ANIMATION (in) FLUX

ABERTAY UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

LOCATION:
EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF ART

DATE:
AUGUST 29TH & 30TH 2024

HELLO

We are so pleased that you could join us here at Edinburgh College of Art to examine the future of the creative industries. We find ourselves at an interesting and somewhat nerve wracking time across animation, video games and film production; the commercial and technological landscape has shifted significantly through our recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and we find ourselves trying to navigate new ways of making, funding and engaging with technology in our pursuits of making media to entertain, enlighten and engage audiences.

We are excited to share the programme for the next two days with you. The schedule is rich, diverse and thought provoking from our opening keynote address by Professor Paul Wells examination of Tik Tok, across a range of through provoking panels and Anisa Sanusi's keynote examining the video games industry, through to our closing workshop that examines relationships between play and work. Over the next two days, we'll discuss the challenges of making in the evolving technological landscape, will interrogate new platforms for media expression, will consider the implications of AI on, well, everything and will investigate the educational and cultural considerations needed to move games, animation and film forward.

This conference is a partnership between Animation Research Network Scotland and CoSTAR Real Time lab and seeks to further the discourse and debate around educational and industry practices in animation, games and media. We are pleased to be supported by the Society of Animation Studies who have provided funding to allow us to provide discounted tickets for students and to NEoN Digital Arts who have supported the Women in the Creative Industries panel which seeks to examine diversity and cultural issues being faced in Scotland today from the perspective of women.

We hope that you have an enriching and thought provoking two days, that you make some new connections and take away some ideas that will help you in your everyday practice. Thank you for joining us at Animation (in) Flux.

Dr Nichola Dobson & Dr Lynn Love
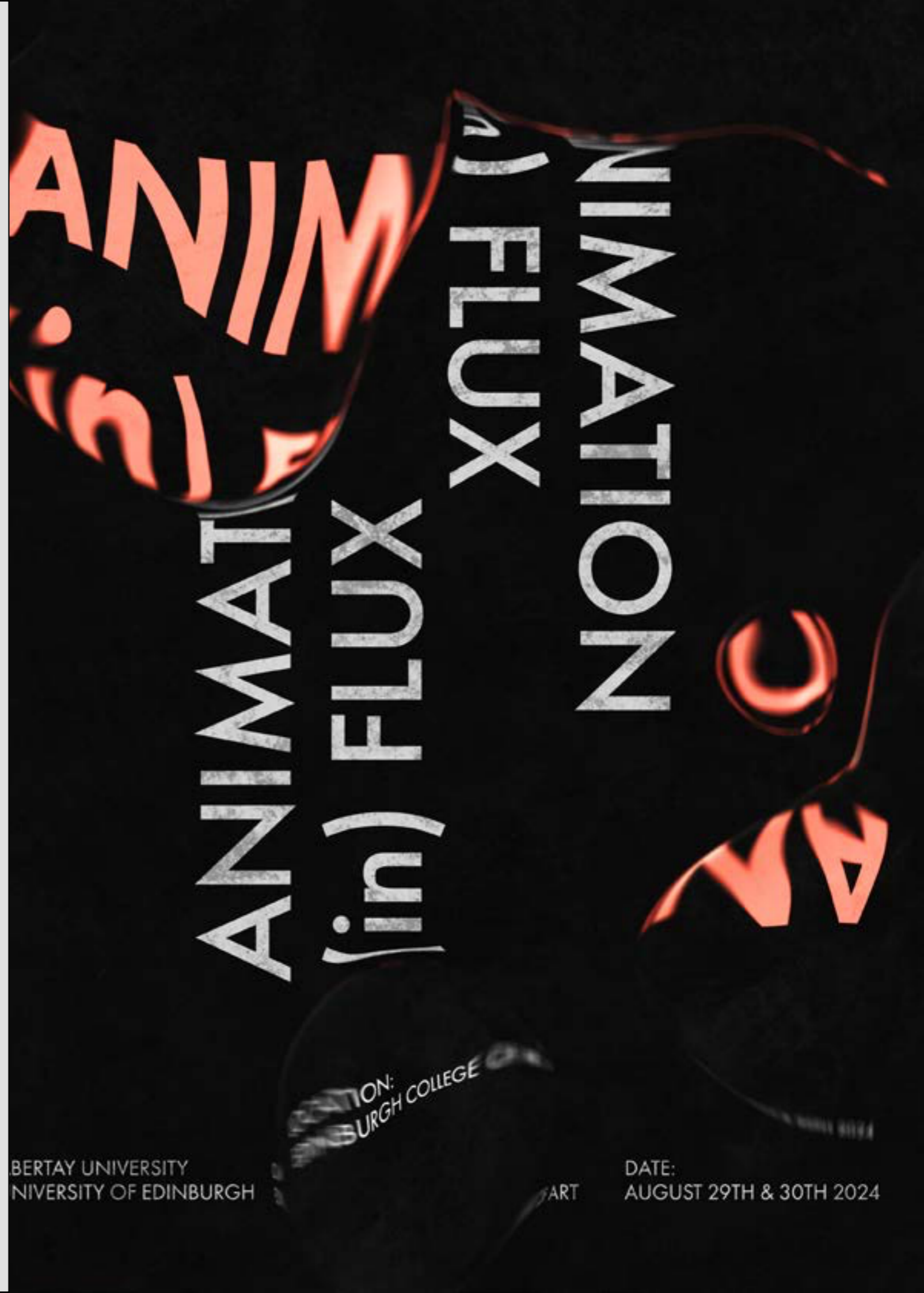
Conference Organising Committee

Co-Chairs: Nichola Dobson & Lynn Love,
Administrative Support: Sabrina Carter
Programme design and development: Calum Main
Technical support: Edinburgh College of Art and Calum Main
Session Chairs: Calum Main, Andrew O'Conner,

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DATE:
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SCHEDULE

TIME	
8:30 - 9:30	Registration and Coffee
9:30-10:00	Welcome
10:00-11:00	Keynote: Professor Paul Wells
11:00-12:30	Panel One: AI, Audience and Education
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	Panel Two: Digital Affordances and Complications
15:00-15:30	Coffee
15:30-17:00	Panel Three: Anime Labour: Minorities, Fans, Companies
17:00-19:00	Practice Exhibition and Drinks Reception

01 DAY

SCHEDULE

TIME	
8:30 - 9:30	Registration and Coffee
9:30-10:30	Keynote: Anisa Sanusi
10:30-12:00	Roundatble: Woman in the Creative Industries
12:00-13:00	Lunch
13:00-14:30	Panel Four: Crafting (Digital) Worlds
14:30-15:30	COSTAR: Future of Media
15:30-16:00	Coffee
16:00-17:00	Plork Workshop
17:00	Closing Remarks

02 DAY

Panel One: AI, Audience and Education

Animation within AI Generative Worlds: Practice, Pedagogy and the Mindset of an Animator - Calum Main

This paper explores AI generative technologies within animation practice as new technologies look to create a paradigm-shift to the ontology of animation. Through an inter-disciplinary approach, looking at theories in animation, the development of AI technologies in recent years and current cultural shifts within pedagogical institutions, this paper will examine the potential impact AI could have on the mindset of an animation practitioner.

In a current cultural climate of instant gratification, this paper will look at the mindset required when approaching training within the discipline.
The introduction of AI generative technologies at an educational level, threatens to further separate students from fundamental animation skills necessary to succeed in a hostile and difficult industry environment.
By exploring the democratisation and accessibility of tools such as AI, this paper will look to outline potential challenges and changes to educational structures.

Drawing on practical case studies of how AI generative technologies were used to make a series of short portfolio films and comparing that to other methods of working, this paper offers insight and recommendations for educators and students looking ahead at potential future worlds shaped by AI generative technologies. Animation is hard and requires patience and a resilient mindset to achieve successful outcomes. Embracing AI as a tool for innovation requires the prerequisite notion that animation practice is approached with robust foundational skills and this mindset will support future students in thriving within an increasingly technologically – driven animation landscape.

The limitations of Physically - Based Rendering and the potenital of existing alternatives - Tim Bentley

The case for alternatives to Physically-Based Rendering , The adoption of PBR as a de facto rendering standard has led to a convergence of both hardware and software development around a single, unifying principle: to accurately simulate the behaviour of light.

Even where photorealism is not the objective, in artistic, technical, and other non-photorealist pipelines, PBR provides a stable, familiar foundation upon which these techniques can be built.

Whilst the benefits of this widespread adoption, guided by a principle of such elegant simplicity, can hardly be understated, they should not preclude the ongoing development of alternative rendering strategies. The emergence of technologies and techniques less able to adhere or adapt to these strict, narrow requirements, poses fundamental, practical questions about how we measure and interpret the world around us.

Point cloud scans, for instance, have provided a vast, sudden wealth of publicly-available modelling data, yet we have struggled to adapt this data to existing rendering pipelines. Are we missing out on the technical, creative and democratic potential of such data, purely because it is so poorly-suited to a PBR workflow? Can the potential of point-cloud technology to record, transmit and display live 3D data be realised within the boundaries of existing rendering frameworks?

Likewise, have the rigid, pre-determined mechanics of surface-based models made us less inclined to consider more fluid, flexible alternatives? Will recent work on Gaussian Splatting, and other non-PBR techniques, lead to an increased need for alternative rendering strategies?
Ultimately, must these and other developments in the capturing, creation and rendering of 3D worlds adapt to existing frameworks in order to survive?

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Panel Two: Digital Affordances and Complications

Against Editing: Algorithm as Narrative Process - Charalambos Margaritis

This presentation concerns an ongoing art-based research on the ways to apply the principles of dynamic and multicursal video game narrative design (open-world games, quest systems, branching narratives and multiple endings) on animated storytelling. It proposes a model of animated storytelling which makes full use of available digital tools instead of digitally mimicking analogue processes.

Following Manovich's analysis, according to whom the currently prominent cultural paradigm is no longer that of the catalogue, but that of the database (which constitutes the digital and augmented form of the catalogue: dynamic, reconfigurable, ever-changing, inviting (and allowing) multiple permutations and combinations of its items), this presentation draws a parallel between the static catalogue and the edited conventional film. If editing is the process through which this catalogue-film results, the algorithm is proposed as the process for the database-film. This database-film's items (narrative parts) are not pre-organized by editing choices, but iterated through by an algorithm. Like a database, it also is dynamic.

By presenting an animated film implementing this concept, this presentation demonstrates the implications of such an approach on animated storytelling. The database-film puts to use principles of dynamic reconfiguration - multicursivity, recursion, looping and repetition. The purpose served by editing is now fulfilled by a process of dynamic (live) movement operated by an algorithm.

All Aboard the Axiom, Destination Wall-E - Media Facades, Situated Animation and the Cruise Ship Experience - Claire O'Brien

Dan Torre (2019) defines 'situated animation' as "made for a particular location, unquestionably anchored to it, and fully integrated into that specific real-world architectural landscape". Its effect, as exclaimed in the editorial of the Animated Space edition of the International Journal of Film and Media Arts (2021), is that "contemporary animation is now seamlessly embedded in our lives, redesigning the facades of our cities, expanding both our intimate spaces and our theatrical experiences..." in the same issue Tritthart also comments that it is "shaped by a new aesthetic, influenced by the omnipresent advertising industry".

In this paper, I discuss this commentary and 'situated animation' through the 'rise of the machine' in the abundance of LED displays present in our surroundings. In this particular case, I look through the lens of cruise ships' media facades, and the animation made for them. I compare the reliance on this media technology to themes and events in Pixar's Wall-E, using it as a case study alongside another of a recent cruise experience on the MSC Euribia (at the time of writing, MSC's newest ship in their fleet). I find that the animated content served on the media facades is multi-purposed and permeates the cruise experience in ways ranging from illumination, ornamentation, entertainment and communication. I analyse this in the context of animation studies, technology developments and tourism theory, where my literature search also revealed the use of 'animation' as a tourism term that is also interesting to consider. (Pompl, 1983)

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A Place to Graze my Files - Sally Pearce

Since October 2023, there have been multiple illegal downloads from my online platform. Although I have made every adjustment to my settings to discourage this, many of my publicly viewable clips have been pirated multiple times (see Fig 1). The pirated work covers a period of 18yrs, from storyboards and exercises from my time as an MA student at the NFTS, to clips from my current WIP documentary and PhD by Practice, Chernobyl Journey. When I first noticed the invasive activity on my account, which initially took the form of hacking and changing my Privacy settings so that certain clips could not be viewed, I was reading The Book of Trespass by Nick Hayes. This book explores the legal and social history of the enclosures of common land, and the resulting dispossession of the many ordinary or marginalised people who relied upon it. This coincidence prompted me to think of my online platform as a 'commons'. My paper will take a video-essay approach, incorporating my pirated animations, to promote conversation about the position, in times of AI, of the 'ordinary or marginalised' animator who, like myself, might rely heavily on online platforms that are susceptible to pirating for their survival. I will root my animations in their long history of development and entanglement in my life experience, and will consider if and why it matters that they have been pirated.

Panel Three: Anime Labour: Minorities, Fans, Companies

Women Labouring on Anime: Kyoto Animation Studio and the Rise of Naoko Yamada - Rayna Denison

Opportunities for women in the anime industry remain comparatively uncommon, and wages for all laborers are often unsustainably low (JSAS 2023). This paper charts the unusual success of Naoko Yamada, who has risen the level of director at Kyoto Animation making films such as Liz and the Bluebird and A Silent Voice. Yamada is one of the rare women to achieve the role of director in anime, and this paper therefore charts her path through industry in order to observe the potential barriers placed in women's paths within the creative worlds of anime. In doing so, the paper questions how the animation industry in Japan treats its female workforce, from the gendering of specific roles to historical trends in inequality. Using industrial discourse from Yamada's home studio at Kyoto Animation, and considering its presentation of gendered labour, this paper seeks to argue that such individual success stories can obscure a wider, starker picture for women labouring on anime.

The visible hands of the God: Staff members as special figures in fan discourse of Japanese animation - Shiro Yoshioka

Since the formation of the fandom of Japanese mainstream commercial TV/feature animation ("anime") in the 1970s, Japanese fans regarded the creators, not just directors but animators and other staff, as artists with unique talent and important figures in the production process. This paper overviews the historical development of how this happened, emphasising significance of the changing status of "anime" within what Bourdieu calls the cultural of cultural production, and contends that this attention to the staff remains strong even now, and can remain so because it can be strategically used by studios to distinguish their works from others.

Screens in Flux: Studio Ghibli's Televisual Experiments - Zoe Combie

Though Studio Ghibli are primarily known for their feature films, this is a paradigm that came about mainly in Western regions as a result of critical acclaim and success within arthouse and fandom circles. In Japan, their presence is more ubiquitous, as exemplified by merchandise, the Ghibli museum and park, and projects exclusive to, or made primarily for, television. This paper examines how Ghibli have turned to screens beyond the cinema in their later years, focusing on Ronja, the Robber's Daughter, Earwig and the Witch, and Ni no Kuni and their use of CGI technologies, as well as the commonalities shared with other Ghibli works. Their television and video game projects have expanded their brand outside of films, particularly those directed by Hayao Miyazaki, and have suggested a new direction that the studio may take with their distinctive house style as they go forward into uncharted territory.,

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Panel Four: Crafting (Digital) Worlds

The Rhetoric of Abandonment: Contemporary Stop-Motion and the "Return" to Craft Practices - Markus Beeken

Since 2008, twenty-six stop-motion films have been released or distributed by major Hollywood studios, including Laika, Aardman, Disney, 20th Century Studios, Netflix, and Pixar. This 'renaissance of stop-motion' (Mihailova, 2021:1) constitutes a return to prominence and popularity for the technique within the contemporary media environment. Given stop-motion is one of the earliest forms of animation (Crafton, 1993), with a long history imbued with discourses of craft (Moseley 2016), its recent return has been framed as an 'authentic, handcrafted' (MacKinnon, 2019:107) antidote to the culturally dominant digital practices defining contemporary animation. However, in this paper, I focus on sharpening the terms of stop-motion's Hollywood renaissance as a moment of renewal and reconfiguration, arguing that the rhetoric of abandonment regarding digital processing that has defined stop-motion's return is complicated by the fact that several films, from Coraline to Kubo and the Two Strings, use extensive CG as part of their hybrid identity. I suggest that contemporary stop-motion animation occupies a complex position, not constituting an uncomplicated return to craft practices so much as an entirely new formulation. Utilising Walter Benjamin's concept of aura and Gilbert Simondon's notions of ontogenesis, this paper demonstrates that stop-motion hybrids are characterised by overarching conditions of uncertainty that force the spectator to choose between simultaneously evident states. By mapping the industrial and cultural contexts associated with craft and computerised practices, this paper identifies how the dual ontological registers of contemporary Hollywood stop-motion function as a deliberate response to the complexities and multiplicities of our modern media landscape.

Inactivity in video games: the unsettling world of idle animations - Maria Pagès Rovira

This paper explores the special features of animation in order to better introduce idle animations into the gameplay using its full potential. It combines methods from different branches that nourish its multidisciplinary approach such as Traditional and Digital Animation practices, Game Studies research, Ethnologic taxonomy of non-verbal communication, Cognitive theory, Human-Machine Interaction and Image Analysis. The text suggests a critical evaluation of the potentialities that animation can offer to the core of immersion in the gameplay and to the empathy aroused from virtual characters. To justify our assumptions, we will also focus on several case studies of video games that use idle animations to deep into the roundness of characters, to set a distinctive mood, to link the player with the surrounding setting or just to entertain with basic beckoning signs. After some years of video game degrees becoming-of-age in world-wide universities, there is a controversial subject that arises in the classroom as far as it is suggested during any given session. Year after year, when questioning about what is an idle animation, someone raises its hand in disappointment with the definition given by current literature of the subject. The consensus about the need and definition of idle animation is not easy to achieve, as it is shown by the eternal debate that encompasses students, practitioners and game designers as well. This article will try to elucidate this uncomfortable zone in video games that defines the unsettling world of idle animations.

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Virtual Production as a Tool for Maintaining Artistic Integrity in Comic to Film Adaptations - Stephanie Erso, Matt Bett and Phil Vaughn

Comic books continue to be modern Hollywood's leading sources of inspiration but in some adaptations, it can be argued that they have been unfaithful to the original material in fundamental ways.

Due to the nature of these mediums being fundamentally different, translating the distinctive art and panel layouts of a comic into a visually appealing and coherent film while preserving the choices made by the original creator in terms of layout, composition, pacing and narrative can be extremely challenging. Additionally, one is also navigating a minefield of audience expectations, especially within well-established fanbases.

Virtual Production is a recent innovation in filmmaking with impact across the production pipeline, but it is not fully explored in its specific use cases to potentially help solve some of the more unique challenges in filmmaking. In this case, as a tool to aid inter-medium film adaptation.

This study examines how virtual production's use of virtual sets, real-time rendering, motion capture, and use of physical cameras in fully CGI sets, enable us to authentically translate comic book panels onto the silver screen without compromising on the artistic integrity of the source material.

Ultimately this research aims to identify the ways in which Virtual Production can positively impact the adaptation process, highlighting its role as an innovative way of ensuring that the artistic integrity of the comic book creator is maintained throughout production, as well as reducing production time and costs.

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FLUX

ANIMATION

OUR KEYNOTES

Professor Paul Wells

Professor Paul Wells is Director of the Animation Academy, Loughborough University, and has published widely in Animation, Film and Screenwriting Studies. He is currently finishing a completely revised and updated 25th Anniversary edition of 'Understanding Animation' and working on a collaborative project with the BFI on 'The Story of British Screen Sport', based partly on his touring Exhibition 'The Beautiful Frame; Animation & Sport'. He is mentoring scripts for two animated features, one a Belgian / Japanese co-production, the other based in the Netherlands, and finalising an original script for production development. Paul is also engaged in production consultancy in Canada and the USA.

Anisa Sanusi

Anisa Sanusi is an award-winning video game UI/UX designer and the founder of Limit Break Mentorship, a non-profit home to the UK games industry's largest mentorship program for underrepresented people. With humble roots in animation, Anisa graduated with a BA (Hons) in Computer Animation at Teesside University after which she worked as a 2D animator before pivoting into video games as a 2D artist. It was within the games industry that she found her true passion for UI/UX design and specialised in the discipline. Over the past decade, she has worked on titles across various platforms, like the BAFTA-winning Rollerdrome, Planet Coaster, Elite: Dangerous, and more. Anisa advocates for diversity, inclusion and equity, subsequently founding Limit Break - now in its sixth year running, with a team of 35 volunteers and 1,600 cohort members. She has been recognised for her efforts by the industry, and was elected as a member of the BAFTA Games Committee, featured on screen at The Game Awards in Los Angeles, listed in Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe, and listed thrice in GamesIndustry.Biz's Top 100 lists as a Future Talent, Game Changer, and among the Most Influential Women in the UK Games Industry. Anisa has spoken about both UI/UX design and her advocacy work at conferences across Europe, Asia, and GDC's UX Summit in San Francisco. She is currently splitting her time between working on indie game projects and collaborating with an international startup, while continuing to run her non-profit on the side.

ROUNDTABLE

Woman in the Industry

Dr Nichola Dobson - Chair

Nichola Dobson is a Senior Lecturer in Animation at Edinburgh College of Art. Founding editor of Animation Studies (2006 - 2011) and Animation Studies 2.0 (2012- present), she has published on animation, television genre and fan fiction, including Norman McLaren: Between the Frames (2018) for Bloomsbury and Historical Dictionary of Animation and Cartoons, Volume 2 (2020) for Scarecrow Press. She is currently working on the Routledge Companion to Animation with Paul Taberham. She was President of the Society for Animation Studies between 2015 and 2019. She is currently the Director of the Animation Research Network Scotland.

Timea Tabori

Timea is the Technical Director at Netspeak Games, a wholesome social mobile games company, currently working on something new and exciting behind the scenes.

With over a decade of experience as a software engineer, and 3 years in leadership, she is now focused on nurturing and leading a creative team through heart-centered leadership.

Previously at Rockstar Games, and serving on the board of directors for the Scottish Game Developers Association, her work advocating for more diversity in game development and nurturing community has received recognition, including a place on MCV's Most Influential Women in Games, Forbes 30 under 30, BAFTA Crew, and more.
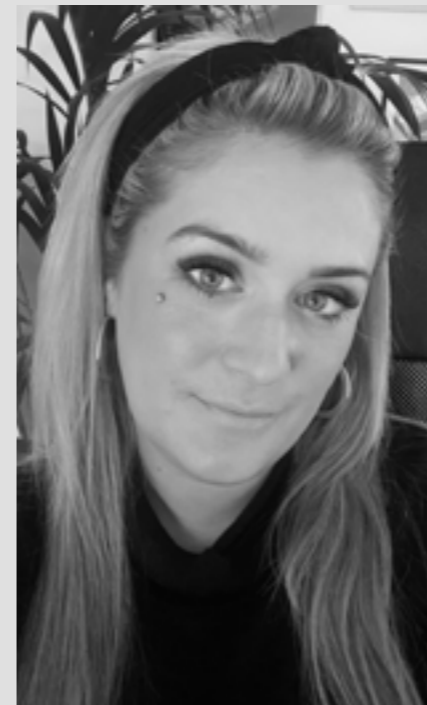
Victoria Watson

Victoria graduated with a BA Hons in Animation in 2006 from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design in Dundee. Since then Victoria has worked as Producer / Director in live-action and all forms of animation. She has worked on a number of short films, commercials and television series, for clients such as Netflix, BBC, Disney, etc.

In 2017 Victoria joined Rhona Drummond in running Eyebolls.
Eyebolls is an award-winning all singing, all dancing, full service studio based in Edinburgh. We create and produce content for TV shows, films, creative advertising and experiential agencies. We are passionate about collaboration and specialise and take pride in pulling together the right team for each individual project. We actively seek out new and fresh talent to compliment existing collaborators, and we morph workflows, push boundaries and adapt styles so that no two eyes are the same.

I am currently co-directing a stop motion short funded by Sharp Shorts called Distance To The Moon.
www.eyebolls.com

Julie Kennedy

Julie is a Lead User Interface Technical Artist with just shy of 10 years in game development. She's passionate about building awesome, accessible interfaces and healthy environments for the teams that make them.
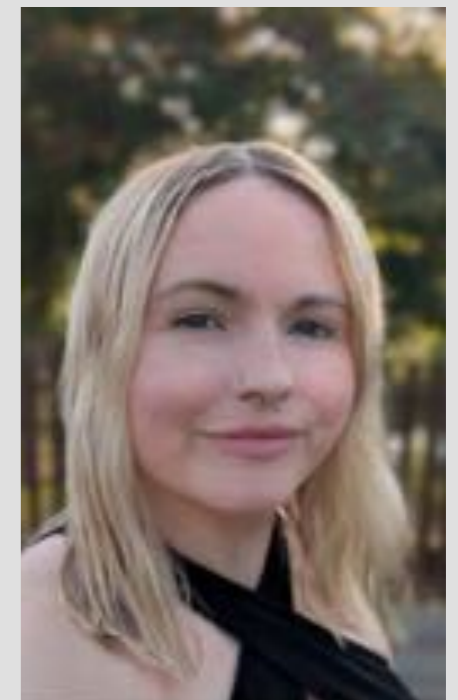
Selina Wagner

Selina is an award-winning animation creator based in Scotland.

For 20 years, she has created content for CBeebies, CBBC, National Trust for Scotland, the Moredun Foundation, Baillie Gifford and Irn Bru.
Her filmography includes Takuskanskan, Crow moon, Spindrift and A dog by your side, which have all been commissioned through Screen Scotland. Each of her films were in official selections at international film festivals, and Spindrift was nominated for a Scottish BAFTA in 2017.

She is now developing and writing her first animated feature film, supported by Screen Scotland.

NEoN Digital Arts (SCIO) is a charitable organisation aiming to advance the understanding and accessibility of digital and technology-driven art forms and encourage high quality within this medium's production. In recognising the profound connection between contemporary culture and digital technology, NEoN believes in addressing digital poverty and promoting digital detox as integral aspects of its mission. Through a collaborative programme, NEoN seeks to not only enhance critical understanding but also make digital art more accessible, acknowledging the impact of technology on society today.

ROUNDTABLE
Costar: Future of Media

The CoSTAR Realtime Lab is led by Abertay University with core partners:
- Water's Edge Studio
- Codebase
- The University of Edinburgh
- Interface
- Scottish Enterprise

It will bring together video games development expertise in Dundee's globally significant InGAME cluster with world-leading applied research and development (R&D) at Abertay, with the University of Edinburgh's expertise in machine learning and artificial intelligence. The Realtime Lab will place R&D side-by-side with live commercial production, offering routes to commercialisation and markets beyond most small and medium business (SME) networks. It will facilitate industry sector engagement, catalysing innovation in:
- performance and motion capture
- virtual humans and dynamic procedural performance
- machine learning for production and artificial intelligence for process reproduction
- artificial intelligence for dynamic effects and procedural graphics for visual effects
- advanced scanning technologies for 3D volume acquisition and ML/AI for procedural environment generation
- developing lighting and ray tracing standards to deliver environmental fidelity
- location-based software and hardware integration
- integrated virtual and real-world film and TV production
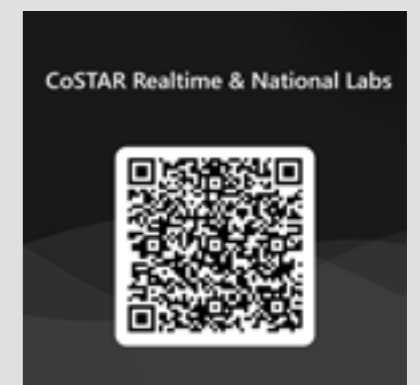
Andrea McSwain - Chair

With 25+ years in the film, tv and architectural industries, Andrea is best known for inventiveness, synthesis of ideas and getting technically complex and creative projects over the line.

In 2022, her PhD explored the perceptual-experiences of artists with sight loss, through an animated film, created and viewed in VR. Being a concept artist on Outlander Season 7, Andrea then joined Abertay in 2023 on the R&D project. InGAME International, which studied the UK-China in the computer games sector.

Andrea is now the Realtime Virtual Production Lab manager for CoSTAR; which places R&D side-by-side with commercial virtual film production.

Professor Ruth Falconer

Professor Ruth Falconer is Head of Division, Games Technology & Mathematics where she leads and evolves the Creative Technology provision. She has a proven track record in delivering research with impact and she champions the transformative power of game technologies and Real-Time 3D to develop interactive and immersive simulation and visualizations to address social and environmental challenges.

Professor Falconer is also the Education Director for Women in Games and Co-I on InGAME: Innovation for for Games and Media Enterprise which drives innovation and growth within the Dundee games cluster through a programme of collaborative research and cluster development activity.

Emily Bailey

I have a background as a Visual Artist creating video design for music events and theatre as well as producing animated music videos and video art. Since 2017 I have also been working in live TV as a Vision Mixer and Multicam Director for broadcasters such as Sky, BBC, ETP, IMG. Last year I began upskilling in virtual production and I have recently joined the CoSTAR team at Abertay as a R&D Fellow in virtual production pipelines. Still working in a live real-time environment I will be involved in practical research projects that drive innovation in this rapidly growing field.

Amit Dev

Amit Dev is a 3D environment artist with 8 years of experience in the visual effects and gaming industries. Specializing in creating immersive, realistic worlds, Amit has crafted stunning environments for blockbuster films, indie and mobile games. With a strong blend of artistic vision and technical skill, Amit specializes in modeling, texturing, and lighting to bring digitallandscapes to life. Passionate about environmental storytelling, Amit is always exploring new techniques and tools to push the boundaries of what's possible. Outside of work, Amit staysactive by hitting the gym, enjoys walking the dog, and is always eager to learn new aspects of 3D design to refine and expand his craft.

Theodore Koterwas

Theodore Koterwas is an artist and researcher drawing critical attention to aspects of daily experience that go unnoticed but affect how we understand each other, technology and the environment. He received his MFA in New Genres from the San Francisco Art Institute and has created art installations, performances, and museum exhibitions for the Exploratorium, University of Oxford, Aberdeen Performing Arts, Edinburgh Science Festival and artist/musician David Byrne. His practice-based research and teaching focuses on physical interactions with artificial intelligence to investigate the impact of embodied engagement on how we perceive, collaborate and empathise with 'others', both living and artificial.

PRACTICE

Jennifer Nightingale

The films come out of a series of 16mm landscape film animations from my PhD by practice completed in 2023 that use a single-frame production technique and a unique editing system to translate guernsey knitting patterns into film. The Cornish and latterly the Faroese, Norfolk and Yorkshire knitting pattern translation into film create a structural relationship between a stitch of knitted textile fabric and a frame of film. In this methodology, gesture, landscape and film are 'knitted together' as a material object, re-embedding the knitting patterns into the location that inspired them. Employing them on location speaks directly to their heritage and contemporary value, creating new visual representations of women's work alongside that of the landscapes, highlighting analogies between my film production with the knitting patterns production. In the production of 'Robin Hoods Bay I' (2023) (near Whitby) I began to expose the knit frames at low tide, and the purl at high tide, recalibrating the tides continuous movement. In 'Sheringham Jimmy Chibbles Bishop herringbone' (2024) I choose to highlight the dominating horizon of the Norfolk Coast landscape to visually replicate the diagonal graphic of the herringbone knitting pattern. The films build on the legacy of single-frame modes of filmmaking in the context of experimental cinema (for example Kurt Kren and Rose Lowder) and produce new visual phenomena and motion effects. One way in which they do this is in my use of a self-instigated time-lapse technique hiding the labour of production in the material object of the film.

Kayleigh MacLeod

"Waulking Simulator" is a rhythm game that pays homage to the traditional Scottish art of waulking tweed. This cultural practice, found in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, involved groups of women rhythmically beating newly woven tweed against a table. This practice was often accompanied by singing songs of recent events or news.
The game features an innovative cloth controller that replicates the process. Players can also choose between two authentic Scottish Gaelic waulking songs (Òrain Luaidh in Gaelic) to accompany their gameplay: 'Ceud Soiridh Soiridh Bhuam' (A Hundred Greetings From Me) or 'Amadan Gòrach Gòrach' (Silly Silly Fool).
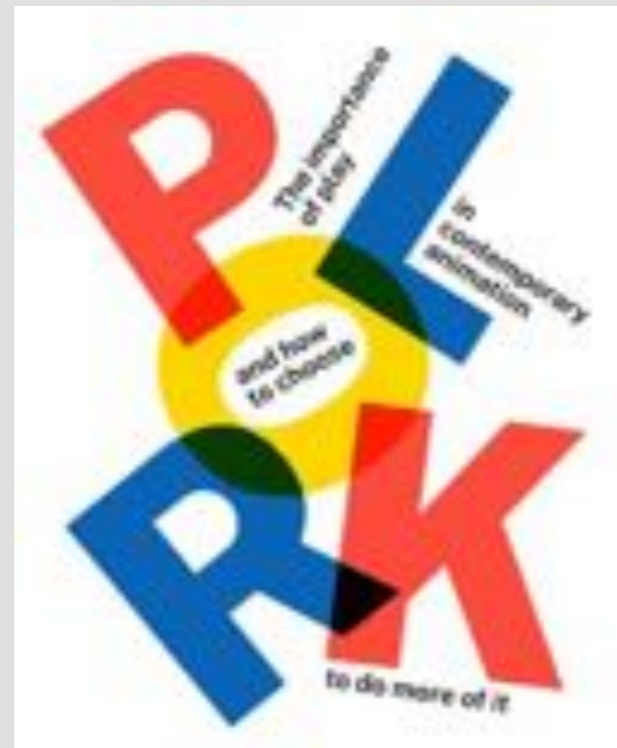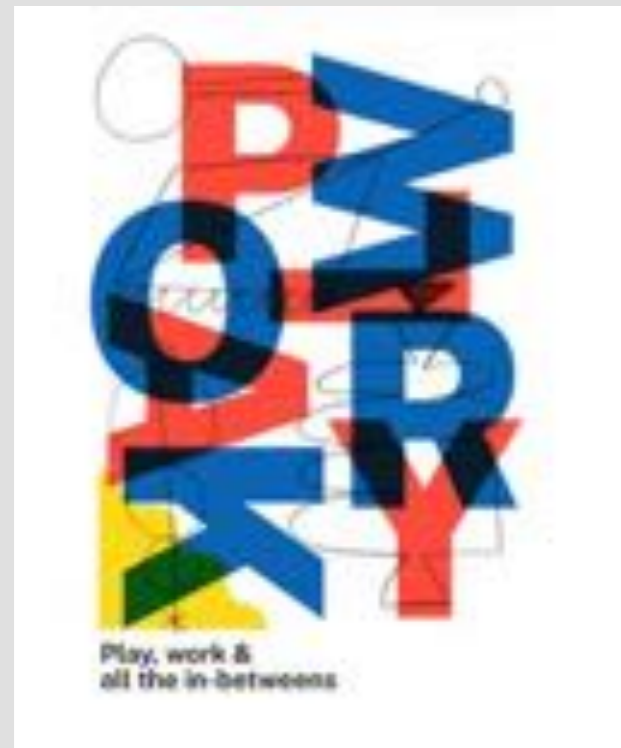
Robin Griffiths

This practical work features a series of short animations, each about 15 seconds long, designed to find the perfect balance between entertainment and education. Tailored specifically for social media audiences, these animations cater to viewers who are often time-poor, content-rich, and not actively seeking educational content. Each animation is crafted to quickly capture attention, delivering engaging, concise, and entertaining messages that make a range of complex topics more accessible and enjoyable without appearing overtly educational. The showcase includes three completed animations, with two additional works currently in progress, offering some insight into the design process.

WORKSHOP

Plork! Play, Work and all the in-betweens in Animation - Dan Castro

It's no big secret that creativity relies heavily on play. And in order to be playful, as Bernard de Koven would put it, we have to "let [our selves] out to play" (2014, p 34-35). We need to adopt a mindset that allows us to approach things creatively, curiously, optimistically. But for creative practitioners, pedagogues, and students alike this is often loaded with the paralysing idea that in order to have value, the creative work needs to be 'good'; and in this thought process we forget the very core of what it means to create. We forget how to play. Based on my PhD research, this workshop establishes Corita Kent's notion of 'plork' – working playfully, or playfully working – (Kent and Steward, 2008) as part of a contemporary toolset for engaging our playful selves; for worrying less and working more. Through two key processes – creative drawing and rule-setting – participants will re-engage with their own playfulness and playful values, learn techniques that give themselves and their students permission to be playful, and ultimately create space for more playful, productive, imaginative practices. And it's not just for creative practitioners and teachers! Anyone and everyone can benefit from reminding themselves to be more playful.
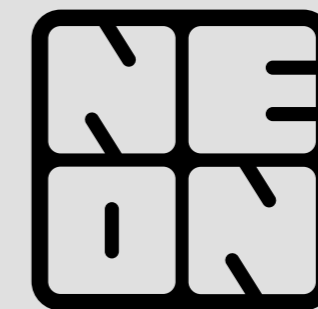
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