ANI 425 Visual Storytelling

Syllabus: Winter 2018

Tuesday: 5:45 – 9:00 pm, CDM Room 527 & 530
Instructor: Steve Socki - Email: ssocki@cdm.depaul.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 11:00am to 2:00pm; and by appointment
Office: CDM 511;   Office Phone: 312-362-8273

Course Description

This class will focus on storyboarding and developing ideas as key pre-production tools for narrative animation, film, and gaming projects. The lectures, class work, and assignments will help students to expand their own cinematic drawing techniques, and help them to develop clear and dynamic stories for the screen. A variety of live-action and animated films and professional storyboards will be analyzed in class. Students will develop their personal style of boarding through a series of exercises and assignments. They will complete a short final animatic - a comprehensive pre-production blueprint for a project of their own choice.

Learning Goals

- Learn the vocabulary of film language, types of shots, transitions, and narrative structure
- Apply basic principles of character staging, shot progression, camera angles, lighting tones, & camera moves with in-class exercises & assignments
- Create a series of hand-drawn storyboards demonstrating knowledge of sequential narration with accurate perspective and placement of characters
- Practice visual methods of expressing character attitudes and acting that relate to story telling
- Combine storyboards with sound to create 'Animatics'

Learning Outcomes

- Understand conventional cinematic structure of shot progression, staging, and screen direction
- Compose visually dynamic shots, with good lighting, showing cinematic depth
- Create character-driven storytelling with convincing character attitudes and acting that visually support the narrative
- Apply all principles of storyboarding into a clear blueprint for an animated film, in which all visual aspects are working together

Textbooks and Printed Resources:

- Recommended for All Students:
    Prepare to Board! by Nancy Beiman;
    Dream Worlds: Production Design for Animation, by Hans Baker

- For BFA Animation Students in Cinema Concentration
    Drawn to Life, by Walt Stanchfield

- For Students with Less Experience in Figure Drawing:
    Drawing from Life, by George Bridgeman

Online Software Reference:

- Lynda.com tutorials for Adobe & most animation software; access w/DePaul Info
- Adobe Creative Suite http://depaul.onthehub.com   discounts for DePaul Students

Prerequisite: ANI 201

Drawing Experience:

Life Drawing is normally required. If you have not taken college-level life drawing classes, ==expect to spend additional time on all assignments==. Plan to use your camera phones to shoot character pose references. Always work on improving your figure drawing.

Grading:
- Weekly Assignments = 75%
- Attendance & Participation = 10%
- Final Project= 15%
- Standard DePaul Grading Policy: A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-88, B = 87-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-78, C = 77-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0
- Note: Any late work submitted will have a deduction. If submitted more than a week late you will receive no credit.

Attendance Policy:
- Miss 1 Class: You will be notified through BlueStar
- ==Miss 2 classes: Final Grade lowered 20%==
- ==Miss 3 classes:== Final grade lowered 40% - (will not pass the class), will be asked to ==Withdraw==
- If you are absent due to illness or family issues, you must ==contact the Dean of Students== and request an ==Excused Absence.==
  https://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/absence-notification.aspx
- Email me if you will be absent, but you must contact the Dean of Students for excused absence.
- Constantly ==arriving late== will be considered an Unexcused absence.
- Working on outside projects or constantly ==working on your phone== will lower your participation grade to '0'
- If you miss a class, you are still <u>required to submit work by the deadlines</u>. ==Time management== is essential in this production class.
- Late submissions receive partial credit; no credit for assignments that are more than ==7 days late==.
- The ==final class== is normally mandatory. If you do not attend, your participation grade will be lowered 50% *

Incompletes:

You must apply for Incomplete directly through Campus Connect. The ==Associate Dean must approve this== first, before I can approve. Must apply before the 10th week of classes. You will be asked to explain circumstances.

Participation in Class:
- Expect to be called upon to give input on <u>weekly critiques.</u> Plan to give brief, professional input that addresses principles of storyboarding. Contact me during first week if you have any personal issues with public speaking.
- Everyone will need to draw during <u>in-class drawing exercises.</u> In-class work is at the very beginning of class, so do not be late.

Assignments:

We will begin with fundamental methods for staging characters that will apply to all aspects of cinematic storytelling. You will learn how to block out a scene with perspective and basic character placement. Drawing skills are helpful but are not required; we will work with references and other guides, on paper, for in-class assignments.
- Some assignments will be submitted on paper, when noted.
- Most work must be submitted as a digital file 'Assignments Folder' on D2L, 1 hour before class.

- You may work digitally on assignments: students often use Photoshop; This is encouraged
- If you work with pencil and paper, scan your work at a high quality, and submit as a single PDF file. Do not submit an I-Phone photo of your artwork for any assignment. It is important to approach each project with a professional attitude, following the required formats and aspect ratios.
- Each assignment is normally worth 10 points (or 10% of your grade). Points will automatically be deducted if late, or in the wrong format, or at a low quality.
- Plan to spend at least 3 to 6 hours of work outside of class to complete assignments.
- You will need to use some Adobe software for some assignments; all software is available in the CDM Labs and hallway computers. Plan to work off-hours to use computer labs 527 & 722.

Facilities:
- Class will first meet in CDM room 527. Most classes we will be working in the Design Studio, CDM room 530. Class critiques will be in the 5th floor gallery when noted (across hall from room 527).
- We will also use a PC Lab for 2 classes; time & place to be determined.
- Digital Scanners are available on floors 1 & 4 of CDM. Other campus scanners are noted on the CDM page; can also check with facilities dept on 4th Floor.
- You can check out a Wacom Drawing Tablet from the "Film Cage," 14 E.Jackson, Basement Level.
- Use any CDM Computer to access Photoshop. Some Lincoln Park studios also have this.
- CDM Tutoring Services on 9th floor available to help with software. Refer to CDM Home Page > Click under Tutoring > Find a Tutor > find a Grad Student who knows the software > Make an appointment.

Supplies:
- Drawing materials and paper will be provided for in-class exercises. You are also encouraged to bring your own sketchbooks for in-class work.
- Always bring your own portable drive when working in any CDM labs. Begin to keep a separate folder for assignments and for "reference material."

Using D2L:
- Most class work must be submitted to the "D2L Assignments Folder" (used to be called Dropbox). The formats and guidelines will be detailed.
- Lectures will be recorded on D2L; the quality is not great, but may help as a reference
- Weekly Class Notes, Student Samples, Reference Art, & Slideshows will be posted on D2L "Content Folder."
- Use the ColTube Site on D2L (bottom right) to view film library of work referenced in class.

Email Me:
Please email me directly with any questions about assignments or if you have any issues with the class. Please let me know right away if you have any problems working in my class, or if something is preventing you from completing assignments. I will always make the time to meet with you individually, outside of class. If you have any personal problems I will let you know about the helpful, confidential resources available to you.

Weekly Schedule: (Will change during the quarter, as noted)

WEEK 1: Overview of Story Boards; Textbooks & Structure of Class; Basic Perspective; Basic Staging; Characters with Perspective; Storyboard Terminology

WEEK 2: Types of Film Shots; Screen Direction; Shot Progression, Film Logic;

WEEK 3: Framing Devices; Cinematic Depth; Strong Composition; Visual Clarity

WEEK 4: Tones; Dramatic Composition; Iconic Shapes; Use of Angles

WEEK 5: Character Performance; Character Development & Design

WEEK 6: Acting; Working with Dialogue; Clarity of Story through Characters

WEEK 7: Camera Moves; Assembling BGs & Multiple Levels, Basic Animatic Assembly

WEEK 8: Animatics; Working with Sound; Compositing in After Effects

WEEK 9: Pitch Final Story; Blocking Out Final with Beat Boards

WEEK 10: "The Hero's Journey" & Other Structures; Work on Finals

FINAL : Tue, March 13, 2:30 ~ 4:45pm

Jan 15: Last day to drop class for Refund (& no grade on transcripts)

Feb 19: Last day to Withdraw Class – (receive "W" grade)

Mar 3: Deadline to Request Incomplete

*Note: This syllabus is subject to changes in content and dates during the quarter. Any changes will be posted under Announcements on D2L.

Online Teaching Evaluation:
Student teaching evaluations are conducted near the very end of the quarter. All evaluations are anonymous. This is a valuable and constructive tool in creating a better classroom experience for future students. A short break will be made available sometime during the last 2 weeks for the students to complete their evaluation – the instructor will not be present for this (Although donuts are usually provided). Submissions should be sent through Campus Connect.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:
This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/ If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

Academic Policies:
All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at:
http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx

Students with Disabilities:
Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: Lewis Center #1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.
Phone: (312)362-8002 Fax: (312)362- 6544 TTY:(773)325.7296