



The Three Month Bristol Animation Course

The Three Month Animation Course is specifically designed to enhance and develop the professional potential of professional or graduate animators'. Based on an understanding of production, design and direction the course focuses on core craft skills and techniques associated with character animation. Students work intensively in either 2D (drawn) or 3D (model/puppet) animation techniques according to their past experience. Students study performance, timing, staging, character development, sound, life drawing and movement as a means of perfecting their skills as animators. The course runs for eleven weeks and is intensively taught throughout with students attending a timetabled series of workshops, seminars and professional master classes as part of the programme.

The course tutor, Arril Johnson has worked in animation on commercials, feature films and productions for television since 1968 and is able to provide students with a skilled and specialist level of support. He tutors students through a series of exercises and projects concentrating on the subtlety of kinetics in animation. Introductory exercises include a look at how hybrid techniques using both graphic and model animation can complement each other, thumbnailing storyboards, and utilizing simply shaped cutouts (2D) or rigid objects (3D) to try and convey thoughts and/or emotions such as fear, curiosity and affection.

The course aims to:

- ~ enhance the professional potential of practicing animators and graduates through an intensive training programme in either 2D or 3D animation;
- ~ promote cultural exchange through the delivery of a programme designed to acquaint students from around the world with the UK animation industry;
- ~ provide master classes and professional experience in the animation industry.

By the end of the programme students will have:

- ~ improved their knowledge and understanding of the craft skills associated with either 2D or 3D animation;
- ~ improved their skills in performance, character design and character animation;
- ~ gained an understanding of hybrid animation techniques involving graphic and model animation;
- ~ improved their drawing, design and kinetic skills and understanding;
- ~ gained professional knowledge and understanding of the UK animation industry;
- ~ developed a show reel for presentation to potential employers.

Course Modules: Life drawing and movement – students consolidate their knowledge and understanding of movement through drawing. This module is delivered as a series of practical workshops which are then applied to the drawing, design and movement of 2D and 3D

animated characters. (Core Module)

Performance – students study performance as a way of understanding the kinetic subtleties of character development for animation. Run as a series of workshops, the understanding of performance is considered central to the development of successful character animation. (Core Module)

All students study either the 2D Animation module or the 3D Animation module.

2D Animation - students work on their drawing and design skills to develop a series of studies and exercises which aim to improve the application of their drawing skills to the design, movement and articulation of 2D characters. The experience of life drawing and performance is assimilated into the 2D animation module. At the end of the module students produce a short show reel of their work. (Option Module)

3D Animation – students work on their kinetic skills and techniques to develop a series of studies and experiments which aim to improve their kinetic skills and understanding of 2D character animation. The experience of life drawing and performance is assimilated into the 3D animation module. At the end of the module students produce a short show reel of their work. (Option Module)

Professional practice – all students make a series of visits to Bristol-based animation studios. Representatives from the studios visit the school, speak with students and present their work. At the end of the course, all students pitch and present their work according to the professional protocols learnt during the course.

The main aim of the course is to prepare the trainees for the professional expectations of both a studio and freelance environment and to make trainees aware of the level of craft demanded for professional practice. Animation professionals from the supporting studios, television companies and freelance sector contribute regular seminars and master classes throughout the course. The course also includes a series of professional practice lectures and workshops run by a variety of European animation professionals.

It is hoped that by the end of The Three Month Course students should have an understanding of the core animation skills that are involved in character animation. They should also be familiar with the standard of sculpting or drawing ability required for professional animation, and have acquired a more complete understanding of the overall animation production process.

What makes this training course unique from any other animation skills based training course that we know of, is that we are lucky enough to have the support of a wide range of top

animation studios including Aardman Animations, Fictitious Egg, A Productions, 4:2:2, bolexbrothers, Beryl Productions and the BBC Bristol Animation Unit amongst others. Professional animators, model makers, producers and sound specialists from the industry all contribute seminar sessions to the course programme, making for a rich and unique learning experience.

All essential consumable materials for the course are supplied. Model animators use a StopMotionPro workstation with a professional 3-chip video camera, lighting rig and Premier video editing software. Students do the bulk of their work using an armatured puppet with latex clothing and plasticine head and hands. 2D animators use a lightbox with the industry standard 2D software package ToonBoom Studio plus Premier video editing software.

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