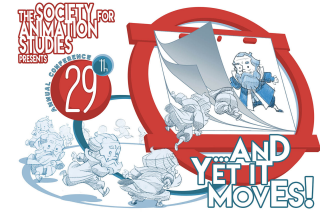


Panel A1

Auditorium

Education and Animation I



Jan Caspers, Gary Rosborough

From Material Transformation to Media Sovereignty

Proposing a framework for the evaluation of early animation training programmes

Background

Traditional stop motion animation uniquely combines art, craft, technology and narrative into a single productive process. In this paper, we contend that early animation training (defined here as the instruction of students between the ages of 8 and 18) can constitute a learning situation that „modifies the learner’s outlook, attitude and skills” in the sense of Dewey’s „educational continuum”, developing both informed animation audiences and future animators as well as nurturing the wider human capacity that is required in a world of rapidly changing technological and social parameters.

At the moment, this is often precluded by a short-termism inherent in many early animation training programmes. The major task in hand is to change the perception that learning animation is like learning to ride a bicycle – a straight forward act, perhaps a little difficult at the beginning but effortless and permanent once accomplished. It is more constructive to look at it as learning to play a musical instrument, where the mastery of the basics is followed by yet more lessons which lead to progressive new levels of ability that open up new worlds of possibility, to be awarded by ever growing creative confidence, skillful reproduction and eventually innovation. Any attempt at shortcuts always carries the risk of stunting this growth and capping the students’ inherent capacity by denying them the right guidance at the appropriate time.

Goals

If their potential is to be fully realised, early animation training programmes must be „taken seriously” and provided with adequate resources in terms of time, personnel and equipment. School principals and other decision makers have to be convinced of the purpose of early animation training and its efficacy in delivering tangible benefits to their students. To help them understand the scope and we propose a framework of goals that represent the constituent aspects of animation activities.

The goals were identified from the accumulated experience of some five hundred animation workshops we conducted over the past six years with primary and secondary school students, teachers, librarians and youth workers in Palestine and Israel, Ireland and Germany. They include Material transformation, Technical proficiency, Productive perseverance, Aesthetic discernment, Creative confidence, Social competence, Cultural continuity and Media sovereignty. These goals will be explained in detail and paired with measurable objectives.

Application

The framework is designed to facilitate the planning, execution and evaluation of early animation programmes and to supply criteria for further research and development. We look forward to receiving feedback from practitioners in the field that will allow us to refine our approach. Ultimately we hope that the framework will help to raise standards and recognition across the board so that early animation training programmes may achieve the proliferation they deserve.

Biography

Gary Rosborough is from Northern Ireland. He studied Fine Arts at University of Ulster and has been teaching animation full-time for twenty years. Between 1993 and 2008 Gary directed the animation unit at the Nerve Centre media arts centre in Derry-Londonderry. He has inspired countless children, teenagers, and adults on four continents with his introduction to the wonderful world of traditional stop motion animation.

Jan Caspers is from Germany. He studied Education at the University of Hagen and came to animation by way of puppetry, paper films and robot theater. and has been facilitating workshops for students and teachers for twenty years as well. Between 1995 and 2008 Jan developed materials and methods for Irish-medium schools in Ireland and wrote for the theatre in Germany.

Since 2008, Gary and Jan have been facilitating a programme of early animation training programmes in Palestine and Israel. In cooperation with the British Council, the Tamer Institute of Community Education, the Palestine Red Crescent Association, the A.M. Qattan Foundation and the Jerusalem Welfare Association, over 300 training workshops have been implemented in over 40 primary and secondary schools, libraries, community centres, universities and teacher training institutions in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, Nazareth and Haifa. Since 2012, the programmes' focus has been on training-of-trainer courses for teachers, librarians and other educators.

Outside of Palestine, Gary and Jan are teaching mainly in Germany, Ireland and the UK.

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