

Panel D1

Auditorium

Experimental Animation: Forms and Contexts



Miriam Harris

Let's Get Digital: The presence of "affect" in experimental animated music videos, films, and games

This proposed paper addresses the ways in which animated works with a primarily digital focus have the potential to produce 'affect'; the power to emotionally and cognitively stir the spectator, and communicate depth, profundity, and even viscerality. Such qualities have been predominantly ascribed to examples of experimental analogue animation, with notable work by theorists such as Rosalind Krauss, Vivian Sobchack, Laura Marks, and Suzanne Buchan drawing upon phenomenological interpretations in their exploration of work by William Kentridge, Ray Harryhausen, Jan Svankmajer, and the Brothers Quay.

In this paper, I will consider how features that are deemed intrinsic to analogue animation – indexicality, gesture, materiality, irregularity, and meta-functionality – are not necessarily excluded from the bounds of the digital realm, especially within the zone of experimental animation. I will draw upon phenomenological observations to back up this claim, together with insights gained as an experimental animator working with both analogue and digital media. The examples cited will be taken from the field of digital experimental animation, and will include not only gallery-based projects and films from the festival circuit, but also music videos and independent computer games from the last ten years.

Select bibliography

Buchan, Suzanne (2010) *The Quay Brothers: Into a Metaphysical Playroom*. University of Minnesota Press.

Marks, Laura (2000) *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*. Duke University Press.

Biography



Dr. Miriam Harris is a Senior Lecturer in Digital Design at the Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. In 2011 she completed her PhD with a thesis entitled 'Words & Images That Move: The relationship between text and drawing in the animated film and graphic novel'. She has had essays published in the book *Animated Worlds* (2006) and *Animation Studies* (the online journal for the Society for Animation Studies: <https://journal.animationstudies.org/>), and curated a major exhibition on Czech and Polish animation – *24 Czech & Polish Animators* – that was exhibited in Auckland and Portland, Oregon.

She is also an animation practitioner with degrees in fine arts and literature, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Digital Animation & Visual Effects from Sheridan College, Toronto. Her experimental animated films, made in collaboration with composer Juliet Palmer, have won awards at the Brooklyn International Film Festival, New York, the New Media Film Festival, Los Angeles, and the FIFE Experimental Film Festival, Romania. She is a member of the Editorial Board for the journal *Animation Practice, Process and Production*, edited by Paul Wells. She is currently co-editing and co-authoring (with Paul Taberham and Lilly Husbands) a book entitled *Experimental Animation: From Analogue to Digital*, which will be published by Routledge.