Chapter 13
Character Development for Visual Storytelling in Traditional and Digital Media

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is focused on text visualization and storytelling delivered in various literary styles. Discussion pertains storytelling by drawing, both with traditional techniques and digital storytelling for multimedia. Building characters for visual storytelling is discussed in theoretical and historical terms, followed by a description of the process of creating characters, their environment, writing a storyline, designing a storyboard and animatic. Projects offer practical examples of the visual storytelling production.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we will focus on visual storytelling, especially on form of digital storytelling. Visual storytelling combines visual and verbal communication. The task to be done is to develop, with the use of software, or coding, or both, dynamic presentation of various kinds of data in the form of a visual story. Visual approach to learning makes the comprehending easier, either of the core concepts in creating art, the designing for web, or using everyday applications. Tools for enhancing visual literacy and thus supporting learning about science may comprise visual storytelling, animations, video clips, simulations, and augmented reality environments, among other solutions. Visuals present in constantly growing technology stimulate us to become more visually literate, knowledgeable, explorative, open to ideas, and adventurous enough to meet the challenge set up by the presence of the computer. We can do it by creating an image and transform it into other dimensions: from two dimensional to three-dimensional rotational object, a time based visual story, or a virtual reality based scenario.

Visual storytelling uses the pictorial and verbal solutions that offer additional communication possibilities. They are given by the developments in data organization techniques such as search engines on the Internet, cognitive and semantic structuring of information, concept mapping, social networking, and

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cloud computing. Electronic art, web design, and communication media support creation of electronic media languages of visual representation and design. A shift in emphasis on learning *with* rather than learning *from* representations reflects transmission of information to constructivist approaches in which learners actively negotiate understanding and construct knowledge. Interpreting and constructing visual representations such as diagrams can lead to better understanding of science concepts (Tippett, 2016).

Integrative approach to multi-sensual, multidisciplinary, and multimedia-oriented projects is fundamental in art creating, learning, and instructional strategies. We can recall several approaches of masters in their fields that may combine into a holistic picture. Human intellectual potential was described by Howard Gardner (1993, 1993/2011, 1993/2006) who taught about at least eight intelligences with resulting mental formations and predispositions of the mind: visual/spatial intelligence, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existential intelligence. The preferred learning style may be mostly visual (and spatial), aural (auditory and musical), verbal (linguistic, in speech or writing), physical (kinesthetic), logical (and mathematical), social (interpersonal), or solitary (intrapersonal). Feelings and emotions were compared by Antonio Damasio (1994, 1999) to horse driving: we have to control horses when each of them tries to take our carriage in different direction. Neural basis of artistic creativity makes attitudes and behaviors more understandable with the advent of neurophysiology and imaging techniques. While exploring neuroaesthetics, a study of the neural basis of artistic creativity and achievement, Semir Zeki (1999) arrived at a conclusion, "artists are, in a sense, neurologists who unknowingly study the brain with techniques unique to them." Multidimensional and multisensory experiences offered by interactive generative art enable the combining and complementing image and word.

Even thou we used to present information both in a visual context and verbally, there is a wide range of ways of transferring visual material to verbal description, but there is a scarce guidance for going from written material to visual presentation. By combining visual and literary arts, science, and visualization we may cause that the visual comes beyond the verbal and verbal beyond the visual. Visual and verbal communication, electronic art, web design, and communication media, all support electronic media languages of visual representation, and thus add the visual approach to social networking. We may send out verbal and graphic info presentations on the web, and this allow the user/visitor's interactivity through the web. Visual storytelling makes possible the retrieving, visualizing, representing, and sharing our knowledge through visual and verbal metaphors, and also involving our senses in the process. Music and sound effects serve as the ways to transfer information.

STORYTELLING

Storytelling refers to the archived oral tradition of storytelling in different cultures, times, and places. It started as a verbal tradition aimed to preserve cultures, myths, stories, and other literary works. Storytelling pertains as well to digital storytelling using a variety of media formats involving words or written texts, images, masks, puppets, shadow puppets, shadows, gestures, sounds, and animated graphics to let the recipient know about incidents, occurrences, or events, and thus convey education, games, entertainment, or cultural and moral traditions. In educational terms, presenting learning material through mental imagery supports both immediate and long-term recall compared to studying material from a traditional, lecture-based method. Edutainment developed as a form of entertainment aimed at educating as well as entertaining.