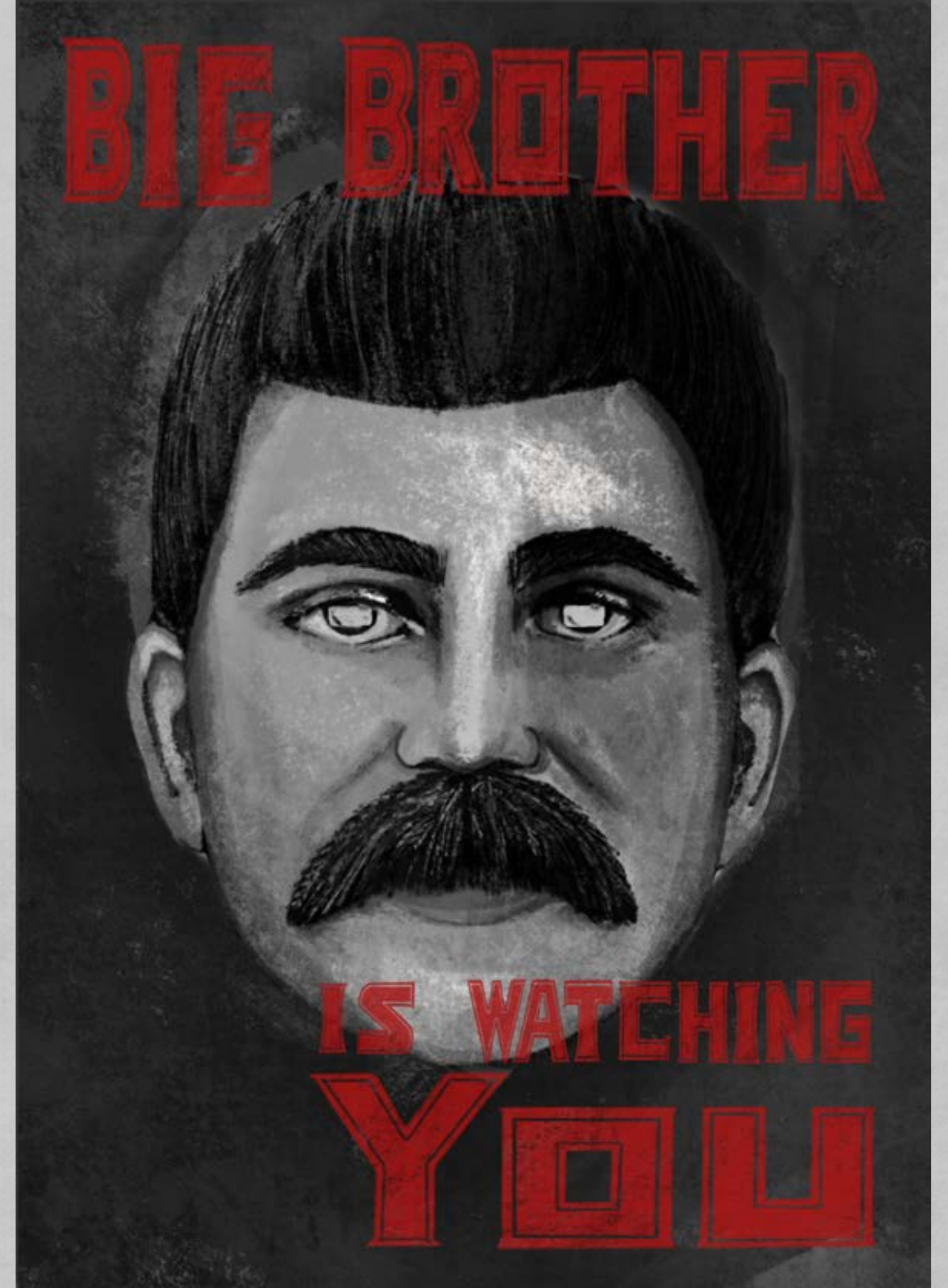
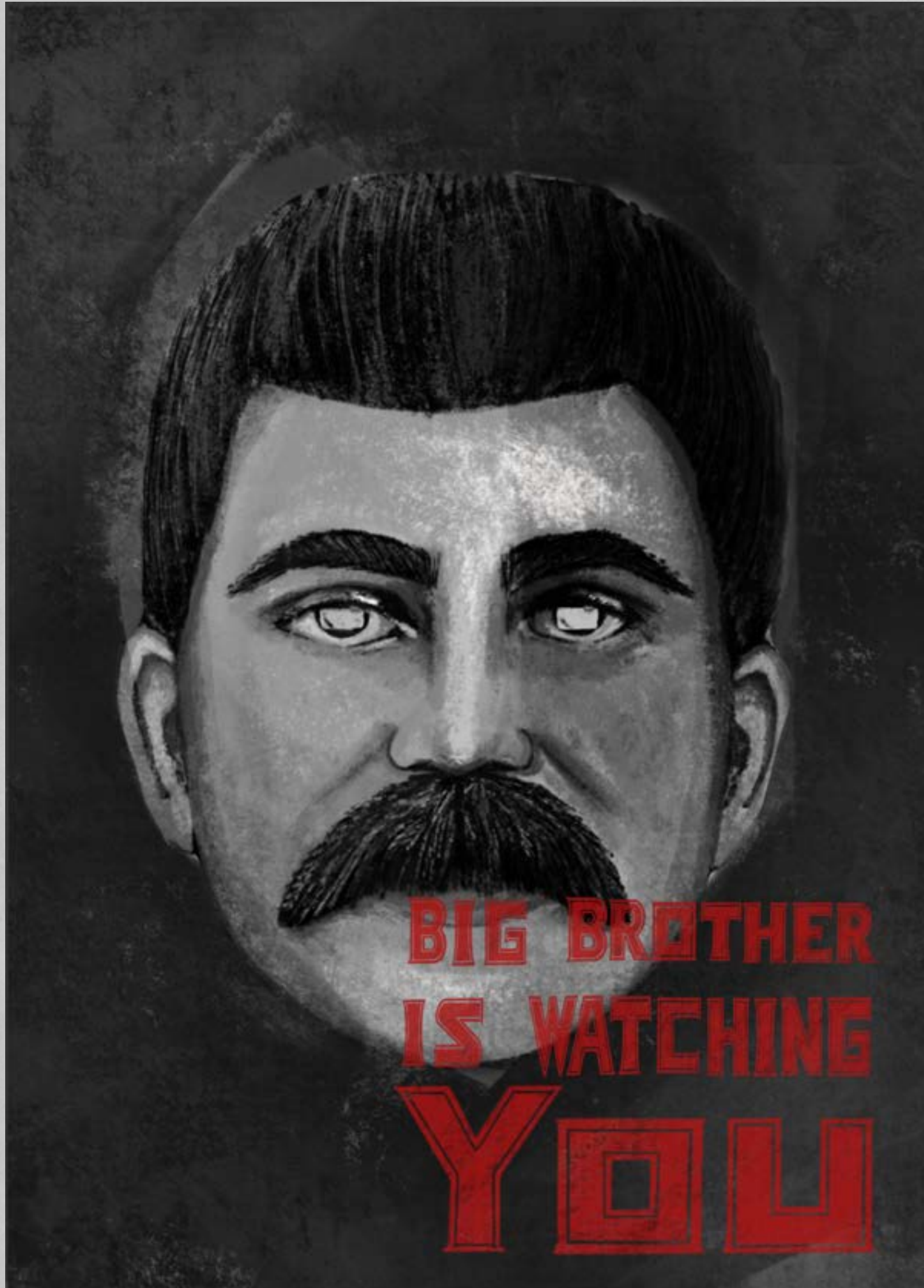
B B P o s t e r

D r a f t 2

One of the developments I decided to make was the screens in the eyes of Big Brother. It was already a little unnerving beforehand but I wanted to go that extra mile- reminding people that the only thing between them and Big Brother were the screens and cameras that watched them.



B B P o s t e r s



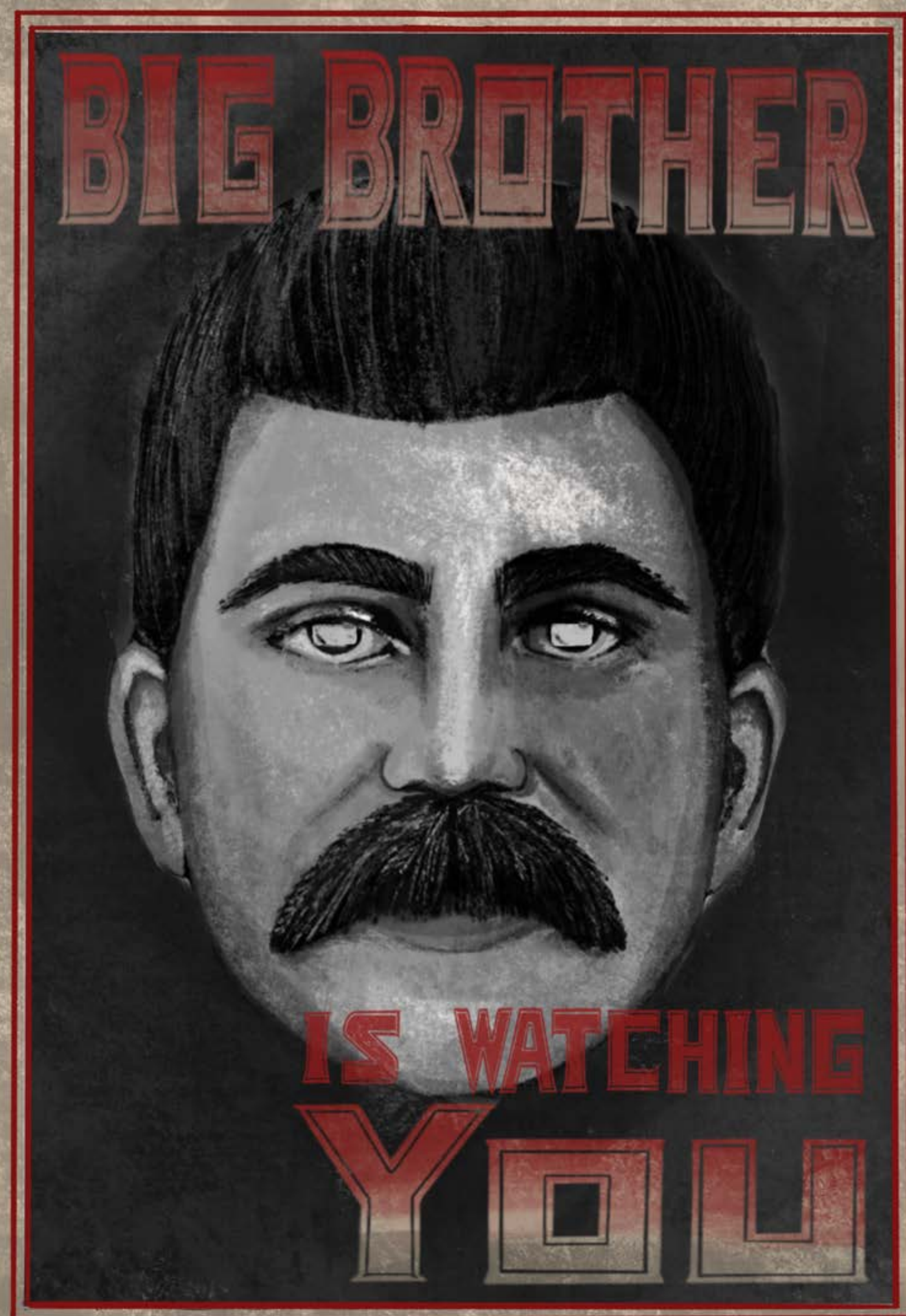
D e v e l o p

B B P o s t e r

F i n a l

With the final draft of the poster, I decided to draw some concept art with it, wanting to showcase what it could look like in ranks on the side of a building.

I liked the idea of the posters being quite large and all-encompassing, making it feel like something you can't ignore or avoid.



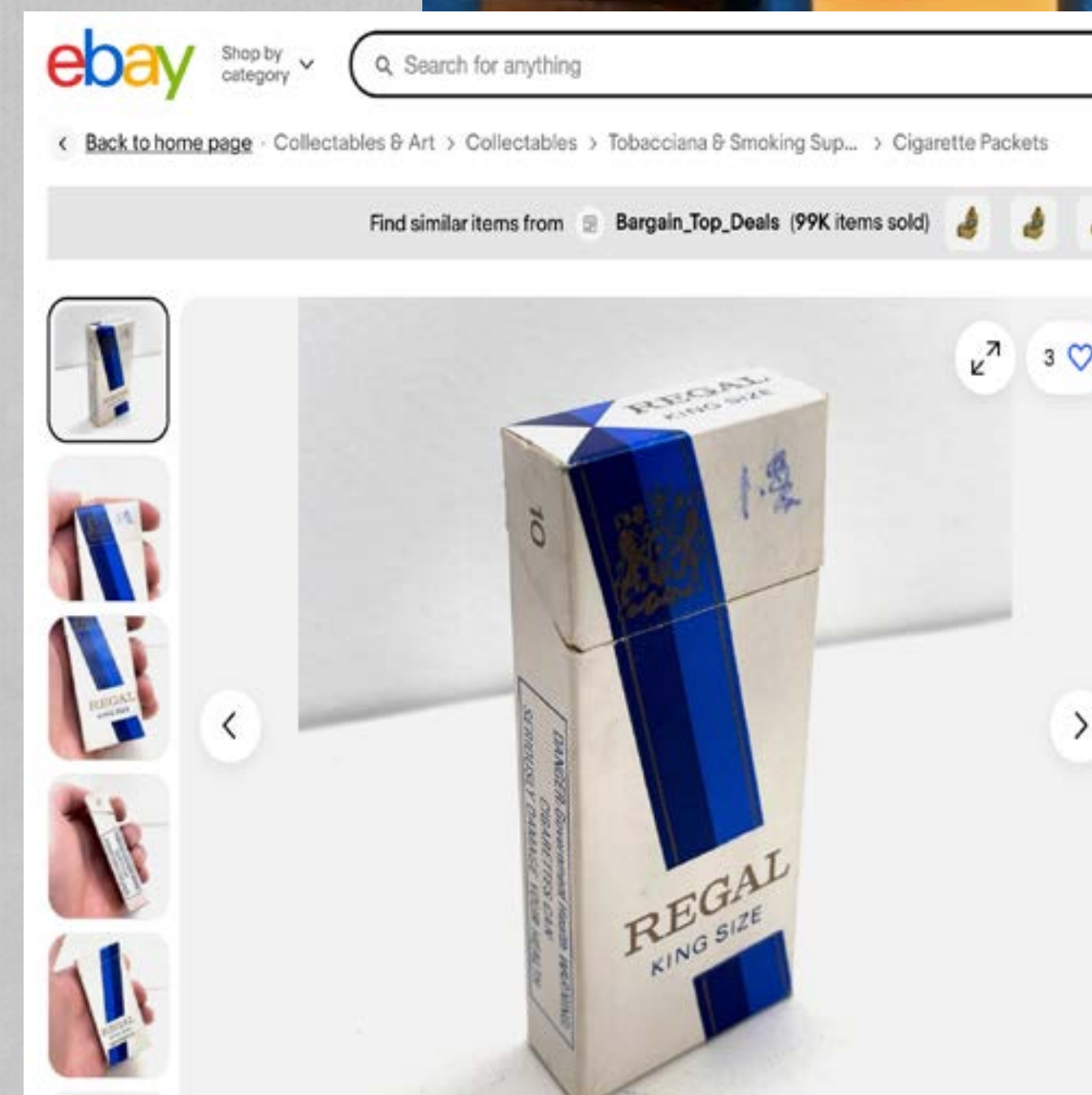


Victory Cigarettes

One of the graphic props I wanted to create was the packaging for the Victory cigarettes.

I started by researching into real vintage cigarette packaging, using sources such as pinterest, as well as websites such as eBay where you can find and bid for real ephemera.

Here I found a ton of different packaging throughout the eras and I took some inspiration from some of the designs I found on there- taking note of the information and labels on the sides.



D e v e l o p

C i g a r e t t e s

I n i t i a l S k e t c h

My initial sketches for the cigarette packaging involved some of the INGSOC logo and the image of Big Brother as I liked the idea of these cigarettes being another form of propaganda. His face, name or iconography being on the packaging adds to this consistent feeling of being monitored.

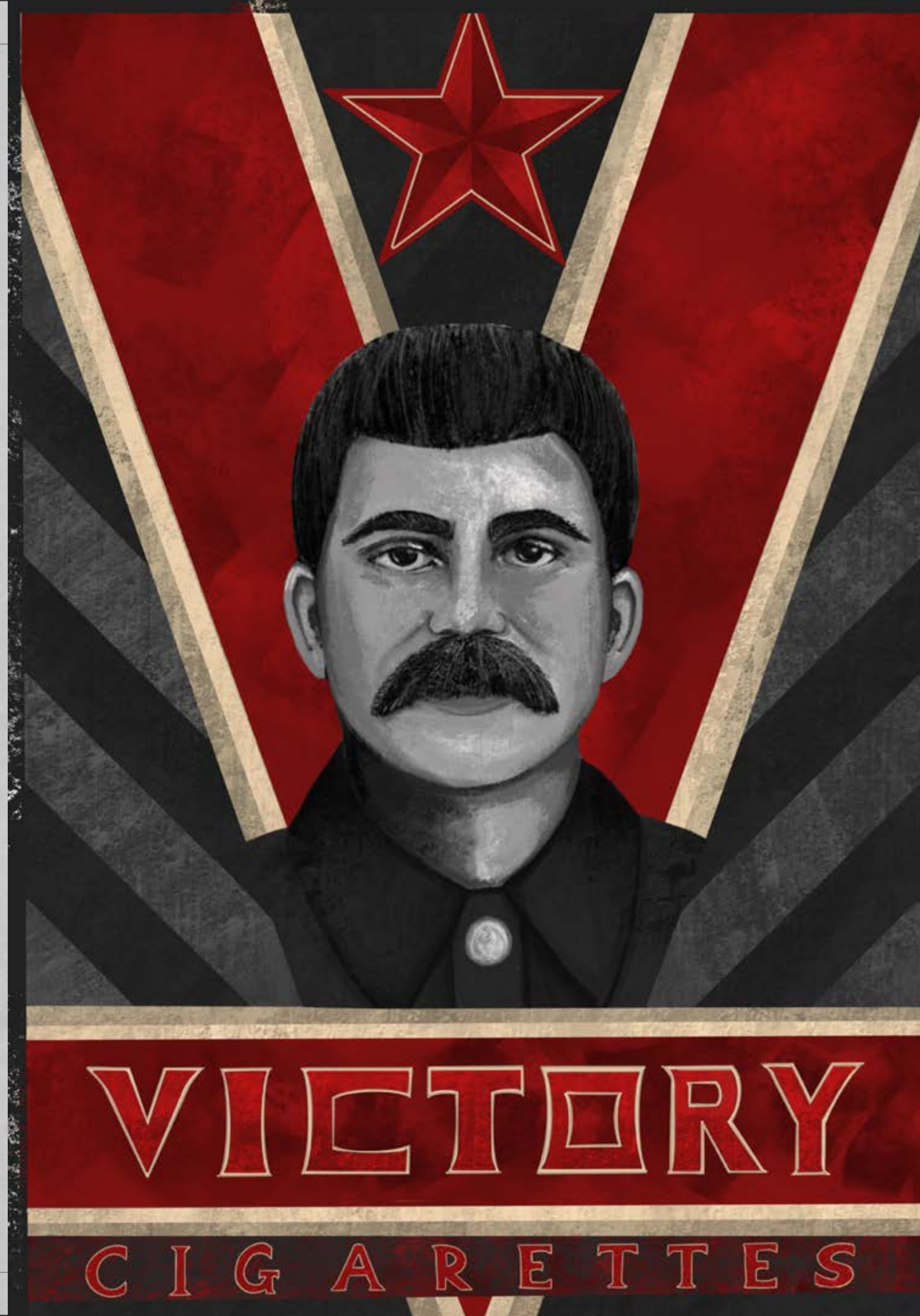
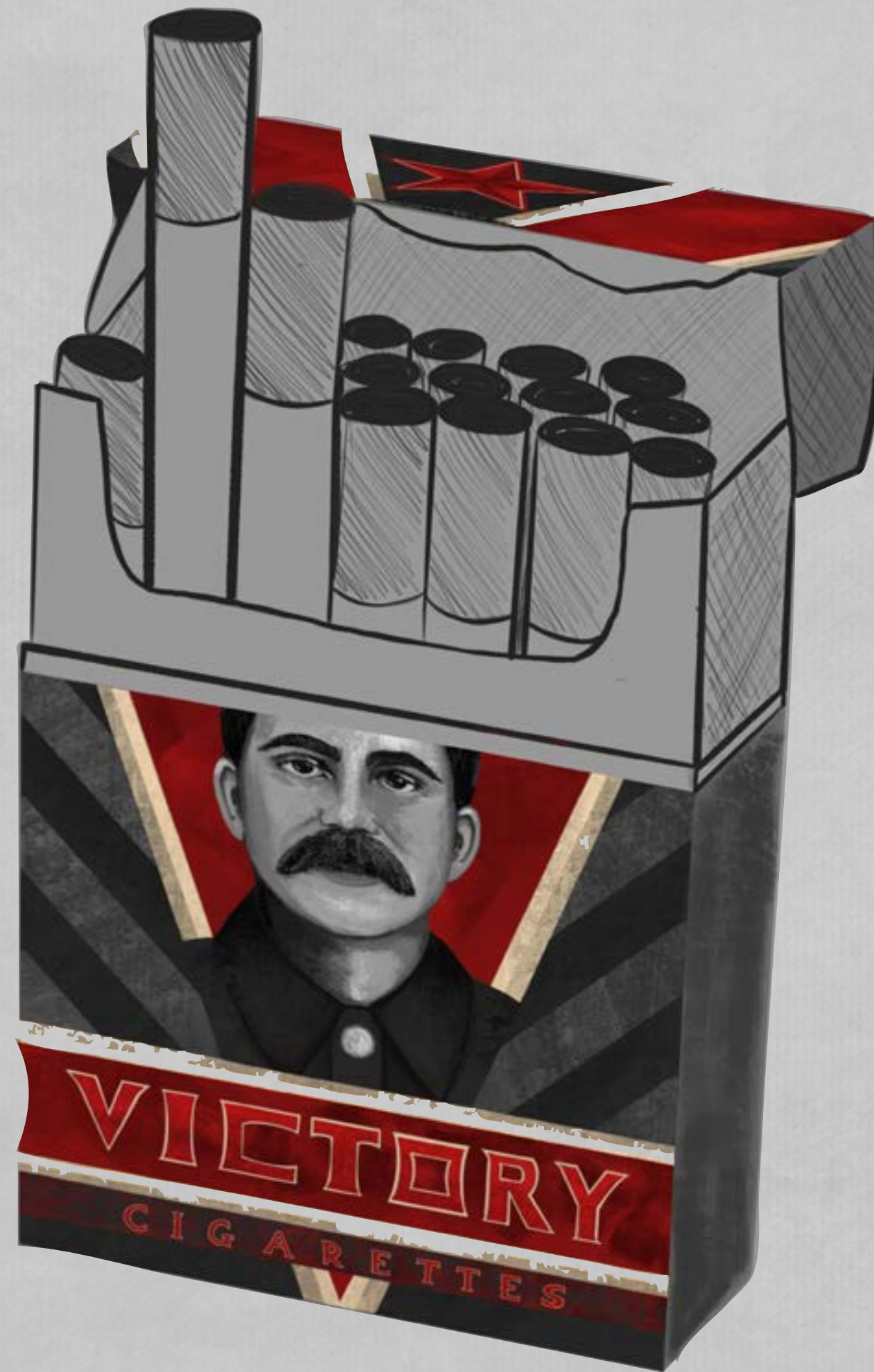


C i g a r e t t e s

D r a f t 1

Once I created the first draft of the design and did a mock up of what it would look like on the box, I felt like it didnt really work in the way I wanted it to- it didn't have that classic, sleek and simple design that many vintage cigarette boxes usually had.

In general, I felt like I could do more to make it feel like an authentic cigarette box and so I decided to go back and re-evaluate my references.

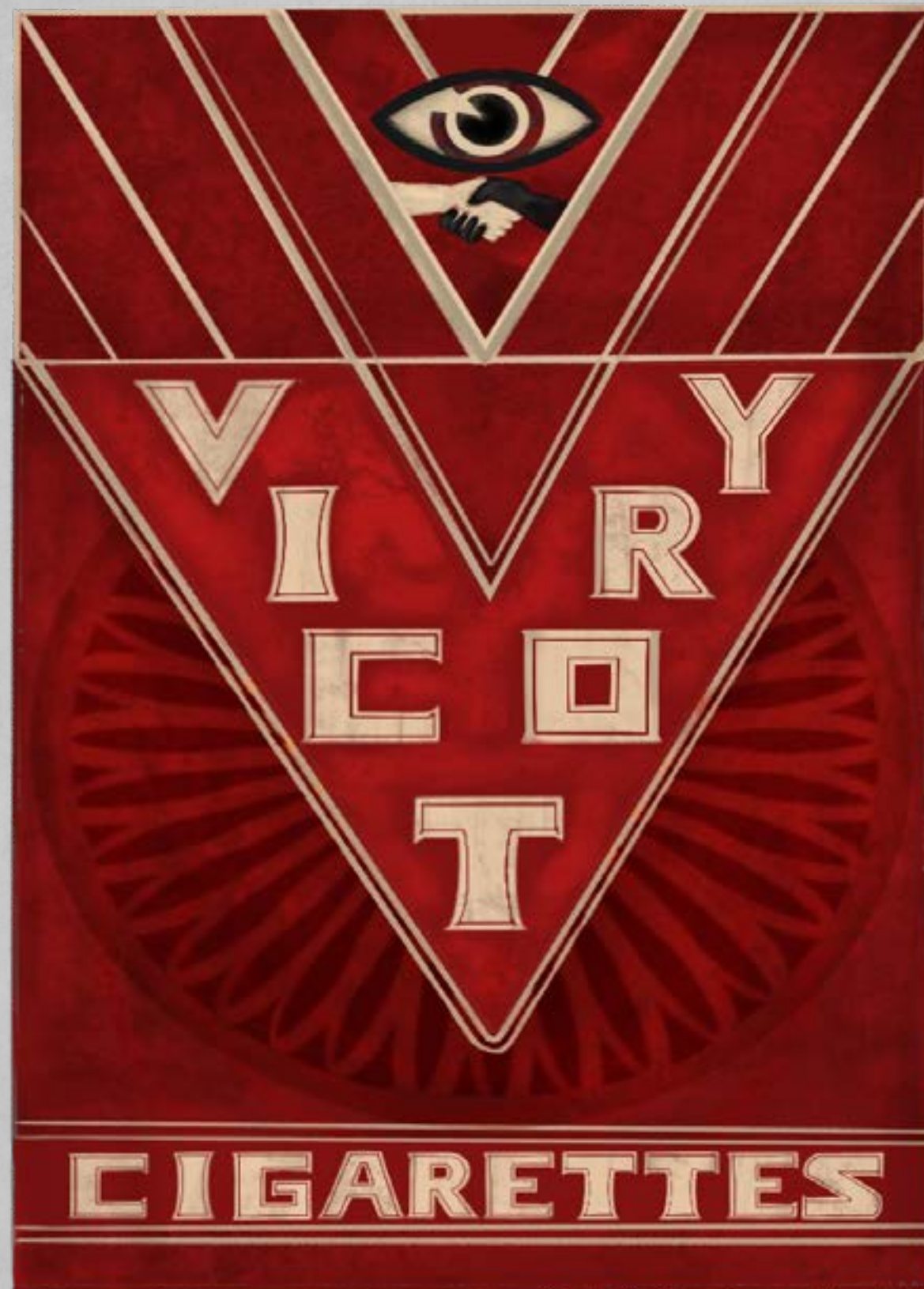


Cigarettes

Draft 2

Overall, I was a lot happier with my redesign, experimenting around with shapes and format until I decided on something that was a little more unique, while also being a bit more reminiscent of the real-life cigarette packaging design.

I decided to add a mandala like pattern to the background to give it some more texture but to also mimic the structure of an eye's iris.



Cigarettes Packaging

When completing the packaging for cigarettes, I decided to investigate into the kind of information that would be used on the packaging back in the 70's/80's.

It was around this time that warnings in regards to health started appearing on the sides of the packaging, and since Big Brother was depicted as a 'caring' and almost paternal figure, I felt like it made sense to include them in the packaging in this world.

I also decided to add brief information about where it was manufactured and the amount of cigarettes in the pack (inspired by the Lucky Strike Cigarettes).



Develop

Cigarettes

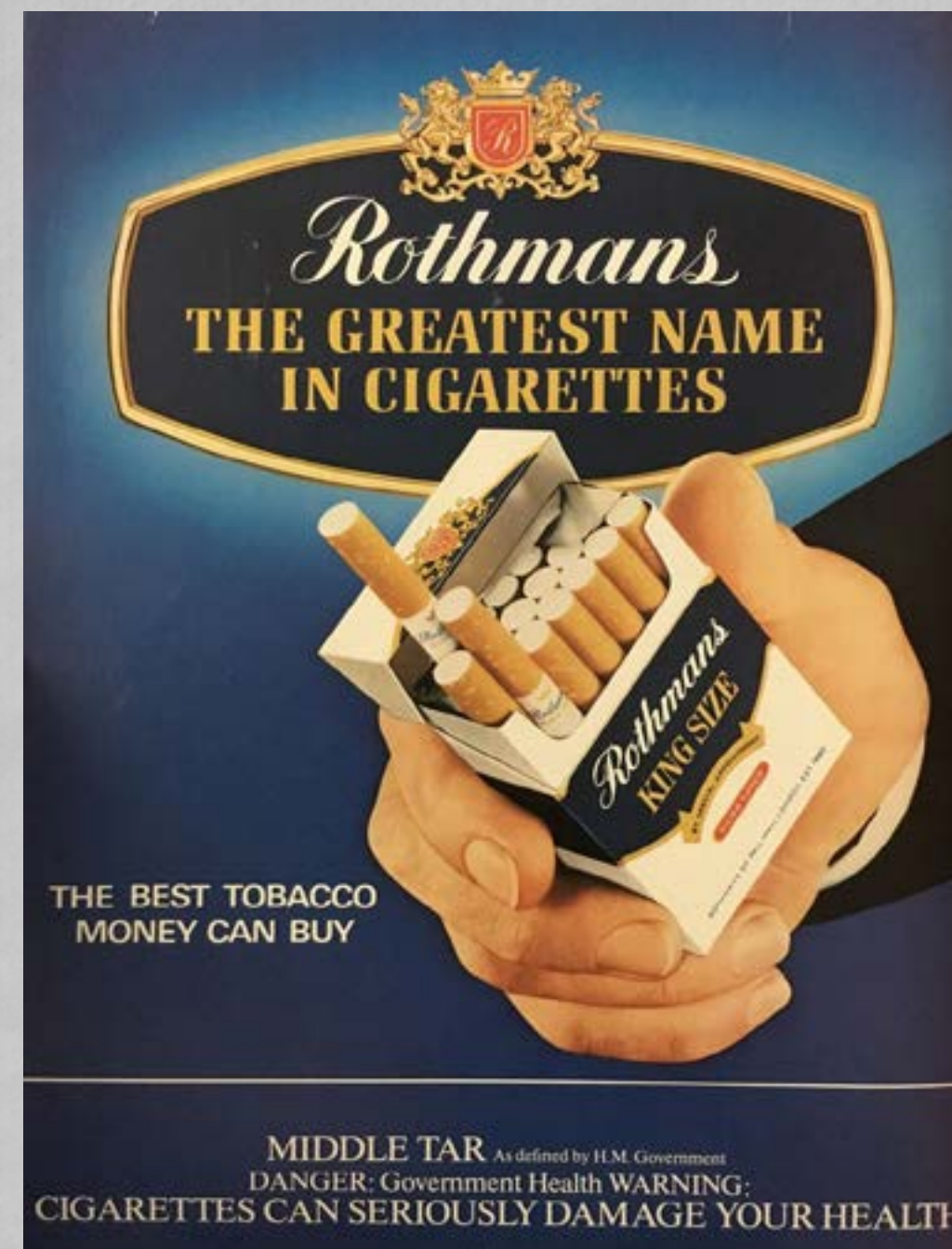
Advert

One of the ideas I had for the advertisement of the products, was to tie it in with the propaganda posters.

Products such as the cigarettes, gin and chocolate are all given to the party members through rations- theres a part in the original text where party members show genuine excitement and gratitude to Big Brother/ INGSOC when it is announced that the rations for chocolate have been increased by 25g.

I wanted to highlight this idea that party members are meant to constantly feel indebted to Big Brother and everything he supposedly does for them.

Not only is the hand in reference to the vintage cigarette advertisements I have seen during my research, but I wanted to make it feel almost ominous as if it's Big Brother's hand offering the party members a cigarette.

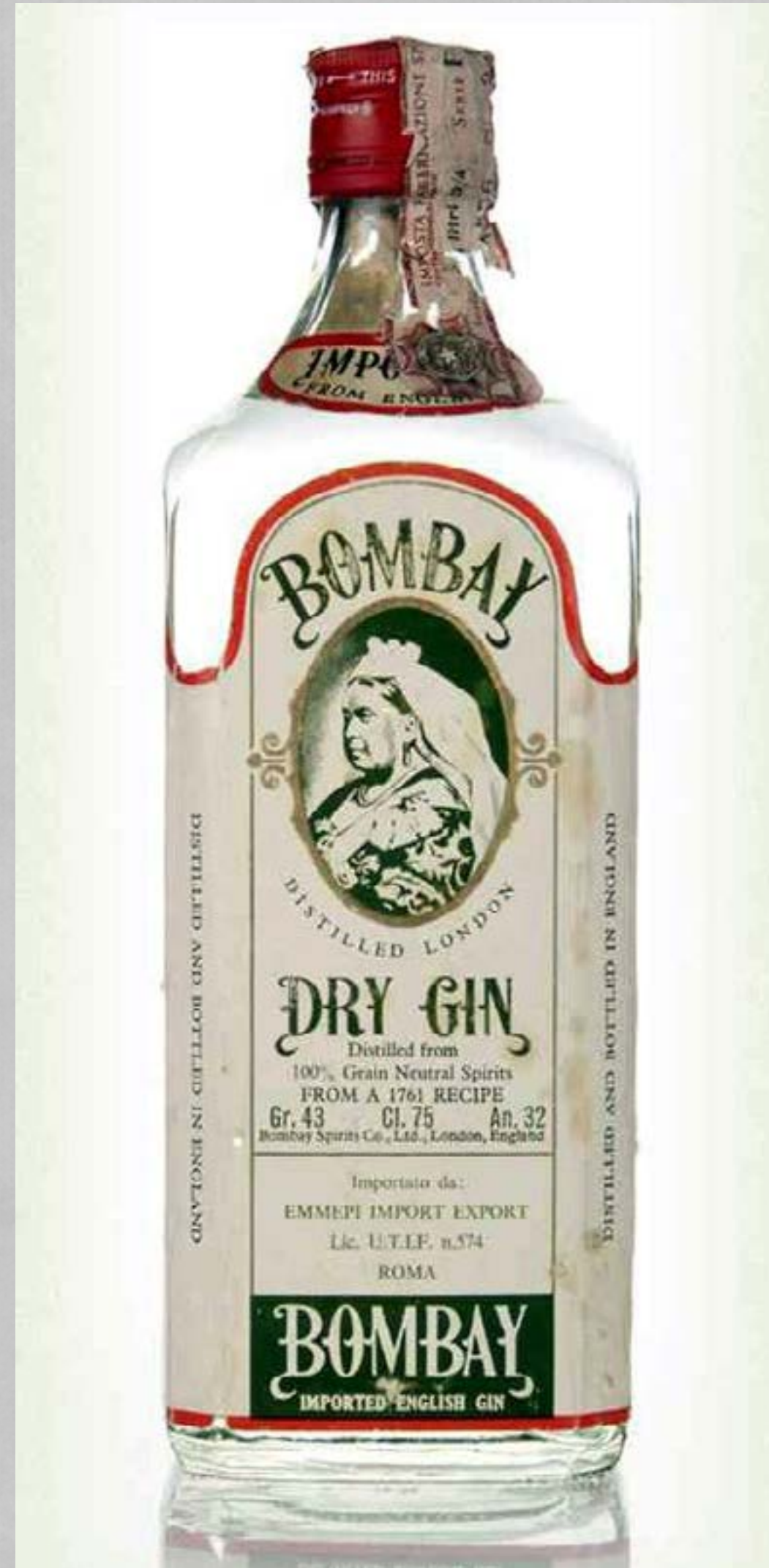


Victory Gin

When designing the Victory gin packaging and advertising, I took a lot of inspiration from the old Bombay and Gordons gin bottles, both in which are made in the UK (Scotland and England).

I was drawn to the medicine-bottle shape, as well as the classic elegant labels, the flowery sophisticated borders, and the serif type.

Another element that I was drawn to was the little illustrations of the queen on the Bombay gin bottle.



Gin

Draft 1

With the first draft of the gin bottle, I used the same design that I used for the cigarettes- as I was initially thinking of making the designs uniform.

I ran into the same problem as before where in using this design, it ended up losing some of the nice, sleek and classy elements that were typically used in gin bottle designs. And so, I decided to go back into my references and redesign it.



Gin

Draft 2

With draft 2 of my design, I referred back to my references and decided to create my own label, utilising the motifs I had established beforehand and trying to focus on finding the right balance between the ornate and decorative reality, and the uniform/strict authoritarian style the belongs to the fictional dystopian world of Oceania and the INGSOC governing party.

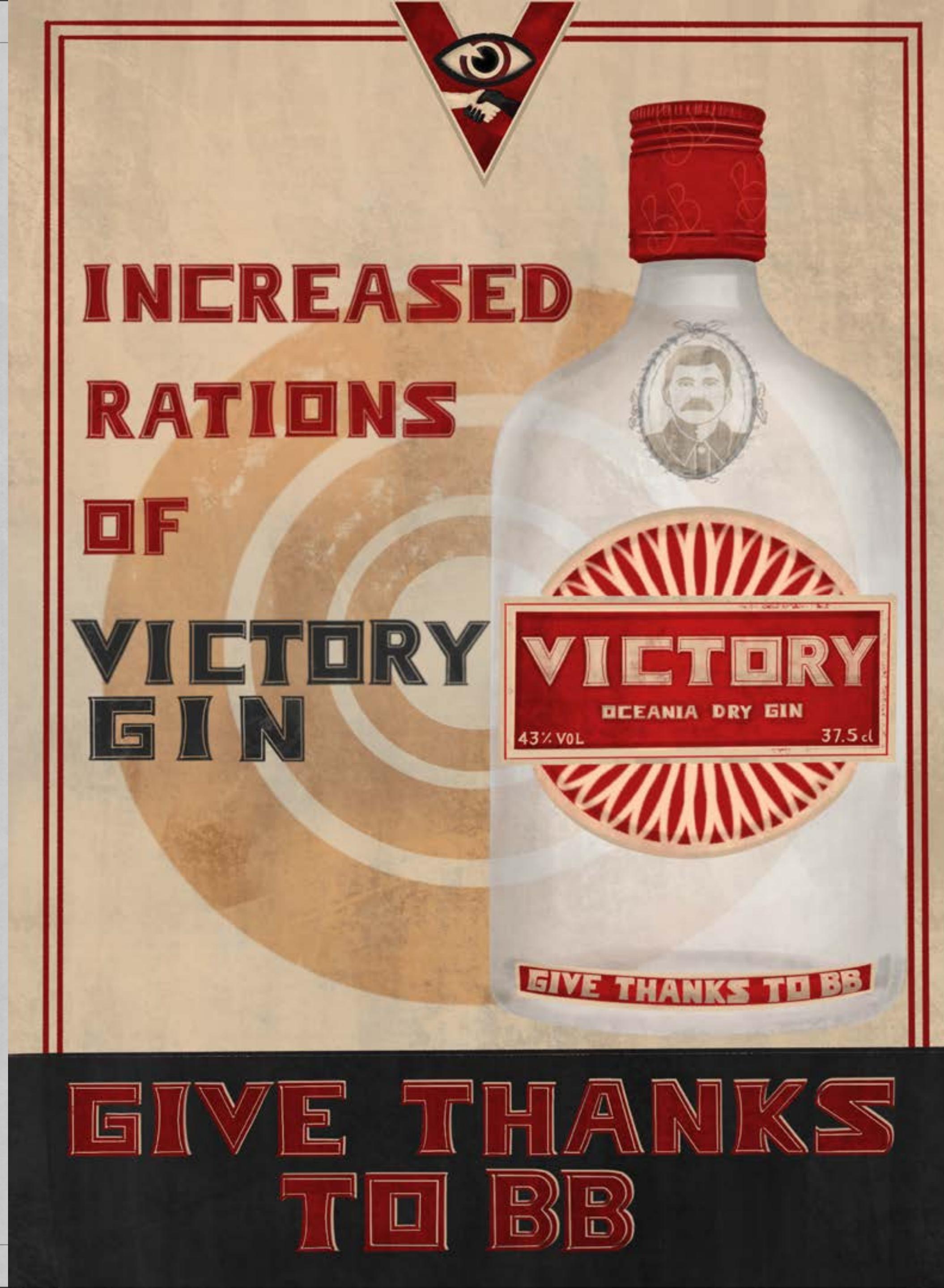
I decided to use a Gordon's gin bottle as my starting reference image as I really liked the medicine- bottle like shape it had. I then proceeded to layer over my own design on top which helped me to create something that looked and felt a little more authentic.



D e v e l o p

G i n

A d v e r t 1



INCREASED
RATIONS
OF
VICTORY
GIN

VICTORY
OCEANIA DRY GIN
43% VOL 37.5 cl

GIVE THANKS TO BB

GIVE THANKS TO BB

D e v e l o p

G i n

A d v e r t 2

was also heavily inspired by the Bombay Dry Gin advert from the 1970's and decided to try and recreate it using the Victory Gin bottle instead.

I used the same stark, grainy colour palette for the background, mimicking the classic vintage alcohol advertisement and highlighting the idea of supposed 'luxury goods' being used as yet another tool of control- keeping the people of Oceania drunk and compliant.



Be Victorious
with Victory gin

Victory Chocolate

The main references I used in the creation of the Victory Chocolate packaging were that of Nestlé and Cadbury as I was drawn to their simplistic packaging from the 1940's, 50's and 60's.

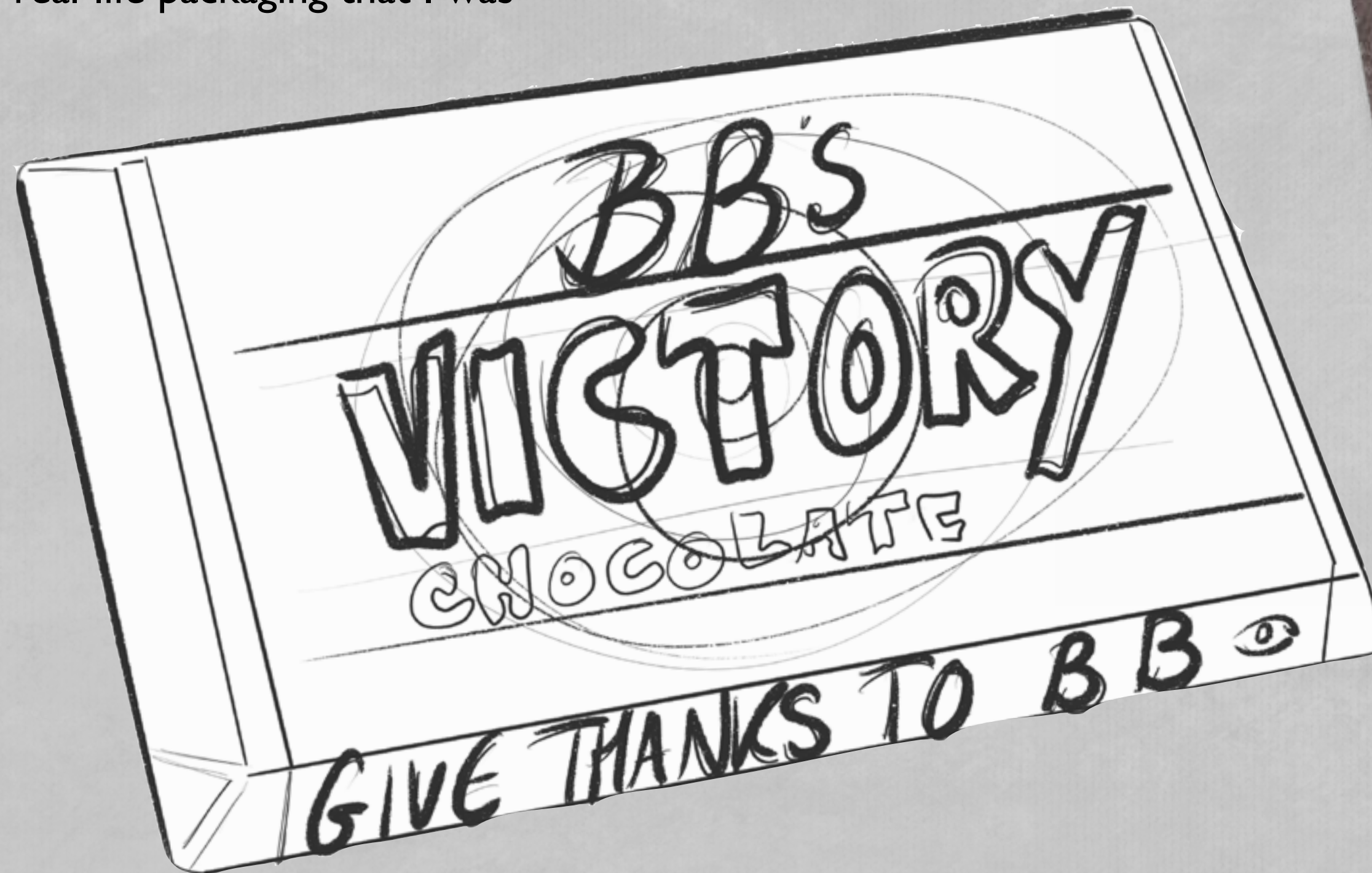


D e v e l o p

C h o c o l a t e

D e s i g n

With my design for the Victory Chocolate packing, I continued to experiment with the ways that I could utilise the motifs such as the eye, the type and the propaganda messaging etc, and relate it to the traditional and simplistic real-life packaging that I was referencing.



D e v e l o p

C h o c o l a t e

A d v e r t

INCREASED
RATIONS
OF VICTORY
CHOCOLATE

Big Brother's
VICTORY
CHOCOLATE

Give Thanks to BB

By 25g

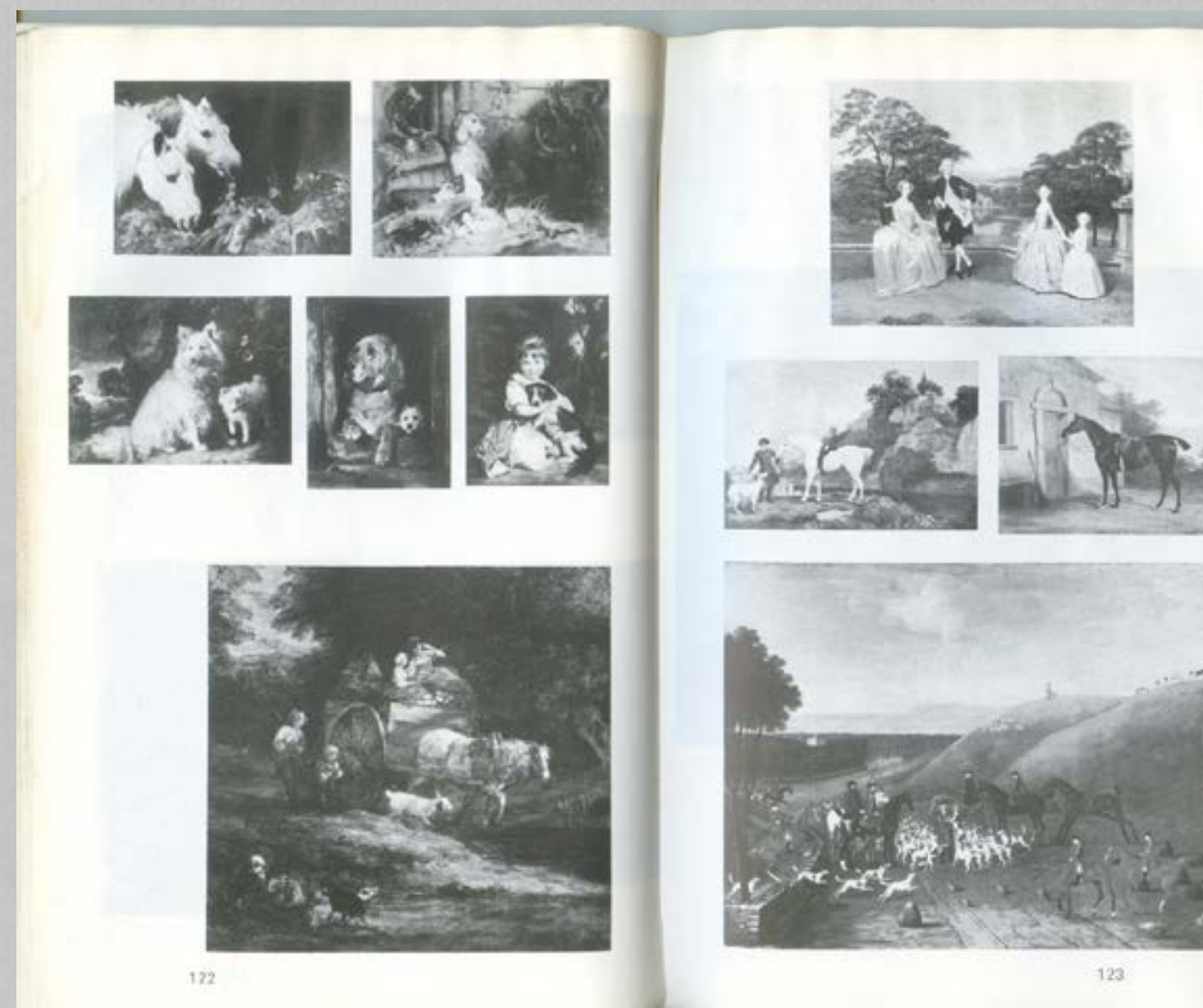
**GIVE THANKS
TO BB**

Lookbook

Inspiration

For my look book, I decided to use John Berger and his book 'Ways of Seeing' (1972) as my primary source of inspiration. I found that I really liked the way he's formatted the images in book and thought it would be a really effective way for me to showcase my props in my lookbook.

It is important that graphic props are able to speak for themselves, considering they are supposed to be able to communicate context quickly and concisely within the mere moments that they appear on screen.



Deliver

L o o k b o o k

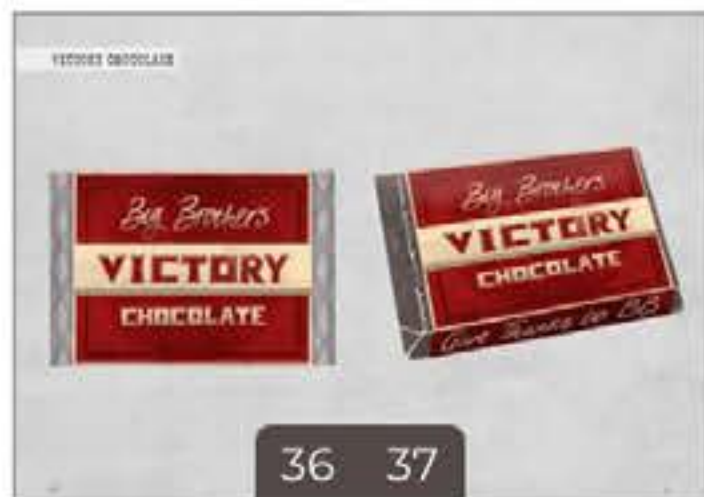
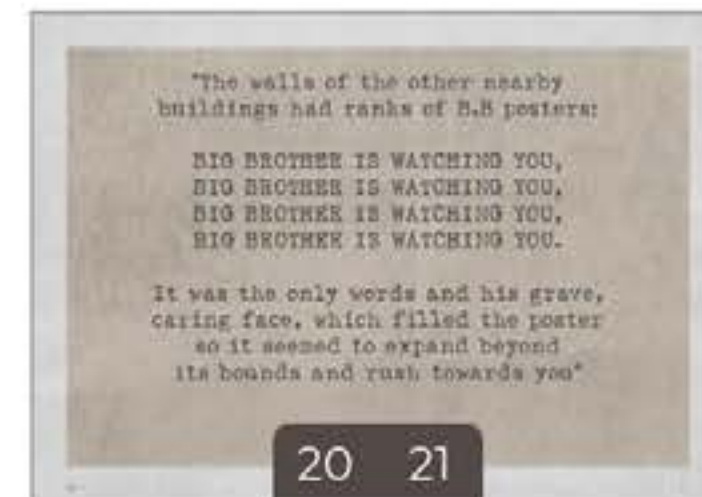
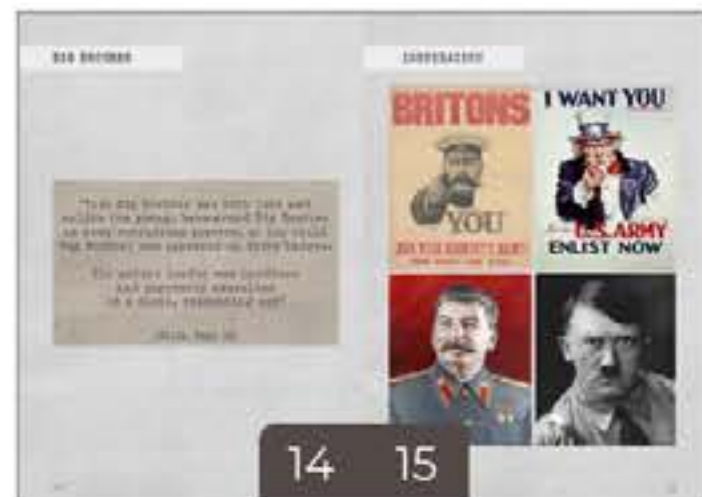
Overall, my lookbook consists of around 20 pages, consisting of all the final pieces of design work, passages from the book, and a few reference images.

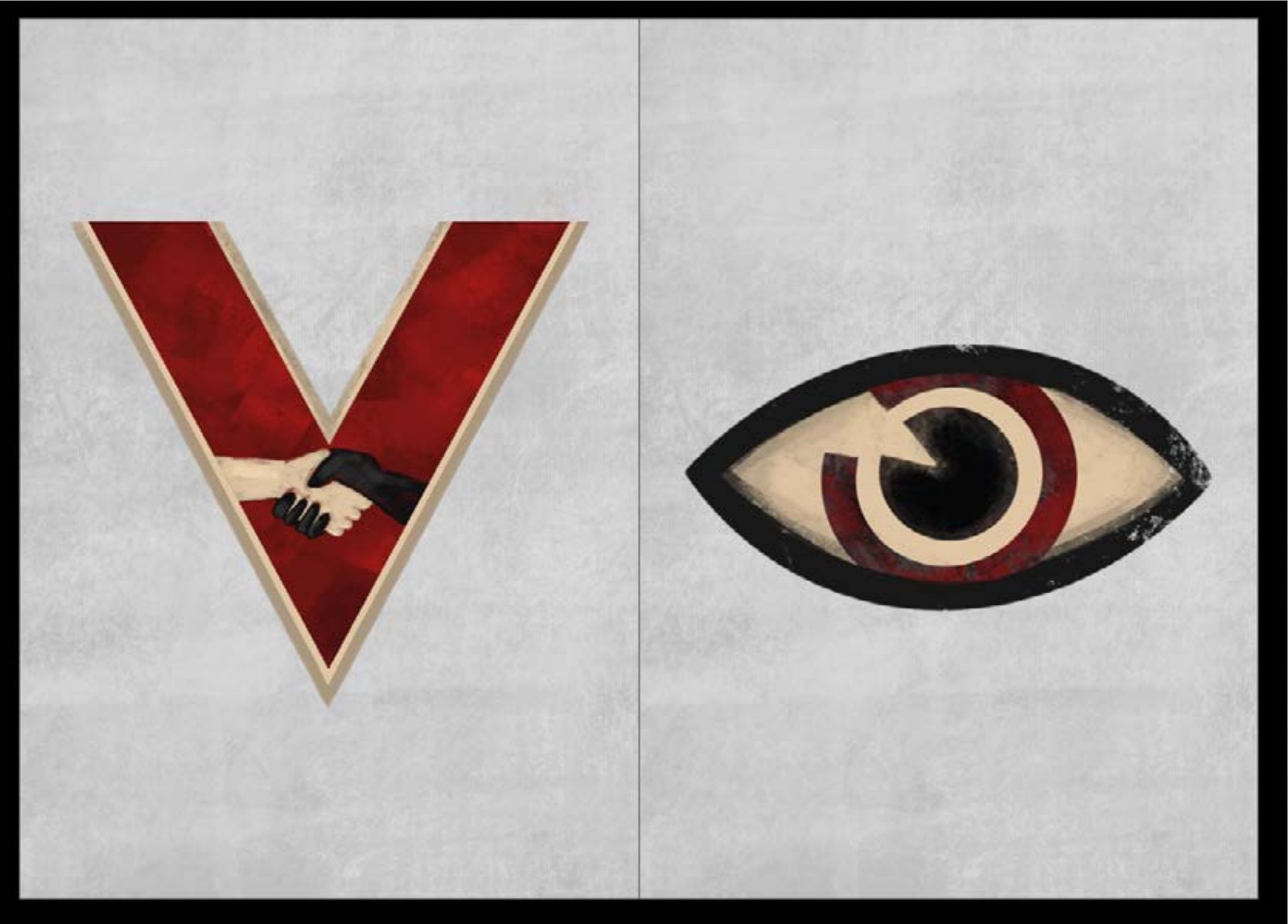
I wanted to make sure that I didn't overload the pages with needless content, instead keeping the style neat, clean and tidy so that the eye was drawn predominately to the props.

I've also taken the liberty to create a [digital flipbook](#) as I wanted to get an idea of what it could look like as a physical copy.



With the front cover, I decided to illustrate my visual interpretation of Julia, wanting to pay homage to the character as it is her story I am exploring.







INGSOC SLOGAN

"Three Core Party Slogans written in thick black letters on red:

War is Peace.
Freedom is Slavery.
Ignorance is Strength."

(Julia, Page 16)

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH





10

POSTERS

"Between bunks were strung propaganda banners:

Sleep Is Vigilance, Six Hours For Health, Big Brother Watches Over Our Peaceful Rest"

(Julia, Page 41)



12

BIG BROTHER

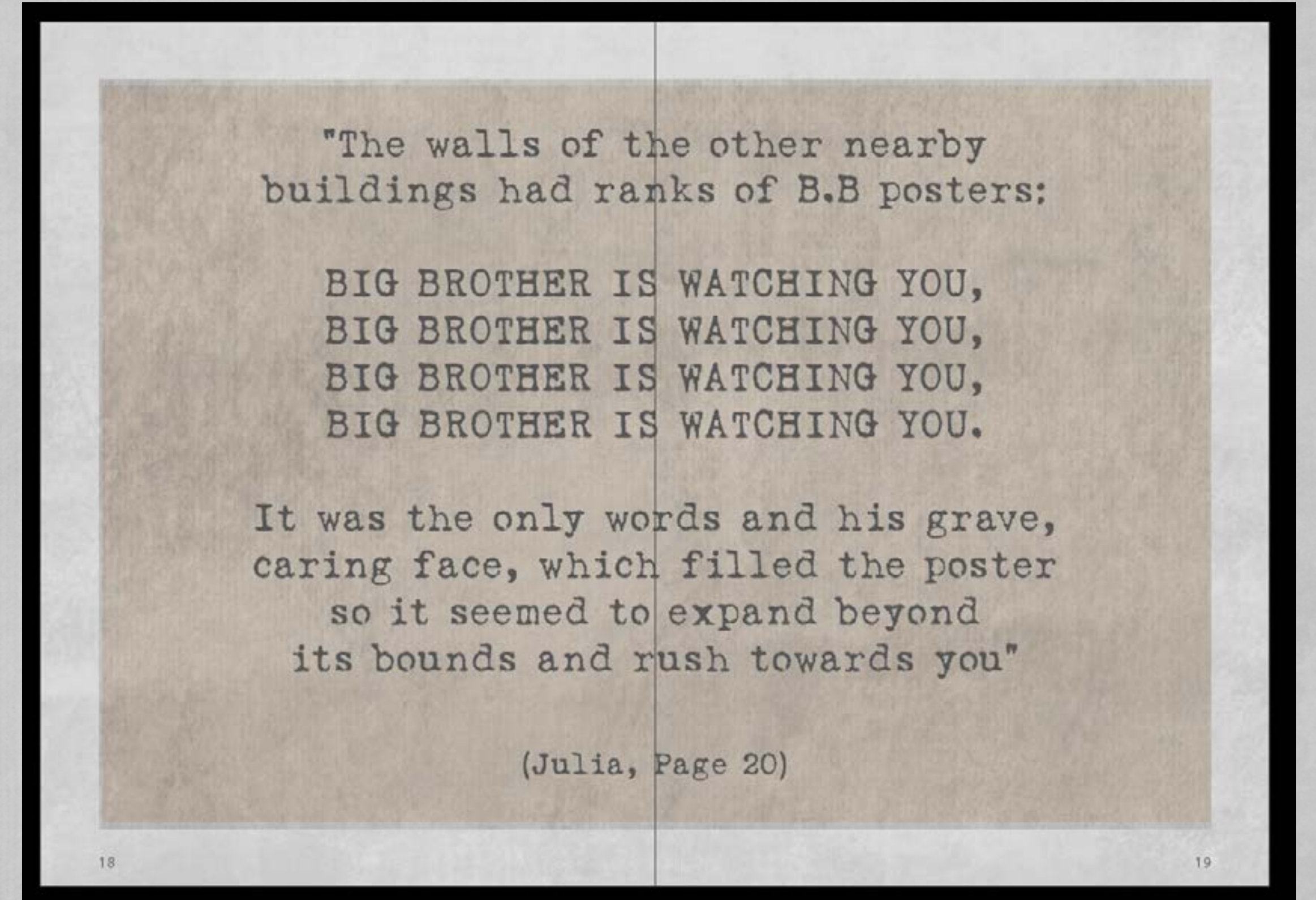
"This Big Brother was both like and unlike the young, bare-armed Big Brother on army recruiting posters, or the child Big Brother who appeared on Spies badges.

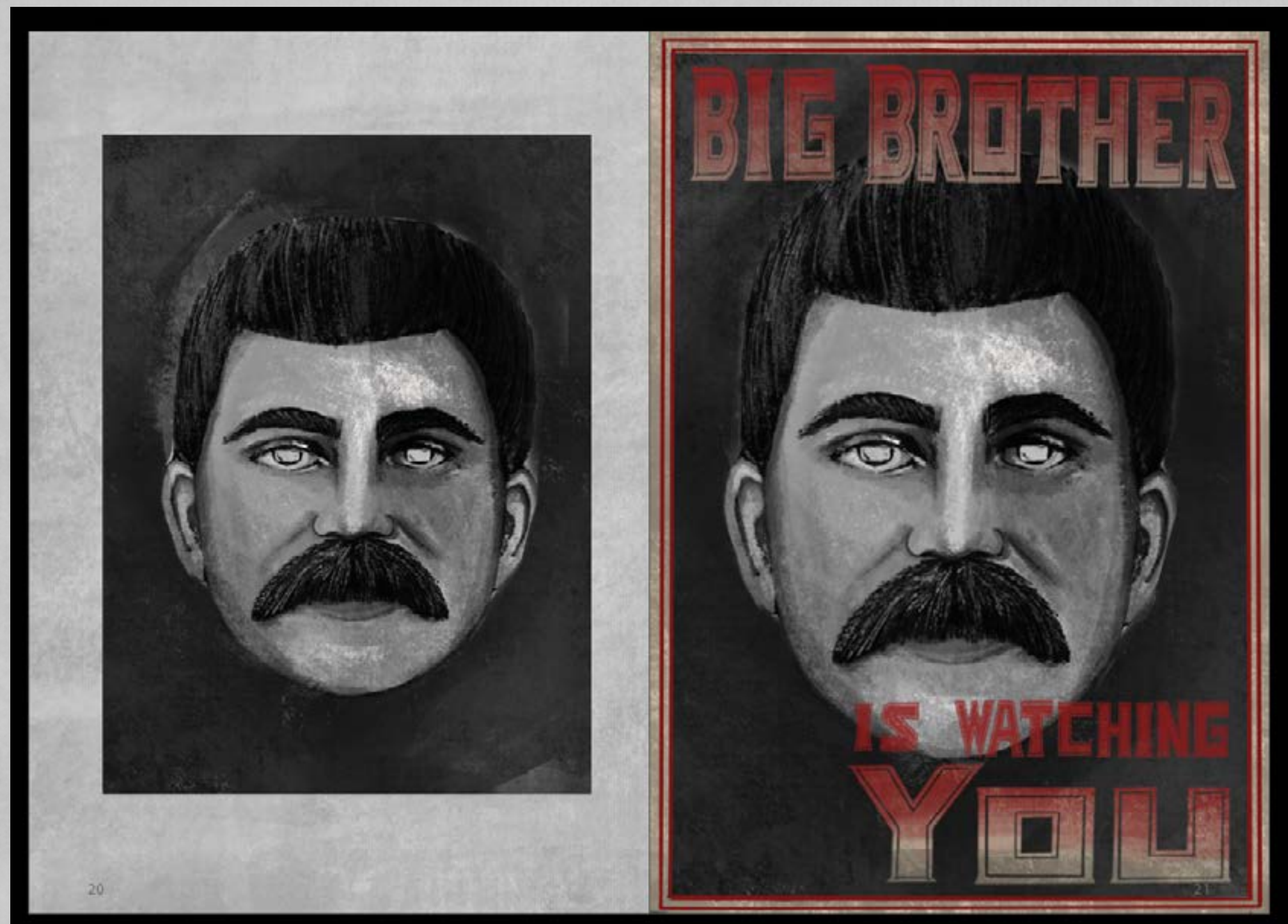
The mature leader was handsome and supremely masculine in a clean, reassuring way"

(Julia, Page 16)

INSPIRATION















C o n c l u s i o n

R e f l e c t i o n

Overall, I am quite happy with how the final outcome of this project has turned out. Venturing into the project itself and the subject matters that revolved around the practice and art of graphic prop-making, was incredibly enlightening and gratifying, especially as it allowed me to venture wholeheartedly back into the world of film production design, which is an area of interest that has remained a cherished part of my identity and creative practice for many years, and hopefully, for many more years to come.

I was incredibly happy with my choice of story as I believe my passion for the genre, its premise, character and themes are what kept me invested in the project, even when it was sometimes a struggle to maintain that momentum and motivation.

This project has taught me a lot about the process of graphic prop-making, the importance of good, in-depth research, the significance of exploration and experimentation, and how it is often through drawing inspiration from real-life that we can really enhance and elevate the impact our props have in a story.

The good thing about my final outcome is that I can continue to revisit and add to it as I go. I really like the idea of continuing it as a self-initiated project, giving me the opportunity to continue practicing my graphic prop-making abilities. I believe I still have a long way to go, and so much more to learn and develop, especially as I start to delve into more analogue techniques. Had I had more time and resources, I would have loved to have ventured down that avenue.

Overall, I aim to utilise this project as part of my portfolio and as a way to show future prospective employers and collaborators what I can do. I was given the idea in a tutorial to have this lookbook printed and made into a physical copy that I can send out to production designers, art directors, prop-houses and filmmakers, which is something I aim to do once I've developed it further.

I believe there is also a lot of opportunities for collaboration with this project, as a major part of the practice is in the way we can collaborate with other creative disciplines- it could be interesting to see how I might collaborate with other practices to bring these props into fruition.

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