

Deadline and Milestones: Week 12

Duration: Weeks 2-12

Autonomy Level: Facilitator Directed

Overview

Animation Studio 3 has a strong focus on polishing creative and artistic skills through group and individual projects.

To understand every step of the production process this project aims to expose each student to the entire animation production pipeline as part of a group for a short animation that involves storytelling and character development aligning thus with the Unit's Learning Outcomes

Brief

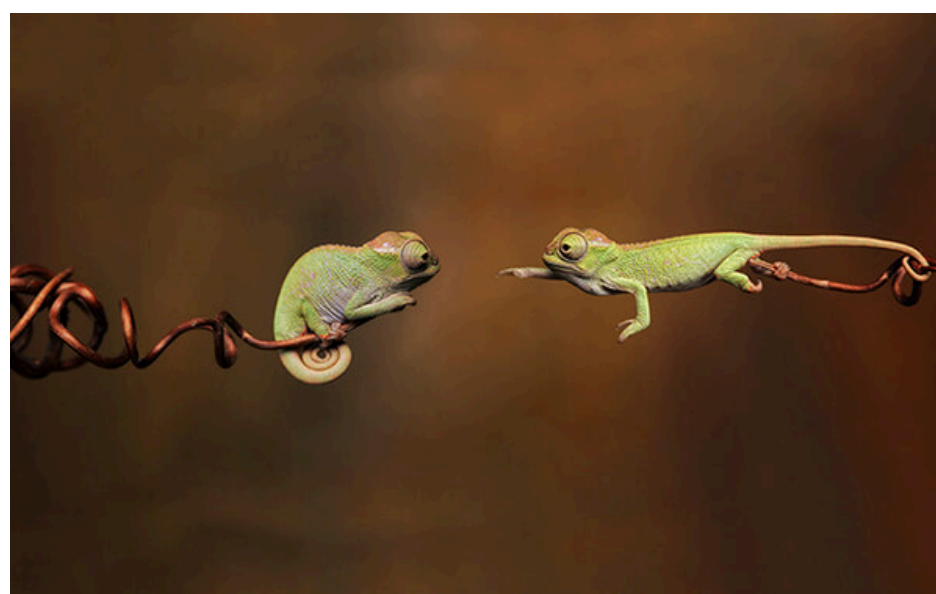
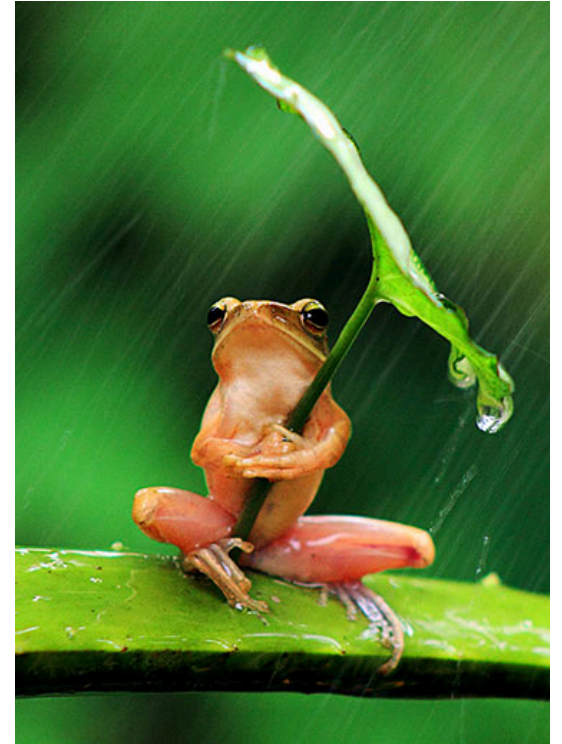
The studio you currently work for has tasked your department with the creation of short animations to be screened in-between TV shows for children and teenagers on the ABC network. The commissioned animations will have as a common theme:

"Hidden worlds in a Macro Lense - Miniature ecosystems in Australian nature"

The purpose of these animations is to inspire audiences to imagine and explore the possibilities of hidden worlds in Australia's wilderness on a small scale, aiming to deliver a message of respect and preservation of nature, balancing human and animal habitation.

The characters and environments can be imaginary, but the essence behind the design and story must remain loyal to the brief's idea and purpose.

The main target audience is the *middle childhood audience* (9-11 years), but the characters and animations could potentially appeal to all audiences.



Refer to pages 7 to 11 for examples and inspiration

Requirements

Collaboration requirements:

- This project is to be developed by a 3 people team.
- The story is to be agreed by the group member's and approved by the head of the studio before being pitched.
- This project requires character animation and use of reference for every student
- Each student will be in charge of their own character development and animation.
- Environment is to be created in collaboration by all team members
- Audio must be supplied by Audio students from SAE (interdisciplinary work)

Please refer to the [Group Work Agreement](#) for information on group work expectations on the studio Units.

Technical requirements:

- Aim to choose a piece where you can explore character animation (not necessarily human)
- You can use 2D animation, 3D animation, or stop motion.
- The minimum length of the animation is 40 Seconds, while the max. is 90 seconds.
- Any art, pieces, or assets need to be detailed and appropriate for the level of the Unit and the scope of the project.
- All art and assets must be from the student's original creation.
- Colouring and lighting needs to be thoughtful and enrich the animation.
- Texturing is to be detailed and use multiple maps.
- If working in 3D, UV maps are to be properly unwrapped, grouped and optimised.
- All working files must be organised effectively (clear object names, coherent scene structure).
- Final output must be polished, presented with titles and credits.
- Output your final video at 1920x1080 pixels (HD_1080), using H.264 compression, and save as a .mp4 or .mov

Deliverables and milestones

Milestone 1: Individual Research - Week 1

Before you start production, take some time to read the brief and understand what your client wants. Answer the following questions in your Project Page using text, images and referencing

- What is macro Photography?
- Describe with words and images the visual characteristics of Macro photography (What makes macro look like macro?)
- What are Ecosystems?
- How can Ecosystems be miniature?
- How can you create the sense of fragility that macro photography has, when you work on 3D?

Milestone 2: Pre Production - Week 4

Pre-Production PITCH

- Title Page
- Introduction:
 - Project Outline and Description: provide a brief project outline and project description.
 - The project creative outline should provide a succinct articulation of your proposal concept, including title of the work you have chosen and broad idea of the animation (50 words).
 - The project description should explain the overall scope of the project, the form the work is likely to take and an explanation of the subject, themes and ideas (500 words). This includes details of any anticipated artistic or technical requirements and collaborations.
- Animation Treatment:
 - Write the 1 line synopsis of your animation
 - Write the animation treatment (half a page)

Animation treatment is the written description of the events of the animation. It usually goes like this:

Act 1 : Set the scene, introduce the main conflict.

Act 2 : expand conflict and event leading to crisis

Act 3 : the final conflict and resolution.

Description is always written in third person, present tense. It is never written in past tense. Present tense gives scripts a certain immediacy. You're not telling a story that happened when you're writing a script, you're revealing it *as* it happens.

Perhaps the most basic thing to remember about writing description in any script is that for the most part it is simply representing in words what the viewer will see. It doesn't have to be said in impressive, flowery prose. Unlike a novel, it's pointless to say something in the description if you don't intend to see it. For example, consider this description:

Joe runs out of his room, wishing he'd left earlier.

The words "wishing he'd left earlier" are unnecessary, as there is no way to show this. It's an abstract concept that cannot even be shown with emotions due to the limitations of animation.

There are three basic elements to writing description. These are: *visualization*, *continuity*, and *pacing*.

● StoryBoard

- Storyboard of animation (completed with panels and camera movement descriptions).

Minimum requirements exemplar

PRODUCTION

STORYBOARD - ASPECT RATIO 1:85 PAGE#



Scene # Shot #



Scene # Shot #

- Create one panel with a clear sample of graphic style and light direction. Exemplar:



Visual Development

- Moodboard 1: Show references for the visual style of your animation
- Moodboard 2: Show the feel you are going for. -With colour chart-

Character development - For each character:

Write the treatment for the characters:

- Name
- Personality
- Background
- Character Moodboard: character type and visual style
- Character Model sheet with a colour chart

Environment development:

Describe the environment in a few lines and provide:

- Environment Moodboard: show references of environment
- Lighting and Atmosphere Mood Board: Define the lighting/time of day and atmosphere

Sound development:

In a visual way show how you would like the sound to be. You can choose to show instruments, feelings or mood as a representation of the sounds. Remember to classify the sound as sound FX or as music

Project Plan

- Technical specifications: indicate what technology will be used in the production of the project, and where it will be sourced.
- Role distribution: outline the crew, their skills and responsibilities
- Production schedule: applicants are required to provide a timeline that outlines key dates in the project production plan it can be in the form of:
 - Kanban Board in Trello with tasks and deadlines
 - WBS project schedule
- Marketing outline:
 - Report on your target audience demographic
 - Establish methods and platforms to promote your project (suitable marketing and distribution platforms)
 - Copyright considerations and statement

- Budget and Potential revenue.
- Credits and references

Deliverable: Each student will submit the Pitch through the Notion or Learning Journal Project Page. If the project is not approved during the pitch you need to improve the proposal within less than 5 days

Milestone 3: Mid Project Reflection - Week 7

Checkpoint: In 250 words, answer each of the questions with examples from your project:

- **Process:** How you improved your workflows and process
How are you planning your processes to achieve outcomes within the project timeframe? How do you manage your priorities and tasks and respond to changes or challenges? Give specific examples of your research and how it informs your project. Cite sources in APA7.
- **Person:** How you developed your communication and collaboration skills
What communication skills does this project require, and how are you responding to feedback and giving feedback to others? How are you working to enhance communication and active collaboration for group projects?
- **Proficiency:** How you developed your technical skills and knowledge
What skills, techniques, knowledge, or technologies are you using to achieve project requirements? Give examples analysing the strengths and limitations of your work and reflect on the skills, knowledge and research relevant to your project.
- **References:** How you used self-study to improve. Use a minimum of 1 in-text citation referenced using APA7.

Deliverable: Reflection to be checked in class the following week. Include the mid-project reflection with your project submission.

Milestone 4: Assets Creation - Week 8

This is the part of production where you recreate all the elements proposed in your art bible. You will model your featuring characters and the environment of your animation.

- The characters poly count must not be higher than 15.000 quads
- Each character must be fully rigged and automatic rigs are not allowed
- Characters must be scalable and use blend shapes for facial expressions
- The environment is to be completed by all team members and assembled on a single maya scene
- UVs must be properly unwrapped and packed in multiple maps.
- The modelling technique must be clean and fulfil professional standards
- NO: N-gons, Non-manifold geometry, unnecessary smooth operations.
- Textures must be not bigger than 4K

Deliverable: Submit files with process description in Notion or Learning Journal and Google Drive:

- 1 .ma files for each character fully textured and Rigged (No working files, just the final one)
- 1 .ma file for environment fully textured (No working files, just the final one)
- Textures organised on the source images directory
- .mp4 Video of 360° turnaround Posed and Textured Character (min. resolution 960x540; max. 1920x1080)

- .mp4 Video of 360° turnaround Posed and Character Wireframe (min. resolution 960x540; max. 1920x1080). Use a wireframe shader, no playblast allowed.
- Min 3 - max 5, High quality close up shots (Details)

Milestone 5: Animation Reference - week 8

Before you start your characters' animation you need to research the style of animation and characterisation you want to achieve with your character.

For this you will either:

- Record your own reference footage
- or find animation references online.

Deliverable: Submit files with process description in Notion or Learning Journal and Google Drive

Milestone 6: Animation - week 11

After gathering your reference you can start animating the elements of your animation.

Deliverables : Submit process in Notion or Learning Journal and in class for feedback and revision.

Submit in Google drive and Notion or Learning Journal:

- 1 or multiple .ma files with character animation, cameras and final lighting (No working files, just the final one)
- Textures organised in the source images directory
- Reference footage in the 'movies' folder
- .mp4 Video playblast of final animation

Milestone 7: Render compositing - week 12

Once your animation in maya is ready, you need to render it and take the sequence to an editing and compositing software. Here you will composite your animation renders and add text, effects and corrections if they are necessary.

Deliverables :

- Submit process in Notion or Learning Journal and in class for feedback and revision.

Milestone 8: Final submission and Post Mortem - week 12

Final Video with title and credits and final reflection of the project

Deliverables : Submit files with process description in Notion or Learning Journal and Google Drive: mp4 video with final animation

Create a final reflection of the project on your Notion or Learning Journal in the form of a project post-mortem. The final reflection must include at least one in text citation with APA 7.

- Appraisal: How you appraised the overall success of the project
Overall, how successful was your project? What worked or didn't work, and why? How did it match your expectations? Give specific examples, screenshots or links.
- Challenges: What obstacles you faced, and how you overcame them
What obstacles did you overcome, and how? What lessons did you learn?
- Future Goals: How you will improve your skills for future projects
How will you improve your skills for future projects? What will you do differently in your next project? What will you repeat?

- Review and Compare your project with current industry practices regarding financial, contractual, copyright and legal issues.

Resources & tutorials

Inspiration resources

- Ant Tales: Fantastic Macro Photography of Ant by Andrey Pavlov
<https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/355010383095952177/?lp=true>
- MacroPhotography <https://www.designswan.com/tag/macro-photography>
- Kate O'Hara – Miniature Worlds <https://wowxwow.com/artist-profile/kate-ohara-ap>
- The Power of Union is Strength <https://youtu.be/jop2l5u2F3U>
- Genius Gluten Free | Hedgehog <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRSo8xthEfs>
- Rolling Safari https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOOljk_LOcs
- Rolling Wild <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ba62uuv-5Dc>
- Android - Be together. Not the same <https://vimeo.com/161165271>
- Among trees Animations, Mikael Gustafsson <https://dribbble.com/MikaelGustafsson>

Character design resources:

- Character design references: <https://characterdesignreferences.com/>
- Character shapes: http://www.floobynoooby.com/boards/character_shapes101.pdf
- Dichotomous Characters:
<https://www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com/12-dichotomous-characters-and-why-they/>

Storyboarding resources:

- Storyboarding tips: <http://www.floobynoooby.com/comp1.html>

Sound resources

- Royalty Free Sound Effects Archive: GameAudioGDC: <https://sonniss.com/gameaudiogdc>

Other resources:

- Screen Australia: Animation <https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/fact-finders/production-trends>









References

Front pictures:

Illusorium Studios - Behance (2018). BRUT the Crocodile - Character design [Illustration]. Illusorium Studios
<https://www.behance.net/Illusorium>

World, E. (n.d.). Scaley critters can be cute, too [Pinterest post]. Retrieved 2018, from
<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/22518066866309818/>

Back Pictures:

Pavlov, A (n.d.). Ant Tales: Fantastic Macro Photography of Ant by Andrey Pavlov [Photography and Composition]. Retrieved 2019, from: <https://www.designswan.com/archives/ant-tales-fantastic-macro-photography-of-ant-by-andrey-pavlov.html>

Axford, S. (2010). From Northern Rivers [Photography]. Retrieved 2021, from
<https://steveaxford.smugmug.com/keyword/DSC05860/>

Murray, K. (2012). Birds Eye View, Blue Sky Debut [Mixed media assemblage]. Kendal Murray Website
<https://kendalmurray.net/album.php?s=flights-of-fancy>

Ohara, K. (2020) Disperse [Illustration]. Retrieved 2021, From Kate Ohara Gallery
<https://www.kate-ohara.com/gallery#/disperse/>

The Pixar Times (2013) Randall Boggs [3D Render]. Retrieved from
<https://pixartimes.com/2013/04/16/monsters-university-character-posters-bios-voice-cast-revealed/>