CTAN 592: Storyboarding Masterclass
Units: Spring 2019, 2 UNITS
WEDNESDAYS 7-8:50 PM

Location: RZC 117

Instructor: Brandon Jeffords
Office: Available upon request
Office Hours: Available upon request
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Student Assistant: Ann Lee
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Course Description
This course will be an introduction to the techniques and uses of storyboards for Film and TV Animation. While many of the methods discussed may be applied to storyboarding for Live-Action film or TV, this class will not focus on the specifics of Live-Action storyboarding. Emphasis will be on – telling a story with pictures – which is the foundation of all cinema, old and new. Students will have the chance to develop their abilities to communicate visually, with clarity. Some aspects of the class will be designed to simulate a “real time” professional storyboarding experience, working from assigned script pages, established character and environmental designs, all toward giving students an overview of what to expect when eventually entering the demanding, active and – yes – fun arena of animated filmmaking. Final projects can include – but not mandatorily - the creation of storyboards focusing on students’ original ideas as well, from concept to execution, and, after individual consultation with the instructor, will be based on a student-by-student basis.

For class demonstration purposes, the instructor will be working on a digital tablet and/or animation storyboard software. (IMPORTANT NOTE: This class is NOT designed to teach the technical aspects or techniques of any digital storyboarding or design software, such as Photoshop, Sketchbook, Toon Boom or Storyboard Pro.)

Grades
Grading will not be based on group critiques, classroom participation and accurate delivery of assignments. Students will be judged by completion of assignments by given deadlines, willingness to take direction, execution of revisions and overall improvement demonstrated over the span of the course. Students will NOT be graded on personal drawing skills, but will be expected to accurately communicate ideas, actions and scenarios in a graphic, clear, visual manner.

Grading Criteria
Assignments 40%
Class participation & participation in lectures 20%
Final project 40%

Projects will be evaluated on the following criteria:

a. Accuracy of assignment guidelines
b. Demonstration of principles covered in class
c. Communication of ideas

Final projects will be evaluated on the following criteria:

a. Completion
b. Communication of narrative or intent
c. Effectiveness of timing and execution

Electronic Media in Class

You may use your laptops and/or portable digital drawing tablets for notes and/or translation, but NOT or Facebook or YouTube (except for research purposes approved by the instructor) during lectures. Absolutely no social media or texting during lectures, keep phones on mute.

Supplies

Digital Storyboarding preferred. Storyboard software such as Toonboom Storyboard Pro, or Photoshop, Sketcher are encouraged for those students who know how to use them. Presentation of assignments using Power Point or Preview is welcomed and encouraged, but not mandatory.

If the student chooses traditional drawing, they can select the exact drawing medium with which they are most comfortable, but drawing paper sketchbooks (no smaller than 8.5 X 11 letter size) pencils, erasers, black pens and markers (Sharpies preferred) are highly recommended, as are professional storyboard pads – both TV and Feature (1:1.85 screen ratio) formats.

Required Text

- *Directing the Story: Professional Storytelling and Storyboarding Techniques for Live Action and Animation* by Francis Glebas
- *Animation 1: Learn to Animate Cartoons Step by Step (Cartooning, Book 1)* by Preston J. Blair
Course Schedule:

- WEEK 1 (Jan 09): “SHOW IT. DON’T TELL IT.” - Visual Storytelling Overview. In-class quick assignments and discussion. First Home Assignment Due Following Week.
- WEEK 2 (Jan 16): “ARE WE CLEAR?” – Turn in Assignments Group Critique and Discussion and instructor examples. Second Home Assignment Due Following Week.
- WEEK 3 (Jan 23): “PROFESSIONAL PITCH DEMONSTRATION” – Student Q & A and discussion. Turn in assignments from previous week.
- Week 4 (Jan 30): “TIME FOR THE REAL THING” - Group discussion and assignment of individual scripted sequence and two-week delivery deadline. Rough working concepts and “thumbnails” of work-in-progress is due following week for individualized discussions with instructor.
- WEEK 5 (Feb 6): INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT/INSTRUCTOR DISCUSSIONS - Group Q & A. In class working session. Instructor Walk Around.
- WEEK 6 (Feb 13): “THE PITCH” – Students present storyboards from assigned sequences. Group discussion. Instructor tips on presentation of storyboards. How to approach revisions. Assignment: Find an existing short film clip (animated or live-action) which conveys a visual idea. Translate in simple drawing form, the basic key visual elements which support the idea.
- WEEK 7 (Feb 20): “2ND STORYBOARD ASSIGNMENT” – Instructor lecture. Advanced version of assignment from Week 4. Due in four Weeks.
- WEEK 8 (Feb 27): INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT/INSTRUCTOR DISCUSSIONS – Group Q & A. In class working session. Instructor Walk Around.
- (Mar 13): NO CLASS! Spring Recess.
- WEEK 10 (Mar 20): “PITCHES”
- WEEK 11 (Mar 27): “HONING SKILLS” – Instructor presentation and student in-class exercises based on class needs. (i.e. improving camera angles, cutting, staging etc.) Final assignment given. Students will storyboard an original idea within the parameters given by the instructor. (Due in 4 weeks.)
- Week 12 (Apr 03): “CONCEPT REVIEW” – Instructor will review the students’ concepts to make sure they are achievable within the timeframe.
- Weeks 13 (Apr 10): “WORKSHOP CLASS PART ONE” – Instructor Walk-Around. Individual Discussions where needed/requested. All students must attend and work in class.
- Week 14 (Apr 17): “WORKSHOP CLASS PART TWO” – Instructor Walk-Around. Individual Discussions where needed/requested. All students must attend and work in class.
- Week 15 (Apr 24): “FINAL PITCHES ” – Final Pitches of your original story are due. They should be submitted electronically and will be presented orally in the final class period. Instructor Summation
- Study Days: April 27-30
Academic Conduct:

**Plagiarism** – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710
Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.
https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

**Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421**
studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

**The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776**
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

**USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710**
studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

**Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101**
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

**USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call**
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

**USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call**
dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

**Diversity and Inclusion**

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/

**Disruptive Student Behavior:**

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX**

**Instructor Accessibility**

Appointments as needed

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“Story is Everything. Nothing can take it's Place.” - Walt Disney