

01.24.2022



**STAR WARS™**  
**APPLEJACK**  
**EA™**

TREATMENT BY

ROBERT SETHI



# HELLO APPLEJACK TEAM

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Hello Applejack Team,

Thank you for a great call and for reaching out again with some stellar creative work. The script is fantastic; it sets the mood perfectly and gives us a great flow to work from. With that in mind, we have some exciting and really executable additions that help bolster the key ask of your campaign strategy, 'How do we create intrigue and interest for a story we don't want to reveal?'

Let's jump in!





# OVERALL CREATIVE

We will, of course, create a visually stunning film that is at the forefront of cinematic trailers, and as said, we love the script, we don't really need to change a thing. Sure, we can finesse details, but the characters, scenes, and timing of the action work great. And, even though we only see a limited number of scenes, we would like to explore adding drama and suspense to each one by cutting to impactful, textural close-ups.

Essentially, adding coverage to the scenes as they're written instead of opting for single long takes. Having more shots per scene helps us compose powerful, painting-inspired compositions instead of trying to do too much with a single take. And, for a :60, we think having the flexibility of multiple shots is a good option to pursue. We want to overboard the film and then trim it back once we've found the most compelling frames. These additional shots will help us accelerate an aura of mystery, while generating a ton of hype.

These quick insert shots don't give anything away, but they will accomplish two key things. First, they help us build a pace that keeps the audience engaged, and of course, we'll decide on the right number and what shots to use during the boarding and previs phase. Secondly, and equally important, they help communicate subtle emotions within the scene while building tension.

Using the script as our guide, these are some of the details and camera work we're thinking of exploring.



# SCRIPT ANALYSIS





Just like the script, we like the idea of starting in tight on the Senator's greedy eyes. From here, we want to escalate the tempo and mood as the Stormtrooper and the unknown escort approaches. We track with their boots across the polished floor, over their shoulders, and with the case clutched in the transporter's gloved hands as they approach the Senator. All the while, we intercut with Senator Daho Sejan, rubbing his sweaty palms together, visualizing his unquenchable thirst for power, over his shoulder, feeling his heart racing, lingering on his hunched back, twitching with excitement for what's coming.

Just before he touches the case, he anxiously wipes his hands on his robe. Cutting in on his fingers as they caress the case's edges, inching their way towards the latch, we capture his desire and pursuit for not just the unattainable but for dominance.

Then, before we reveal the lightsaber, let's hold that moment and make it really big- play up the greed in his eyes with a solid beat before opening it. Just after a glint of light crosses over his face, we see what he sees— the hint of a lightsaber perfectly placed in a case.

It's essential to capture the subtleties of his performance, to feel his insatiable desire for power; for him, the lightsaber represents that. And while it's not the point of the scene, we want to make sure and feel the shimmering skyline of Coruscant off in the distance and the yacht's luxurious interior. This layer of background visuals and textures helps bring Daho's dominance and greed to the foreground. The goal is to amp up every detail within the scene.

## *INT. CORUSCANT - NIGHT*

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ROBERT SETHI

THE MILL





This scene reminds me of the opening to the first Alien film -- and the Dead Space teaser mentioned on the call-- a moody and mysterious scene that still shocks you to attention. We sense life through the small details within, beeping lights, air vents pumping, a looping radio transmission, but we don't see life. Here we want to pick apart the ship and find those details to help us build the presence of life and the right amount of tension before and even after the big bang. We want to explore a bit of Kubrick-inspired camera movement to journey into the ship, rotating the camera as it moves— something we'll dive deeper into in previs, but it's an interesting take on the composition.

Saying that, as our camera drifts into the main hold, we also wonder about passing by small clues of anything Cal might have left behind. A piece of clothing, a piece of tech, or anything small internet sleuths can grab onto. That way, this screen-time can do double the work before the big boom and the reveal of the Holotable and footprints. And, by feeling remnants of Cal being on the ship, we introduce the idea that it's only recently abandoned, strengthening the theme provided by the footprints.

## *INT. MANTIS - KOBOH - AFTERNOON*

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Because of the nature of this scene, there isn't too much room for adding additional shots and textures, but what we would like to explore is seeing her hands and fingers working the lightsaber.

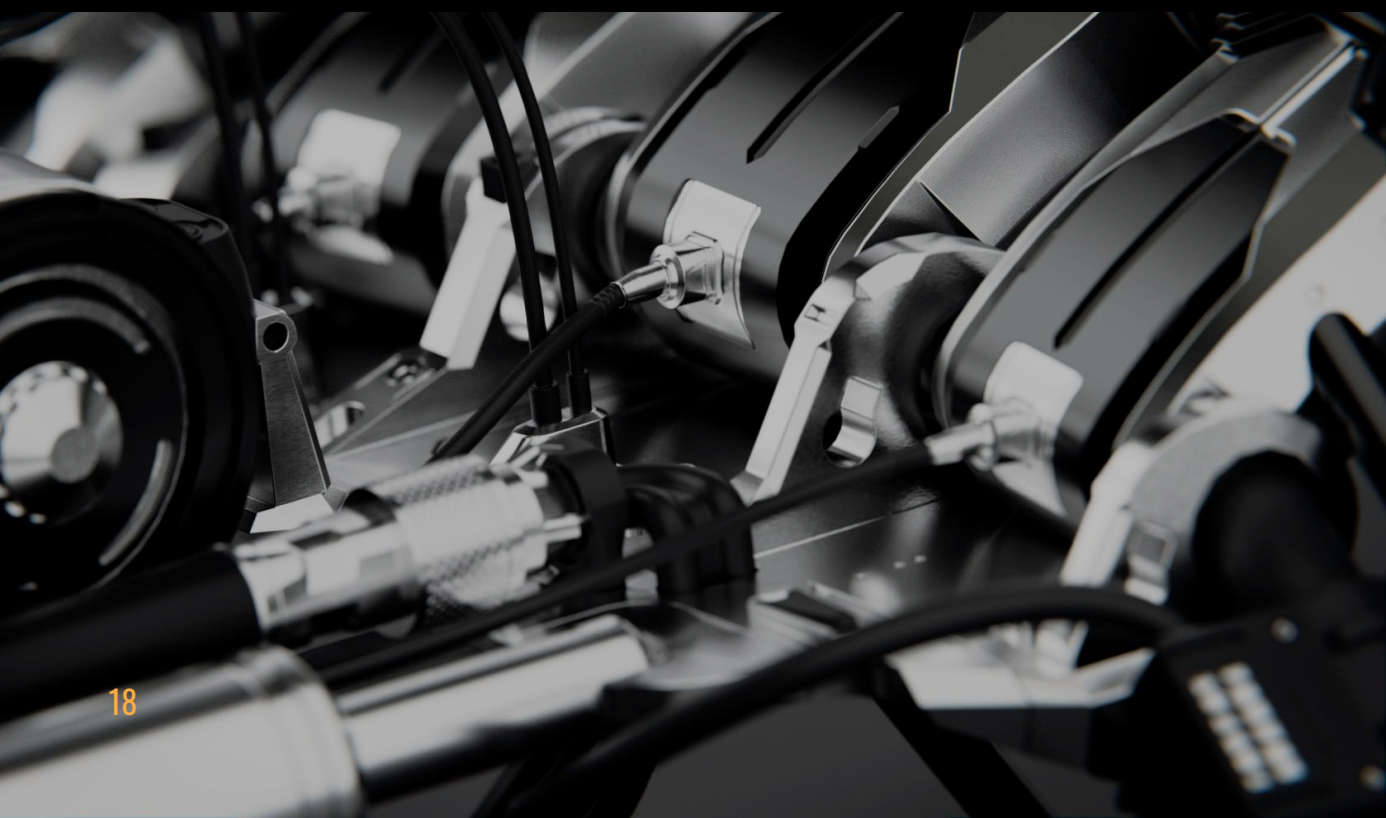
Alluding to the character's apparent rebirth also implies she's ascended in her abilities. One way to quickly show that is through a quick insert shot showcasing the complexity of her hand movements and her newly acquired skill. And, since she now has a new mechanical arm, it becomes an even more critical detail to highlight to sell her evolution. On that note, we love the potential in exploring the mechanics of her hand, small pistons pushing and pulling tendons, gears and hinges rotating as she twirls the lightsabers. By really digging into her evolution, we make her character's comeback feel even more menacing buildup, considering what's to come. Plus, who doesn't love building a badass robotic arm?

## *INT. CORUSCANT - HALLWAY - NIGHT*

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The journey down into the ruins can be a quick one, and with the proper treatment, it becomes an exhilarating ride. As we descend at breakneck speed, we can already feel artifacts of the High Republic embedded into the walls, the remnants of ships, senate seats, etc., flying past us. Traveling downward, we also deep-dive our camera down through small openings - we don't have to be locked into a 'human' POV. This descent is all about mystery, scale, and scope. While diving through a smaller micro-chasm, we, in turn, pick up smaller, more intricate artifacts and details— old access cards, destroyed lightsabers, R2 parts, etc.

Once we're exploring from a terrestrial perspective, we like the idea of building tension with an almost flashlight-like POV-- illuminating relics and droids just as the wind uncovers them from dust, all while timing their reveal with the voice-over delivery.

## *INT. UNDERGROUND - HIGH REPUBLIC RUINS*

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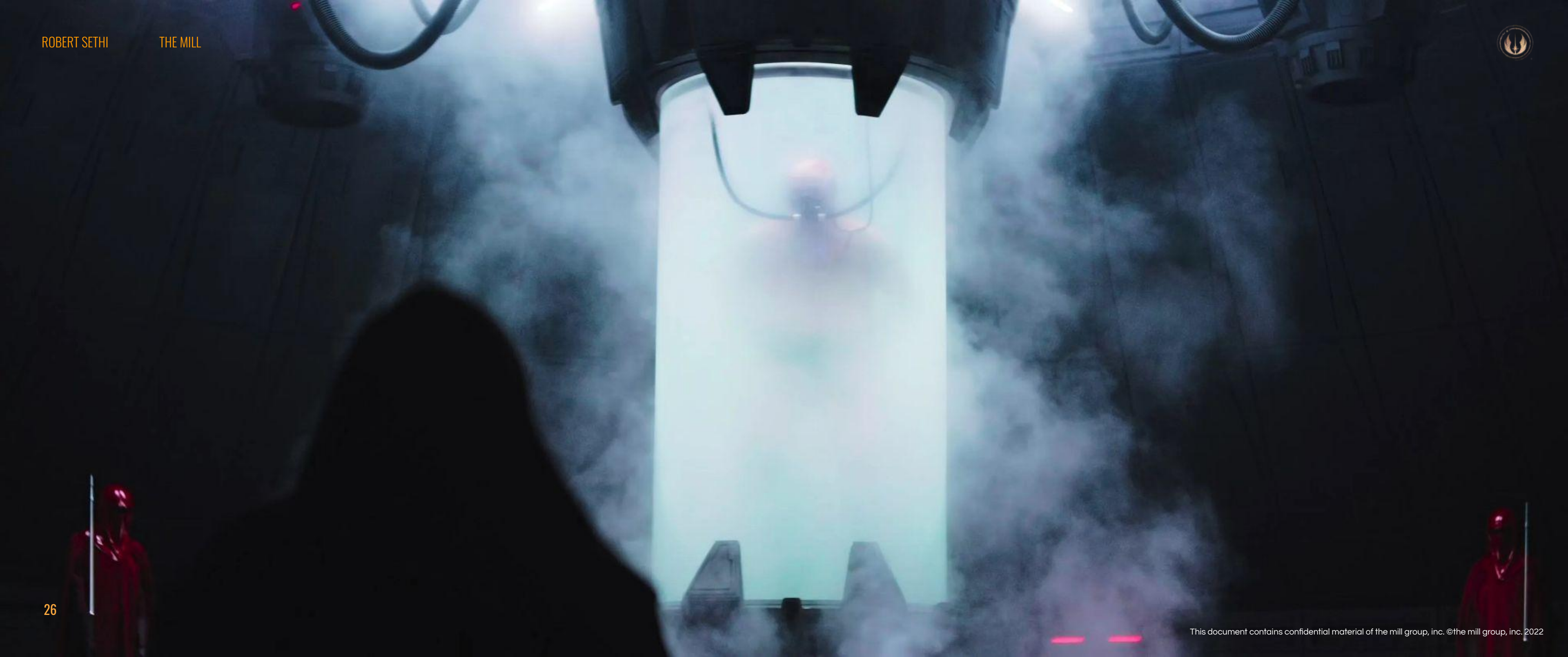
Inspired by a few details from the fantastic concept frames you sent over for this scene, we love the reveal of the Inner Chamber. The small bubbles pushing through the water, dancing over a mass of seaweed, algae– strands of dark hair, then revealing it's a body floating; a really powerful way to build up a scene and create a ton of suspense. By first exploring this setup in close, as the script describes, we create more mystery around the character, whether he's good or bad. So, let's add to that and take our time.

This scene, in particular, led us to consider using multiple angles of coverage to capture each vignette. While we love the concept of a continuous move-out, we don't want to rush the action and lose the impact of the details that leave us wondering why. That's not to say we can't create a seemingly continuous long take that we can cut around as we reveal the scene.

Of course, without giving too much away, and while still keeping the coverage even-handed, we wonder about seeing a twitching finger inside the fluid, feeling a pulsing heartbeat, the fluttering of an eye-lid. And perhaps, after introducing Cal's shadow, do we see one of Dagan Gera's eyes snap open underwater - or better yet, save it for a bumper after the end card? Let's Explore!

## *INT. FORREST ARRAY - INNER CHAMBER*

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# CINEMATOGRAPHY





# CINEMATOGRAPHY

The cinematography for this film is beautifully lit, highly composed frames, with each composition treated like a painting, always with strong silhouettes. That familiar, high-level cinematic language that looks like concept art comes through when shooting with a large or medium format camera system. To execute that, we want to use the combination of an Ari Alex LF Camera with Ultra Vista Lenses. This is the same setup used on The Mandalorian and is the right recipe to deliver an excellent look the audience expects from the IP.

Using a film-first approach, we want our scenes to feel lit from existing natural lights and sources - not artificially lit or stylized with lights. There's no need to get heavy-handed with this or let it dominate our thinking, but our lighting needs to feel natural to be beautiful—carefully crafted by our artists. Some of this will also come through opening up the aperture, letting the natural lighting in, which gives us a more shallow depth of field, which is great for feeling but not showing the entirety of a scene. With natural light in mind, we're really excited to deliver on the long shadow ending- so classic for the IP. We want to find a way to really give that moment a proper light source from inside the room.

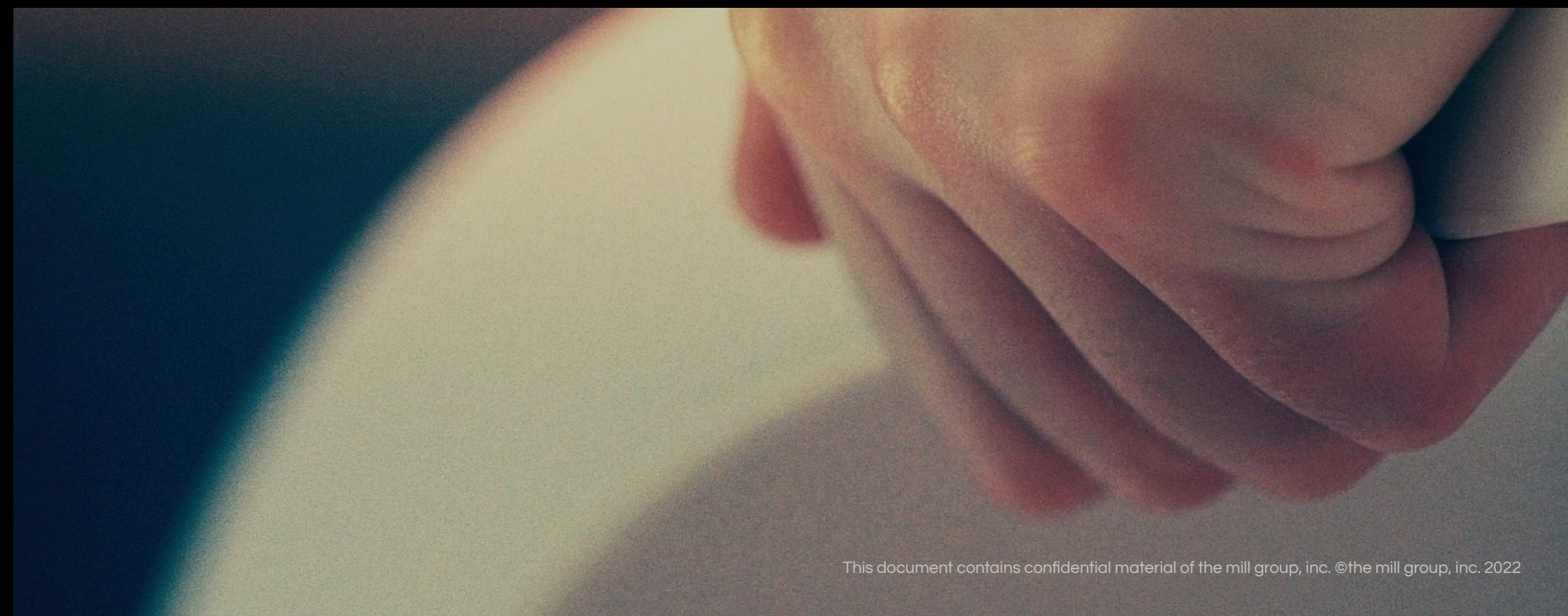


# CINEMATOGRAPHY CONT.

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Movement is still an essential part of the film; even though we're proposing adding coverage to each scene, every shot features movement of some kind. At times this can be very subtle background movement, the hint of the drifting horizon line on Daho's yacht, or a desert mirage just beyond the footprints in the rocks and sand, the dust covering over the impressions before our eyes. But, along with these subtle forms of movement, we also have our big moments. Falling down the cave in the ruins of the Republic delivers a frenetic joy ride. The steady move twisting through the downed spacecraft on Koboh creates an eerie sort of atmosphere. Hyper-jumping from micro to macro to wide in the Inner Chamber adds to the character's intrigue.

Of course, all of our shots will be beautifully executed, but in our closeups, we can really deliver a photoreal frame composed like a painting. Knowing that, we also like the idea of exploring more abstract framing in our cutaways-- they should be able to hold enough information.







ART DIRECTION

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# ART DIRECTION

Everything we put on the screen has to guide and strengthen the narrative, and we'll push our Art Direction in that same way. Using contrasting colors, we can boost the visual fidelity and importance of details within each scene. We also play with light and dark, putting dark silhouettes over brighter backgrounds and using negative fill to darken the background when we want the foreground to pop.

With these details working in harmony, we also want to have constant movement to give each picture life. Dust blowing through the ruins, the senator's robe billowing, our camera dutching as it moves through the hull of the ship, lights flickering, and backgrounds alive with movement create a fully realized picture. Even when they are softly focused, like the expensive materials of Daho Sejan's yacht, we'll still feel the right mood in every environment.

Of course, just as we experience the pristine nature of the yacht and ocean breezes, we also have to capture the grimy, industrial feel of an old inner chamber. Those juxtaposing locations, and more importantly, their minute details, are an example of what makes the Star Wars landscape so rich; we have to be highly informed by the when and where of our scenes. And, with that in mind, the backgrounds of every location are always working to compliment the foreground from a narrative point of view.



EDIT



# EDIT

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We love the idea of dipping in and out of black. We want to make sure and find the right rhythm between the dips to black and the cuts of the film to create a constant but climactic flow. At times, we may go entirely to black and let it live for a beat; the transition from Koboh to Coruscant, and in other scene transitions only touch black for a single frame; the shift from the High Republic Ruins to the Forrest Array.

While our edit might be highly informed by our music choice, especially having The Hu in mind, we always want to get into a flow of imagery and visual rhythm. This holds true, even if we go with a more soundscape style score because we want to build the energy of our edit naturally to a big ending.

# MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN

A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, several dead, skeletal trees stand on a flat, sandy plain. The background features large, smooth sand dunes that rise against a dark, almost black sky. The overall mood is desolate and atmospheric. The text 'MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN' is overlaid in the center in a white, serif font. A thin, horizontal line with a small diamond-shaped ornament in the middle is positioned below the text.





# MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN

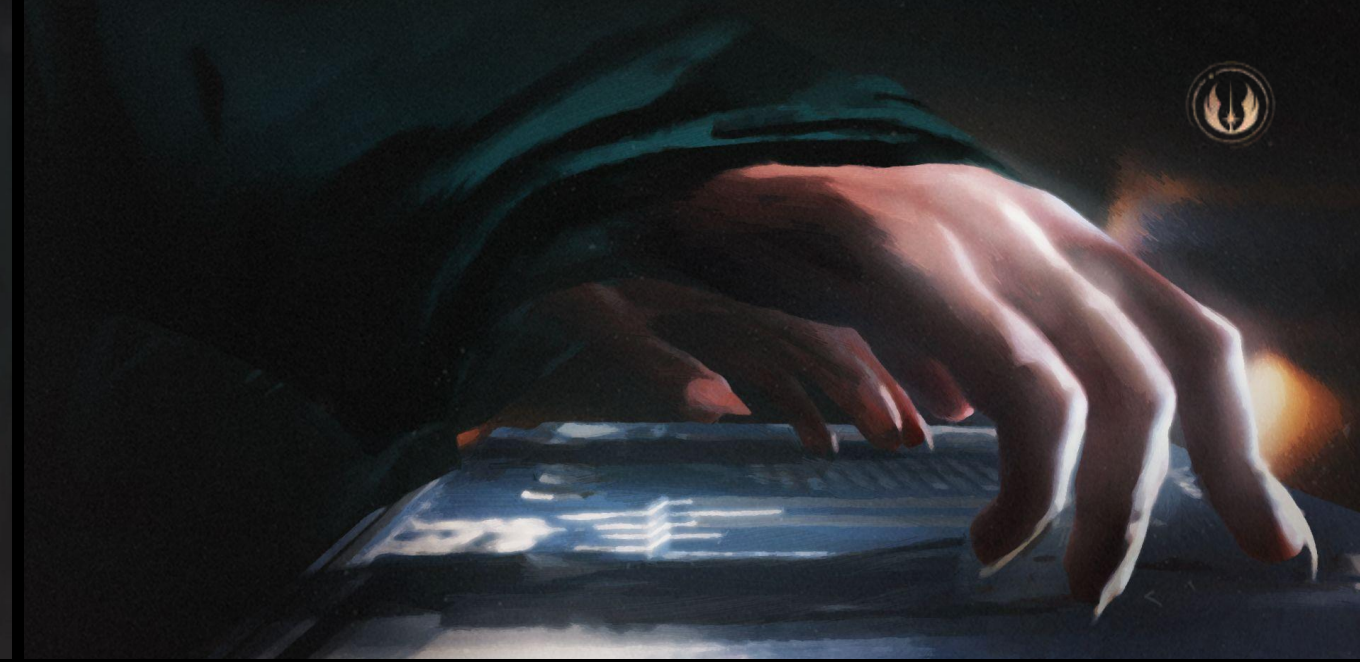
The Hu is super interesting. So much personality, mystery, and power in the music; it's otherworldly but has a bit of a rock-meets-western flavor, so cool. On top of that, there's an energetic rhythm within their tracks when we need it, and slow moments too. Additionally, with their music and/or that style, we can easily create a crescendo ending for dramatic effect. Taking us out on a high note, but not necessarily a literal one. And while we love the idea of exploring a choice like The Hu, we can, of course, explore other options, both unexpected and traditional.

Our approach to sound design will be similar to our approach to lighting, keeping it natural and real. But, even still, we can use sound design to enhance the scene's emotion-- adding a slight rubbing sound to Daho Sejan's fingers caressing the metal case, the rattle of Ninth Sister's pained breathing, or bubbles moving through a viscous liquid. Each scene needs to feel full of sound.

The background image is a dark, atmospheric sci-fi environment. In the foreground, a character in a dark, tactical suit is seen from behind, looking towards a brightly lit, futuristic corridor. The corridor is filled with complex machinery, pipes, and glowing blue light sources. In the distance, a small, white, boxy robot is visible, standing on a circular platform. The overall mood is mysterious and high-tech.

# CONCEPTS

While much more exploration is, of course, needed, we couldn't help ourselves and worked up some initial ideas over the weekend. This is the type of project that pushes everyone to bring their best to the table, and our minds were just going, so we figured we'd share!





# THANK YOU

We could not be more excited about the prospect of working together again. The script is epic and sets up such a cool campaign and we truly hope to be a part of it. It was great working with everyone on the last Star Wars film and the other projects we've produced, so let's get the band back together! I'll work on my throat singing, but wait until after our next call.

Sincerely,

Rob



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