

SYMPOSIUM "NARRATIVE STRUCTURES AND VISUAL STORYTELLING"
Wednesday April 27 2016, 10.00-17.00 Literaturhaus Stuttgart
Conference Chairs: Prof. Dr. Susanne Marschall (Eberhard Karls University Tübingen)
Assoc.Prof. Hannes Rall (Nanyang Technological University)

KEYNOTE 1

Prof. Michaela Pavlatova

10.00-12.00

The stories without the the story / From my kitchen

Is there any universal recipe to make a good story, does the film need a story at all? Definitely it needs a code given to the audience. I will try to name and describe the way I work to find where the stories come from and how they turn to the film, trying to find the recipes that can be shared.

(The talk will be accompanied with excerpts from her films.)

About the speaker

Michaela Pavlatova is an animation director from Czech Republic. Her films (*Reci, reci, reci / Words, words, words, Repete, Tram*) have received numerous awards at international film festivals, including an Oscar nomination, Annecy Cristal, Golden Bear in Berlinale, Grand Prix at the International Animation Festival Hiroshima, etc. Besides animation, Pavlatova directed two live action feature films, makes illustrations and works in the field of theatre. She gives master-classes and workshops at the universities and festivals around the world. Since 2016 she is the Chair of an Animation Department at FAMU Prague.

KEYNOTE 2

Prof. Michael Schwertel

11.00-11.30

Digital Storytelling – What we could learn from the past to handle virtual reality and to recognize chances of new techniques for narration in the future

Like Marshall McLuhan stated: Virtual reality is on the doorstep. This new media channel will change our media reception and our habits one more time like radio, cinema and tv already did.

But what can we exactly learn from the past for vr? What knowledge can we adapt to build vr content and to tell stories?

In the media evolution we can see the development from the lean back entertainment to web of communication empowerment over the jump in to the web of things. Now we are living in the time of web of thoughts extension. The next step will be to open up the small holes of our smartphones and place it in 360 degrees around us. This will be a new lifecycle of a new media species and it will act like the media evolution steps from the past.

With these steps as milestones it is easy to predict how the evolution of vr storytelling will be in the next time. From lean back vr to interactive vr over connected vr games to always online augmented reality headsets. These categories of evolution steps will help to understand the chances of vr storytelling and can show old patterns to adapt and

indicate the differences to new possibilities like interactivity, 4D animations, instant feedback and a new hero's journey.

About the speaker

Michael Schwertel is an animation producer and professor for Media Management at the Cologne Business School.

He is a scholar with main research interests in Future of Media, Transmedia, Design Thinking and Media Production.

He started as an animator and founded his own production company Power-Toons and an animation design studio blurmedia for transmedia projects. He works and worked for every kind of media channel for clients like ARD, Bertelsmann, Deutsche Bahn, Goethe-Institut, RTL, T-Com, WDR,... and own independent projects shown on festivals around the world. He has received nominations for the Robert Bosch prize twice and awards of the International Trickfilm Festival in Stuttgart and the DEFA-Stiftung.

He had some lectureships at some universities like iae Savoie Mont-Blanc Universitaire d'Annecy France, BiTS Iserlohn Germany and held workshops about Animation, Transmedia, Social Media and Media Trends for several institutions like Grimme Akademie, Goethe-Institut, Landesanstalt für Medien NRW, giz,... at conferences like the Energy Forum of the European Union in Beirut/Lebanon.

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About the speaker

Lea Vidakovic

Animation installation and spatial storytelling

11.30-12.00

Animation installations intrinsically rely on the space where they occur. Some are tied so closely to the place where they appear, that once displaced, their meaning essentially changes. Others are less dependent on the particular place, but rather on the spatial organization of elements within the installation. Depending on their nature and purpose, animation installations show different content varying from immersive environments and abstract imagery to figurative, highly narrative stories. This paper will focus on the narrative aspect of animation installations that feature representational visual imagery in spatial context. The aim is to explore alternative narrative approaches to storytelling in animation, which employ physical space not only as a container for the story, but as an integral part of it.

When presenting animation films outside traditional screening venues, the fixed viewing position is compromised, and with it, the storyline, as we know it, stops to exist.

Animated sequences no longer replace each other only in a linear succession, in a timeline, but they coexist in physical space forming juxtaposed interrelations. To create stories for such installations novel storytelling approaches are needed. These are more open, flexible narrative structures that offer a layered experience, but demand active participation and interpretation from the audience. To exemplify this approach, the

paper will address several animation installations that I created for gallery presentations. Splendid Isolation (2010), Sisters (2012) and The Family Portrait (2016) tackle the storytelling potential that animation installation can offer, where space is considered as a narrative device which supports and drives the story.

About the speaker

Lea Vidakovic is an artist and animator who works in the field of animation installation, utilizing traditional puppet animation. She graduated from the Academy of Arts in Zagreb, Croatia (2011), gained a BA in animation from Hogskulen i Volda, Norway (2010) and an MA of audio-visual arts from the Royal Academy of Art in Ghent, Belgium (2012). Currently she is a PhD student at Nanyang Technological University – School of Art, Design and Media in Singapore, with research interest in fragmented storytelling and new narrative approaches for animation installations. She has exhibited internationally in solo and group exhibitions and 200+ international animation festivals, where both her films and artworks received numerous awards. She is a member of HDLU (Croatian Association of Artists) and SULUV (Association of Artists from Vojvodina). leavidakovic.com

KEYNOTE 3

Assoc. Prof. Benjamin Seide

14.00-15.00

The Influence of Digital Visual Effects on Storytelling Structure

This talk will negotiate the role of digital Visual Effects on the narrative structure in the filmmaking process. Do storytellers benefit or do Visual Effects undermine the classical storytelling and how do omnipotent virtual cameras influence the filmmaking process and storytelling aspect?

Naima Alam

Lecturer, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh

15.00-15.30

So Relatable: Comic Medium as a Portrayal of the Social Realities of Bangladesh

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The depiction of historical and political social realism through biographical graphic novel like Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, and many others like it, are not new to the literary world. This paper aims to portray comic and graphic novels as a representation of social realities of a Bangladesh from its conception to the present day. The paper will analyze the visual narratives and stories told in several Bangladeshi comics and graphic novels published in the last few decades to gain a critical perspective of Bangladeshi cultural and society. The revolution and social struggle that brought on the birth of the country in 1970s will be analyzed through *Mujib* a biographical novel of the Father of the Nation. Then the economic and social struggles of the new country during the 80s will be seen in a daily newspaper comic *Tokai* (street urchin). Finally, the 90s and 2000s will be represented by a comic magazine *Unmad*, and a graphic novel series *Shabash*. Ideas suggested in Josep Catala's article, A Drawing of the World: Documentary and Comic Book like "subjective realism", and "hybrid image" as a way of understanding the integration of social reality and comic reality will be used as an analytical framework. Finally the paper will establish the function of visual story-telling in the comic medium as a component of constructing and portraying social reality and cultural values, in contemporary Bangladeshi literature.

About the speaker

University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh- Lecturer

- *Courses Taught-* Undergraduate: Introduction to Animation, Introduction to Public Relations, Interpersonal and Intercultural Communications, Introduction to Photography; Masters Courses: Integrated Marketing Communication
- Member Animation Minor Development Committee and Curriculum Evaluation Committee of the Media Studies and Journalism Department of ULAB *Founder of VoicelessBangladeshi Community Outreach Project-* The project has completed one year on July 2015.
- *Achievement-* The project has gotten major response from local minority groups, community leaders and has been covered several times on different daily newspapers including Daily Star, Dhaka Tribune, New Age and Prothom Alo.
- *Chaired the Curriculum Integration Event for Fall 2014*

Markus Watzl

16.00-17.00

Writing for modern-day-children – Geschichten aus Märchentale

This paper focuses on my work as an author for the mobile application „Geschichten aus Märchentale“, published by Solid White, Stuttgart.

The goal was to create an animated book of fairy tales, which could be read by children or by parents for their children on mobile devices, using iOS and Android. The stories included topics like the difficulty of making friends, personal responsibility towards them or the value of a functioning Gemeinschaft and had to be embedded in a narrative structure, that could be understood by kids.

The most important part in every dramatic structure are the characters. Even in a fairy tale, they had to be reliable and also loveable figures with a goal. It was obvious, that we couldn't create characters, that reimagined fairy tale figures from our own childhood, because they were poorly developed and we couldn't use characters as in the American Monomyth, because they weren't suitable for a children's storyline. It also had to be considered, that the expectations and the viewer experiences of parents and children alike were in steady change and weren't definitely the same as mine, when I read fairy tales. So it was necessary to empathize with modern storytelling experiences of children and parents, but also follow the rules of narration. The project was supported by the Digital Content Fund of the Medien- and Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg and was released in 2015.

The tales also include the possibility of sequels, so the work on this project continues.