

Glossary

Animatic

An animated storyboard; a series of still images edited together and displayed in sequence. Often, a rough dialogue/soundtrack is added to it to test whether the sound and images work together.

Animation

The technique of photographing successive drawings or positions of models to create an illusion of movement when the film is shown as a sequence.

Arcs

Animation technique used to plan and simulate realistic motion paths.

Armature

A framework around which a sculpture (physical or digital) is built, allowing movements of the figure to be animated such as arms and legs.

Boiling Line

The inevitable wobble of hand-drawn lines, particularly noticeable when characters are redrawn in every frame even though they are standing still.

Breakdowns

Animation frames used to plan significant movement in a sequence

Claymation

Animation using figures made from clay or similar material.

Cel

Short for celluloid, the material from which the first transparent sheets, used for animating on several levels, were made. Now used as a term interchangeable with 2D animation.

CGI

Computer generated images. Can be 2D, often drawn using a graphic tablet or 3D, using specialist software to create a virtual world.

Compositing

The technique of constructing an image from multiple digital sources.

Copy stand (also known as rostrum camera)

A adjustable camera mounting device used for photographing a still image from above.

Cut out animation

Cut paper shapes moved around with stop motion technique under a glass plate

Double Frame

Technique for photographing every other frame to create 12 frames per second. This is sometimes called “on Twos”.

Dubbing

Adding sound- sometimes translated dialogue into another language for animations to be sold to another territory.

Format

For a TV series- the same basic structure of the programme but with internal differences each week to keep the audience interested.

Frame

The basic unit of filmmaking – an image that lasts for 1/24th of a second.

Graphics tablet

A computer input that allows images and graphics to be hand-drawn, similar to drawing conventionally with pencil on paper.

Inbetweening

A process in cell animation, usually referred to as pose to pose, in which an animator or assistant illustrates the frames and action between key poses in an animated sequence.

IP

Intellectual property- having the rights to a film or character or story, so that a proportion of any sales go to the rights holder.

Key positions

Usually the start and end pose in an animated scene from which an animator will the plan or breakdown other key poses before the in-between frames are completed.

Layout stage

The stage in 2D animation in which key positions and poses are laid out in advance of frame by frame animation.

Light box

A box with a sheet of acetate or glass with a small light shining underneath. A sheet of paper is placed over peg bars attached to the light box and a drawing is made. When a second piece of paper is placed over the pegs it is possible to view the drawing through it and thus trace over it with small changes.

Locked off

Refers to either a static camera or the point at which the pre production for an animation is completed and the animating can start.

Long form animation

Animation which is not just a 'one off' text, but a series, which in some cases may go on for hundreds of episodes.

Maya

A 3D modelling and animating program used in the industry.

Morphing

Changing from one shape or form to another.

Motion path

A process in computer based animation in which a pathway is plotted between two or more key frames in order to direct motion.

Multi plane animation

A series of glass plates stacked vertically beneath the camera to add to depth of movement. Technique first developed by Lotte Reiniger in the 1920s and developed later at Disney.

Onion Skinning

When an animator is able see a relief or impression of the previous frame either through the animation paper or on a computer.

Peg-bar

Drawn animation requires each image to be aligned with others to prevent slippage. When drawing, filming, scanning, each sheet is hole punched and the holes fit over a peg bar fitted to the light box and plate.

Pixillation

Shooting live action using a limited number of frames.

Plus

Adding something creative to the original script- could be done by an actor, an animator, a composer or various other people. To 'plus' something is to improve it in some way by your contribution.

Render

A process in computer graphics in which a programmed effect is assembled into its final formation. A motion effect, animation or transition may be viewable before rendering but not in its intended quality.

Rotoscope

An animation technique in which live-action images are traced either manually or automatically.

Rig

A usually hidden system used to support and manipulate an animation model, be it digital or physical.

Scene

A sequence of continuous action usually demarcated by location.

Script

The written direction for an animation.

Shot

A sequence photographed continuously by one camera

Stop Motion /stop frame

The technique in which an object is moved in small increments between individually photographed frames, creating the illusion of movement when the series of frames is played as a continuous sequence.

Storyboard

An illustrated planning document which each camera position and the associated action for a given sequence is visually represented.

Storyboard artist

Person who, working closely with the director, will plan and design the storyboard

Thumbnail

A smaller and less detailed illustration used for planning shots and sequences

Timeline

An editable liner representation of a moving image sequence used in digital editing and animation software.

Treatment

An outline of an idea giving key narrative and conceptual detail.

Voice track

The recording of the actors in order to guide animators.

Volume

Usually refers to the mass of a character or object being animated. It is important to maintain a consistent mass to ensure continuity.

Walk cycle

A repeatable sequence of frames needed for an animated character to walk.