

Panel D1

Auditorium

Experimental Animation: Forms and Contexts

Paul Taberham

First Steps into the Avant-Garde



The proposed paper will address the question ‘what are the first steps a viewer must take when engaging with the field of experimental animation?’ There is a range of existing scholarship which poses narrowly defined questions about specific artists, but less on the more generalized viewing procedures required when encountering the field.

Two broad introductions to experimental animation feature in Paul Wells’ *Understanding Animation* and Maureen Furniss’ *Art in Motion*. The proposed paper will outline, critique and expand on Wells’ and Furniss’ ideas, and consider how the climate may have changed since their books were originally published (both 1998).

My presentation will be divided into four parts. First, the origins of experimental animation will be detailed along with the concept of visualised music and synaesthetic film. Following this, a discussion of the modernist notion of drawing attention to the medium will be outlined. Next, a consideration of the presence of an authorial voice will be discussed as well as the notion of ‘evoking’ over ‘saying’. Finally, I will outline the ways in which avant-garde/ experimental aesthetics can intercept mainstream visual culture.

Select bibliography

Furniss, Maureen (1998) *Art in Motion: Animation Aesthetics*. John Libbey.

Wells, Paul (1998) *Understanding Animation*. Routledge.

Biography



Dr. Paul Taberham is Senior Lecturer in animation theory and history at the Arts University Bournemouth, UK. He has spoken nationally and internationally at conferences, and has been published in *Projections: Journal for Movies and Mind*, and *Animation Journal*, writing about the work of Stan Brakhage and synaesthetic film respectively. He also contributed to the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Film Theory*, and is co-editor of *Cognitive Media Theory* (2014), and author

of the forthcoming monograph *The Avant-Garde Filmmaker as Practical Psychologist* (2017). Paul is also currently co-authoring and co-editing (with Miriam Harris and Lilly Husbands) a book entitled *Experimental Animation: From Analogue to Digital*, to be published by Routledge. He gained his PhD in 2013 from the University of Kent.

Paul serves as a Fellow for SCSMI (Society for the Cognitive Study of Moving Images), and is also an occasional experimental filmmaker. Most recently, his experimental work

has been screened at a FREE RANGE event in Canterbury, UK. In addition to experimental film, animation and cognitive film theory, he is also interested in humour, and is currently researching sound design in animation.