CTAN 586: Storyboarding Masterclass
Units: FALL 2022, 2 UNITS
MONDAYS 7-8:50 PM (PST)

Location: SCB 102

Instructor: Brandon Jeffords
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Office Hours: Available upon request
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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 Breakdown

- 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 for social media 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 Readings and Supplementary Materials

While storyboarding is largely a "Learn by Doing" craft, several books have been published, which provide, if not fully "How To" information, good inspiration for the student artist. All the books listed below are relatively inexpensive and available new and/or used, and in paperback, on Amazon.com or eBay, as well as book and art supply stores:

- *FUN WITH A PENCIL* by Andrew Loomis
- *ANIMATION – LEARN HOW TO DRAW ANIMATED CARTOONS* by Preston Blair
- *HOW TO ANIMATE FILM CARTOONS* by Preston Blair
- *DISNEY ANIMATION – THE ILLUSION OF LIFE* by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnson

Course Schedule:

- WEEK 1 (Aug 23): **"SHOW IT. DON'T TELL IT."** - Visual Storytelling Overview. In-class quick assignments and discussion. First Home Assignment Due Following Week.
- WEEK 2(Aug 30): **"ARE WE CLEAR?"** – Turn in Assignments Group Critique and Discussion and instructor examples. Second Home Assignment Due Following Week.
- WEEK 3 (Sep 6): **NO CLASS!** Labor Day.
- WEEK 4 (Sep 13): **"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 (Sep 20): **"PROFESSIONAL PITCH DEMONSTRATION"** - Group Q & A. In class working session. One-on-one instructor assistance.
- WEEK 6 (Sep 27): **"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 (Oct 4): **"2ND STORYBOARD ASSIGNMENT- Story Test"** – Review student scenes. Instructor lecture. Advanced version of assignment from Week 4. (Due in 3 Weeks.)
- WEEK 8 (Oct 11): **INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT/INSTRUCTOR DISCUSSIONS –** Group Q & A. In class working session. One-on-one instructor assistance.
- Fall Recess (Oct 14-15)
- WEEK 9 (Oct 18): **INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT/INSTRUCTOR DISCUSSIONS –** Group Q & A. In class working session. One-on-one instructor assistance.
- WEEK 10 (Oct 25): **"PITCHES"** Story Test Pitch review. In class exercise.

- WEEK 11 (Nov 1):. "**HONING SKILLS**" – Instructor presentation and student in-class exercises based on class needs. (i.e. improving camera angles, cutting, staging etc.) "**THE FINAL ASSIGNMENT**" – Students and Instructor discuss whether given student wants to produce and original idea or from an existing script assigned by the Instructor (both receive equal grading credit). Assignments given. Due in 4 weeks (Nov 22)
- WEEK 12 (Nov 8): "**CONCEPT REVIEW**" – Instructor will review the students' concepts to make sure they are achievable within the timeframe. One-on-one instructor assistance
- WEEK 13 (Nov 15): "**WORKSHOP CLASS PART ONE**" – Instructor "Walk-Around". Individual Discussions where needed/requested. All students must check-in. One-on-one instructor assistance.
- WEEK 14 (Nov 22): "**WORKSHOP CLASS PART TWO**" – Instructor "Walk-Around". Individual Discussions where needed/requested. All students must check-in. One-on-one instructor assistance.
- WEEK 15 (Nov 29): "**FINAL PITCHES** " – Final Pitches of your original story are due. This is your final exam. They should be submitted electronically and will be presented orally in the final class period. Instructor Summation. Due at 7:00pm (PST)
- (Dec 4-6) Study Days

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call studenthealth.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 and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298 equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by 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. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298 usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, 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.

Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710 campussupport.usc.edu

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC) ombuds.usc.edu

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

PLEASE NOTE:

FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE IN THE SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX

"**Story is Everything. Nothing can take it's Place." - Walt Disney**