

STOP-MOTION / ANIMATION OPTIONS:

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The biggest danger with this media is that it is easy to make unsophisticated work because the tools are often used for children's entertainment. Remember our overall goal of making artwork for adults to see in galleries. Because of this I encourage the use of metaphor and symbolism rather than direct illustration although directness can work if it is sophisticated and clever. If you use a known story, with a "character," make sure it doesn't reiterate a cliché.

If you chose to develop a "story," there are many options. Dramatic or commercial narratives often use an arc structure, that simply stated works something like this: Introduce location/ character. State the problem or mission. Take them on a "journey." Have them solve the problem after trials. Refer to the beginning to conclude.

You can use a variation on this if you like, but I encourage you to be more experimental: Use structure that supports your idea: If your piece is about repetition it could be looped. If it is about memory it could keep going back and forth, if it is about growth it could continually evolve, etc. You could use the structure of a poem (sonnet repeats a certain way, pantoum comes back to the same line, etc) or a DNA spiral. It doesn't have to be a story at all!

As in all our work, strive to have an initial impact that is compelling. Develop interest over time to be sustaining. Add elements that are surprising. Let the viewer know you are ending. Although I expect attention to detail, each person will have stylistic variations that will make their work unique.

GETTING AN IDEA: *We will use various exercises to prompt your ideas. Some options include:*

- Go hunting and gathering FIRST, before writing. Find a material or object that can center your idea for your project.
- **Use a famous myth as in the current assignment**, photo, painting, story to begin your project, but change it to be meaningful to you. (you might juxtapose it to something contemporary in society)
- **Consider an autobiographical or family story as a starting point** for the final assignment. You might consider exploring two sides of your personality or a compelling memory.
- **Start with a book title/ quote from another class or personal interest. For the 3d assignment**
- **Start with a word** (an option for the first assignment) that can have more than one meaning and explore them. Pin, Saw, Seed, Wave, Palm, Piece, Grave, Change, Nail, Plug, Bond, Case, Key, Bar, Link, Felt, Net, Trap, etc
- Start with a word that has visual associations:
Fenestrate: producing small window like perforations or transparent areas
Geomancy: divination from the configuration of a handful of earth or random dots, lines
Recursion: the act or an instance of returning to previous result to obtain a series of values
Palimpsest: material on which the original writing/image has been erased to make room for others
- Start from a set/ scene or drawing or a media you are comfortable with (including sound) Avoid dialog for these short projects. (voice over is okay)
- *Figure out the sequence and essentials of your project by writing in journals*

DEVELOPING THE IDEA

- Make thumbnail sketches or written descriptions (storyboard/index cards) Include camera angle, lighting, action.
- Write narration or directions several different ways in your journal. (For assignment 2)
- Try live action to experiment with the action for your elements (You can “act out” the type of movement you are after and use snap shots to make your storyboard. Although they are not yet animated, you can get a sense of rhythm of image and theme by playing through these still images. That will help you develop your movement. This is called making an “animatic” or “photomatic”.)
- Work with materials seeing what they can do and base action on that
- Record audio first, although this will need to be adjusted later.

MATERIALS & METHOD OPTIONS: (consider appropriate type for assignment)

- Use found objects from whatever source (Goodwill, Antiques, kitchen, food, closet, nature, etc)
- Use Appropriated Printed images from Magazines/newspapers, etc
- Use translucent or opaque papers on a lightbox
- Use Malleable materials such as clay, wire, wax, dirt, sand, cheese, mashed potatoes
With appropriate armatures. Molds, etc
- Make Inkjet printed images (made or appropriated) that can be cut out and manipulated
(movable arm with hinged sockets, etc) (Shoshana Shapiro-Baruch)
- Make a small set like a puppet theatre or diorama to manipulate.
(Madeline Courtney, Nora Gavin-Smyth, Hallie Bahn, Sara Baicker-McKee)
- Make a flat “set” that is larger than your flat manipulated images so that you can “pan” the image by moving the “set” under the camera.
- Shoot against contrasting key color that can be dropped out and replaced with moving video or still images.
- Pixelation: moving live actors shot by shot.

The following are not really stop motion, but can be creatively used in this class:

- Charcoal/other drawing on erasable paper and shoot sequentially as you add or subtract from them
(especially hot press watercolor paper with vine charcoal and a kneaded eraser William Kentridge)
- Do Paintings shot sequentially or with parts that can be cut out and manipulated.
(Chelsea Raflo, Purple Pickles, Stan Brackhage)
- Timelapse: using a camcorder’s ability to shoot every 30 sec/ etc, can speed up natural movement (clouds across a sky, etc)

Methods (not for this class)

Flash animation with both photos and with vector based shapes.

Rotoscoping: tracing live action using software (photoshop for now). (Richard Linklater, Waking Life)

After Effects computer manipulation

Photoshop you can change an image a step at a time and export sequential jpgs and then make a video sequence with them.

CAPTURE OPTIONS:

Digital Still Camera (DSLR) without Dragon: (we did with Pixelation)

- Take sequential small/medium resolution shots (can use intervalometer if desired) (see instructions*)
- Store in a folder on your computer and use software to import/export an image sequence.

WITH DragonFrame Stop Motion to capture your image. You'll have live feed to preview the sequence after capturing some images and export as a movie or image sequence. You can control the camera with the software. (see instructions**)

You can even take *video of movement*, import into Premiere Pro and take snapshot/stills of images to export in a sequence. Of course, this will not have the charm of actually moving the image to each position in stop motion.

Post Production in Premiere Pro.

Photoshop

In photoshop, you can change an image a step at a time and export sequential jpgs and then make a video sequence with them.