STOP-MOTION / ANIMATION OPTIONS:
Prof. Claudia Esslinger

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 physical or online 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 (unless looped). Each person will have stylistic variations that will make their work unique, but I expect deep involvement to that approach, with attention to the type of detail it needs.

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

- **Start with a word(s)**:
    - **A verb**: using an action verb from our own lists, the dictionary or Richard Serra's verb list.
    - **A word** 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, et
    - **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
    - **A book title/ quote from another class or personal interest.**

- **Use a cultural myth, photo, painting, story** to begin your project, but change it to be meaningful to you. (you might juxtapose it to something else in contemporary in society)

- **Consider an autobiographical or family story as a starting point**. You might consider exploring two sides of your personality or a compelling memory.

PROCESS OPTIONS:
- **Go hunting and gathering FIRST**, before writing. Find a material or object that can provoke your idea for your project.

- **Start from a media** / set/ scene or drawing you are comfortable with (including sound) Avoid dialog for these short projects. (voice over is okay)

- **Start by writing**: *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:
- Pixielation: moving live actors shot by shot. (first assignment only)
- Two Dimensional Media;
  - Use Appropriated Printed images from Magazines/newspapers, etc
  - Use translucent or opaque papers on a lightbox
  - 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 flat "set" that is larger than your flat manipulated images so that you can "pan" the image by moving the "set" under the camera.
- Three Dimensional Media:
  - Use found objects from whatever source (Goodwill, Antiques, kitchen, food, closet, nature)
  - Use Malleable materials such as clay, wire, wax, dirt, sand, cheese, mashed potatoes
    With appropriate armatures. Molds, etc
    Make a small set like a puppet theatre or diorama to manipulate.
    (Madeline Courtney, Nora Gavin-Smyth, Hallie Bahn, Sara Baicker-McKee)
- Experimental Combinations:
  - Shoot against contrasting key color that can be dropped out and replaced with moving video or still images.

The following are not stop motion, but can work with stop motion projects occasionally. See me.
- **Timelapse:** using a camcorder's ability to shoot every 30 sec/ etc,
  - can speed up natural movement (clouds across a sky, etc)
  - Charcoal/other drawing on erasable paper and shoot sequentially as you add or subtract*(especially hot press watercolor paper with vine charcoal and a kneaded eraser William Kentridge)*
  - Paintings shot sequentially or with parts that can be cut out and manipulated.
    (Chelsea Raflo, Purple Pickles, Stan Brackhage)
- *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. You can also do "cell animation" in photoshop, where you fully redraw each image in a sequence, but this is NOT stop motion.

CAPTURE OPTIONS:

Digital Still Camera (DSLR) **without Dragonframe:**
- 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**)

Post Production in Premiere Pro.