

# **AInimotion**

Layer-Separated Deformable Interpolation for Anime Video

Travis Whitney

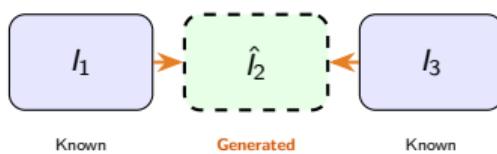
February 16, 2026

# Video Frame Interpolation for Anime

## Why anime is uniquely challenging:

- ① **Flat color regions** — no texture for optical flow
- ② **Non-linear motion** — characters “pop” between poses
- ③ **Ink line preservation** — thin lines blur easily
- ④ **Scene cuts** — abrupt shot changes
- ⑤ **Layer separation** — backgrounds pan rigidly, characters move independently

**Goal:** Generate intermediate frames to increase frame rate (24fps → 60fps).



## Why Deep Learning?

Frames have **multi-scale spatial structure** (edges, textures, objects) and **temporal structure** (motion patterns across frames). Anime adds **layer structure**: rigid backgrounds vs. deformable characters. My model encodes these structural priors directly.

# Prior Work & My Contribution

## Prior Approaches:

Method	Idea	Gap
DAIN [7]	Depth-aware flow	Not anime-specific
AdaCoF [2]	Deform. kernels	Single motion path
AnimeInterp [1]	Segment match	Ext. segmentation
RIFE [3]	Lightweight flow	Blurs heavy motion
LDMVFI [8]	Latent diffusion	100× slower

Layer decomposition dates to Wang & Adelson (1994) [6], but **no prior VFI method** builds anime's layer structure into the architecture.

## What makes Alnimotion novel:

- ➊ **Dual-path architecture** — dedicated BG (affine grid) + FG (AdaCoF kernels)
- ➋ **Domain-informed** — encodes how anime is produced (cel layers)
- ➌ **Learned compositor** — soft  $\alpha$  mask, no external segmentation
- ➍ **Edge-aware loss** — Sobel-weighted L1 protects ink lines
- ➎ **Practical** — real-time inference (~50ms) vs. diffusion (~5–30s)

# ATD-12K Dataset

**Source:** ATD-12K [1] (CVPR 2021)

- **12,000** frame triplets ( $I_1, I_2, I_3$ ) from **30 films**
- Motion categories: small, medium, **large**
- Established anime VFI benchmark

## Training setup:

- Random  $256 \times 256$  crops
- Horizontal/vertical/temporal flips
- 100K samples per epoch

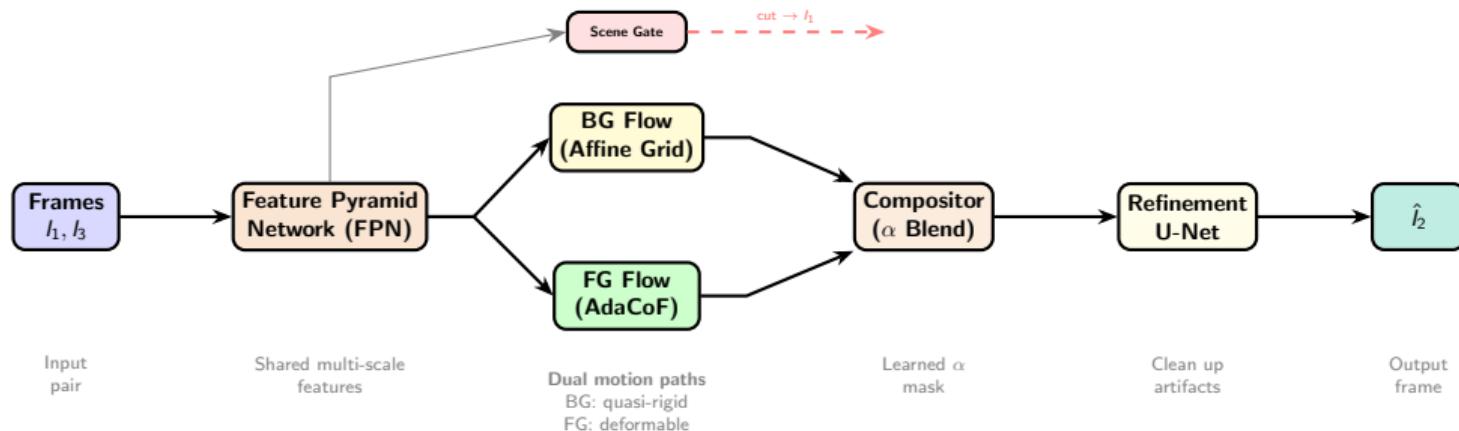
## Why This Dataset?

- Purpose-built for anime VFI
- Publicly available
- Rich motion diversity
- Includes difficulty labels

## Triplet Format

$(I_1, I_2, I_3)$ :  $I_2$  is ground truth used as supervision during training.

# Architecture Overview: LayeredInterpolator



# Key Components & Loss Functions

## Components:

- **FPN:** Shared encoder, 4 scales ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{16}$ ) + **correlation volumes** (per-pixel dot-product similarity over a  $9 \times 9$  search window between frames — tells the network “where did each pixel move?”)
- **Scene Gate:** Detects hard cuts via correlation statistics, bypasses interpolation
- **Background:**  $8 \times 8$  quasi-rigid affine grid for camera pans/zooms
- **Foreground (AdaCoF):**  $7 \times 7$  deformable sampling kernels per pixel (49 weights + 98 offsets = 147 params/pixel)
- **Composer:** Learned soft  $\alpha$  mask + refinement U-Net

## Generator Loss:

$$\mathcal{L}_G = \underbrace{2.0 \cdot \mathcal{L}_{L1}}_{\text{Reconstruction}} + \underbrace{0.05 \cdot \mathcal{L}_{perc}}_{\text{VGG19}} + \underbrace{1.0 \cdot \mathcal{L}_{edge}}_{\text{Ink Lines}} + \underbrace{0.005 \cdot \mathcal{L}_{GAN}}_{\text{Phase 2}}$$

- $\mathcal{L}_{L1}$ : Pixel accuracy, drives PSNR
- $\mathcal{L}_{perc}$ : VGG19 feature similarity, preserves style
- $\mathcal{L}_{edge}$ : Sobel-weighted L1, 20 $\times$  multiplier on edges
- $\mathcal{L}_{GAN}$ : LSGAN patch discriminator with label smoothing (0.1), Phase 2 only

# Two-Phase Training Strategy

## Phase 1: Reconstruction (Ep 0–34)

- Generator only — no adversarial loss
- $\text{lr}_G = 2 \times 10^{-4}$
- Loss:  $\mathcal{L}_{L1} + \mathcal{L}_{\text{perc}} + \mathcal{L}_{\text{edge}}$
- **Goal:** PSNR  $\geq 28$  dB

$\Downarrow D$  warmup (500 batches)

## Phase 2: GAN Fine-Tuning (Ep 35–49)

- Adversarial loss activated ( $\lambda_{\text{GAN}} = 0.005$ )
- $\text{lr}_G = 5 \times 10^{-5}$  (reduced)
- D trains every other batch (1:2 ratio)
- **Goal:** perceptual sharpness

### Why two phases?

- ① Generator learns stable reconstructions *before* seeing adversarial gradients
- ② GAN adds sharpness without destabilizing a converged generator

### Key stabilization choices:

- **D warmup** — 500 batches before G sees GAN loss
- **Low GAN weight** (0.005) prevents mode collapse
- **Adaptive  $\text{lr}_D$**  — auto-adjusts based on  $d_{\text{acc}}$
- **Label smoothing** (0.1) on discriminator

# GAN Stabilization & Training Infrastructure

## Discriminator Control:

- **D Warmup** (500 batches) — D learns before G sees adversarial loss
- **Patch Discriminator** —  $70 \times 70$  patches, not full images
- **Label Smoothing** (0.1) — prevents overconfident D
- **D Update Ratio** (1:2) — D trains every other batch
- **Adaptive lr<sub>D</sub>** — auto-adjusts based on  $d_{\text{acc}}$

## Evaluation Metrics:

- **PSNR** (dB):  $-10 \log_{10}(\text{MSE})$ . Higher = better pixel accuracy. Log scale: +3 dB  $\approx$  halving MSE.
- **SSIM**: Measures luminance, contrast, and structural similarity (0–1). Catches distortions PSNR misses.
- **Visual comparison**: Side-by-side with ground truth, especially on ink lines and motion.

## Infrastructure

Mixed precision, grad\_clip=1.0, OOM recovery, W&B logging. RTX 5090 (32 GB VRAM).

# Design Evolution & Training Progress

Component	Initial	Final
Base Channels	32	96 ( $3\times$ )
GAN Training	From epoch 0	Two-phase (ep 35)
L1 Weight	1.0	2.0 (PSNR focus)
GAN Weight	0.01	0.005 (gentler)
Edge Multiplier	$10\times$	$20\times$ (sharper)
Disc. LR	$10^{-4}$	$2 \times 10^{-5}$
D Update	1:1	1:2 (G trains more)
D Warmup	None	500 batches

**Lesson:** GAN training is highly sensitive in anime VFI. The discriminator easily dominates.

## Evaluation Baselines (ATD-12K):

Method	PSNR	SSIM
RIFE	~25–27 dB	~0.85
Animelinterp	~27–29 dB	~0.88
<b>AInimotion (target)</b>	<b><math>\geq 28</math> dB</b>	<b><math>\geq 0.90</math></b>

## Early Results (Epochs 0–9):

- PSNR: 20.7 → 22.1 dB (rising)
- Gradients stable ( $\sim 0.2$ –0.5)

## Targets

Phase 1: PSNR  $\geq 28$  dB by epoch 34

Phase 2: + perceptual sharpness via GAN

# Summary & Next Steps

## What I built:

- **LayeredInterpolator** — novel dual-path architecture separating BG/FG motion
- **Edge-aware losses** for ink line preservation
- **Two-phase training** with D warmup for stable GAN integration
- **Robust infrastructure** — OOM recovery, adaptive GAN balancing, mixed precision, W&B logging

## Next steps:

- Complete Phase 1 training (35 epochs)
- Hyperparameter sweep for heavy motion
- Evaluate Phase 2 GAN fine-tuning
- Qualitative evaluation on test set
- Compare with RIFE, AnimelInterp baselines

Project Repository

[github.com/TWhit229/AInimotion](https://github.com/TWhit229/AInimotion)

# References I

-  L. Siyao, S. Zhao, W. Yu, W. Sun, D. Metaxas, C. Loy, Z. Liu.  
“Deep Animation Video Interpolation in the Wild.”  
*CVPR*, 2021.
-  H. Lee, T. Kim, T. Chung, D. Pak, Y. Ban, S. Lee.  
“AdaCoF: Adaptive Collaboration of Flows for Video Frame Interpolation.”  
*CVPR*, 2020.
-  Z. Huang, T. Zhang, W. Heng, B. Shi, S. Zhou.  
“Real-Time Intermediate Flow Estimation for Video Frame Interpolation.”  
*ECCV*, 2022.
-  I. Goodfellow et al.  
“Generative Adversarial Nets.”  
*NeurIPS*, 2014.

## References II

-  X. Mao, Q. Li, H. Xie, R. Lau, Z. Wang, S. Smolley.  
“Least Squares Generative Adversarial Networks.”  
*ICCV*, 2017.
-  J. Wang, E. Adelson.  
“Representing Moving Images with Layers.”  
*IEEE Trans. Image Processing*, 1994.
-  W. Bao, W. Lai, C. Ma, X. Zhang, Z. Gao, M. Yang.  
“Depth-Aware Video Frame Interpolation.”  
*CVPR*, 2019.
-  D. Danier, F. Zhang, D. Bull.  
“LDMVFI: Video Frame Interpolation with Latent Diffusion Models.”  
*AAAI*, 2023.