

# Projects

These project prompts can be attempted at any point throughout the semester. To pass the course with a 'C', you must complete 2 of these projects by the end of the semester. You will not get above a 'B' without completing 4 projects.

Time for critique will be available during each class. At each critique, you will either be approved to 'move on' or must resolve issues with that stage of production and then present again.

These projects must be completed in addition to in-class work. You may not do any project twice.

Every project requires at least 3 critiques, although you may come in for as many as you'd like. At each critique you will be approved to move on to the next stage of production or you will be asked to make improvements and present again during the subsequent class

1. Preproduction critique – Concept and visual development (character designs, storyboards, etc)
2. Production Critique – Some of the animation presented for critique.
3. Final Critique – The finished product

Feel free to propose changes or subvert the assignments outlined here, but propose changes in order to create better projects or push yourself as an artist, not to make your life easier or to stay in your comfort zone.

Use publicly available resources (i.e. free models, rigs, photos, music etc) sparingly. Share resources for better results.

## 1. Remix

**Prompt:** Central tenants of postmodernism and intertextuality claim that new meanings are created through the appropriation and recontextualization of old materials. How is this meaning created? What does this new meaning say about common consciousness and shared culture? What special abilities does animation have in remixing that other media forms may not have? In what ways can a remix piece strive to be original?

**Assignment:** Create new meaning in an animation by appropriating materials from other artists and manufacturers.

## 2. Meditation

**Prompt:** There are multiple strains of meditation theory and practice going back thousands of years. These strains vary from the spiritual to the contemplative, the energizing to the sedate. Some of these meditative experiences are represented or aided by art. What is your process of meditation and how does it manifest? Is there a unifying theme to meditation as a practice? How do existing artistic representations of meditation resonate with your experiences? In what ways do you reject them? What might be universal or unifying themes or experiences of meditation?

**Assignment:** Create a meditative animation. Focus on creating a tone rather than a narrative. Strive to use no spoken or on-screen text.

### 3. The Lock

**Prompt:** The lock sits at the juncture between security and curiosity; stability and exclusion. While locks may protect us, they also confine us. What does the lock say about the human drive to exclude? In what ways might a lock hold us in place? In what ways might a lock free us? What does a lock say about the relationship between secrecy and value? Is there a conceptual symmetry between things locked together and things locked in place?

**Assignment:** Create an animation conceptually addressing locks. Do this without using established symbols as much as possible.

### 4. Reflection

**Prompt:** Christian Metz described cinema as a mirror for the spectator, but cinema can also be a mirror for the filmmaker. How might you use cinema to better see yourself? How might the reflection of a filmmaker clash with the reflection of an audience? How can a filmmaker strive to lie to their audience? Does form and technique ultimately reflect the truth about a filmmaker regardless of their intent? How might you be both honest and deceitful through form and narrative?

**Assignment:** Reflect upon yourself using animation with an eye towards getting others to understand you as an individual. Attempt this without spoken or written words.

### 5. On The Fringe

**Prompt:** Art described as 'fringe' is unconventional, extreme, risky, often ignored, and dictated by subculture rather than the mainstream. How do fringe works differ from mainstream works? What kinds of topics put a work 'on the fringe'? What areas of filmmaking and animation have been left unexplored? What areas of our culture do you occupy that have been kept out of media thus far?

**Assignment:** Make an animated work on the fringe of art and culture. Use methods, materials, designs, narratives and forms that have been underutilized or overlooked.

### 6. The Space Where I...

**Prompt:** Where we work has a fundamental and (often) invisible connection to the work we do. Choose a space to work in and make this connection visible. Where are you working and why? What dialog does the piece have with the space it was created in? How might the 'wrong' place change your processes or your outcomes? What kinds of innovative spaces might result in innovative animations?

**Assignment:** Create an animation where the production space is integral to the form, design and motion of the finished piece.

### 7. Cycling

**Prompt:** Cyclical events govern both the very big and the very small. Arguments have been made that cycling (or at least reproduction) is the very definition of life. Rather than being merely repetitive, a cycle can be expansive and exciting. What could be gained through repetition and reproduction? What is lost? How might a narrative arc be created through cycling?

**Assignment:** Create a piece that utilizes cycles narratively and formally.

## 8. We Are Connected

**Prompt:** Although the root of 'connection' implies a physical binding together, we usually imagine a connection as a kind of metaphor. Objects or people who have never been in physical proximity may be 'connected.' The implication is that objects and people have some kind of metaphysical ability to 'bind' when not in contact. How does the concept of connection signify a natural state of separation? In what ways do we culturally privilege notional connections over physical ones? How does the expanded meaning of connection blur the lines between our metaphorical and literal thinking?

**Assignment:** Make a piece dealing with real or imagined connections. Find ways to manifest these connections visually.

## 9. Utopia/Ectopia

**Prompt:** Utopia – literally 'no place' – a cultural designation of a perfect society  
Ectopia – literally 'out of place' – a medical/scientific designation for something that has formed in the wrong location.

**Assignment:** Create an animated work engaging these concepts in synthesis.

## 10. Alternative Project

**Assignment:** Propose a prompt for a project. Complete a project within that prompt. Try to create the prompt without a specific project in mind. What is it that you want to say? What are you interested in exploring? Stay flexible! The ideas will change.

**NOTE:** this project may only be proposed after 2 projects have been completed