The Discussion of Still Frames and Motions on Timing Value – A Case Study of Some Awards Best Animated Shorts

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Abstract

The sense of accomplishment is seeing these still images come alive in the linear spatial reality in which we live, the restored concept of time reenacted amid stop-motion frames brings about the static consecution and dynamic reconstruction of moving images. Amid stop-motion frames where time can either pause or move forward, we are given a chance to rethink the definition of the recurrence of temporal consciousness. Therefore, in addition to the physical definition of time, the sense of time reshaped in space and the space constructed in time mark the instant when animated life is created. Within linear time structure, animated life and actual noumenon often form multiple overlapping senses of present space-time amid the spatiotemporal cycle of reconstructing and retracing past time and memorized moments aroused by the subconsciousness. This research essay focuses on exploring and expounding on the observation of temporal flow and spatial sense through frame by frame, as well as the observation of infinite from memory and memory points through life. The illusions created still images and frames and existing in space and time, and by discussion the subject of time-space and ponder the extension of image structures to satisfy viewers at a spiritual level. In addition, an echo can be aroused in viewers with the universal value of human activities, so that the viewers can gain an insight into this subject matter.

Keywords: Frame, Visual Images, Animated Short Film

Introduction

Animation begins with the continuity of speed composition from frame to frame. This "persistence of vision" achieves the expression of time and speed in screen motion and image, that is, achieving a virtual motion known as animation through interactions among timeline, space, and the laws of physical motion based on a specific number of flat images.

The control of human visual behavior is determined by speed. The speed of time produces a continuity that links the images in the left and right brain, while corresponding to the concept of time on a mental level. In reality, time and space timeline exhibit a linear and consistent speed, and we continue to move forward in the flow of time. However, by creating a new view of time through the interaction between frames in animation, we can autonomously determine the speed at which time proceeds. In addition, different methods can be used in the story's narrative rhythm, such as montage expression from shot to shot, to control viewers' sense of lapses in time. Regarding the view of time in animation and the alternation and connection of time described in this paper, we can express another view of time in the frame's shaping time.

Thus, animation uses the smallest unit in a film (a frame) and the persistence of vision principle to gradually produce visual image motion by connecting the flat composition in different frames. From the "scene" in a flat construct, we can build visually aesthetic and picture-balanced elements based on the frame concept, then extend this to the screen's narrative, and integrate the picture's entire scene scheduling. As a moving image art form, animation uses the shaping and broadcasting of moving images to enable viewers' mental exchange, and interpret and discuss the meaning of the work via the processing of forms, regardless of the inner context, external meaning, or symbolism of the moving image work. Therefore, the advancement of the aforementioned elements forms the important structure of the basic moving image form.

1.1 Background and Objective of the Research

Important animation film festivals and related broadcasting platforms provide animation creators with venues for mutual exchange and the ability to expand visibility for their work. Currently, there are many large and small international animation-related film festivals. The following is a list of large, indicative international film festivals with animation categories hosted by Taiwan:

● Golden Horse Film Festival
● Taichung International Animation Festival
● Taipei Film Festival
● Kaohsiung Film Festival

Golden Horse Film Festival, which is the most important event for animation in Taiwan, added an animated short film category in 2016, reflecting the effects and importance of independently created animated short films. In addition to the aforementioned four animation-related festivals, Taiwan also has the Women Make Waves Film Festival Taiwan, the South Taiwan Film Festival, the Youth Film

Festival, the Annual Screwdriver International Student Short Film Festival, and other regional/student/ documentary-related film festivals. These international platforms organized by Taiwan enable the themes of independent animation creators to receive local attention. Broadcasting in these film festivals not only delivers the image information in these animated short films to the public, but also enables animation industry professionals to review these works and recognize the expressed topics or media forms.

The goal of broadcasting animated short films in film festivals or in other venues is to induce a dialogue with society and the public. Viewers can obtain information expressed in the film through the moving images and gradually understand the story themes/meanings that the creator wishes to express, as well as make their own determination of the creator's thinking and perspectives towards people, things, and events. A mature viewer will often carefully examine the context and underlying ideas that the creator is trying to express behind the scenes. Detailed clues in the images can induce viewers to explore and discover the creator's interpretation in the creative work. After watching the film, viewers' satisfaction comes from their experience and understanding of the intention that the creator wishes to express.

In this study, we compiled the media genre and performance topics that creators have been recognized for from the winners of the aforementioned four indicative international animation festivals in the last three years. The compilation is based on the following two dimensions:

1. The mutual effects between animation media and the overall performance of the work
2. The time difference between the view of time and life course in the animation topic

The two aforementioned items are the overall analysis and comparison of the time and space that an animated short film creator used in his/her animated work. This is done to determine the similarities and the differences. The broadcasting of the image work can produce different feelings, interpretations, and perspectives in viewers. Therefore, the receiving and return of image information from the moving images will also create many different interpretations of the work. We aim to determine the factors that make animated short films popular and recognized. The results of this study can serve as a reference for future independent animation creators.

1.2 The importance of The Research

The display of moving images (the creation process of the work) is the very start of life for an animation. This process often originates through creators' own growing experience, feelings, or psychological cognition of their experiences. After these feelings and experiences have been objectively and comprehensively reflected upon, the creators then decide to express their feelings, thoughts, and experiences in an animated short film form. In addition to trying to create resonance between their own feelings and the external world, the creators also hope to explore topics/feelings or gain recognition and attention. These animated short films and their content on a certain level represent the aspects of social structure from the countries that the creators come from. The animated films can also highlight feelings toward universal

life values that have no borders. This means that the reasons for creation and the culture value of a complete animated work are worthy of exploring.

Three directions are used to define this study's necessity and importance, and to conduct the analysis and exploration in sequence:

1. Rendering from animation creators' perspective: expressing their own life experience/topics or the appearance of contemporary society
2. Special reasons and values that have been recognized: discussing universal life values, cultural perspective, or media expression
3. The feeling and cognition of common viewers: the delivery clarity of the work's information and the resonance

Therefore, the frame's stopping time and dynamic lapse speed in animation and the time multiplication relative to spatial performance involve social and cultural values triggered by the topic itself. This study comprehensively categorizes, analyzes, and discusses animated works and creators recognized at the previously mentioned animation festivals.

2. Animation Structure and Theme Mode

Before discussing the animation creative forms, we must first explore movie image language. Animation has been categorized as movie art in the more than one hundred years of movie history. Therefore, an animation's creative form can also be a movie's creative form. People have listened to stories since ancient times. The content of these stories takes the listeners into plots that exist in an imaginary environment. From mythology to fables and small plots that exist in conversation, people learn to comprehend truths beyond what is on the surface from these stories, i.e., the deeper meaning of these stories. Thus, stories are the pre-narratives of an animation.

A narrative emphasizes the cause and effect of elements in the story, their relationships, features, and direction. The narrative also describes the time flow and the spatial construct, as well as the overall rhythm; it is closely related to viewers' understanding of the complete story image. These elements are all linked into an organized structure that viewers can understand. The plot is similar to the starting and closing structures in an article.

Animation narrative theory and structure can be divided into orthodox animation and experimental animation (Paul Well, 1998). Orthodox animation uses a certain narrative structure. The three-act structure (Syd Field, 1979) has a clear start and transformation linearity where the story starts, the conflict transforms, and the story ends. The performance of representational characters is used to integrate the content. The animated short films produced by most independent creators are developmental animation that is between orthodox animation and experimental animation on the spectrum. Although developmental animation still has a story linearity and rhythm, its creator uses art style or scenes, scene transitions, or the changing and switching of the lens or lines to narrate a certain ideology. This type of animation is based mainly on imagery expression of the picture, and media are added for interactive use. Pictures are often used to drive or stimulate viewers' visual sense and to express feelings towards a certain topic. Developmental animation does not focus on the story

description structure, or only uses certain things or items as a symbolic representation. This method is often used in animated short films to explore human consciousness and the value of our existence.

In a broad range of animated short film topics, subject matter that can relate to viewers' similar experiences or universal value can often touch people's hearts. Thus, regardless of whether the material takes an action form and conscious behavior that hides a creator's own unconscious intention, or whether the topic is about human self-awareness, family conflict, love or hate, or social criticism, most people use their own life experiences as the starting point and expand to the feelings and responses of the group.
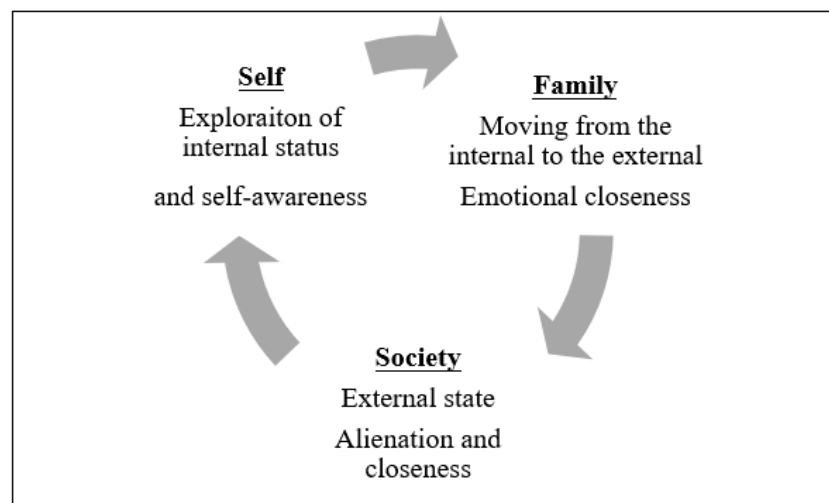
Figure 1. Animation expression topic that corresponds to life experience

As people, we use our self-awareness to gradually feel our existence at the moment and realize the relationship between ourselves and others. We use self-awareness to repeatedly consider awareness in our minds, and use this type of exercise to explore and get to know ourselves, and to move from getting along with ourselves to relationships with others. In the process, we gradually contemplate the meaning and value of our own existence. This exploration of the aspects of human nature forms the topics in animated short films that have an impact on viewers and that display universal experience. In this study, we explored, compared, and analyzed the use of time in animation by using the nominees and winners of the Golden Horse animated short film award in the last three years based on the three following topical aspects:

A. Awareness of self-awareness and life experience: rendering and highlighting our own self-awareness with time and space
B. Temporal view and temporal difference in the life course in animation subject matter: looking at an exploration of inner dilemmas, searching for balance, and a desire from a loneliness perspective
C. Physical time flow and corresponding persistence of visual time feeling: from self to harmony and coexistence with the world
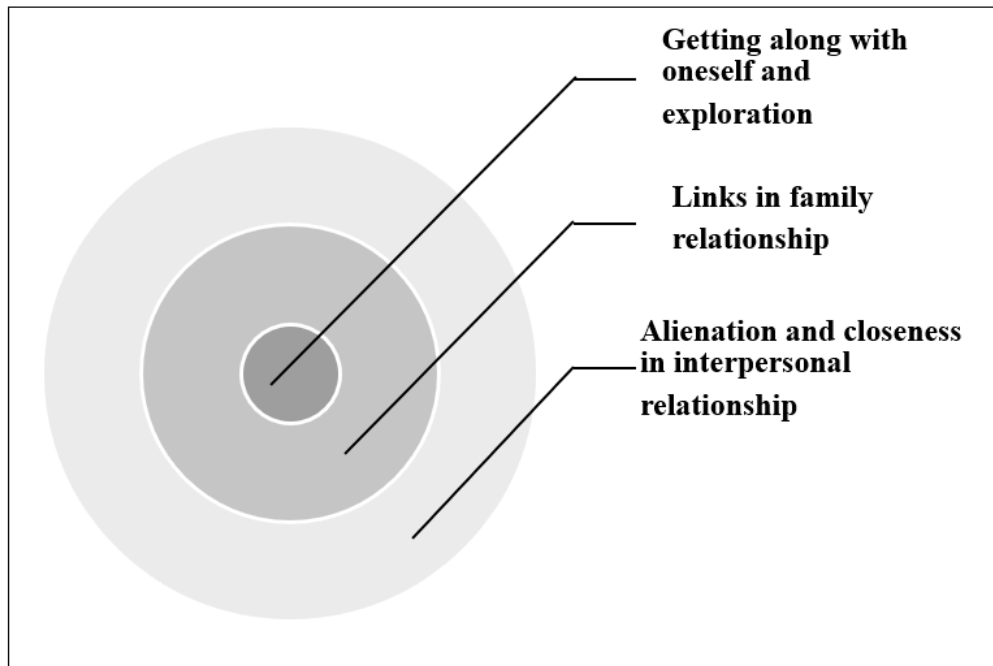
Getting along with oneself and exploration

Links in family relationship

Alienation and closeness in interpersonal relationship

Figure 2. Analysis of animation topic dimensions

3. The Connection Between Animation Performance and Time/Space

After the cut-and-paste concept developed by the father of American movie (D. W. Griffith; *The Birth of a Nation*, 1915), the term "montage" was proposed by Russian director Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein in the 1920s. Montage uses a large combination approach to edit different image materials (such as shots taken at different times and locations or series of split shots of far and near distances) to joint editing or staggered action. This type of front and back scene succession will produce a third type of interpretation and meaning, which can be used to emphasize or affect viewers' emotions towards the narrative story. Thus, montage became an important narrative method in movie history and animation performance form that continues to affect us today.

The montage theory builds an inseparable relationship between scenes and provides the audience with picture meaning of the scene. Montages also provide new meaning through series of edited scenes; this is the mise-en-scene method that requires exploration. The longitudinal depth in multi-level space in a scene and translational motion axis, the scene's 2D flat composition, and the interweaving of these pictures are all operated by the mise-en-scene. The purpose is to trigger viewers' viewer meaning association towards the work and understand the intrinsic meaning of the picture arrangement.

The long scene theory, which is the opposite of the montage theory, was introduced by the father of French new wave movies, Andre Bazin. In the montage method, the result of the images after they are shot to the edited material involves a compression of time flow. The seconds displayed in the picture and the result, as well as the shooting time and the playing time, cannot be restored to a near-reality time flow. What viewers see is the temporal and spatial construct after a director is done with the editing. Bazin had a realistic attitude towards the rendering of images so that they do not manipulate viewers' emotions. Bazin also attempted to reproduce the real

temporal and spatial environment and objectivity. He used moving images closest to reality as the rendering form. Although Bazin had the lofty goal of recording the most truthful time, and the camera films in real recording time: by the time the moving images are restored and broadcast to the audience, the time in the moving images has long turned into the past tense of real time and space. Even thus, Bazin's theory corresponding to the truthfulness of time and structural aspects in the restored time flow in a creator's short film had a deep impact on image action creators.

Because animation is created through a series of continuous flat images that are played in real time and space, the moment the images stop, the animation life ceases to have temporal motion at that time point. This special feature allows animation and spatial relationship axis to exist in a type of special multilayered relationship. That is, the animation's specific rendering and life relies on temporal and spatial broadcasting. However, once the broadcasting stops, the existing real time and space continues to move forward in a linear fashion. Therefore, animation uses the time created through the existence of the frames to re-render the passing of time flow in real time and space. Once the curtain falls, the frames return to their initial state and we continue forward in real time and space. However, we continue to reflux in the created time flow and use multiplicity time architecture to correspond to the existence of space.

Furthermore, constructs such as "time flies" or "days wear on like years" in real time and space make people feel time is flowing especially fast or especially slow. These feelings can extend to, or compress, our awareness of real time; they come from people's awareness of emotional time, not real time in real life. When the two interact, they create a time illusion and a movie's repetition of perceived time, giving us a cognitive perception point on time and life.

This study aims to explore many aspects based on the winning animated short films within the last three years, for example, the choice of media for an animated short film and how this media highlights the topics in the film, whether the animated short film narrative method emphasizes the representational structure or abstract editing ideology, whether the topic of the animation starts from its creator and moves towards social exploration, how the dynamic image form displayed for the animation topic affects the grasp of the time narrative, how the temporal view affects viewers' awareness, and how the illusory time frame in animation interacts with the physical recreated time and space.

4. Analyses of Winning Animated shorts

This study focuses on four international movie festivals from Taiwan that are indicative of the industry: Golden Horse Film Festival, TIAF, Taipei Film Festival, and Kaohsiung Film Festival, to study animated short films that have won awards in these festivals in the past three years. The subject matter, genres, and content of 16 award winning animated short films will be analyzed and studied. The following are the initial data:

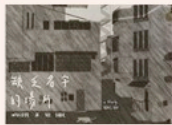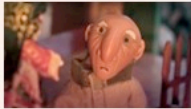A. Golden Horse Film Festival's animated short film category:

	2016	2017	2018
Name of winning short film	Wander in the Dark	Losing Sight of a Longed Place	Where Am I Going?
Animation stills			
Director/creator	Redic Hsu	Ka-Chun Shek, Chun-Long Wong & Tsu-Ying Wong	Yun-Sian Huang & Yi-Chin Tsai
Country	Taiwan	Hong Kong	Taiwan
Media	Hand-drawn animation	Hand-drawn animation	Puppet animation
Subject matter	A life that lost its name and identity	LGBT rights based on a true story	Taiwan craftsmanship and the lives of local elderly people
Source of inspiration	Shannon Johnstone's Discarded Property photography series; Natsume Soseki's I Am a Cat	Anca Damian's The Magic Mountain	Local Taiwan dough art

Figure 3. Winners of the animated short film category in Golden Horse Film Festival for the last three years

B. TIAF:

	2016		2017		2018	
Award item	Taiwan award	Taichung award	International short film group: Taichung's first prize award	Best Taiwan short film award	Short film competition: first prize	Taiwan short film competition: first prize (total of two films)
Name of winning short film	20	And Then	Negative Space	Stories About Him	The Fall	1. Si So Mi 2. Where Am I Going?
Animation stills						
Director/creator	Chu-Ying Chiang	Tzu-Hsin Yang	Max Porter & Ru Kuwahata	Yung-Shiuan Yang	Boris Labbé	1. Xu-Zhan Zhang 2. Yun-Sian Huang & Yi-Chin Tsai
Country	Taiwan	Taiwan	France	Taiwan	France	Taiwan, Taiwan
Media	Hand-drawn animation (transfer)	Hand-drawn animation	Puppet animation	Hand-drawn 2D paper cutting and clay mixed media animation	2D hand-drawn animation	1. Puppet animation 2. Puppet animation
Subject matter	Links between people	Interruption of rhythm in a rhythmic society	Father's love	Land, memory, and family	Cycle and sequence of heaven and hell	1. Story of life and death 2. Taiwan craftsmanship and the lives of local elderly people
Source of inspiration	Growing experience	Paris terror attack in November 2015	Adopted from the short poem of the same title by American poet Ron Koertge	Exploring grandfather's story from an oil painting on grandmother's living room wall	Dante's Divine Comedy	Love song soundtrack from the German poetry: Ach wie ist's möglich dann to the name for Taiwan's funeral team Si So Mi

Figure 4. Winners of the animation category in TIAF for the last three years

C. Taipei Film Festival:

	2016	2017	2018
Name of winning short film	Crash Testing	Stories About Him	Neon
Animation stills			
Director/creator	Yu-Ting Hsueh	Yung-Shiuan Yang	Sz-Yu Pan
Country	Taiwan	Taiwan	Taiwan
Media	Experimental animation	Hand-drawn 2D paper cutting and clay mixed media animation	Hand-drawn animation
Subject matter	Using impact to discern people's value of existence	Land, memory, and family	Using light and shadow as the subject matter to reveal various depths of feelings towards love and the different aspects of love
Source of inspiration	Using mannequin car crash testing to echo life	Exploring grandfather's story from an oil painting on grandmother's living room wall	Inspired by the films: Chungking Express, Fallen Angels, and Café de Flore

Figure 5. Winners of the animation category in Taipei Film Festival for the last three years

D. Kaohsiung Film Festival:

	2016	2017	2018
Award	Animation award	Animation award	Best VR narrative short film award
Name of winning short film	In The Distance	Catherine	Battlescar
Animation stills			
Director/creator	Florian Grolig	Britt Raes	Nico Casavecchia & Martin Allais
Country	Germany	Belgium	France & the United States
Media	3D computer animation	Hand-drawn animation	VR computer animation
Subject matter	Forced immigration/displacement crisis	The feelings between animals and people	Paying tribute to the end of the 1970s
Source of inspiration	British animation director Phil Mulloy and Russian animator Igor Kovalyov	The definition of "home"	Punk poet Patti Smith

Figure 6. Winner of the animation category in Kaohsiung Film Festival for the last three years

The above data are from 16 winning animated short films from 2016 to 2018. Two of the works won different awards in different film festivals. *Stories About Him* won the best Taiwan short film award in the 2017 TIAF and the 2017 Taipei Film Festival. The film: *Where Am I Going?* won the 2018 Golden Horse Film Festival's animated

short film award and first place in the Taiwan short film category in the 2018 TIAF, there are a total of six foreign creators and eight domestic creators. The Internet platform and email were used to contact and communicate with them. This can provide more contexts for the contents of the creations and the perspective that the works try to express.

Directors from Taiwan	Wander in the Dark, Where Am I Going?, 20, And Then, Stories About Him, Si So Mi, Crash Testing, Neon
Directors not from Taiwan	Losing Sight of A Longed Place, Negative Space, The Fall, In the Distance, Catherine, Battlescar

Figure 7. List of creators for winning animated short films in the past three years

The implementation not only can help us understand the different aspects of an animated short film that moves viewers, but can also help us understand the correlation between media and subject matter rendering, the application of aesthetics on the subject matter, and whether animation aesthetics achieves the level of pursuit that media should have. In addition, this study also explores whether animations have an effect on others and whether viewers receive and recognize the delivered message once a film has been completed. The results of this study will be turned into a report and be presented at seminars. They can also be used as a reference for animation-related academics, industry, beginner animated short film directors, and students, as well as points for conducting exchange.

5. Conclusions

Work rendering that starts from an emotional basis is the nature of creation. An animated short film starts with a precious concept, which is rendered with suitable media, and then finally broadcast. The value of the work comes from the topics explored in the subject matter that are central to people or society, and the emotions involved.

Through their works, creators continuously redefine and inspect themselves. The shaping of a work is a dialogue with the outside world and the objective is to trigger a shared resonance on humanistic and mental levels. The emergence of digital platforms provides animations with greater visibility and helps to spread this broadcasting form. Digital devices and video platforms can be used by viewers to see the works. The rendered animated works are also rapidly being delivered to, and seen by, the public. After this rapid dissemination is achieved, whether creators can use a slow attitude to ponder the intentions rendered in their works is a space for reflection for both the creators and viewers. In this alternating speed, we realize the true meaning in this time space, not only in the works themselves, but also in their life philosophy and reflections.

In the dialogue between a creator's work topic and the outside world, we use our own awareness to gradually obtain the meaning of our own existence and the meaning of

the relationship between ourselves and other people around us. We use our own self-awareness to repeatedly consider so that we acknowledge ourselves through this type of activity and exploration. The framework of our own treatment and the relationship with others is used to gradually move towards defining and understanding what the work is trying to advocate.

To a creator, the artistic expression of an animation is not just expressed by the media, but also extends from the theme to familiarity with the view of time. Animated works often go from rational real time and space to the created emotional virtual time and then back. Thus, in the animation framework, we can autonomously stop the frame and magnify the emotional level through internal life feelings. The layering of time and the definition of time/space in rational reality and the created frame mean that we should deeply consider viewers' view of time and the impact that the hidden context and view of time in animated work have on their inner emotional life.

Thus, we hope that the collection, exploration, organization, and dialogue conducted for this study can interpret and give new meaning to winning animated short films, and equip the public with the ability to understand and feel what the films are trying to express. Exploration done for this study can influence people's care for society and humanity, as well as let people feel spiritual value and hope for the future.

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