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2020

### Topics in Animation

Pilar C. Newton  
*CUNY City College*

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## Topics In Animation

CCNY ART 495283

3 credits

Fall Semester: August 31 - Dec 17

Thursdays 2:00pm- 4:50pm

Building: CG room 121

**Professor:** Pilar Newton-Katz **email:** Pnewton@ccny.cuny.edu

**phone:** 917.202.6035

Office Hours: Monday 5-6

## Course Description

- This semester we delve into the world of nonfiction animation! Through exploring animated documentary, the animated interview and animated memoir we learn about this art form. This semester we explore different ways to document: IE; Interview, Narration, Slice of life, conceptual.

From rough idea to sketched-out storyboard to finished animation you'll have a chance to develop and create nonfiction animation. Every student is going to come away with a film festival-ready 30 to 60 second short due on the last day.

## Learning Outcomes and Assessable Tasks

- Reinforce and expand upon your vocabulary of Animation and visual narrative.
- Develop drawing/design skills needed to create an animated documentary.
- Develop skills to research and create an animated documentary.
- Learn about animated documentaries, interviews and memoirs.

## Supply List

- A dedicated class Sketchbook, 8 x 10 size minimum
- Pens (Sharpie thick or thin, and black felt tip) and pencils
- Thumb Drive (2 GB min.) for backing up your work but work **MUST** be backed up in at least 2-3 places
- Wacom Tablet + driver software (optional). Tablets can be borrowed from Dept. But having your own is recommended

## Readings and Resources (PDF texts will be provided)

- [The Animator's Survival Kit \(Paperback\)](#) by Richard Williams
- [Cartoon Animation](#) by Preston Blair
- [The Illusion of Life](#) by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston

## Assignments:

Storyboard a 20-panel historical moment.

Animated Biography

Interview animated.

Animated Anecdote.

Final Project : 30 - 60 second documentary, interview or memoir.

## Course Outline

### 1) Intro to Course and class goals

- Viewing and discussion: Winsor McCay's *Sinking of the Lusitania*
- Document your class: Learn a classmate's story.
- Discussion of storyboard.

#### Homework Assignment:

1. This week we watched the short film *Sinking of the Lusitania*. For homework: In 15-20 panels describe an event in history. Next class bring storyboard board scanned in.

### 2) Storyboard pitches. Talk us through your board in 5 min or less and discuss.

- Viewing: Show [Storycorps, Winston Churchill bio](#)
- Adobe Animate review of tools and interface.

#### Homework Assignment:

- Homework: Revised Animated Biography boards PDF due.

### 3) Carol Spinney

segment [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRD\\_QNgO\\_kQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRD_QNgO_kQ)

- Pitch homework drawing assignment.
- Adobe Premiere review.

#### Homework Assignment:

- Watch Ryan and Lipsett Diaries

### 4) Group activity. Rapid prototyping. 5 Groups research and create a 30 second documentary.

- Show [Storycorps](#); Rauch Bros and Ace and Sons.
- Adobe Premiere review.

#### Homework Assignment:

Homework: • 30 second Animated Documentary due.

### 5) Dustin Grella Animation Hotline

- Presentation of animated group projects.
- Discussion of creatively visualizing documentary.

#### Homework Assignment:

- Animated Anecdote: Record yourself or a friend telling a 15-20 second anecdote. Must be kept to 30 seconds.

### 6) Animated Anecdote

Last class we discussed Dustin Grella's Animation Hotline. Now we will bring it to life. Imagery is symbolic and shows mostly no people.

**Homework Assignment:** Animated Anecdote: Storyboard the 30 second story that you recorded.

### 7) Working with sound

- Importing and animating with sound workshop.

**Homework Assignment:** Animated Anecdote: Storyboard animatic video due

- 8)** All about Aardman Animation Film Viewing.
- Aardman talk and exercise.
  - In class lab time to work on Animated Anecdote.

**Homework Assignment:** Rough cut of your Animated Anecdote due

- 9)** Class Crit of Animated Anecdote rough cut.
- Upload EXPORTED and properly named (Firstname.lastname\_animatedbiography.mp4 for example) file to your dropbox folder.

**Homework Assignment:**

1. Animated Anecdote due.
2. Implement any feedback received on your Animated Anecdote.

**10)** Out of Context Interview

- View Andy London's [149<sup>th</sup> and Grand Concourse link](#) on Blackboard

**Homework Assignment:**

Interview: You must interview someone. Write out 5 questions and record interview.

**11)** Visual Language : Space and Motion and talk and exercise.

- Upload Audio
- Editing demo

**Homework Assignment:** *Interview storyboard due for review.*

**12)** Travel Journal. Let's travel!

- Film Viewing: Madagascar, Carnet De Voyage and exercise.
- Work on Out of Context Interview in class.

**Homework Assignment:**

- Out of Context Interview storyboard animatic video due.
- Your Travel Journal: Do a small sketch for at least 2- 3 spots in your home that you visit the most. Write a sentence for each sketch. Upload a PDF.

**13) Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**

- Guest Speaker TBD

**Homework Assignment:** Rough cut of Out of Context Interview due

**14) Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>**

- In-class studio time to work on final.
- Class Critique and round table discussion
- **Homework Assignment:** Animated Anecdote due final

**15) Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>**

- Work in progress crit.

**Homework Assignment:** Final due by midnight.

## **GRADING:**

Attendance + Participation: 40% (20/100 points)

Assignments: 60 % (20/100 points)

**A=** Student work shows development, a full understanding of the principles discussed in class and a creative evolution. The student displays an enthusiasm towards the class and participates fully and constructively in critiques, and presents work professionally. Overall, an exceptional performance.

**B=** Student completes all assignments in a thorough manner. The work created over the course shows an understanding of the principles and lessons covered in class. The student participates in critiques and discussions and provides insight to others, showing a better-than-average performance.

**C=** Work and performance quality is barely adequate.

**D=** Poor work. Doesn't understand the assignments.

**F=** Don't even go there! This class should be fun. But, if you want to get an F, this is what you need to do: do not complete the course work, have a negative attitude, don't participate, and disrupt the good studio vibe we establish in the classroom.

**Your Work:** You own your work. Everything that you create in this class is your own. I host and have access to many screening events. I look for opportunities for your work to be screened. But I will never screen any of your animations without asking permission from you first.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is an essential part of the pursuit of truth, and of your education. We are all responsible for maintaining academic integrity at City College – it is the rock on which the value of your degree is built.

If you cheat on a test or plagiarize by using someone else's work or ideas, you defeat the purpose of your education. Any artwork, images, video, text or music must be credited to the original artist, filmmaker or author.

In addition, academic dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York, and is punishable by failing grades, suspension and expulsion.

To read the full policy: [http://www.ccnycuny.edu/about/upload/academic\\_integrity.pdf](http://www.ccnycuny.edu/about/upload/academic_integrity.pdf)

Instructor Bio:

Animator/educator Pilar Newton-Katz has earned a BFA in Film and Animation at the Rhode Island School of Design. She has done work for Nickelodeon, Nick Jr., Cartoon Network, MTV, Ted Ed and Sirius Thinking among many others. With a focus on 2D Adobe Animate animation, Pilar's Brooklyn-based company PilarToons, LLC has a growing client base. As an avid educator, Pilar teaches several acclaimed after-school animation programs. She is also a visiting teacher at New York City's prestigious LaGuardia High School of Music and Art and the Performing Arts where she is also a graduate.