



If Claymation is what you want to learn, the Stop-Motion Animation/Claymation #122 is a class that teaches the art of Claymation directly by Will Vinton himself. Located in Portland Oregon the class has no requirements other than a willingness to learn. Artistic experience helps, especially sculpting.

According to the official web page, "the course will explore such concepts and techniques as squash/stretch, ease in and ease out, metamorphosis, staging and composition, armatures and fabrication, clay sculpting, gesture, walks, and lip sync." The entire course costs just under \$2000.00 as there are a few lab processing fees and supplies to buy on top of tuition.

Due to the popularity of stop motion course questions we get here on our site, we sent a set of questions to Will Vinton about his class. Below are our questions and his detailed answers. We give this class a high rating due to the pioneering history that made Vinton a house hold name in stop motion.

Hi Will, your class at the School of Film consists of learning how to build characters that perform through stop motion animation. What is your history in this field and where can students see some of your past work?

I have been working at and developing sophisticated puppets and 3D models and performing them for many years having pioneered (and coined the word) Claymation and helped grow the stop-motion and CGI industries. My focus has always been on creating and performing great characters. Our extensive array of awards including 5 Academy Award Nominations, an Oscar, 8 Emmies, Clios, etc. and our well0-know character creation including the Dominoes Noid, the California Raisins, Dinosaurs Herb and Rex, the M&Ms, and Thurgood Stubbs from 'The PJs' are all a testament to our success in pulling off this goal. Over many years, I have developed techniques and concepts to help animators and animation directors to breathe life into their puppets

and my emphasis in teaching is to impart this knowledge to upcoming pros and sophisticated amateurs. One can read a detailed history of my work and of my teams work at this site: www.willvinton.net

That same site has samples of the work and detailed history of characters and productions. It also has a DVD sales section (<http://willvinton.net/videos.htm>) where a number of my early films can be purchased for home use and further study.



"THE BASICS OF STOP MOTION ARE EVEN MORE VALUABLE TODAY THAN WHEN I GOT STARTED." - WILL VINTON

Since you are best known for the Claymation process will students be expected to work with clay? And are there any special requirements before someone can join?

My class is a very hands-on experience. We work primarily in clay animation because it is so immediate and fast for animating without first having to spend huge amounts of time preparing and building characters. Every class lesson uses hands on animating for get experience with the concepts. Not every student is a great sculptor so my focus is less on design and much more on how characters and objects move to communicate effectively. Over the years, I have found that animators adept at SM or clay animation are also more comfortable in CGI - and usually they are better CG animators as well. There are no special requirements for the students except that they be adults (college age and over) and that they are willing and eager to put in the hours necessary to become a solid Stop Motion animator.

What can students expect in their first week of the course, and how long will the class be?

The class this Fall takes place every Tuesday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 starting Sept. 25th (finishing in early December). Classes are held at the NW Film Center's facilities in Downtown Portland. Each student must have their own SM workshop / lab / shooting area where they can practice at their convenience. We spend a little time at the beginning making sure everyone is physically well set up to do the exercises and proficient at Dragonframe. But we jump right in and start animating exercises right from session one.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDN_C70xpZ8 There are only a few classes and workshops teaching clay animation and stop motion all over the world. What would you say sets your class apart from others?

Well, I have a deep and (frankly) very unique perspective on how to create great SM films and how to teach others to breath life into characters. I try to impart that knowledge to every student that is ready to absorb it. Every student will complete a short 20 second SM film by the end of the sessions. We have terrific SM facilities and

School of Film (Portland OR) Will Vinton Claymation Class

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resources here in Portland including jobs. ☐ Incredibly talented local animators like Barry Bruce sometimes handle sections of my class and occasionally substitute for me as instructor.

Why did you choose to go into teaching this art form and what benefit do you see in the film industry by educating the next generation?

The basics of Stop Motion are even more valuable today than when I got started. ☐ Today there is much more opportunity in 3D animation of all kinds and much more happening. ☐ Being able to animate well is becoming valuable in computer games, web art and design, and the still growing entertainment world. ☐ And as implied above, SM is really one of the best ways to learn animation even if one is planning to become a CG animator. ☐ There is no other more effective way to learn how give life to animated characters. ☐ If we build on the fantastic animation art and experiences of the past and present, we are guaranteed to keep growing animation art and build a future filled with great animated entertainment.

Will Vinton

Find out more on the official web site here:

<http://nwfilm.org/school/classes/term/13/>