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ATCM 4319 • Section 001 • Fall 2019

Animation: Origins and Techniques

Meets Weekly on **Wednesdays**
From 4 pm to 6:45 pm
in **SLC room 2.303**
(Science Learning Center Building)

Course Description

Animation is an expanding field, becoming ubiquitous through the use of computer technology. This course presents and examines this field in many aspects: Introducing and investigating the historical, cultural, and technical developments of animation through time, from its origins until contemporary times. In each class, pioneering commercial and experimental animations and their artists are showcased, studied, and analyzed exposing the students to a broad, worldwide range of animated techniques through lively lectures.

Learning Objectives

The objective of this course is to enable students to expand their knowledge of the medium and learn how to identify different techniques, periods, contexts, styles, and authors of animation.

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and recognize animated films by their technique, style, and era, with the awareness that they belong to a major and independent historical section of visual arts and media;
- Expand their knowledge of animation, being exposed to different creative references and getting to know the contexts that inspired artists and animators in the creation of their films;
- Enrich their vocabulary of terms related to techniques and processes of animation;
- Understand the basic formal elements to critique an animated film and engage in thought-provoking discussions about animation.

Textbook and Required Texts

Furniss, Maureen. *A New History of Animation*. New York, New York: Thames & Hudson, 2016.

The textbook is required and weekly quizzes are based on it.

Any additional readings will be assigned and made available online on e-Learning. Also check the list of other suggested readings available in this syllabus as reference on specific topics.

Required Material

One sketchbook exclusive for this course.

Smartphone or computer (to access quizzes and surveys done in class)

How to be Successful in this Class

Discipline and communication are the keys to succeed in this class. Participate in classes and keep the professor informed on your development in the class.

Grading

A list of assigned readings and materials is listed in this syllabus. Supplemental materials may be provided or posted electronically on eLearning. Advance preparation and enthusiastic participation is an important part of the learning experience and critical to in-class discussions.

Percent	Grading Scale					
20% Attendance	A+	97-100	4.0	C+	77-79	2.3
20% Sketchbook	A	93-96	4.0	C	73-76	2.0
15% Quizzes	A-	90-92	3.7	C-	70-72	1.7
15% Short Analysis	B+	87-89	3.3	D+	67-69	1.3
15% Peer Review	B	83-86	3.0	D	63-66	1.0
20% Final Paper	B-	80-83	2.7	D-	60-62	0.7

Late Work

Late work is not accepted. It is your responsibility to correspond via UT Dallas email any absences and issues that might occur. Private email accounts outside of UT Dallas email accounts cannot be used for course communication due to FERPA regulation.

Attendance

Attendance is 20% of your total grade and is necessary to successfully complete this course. Communication is key in this course, so remember to let the professor know in case of any absences and issues that might occur.

e-Learning Access

UTD NetID account needed to login to the course through UTD eLearning: <http://elearning.utdallas.edu>

The submission of all assignments is done through e-Learning.

'Getting Started' with eLearning information can be found here: <http://www.utdallas.edu/elearning/students/getting-started.html>

Academic Integrity

It is expected that any material that you submit for a grade will be your original work. Please familiarize yourself with UTD's policy on plagiarism and be aware that such behavior has serious consequences and will not be tolerated:

<https://libguides.utdallas.edu/c.php?g=217695&p=1438026>

Policies and Procedures

Class attendance is expected of all students, more than one unexcused (1) absence will negatively affect your grade. More than three (3) absences will result in a failing grade. Lateness or leaving early, without prior communication to the professor will mark you as absent for that class. Punctuality is important and classes start on time.

Participation is a vital part of the learning process. Please try to be as fully present and engaged as possible (no cell phones, earbuds, or Internet during class, except when requested for a specific activity). Participation includes answering questions, engaging in class discussions, and demonstrating a professional and positive attitude.

To expedite learning process for all, be ready with all assignments

prior to days due. Late work will only be accepted under major extenuating circumstances. In fairness to other students, no make-up quiz will be given and no late assignments will be accepted without prior approval. Late assignments are highly discouraged. Even with approved extension, late submittals can be fined up to 10% per day past a deadline. To request an extension, email instructor with the request date before the deadline. You must keep all correspondence.

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Visit go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Accommodations

The University makes reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. If you're eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, I'll need *written* notification from the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA). Feel free to contact me about it, in case you wish to, and allow one week advance notice for the accommodations to be put in place. The Office of Student AccessAbility can be contacted directly for a confidential discussion at utdallas.edu/studentaccess

Assignment Details

Sketchbook: You should have a sketchbook exclusive for this course. On it, you will write your notes, observations, and references that inspired you in each class. You can even illustrate your notes to reinforce your written comments. Examples are available on e-Learning. After every three-weeks of classes, you will submit on e-learning a photo taken of your notes for the past three classes. Your notes should be done by hand, not typed. Writing by hand is associated with improved critical thinking, creativity, and enhanced problem-solving skills. You can use tablets or do them directly on your sketchbook. At the end of the course, you will have a comprehensive set of notes that will serve as references for future applications in the field of animation. The professor may request to see your sketchbook at any given time throughout the semester.

Quizzes: Every week, there will be a chapter reading associated with the content of next week's class. All readings should be completed BEFORE the class session for which they are assigned and quizzes taken also BEFORE that class. You have a week to do the assigned readings and take the quizzes. All assignments should be submitted on e-Learning.

Double assignment - Short Analysis and Peer Review: You will choose an animated short to do a written critical analysis in 800 words (no more, no less). You should take into consideration its historical and cultural contexts, describe a sequence and analyze it, examining its most relevant formal aspects and its importance and relevancy for animation. All assignments should be submitted on e-Learning.

Peer Review: You will review the short analysis done by your peer, (and have your analysis reviewed by another of your peers) offering constructive feedback on how they can improve their analysis to achieve the goals of the assignment. You will receive a rubric to assess it, and reviewers will be randomly assigned. All assignments should be submitted on e-Learning. **IMPORTANT:** A grade will only be

completed if you submit your analysis on time AND also review someone's analysis, submitting your review on time. There will be two separated deadlines for each, but a grade is only received if you do both.

Group assignment – Timeline: In groups of maximum five students you will be assigned a period in history of animation and create an online timeline using the free tool *Timeline JS*, *StoryMap* or *Storyline* (<https://knightlab.northwestern.edu/projects/#storytelling>) to illustrate the key moments in relation to that timeframe. Presentation schedules will be announced in class and made available on e-Learning. All assignments should be submitted on e-Learning.

Final Paper: As your final paper, you will revise the short analysis done previously, taking into consideration the critiques received during the peer-review process. Papers should demonstrate considerable improvements from the original ones. All assignments should be submitted on e-Learning.

Other Suggested Readings

Bendazzi, Giannalberto. *Animation: a World History*. Volumes 1, 2 and 3. Burlington, MA: Focal Press, 2017.

Cholodenko, Alan. "The Illusion of Life 2: More Essays on Animation." Sydney] N.S.W, Australia: Power Publications, 2007.

Cholodenko, Alan. *The Illusion of Life: Essays on Animation*. Sydney: Power Publications in association with the Australian Film Commission, 1991.

Crafton, Donald. *Before Mickey: the Animated Film, 1898-1928*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1982.

Dobson, Nichola. *Norman McLaren: Between the Frames*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

Harryhausen, Ray., and Dalton, Tony. *The Art of Ray Harryhausen* . New York: Billboard Books, 2006.

Lasseter, John & Daly, Steve. *Toy story: the art and making of an animated film*. New York: Hyperion, 1996.

Lent, John A. *Animation in Asia and the Pacific*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.

Lord, Peter, and Sibley, Brian. *Creating 3-D Animation: the Aardman Book of Filmmaking*. Rev. ed. New York: H.N. Abrams, 2004.

Maltin, Leonard. *Of Mice and Magic: a History of American Animated Cartoons*. Rev. ed. New York: New American Library, 1987.

Mannoni, Laurent., and Crangle, Richard. *The Great Art of Light and Shadow: Archaeology of the Cinema*. Exeter, Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2000.

Pierson, Michele. *Special Effects: Still in Search of Wonder*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

Place-Verghnes, Floriane. *Tex Avery: a Unique Legacy, 1942-1955*. Eastleigh, UK: John Libbey Pub., 2006.

Rickitt, Richard. *Special Effects: the History and Technique*. New York,

NY: Billboard Books, 2007.

Russett, Robert., and Starr, Cecile. *Experimental Animation: an Illustrated Anthology*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1976.

Shull, Michael S., and Wilt, David E. *Doing Their Bit: Wartime American Animated Short Films, 1939-1945*. 2nd ed. Jefferson, N.C: McFarland, 2004.

Smith, Susan. *Toy Story: How Pixar Reinvented the Animated Feature*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, 2018.

Smith, Vicky, and Hamlyn, Nicky. *Experimental and Expanded Animation: New Perspectives and Practices*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Thomas, Frank, and Johnston, Ollie. *Disney Animation: the Illusion of Life* . 1st ed. New York: Abbeville Press, 1981.

Comet Creed

The UT Dallas student body voted to accept this creed in 2014.

It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Week-by-Week

Below is the order of topics that we will cover throughout the semester. Specific readings are assigned for each class; details are also available on e-Learning. The students should read the assigned texts BEFORE coming to class and take the quiz related to that reading BEFORE class starts. The topics may change according to the development of the course, at the discretion of the instructor. Always check with the professor and on elearning.utdallas.edu for current updates:

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Aug 21

Lecture: Defining Animation / Origins of Animation

Considerations on the transforming definition of the term “animation.” Origins of animation from cave paintings through magic lanterns and optical toys. Role of technology, scientific discoveries and entertainment in uncovering a potential new medium. The inventions of Émile Reynaud and the advent of cinema.

Syllabus Overview: How to be Successful in this Course, Responsibilities, Projects, Assignments and Quizzes.

Read BEFORE next class: Chapters 1 and 3 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss

Take the Quiz: on Chapters 1 and 3 on e-Learning BEFORE next class

Week 2	<p>Aug 28</p> <p>Lecture: Animation Pioneers</p> <p>Trick film and pioneers of animation: James Stuart Blackton, Émile Cohl and Winsor McCay. The silent era of animation and the birth of a new approach to artistic expression, that established the foundations of the animation industry.</p> <p>Library Resources Introduction</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 5 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 5 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 3	<p>Sept 4</p> <p>Lecture: Animation as Modern Art</p> <p>Abstractions and movement at the core of artistic investigations that explored animation during the 1920s and 1930s. Lotte Reiniger, Walther Ruttmann, Hans Richter, Oskar Fischinger and Len Lye are some of the artists who pioneered animation and expanded our senses. Their films proposed new ways to perceive life and suggested alternative strategies for visual thinking, reflecting modern artistic movements of the period.</p> <p>*Submit Sketchbook pages for classes 1, 2, and 3 on e-Learning. *Groups divided and themes assigned in class</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 6 and 7 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 6 and 7 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 4	<p>Sept 11</p> <p>Lecture: Walt Disney and Max Fleischer: The American Cartoon</p> <p>With immense cultural influence and market domination, the American cartoon has reigned supreme over the animation industry. This lecture investigates the roles of Walt Disney and Max Fleischer in establishing an industry standard and unique influential styles still referenced today.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 8 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 8 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>

Week 5	Sept 18	<p>Lecture: Comedy in Animation: MGM, Warner Bros. and Tex Avery Humor comes in many forms and its variations are pervasive throughout the history of American animation. Different studios, unable to compete with Disney will develop their own unique style. Few animators were so visually inventive and polemic as Tex Avery. His films broke the limits established by classical animation of the 1930's. Made for adult audiences, his films became a mirror that revealed hidden aspects of human behavior.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 9 from "A New History of Animation" by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 9 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 6	Sept 25	<p>Lecture: Animation Goes to War Panorama of the USA, UK and USSR (Allies) vs. German and Japanese (Axis) cartoons. Warner Bros. and Disney productions during WWII served as war propaganda to inform and update the public, but also to educate the troops.</p> <p>*Submit Sketchbook pages for classes 4, 5, and 6 on e-Learning.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 12 from "A New History of Animation" by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 12 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 7	Oct 2	<p>Lecture: UPA One of the most seminal production companies during the 1950's, UPA, produced a filmography that established a new era for animation, influencing many other studios such as the National Film Board of Canada, Zagreb, Soyuzmultfilm, among others. UPA's animations propose a new aesthetic, reflecting the shift in American design of the period.</p> <p>*Submission on eLearning: Short Analysis</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 10 from "A New History of Animation" by Maureen Furniss and Chapter 5 from "Experimental Animation" by Robert Russet and Cecile Starr (link for Chapter available on e-Learning)</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 10 (Furniss) and Chapter 5 (Russet/Starr) on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>

Week 8	Oct 9	<p>Lecture: Norman McLaren and the National Film Board of Canada The process, research, and work of animator Norman McLaren will be presented. His films represent an important new approach to the dialog between art, experiment, and technology. Under McLaren’s vision the Animation Department at the National Film Board of Canada will flourish, using animated films to present multicultural issues to the public. Animators from all over the world are invited to create animations that develop humanistic themes, from different cultures and perspectives.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 17 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 17 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 9	Oct 16	<p>Lecture: Eastern European Animation Low budget production. New approaches to sound. Strategies for narrative synthesis and absence of dialogue. Searching for an international language while working with limited resources. Censorship restrictions and political changes are challenges faced by artists from the Eastern Bloc.</p> <p>*Submit Sketchbook pages for classes 7, 8, and 9 on e-Learning.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 11 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 11 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 10	Oct 23	<p>Lecture: Stop-Motion Animation The development of stop-motion techniques and expressive contemporary productions expanded the possibilities for physical 3D animation. George Pal, Willis O’Brien, Ray Harryhausen, Aleksandr Ptushko, Jiri Trnka, Hermina Tyrlova, Karel Zeman established the main strategies for producing stop-motion animation.</p> <p>*Submission of Peer Review Critique on e-Learning</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 22 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 22 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>

Week 11	<p>Oct 30</p> <p>Lecture: Asian Animation From classical Japanese animation to Anime. Ghibli Studio: Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata. China and the Shanghai Animation Film Studio. Te Wei: master of water ink animation.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 21 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 21 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 12	<p>Nov 6</p> <p>Lecture: Computer Generated Animation The relationship between animated films and digital technology will be further explored in this class. Computer Generated Animation can be considered an important resource for conceiving a new aesthetics that has been now influencing cinema, presenting new possibilities for artistic expression.</p> <p>*Submit Sketchbook pages for classes 10, 11, and 12 on e-Learning.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 23 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 23 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 13	<p>Nov 13</p> <p>Lecture: Panorama of World Animation The establishment of national industries and the need to express cultural identities through animation. The role of Festivals in reinforcing and popularize such expressions. Showcase of worldwide animations.</p> <p>*Group submission on e-Learning: Timeline/Storytelling</p> <p>TA’s lecture</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 18 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 18 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>
Week 14	<p>Nov 20</p> <p>Lecture: Authorship in Animation Creator-driven animation as alternatives to industry productions. Showcase of different authors, experimental processes and techniques, and growth of female productions. Animation can become a global language that respects diversity and transdisciplinarity.</p> <p>Read BEFORE next class: Chapter 24 from “A New History of Animation” by Maureen Furniss</p> <p>Take the Quiz: on Chapter 24 on e-Learning BEFORE next class</p>

FALL BREAK NOV 25 to 29

Week 15	<p>Dec 4</p> <p>Lecture: New Possibilities of Animation</p> <p>Animation can transcend mainstream entertainment to imagine and propose a new world. Digital technology opened up new variations and possibilities for using animation in performances, installations, shows, projection mapping, VR and many other forms.</p> <p>*Submit Sketchbook pages for classes 13, 14, and 15 on e-Learning.</p> <p>*Submission of Final Paper on e-Learning</p>
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