

Panel B4

Sala Emiciclo

National Experiences in Animation II

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Moving Pinocchio from paper to screen. Illustration, animation and prototypal storyboarding in the Italian cultural industry



At the beginning of 1900 *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi was already belonging to the imaginarium of Italian visual culture. Film productions were also involved in this process that began in the silent era and went on until the crucial moment when the rights of the novel were caught by Walt Disney for his own production (1940). After that date there was a dramatic iconographic and cultural change and the image of the puppet moved from exclusively Italian to global. *The Adventures of Pinocchio* has been published for the very first time in 1883 and it has been translated to other media since its release, marking the starting point of the Italian cultural industry (Colombo 1998). Since that moment even film productions tried to adapt the Collodi's novel.

The paper intends to investigate the relationship between one of the first visual interpretations of Pinocchio, brought by Attilio Mussino for 1911 edition published by Bemporad in Florence, and the first efforts to adapt Collodi's novel to the big screen. That would demonstrate the primary influence of the 1911 edition over the first adaptation of Pinocchio. Through the analysis of the mode of production in both earlier film and publishing industries, I will try to prove how the interdisciplinary exchange, from illustration to live-action and animation films, has prefigured a case of primitive use of the process of storyboarding. At the beginning of twentieth century there were many examples of connection between illustration, comic strips, and films, that produced, not only in Italy, some interesting experiments in literature adaptation to screen. In this period, storyboarding was still not formally structured in the production process, that is why we talked about a "pre-history of storyboarding" (Pallant, Price 2015). However, it is possible to find a relationship between the drawings and the sequences in films where the image of Pinocchio was built starting by the 1911 edition. In the same year, the live action film directed by Giulio Antamoro (1911), one of the first long feature of Italian cinema, was an early effort to translate Mussino's illustrations to another medium, followed by the version of Umberto Spano and Raoul Verdini, an unfinished project developed in 1935-36, that had the ambition to become the first national animation feature. In both cases the influences of illustration and comics in "continuity style" (Katz 1991) can be underlined through the analysis of drawings, shots, survived sequences of the productions, and preserved in specific archival sites. The resulting images of Pinocchio, that maintain the principal characterization drawn by Mussino, confirm the most recognizable reference that both versions have in common. Basically, this model of visualization represents a sort of earlier use of storyboarding technique, that starting to involve, even in Italy, the mode of productions of live actions films, as well as the animation ones. The fragmented Italian film landscape induced the failure of those adaptations of Pinocchio and didn't allow the birth of a proper cultural industry to be able to support similar kind of productions. Nevertheless, in the American system, where practices like storyboarding were involved in the pre-production process since the end of twenties of the last century, the puppet created by Collodi met a cultural background more receptive and capable to build a new image of the

puppet, totally different from the above, but eventually destined to hug the worldwide audiences.

Biography

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Nicola Stefani, PhD student at the University of Florence, is studying the forms of display of film and television production, both Italian and international, through an analysis of working documents in a reconstruction prospect of the film process, with particular care on archival research. He achieved the master degree with a thesis about «The Evolution of Fellini's Graphics, from "Marc'Aurelio" to "The White Sheik" (1939-1952)». Currently his research is focusing on the rise of modes of production in Italy, through the analysis of cultural context. During the doctorate he's developing a thesis from title; "The Road to Italian Storyboarding: Illustration, Comics, Films and Culture from Florentine Publishing Industry of Early 1900 to Post World War II Cinema". Also interested to emerging media convergent scenarios, including the impact of new digital technologies on participatory cultures. He collaborates with various magazines in film and media studies is editor of "Drammaturgia", the journal of Sagas (History, Archaeology, Geography, Art and Entertainment) department, University of Florence.