

## Panel A3

Sala delle Colonne 2

### Art and Technology in Digital Animation

#### Corrie Francis Parks

#### Peeling Back the Painted Onion: How Digital Workflow Changed the Paint-on-glass Aesthetic



This presentation offers a comparative study of past and present works by paint-on-glass animators, highlighting the distinct evolution of aesthetics due to the adoption of digital assists. The recent availability of frame-capture programs, with live video feeds, onion skin, and immediate playback, has created an environment of mitigated risk. For the paint-on-glass animator, the ability to reference previously created footage, whether it be live-action, 3D animation, or hand-drawn templates, allows precise control over movement patterns created with a largely uncontrollable material - wet-paint. Animators have readily adopted these benefits, and with them a new understanding of painted movement emerges.

Once captured, the digital frame becomes an additional experimental playground for stopframe animators, offering the opportunity to expand the historical aesthetic of paint-on-glass. Grounded in techniques established by Witold Giersz, Caroline Leaf and Alexander Petrov, contemporary animators now seek a balance between security, efficiency, and spontaneity. An analysis of their work shows how technology has affected visual complexity and spatial accuracy: compositing replaces the multiplane, 3D cameras replace the drawn camera movement, animation even becomes live performance. Examining the technical approaches employed by these artists, we see they are far from risk-adverse, but have replaced the old risks with new aesthetic challenges, allowing the elements of spontaneity and accidental discovery inherent in paint-on-glass animation to be applied in a new context.

#### Biography

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Corrie Francis Parks animates sand, paint and other unusual materials. Working with one hand under the camera and the other on the computer keyboard, her animation maintains an organic connection to natural materials and traditional production methods while fully integrating digital technology. She studied animation at Dartmouth College and received her MFA from University of Southern California. Now an Assistant Professor of Animation at University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Parks continues to research animation from a practitioner's perspective. Her newly published book, *Fluid Frames: Experimental Animation with Sand, Clay, Paint and Pixels* (Focal Press, 2016) explores the tactile nature of moving malleable materials directly under the camera, bringing together

traditional and digital workflow through interviews with contemporary animators and workshop-style exercises.

Parks' award-winning animated shorts have screened at Annecy, Hiroshima, Ottawa and Zagreb and at major festivals on every continent except Antarctica. She looks forward to the day when she can count penguins among her biggest fans.