

2021-22 Spring

## **HART1023 Introduction to Experimental Animation (1 Credit)**

Course Instructor: Prof. Jake ZHANG (Email: jakezhang@ust.hk)

Program Officer: Ms. Vickie WONG (Email: vickiewong@ust.hk)

Time: Mondays | 10:30am – 12:20 pm

Venue: LG1 E-Learning classroom A, Library

Office Hours: By appointment

### **Course Description**

This introductory course aims at guiding students to explore the art of animation through producing drawing, cut-ups, roto-scoping, photographic and object animation with both digital and traditional tools. By introducing non-mainstream techniques and mediums for creating time-based imagery, students will learn both practical skills and theories of animation as a visual art form for artistic expression and communication.

Through brief lecturing, students will acquaint themselves with the history and development of experimental animation and its influences to moving image arts in general. The hands-on activities will allow students to explore freely the principles of animation starting from pencil and paper to digital software and tools.

### **Intended Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe and appreciate the history and development of experimental animation
2. Identify and explain the stylistic and narrative elements of experimental animation
3. Develop abstract ideas into experimental animation works

### **Materials to prepare**

Sketchbook  
Drawing pencil and pen  
A smart phone

### **Required Application to download on phone or ipad**

Stop Motion Studio  
FlipaClip  
animatorSW or ANIMTIME

### **Recommended software on desktop**

Adobe Photoshop, Premiere, After Effects

### **Equipment to borrow for each team:**

Tripod and phone clip, hard disk for transferring file

## Course Syllabus and Schedule

Lesson	Date	Topic	ILO(s)
1	7 Feb	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>Introduction and discussion about the strategy of learning historical context of animation aesthetics</p> <p>History of animation as inspiration to animation production.</p> <p>Discussion of styles, styles of story-telling, relationship of story and visual.</p> <p>Screening of some featured animated shorts and discussion on the form, visual structure, and narrative structure.</p> <p>Introduction to class engagement, grading criteria, in-class projects, and final projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is experimental and mainstream animation</li> <li>• What are the tools and materials for experimental animation</li> <li>• Introduction to zoetrope and praxinoscope</li> <li>• Terms need to know, e.g. frame rates, aspect ratio, etc</li> </ul>	1,2
2	14 Feb	<p><b>The Discovery of Animation</b></p> <p>Introduction to early "animation toy": Phenakistiscope, zeotrope, praxinoscope</p> <p>Georges Melies and his "trick films"</p> <p>Emile Cohl, James Stuart Blackton, Winsor McCay</p> <p>Relationship between art creation and techniques, experimental animation and commercial animation.</p> <p>Introduction to The Fleischers Brothers, techniques of rotoscope and rotograph</p> <p><b>Launch the group project_1 : object animation</b></p> <p>Group discussion, rough storyboard, come up with objects list for next class to bring in</p> <p>Each group of students need to borrow a tripod and phone clip to bring in next class.</p> <p>Demo of rotoscope if time allows</p>	1,2
3	21 Feb	<p><b>Workshop: object animation</b></p> <p>Based on previous discussion, students will execute an animation practice applying object animation.</p> <p>Demonstration of App Stop Motion Studio: frame rate, animate, shoot, and render.</p> <p>Principals of animation: timing, slow-in, slow-out</p> <p>Students are expected to finish at least the shooting part in class</p> <p>Students will need to submit their course work by the end of Friday this week (25 Feb; 11:59PM)</p>	2,3
4	28 Feb	<p><b>Inventing Techniques: Cutouts</b></p> <p>Quirino Cristiani</p> <p>Lotte Reiniger and Prince Achmed (1926)</p> <p>Berthold Bartosch and The Idea (1932)</p> <p>Workshop of cut-out animation if time allows</p>	1,2

5	7 Mar	<p><b>Absolute Animation: Mystical visions</b></p> <p>Leopold Survage, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Stanton Macdonald- Wright Walther Ruttmann, Viking Eggeling, Hans Richter</p> <p>Oscar Fischinger, Harry Smith, James Whitney, Jordan Belson</p> <p>Next generation of absolute animation artists: Mary Ellen Bute, Len Lye, Norman McLaren</p> <p>Development of early computer graphics</p> <p>READING – "Influence and Inspiration: The Great Tradition of Visual Music" by William Moritz <a href="http://www.iotacenter.org/visualmusic/articles/moritz/influenceinspiration">http://www.iotacenter.org/visualmusic/articles/moritz/influenceinspiration</a> "Oskar Fischinger: Artist of the Century" by William Moritz <a href="http://www.iotacenter.org/visualmusic/articles/moritz/fischartist">http://www.iotacenter.org/visualmusic/articles/moritz/fischartist</a> "The Unknown Art of Jordan Belson" by Ying Tang <a href="http://pages.uoregon.edu/tanying/JBart.html">http://pages.uoregon.edu/tanying/JBart.html</a> "Enlightenment" by William Moritz <a href="http://www.centerforvisualmusic.org/WMEnlightenment.html">http://www.centerforvisualmusic.org/WMEnlightenment.html</a> "Jordan Belson the Last of the Great Masters" by William Moritz <a href="http://www.iotacenter.org/visualmusic/articles/moritz/belsonmaster">http://www.iotacenter.org/visualmusic/articles/moritz/belsonmaster</a></p> <p>Launch for next group project_pixillation and preparation</p>	1,2
6	14 Mar	<p><b>Workshop – Group project_2: pixilation group project</b></p> <p>Students will work in group to generate pixilation animation to present simple story or movement.</p> <p>Students are expected to finish at least the shooting part in class Students will need to submit their course work by the end of Friday this week (18 Mar; 11:59PM)</p> <p><b>Launch the final project</b> Check point: Class 7: in-class discussion on ideas Class 8: Presentation of project idea, storyboards and production plan Class 9: 1<sup>st</sup> cut Class 11: Final production</p> <p><b>Watching assignment:</b> Watching class recording about animation pipeline by Jake Zhang</p>	2,3
7	21 Mar	<p><b>Stop-motion animation</b></p> <p>Inventing Techniques: Puppets Arthur Melbourne Cooper, Ladislav Starewich, Willis O'Brien, George Paul, Ray Harryhausen, The Brothers Quay, Barry Purvis</p> <p><b>Project idea and project plan presentation</b> Students should present their project idea, short synopsis, moodboards, storyboard thumbnails.</p>	1,2,3
8	28 Mar	<p><b>Drawing animation</b></p> <p>Alexandre Alexeieff, Claire Parker, Jacques Drouin, Caroline Leaf, Anthony Gross, Robert Breer, Frederic Back, Caroline Leaf, William Kentridge</p> <p><b>Final project storyboard and work-in-progress presentation</b> Each student or group will present their updated storyboards, updated work-in-progress, visual treatment and other visual development materials.</p>	1,2,3

9	4 April	<b>Topic: Presentation of 1st cut &amp; Tutorial on individual final projects</b> Discussion with students on their individual final projects Examples to be shown for specific artistic and technical needs	3
10	11 April	<b>Animation pipeline, post production, compositing workshop</b> Post-production compositing workshop for supporting final projects	3
11	25 April	<b>Topic: Final Project Presentation (25%)</b> Students present their final cut of their animations Critique and comment	3

### Assessment Tasks

Assessment	Description	ILO(s)
<b>Mid-term project (30%)</b>	<p><b>Mid-term project</b> Individual essay Each student should find a short animation to discuss. You may analyze its styles, artistic treatments, special skills and experiment intentions found in the work. Also, you may talk about its significance in animation development. The work chosen should be non-mainstream shorts with clear artistic interests and intentions.</p> <p><b><u>Due date: 15 March</u></b> <b><u>Word limit: 800</u></b></p> <p>For late submission, students will have 10% deducted each day from their grade of this project. Submissions will not be accepted after <b><u>20 March.</u></b></p>	1, 2
<b>Final project (30%)</b> (5% for Proposal & 10% for the first draft)	<p><b>Final project</b> Each student or student group is required to submit a short animation artwork (around one minute). Students may choose any story or visual concepts for this final project and should choose suitable elements for fitting into the one-minute timeframe. All artworks must be presented during the critique session in <b><u>lesson 11.</u></b></p> <p><b>Work alone or Work in team</b> Student can choose to work alone OR work as a group (2-3 per group). Students who plan to work as a group need to present as group in Class 7, 21<sup>st</sup> March with clarifying each student's responsibilities and group's production plan.</p> <p><b>Volunteer to help on other students' final projects</b> Students are encouraged to participate in classmates' final projects as well. For example, voice-over, music, sound, actor, etc. Students who have contributed to other projects are encouraged to submit a short statement about the volunteer works for classmates.</p> <p>In <b><u>lesson 07 (March 21)</u></b>, students need to present their planning of the final project, including the basic story, characters, structure, and organization of different elements. The first drafts are expected to be finished by <b><u>lesson 9 (April 4)</u></b></p>	2, 3

<b>Group project_1: object animation (15%)</b>	<b>Project participation and engagement – 25%</b> <b>Storytelling – 25%</b> <b>Animation quality – 25%</b> <b>Post-production, completion – 25%</b>  Delivery: animation video file, short personal statement addressing responsibilities and contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students who are absent in the workshop/production class (21<sup>st</sup>, Feb) may cause the loss of 25% (project participation) of the grade for this assignment.</li> </ul>	2, 3
<b>Group project_2: pixilation animation (15%)</b>	<b>Project participation and engagement – 25%</b> <b>Storytelling – 25%</b> <b>Animation quality – 25%</b> <b>Post-production, completion – 25%</b>  Delivery: animation video file, short personal statement addressing responsibilities and contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students who are absent in the workshop/production class(14<sup>th</sup> March) may cause the loss of 25% (project participation) of the grade for this assignment</li> </ul>	2, 3
<b>Attendance (10%)</b>	<b>Attendance</b> Attendance will be taken in the beginning of each session after the add/drop period. Students arriving 10 minutes after the beginning of each session will be counted as late. Being late or leaving early twice will be counted as one absence.	NA

### Recommended Reading Materials

1. Russett, et al. *Experimental Animation : an Illustrated Anthology*. Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1976.
2. Furniss, Maureen. *Art in Motion : Animation Aesthetics*. John Libbey, 1998.
3. Furniss, Maureen. *The Animation Bible : a Practical Guide to the Art of Animating, from Flipbooks to Flash*. Abrams, 2008.

### Supplementary Reading Materials

1. Winder and Dowlatabadi, *Producing Animation*. Focal Press, 2001.
2. Williams, Richard. *The Animator's Survival Kit*. Faber, 2001.

### DVDs

3. *Caroline Leaf: Out on a limb: handcrafted* [DVD]. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, c2010.
4. *Norman McLaren, the master's edition* [DVD]. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, c2006.
5. *Oskar Fischinger, ten films* [DVD]. S.l.: Kinetica Video Library, 2000.
6. *The Animation of Alexeieff* [DVD]. Paris: Cinédoc ; Chicago, Ill. : Distributed by Facets Video, c2009.
7. *Animation World of Paul Driessen* [DVD]. Films du Paradoxe
8. *The Astonishing Work of Tezuka Osamu* [DVD]. Brooklyn, NY : Kino International, c2009.
9. *The exquisite short films of Kihachiro Kawamoto* [DVD]. Brooklyn, NY : KimStim, Inc. : distributed exclusively by Kino, [2008]
10. *Anthology of Surreal Cinema. Vol. 1* [DVD]. Risque Cinema, 2005
11. *The Anthology of Polish Experimental Animation* [DVD]. Warsaw : Polskie Wydawnictwo Audiowizualne, [2008]
12. *The Naoyuki Tsuji Animation Collection* [DVD]. Chicago, IL : Facets Video, c2006.

## **ACADEMIC HONOR CODE**

- You must observe and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all the work you do throughout your program of study.
- As members of the University community, you have the responsibility to help maintain the academic reputation of HKUST in its academic endeavors.
- Sanctions will be imposed if you are found to have violated the regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- Regulations for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (<http://publish.ust.hk/acadreg/generalreg/index.html>)