

Case Study 2

Title of the short, year, and director: Sleepy Time Tom (1951) by Joseph Barbera and William Hanna

Available at (provide link): <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x15mnlq>

Choose three aspects related to the form and style of the animation that you will focus on. Mark your choices in the table below (or list them below based on the options available):

color	music	sound	composition	camera angle
dialogue	animation	line	repetition	character design
movement	technique	shadows	negative space	volume
perspective	focus	time	continuity	speed
transitions	space	timing	background	narrative
editing	camera movement	light	framing	rhythm

Explain your choices, marked/listed above, by describing examples of sequences and scenes from the animation (minimum 300, maximum 500 words):

Sound is quite important to this animation since it sets the tone for the animation both musically and diegetically. The short opens with jazzy music that does not take itself seriously, but provides a playful and bright introduction to the “violence” that is to follow. If a more darker musical overture were used, the audience would have been entirely more apprehensive and disturbed by the action in the animation. The music also acts as the sound effects for many of the hits and bumps in the short. This adds a more dream-like quality as well as adding a consistent rhythm to the animation. This can be seen in another opening shot of Tom rocking back and forth and the music rocking back and forth with him.

The sound also emphasizes the speed of the animation and the speed of the different shots in the film, with the music slowing down during the times when Tom feels drowsy and speeding up when he is chasing Jerry aggressively. When Tom is desperately to keep himself awake, the music transforms into a

lullaby and the shots are considerably longer, stretching up to 5 seconds or longer per shot. However when Jerry is planning to capture Tom, the music and the speed of the animation intensely speed up with more cuts and faster edits between the shots.

The framing is mainly used to explain the narrative in the short. Whenever Tom's owner is present, she has her head out of the frame. Tom is framed to be shorter than her and looking up to her. However, Jerry does not receive the same treatment. During the short where Jerry inspects Tom's eyes to see if he is really awake, Jerry is perfectly eye level with Tom, indicating a sense of disregard for the power dynamic

In your opinion, why are these elements particularly relevant to this animation and its story? What is the history and background of the production that can connect the director's choices to its overall context? (minimum 100 words, maximum 300 words)

These elements are important to the animation since it establishes the cartoonish style that many animations implement themselves. The Looney Tunes animations follow a similar formula with similar principles of comedy being used, as well as the more fantastical nature of cartoons that was implemented by Tex Avery. However, while Warner Bros. cartoons had more of an emphasis on dialogue, Tom and Jerry have very little dialogue from our titular characters. Instead, following the footsteps of cartoon characters like Gertie The Dinosaur, both Tom and Jerry have distinguished personalities that are emphasized by the non-dialogue elements of animations: the sound and sound effects, the speed, and the framing.

References (MLA format):

Furniss, Maureen. *A New History of Animation*. Thames & Hudson, 2016.