

## FILM 406 Studies in Film Aesthetics: Animation

**Trimester 1 2015**

2 March to 1 July 2015

**30 Points**



Sylvester and Butch in Tweety and Sylvester Mysteries, ©Warner Bros.

### IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

Easter/Mid-Trimester break: 3 to 19 April 2015

Last assessment item due: 5 June

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds). If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

### CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

**Seminars:** Wednesdays 13:10 - 17:00 85 Fairlie Tce FT85108

### NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:

Dr Kirsten Thompson

Email: [kirsten.thompson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:kirsten.thompson@vuw.ac.nz)

Phone: 463 6728

Room: 101, 85 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: Wed, 12-1 or by appointment

### COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, you **must** set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use. All class emails will be sent to your Victoria email

ONLY so you are responsible for checking them. All required readings will be uploaded to Blackboard, except for the course textbooks.

Please address all email **formally and courteously** to me and don't expect a response faster than 24 hours. (This means addressing your email as Dear Dr Thompson, not "Hey Kirsten" and giving me your full name and Student ID).

### PRESCRIPTION

A critical examination of one or more aspects of the aesthetic dimensions of cinema. In 2015 the course will explore the history, aesthetics and theories of animation. We'll have a particular emphasis on classical Hollywood cel animation and new developments in animation theory, but students will also be able to consider other genre forms (stop motion, scratch, puppet, anime, computer), as well as non-narrative animation. We'll consider animation's vexed relationship to live action film (and to the discipline of film and media studies), and recent theoretical ideas about animated space, movement, machine and affect, as well as questions of materiality and medium specificity.

### COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

- 1) demonstrate knowledge of the history and technological development of animation
- 2) have a general understanding of a number of different methodological and theoretical approaches to animation studies, including its definition, history, technological forms and aesthetics
- 3) have a more advanced knowledge of at least one theoretical approach in animation studies
- 4) demonstrate research & analytical skills having developed an independent research project on a topic in animation.

### TEACHING FORMAT

The course will be delivered through a combination of seminar and screenings. There will be some short presentations and clips from the instructor. Seminars will involve considerable student participation, especially in the introduction and discussion of weekly reading material as well as presentation of your own work.

### MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must have:

- submitted ALL assignments, on or by the specified dates (unless extensions are approved)
- submitted all assignments both digitally (on Turnitin) and in hard copy form to 83 Fairlie Terrace (front office) **by the due date at 5 pm**. Failure to submit either the digital assignment or hardcopy assignment will result in penalties. All assignments are subject to a three day maximum lateness

policy (see penalties section). Failure to complete any specific coursework **results in a failure for the class**

- attended at least 9 out of the 12 seminars, unless documented by illness or other approved excuse.

## WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30-point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week.

As a guide consider this hour allocation should be:

Class contact hours	12 x 4 hours seminar/lectures	48 hours
Class preparation	12 x 4 hours	48 hours
Personal reading and research		40 hours
Research essay		84 hours
Seminar presentation		40 hours
Annotated bibliographies		40 hours

TOTAL: 300 hours

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Annotated bibliography	20 %	1, 2, 4	22 April
2	Individual presentations	30 %	1, 2, 3,4,	13 May
3	Research essay	40 %	1,2,3,4	5 June
4	Participation	10 %	1, 2, 3, 4	Wks 2-12

### Assignment One: Annotated Bibliography (20%): Due Date: 22 April

Length. One paragraph annotated description each for 10 texts. Using JSTOR or MLA databases, this assignment will require you to prepare an annotated bibliography of 10 texts relevant to a potential research essay topic in animation studies in which you are interested. For each text you will write a brief summary of the main thesis or argument of the text with 2-3 sentences elaborating on particular issues of relevance to your thesis. You will then write a summary paragraph which assesses how your 10 articles collectively contribute to your proposed topic. (See also more detailed handout on Blackboard posted by Week 1.)

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 406
- Clear analysis of the material presented in the articles
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in the articles
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Accurate and complete referencing of the articles.

**Assignment Two: Seminar Presentation (30%) Due 13 May (depending on class size)**

For this assignment you will be expected to develop a research question relating to your interests in animation, on which you *may* eventually write your final paper. You will be expected to present your research question/topic to the class (no more than 20 minutes) with handouts on your readings & other relevant materials. You will also have a written version of your presentation to hand in to the instructor. Class feedback will then be given in a round table response to the presentation.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 406
- Evidence of textual analysis skills, including argumentation
- Quality and originality of the presentation
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography in written version of presentation.

**Assignment Three: Research Essay (40%) 3500-4000 words; Due Date: Friday 5 June (by 5 pm)**

This assignment builds from Assignments 1 & 2. You are expected to explore a research question on a topic of your own devising within animation studies. You will be assessed on your analytical skills, originality and fluency in close textual and theoretical examination of your chosen topic.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in class
- Evidence of textual analysis skills, including argumentation
- Quality and originality of the presentation

- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography.

#### **Assignment Four: Participation in Seminars (10%); All Seminars Wk 2-12**

You will be assessed on the quality of your contributions to each seminar throughout the course, which includes having done the readings and being prepared to discuss them, commencing in week 2. You will be expected to lead the discussion of at least one week's reading. Non-attendance for more than three classes without a valid excuse (such as illness) is a mandatory course requirement and failure to do so will result in course failure.

#### Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 406
- Evidence of textual analysis skills, including argumentation
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis.

**Please note:** Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until feedback from the external examiner has been considered. Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made by the Honours programme examination committee.

#### **SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK**

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the "Assignments and Turnitin" section of Blackboard.

Each assignment is submitted in two formats:

- A hardcopy in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet to your assignment, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office.
- Email your assignment as a MS Word file to [film@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:film@vuw.ac.nz) Your marked assignment will be handed back by your course coordinator. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the

administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the administration office.

## EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

### Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted but *must be requested before the due date* (unless documented by exceptional circumstances such as severe illness). To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due.

### Penalties

All assignments are subject to a 2.5 % penalty for each day late (counted as two days on weekends) **and subject to a maximum of 3 days. No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Wednesday 19 June 2015.** Weekends will count as two late days. Late work also receives minimal or no comments from your marker.

## SET TEXTS

Beckman, Karen, ed. *Animating Film Theory*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. (AFT in course outline).

As this is a slightly less essential textbook, you can get it out from library and photocopy or scan the chapters you will need, if you prefer.

Buchan, Suzanne, ed. *Pervasive Animation*. NY: Routledge, 2013. (PA in course outline) Essential

Additional Required Readings will be on Blackboard (BB in course outline)

You can order textbooks online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz).

## RECOMMENDED READING

See listings each week in course outline at end.

## CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

This is the first time this version of this class has been taught. Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php). In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Aegrotats: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Resolving academic issues: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)
- Special passes: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Student Contract: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)
- School website: [www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms)

## COURSE PROGRAMME

### Week I / What is Animation? / 4 March

#### Screenings:

Eadweard Muybridge and Charles-Émile Reynaud Pauvre Pierrot (1892), Fr.

Enchanted Drawings (1900) J. Stuart Blackton US

Humorous Phases of Funny Faces (1906) J Stuart Blackton, US

In a Cartoon Studio/ (aka) Making Them Move (1931) Van Beuren Studios (Complete Lotte Reiniger -- selections of fairy tales & silhouette animation (Austria)

The Cameraman's Revenge (1912, Lareslas Starewich/Khanzhonkov (Russia)

Duck Amuck (Chuck Jones, 1953) US

Alfonso Cuaron Gravity,

\*\*\*\*watch the following items below in advance of class

Hugo & Marie's music video for ColdPlay <http://vimeo.com/74033645>

Olafur Eliasson's TedTalk "Playing with Space and Light"

[http://www.ted.com/talks/olafur\\_eliasson\\_playing\\_with\\_space\\_and\\_light?language=e](http://www.ted.com/talks/olafur_eliasson_playing_with_space_and_light?language=e)

Tara Dougans's video for the fashion week "Beware of a Man's Shadow" at <http://vimeo.com/44189505>

Reading: Maureen Furniss, chapter 1 BB

Suzanne Buchan "Pervasive Animation" , PA

### Week II/ What is Animation?: The Animated Line/ 11 March

#### Screenings:

Fantasmagorie (1908) Emile Cohl, France.

Le Paysagist/Mindscape (Jacques Drouin, 1976, Canada)

How A Mosquito Operates (1912) Winsor McCay

Rejected (Don Hertzfeld, 2000) US

Broomstick Bunny (1956) Chuck Jones

Gerald McBoing Boing (1950)

The Telltale Heart (1953)

Len Lye Selections (NZ/UK)

#### Watch in Advance of Class



Begone Dull Care (Norman McLaren, 1949, Canada)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svDOCWVjYRY>

Hilton Ads pertaining to Sobchack article) watch at

<http://jakesdiplomablog.blogspot.com/2010/03/hilton-ads-by-raimund-krumme.html>

Also <http://www.acmefilmworks.com/director/0/7/krumme.html> (click on “view director’s showreel”

Rejected (Don Hertzfeldt, 2000) US Watch it on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9I7sxPLhOQk>

Hilton Ads pertaining to Sobchack article) watch at

<http://jakesdiplomablog.blogspot.com/2010/03/hilton-ads-by-raimund-krumme.html>

Also <http://www.acmefilmworks.com/director/0/7/krumme.html> (click on various individual boxes, such as “Dancing Couple” “Dragon” “Hammock” “Jordan” “Sunrise”

**Reading:** Karen Beckman, Introduction “Animating Film Theory” AFT

Vivian Sobchack. “The Line from A to B” BB; Birgitta Hosea “Drawing Animation” BB

Recommended Readings: Sean Cubitt: “Line and Color in the Band Concert” BB

Sianne Ngai: “Animatedness,” excerpt from *Ugly Feelings* 89-126 BB

Andrew Johnstone “Signatures Of Motion: Len Lye’s Scratch films And The Energy Of The Line” AFT

### **Week III / Animated Documentary/ 18 March**

**Screenings:** Waltz With Bashir (Ari Folman, 2008); selections Military Training Films WWII, such as Victory Through Air Power (selections), The Winged Scourge; Out of the Frying Pan and into the Front Lines

**Readings:** Nea Ehrlich “Animated Documentaries: Aesthetics, Politics, and Viewer Engagement” PA

Bishnupriya Ghosh “Aniamting Uncommon Life : US Military Malaria Films (1942-1945) and the Pacific Theater , AFT

### **Week IV / Anime and Stasis/ / 25 March**

**NB: Professor Thompson away at Conference.**

**\*\*\*\*\*Class will meet with Koichi, Vic Film Librarian at KK217 for presentation on Research and not in the regular classroom**

**Come to Class and watch**

**Screenings:** Mamoru Oshii Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence (2012). (one student will take responsibility for

screening and retuning film to my office)

Additional Recommended Home Viewing: the films of Katsuhiro Otomo (Akira), Hayao Miyazaki (Princess Mononoke, Howl's Moving Castle, Spirited Away, The Wind Rises), and Satoshi Kon (Three Godfathers, Paprika, Perfect Blue)

**Reading:** Thomas Lamarre "Coming to Life: Cartoon Animals and Natural Philosophy" PA

Recommended: Joon Young Kim "The East Asian Post-Human Prometheus: Animated Mechanical Others" PA; Thomas Lamarre – "Japanese Animation and New Media" [Online] [www.lamarre-mediaken.com/Site/214L2\\_1.html](http://www.lamarre-mediaken.com/Site/214L2_1.html)

### **Week V/ Ephemeral Animation /1 April**

**NB: Professor Thompson away at Conference.**

**Screenings: watch/read at Home these materials below**

1) Disney Wedding Cakes

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/30/disney-wedding-cake\\_n\\_5909032.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/30/disney-wedding-cake_n_5909032.html)

2) "Animating Ephemeral Surfaces: Transparency, Translucency and Disney's World of Color." *Refractory: A Journal of Entertainment Media*. vol 24. (June) 2014.

<http://refractory.unimelb.edu.au/2014/08/06/thompson/>

Watch Wonderful World of Color (30 minute show embedded in essay above)

3) look at Website James Turrell <http://jamesturrell.com>

**Readings:** Sean Cubitt 'Ecocritique and the Materialities of Animation'; PA

George Griffin – "Take the B Train: Reconstructing the Protocinematic Apparatus" PA

**Easter/Mid Trimester Break:** Friday 3 to Sunday 19 April 2015

### **Week VI /Bodies and Labour/ 22 April**

**Annotated Bibliographies Due this week**

**Screening:** Selections Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (Disney , 1937) ; Reluctant Dragon sequence; Cinderella sequence; Swooner Crooner (1944) Frank Tashlin; Funny Little Bunnies (1934, Disney); Barber of Seville (1944, Shamus Culhane/ Walter Lantz) ; Alice's Egg Plant (1925, Ub Iwerks/ Disney)

**Reading:** Kirsten Moana Thompson "' Quick-- Like a Bunny ! :The Ink and Paint Machine, Female Labor and Color Production." *Animation Studies*, vol. 9. February (2014).

<http://journal.animationstudies.org/kirsten-thompson-quick-like-a-bunny/>

**Week VII/ WAR CARTOONS AND PROPAGANDA/ 29 April**

**Screenings:** Selections Bambi (Disney, 1941)

Coal Black and De Sebben Dwarfs (1943) Bob Clampett

Plane Daffy (Frank Tashlin, 1944) WB

Draftee Daffy (Bob Clampett, 1945) WB

Any Bonds Today? (1942, WB)

Der Führer's Face (Jack Kinney, 1943)

Education for Death (Clyde Geronimi, 1943)

**Readings:** Kirsten Moana Thompson "Classical Animation, World War II and Bambi" BB

Scott Bukatman "Some Observations Pertaining to Cartoon Physics: or the Cartoon Cat in the Machine" AFT

**WEEK VIII/ Weird Animation/ 6 May**

**Screenings:**

Jan Svankmajer, selections., such as Dimensions of Dialogue (1982), Meat Love (1988) Czechoslovakia

Brothers Quay: selections, e.g Cabinet of Jan Svankmajer (1984), Street of Crocodiles (1986) UK

The Big Snooze (Bob Clampett, 1946) WB, US

King Size Canary (Tex Avery, 1947) MGM, US

I'll be glad when you're dead, you rascal you (Fleischer Bros, 1932) US

**Reading:** Suzanne Buchan "A Cinema of Apprehension" PA; Christopher Lehman "African-American Representation Through the Combination of Live action and Animation" AFT

Recommended: Esther Leslie: Animation's Petrified Unrest" PA

**Week IX/ History of Computer Animation / 13 May**

**PRESENTATIONS THIS WEEK**

**Screenings:** Luxo Jr (John Lasseter, 1986), Knick Knack (John Lasseter, 1987)

Tin Toy (Pixar, 1986); The Abyss (James Cameron, 1989)

**Readings:** Darley, Andy. "Second-order Realism and Post-Modernist Aesthetics in Computer Animation." *A Reader in Animation Studies*. Ed. Jayne Pilling. Sydney: John Libbey & Company, 1997. 16-24. BB

Sito, Tom. *Moving Innovation: A History of Computer Animation*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2012. Chapters 9 & 10.

**Recommended Readings:** Vivian Sobchack "Animation and Automation, or the Incredible Effortfulness of Being" BB

**WEEK X/ Digital Animation/ 20 May**

**Screenings:** Jurassic Park (Steven Spielberg, 1993); Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (Peter Jackson, 2002)

**Readings:** Prince, Stephen. *Digital Visual Effects in Cinema: The Seduction of Reality*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012. Chapter 1: 11-56. BB

Thompson, Kirsten Moana. "Space, Spectacle, and Movement: Massive Software and Digital Special Effects in *The Lord of the Rings*." *From Hobbits to Hollywood: Essays on Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings*. Eds. Ernest Mathijs and Murray Pomerance. New York: Rodopi B.V., 2006. BB

**WEEK XI/ Motion Capture, the Virtual Actor, and the Uncanny Valley / 27 May**

**Screenings:** Planet of the Apes; King Kong selections; Final Fantasy; Coraline 3D(Henry Selick 2009),

**Readings:** Allison, Tanine. "More than a Man in a Monkey Suit: Andy Serkis, Motion Capture, and Digital Realism." *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 28 (2011): 325-341.

Mori, Masahiro. "The Uncanny Valley." Trans. Karl F. MacDorman and Takashi Minato. *Energy* 7.4 (1970): 33-35. *Android Science*. Web. 17 May 2011.

<<http://www.androidscience.com/theuncannyvalley/proceedings2005/uncannyvalley.html>

Gurevitch, Leon. "The Birth of a Stereoscopic Nation: Hollywood, Digital Empire and the Cybernetic Attraction." *animation: an interdisciplinary journal* 7.3 (2012): 239-258.

**WEEK XII /TBA / 3 June**

Class to Vote on favourite Animation Film (s) for screening and discussion.

**RESEARCH PAPER DUE FRIDAY 5 JUNE**