

FILM 406 Studies in Film Aesthetics

Trimester 1 2016

29 February to 29 June 2016

30 Points



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

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24 to 30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Last assessment item due: 10 June 2016

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Wednesday	9.00-13.00	85FT108
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NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff: Dr Kirsten Thompson

Email: Kirsten.thompson@vuw.ac.nz

Phone: 04 463 6728

Room: 101, 85 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: Thursdays 9-10, To be confirmed by email appointment

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be communicated in class and via Blackboard. 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 2016 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 more formal presentations.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As completing all assignments is important to fulfill all course learning objectives, in addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- submit ALL assignments, on or by the specified dates (unless extensions are approved)
- submit 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 and 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**
- attend at least 7 out of 11 tutorials, unless documented by illness or other approved excuse .

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

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 1500-2000 words	20 %	1, 2, 4	6 April
2	Individual presentations	30 %	1, 2, 3,4,	11 May
3	Research essay 3500-4000 words	40 %	1,2,3,4	10 June
4	Participation (Weekly)	10 %	1, 2, 3	Wks 2-12

Assignment One: Annotated Bibliography (20%) 1500-2000 words: Due Date: 6 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 2.)

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 11 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 10 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. Also submit it online to Turnitin by the same due date and time.
- Email your assignment as a MS Word file to film@vuw.ac.nz. Your marked assignment will be handed back by your course coordinator in class. 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 **and subject to a maximum of 3 days. No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Wednesday 15 June 2016.** Late work also receives minimal or no comments from your marker.

SET TEXTS

Maureen Furniss, *Art in Motion* (London/Bloomington: John Libbey/Indiana University Press), 1998. Any edition. ISBN-13: 978-0861966639 ISBN-10: 0861966635. Listed as MF in syllabus.

Karen Beckman, *Animating Film Theory*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2014.

ISBN-10: 082235652X ISBN-13: 978-0822356523. Listed as AFT in syllabus.

Additional readings will also be assigned from time to time and will be made available in PDF form via Blackboard (BB in syllabus).

You can order textbooks online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz, or alternatively order online at bookdepository.com (with free delivery) or amazon.com

RECOMMENDED READING

See listings each week in course outline and available via Blackboard.

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 class has been taught once before and as a result of class feedback one of the textbooks was changed to a slightly cheaper alternative (Furniss) which gives more introductory material on Animation History and Form.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

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
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf

- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

COURSE PROGRAMME

Easter Break: Thursday 24 to Wednesday 30 March 2016

Week 1 / What is Animation? / 2 March

Screenings:

EPOK Animation in Times Square (Douglas Leigh Associates) and Still Images.

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

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

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: MF, chapter 1, also BB

Suzanne Buchan "Pervasive Animation" BB

Karen Beckman, Introduction "Animating Film Theory" AFT, also BB

Week II/ What is Animation?: The Animated Line/ 9 March

Screenings:

Fantasmagorie (1908) Emile Cohl, France.

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

How A Mosquito Operates (1912) Winsor McCay

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>

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:

Vivian Sobchack. "The Line from A to B" BB ; MF Chapter 2 (Foundations of Studio Practise)

Week III / Animated Documentary/ 16 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" (BB); MF chap 3 & Chap 4

Week IV / Ephemeral Animation / March 23

How to do Research Presentation with Film Librarian Koichi Inoue. Please bring laptops to class.

Screenings: 1) Disney Wedding Cakes

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: Furniss chap 9

Week V Easter Break: Thursday 24 to Wednesday 30 March 2016

Week VI/ Anime: Stasis and Movement / 6 April

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE

Screenings: Mamoru Oshii Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence (2012)

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: Maureen Furniss "The Culture of Japanese Animation" BB; MF Chapter 7 "Full and Limited Animation"; Marc Steinberg "Realism in the Animation Media Environment" Chap 16, AFT)

Week VII /Bodies and Labour/ 13 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/>

MF chap 6

Week VIII/ WAR CARTOONS AND PROPAGANDA/ April 20

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

Mid-trimester Break: Monday 25 April to Sunday 1 May

WEEK IX/ Weird Animation/ 4 May

PRESENTATIONS THIS WEEK

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: Christopher Lehman "African-American Representation Through the Combination of Live action and Animation" AFT

Recommended: Esther Leslie: *Animation's Petrified Unrest*" PA; MF chap 10 (Institutional Regulators)

Week X/ History of Computer Animation / 11 May

Watch in class without me: Luxo Jr (John Lasseter, 1986), Knick Knack (John Lasseter, 1987)

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

Readings: Furniss chap 5 (Sound); Darley, Andy. "Second-order Realism and Post-Modernist Aesthetics in Computer Animation." in *A Reader in Animation Studies*. Ed. Jayne Pilling. Sydney: John Libbey & Company, 1997. (BB)

Sito, Tom. selections from *Moving Innovation: A History of Computer Animation*. Cambridge: (BB)

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

WEEK XI/ Digital Animation/ 18 May

*** I am away in Guam at Conference.**

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, 2006. BB

WEEK XII/ Motion Capture, the Virtual Actor, and the Uncanny Valley / May 25

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 XIII /TBA / 1 June

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

RESEARCH PAPER DUE FRIDAY 10 JUNE