PESTS

A DESIGN BY MIA STAPP

DESIGN STATEMENT

The T-Shirt Graphic 'Pests' reverses conceptions of who and what are 'pests' in an age of commodification of all life. 'Pests' switches the roles of animals and humans, to demonstrate the way humans cruelly treat animals. The figure of the rabbit represents the human who wields a weapon to dominate, and typifies a belief in human exceptionalism. The figure of the girl is the rabbit who gazes fearfully towards the viewer, her vulnerable form urging engagement and support.

'Pests' targets 15+ teens who are interested in detailed graphic designs, dark colours, and more edgy concepts. The design includes lots of line art, and dark colours of reds, blues and black. This design targets people who support animal rights, as the design revolves around switching humans and animal's places to represent the way animals are treated by humans.

DESIGN STATEMENT

'Pests' was created using Procreate to create the initial sketches. The sketches were then imported into Adobe Fresco (iPad) for further refinement, added detail and colour. Finally, the design was imported into Adobe Illustrator for final compositing with text and background.

CONCEPTS

CHOSEN DESIGN

This design switches the narrative between humans and rabbits. Here, the human in the foreground is crawling away from the rabbit in fear. Whilst the rabbit in the back is holding a gun in the back which has already been fired, suggested by the smoke and bullets coming from the gun. I've highlighted the cruelty inflicted on rabbits by giving the rabbit a necklace which has a human foot instead of a rabbit foot. In my research, I discussed how humans cut off rabbit feet and the ways in which it is cruel, So I wanted to include that into this design By switching these it should give insight on how unfair it is for rabbits. The typography will be the rabbit exclaiming pests as a representation of what we call rabbits to further present the harsh treatment inflicted upon them.
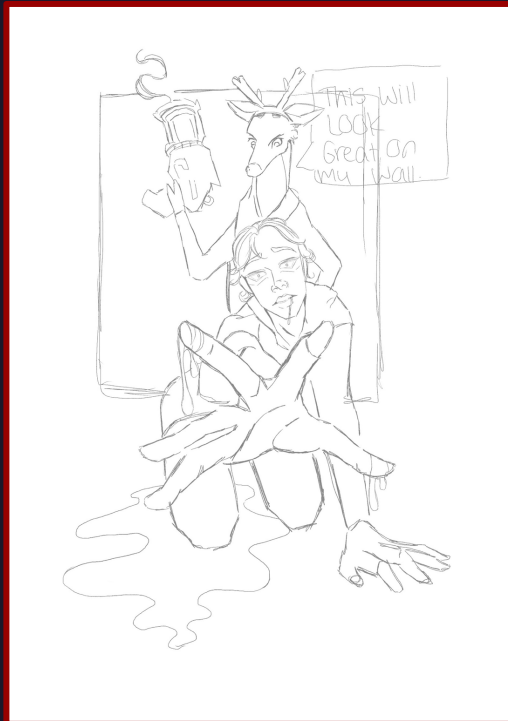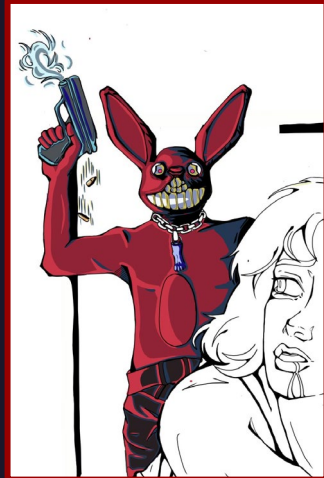

For this design, I had used a deer instead of a rabbit. They are relatively similar concepts, however here the deer wants to put the girls head on a wall. This way of switching roles allow people to think about the cruel fascination of putting animal heads on walls as decoration.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT T-SHIRT

1)   My Concept sketch

I started working on the rabbit with a clear vision in mind. I was inspired by the colours on the aliens poster in my mood board and wanted the rabbit to follow a similar colour scheme. This was also beneficial to make the rabbit look menacing. I did have some trouble deciding where the shadows and highlights would go in the beginning, although im satisfied by the results.
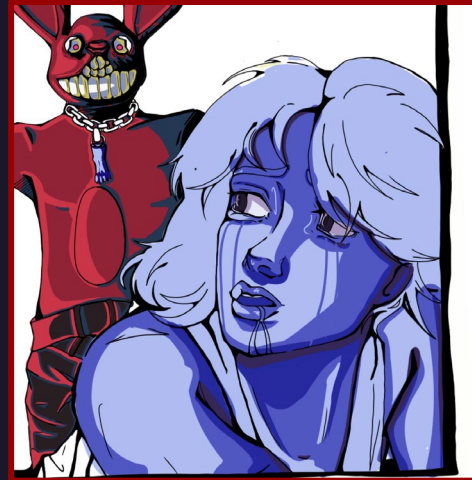
Here I started working on the girl. I used blue to contrast with the red. I started with a light blue and followed with shadows. At the start I had a hard time deciding how I should colour her. I started by using normal colours but it didn't look right so I decided I'd try using the principle of contrast. It worked well to create meaning between the two subjects and overall make it look more appealing.

Here I added some more details. I wanted to create a highlight of some sort on her hair so I used a contrasting yellow against the blue. At first I really wasn't sure about how I was approaching this. I thought it looked messy and strange so I was about to scrap the highlights all together. Although, when I went to delete the layer, I discovered how boring and dull it was without the highlights. So In the end I decided to keep it.

FINAL T-SHIRT DESIGN

This is the completed t-shirt graphic. I'm satisfied with the colours and the contrast between them. The line art compliments the the cartoony style I was going for which is cool and fresh.
The highlights in the girls hair is a nice finishing touch that brings all the colours together.

RATIONALE

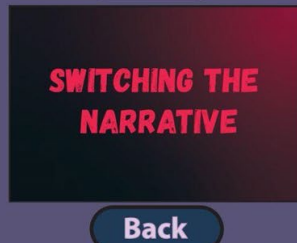My T-shirt design meets the requirements of the brief. For my graphic, I've chosen to make a statement about the way humans treat animals. For the wild and wacky portion of the brief, I have decided to switch the roles of humans and animals in my design to display the harsh treatment inflicted upon animals but from a different perspective, in a way that humans can observe the harsh treatment and sympathise more easily because it is themselves being vulnerable. I've done this by having a human crawling in the foreground in fear and a rabbit in the background holding a gun accompanied by typography that says pests. This twist gets the audience to view the harm inflicted on animals in a different light, it's unique and impactful. It should be impactful to the viewers as instead of an animal being torn down, It's a human being placed in a vulnerable position. This should be new and confronting and will grab the attention of viewers.
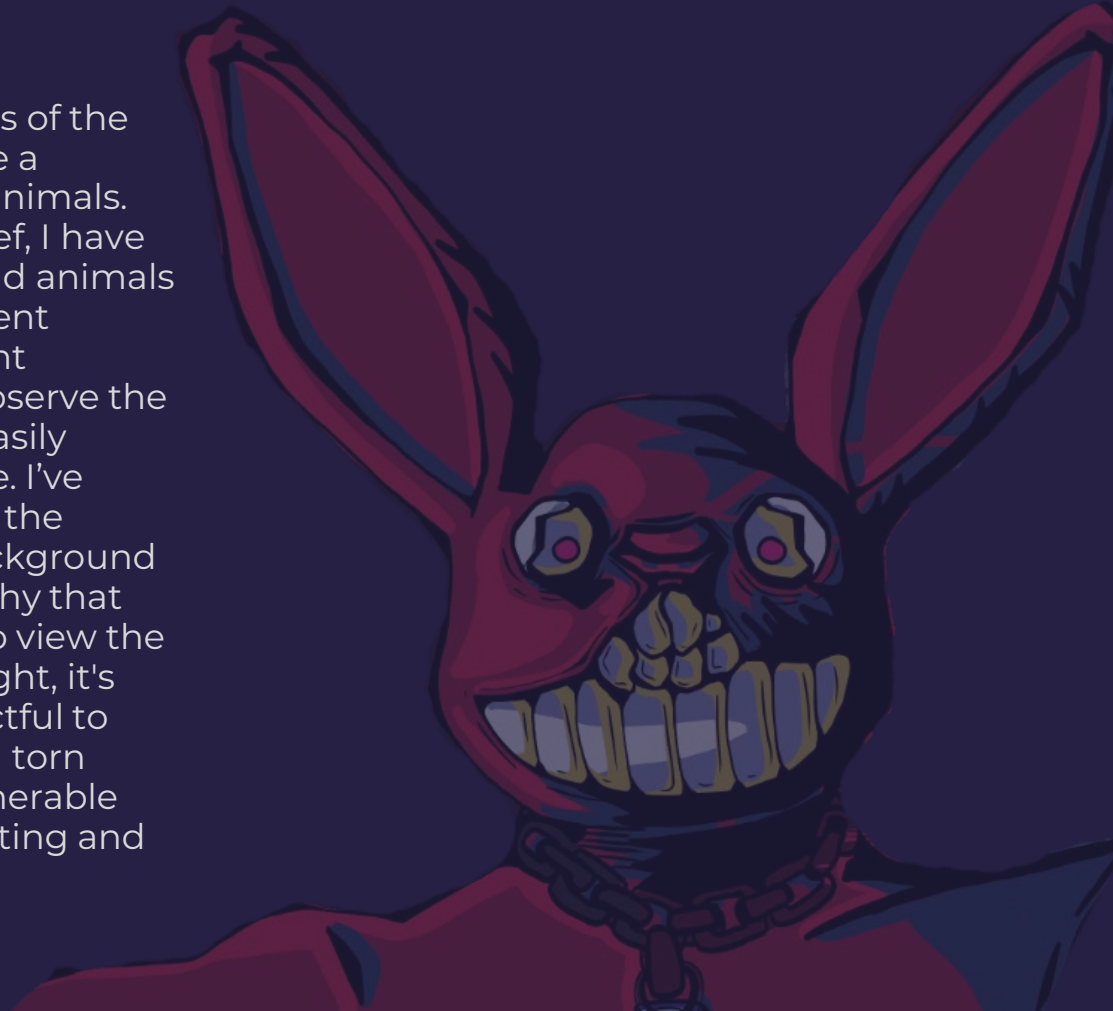
RATIONALE

I have used colour to create meaning in my design. My colour palette over all my designs has been reds, blues, and black. I've been inspired by the Aliens picture on my mood board to manipulate the colours to create a unique design. In my t-shirt design, the colour red is a representation of danger and power. I've made the rabbit in the back red to represent the menacing power it holds over the girl in the foreground. This technique should allow the viewers to further recognise the twisted situation, the distinct switch between the human and animal, by using red it makes it obvious the rabbit is supposed to be the villain. This just makes the design all that scarier and more confronting which makes it eye-catching.
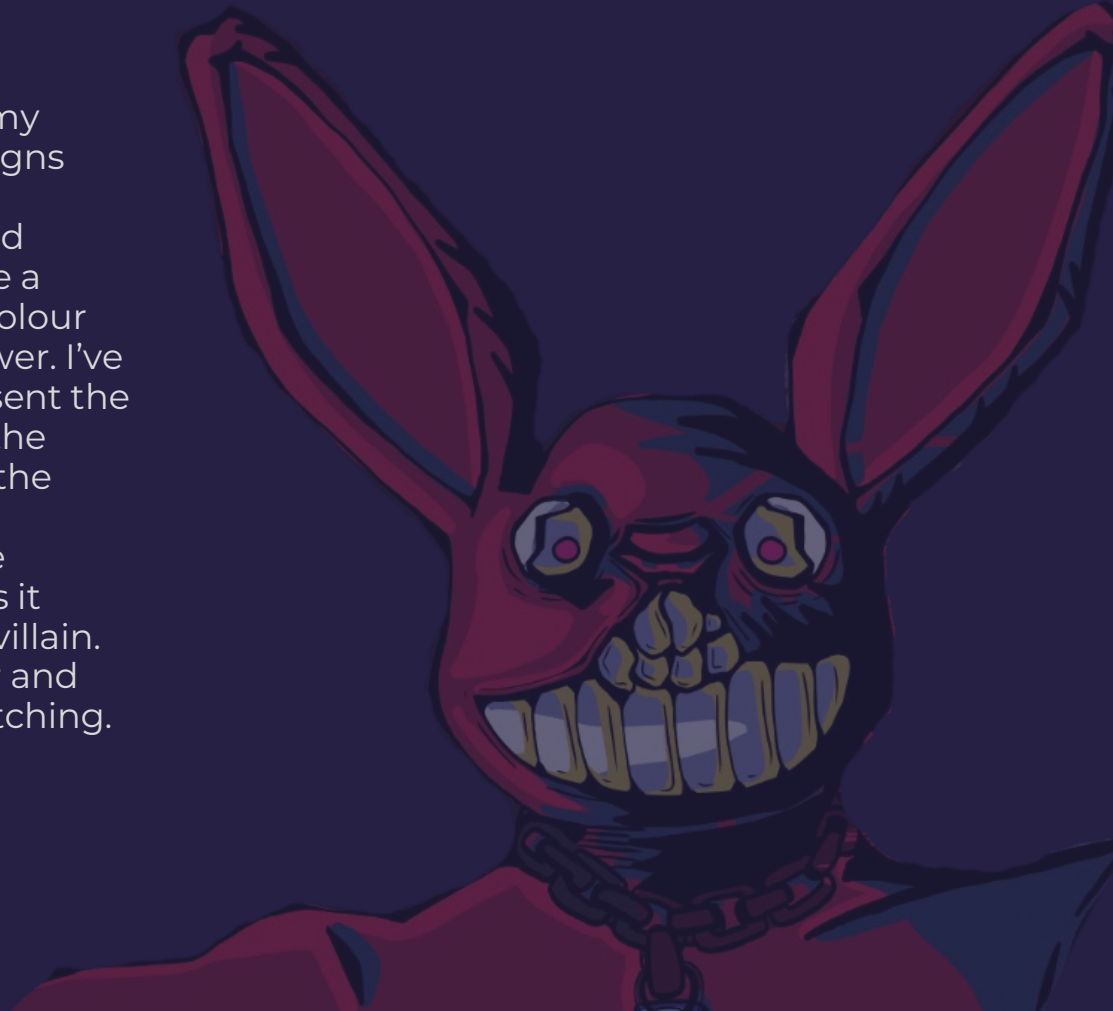
RATIONALE

I decided to only use the bold colours of reds and blues instead of using the actual colours of the subjects. I've chosen to do this to make my design pop, to make it more appealing and eye-catching, and to further get my idea across. I thought that using the original colours would be boring and would be a missed opportunity to further enhance my design and get more people to view it. These current colours certainly speak more volumes about the design, the relationships between subjects, and the mood.

RATIONALE

Accompanying this, the contrast between the red and blue further tell the audience the distinct difference between the two characters. Instead of using regular colours for the rabbit and human, I've used bright blues which contrast against the red in the back. A viewer's eyes will be drawn to the bright blues and then see the red, menacing figure in the back. This significant choice further shows the difference between the two subjects and also grabs the attention of the audience due to the bright, bold, and unusual colours.

To support the scenario of the design, I've used typography. In the top right corner in red, bold writing displays the word pests. I've chosen to use this word as its most commonly directed towards rabbits negatively. So in my design, I wanted it to seem like the rabbit was calling the human a pest. This is another confronting aspect for the audience, as it's a familiar action to call rabbits pests, but by having the rabbit call the human pests instead, the audience gets insight into what it's like to be called that which can be discomforting. I've also intentionally made the text red as a way of symbolising the negativity of the word and grabbing the attention of the viewers with the bright red colours.

RATIONALE
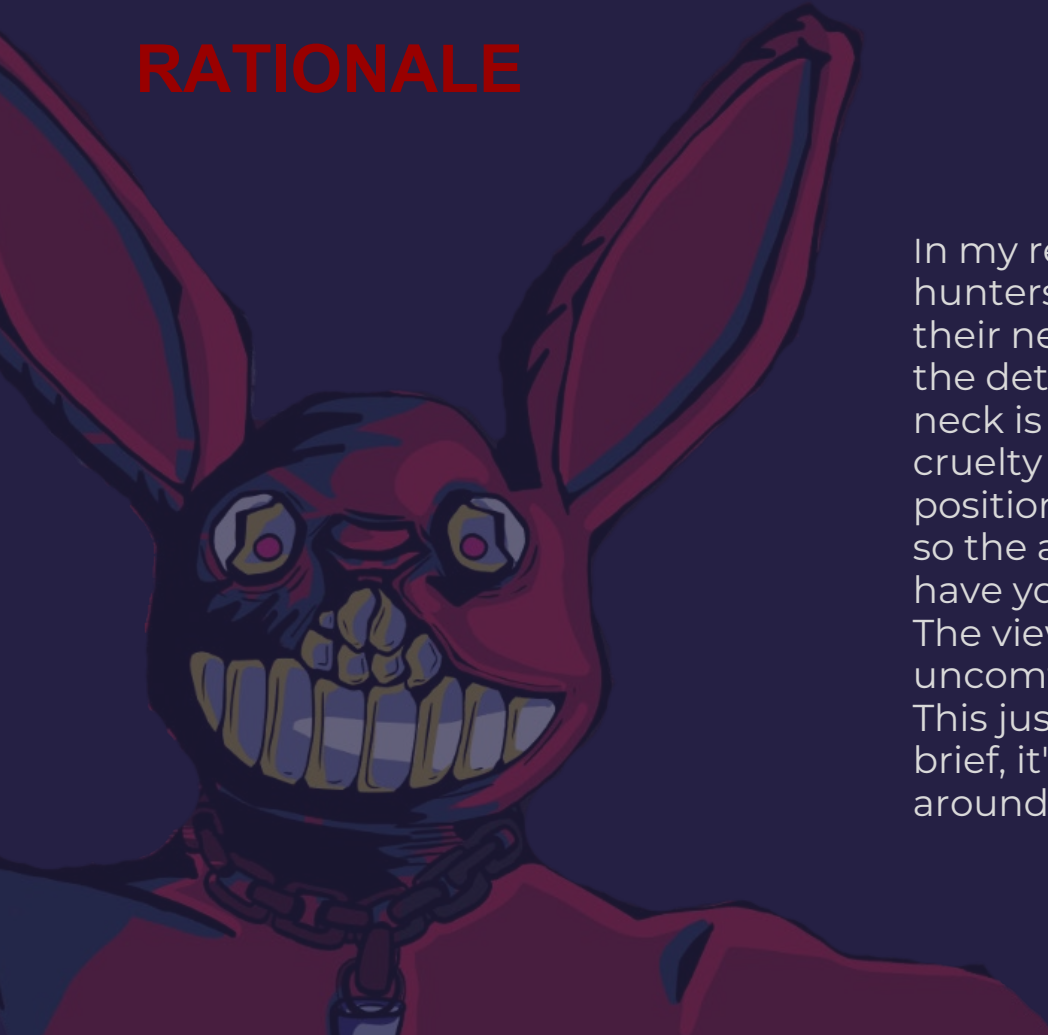
In my research, I looked at rabbit feet and how hunters collect them and wear them around their necks. In my design, if you pay attention to the details, You'll notice that around the rabbit's neck is a human foot. This factor highlights the cruelty of taking rabbit feet by switching the positions and having it be a human foot instead, so the audience can imagine how it'd feel to have your feet hacked off and worn as a trophy. The viewer should feel disgusted and uncomfortable as they recognise how cruel it is. This just further goes with the wild and wacky brief, it's wild to see a severed human foot around an animal's neck instead.

RATIONALE
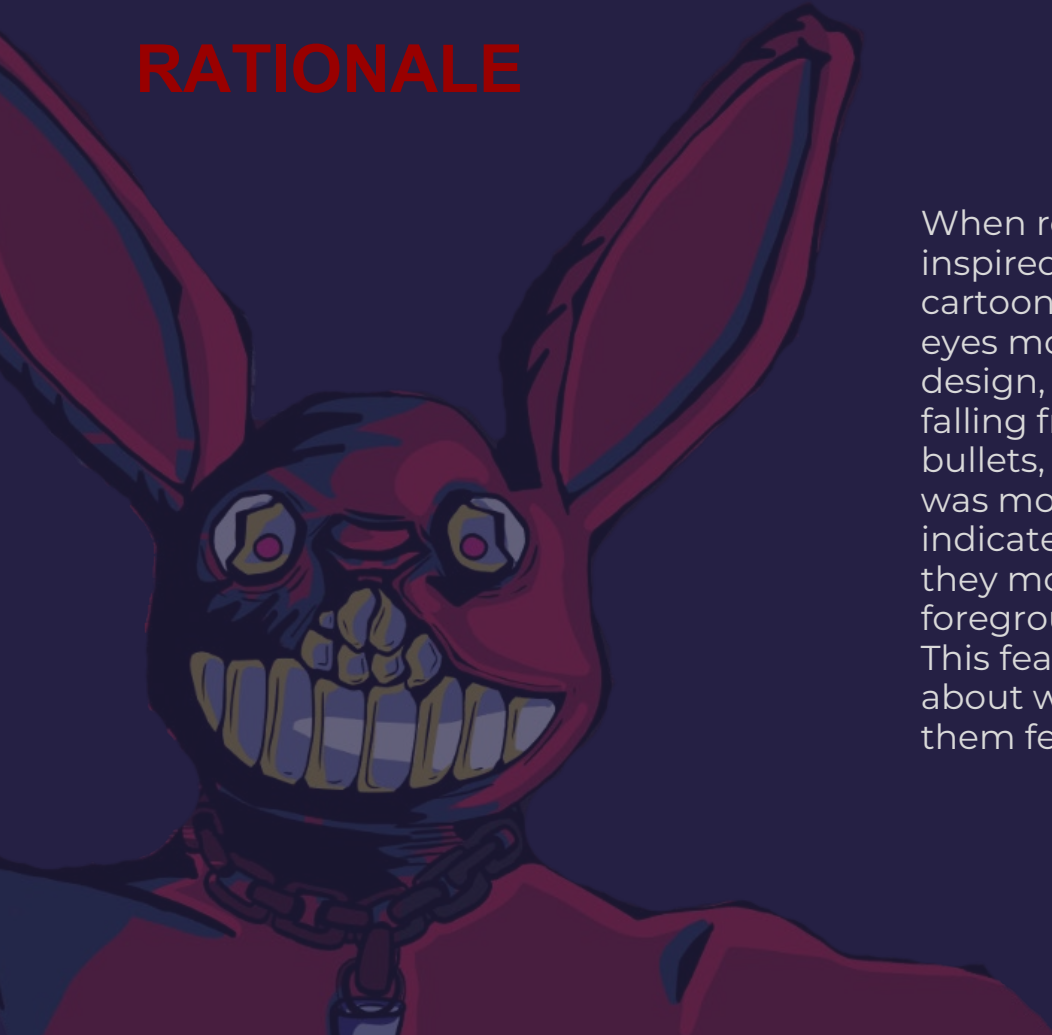
When researching Steven Harrington, I was inspired by his artworks. I had an interest in his cartoony art style, the bold lines, and the way our eyes moved with some of the features. In my design, another small detail is the bullet casings falling from the rabbit's gun. Surrounding the bullets, I drew lines around it to indicate that it was moving down quickly. This feature also indicates that shots have already been fired and they most likely have hit the girl in the foreground. To make my design more detailed. This feature just gives more hints to the audience about what is going down and should make them feel concerned.

RATIONALE

Due to the rabbit in my t-shirt design being one of the most confronting figures in the graphic, I wanted to use that in the rest of my designs. On my swing tag inspiration slide, Image B, I liked the way they cut the logo out on the side of the tag, I thought it looked great spatially and was simple and clear. For my first swing tag, I used a simple rectangle shape and took half of the rabbit and placed it on there, and I used a black and red gradient for the background. I didn't want to make the swing tags too complicated so they did not outshine the main design, which is why I liked the inspiration so much, but I wanted to incorporate the rabbit in there somewhere. My postcard takes a similar approach by including an image of the rabbit on the back again. By putting the rabbit on my swing tags, postcards, etc. It serves as a reminder of how bad humans are. Although it's a rabbit we're seeing, really it's a representation of a human and so by using the rabbit, it confronts the viewers constantly as they know it's actually them. For my second swing tag, I didn't use my rabbit design, Instead, I made the shape of the tag a rabbit. Although it's not the same rabbit, I gave it red eyes so the viewers know it's still evil and continues to serve as that reminder. By using the animal also, it doesn't steer from the wild and wacky animal portion of the brief, I still find a way to incorporate the insane-looking rabbit into my other designs and it still serves its wild purpose.

RATIONALE
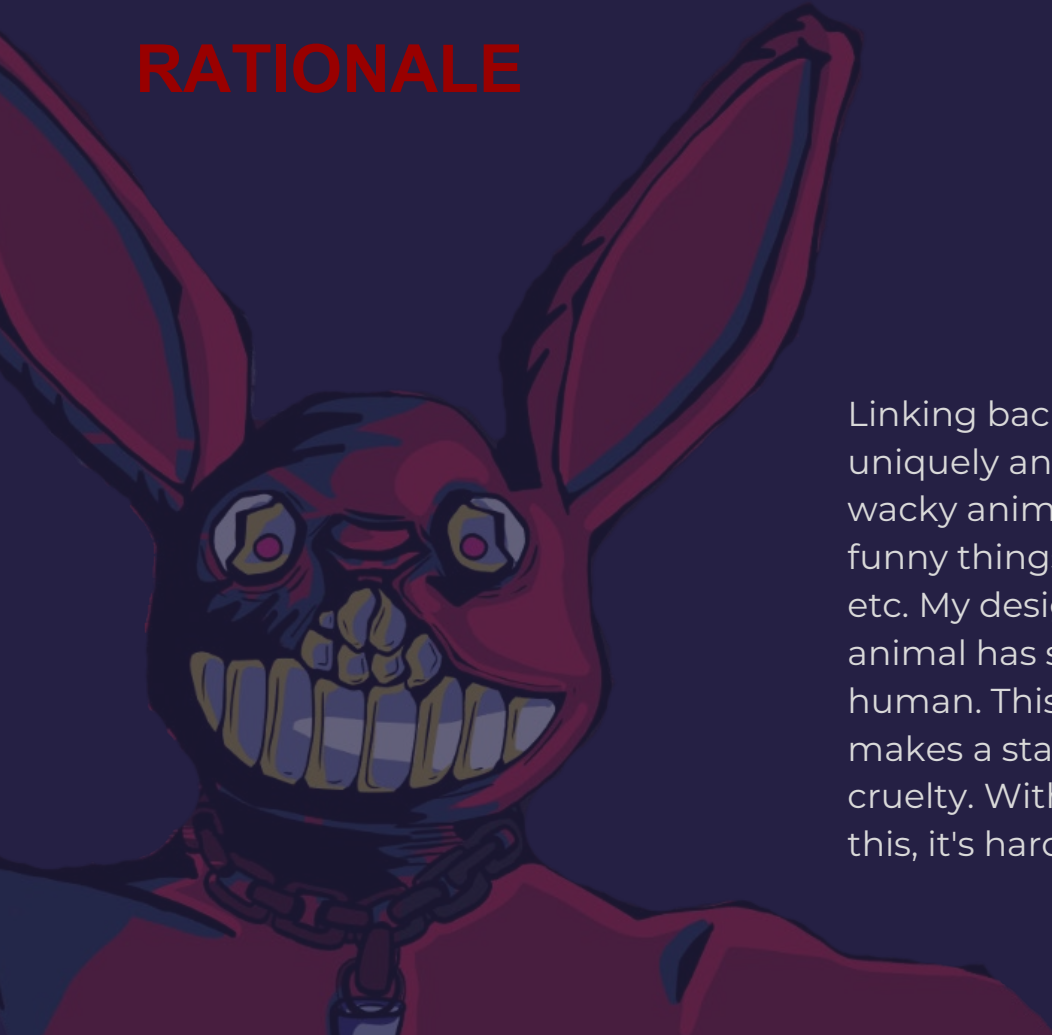
Linking back to the brief, my design meets the criteria uniquely and interestingly. Usually in response to wild and wacky animals, you'd expect designs with animals doing funny things such as animals surfing, pulling funny faces, etc. My design is wacky and wild in the sense that an animal has switched places with a human and is hunting a human. This concept is more unusual, however, it actually makes a statement about an important subject, animal cruelty. With a concept as different and confronting as this, it's hard not to catch your eye.

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