

# **Animation Essay**

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IAT 343 – E100

April 1, 2014

## **Short Films**

The two animation shorts chosen for analysis are known as *Paperman* by Walt Disney Pictures and *Banana* starring particularly a minion's story, which was a short film derived from the motion picture of *Despicable Me* created by Universal Pictures.

### **Paperman**

This short film falls under the film genre of romance and comedy, which is about a male accountant who manages to find his true love after various obstacles and struggles throughout the film.

#### **Narrative:**

The story starts with an establishing shot of a male character waiting for the train on the platform. Suddenly, a piece of paper flew onto him and came to realize that it flew out of a lady's hands due to heavy wind. Alternatively, the same thing happens to the male character, which then his piece of paper accidentally lands on the lady's face, giving it a lipstick stamp. As a result, the male became attracted to the women's beauty, but she had to board the train to leave. Afterwards, the male character arrives at the office and discovers that the lady was present in the building across the street which he then tries to get her attention, but failed and decided to use paper airplanes. Unfortunately, he misses with his last piece as well, which had the lipstick mark on it. When he saw the lady leaving, he quickly dashes out to try to find her and that at this point, the paper planes came to life to bring them both together.

#### **Technique:**

In this award winning film, it was the technical aspect that has opened up a new door to animation. Here, there is a combination of traditional animation and computer animation methods used. To do so, the steps required consist of CG animation, motion fields, silhouette ribbons, motion paper, final lines and pain, motion pasting, as well as motion betweening using a new developed software called Meander (Failes, 2013). As a result, it uses CG animations while laying 2D drawings over the polygons through a hybrid of vector and raster-based drawing and animation system (Ciafardini, 2012). Also, due to its use of basic shades, infinite light played a major role by increasing the key light to provide highlights on the characters so that the light rays in the scene are parallel to each other (Kerlow, p. 228). Therefore, the experimental hybrid of 2D and 3D technology has become realizable.

#### **Aesthetics:**

In terms of visual aesthetics, there is a use of black and white colour to enhance the traditional look and feel of traditional animation, as well as a tint of red for high contrast and to signify the main focus. Furthermore, the team did not have a sub group to focus on clothing and hair (Failes, 2013), which they had to keep something minimalistic.

### **Banana (Despicable Me)**

On the other hand, this short film is categorized under comedy. In this particular story, it portrays specific personalities of the unique characters known as minions of their obsession with bananas.

#### Narrative:

The short begins with a minion getting hungry at work with the trouble of resisting his lunch of a banana. After a while, he decided to eat it, but a colleague saw him and asked him to share, but he refuses. Eventually, a third coworker comes by to break the fight, but ended up joining the fight since minions have an obsession with bananas. Then, a series of fight and chase happened where the three of them ended up at an open environment where other minions are found and that they all started to fight for the one banana. However, the minions lost their grip to the banana which flew out of their hands and loosing it in a hole.

#### Technique:

For this particular short, no special technique were used besides it being fully generated through computer animation. However, to enhance the minion's characteristics, many animation principals were used as found in Kerlow's readings, based off Disney's 12 Animation Principles (Kerlow, p. 305), such as Squashed and Stretched found through the minions' movements, Anticipation of getting to the banana at the beginning, Secondary Actions of various facial and body movement all happening at the same time such as when one of the minions got punched away and his eyes starts to rotate, as well as having lots of Exaggeration in motion and Character Personality. In terms of lighting, more ambient and area lights were used to distribute even lighting around the scene to simulate an underground factory mood (Kerlow, p. 230). With these techniques, it can create a realistic, yet comedic look in the short.

#### Aesthetics:

As for the style of the animation, bright colours were used to simulate humour, such that the yellow used on minions represent that they are bright and cheerful characters. Furthermore, the yellow colour of minions has a potential in alluding to their obsessions with bananas.

### **Conclusion**

After viewing the two animation shorts, I have come to realized that a story can be portrayed easily with no necessity in dialogue, but simply sound of characters' reactions which was found in both of the films. However, the animation style plays a large part in the story that the team tries to convey, such that *Paperman* attempts to simulate a traditional aesthetic which explores the technique of merging 2D and computer graphic animation, whereas in *Banana* from *Despicable Me*, more light and humorous colours were used to enhance the comedic effect. Additionally, to enhance the cartoon look, more of Lambert shading was used by giving a faceted appearance (Kerlow, p. 252).

## **References**

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