

UP IN THE CLOUDS

PRESS NOTES:

Up in the Clouds was inspired by the story of Chinese aviatrix Katherine Sui Fun Cheung, who became one of the first Chinese women pilots to earn a license to fly in the United States.

We wanted to create a simple but fun cartoon to depict the story of how she first fell in love with flying while learning to drive a car with her dad next to a dusty airfield in 1921.

The cartoon was originally black and white sketches meant to be used as animatic to depict Katherine's story of falling in love with flying while learning to drive a car with her dad next to a dusty airfield in Los Angeles.

The illustrations were completely hand drawn with 1920s period cars and planes in a cartoon style meets modern anime caricature by student artist Ruby Chen. We then sent the illustrations to student visual effects editor Chris Trinh who animated the illustrations with motion and movement.

Sound design and sound editing were done by student filmmaker David Cu who used 1920s Jazz music samples as comedic music cues in the short film.

We brought in two voice actors, Raymond Ma ("The Muppets," "Horrible Bosses 2," and "Lethal Weapon 4") as the father and Katherine Park ("Red Dress") as the daughter to record dialogue. The audio was recorded at Voice Traxx West Studio in Los Angeles.

To me this was very much an international student project of sorts because Chris Trinh is a high school student living and working remotely via internet from Canada and Ruby Chen is an art student from Taiwan who studied in the United States.

Hopefully, audiences will find the mix of animated caricatures, comedic music cues and sound effects, refreshingly fun and amusing.

Our goal was to create something simple, whimsical and fun that both adults and children could enjoy watching but also learn something about Katherine's story.