4-11-2014

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The Artist in the Image: A Discussion of Style and Content in *Flotsam* and *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*

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Researching Children’s Illustrations: Contemporary Narratives

This project began in the fall of 2013 with the completion of a scholarly essay concerning the topic of children's illustration. The thesis of the essay asserted that the role of children's picture books has served as a reprieve for adults and children from the bombardment of digital technology and visual stimulation in today's global society. It was the purpose of this study to examine the causes of this respite by examining the aesthetic choices of the illustrator, the physicality of the books themselves, and the narrative content therein. To this end, I examined two children's books as case studies which demonstrate the thesis: *Flotsam* (2006) and *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* (2010).

*Flotsam* is a wordless picture book telling the story of a little boy who discovers an underwater camera and the mysteries that it holds. *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* combines both text and image to depict the story of what happens when an elderly zookeeper becomes ill and is visited by his animal friends.

Home for Roy: Combining Digital technology with Traditional illustration Mediums

For the Spring 2014 semester, my research took the form of an art piece, the creation of a stop motion animation. Based on the research that I conducted in the fall semester, I began work on the creation of an animation that would combine traditional illustration mediums such as drawing, with digital technology to create an artistic object that can be accessed digitally, yet still maintains the virtuosity of hand-drawn illustrations. The final product was a 5min stop motion animation film depicting the events surrounding a transformed rabbit, and the mischievous creatures responsible for the transformation.

Process: Post-production of Characters

Most of the characters started out as watercolor drawings, as the first image demonstrates. Once a velum prototype is completed the next step is to trace the final character. The second picture shows a jointed velum character. The third image shows a cutting mat and two prototype characters that are ready to be traced and cut with an exacto-knife. The last image depicts a finished character with embroidery.

Film Production: Using Stop Motion

The image at right shows my hand in between camera shots as I move the jointed figures. The images on the far right show the slow progress of movement between each frame. The arm moves slightly down each time. When sped up, this progress creates the illusion of movement, allowing the stop motion technique to create animations.

The images were then shot individually with a digital Cannon camera, imported into Windows Movie Maker. After the correct slide speed was selected, the film was edited then imported into iDVD, and sound was added. The total sound and imaging editing process took approximately 84 hours.

Home for Roy is currently being screened in the graduation senior art exhibition, *Exceptional Spaces*, along with a display of the original characters and setting componets.