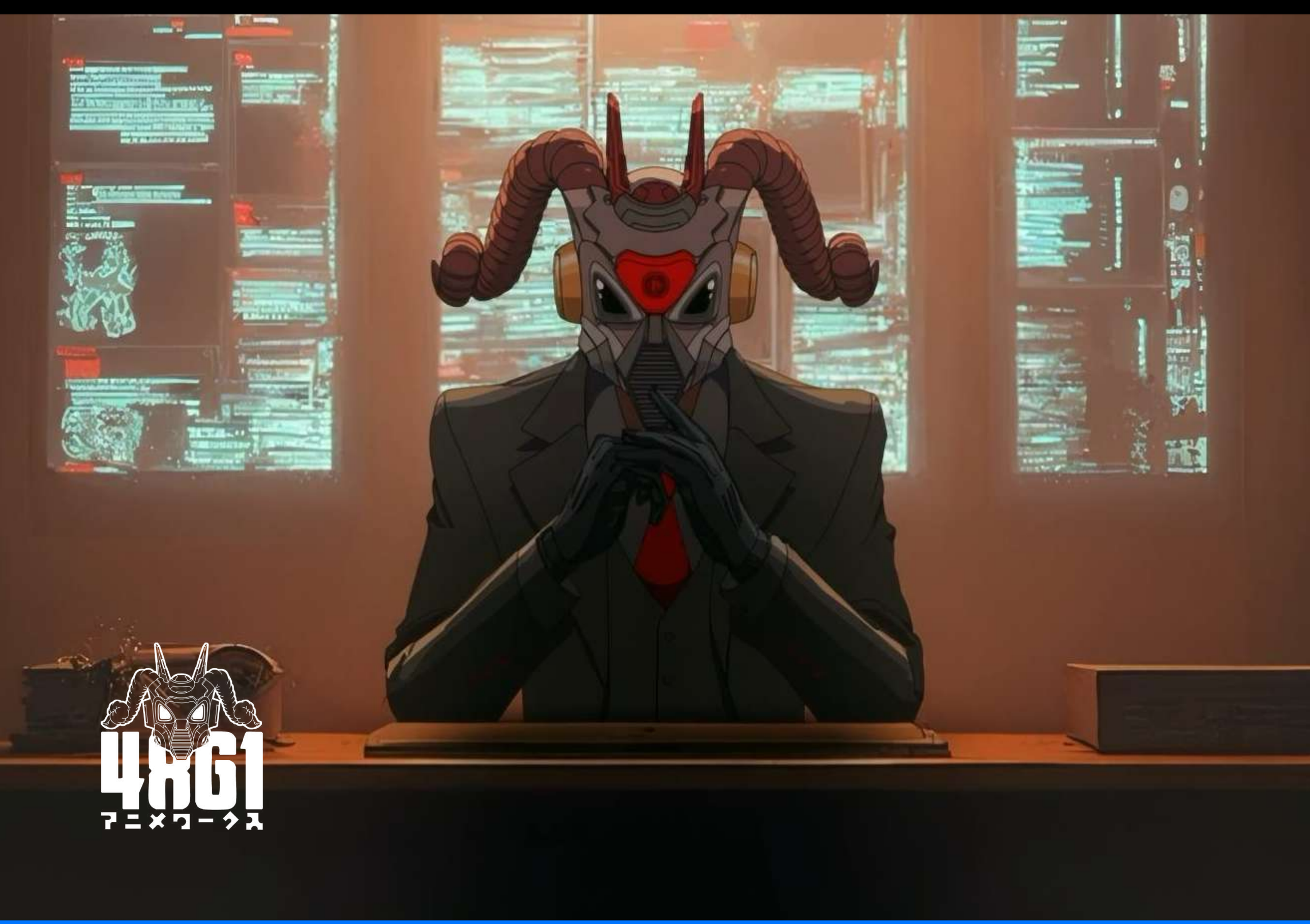
Morphic

DQN

Creating an Anime Feature Series Trailer

DQN

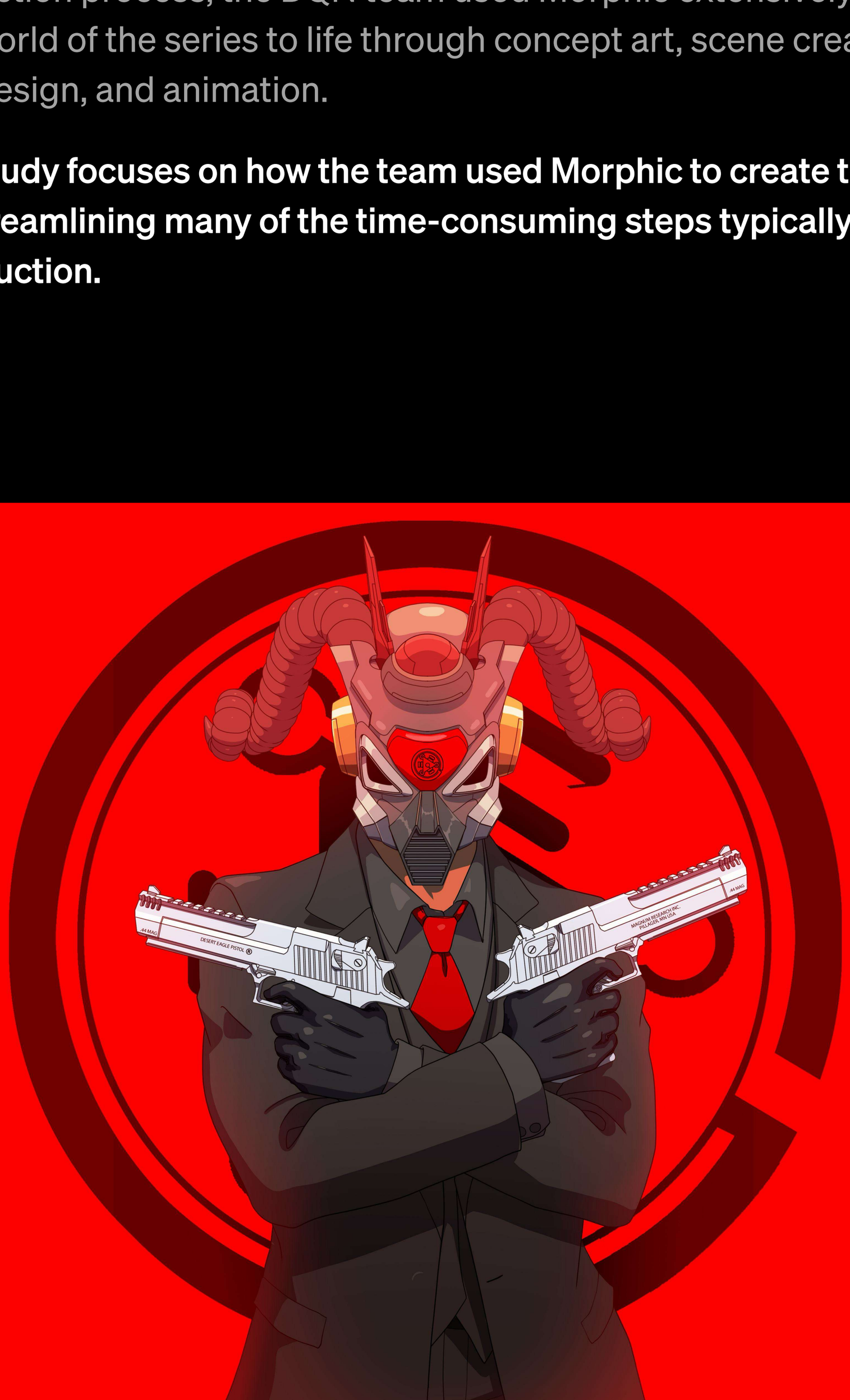
Creator: Kushagra Kushwaha
Format: Anime Feature Series Trailer
Trailer Production Time: 3 Weeks



DQN Introduction

DQN is an upcoming anime feature series, produced by Morphic. During the early production process, the DQN team used Morphic extensively to bring the visual world of the series to life through concept art, scene creation, character design, and animation.

This case study focuses on how the team used Morphic to create the trailer for DQN, streamlining many of the time-consuming steps typically involved in anime production.



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About the Creator: Kushagra Kushwaha

Kushagra is an experienced anime director and visual artist who has worked in the Japanese anime industry for over 7 years. He has worked on over 30 anime and manga titles including:

Vinland Saga
Yu-Gi-Oh! Sevens
Fairy Tail
JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure: Stone Ocean

His deep understanding of anime pipelines, paired with a curiosity to innovate, led him to explore Morphic as a creative partner and producer in accelerating visual production.

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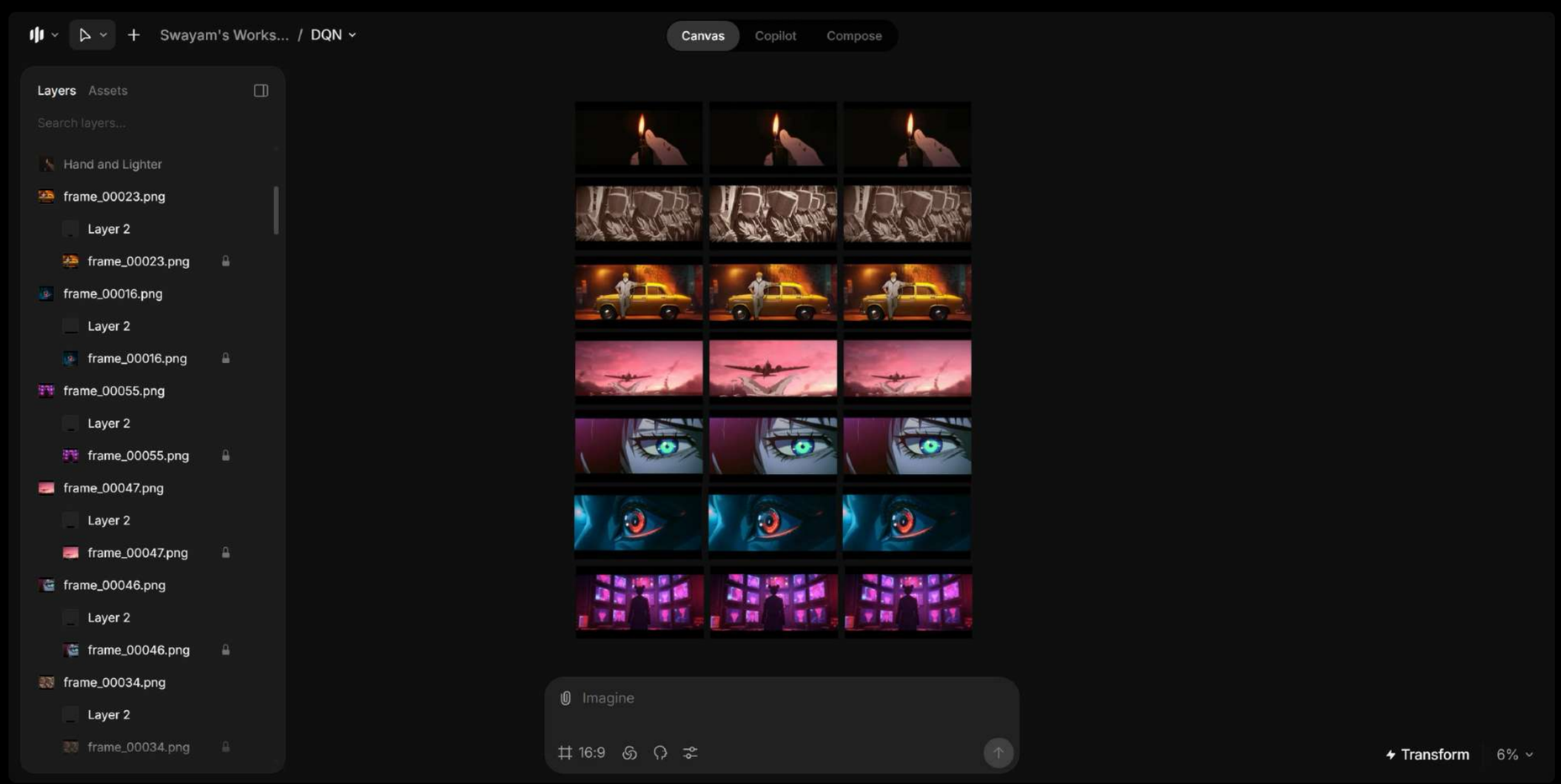
The team used four distinct workflows on Morphic:



1. Style & Character Models

Custom-trained models ensured consistent art style and character design across all scenes.

2. Storyboarding with Prompts

Text-to-image generation allowed fast creation of storyboard frames using style and character models.

3. Sketch to Color

Line drawings were transformed into fully rendered scenes, guided by trained visual styles.

4. Animation

Image-to-video & frames-to-video allowed fast in-between generations and enabled subtle animations and motion for key sequences.

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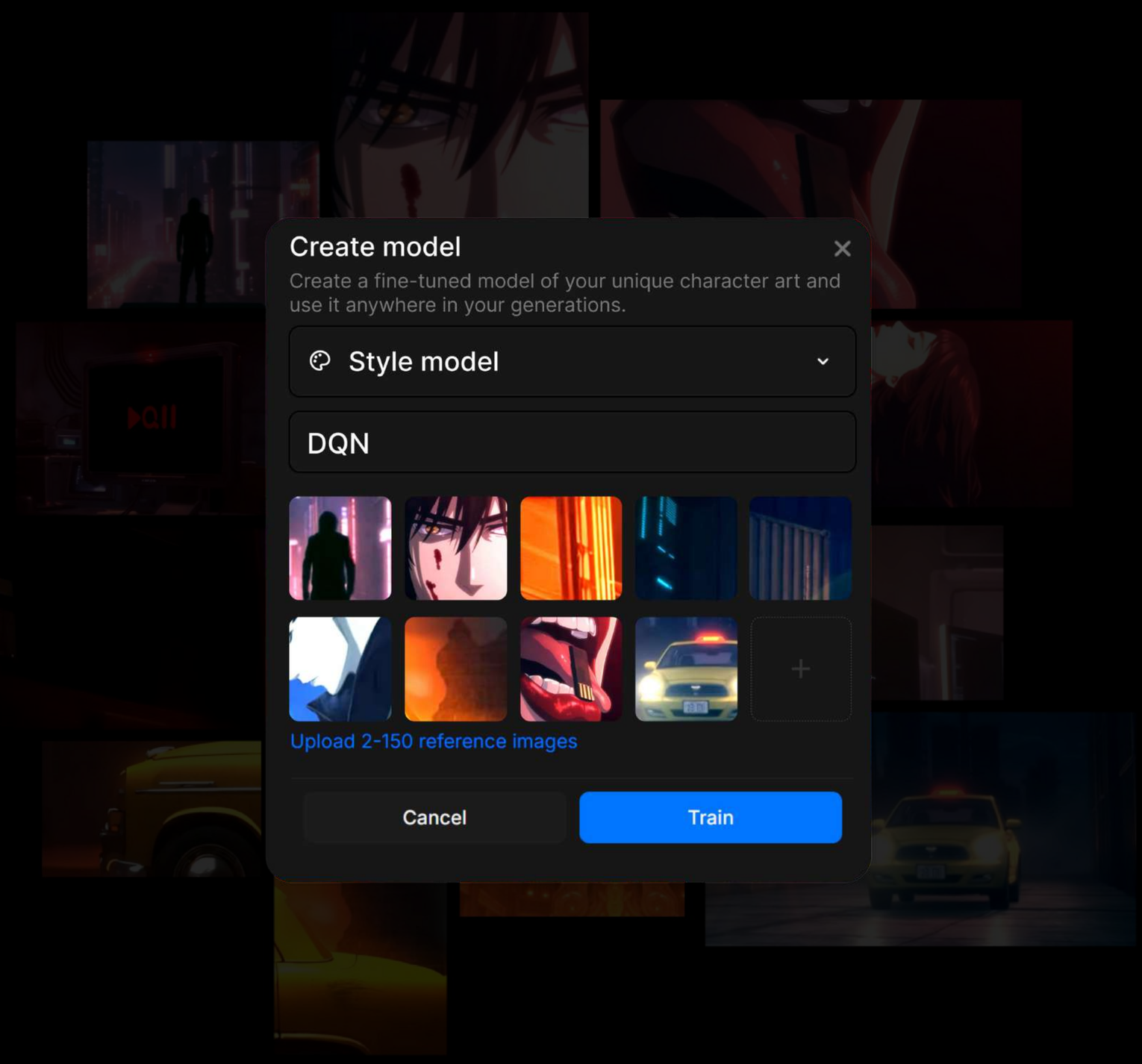
Process Breakdown

1. Training the Style Model

The production team trained a custom DQN-style model to reflect the gritty, high-contrast, cinematic look of the series. This model consisted of being trained on custom-designed and painted illustrations, background designs, and image boards of DQN that Kushagra had prepared beforehand. These assets were used to train the style model. This helped ensure consistency in tone across scenes, even when created by different team members or over multiple sessions.



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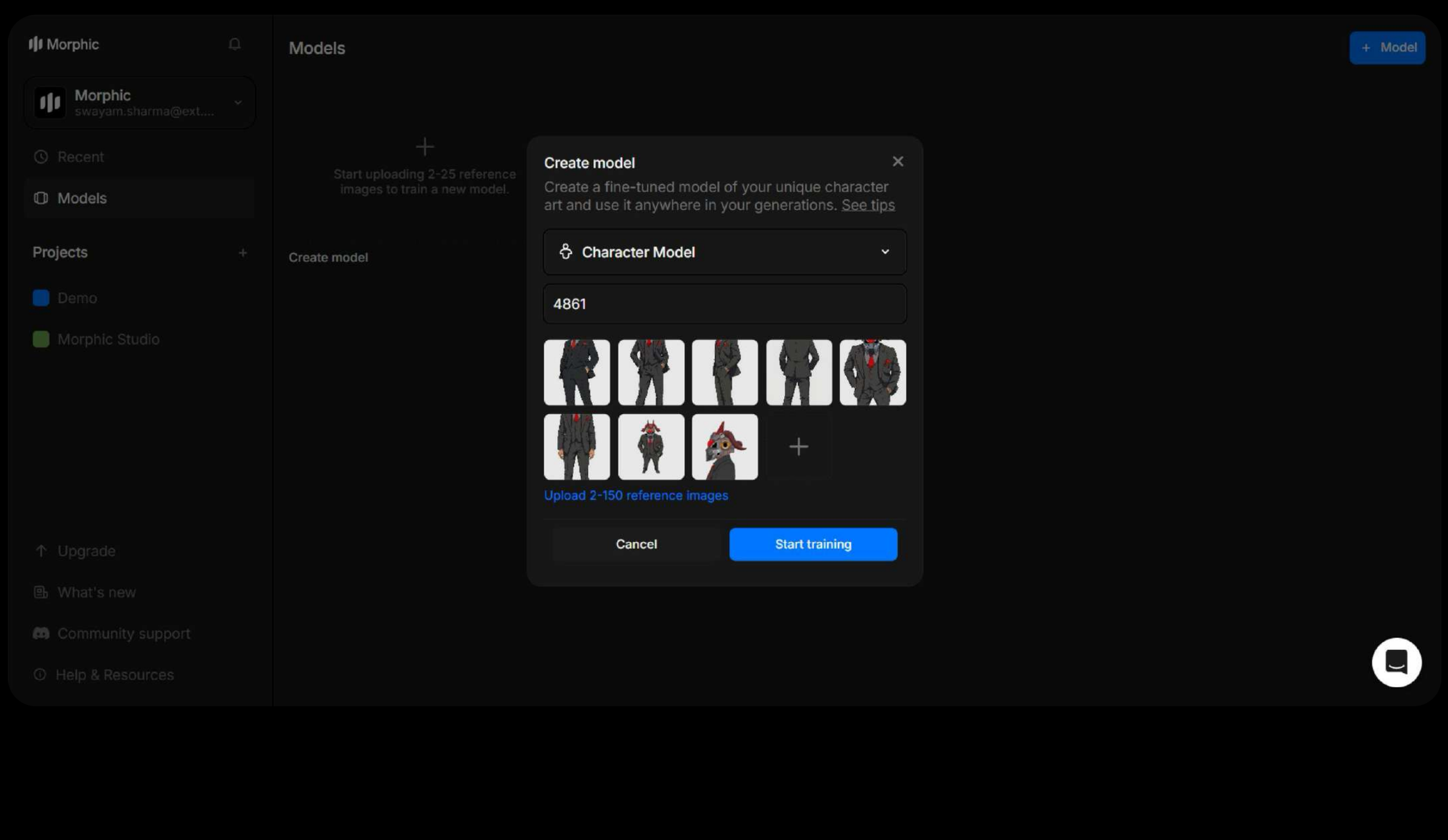
2. Training the Character Model

To ensure visual consistency for recurring characters, Kushagra trained dedicated character models in Morphic. This allows him to lock in each character's appearance across any frame he wanted to create.

Multiple character models were tested and trained during the process, each with distinct attributes and behaviors. Among them, one used in the trailer is - 4861, which stood out as one of the key variants, contributing significantly to the development and evaluation phases.



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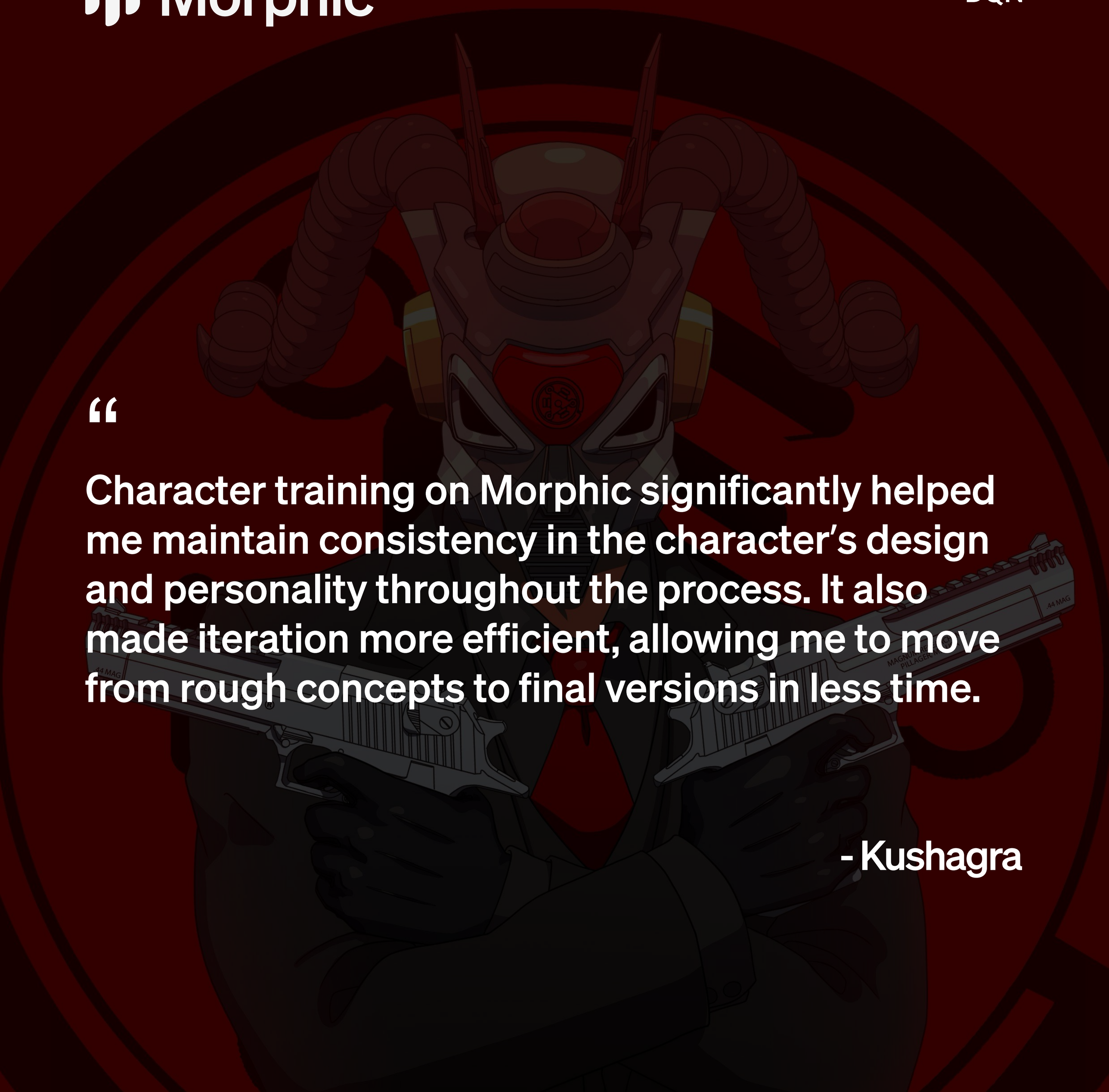

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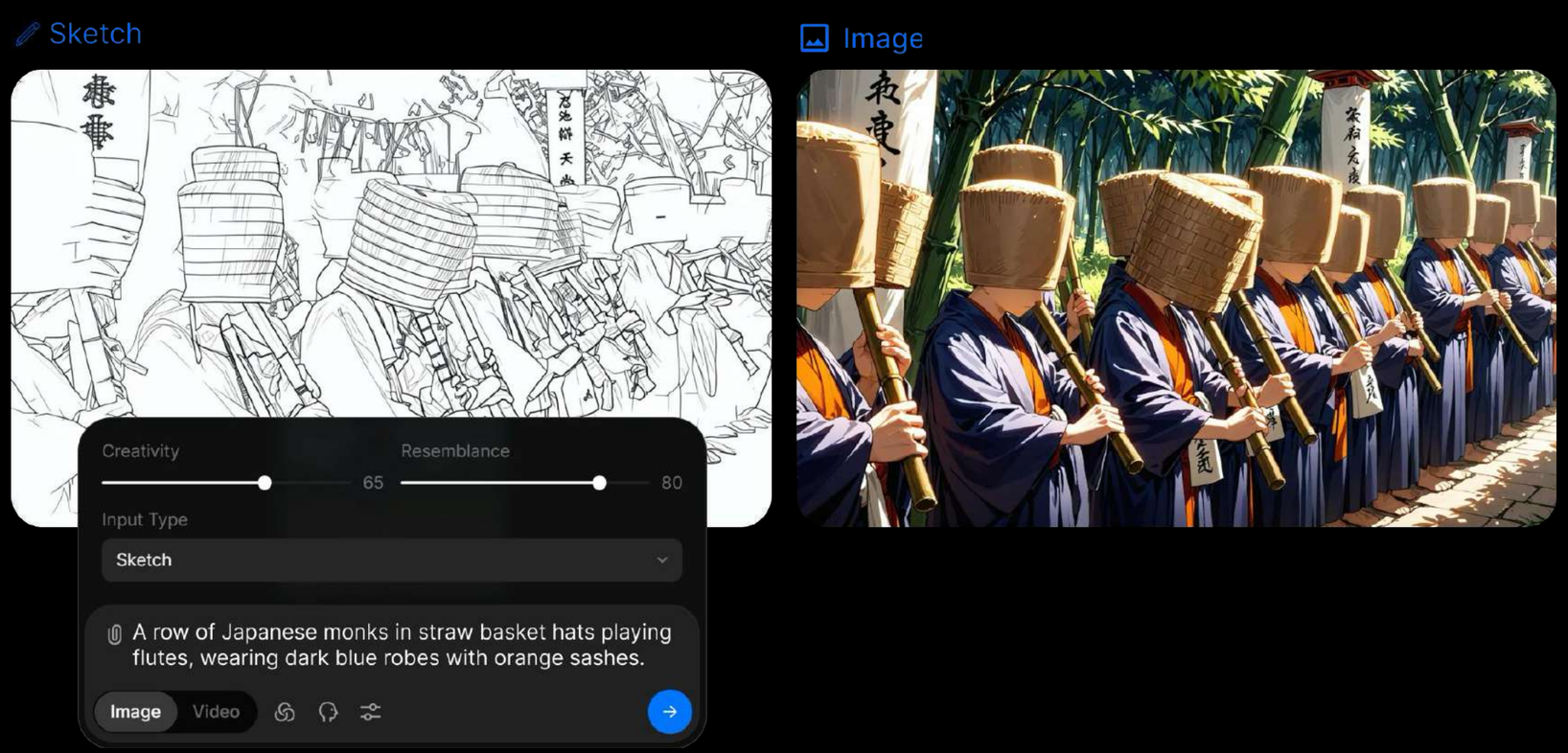
Character training on Morphic significantly helped me maintain consistency in the character’s design and personality throughout the process. It also made iteration more efficient, allowing me to move from rough concepts to final versions in less time.

- Kushagra

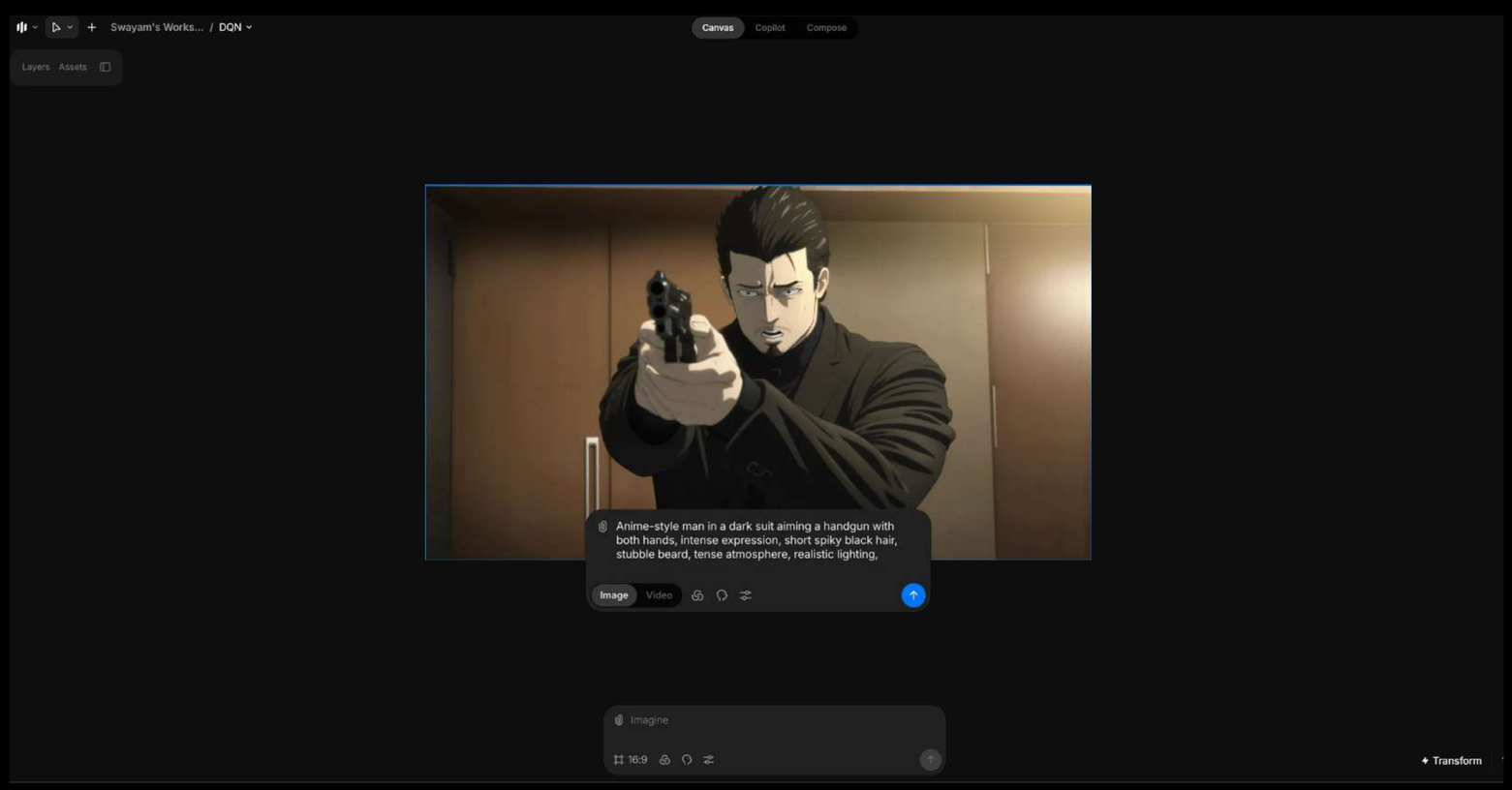
3. Sketch-to-Color Image Generation

Kushagra began some scenes as rough sketches, uploading them to Morphic and using the trained style model to render full-color frames.



4. Scene Creation with Style Model

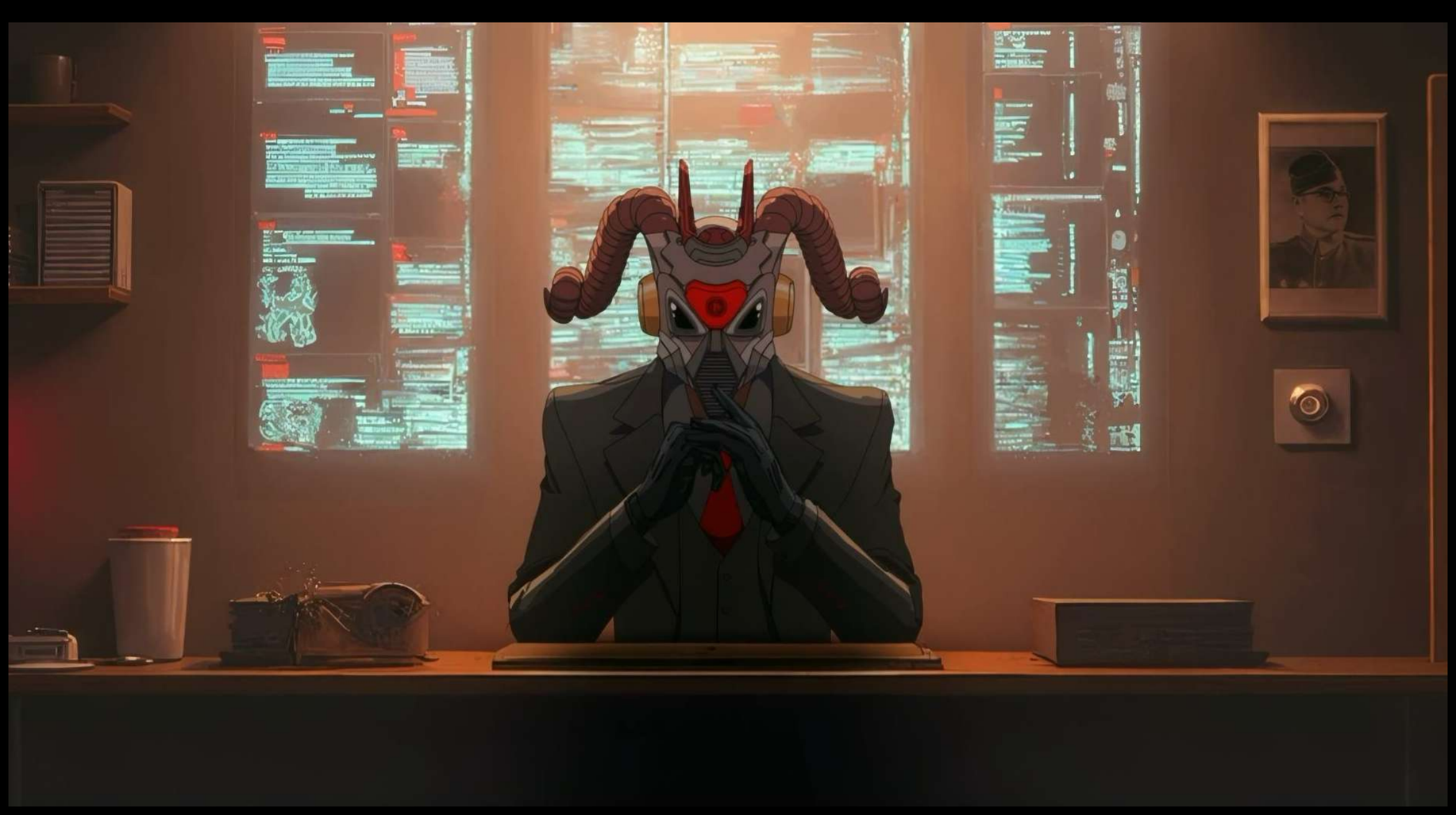
To generate frames for the trailer, Kushagra directly prompted visuals using frame descriptions and applied the DQN style model for coherence. Across all the frames, Kushagra was able to keep his style and the cinematographic feel intact.



5. Creating Character Frames

To generate a frame with a specific character, Kushagra would reference the character model directly in the prompt, followed by a description of the scene. This method allowed him to create character-driven frames while ensuring consistency in the character's design and personality. This eliminated the need to manually redraw the character in every scene.

This process was used to create shots of character 4861, for whom a dedicated model was trained to maintain visual continuity across multiple scenes.



6. Interpolation between Frames

For scenes where Kushagra wanted precise control over motion, he began by defining the keyframes. He then uploaded them to Morphic and used the frame-to-video feature to generate smooth in-betweens in one click, while maintaining both style and composition throughout the sequence.

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It offered the best of both worlds: the sketch gave control over structure and composition, while the AI and style model on Morphic added detail and consistency in the desired aesthetic. This approach sped up the workflow and improved visual coherence.

- Kushagra

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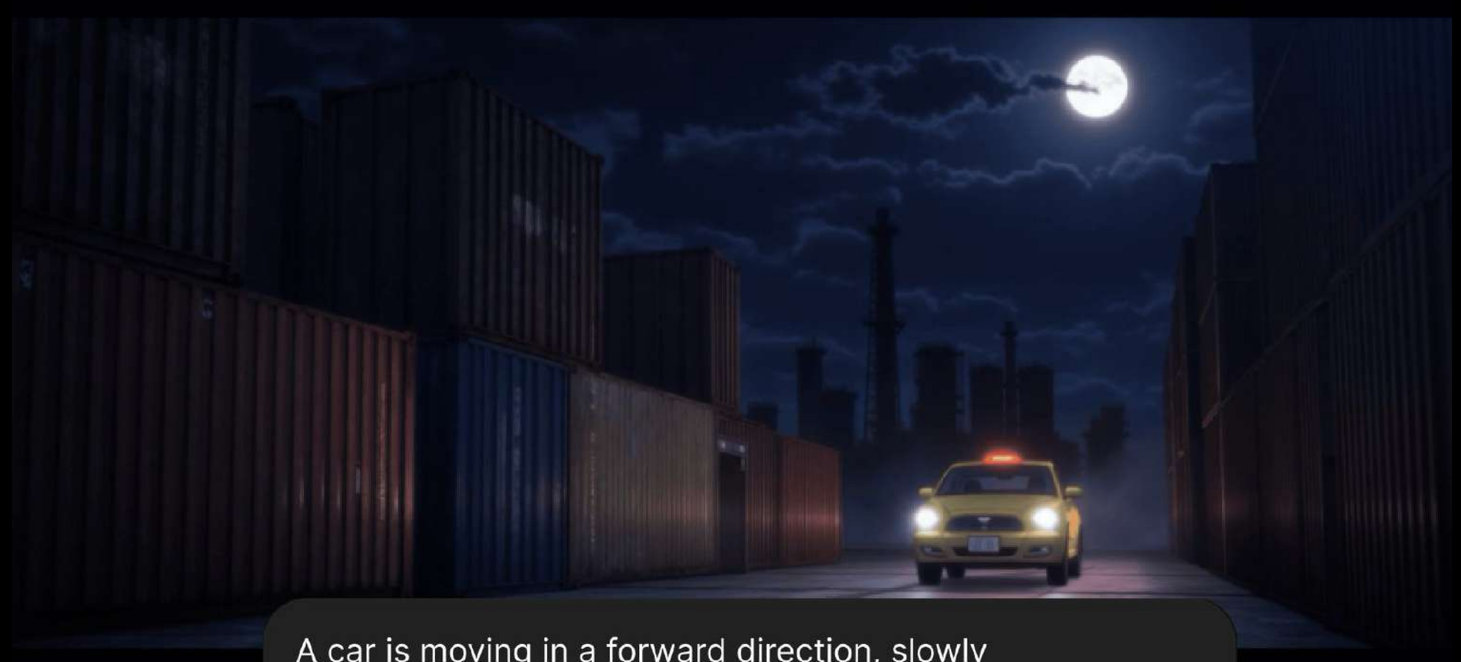
7. Image-to-Video Animation

Several key shots in the trailer were animated using Morphic's Image-to-video feature. Kushagra was able to achieve subtle movements such as, camera pans, zoom, and wind effects, through prompt. This added dynamism to otherwise still frames.

Image



Video

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I prioritized motion in key storytelling moments like actions, transitions, or emotional beats to guide attention and enhance impact.

Even when AI-generated frames were diffused, I manually refined them to maintain clarity and intent.

I also chose the right FPS and framing to support the scene’s pacing and cinematography, ensuring smooth, cinematic motion.

- Kushagra

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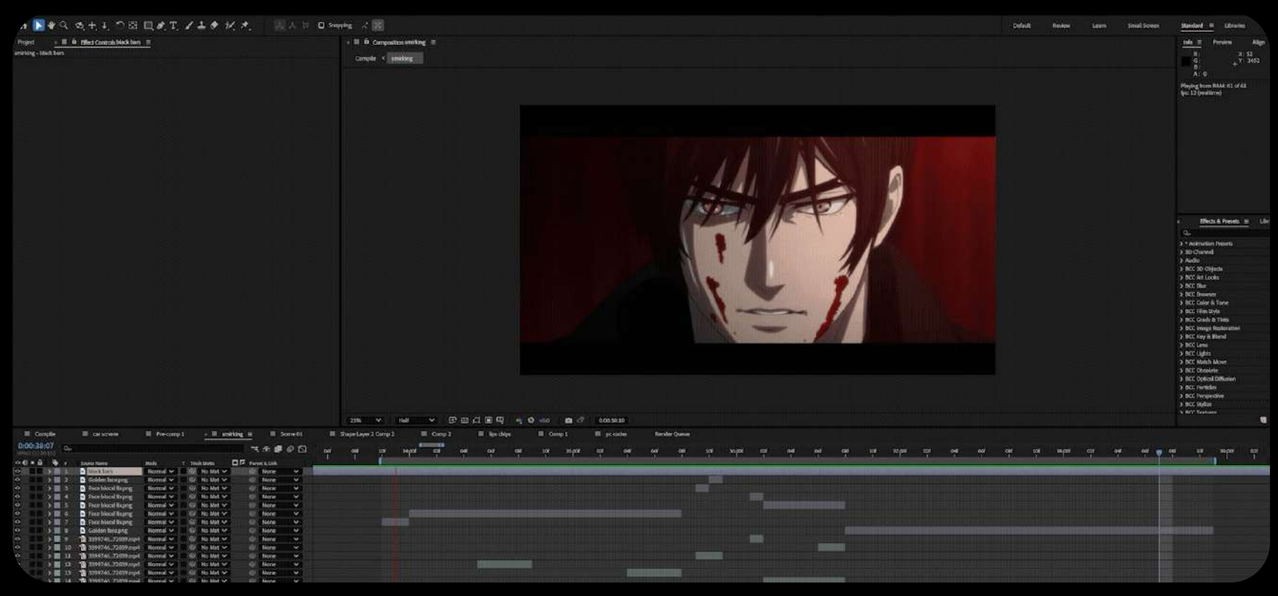
Post-Production Workflow

Kushagra handled most of the production and visual development for the trailer on Morphic, while additional editing, compositing, and color grading were done using external tools. He manually managed the final trailer assembly, pacing, and transitions to polish the overall look.



Tools used for post-production:
After Effects, DaVinci Resolve

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This trailer, which would traditionally take 2–3 months with a small team, was completed in just 3 weeks using Morphic-assisted workflows.

- Kushagra

Scaling Toward the Full Series

One of the biggest advantages of using Morphic is the ability to reuse and refine trained assets throughout the entire production lifecycle.

Kushagra has already developed a custom style model that defines the tone and visual DNA of the series, along with individual character models for the main protagonists. With these in place, he’s able to continue generating scenes, sequences, and trailers using the same core models. This ensures visual consistency across the entire series.

As production moves forward, all newly generated scenes will be recycled to retrain and refine the style model, making it more representative of the evolving world of DQN. More character models will also be trained for recurring characters, allowing the cast to grow while keeping design and personality consistent.

Model Iteration

As new frames are generated during production, Kushagra updates and retrains the models using this evolving dataset, sharpening the visual fidelity and adaptability of both character and style models to better define the series direction.

This turns Morphic and its features into a creative engine that grows with the project.

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Q1. What was your creative workflow like before this project?

“

Before this project, my creative workflow for anime production was quite manual and time-consuming, especially during pre-production and visual development. I usually began with brainstorming and moodboarding, followed by crafting detailed concept art using tools like Photoshop, Procreate, and sometimes Blender for 3D elements. Storyboarding and animatics were developed over several weeks, requiring constant back-and-forth with collaborators to fine-tune the vision. On average, it would take me around 6 to 8 weeks to produce a trailer or visual proof-of-concept, largely due to the iterative nature of the process and the heavy workload involved in rendering and revisions.

- Kushagra

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Q2. How did your workflow change when incorporating Morphic?

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Incorporating Morphic into my workflow made the ideation phase more efficient, especially for building image boards and exploring different values, hues, and environments. It took some adaptation to get used to the interface and find the right parameters for consistent results, but once dialed in, it sped up visual exploration significantly. I would pick a strong concept from the image board, make manual edits for clarity and consistency, and then render it into video. Even when frames came out diffused or morphed, I refined them by hand. Careful attention to FPS and cinematography helped maintain a cohesive and polished final output. Morphic integrated well into my animation workflow, helping speed up certain stages while still requiring creative control.

- Kushagra

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Q3. How did Morphic affect your approach to visual planning and iteration?

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I used Morphic selectively for visual planning, mostly when facing creative roadblocks or when quick iteration was necessary. While it took some trial and error to find the right parameters, Morphic's ability to rapidly generate scene variations was genuinely useful. It allowed me to test different compositions, lighting, and moods without committing hours to each version. That flexibility made it easier to break through creative roadblocks and explore ideas I might not have considered otherwise, ultimately helping me make clearer, more confident visual decisions when needed.

- Kushagra

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Q4. How did you maintain artistic control while using Morphic?

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Maintaining artistic control with Morphic took some adjustment, but with clear prompts and visual references, the results often aligned closely enough with my intent to be useful. While it helped speed up the generation of initial concepts, I still needed to make manual tweaks—especially to composition, color, or expressions—to get the tone just right. These edits were a regular part of the process, not exceptions. Overall, Morphic was a helpful tool when used intentionally, supporting my vision without taking over the creative direction.

- Kushagra

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Q5. What challenges came up during the process?

“

One of the main challenges I faced during the process was generating complex scenes involving dynamic character actions or intricate camera movements, these often required multiple iterations to get right. Morphic occasionally struggled with consistency in character design across frames, which made continuity a bit tricky in more detailed sequences. Additionally, some stylistic nuances or abstract visual ideas were harder to capture directly through Morphic. To work around these limitations, I combined Morphic’s outputs with manual touch-ups and post-processing in tools like Photoshop for images and sometimes used keyframes as a guide for animators to maintain coherence. It pushed me to be more adaptive, blending Morphic generated elements with traditional techniques to achieve the final vision.

- Kushagra

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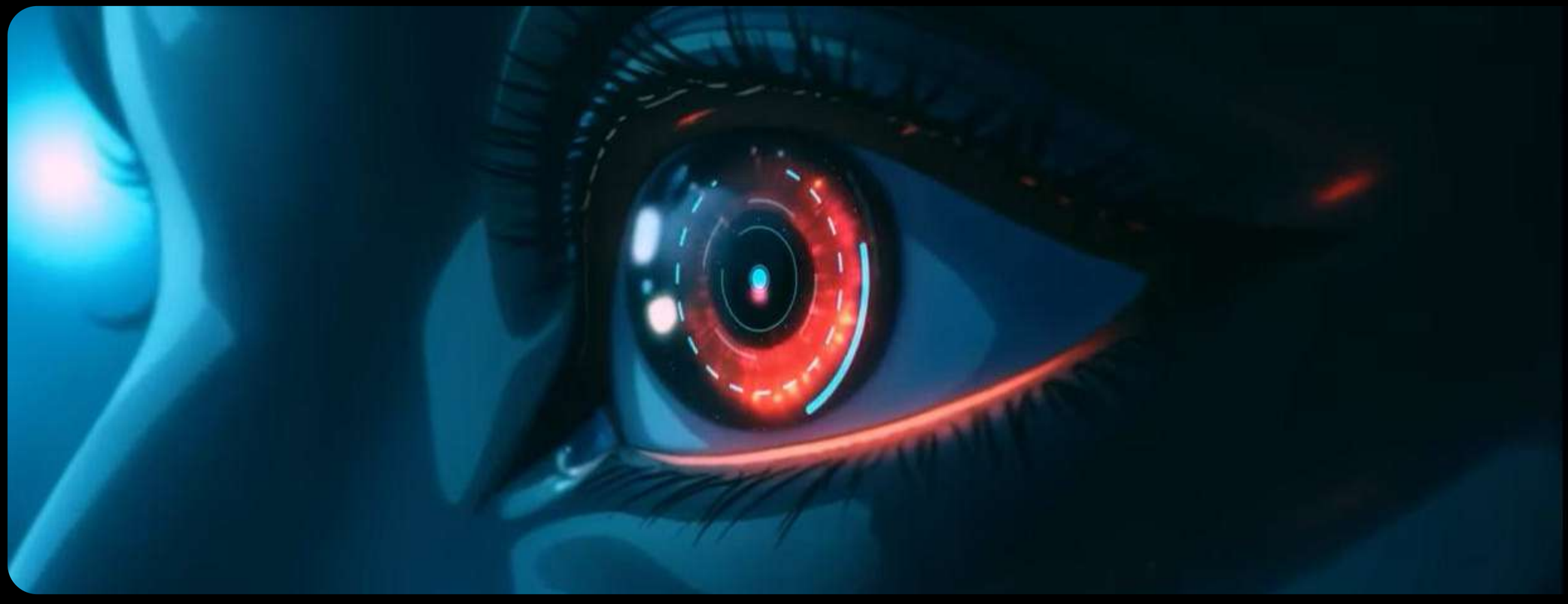
Q6. How did using trained character/style models impact your storytelling?

“

Using style models had a noticeable impact on my storytelling by providing visual consistency and a unified aesthetic across scenes. While I didn’t rely on character models since they often lacked the flexibility I needed, the style models helped ground the visuals and maintain continuity. This let me focus more on pacing, mood, and shot composition without constantly adjusting for look and feel. In some cases, having a clear stylistic direction early on even shaped how I imagined certain scenes, making the process feel more intentional and cinematic.

- Kushagra



Q7. How did you collaborate with Morphic? More as a partner or an assistant?

“

I collaborated with Morphic more as a creative partner than just an assistant it felt like co-creating with a partner that could both execute my ideas and inspire new ones. While I maintained the overall vision and direction, Morphic often generated visuals or compositions that surprised me in a good way, occasionally redirecting my thinking or opening up possibilities I hadn’t considered. It wasn’t just about speeding up execution; it actively contributed to the creative dialogue, helping me refine scenes, experiment more freely, and sometimes even rethink how I approached a moment in the story.

- Kushagra

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Q8. Looking ahead, how do you see Morphic fitting into long-form projects like anime features?

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I see Morphic becoming an integral part of long-form anime projects, especially for early visual development, storyboarding, and even pre-visualization at scale. I definitely see myself continuing with this model-based workflow for full features - it accelerates the creative process without compromising quality or intent. While it works well as a solo or director-level tool for exploration and ideation, I think the real power comes from integrating it into a larger production pipeline, where it can support artists, animators, and directors alike. It creates a common visual language early on, streamlining communication and ensuring consistency throughout the project.

- Kushagra

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Traditional manual workflow production time:

6-8 weeks

Production time with the help of Morphic:

4 weeks

Workflows supported:

Pre-production
Storyboarding
Early Animation

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Workflow Support

Storyboarding with the help of style model training

Creation of consistent character driven scenes using character models

Rapid scene coloring from sketches and prompts

Lightweight image-to-video animation for key trailer sequences

~70% of the scenes and animations in the trailer were made completely using Morphic outputs.

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Outcome (Trailer)

DQN Anime | Official Trailer

Morphic
1.59K subscribers

56K+ views · May 1, 2025

A ghost sends a message. A vault resurfaces. And suddenly, 12 strangers are pulled into a global game that feels designed by something — or someone — who knows them too well.

Click here to watch the trailer of DQN

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DQN Trailer Gallery

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