Engaged practice and authorship:

Inquiry into the process of animation filmmaking as practitioner and critical researcher

Natalie Dekel

poeticmind.co.uk

A thesis submitted along with practical work
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of
Leeds Metropolitan University for
the degree of MPhil.

April 2007

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Animation has always been intrinsically authorial and intrinsically self-reflective (P. Wells, interview, 11 April 2006)*. Wells argues that animators are artists and are authorial, despite the fact that commercialism tends to dismiss this. Yet, even though commercial animators may feel that the scripts and ideas for the animation films are never precisely their own due to collaborative work in the studios, the animator actually acts as a vehicle through which these ideas take shape and materialise on a screen.

I would argue that the information is rushing through one's body and mind, driving one to express through animated language of symbols and images what is ultimately personal and is in fact an interpretation of subjective authorial nature. My research aims to explore this sense of authorship through my own practice, by exploring my experience as an animator in the process of filmmaking. My films explore personal experiments, within commercial elements – they are script driven, narrative driven, using a strong graphic line that links them to the commercial requirements of animation film. More importantly, my practice as discussed in this research will raise the issue of being a critical self-conscious and self-reflective practitioner, aiming at opening up a much needed path for further inquiry into this issue in animation practice. Looking back on the literature on animation, I have encountered either "clinical" technical accounts of the filmmaking "inventory" or a focus on historic, commercial and industrial aspects of popular animation, thus overlooking the experience of an animator.

Authorship was discussed from the point of view of the result of the filmmaking (Wells, 2002), and to this I would like to contribute a discussion of the process and from the point of view of an animator.

* For full list of interviews held with critics and animators, see page 53.

How to read this work

This work is practice-based research consisting of two animation films (*The Truth* (2004) and *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007)), a sketchbook *Tribute,* and the critical reflection (thesis).

Since practice is the primary source for this study, I suggest reading the work in the following order:

1. First, watch the film *The Truth* (2004)
2. Then watch the film *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007) that reflects and analyses both my practice (*The Truth*) and animation as a medium in general.
3. Read through the sketchbook *Tribute.*
4. Finally, read the critical reflection (thesis).

I hope that this suggestion will help the reader to undergo a parallel process to that which I have experienced during the research.

Table of contents

Introduction

Animators seem to know thousands of ways to express emotions and movement through line, colour and texture, all through personal experience. The experience gained in the studio turns an animator into what Elkins (1999: 22) defines as a, "treasury of nearly incommunicable knowledge" in the way they apply movement, express emotion, give it a sense of dimension and individual reality. It is therefore my task, as an academic and as an animator, to attempt to communicate this knowledge, to find a way of passing it on, since this kind of knowledge is certainly not expressed well in animation literature. The books that deal with animation filmmaking, such as Thomas (1991), Taylor (1999) and Simon (2003), seem often sterile and clinical as if making an animation film is a mathematical formula to a visual query. Although animation has been always linked with technology, animators managed to preserve a "magical" sense of inner world while making their films, world of substances, colours and personal style. To create films in such a way springs from a desire to consciously reflect on every movement and sensation around us, to re-evaluate what we perceive, to understand again what makes the stone feel "stony" or the water "watery" or the fire "fiery".

Initially I started my research by analysing films of popular drawn animation made in the United States in the past two decades. I generated a critical analysis, which was then applied in my practice in order to see how or what can be done to cover some gaps in the literature as regards that particular type of animation filmmaking. However, once I have begun reflecting on my practice and attempting to verbalise the process that I undertook in order to critically reflect on my filmmaking, a whole treasury of professional and personal knowledge has begun to unearth itself. This discovery led to a much more profound study and may have a greater impact on the expansion of professional knowledge and expertise in animation filmmaking. My previous viva examination emphasised this aspect of my evolution as a researcher and practitioner. Hence, during the academic year 2006-2007 I have concentrated on the exploration and analysis of the process that the animator undergoes while making her films. I have concentrated on the effects and undercurrents of my practice as a kind of a case study. The knowledge and understanding that I have revealed in my analysis can be applied to any two-dimensional animation practice, whether commercial or

not. Usually there seems a big difference between commercial animation and independent animation. To begin with, the goals of each are different. Commercial animations aim at designing films to pursue profits, while independent animations aim at exploring the artistry of materials and of the practitioner's skills. One uses the tools of marketing and software, complies with standards and works within commercial limitations. The other experiments on various materials in a leisurely way. The first works in a commercial group studio, the other independently and often alone. Hence, the two seem to draw on very different bodies of professional knowledge. But there are similarities too, as both work within the domain of animation films: 24 frames per second, software for editing, and the frame-by-frame technique. In both cases, each film is treated by the practitioner as a unique case. The animator's creativity is evident in the selective management of a large amount of information, the ability to produce long lines of invention and inference, and the capacity to maintain several ways of looking at things at once without disrupting the flow of inquiry (Noble and Bestley, 2005: 54-55; Schön, 1991: 130). These points of similarity create the conditions for reflection-in-action. Because each practitioner treats his film as unique, it cannot be dealt with by applying standard theories or techniques, but instead is done by re-framing and reconstructing the practitioner's experience. It is this art of practice that I discuss and research in this study. Despite the differences between these two domains of animation, they both engage in a process whose underlying structure is similar, namely a reflective conversation with practice. My research comes to show that both types of practice are in fact interrelated and complement each other. I propose that by attending to my reflection-in-action as a practitioner it is possible to discover a fundamental structure of professional inquiry, which underlies the many varieties of representation and meanings in animation.

By becoming a self-reflective practitioner who explores a critical approach through her practice, I wish to give rise to a new sense of authorship that emerges from critical observation of both the process and the animator. The animator cannot be defined just by having mere basic drawing skills, an intuitive sense of acting and timing, understanding of cinema and theatre as well as physics and the newest software. These are mere 'technicalities' of the essence of being an animator. I believe that an animator also possesses an interest in the observation and analysis of self and

others as part of her skills and professional expertise. Being an animator means being passionate about forces of life and their expression, and the careful exploration of nuances of movement, line and colour that together create a sense of life unique to that author.

Since the late 1940's animators such as Natwick Grim and Bill Tytle have felt that they had to develop their skills further in order to improve their practice (Sito, 2007). In 1931 Disney's animator Art Babbitt began to have informal art classes for his colleagues. Already in these early days of the animation industry, animators felt that in order for practice to succeed they needed to continue self-observation and develop their skills and expertise (Sito, 2007). Sito explains that as early as 1942, Les Novros taught the principles and mechanics of animation along with Herb Kosower, who taught graphic art as part of animation skills. To achieve innovation and development in animation as a professional practice, it seems necessary for the animators to develop their practice. Accordingly, Boud (1999: 121) argues that in the past twenty years there has been a slowly emerging recognition that an integral part of any profession is serious engagement of theory and professional practice. This has meant making professional practice and professional knowledge central to academic courses, not just the inclusion of professional content. In turn, being a professional practitioner as well as an academic researcher means integrating aspects of self-assessment and reflection in practice by actively constructing and reconstructing the notions of good practice as one proceeds. Active reconstruction through reflection is a complex process that involves a state of perplexity, hesitation and doubt and is associated with questioning, uncertainty and dissatisfaction. Boud (1999: 123) explains that "reflection is about learners constructing their own meanings within a community of professional discourse. It is also about professionals retaining critical control over the more intuitive parts of their expertise". Reflection can therefore be seen as an acquisition of attitudes and skills in thinking. It is a process of becoming aware of the influence of societal and ideological assumptions, especially beliefs that shape professional practice (Yip, 2006: 777). By comparing and contrasting phenomena in practice, recognising patterns, categorising perceptions, framing and self-questioning, one creates meaning and a better understanding of one's practice.

Ward (2006: 234) argues that there are different extents to which one can be self-conscious about one's work. In this study I explore three main aspects of animation practice, namely personality of an animator (chapter 2), skill of an animator (chapter 3), and critical thinking of an animator (chapter 4).

The analysis of my practice and reflections on my experience as an animator aim to reflect on the very worth of animation as an art form and the nature of the profession. By portraying my experience as an animator I want to reassert the artist's presence through a personal account that will bring the experience of animation filmmaking closer to both the viewer and the creator. It might also act as an example of practice like a case study that can then be generalised in its implications to other practices of animation filmmaking both professionally and academically.

Chapter One: Research context

Literature review

Hatfield (2004) argues that animation has always been a self-reflective practice, starting as far back as McCay's pioneering *Little Nemo* (1911), in which the hero himself begins to draw, becoming the artist's alter-ego. In other films the relationships between animator and his creation were either implicitly or explicitly explored. For instance, *Sorceror's Apprentice* and *Night on Bald Mountain*, segments of Disney's *Fantasia* (1940), portrayed implicit relationships and Chuck Jones & Michael Maltese's *Duck Amock* (1953), is more overtly explicit. Animation practice is self-reflective in its nature, due to continual observation and analysis of motion, line, colour and expression that the animator attempts to recreate on the screen. As a practitioner, one needs to be constantly critical and reflective of one's actions, thoughts and emotions while acting, timing and observing oneself and others. This is also necessary in order to expand one's professional knowledge and establish an academic level of inquiry for professional practice. Many of the professions that are newer to the universities, such as social work, and nursing as well as animation studies are attracted to this as it gives strength to their own arguments for enhancing their professional standing.

The concept of 'reflective practice' has received considerable attention, initially in the teacher education literature and more recently in the nursing literature and now it starts also in animation studies. Over the past few decades, reflection and reflective practice have been regarded as standards towards which practitioners such as teachers, nurses, social sciences and others must strive (Orland-Barak, 2005: 26). The growing concern for educating 'reflective practitioners' (Schön, 1983) has its roots in the philosophy and work of John Dewey. As early as 1910 Dewey conceptualised reflective practice as a systematic, rigorous and disciplined, communal meaning-making process, which requires attitudes that value personal and intellectual growth (Orland-Barak, 2005: 27). Among contemporary writings on reflective thinking, the most significant studies have been Schön's *The reflective practitioner* (1983) and *Educating the reflective practitioner* (1987). Schön based his work on Dewey's notion of reflective thinking, but while Dewey focused on the process,

Schön tended to concentrate on the outcomes (Teekman, 2000: 1126). Schön developed the term 'reflective practice', emphasising the importance of the role of practice for the development of professional knowledge. However, he never offered a clear definition of reflection or reflective practice, thus making it easier for each professional practice to adjust Schön's theory to their professional context. Notably, the literature in nursing, teaching and the social sciences generally refers to Schön's study, which indicates how widely his concepts are accepted. I found that it could also be applied to animation studies. The nursing literature has emphasised reflective practice as an effective tool for reducing or eliminating a perceived theory-practice gap, gaining acceptance in and becoming the cornerstone of professional practice (Teekman, 2000: 1127). Likewise, I hope that my research will be one step towards a similarly raised awareness of the benefits of reflective practice among animators. I can not assume that all animators are reflective practitioners. Yet by the nature of the production of animation it necessitates reflection and critical analysis as an essential part of its practice that can be developed further. Reflective thinking as critical inquiry goes beyond questions of technical proficiency to thoughtful reflection as to how contexts influence animator and their practice. Critical inquiry is concerned with examining why certain choices of practice are made, with the influence of personal conditions on an animator's practice within the production process.

Olrand-Barak (2005: 34) argues that among practitioners in teaching often the technical level of reflection prevails and that they find it difficult to broaden their reflection to a more critical domain. Likewise, Ward (2006: 234) explains that often the reflective practitioner, who is able to reflect on the production process, will have a tendency to focus on technology to the detriment of other factors. While it is correct that reflective practice embodies Aristotle's notion of *techne* (the production or operation of things), such a process of practice also requires skill, character development and openness to confronting the particularities of a given situation. Thus learning to be a reflective practitioner includes not only acquiring technical expertise, but also the ability to engage in dynamic professional relationships and to establish meaningful connections between theory and practice, providing rationale for action. These, Orland-Barak (2005: 27) argues, require a stance towards practice that is both affective and intellectual, integrating practical, ethical and critical dimensions that lead the practitioners towards more informed understandings of their practice. On the

other hand, a theoretician tends to dwell on the importance of the text as the site of meaning, as I found when interviewing theoreticians of animation such as Paul Wells and Esther Leslie in 2006. When animators (Sandra Ernsby, Yael Biran and Silvy Bringas) speak to me, they speak of the details of the use of software or the significance of particular types of pens and commercial requirements. The meaning for them lies in the process of filmmaking, whereas the academic interviewees (Paul Wells, Leslie Esther, Ken Devine and Eva Palacios) were focusing more on the social and cultural positions of the filmmaking processes, connecting its practice to its historical political and professional tradition. Their meaning of animation filmmaking was derived from a different source altogether than the meanings of practitioners. However, I think that their views complement each other and together can give rise to critical reflection on practice. Ward (2006: 234) suggests that the critical reflective practitioner is a perfect link between the ability to discuss meanings in the technical processes of animation practice while being able to place it in a broader context.

In animation, reflective practice involves the *process* of filmmaking and the thinking behind it, rather than just evaluating the animation filmmaking itself. It therefore addresses the *why* as opposed to the *how* – it is about learning from that process. Reflection leads to self-knowledge, which is fundamental to the development of the professional animator. That is why I find the current knowledge of animation practice insufficient, as it 'coldly' concentrates on *how* animation films are made technically and not necessarily on *why*. Most of the literature on popular animation is concerned with its early stages, mainly with the big companies that led the market and a few leading animators such as Chuck Jones and Walt Disney, which has resulted in a number of biographies. The literature has structured a technical and historical framework for the discussion of popular animation in terms of (i) progress (e.g., Bendazzi, 1994; Culhane, 1998); (ii) its commercial and industrial aspects (e.g., Hollinshead, 1998; Wasko, 2001); or (iii) the purely mechanical aspects of how to draw an animation film (e.g., Simon, 2003; Taylor, 1999; Williams, 2001).

Aim of this study

The aim of this study is to explore the extent of self-reflection and critical thinking of an animator before, during and after the filmmaking, as well as how the issue of authorship is embodied in practice as a result of self-reflection.

My main argument is that an animator is more than a technician of movement employed in a commercial context but rather a treasurer of deep professional knowledge and expertise that is employed both to promote the sense of authorship and the actual filmmaking. My research aims to raise the discussion and the analysis of the experience of an animator during her work, the impact of drawing ideas of the self in and through practice. I am not interested in categorisation or self-reflective forms of animation, or formulations of the historical, philosophical and artistic genres of animation forms. I take the theory of a reflective style of research as a point of departure and concentrate on observation and analysis of my experience, which I have not seen done either in Schön's works nor in others that I have read in that context, such as Wells and Pilling.

Making artwork automatically embodies in it the imprint of an author and even more so in animation films where drawing images is like an author's signature. I feel that it is important to analyse and understand what the animator experiences and how she reaches her results in that particular way. And what is a better way than that I as an animator explore myself as an author, thus giving me a better platform for the analysis of authorship through my own practice. My experience as an animator is as valid as any other research form (Gray and Malins, 2004: 5). Despite its possible lack of historical details, and not being as controlled and objective as other forms of research, the fact that it is a kind of a narrative and not a "life", according to Jay (1984: 16), makes it a literary as well as an artistic creation and as such an aesthetic construction. I do not claim to be a scientist, but an artist. Through my filmmaking I achieve analysis and observation of my practice inasmuch as any laboratory work, as it has insight into the psychological and spiritual state of the animator's mind during the practice and is not a "dry" technical observation of actions. Jay (1990: 16) argues that if someone claimed that such an account was "fictional", "made up", "created" or "imagined", literary and not "real", then we have merely defined the ontological

status of any text, autobiographical or not. My analysis of what I did before, after and during the filmmaking process, links retrospection and introspection and as such signals a link between self-reflective composition and the process of psychoanalysis. It shows my journey of mapping the topography of my artistic performance as an animator.

The creative "history" of the animator's act is perhaps being created in and by the act of analysis itself (as Freud suggested according to Jay, 1984: 25) and is partly symbolic and partly factual. Jay (1984: 31) explains that self-reflectivity acts as a bridge between past and present, myself and my own textual representation of myself. Narratives in my films and sketchbooks then act as a mode of self-representation. I am seeking in my research to relocate and re-articulate what the author is in terms of artistry and industry. Self-consciousness is obtained by and through practice. This notion of 'self' as an animator and author is continuously changing, so that the 'self' who produces this activity is different from the self who begun it. When I look back at the 'self' who started this research in 2001, I see a person who was more interested in researching other practitioners, to find the ideological thread of their practice. Then I observe that 'self' changing into the one that was determined to create her own practice to cover some gaps in the literature and the films she explored. However, once that 'self' has started to explore and analyse her own practice, a new notion of what truly matters to her has occurred that propelled that development of the 'self' which I am at the moment. That process is an exploration of experience and skills that lead to providing the professional knowledge I have merely glanced at, through my self-reflection. Others can perhaps take my lead and continue to uncover that knowledge about animation practice that will benefit the professional field as well as academic.

Becoming conscious of my practice and my position as an author has been achieved through language while thinking it, writing it and discussing it. It is possible to see the struggle I had between seeing myself as a person, a practitioner and an academic. Sometimes I use the 'I' when the information described comes from within the innermost personal self. At other times I use a general 'animator' or 'practitioner' as I try to achieve a distance that is needed to be able to critically reflect on my practice. My wrestle with words to describe my experience is an effort to grasp the

knowledge derived from experience. Looking back on my experience throughout the research, I see that the actual work of self-reflectiveness is more important than the finished product as it continuously evokes new understandings, inspirations and creativity. Thus, the discursive form of my second film, *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007), and the sketchbooks and their information are generated partly in order to produce a new kind of materials on authorship in animation. Reflection through filmmaking and documenting the process in the sketchbooks has been instrumental in developing my reflective practice. It was a means of making the focus and purpose of reflection explicit and effective by allowing myself, as an academic, to consider my role as a professional animator, and to seek and engage in relevant developmental processes as a consequence.

Research methodology

I have chosen to use self-reflection, a qualitative research method, for this study. Developed by Schön (1983) and others, it has been widely applied in teaching, social work, nursing, psychology and other professions. This method focuses on developing an understanding of the conditions governing dynamic processes and has been used to study the way a practitioner operates and the rationale behind her decisions and choices during her practice. This method helps the practitioner to evaluate her own practice better, and to reveal the professional knowledge that motivates decision making during the practice. Moreover, I would argue that an animator's skill is in itself knowledge in application and knowledge in action, which is not accounted for in the literature, and is not regarded as a model of professional knowledge. Animators' artful competence produces knowledge from a context and develops commercial and industrial problem-solving skills. Practice itself can be seen as descriptive knowledge, where every decision and choice made is driven by professional proficiency embedded in practice. My research reveals such descriptive knowledge being applied in the practice of animation, explored through the practical problems encountered in my practice. It yields fundamental theory on the language of animation, which can be applied to practice in general.

To gain some insight into the visual language of animation filmmaking means to reveal the visions that are embedded in the action of practice. The need to find

meaning and to follow what I have experienced led me to use the self-reflective inquiry as a methodology. For that I needed to identify and make explicit the understandings, choices and thoughts in both practice (the filmic imagery) and my intent as an animator. I had not understood at the time of the beginning of my research in 2001 the extent to which I would subsequently search for deeper knowledge and meaning, which lay, in a subliminal way, underneath and beyond those surface visual appearances, using research strategies. This technique of writing down in sketchbooks the insights and knowledge that are embodied in practice is often used in psychotherapy, where it is seen as a way of "opening a window on the mind" (Higgs 1998: 64; Cortazzi, 1993:2).

The making of the film *The Truth* (2004) was based on my previous critical analysis that led me to develop a self-reflective assessment and evaluation of my practice and position as an animator. This propelled me to go in some depth into the meaning of authorship and self-reflection. As a result another film was created, *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007), which explored these issues by interviewing my own characters from the previous film *The Truth*, alongside theoreticians and practitioners of animation. All were drawn and animated to give equal time to a discussion of authorship and self-reflectivity in my practice and animation in general. If the "live" interviewers would be kept live, i.e. not animated, this could cause the animated characters to be enjoyed by the viewer rather than to be listened to what they were actually saying. I wanted the viewers to listen to both live and drawn characters. I wanted to give my characters the same visual and intellectual weight as the academics whose style of language automatically requires attention and serious consideration. Alongside the creation of both films, I have documented and analysed my experience as an animator by creating a series of six sketchbooks, later turned into one sketchbook named *Tribute*. Each sketchbook, and later on each chapter in *Tribute* explore a different aspect of filmmaking (Notebook on filmmaking, Authorship, Line, Colour, Movement, Character). I have not used these sketchbooks as technical observations on how to make my films, but rather as a means of enhancing the communication of my experience and developing self-expression as a practitioner. They were used as a trigger for the reflective exploration of my filmmaking process, examine my perception and facilitate learning from experience. I have chosen the language of scrapbooking and collage as to me they communicate a sense of memory

and conscious re-articulation of the past. The assembly of magazine pictures in a form of collage allows the metaphorical representation of events and influences through which I as a practitioner can "see" my practice from a different perspective (Williams, 2000: 273).

Williams argues that the artwork itself (in the way of collage) is created with a deal of subconscious influence. As such, personal symbols are used to enable a reflective discussion to take place in order to establish their implied meaning in relation to the practice and attitude to practice. Creative collage work encourages unconscious association and develops self-expression by integrating the distinct separate parts of a collage into a creative whole, just like various frames and scenes in animation films eventually become a complete film. Collage uses pieces of existing materials that perhaps may not have artistic feeling to it when they are separated, yet once they are recombined into a new whole they become an art, a new sense and emotion. Analogously, in commercial animation filmmaking, where a practitioner works in collaboration with others and may not feel artistic in producing a piece of work, by contributing to the new mix of the visual material, the eventual unity of creativity and authorship is evoked (S. Ernsby, interview, 15 August 2006). Collage does not give the artist total control over the visual and it is this reduction in conscious control which contributes to greater levels of expression and in turn greater areas of examination and subsequent clarifications. This creates links between the artwork of animation and reflective expression as it has an internal action of reflecting and experiencing while being engaged in creating. By describing and sharing my reflection with others during the interviews that I conducted, I objectified it and moved it to a documentary level while retaining the expressive qualities of unconscious association that collage and animation allow for.

Reflection is not simply a matter of recollecting an event and giving transient thought to that experience. It is a complex process involving skills and abilities, and using sketchbooks as a model of research benefits the mix of art work with that of guided reflection where interpretation can be a rational way of gaining insight. Such insight is gained with a collage work acting as a trigger, which heightens the aware-ness of authorship as the reflection unfolds and raises the question of self-imposed censorship, which enhances personal awareness of the issues being examined and the

personal values associated with them. It adds to the process of self-reflection by offering a further medium to help develop reflective analysis and exploration.

Professional and academic context

Working in a continuous dialogue with my practice led me to focus on the issue of professional language, which in turn led me to explore authorship within the commercial framework. On the one hand, my practice is done within the context of academic research, while on the other it abides by the commercial context to a certain degree. For example, my films follow commercial requirements by using a narrative structure, graphic appearances and the device of an ideological message, which Wells (2000: 36) suggests is what it means to be commercial. Yet my experimentation with various materials and techniques to discuss animation materiality as well as personal opinion, creates a complex, almost contradictory system. To operate within that system, a balance between the personal and the commercial is continuously sought (see table bellow).

Table 1.1 Comparison of commercial animation and personal practice

Commercial animation	My practice
Graphic/'geometric' form and strong basic colours (red, green, blue etc.)	Graphic/'geometric' and abstract forms, use of pastel colours as well as basic colours
Narrative continuity	Narrative continuity
Basic materials (paper, graphic line), extensive use of software	Experimentation with materials, line and form, handwork and computer
Author's presence is often unfelt	Author's presence is strong
Unity of style	Experimentation with style
Cartoonish style and exaggerated figures	Realistic figures

In order to achieve a balance, I chose the 'extent' to which my practice abides commercial guidelines. I had to establish a threshold standard of fit, which enables me to say that "slightly" is enough for it to fit (Schön, 1991: 134) in a commercial context. That 'slightly' criterion included use of repetitive movement, limited expression, speed of production and use of software. Even though my practice is not commercial in terms of limitations of budget, time and customer requirements, it

relates to the animation industry, but does not represent it literally; rather it presents itself as a set of propositions. I see my practice as the embodiment of the theoretical investigation on the one hand, and on the other, it discovers the impact of the creative process that an animator undergoes and therefore gives rise to new questions and enriches the theoretical investigation by providing more of the critical engagement. In that way I was able to position myself as both an insider (a practitioner) and an outsider (a critical analyst). Such an approach lead me to discover during the interviews with practitioners the spontaneous, independent, creative aspects of commercial animation filmmaking that slightly alter one's plans, enriching the film with individual artistic experience. Critical theoreticians who are not practitioners of animation seem not to realise this point.

From the interview with Sandra Ernsby of *SweetworldTV* (15 August 2006), I have learned that the collective effort in animation as industrial product makes use of an overarching filmic schema – timing, movement, narrative and music, which are familiar to all practitioners. Each animator knows how to deliver appropriate parts of the overall filmic structure. Improvisation consists in varying, combining and recombining a set of techniques, images, sounds, movements and editing within the schema which bounds and gives coherence to the film. The interview showed me that as animators feel the direction of the filmic development (visually), they make a new sense of it and adjust their performance to this new sense. They are reflecting-in-action on the film they are collectively making and on their individual contributions, thinking about what they are doing in the process, evolving their way of doing it (Schön, 1991: 56). This reflection-in-action therefore not only develops professional knowledge and expertise but also emphasises the issue of authorship behind every move in filmmaking process.

It is evident from the above interview that the self-reflective approach can be applied to the commercial filmmaker. However, my practice lies in a different context, somewhere between the commercial context and academic research. The context of commercial practice is different from the research context in several ways, all of which having to do with the relationship between changing elements of filmic practice and understanding them. The practitioner is interested in transforming the situation from what it is to a more efficient adaptation to the client's requests. The

situation of my reflection is in a way a virtual one as my practice is done under research "laboratory" conditions, without the commercial pressures of budget and timing and working with hundreds more people. It operates in a virtual world, a constructed representation of the real world of practice (Schön, 1991: 157). In such a world, I can manage some of the constraints of my experimental testing of the research question, which are inherent in the world of commercial practice. The graphic world of the screen and of movement is the medium of reflection-in-action. Here I can draw and talk and think my moves in spatial action language, leaving traces, which then move on the screen for others to follow my thread of thoughts. Because each drawing reveals spontaneous qualities and relations unimagined before-hand, moves could be treated as experiments. I can see that my movement is too jerky or uneven or slow or quick. Or I can see that the composition does not support the general narrative of the scene. I observe what is repetitive and what is not. Constraints, which would prevent or inhibit experiment in commercial film production, are greatly reduced in the virtual world of research in a university. The act of drawing can be rapid and spontaneous but the residual traces are stable as they set the way in which the movement will eventually appear on the screen (whether wobbly and boiling or strong and confident). I can examine them at leisure. The pace of action can be varied at will. As a researcher I can slow down to think about what I am doing as Schön (1991: 158) suggests. On the other hand, events that would take longer in the commercial world – budget approvals, committees at every stage of filmmaking, and waiting for each group of colleagues to finish their part can be made to "happen" immediately in my own process of filmmaking. I draw and redraw to determine the "right" movement, look and feel for the film. Moves and experiments that would be costly in the commercial world can be tried at little or no risk in the world of research. There are no stoppages, unavailability of staff or limited time to work on the project. Nevertheless, my practice has competence and an understanding of commercial animation, its language and notations. As far as this experiment can be applicable to commercial context it is reliable. Research animation functions as a context for experiment precisely because it enables me to eliminate the disruptive aspects of commercial animation, which I have mentioned already. Its focus lies on analysis and understanding of the processes involved, whereas commercial animation is focused on product and profit. However, I acknowledge the factors that have been eliminated in my practice. Making a film is then held as a datum considered at leisure for its

meanings and relationships to other films. Events in the process of filmmaking that are widely separated in time can be held steady and juxtaposed with one another to permit exploration of the animator's thoughts, insights and emotions. Some aspects of practice can be ignored or reduced to mere outlines, while others are expanded and elaborated (Schön, 1991: 160).

By setting boundaries to the universe of animation data, I use it as material for my experiments in interpretation. Trying different interpretations affects my own learning sequences. In such a process it is possible to slow down the process of filmmaking, which could ordinarily be lost to observation and reflection in the commercial world, such as analysis and implications of choices of colour and line, stopping long enough to verbalise the practitioner's thoughts during the filmmaking, explore how personal background affects the practice.

Data collection

The informal interviews that I have conducted (see page 53 for the list of interviews) were not aimed at accumulation of data for statistical or precise analysis. Instead I wanted to talk to people in order to see the wider context of the assumptions that I have drawn from my practice in relation to the animator's experience of filmmaking and authorship. During the interviews the same questions were asked of all the people involved and the actual interviews were documented on a video (partly because of my being hard of hearing and partly because I wanted to animate the interviewed people for *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007) later on). I have chosen to interview both animation theoreticians and practitioners. The theoreticians were chosen because their academic work has directly affected my previous critical analysis of animation practice and helped me to evolve a self-reflective approach. The practitioners of animation were chosen for reasons of availability, working in a commercial field and their connection to academic background as most of them were at some point studying animation in universities. I have also interviewed animation teachers from around the area of South of England.

In my preparations for the interviews I had to consider the fact that my baby daughter had to accompany me, which meant filming was not flowing but sometimes restricted to certain times of the day and places. The noise level in public places led to poor

sound quality in some of the recordings. However, my child's presence and the general informal atmosphere helped people to remain relaxed throughout the interviews and share significant information about their views and practices.

Since *Reflections in a Light* Box (2007) had to be a short film aimed at being examined academically, I had to edit it from more than fifteen hours of recorded material to about fifteen minutes maximum. Some interviews had to be dropped altogether.

I have used the collages from the sketchbooks as a background for the scenes in the film, creating a relationship between the animated line of the interviewees and the colourful spatial background of sketchbooks. I also wanted to have a live version of myself and my husband in the film as a living reference to the actual documentation process, to the sense of authorship embodied explicitly in the film.

Data analysis

I do not intend to analyse the data collected from the interviews in the tradition of qualitative research. I simply critically reflected on my experience. As a result I have seen two types of reflections: reflection on the interviewees and reflection on myself. Reflection on the interviewees showed me a clear difference between practitioners and theoreticians of animation. Those who practise often use gestures that visually 'depict' their practice movements and their knowledge of theory often sprang from their direct involvement in practice. Sandra Ernsby of *SweetworldTV* said that, for instance, she learned skiing by animating it first (acting it, timing it, feeling it). Theoreticians, on the other hand, spoke more of historical contexts, ideology and commerce and the way animation evolved. Reflection on myself, on the other hand, showed me that my social, cultural and personal background had a direct impact on my cinematic decisions. Being born in Eastern Europe led me unconsciously to create a film *The Truth* (2004) that may be seen as belonging to an Eastern European tradition visually and philosophically. Or, my feeling of being foreign in every country I have ever lived automatically set me upon the mode of self-reflection and self-evaluation. Expressing my views on the process of my filmmaking brought the realisation of why certain choices and decisions were made, whereas interviewing

other animators enriched my views on the authorial signature embodied in filmmaking practice. After talking to other practitioners about my own process of self-discovery as an animator, and asking them about theirs, all parties involved often agreed on the significance of self-reflection for personal understanding and professional practice. My questions brought an insight into certain aspects of their filmmaking of which they were not conscious and an understanding which will help raise the level of their professional skills and expertise. Furthermore, the actual collaboration in practice as well as in the process of research for the practice acted as a catalyst for self-reflection and reflection in general during the filmmaking.

I do not consider either of my films as being completed final products, but simply documentation of a phase in my development as a practitioner and as a researcher. Often, when speaking of reflective practice, it is intended that the process of self-involvement and self-reflection is directed towards the final outcome - the product of that process. I am, however, more interested in assessing the process and the changes that I as a practitioner undergo in such a process. I try to assess how it benefits me as a practitioner, while creating a coherent flow of self-reflection on practice. The following table was inspired by Higgs (1998: 42):

Structural aspects of self-reflection:	-animator transmits information and knowledge -animator develops concepts visually, intellectually and emotionally -animator helps to change conceptions
Referential aspects of self-reflection:	-focus of self-reflective filmmaking is on visual language -focus of self-reflective filmmaking is on animator's conceptions and experience -focus of self-reflective filmmaking is on exploring and experimenting with points that I as a researcher find under-explored (characters think and evolve, animation's materiality).

To assign meaning to the self-reflective process that practitioners undergo, I initially made a list of points that I discerned in my practice. Then I structured a list of questions that needed to clarify how practitioners described their experience and from what their description was derived. Then, between the insights from the process of filmmaking and the insights from the interviews, my sketchbooks and my research had acquired a sense of what can be described as a 'narrative inquiry'. Higgs (1998: 61) explains that "narrative may be described as a form of natural discourse in which

the narrator conveys the nature of what has been experienced through the sequential telling of that experience. The story form that is used in the telling process provides a structure through which sense making of experience occurs". I agree with Higgs, however, my narration of filmmaking process does not follow the sequentiality of time and space, unless it is part of my practice. So, in actuality I take the aspects of various methods as they apply to me as a practitioner and adjust them to my needs as a self-reflective critical animator. My narration runs as a self-evolving process in which the underlying themes of critical analysis, such as contemplation, search, experiment with colour, line, materials and self-awareness are woven into a narrative account of the films that provided a synthesis of key concepts drawn from personal experience. The opportunity to gain insight into the 'animator's way of thinking' through my account of such experience and the accompanying storying both as a film and as analysis formed the major part of my research data.

The uses of storying as a methodological tool may vary. The story of my experience as an animator provided a way for me to study the animator's thinking, experiences and beliefs through personal practice. Personal experience of animating a film enriches the narrative with beliefs, thoughts and actions of myself as a practitioner as well as with reflection on such experience. While writing down my insights and choices, the narratives of experience could then be critically analysed. By drawing on my practice I provide a broad context for the interpretation of the filmmaking process within a personal narrative of experience. As a researcher, I have analysed each insight or thought, pulling together central themes from my accounts. From this I wrote a synthetic account of experience-over-time in my sketchbooks which Higgs (1998: 66) might call 'a narrative reconstruction'. Each theme in my storying was developed around feelings, thoughts and personal meanings that I as an animator associated with a particular filmic element. The meanings, which I gave in my reflections on my actions (which can be found in my sketchbook *Tribute* (2007)), were often of a philosophical nature set within the context of my own experience and practice.

Chapter Two: Personality of an animator

> *Man is always a storyteller! He lives surrounded by his and others'*
> *myths. With them he seeks to live his life as though he were telling*
> *it.* (Sartre, cited in Sarbin and Scheibe, 1983: 254)

This chapter investigates the effect that the personality of an animator has on her practice. It concentrates on the notion of foreignness that shaped me as a practitioner, the relationship of an animator and her characters and the continuous evolution of animator's self-awareness in practice.

Foreignness, a beginning

This section explores the sense of foreignness as a drive to self-awareness and self-reflectivity.

In the process of self-reflective analysis of my practice, I have realised that a personal baggage has a direct influence on the way I visually express my self in my films. My films act as an extension and mirror of my self at the particular moment in time. Each key point in my life and my films tells a story. Reflecting on my practice helps me to make a general sense of my personal and professional development. In fact my practice creates me at the same time as I create it.

Personal experience is an integral part of our existence. It embodies itself in the way the person think,s feels and experiences his/her environment. My experience involves living first in the Far East of USSR, a country that does not longer exist, a place where ideas and representation were serving a myth that no longer function. Then I have spent 12 years of living in Israel, a country that has other types of myths, which I eventually discovered no longer have a hold over me either. Now living almost 6 years in Britain, I have learned to look back at my experience, as a learning process that does not necessarily require a myth, to have it called a 'worthwhile'. The experience itself is valid because of the way it shapes me as a practitioner and as an academic. The change in countries, cultures, languages and perspectives gradually shaped me in such a way that had no specific sense of belonging to one group, culture, age or religion.

Not speaking English as my mother's tongue but rather as an acquired tool of expression, along with Hebrew, I became a user of these languages. Sometimes it feels liberating, as the new words allow wider scope of expression. But the illusion collapses when I hear myself in my films, where the sound of my voice comes back to me as a peculiar sound, out of nowhere. This constant observation of myself in a critical almost alienated way makes me self-reflective, trying to solve that peculiar mystery of self and its identity. Meanwhile, between three languages (Hebrew, English and Russian) and being half-deaf, my realm is silent exploration through other senses, which are sharpened by this virtual imprisonment of self. In this way, I explore my visual and sensual expression through line, colour, movement and touch in the process of creating my films and artwork. However, hard work on the production of thousands of frames into a film, propagates my self-absorption, silence and foreignness even more. My film *The Truth* (2004) mirrors this sense of uprootness, of search for what has left. At the same time self consciousness is cultivated as a passion and skill. The film therefore acts as a "window onto something else, a transparent thing that shimmers in our awareness as we look through it" as Elkins (1999: 45) describes. A window to loot at what the animator has depicted. Yet, it also a visual tapestry, a moving line on the paper or frame. And when animation film is observed as merely line, colour and movement, it begins to speak a different language, telling us things that often we cannot quite understand. It seems to be infused with moods, obscure thoughts and personal language of an animator's body and soul.

My identity as an animator is shaped by who I am as a person. My feelings of being forever a foreigner and the estrangement that I feel as well as alienation have helped me to be able to critically observe, not only myself as a person, but what I do and create as well. Kristeva (1991: 17) argues that "the foreigner lives within us, he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity found. By recognising him in ourselves, we are spared detesting him in himself". This recognition in my case is quite literal being resident in different countries and cultures. Changing languages, observations, values, perceptions, never quite sure of where I am next, nor who I am to be. The consciousness of this taste of "foreignness" leaves me unattached to bonds and culture

or religion. Instead I observe and contemplate on that which is inherently stable and unchangeable, which is the spirit that motivates me to breathe and to create and to observe the inner and outer expression, thoughts and actions. The sheer nature of feeling foreign allows me to be hyper sensitive to sensations, people's feelings, expressions and my own reflection in the face of change.

I do not wish to solidify my otherness of the foreigner into a 'thing', even when it is explored and discussed in my films, it remains, I believe, possessing the same 'wandering elusiveness'. I merely want to acknowledge it without giving it a permanent structure, to understand how it creates me as a self-reflective observer. Sketching out its perpetual motion that evolves me along with my visual expression in the films. Thus, I see my life as a biography of acts, which constitute events because they imply choice, surprises, breaks, adaptations, but neither routine nor rest. This in turn shapes me into a continuos reflective observer of who I am in relation to what I do and think in relation to the society in which I am circulating. Perhaps I have no landmarks as such (anchors to territory or culture), yet my strength lies in myself, my inner wisdom- a pleasure that has been numbed by solitude. That in turn leads me to question that self in which I confide and trust. Thus for instance, *The Truth* (2004) explores that searching aspect of me.

Projection of self on character

This section explores the relationship of an animator and her characters.

Gilder (2006) explains that behind all animated characters there is a creator: an individual who designs, produces and manipulates the existence of all roles, circumstances and even psychological journeys within the emotions and thoughts of these characters. The relationship of the animator and his creations has been a topic of interest since the process of animation was first explored in the ninetieth century. Any character that appears to interact with its creator via an apparent "free will" is bound to that of the animator. So in my pursuit of creating movement on the screen I had to remember continuously who I am and whom I am drawing. I tried to distinguish the interweaving and overlapping thoughts that pass in my head, to those that are 'mine' and those that actually 'belong to the character' whom I am animating. The reality in which I live as a person blurred, and the only one that remained was that of an

animator and that of the character which I create. My attention moved from shapes, lines and movement to emotions that the character expresses that in turn affects the line and the movement.

Throughout history of animation, animators explored the relationships with their creation. Animators such as Winsor McCay, The Fleischer Brothers, Jack King, Otto Messner and Chuck Jones pioneered the development of creator/cartoon interaction. For example, the Fleischers' *Koko the Clown* would interact and annoy the animator, and when the animator was not present, Koko would wreak havoc upon his studio. Jack King's short film *A Cartoonist's nightmare* creates a world where the animator himself while working late in the studio falls asleep at his drawing table only to be grabbed by animated villains and pulled into their world. Later he realises that all this was a dream but still even in waken state he exchanges a drawn ice cream with one of his characters. Winsor McCay was exploring the concept of animation technology by showing himself drawing his characters and while doing so making them 'alive', as can be seen in *Gertie the Dinosaur*. These animators addressed the animation process itself, the development and movement of a character, and how it can produce a relationship between the artist and the drawing. However I believe that portraying these relationships and the technical production of it does not reveal the more implicit authorship behind the searching line, movement and expression through colour and narrative that are unique and authorial.

Thinking about my practice and my intent as an animator, I realise that I do not want to challenge other traditions, merely search to find that which I am. The Prince in *The Truth* (2004) is "me" searching, wondering, curious, eager for meetings. He is the projection of my personality. I found a parallel analysis between my storying of search for identity through Prince on his journey and Kristeva's perception of the position of foreigner in a society. Just like my Prince meets other people and exchanges food and beliefs, Kristeva draws parallel lines of analysis about the foreigner. She (1991: 11) argues that "he is nourished by them, makes his way forever unsatisfied. Always going towards the other, always going farther. The meetings often begin with a food, feast- bread, salt and wine…merging with the hospitality ritual… but also covered with memories. The nourishing and initially somewhat animal banquet raises to the vaporous levels of dreams and ideas: the hospitality makers

become united for a while through the spirit… the utopia, the cosmopolitanism of a moment, the brotherhood of guests who soothe and forget their differences…outside of time". Kristeva mirrors very clearly what I felt when describing the process of meetings between the Prince and the others on his way.

The Prince in my film feels free as he sets off to distance himself from everything he knows. Nevertheless, such freedom is linked inevitably with solitude. His eventual recognition of his state bears the paradox of wanting company, but still remaining alone, while realising that none yet joined him in his space of uniqueness. It is the search that which makes him real (as much as me) and authentic so to speak, solid, or simply existing. Each time the Prince meets another, he confronts the possibilities or not of being an other. This sense of alienation provides him with a distance, which nourishes imagining and thinking. This point is further discussed in *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007), where characters Horse, Prince and King refer to their "physicality", thoughts and emotions in the actual process of being created. They refer to the materiality of paper, ink, computer, and my hand as part of their being. These references are self-reflective and they stem from my attitude towards the filmmaking.

In some ways my film and its characters reflect on the "personal myth" of the foreignness (of which I spoke previously). Hence, some aspects of the film may appear familiar (scenery and narrative) for the Western and Eastern viewer alike, and other aspects appear foreign. When the Prince comes to terms with his search it is in fact a reflection on my attempt to come to terms with my search for sense of belonging and identity. Animation being an outcome of my hand, my thought, necessitates for me self-referentially, to understand better its nature, its marks on me and vice versa.

Evolution of a practitioner

This section identifies the evolving sense of awareness and reflection throughout the practice.

Yip (2006: 779) explains that reflective practice is a spontaneous process of self-recall of past experience, self-articulation of situations and internalisation of

professional knowledge into actual situations and contexts. It means becoming aware of the emotional interaction in and throughout practice, acknowledging associated feelings and thoughts that gradually are embodied in practice. The deeper the reflection is undertaken, the stronger is the practitioner's awareness of her experiences and cognition. For example, after months of preparation research and sketching, and making *The Truth* (2004) to conform to the commercial guidelines of filmmaking, *Reflections in A light Box* (2007) had evolved more and more as an act of spontaneous creation and experimentation on the frames directly. This approach shifted the overall structure of the practice more into research and art than finished product. I have become much more self-conscious as an author and as a researcher during the second filmmaking. It was as if my practice was gradually evolving, involving self-evaluation, self-analysis, self-recall, self-observation and self-dialogue. This sort of self-evaluation actively relates to my self-image and professional identity as an animator. Certainly animation film being a product of continuous evaluation of both self and environment embodies in it the essence of its creator. The fact that it is being produced and performed by practitioner with thoughts and feelings and emotional luggage leaves traces embedded in every line, choice or decision made in practice. *Reflections in a light box* (2007) seeks to author my own onscreen version of 'self' as a practitioner. By acting and performing my characters in the films and even appearing my live self on the screen I show my dual role as filmmaker and filmic subject at once. This dual role enables a unique process of self-analysis as well as the possibility of constructing a unified self as an author in animation practice as seen through my personal case.

Such self-awareness has led me to become adept at listening to utterances, thoughts and moves that I do as a practitioner and compare them with the relationships outside my practice. My practice has in itself became a world of inquiry in which thoughts and feelings can be seen as sources of discovery rather than as triggers of action (such as for example: I think of the amount of frames that will create one second of running motion). I reflect on my experience both as a practitioner and as a viewer at the same time. The world of inquiry in my case is both method and strategy of practice. It allows me to reflect on my intuitive responses to it. And only through continuous practice and reflection upon it can I test my assumptions.

Improvisations on the spot in practice create bridges between the various roles played by myself as a practitioner, thus blurring the realities of life and of the film.

Chapter Three: Skill of an animator

This chapter explores three fundamental elements of animation: line, colour and movement; analysis of which clarifies the extent of reflection in practice.

Line

This section identifies line as a dialogue of an animator with her practice.

Line in the film acts as a dialogue, where thickness and smoothens speak and the animator responds by it, to it and through it. Line in animation is a character as well as the carrier of the fluid thought of its creator. Line embodies in it the way my hand follows the mind and keeps the steady flow of control over the filmmaking. Each line speaks of the gestures, of patience, of sometimes tired and impatient hand that occasionally deliberately looses control. Line acts as a projection of the animators' unarticulated moods. It mirrors things about ourselves that we cannot quite understand. All of this is my speculation as to suggest an understanding of the irrational continuous dialogue of an animator with her creation.

To create a film of six to fifteen minutes almost all on my own, it was necessary to work roughly and quickly, with precision and firmness that embodied itself in the line. Every frame I have drawn was done almost without breaking the contact with the paper, in one long shot. Occasionally it was influenced by impulsive twists and turns as the pen moved on, or by gradations of colour and thickness that affected the movement as much as the character. Every mark created a significant presence in the film so that even a few careless marks would make a convincing landscape or portrait, once followed by next several frames. Lines continuously converse with each other, merging, separating. Like in alchemy, line easily shifts one object into a completely different one. It is both an object and the means of change.

The line is the creator of the universe of the film. It distinguishes shapes from nothingness of background, merging and separating. Any two marks seen together will appear complete in themselves as if they are a language in itself. Yet their mere difference will create thoughts of separation and difference and unique individuality. The animated line is creating a new unit but it is also a formless insipience and incompletion when it is in the "in between stage of its creation of form".

Line carries with it issues of resemblance and difference at once as it constantly changes but also repeats itself during the film. Resemblance is found in terms of order and hierarchy that create the movement, the objects and the environment. Yet with every frame I found it difficult if not impossible to create perfectly the same line several dozens or hundred times. Thus resemblance to 'reality' fails as it stops to refer and classify things as seen in details and becomes a living organic entity rather than a limit or border. It develops series of statements with no beginning or end as such but rather stressing small differences between hundred of frames. While resemblance that each line carries serves representation, the change in similitude serves emotion, change in repetition. Therefore line unfolds itself in animation while no longer pointing out from the frame in order to refer directly and precisely to something else, for example line as indicator that it leads to a depiction of a road or another object or character. Instead it inaugurates a play of transference that run, proliferates and corresponds within the layout and the inner logic of the film. While the play of signs in the film does not "overflow" its visual appearances it leaves the animation film an open incomplete whole.

For me, line from its beginning has already every form in it, but in a hidden chaotic state and it is through my hand and mind that I unravel these forms. The actual drawing is merely a technique to reveal it, not a name in itself. As I reveal the forms, they move across the frames, exploring the space that is created beneath and around it as it evolves. Its evolution starts from a two-dimensional dot on a flat paper and gradually evolved into three-dimensional reality with forms and substances, thoughts and emotion. The silence of a paper is then broken to explicate my thoughts as an author, as a person. In the chaotic "in between stage" of evolution of line, substances and ideas toss about experimentally (see the opening scene in *The Truth* where the castle is created from a dot). There nothing is fixed, everything is volatile, explosive,

half formed. The space breathes with possibilities, hard to control and directed. This sense of chaos arouses questions, contradictions and experimentation with conventions.

Colour

This section discusses colour as a visual echo of animator's perception.

The overall colour and texture spectrum in the film is an element that gives "shape" to the whole film. The sensation of colour runs through an entire film evoking emotions that are personally associated with it. Although there are changes in hue and tones it winds through the film as a continuum. Colour has such as significant presence in the film that without it, the film loosed its presence and becomes much more abstract. Textures of forms and colours mingling and separating and working along with a graphic line portrays to me the idea that the mind might also be full of mingling and separating thoughts. Tentative or dynamic motions of one texture flowing into another are irresistibly metaphors for mental states of an author. The labour invested in creating an animating these textures portrays a continuous relationship, a struggle between material, line and technique of making it alive. Meditating on creating a film then naturally expresses inwardly pictures of one's mind into the lines in the texture and into the line of the character.

As an animator and a painter I do not only see colours as part of other things, but also as an independent element in their own right. These elements though conditioned to their function within the animated frame still have dynamic independence. The sensation that I created in the film spring from the choices of colour and line I made from my palette on the computer. Every visual sensation is a manifestation of these choices. "For perceptual space the painter has to invent pictorial space… each sensation must be recast in pictorial terms. And if these are to "work"… then together they must create a pictorial reality which is credible" (Lamb and Bourriau, 1997:28). As part of animation's credible reality, any colour or texture used in the film describes something- like green for instance describes fields, but it also acts as the thing itself – the grass, the blanket, the hair. And the use of colour both to identify an object and characterise it, while it awakens into life, depends on the animator's sense of the material, intuition and harmony. Every use of colour turns

them on the edge of either becoming an obvious illusion or granting them a sense of corporeal, sensually perceptive material value.

The computer software has enabled me to use both graphic strong colours such as red and black, which can give sharp and dramatic sense to the film, but also rich semitransparent colours and textures, which give realistic sense of subtlety and atmospheric feeling to the scenes. The use of strong competing colour could easily lead the composition to fall apart visually but the use of textures and pastel colours achieved an overall harmony, effortlessly knitting everything together with a subtle framework of quiet colours. That has created an overall effect of personal colour palette and authorial feeling to the whole film. Also, shaping colours in *The Truth* (2004) into contour line helped me to keep its chaotic explosive energy at arm's length, to control it so as not to affect too much, to overwhelm the narrative of the film. I used and navigated the colour to convey a deeper meaning to explore the relationships between the turmoil of chaotic energy of colour and the more "logical" or thought through guidance and limits of lines.

Movement

This section correlates movement in the film with the practitioner's movement in the process of filmmaking.

The animated world becomes visible through the movement of its bodies, objects and its environment. Every sense of movement, even "accidental" 'boiling' sense of line (when the line moves spasmodically during the film) fills the film with sensations, impressions, memories and feelings that are part of the animated image. Animating movement means that you become aware of the act of perceiving the bodily moves and the consciousness that pervades every act of that body and the line that creates it. The subjective and the objective incarnated themselves at once in every bodily movement, and this sense of unity of two opposites gives animated movement and narrative its timelessness and depth of existence.

So, if we are to observe the actual 'technical' process of creating a movement, at the actual moment of creating, acting is everything. Acting, timing and performing

what emotion or thought one has in mind will determine how that animated image will appear. It is this experience that is expressed through the personal filter that gives animated film its uniqueness, its spirit. There is a wonderful fluid complexity of thoughts that accompany every movement and line, but they are all in and through the animated image. The animator (myself), despite the planning of the general outline of filmic narrative, words, scenes, leaves plenty of space for experimentation trial and error, feelings and intuition. Sandra Ernsby has explained (15 August 2006) that 'when animating you enter almost a hypnotic state of being, because then things happen creatively and intuitively that otherwise would not be there, when being technical and clinical about your practice. It is very specific to animation process, and that is where the interesting things happen, then afterwards you can take a step back and reflect on how it works with the film as planned before.' No animator knows a hundred percent how the film will look like, rather animation is like painting, something that is worked out in the making and the work and its maker exchange ideas and change one another. The only way to capture the ideal of what I want to achieve is to do the work and explore it by revealing it in and through practice. Thoughts that I have at the beginning merely act as guide posts, and the actual development of the work is intuitive and fluid.

Everything is constantly on the move in my films. Every inch of a frame wobbles, boils, or simple changes as a mirrored reflection of my moods. Any motion my body makes takes me into a certain state of mind. For example, an agitated mind affects the hands and produces agitated lines, in turn agitated movement (or feeling of it in the film). So in order to achieve a certain emotion in my films, I needed to get myself into the mood that matched the narrative. The film does not bear only my emotions but the imprint of my own movement along that which I have drawn. That included the bent body at work, the scanning of thousands of frames, colouring, cropping them one by one using a computer (which occasionally makes the frame wobble if done imprecisely), the editing, altering its pace, all leaving their mark on the filmic appearance. Each frame also speaks of the pen's grip that occasionally scratches the paper (when almost finished) thus changing the hue and saturation of the ink and that created movement in itself. At other times it is affected by new pens' easy flow of ink, as it hovers, dancing across the frames. Some lines or moves are done carefully and slow, as in faces and details of clothing, others quick impatient, almost

flicking on the paper. All these memories, along with the thoughts that went into the making are embedded in the film. It is easy to see when I was clam and relaxed (with gentle lines) or with worried mind, where harshly made lines slashes across the flames. "The meanings seem to travel like electric current, sparking from the artist's body to the chemicals and from there to the eye of the viewer" (Elkins, 1999: 98).

Chapter Four: Critical thinking in animator

This chapter discusses the way I as a practitioner see animation practice as a medium of creativity, analysis, and authorship.

Animation, a creative medium

This section explores the way the medium affects the creative experience of an animator.

Elkins (1999: 99) gives an example of how the medium affects the experience of it. He says that "my experience of any photograph is blurred together with my thoughts about clutching the camera and the peculiar tunnel view through the view finder … By the same logic marble sculptures often seem to be about marble, and the limits that it will allow". Likewise, for me as an animator, watching animation film automatically means remembering and re-experiencing the process of its making, the experiences I have felt and sensed. It is not only about the way one draws animation or creates it on the screen, but what motivates one to do it and why it is so compelling for one to continue and experience it in practice again.

Paul Wells (2002) in his book *Animation and America* explains that the animation medium is a vehicle to project more primal forces and energies, which are the underlying imperative of human existence and endeavour. In other words, understanding the details and illuminating the quality of the creative construction of text and imagery in animation will maybe lead to recognising the forces that drive humanity to live and create (or at least to understand my own imperatives and drives as an artist and an animator). My self-conscious knowledge of the parameters of the

animation films attempts to refer and revise the received knowledge and consensual frame of my lived experience. Exploring the 'technicalities' in animation helps me thus to follow the inner creative guidance as an artist. As I have explained earlier, in Chapter Two, my foreignness and continuous search for identity bring me to continually attempt to identify everything in and around me as the source of information from which I might draw my identity and understanding of self. Animation provides this opportunity as Wood (2006: 133-134) argues that animation has an ability to portray an intense spatial experience and different types of transformation within the cinematic space. It is unique to animation practice (as opposed to live action films) to portray space in the process of change. Wood explains that the animated space is undergoing the process of reverberation: existing beyond the location of events, fluid and marked by heterogeneity, shifting between familiarity and uncertainty, and chaos. Wood (2006: 134) argues that people "live through and in space, generating intensive experiences through memories and act of imagination, or transforming through actual activities. This transformative aspect is rarely addressed, perhaps because, even as cinema creates all kinds of engagements with characters, times and spaces, live action images only infrequently show space itself in the process of change and so less commonly evoke a more direct experience of that process. By contrast, in many animation films space is caught in the act of changing, making it a form of cinema especially relevant to thinking about experiences of spatial transformation." Hence, going back to my desire to identify what is going on with me as a person, animation and its exploration of change and change in objects within its space provides me with metaphoric references to my own situation in society, culture and reality at large.

Animation then is about the knowledge of experience, which is communicated with surrender to the material, the energy and the movement that creates a moving image under your hands. The interesting thing is that the physical actual portrayal of emotion or movement does not say the meaning in its form, for example, walking in form is just walking, but it is the inner feeling invested in line, choice of colour, texture, angle that gives 'higher' meaning that transcends the shape and becomes explicit for general recognition. Separate animation frames are unclear in their meaning as part of a story until they become a sequence. Words, movement and lines refer to spatial images, which are congruent with one another to achieve a filmic

meaning. Paradoxically to achieve that filmic meaning I take filmic elements apart to see them for what they are in the process of making. Each element is a choice-point. As I reflect-in-action on the situation created by my earlier choices, automatically the whole tree of further choices is thought of. Thus there is a continually evolving system of implications within which I reflect-in-action.

Animation, analytical medium

This section explores the gap between doing practice and writing about it.

Seeing myself in *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007) as an animator talking in the film about the film helps me to observe myself in a detached way. It helps me to release the structure of "inner subjectiveness" of an artist from within and see from beyond it by contemplating on the subject of the film. The film explores the technical aspect of creation, illuminating the materiality of animation filmmaking. Both this film and the sketchbooks act as surgeons of my practice, where by taking the practice apart and analysing it, I am rethinking my image, activity and role and ultimately reinvent the notion of myself as an animator. However it also positions me as a critical observer. This subjective self as I have discovered can perceive itself, think itself and see itself as a 'whole' with memories both within and without that self. It in turns creates a distance between the various types of self- the artist, the person, the researcher, the animator. This distance serves to analyse my films and my intentions before, during and after the filmmaking process. I came to understand better my own thoughts in the speech form of others (English and academic language). However, it also helped me to identify language, which is inseparable from my intimate personality, from Who I Am. Thus transcending cultures, time and space in which it exists. In fact, a significant part of my analysis is derived from memories, looking back on the creative process. Conceived that way, my analysis and reflection on self flows from my own thoughts, articulating ideas, forming analysis both on memories from within self (as a person) and from without (as a professional animator). It is a conversation of self with itself throughout the creative process. My self-reflective analysis becomes a valid conversation with my practice conducted through my writings as well as imagery. It links the world of animating and acting and the world of personal memory and understanding. Thus it develops a conceptual language of

animation discourse. It is the tool to make the world of an animator and her reality during filmmaking process to be captured and explored.

My initial problem-solving technique led me to produce what looks like a "finished film"- *The Truth* (2004). By critically reflecting on the main problems and technicalities of the filmmaking process, reframing the initial question and proceeding to work out the consequences of the new approach, I evolved and developed the aspects that have led me to create the film in the first place. I have produced then a series of artefacts, subjecting each domain of the film to be evaluated, drawing from my experience and knowledge. As I do so, I discover in the situation's feedback a whole new idea, which generates a web of implications for further development (Schön, 1991: 100). I learn from iterations of choices and thoughts, which have led me to re-appreciate, reinvent and redraw. This intuitive process being critically analysed opens up a discussion to benefit other practitioners as well as academics.

The reliability of my reflection-in-action as derived from the personal account of myself as a practitioner lies in "disciplined subjectivity". By verbalising everything in the process of filmmaking, I derive an analysis of conscious and unconscious assumptions and messages in the process (Schön, 1991: 116-117). Those messages have been transferred from my personality, and my cultural and social background. In a way, this method of inquiry is crossing the domain of psychotherapy, where each case must be understood as a unique experience of the person who has created it. The analysis must set aside all preconceptions, listening afresh and testing the explanations as they arise. I seek both to understand my practice and to change it. As I elicit new scenes and probe them, I test my evolving understanding and at the same time draw out new phenomena, which alters my experience of the situation. As a practitioner, I evaluate my filmic practice by determining whether the changes are effective to the general development of the practice or whether I can see a possibility of developing them further. An added scene with animal life in *The Truth* (2004), when the Prince character in my film travels to the Cold Countries, for example, is used to expand on the Prince's evolving understanding and perception, a subject which I pursue further in my reflections. Through unintended effects, such as the impact of the experiment in the scene of animals, the situation of my practice talks

back to me. Reflecting on this talk leads me to find new meanings in the situation and in turn conducting reflective conversations with the situation act as experiments in reframing.

My practice can be seen as exploratory experimenting with textures colours and movements. It is a playful activity by which I get a "feel" for things and discover knowledge and insights-in-action. Description of intuitive knowing or "feel" feeds reflection, enabling the inquirer to criticise, test and restructure his understandings (Schön, 1991: 277). Reflection-in-action converts one's intuitive feel for performance to knowledge and practice, which involves a different strategy of representation. Such a description may be good enough to enable to criticise and restructure my intuitive understandings so as to produce new action that improves my filmmaking. Furthermore, I have learned to use animation language transparently. When I represent a contour of one frame, I see through it to the actual expression in movement, just as practiced readers can see through the letters on a page to words and meanings. Reflection on practice and the way it is verbalised in its exploration make up the material of inquiry, in terms of which the practitioner moves, experiment, and explore.

Animation, authorial medium

This section discusses the meaning and the implication of authorship in animation practice.

Commercial animation is about collaboration, working with others in order to create something together. It is usually a group effort with a continuous stimulus of interaction. However, it is also about concentration on every piece of movement, timing it out and spacing it, visualising it in one's head. And so in these terms it is isolation, which is quite contradictory to working together. That raises the issue of authorship that many deny as being integral part of animation imagery in commercial setting.

My image of an animator is drawn from commercial popular culture, in which design and commerce dominate. It is derived from not being considered as being an art by the critics and the academics due to it being too popular and dealing with young audience (Furniss, 1999: 3), displaced as a creative unique form that is argued by some critics as being a part of a graphic art rather than an independent subject of investigation (Hill and Gibson, 1998: 434). This in turn, enabled animation its visual, movement and sound, to become a vehicle to explore new identity and content levels. Author in animation, I believe, is an 'alchemist' who continuously takes the skills he possesses from various disciplines and melting them to achieve his expression to the best of his knowledge. It is perpetually evolving process that involves evolution of both the author and the product (Sito, 2007). Part of this evolution is reflective observation of process of filmmaking. Animator is a constant observer. Most of the times, as an animator I have almost no physical visual presence of myself (unlike Hitchcock in his films). Yet the presence is embodied in every line. This act of observation within and without an animator makes this research a unique type of artistry. Creating the observation and then observing it again from without. Marx Ernst (cited in Drury, 1979: 86) said that every person carries in his subconscious an inexhaustible supply of buried pictures. Yet it is a matter of courage or of liberating methods to bring light from expeditions into the unconscious, uncoloured by control pictures…the journey into inner spaces and dimensions will yield powerful and expressive images of a greater reality. I believe that the self-reflective animator does precisely that- consciously bringing up the treasury of professional knowledge and expertise that is buried deep in the authorial animation. As an animator, I make connections of line, colour and texture that have psychological self-reflective links, which maybe are not visible but are always buried just beneath the surface. An animator meditates and explores the space between the daily procedures, methods, and techniques of creating a film and the emotional and personal meditative state that adds the 'magic' to the film.

Filmic elements constantly occupy my mind by embodying my slight changes of mood, body and thoughts. To sense the meaning that making a film gives me as an animator, one need to know how the work of drawing the line, filling the colour, acting and timing, scratching and stroking every frame can occupy the mind. Pens, paper, software, lines and colour, textures are something I work with but also think

about. It is this feeling of drawing life from under my fingertips, only to redraw it and give it a life again and again, resurrecting a dream, a wish. It is notions like these and not story about technical excellence that makes drawn animation an absorbing subject for a life's work. It is line that gives warmth to a drawn fire or creating a 'live' person, dreaming of waking up into a different reality and manifesting it. Even when the authorship in the film is subdued by endless collaborating process, Gilder (2006) argues that the will of the animator is present. All character design, for instance, include the creation of a new will that may act differently than the animator would in terms of her own reality. Thus creating a new 'will' is an act of authorship. In fact, the more time I spend making films, the more acutely I become aware of the filmic elements and my experience as an author that manipulates them in a filmic alchemy.

'Every thought that passes through my head, stems from my personal experience, my way of speech, my subjective ideas of expressing reality' (Caranfa, 1990: 21). This strengthens and emphasises the importance of authorship in creating an animation film, where every inch of changeable and flexible lines and colours are driven by authorial decisions and thoughts. As an author I continually define and redefine what I see and what I intend to create in my films. That is why my fist film in my research has been called *The Truth* (2004). As the truth is- the expression of my innermost thoughts. It is the truth of creating my own imagination. Hence, when reality of my thoughts is 'reduced' to colour and line moving on the frames, the discourse of the significance of my authorship and way of thinking becomes a work of art, a created form, a complex of images. The images of my film then become a 'language' that viewers can choose to translate to themselves according to their understanding.

In a way, philosophy of drawn animation is ultimately a psychology of its creator, a psychology especially concerned with animator's consciousness and self-reflectivity. Aboulafia (1986: 3) argues that once I start analysing my practice I immediately produce an interaction between self and self-consciousness in a reflective experience. The animator, as an author, as a self, begins according to Aboulafia (1986: 11), who analyses authorship in writing and as a term in general, with a behaviour, behaviour that becomes a role, a role that we become aware of taking by viewing them from the perspective of the other. I both define and watch myself as an

animator and as a personality that shapes my role as an animator. By acting my characters in *Reflections in a Light Box* (2007) as well as creating them, while discussing my animation practice, I raise the discussion of my experience as an animator. I draw attention to the way my vision of self can come from others, to the fact that, as Seaman (1999) explained, a person's identity is crucially dependent on the stories she carries in her head.

The inscription of authorship and self is perhaps made more complex in the *Reflections in a light box* (2007) than in my other films because of my on-screen 'live performance'. In *The Truth* (2004), the physical appearance of my identity as a filmmaker on screen is limited to similarity to my characters and is carefully controlled and implicit. However, creating animation film about making a film is an obvious medium for representing the process of self-analysis because it emphasises and performs my role as a filmmaker both as subject and as author. It also draws attention to the process of representation and the performance of identity itself. On the one hand, the moment, when each character speaks of his experience of being in the filmic process and product, is the ambivalent point at which I reveal my perceived loss of self. On the other hand, I construct a filmic self of what it is like being an author in animation.

When creating an animation film it is difficult to communicate to the audience the sense of the fragmentation of self in the production process when one creates pieces of film while collaborating with others and performing for being someone else (characters, filmic elements). *Reflections in a light box* (2007) enabled me to show the audience the unified version of self as a producer and author of the film. My film therefore can be seen as becoming an autobiographical narrative by which it tells it story of my practice. Seaman (1999) explains that the ways of telling and the ways of conceptualising that go with narrating one's experience become so habitual that they finally become the recipes for structuring experience itself, for laying down routes into memory, for not only guiding the life narrative up to the present but directing it into the future. Seaman (1999) argues that the self is itself made up of tales and images which are already 'literary' and that if we come into being through fantasy, we are at root of its construction. Then animation films can be considered not as records or testaments of historical or social context but as cultural attempt to construct identity. The film *Reflections in a light box* (2007) is realistic in the sense that it truthfully relates to how the practice is constructed off-screen. It allows for an
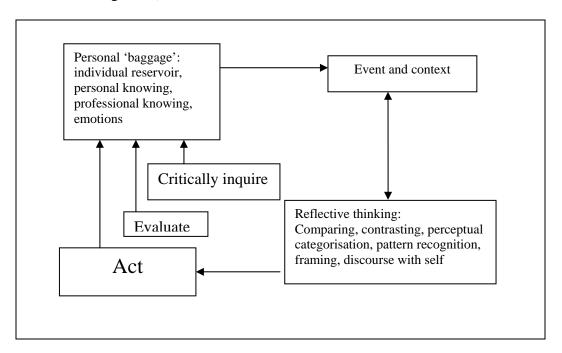
understanding of self-inscription as fundamentally challenging and easy relationship between the represented self and the real self of animator.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Conclusion

Self-reflection develops discourse with the self that helps to raise understanding towards oneself as a practitioner, and increase understanding of professional practice. In the process of research, I have discovered that self-reflection incorporates different levels of reflective thought, as well as the dynamics that are inherent in such a process. Teekman (2000: 1132) explains that there is a spiral-like development in reflective thinking, starting with individual pre-conceptions of personal baggage going to an experience of event that requires one to create meaning in order to (inter)act. Then a range of mental activities called reflective thinking take place, ranging from comparing and contrasting, to discourse with self for the purpose of creating meaning of event in order to act. The individual then continues one's reflective thinking and focuses on the next level and so on. The reflective process then spirals to ever increasing amounts of experiential insights and 'knowing', which feeds back into the system.

Figure 1, Visualisation of reflective thinking as a dynamic process (Teekman, 2000: 1133 [Figure 3])

There are different layers of meaning and understandings as I bring out my own knowledge and personal experience to the analysis and reflection on my practice. So on the one hand it requires me to step outside of myself and be as objective as possible. On the other hand, my analysis is uniquely driven by my personality and experience and is therefore subjective. The breadth and the depth of knowledge that I have revealed through self-reflective analysis adds to the richness and expressive nature of writing about the practice within the academic critical framework.

I began writing insights and so called 'narratives' about my practice as an alternative to dry descriptive summaries. My original intent was to write a summary of my animation practice, which could then be contextualised and verified by interviews with other practitioners, involved in similar practice context. However, writing about personal experience of the art of animation filmmaking has led me to express myself in an almost poetic way that conveyed the implicit qualities and the nature of animation as animator experiences it. By critically observing my own thoughts, choices and insights during the practice and by writing them down I have closed the gap between myself as an observer and as an observee. I carried on the interviews with other practitioners, as I was interested in whether I had represented through my reflections on my experience, their experiences, feelings and perceptions as well. Following the opportunity to talk to the animators I then shared my reflections with them to see whether there were understandings that we held in common. One of the outcomes of this process was the realisation that animators in this study held many beliefs and expectations, which were common. They began to feel empowered by the opportunity to find expression of their own knowledge. While this process provided a way of tapping into each animator's thinking, it also revealed to some of the animators the tacitness of their own personal practical knowledge (as per Clandinin, 1985). The tacitness of animator's knowledge as well as my earlier claim that commercial animators do not often engage in intellectual analysis of their practice, lend support to the relevance of using the narrative style of writing in my research as a form of inquiry.

Reflective thinking is an under-researched phenomenon in animation practice. Using a qualitative research approach of 'self-reflection' this study explored how I as a practitioner use reflective thinking in my practice. The finds demonstrate that I have

used reflective practice foremost to create meaning in order to improve and expand my understanding of practice and professional knowledge. At the second level the focus was on reflection for evaluation of the presence of authorship in my animation practice. Then reflective thinking has assumed a sense of critical inquiry that was demonstrated in and through practice as seen in *Reflection in a light box* (2007). The other artifacts of this research were the sketchbooks that are a method of documentation of the research process. Each sketchbook is dedicated to one aspect of my filmmaking, where I have explored my feelings, thoughts, values and beliefs as well as analysing my choices during and after the filmmaking. My reflections in the sketchbooks are by no means a checklist of technical matters or behaviour but an attempt at critical analysis of my choices and creative thought behind the filmmaking. They are in fact a complex intellectual and emotional enterprise that took plenty of time to dwell upon and digest and analyse it, not to mention to create them. The fact that I have divided the sketchbooks into various themes, each reflecting and documenting a different aspect of my filmmaking is evidence on my behalf of systematic critical documentation and observation of my actions in practice and in turn led to a revised practice. My sketchbooks are therefore act as catalysts of professional growth and change.

There is a repetition of texts that appear in my thesis and also in the eventual one sketchbook that includes most information from the others: *Tribute* (2007). The repetition was intentional, as it was natural that observation of my practice has become directly the foundation for critical analysis later on written in the thesis. The repetition of texts from the sketchbooks in the critical analysis shows that the reflections on my practice in the artistic expression of the sketchbooks already embody critical analysis. It therefore shows that my filmmaking is both a research product and the research process at once. Thus by shifting the contents of sketchbooks to a form of academic critical analysis my practice and reflections on it have been elevated to a level of academic critical inquiry.

Self-reflection in my practice aims to promote professional knowledge and learning process that requires ongoing change and development. Hence, first I have attended to thoughts and feelings aroused in the process of producing a film. Then, I re-assessed my experience of filmmaking. That in turn led me to generate new insights and perspectives from my reflection. All these new insights may imply an

improvement of practice and competence. This approach, I have adopted is driven by Dewey's notion of possessing an attitude which values the personal; and intellectual growth of oneself and of others as central to the development of reflective practice. My analysis of practice is, therefore, both a response and a contribution to the sense that the reality of my practice is made of a series of constructions, structures, emotions and thoughts.

I am aware that occasionally my uncertain self-reflective nature of researching animation form will leave it open to criticism. Yet it is this instability and vulnerability, openness and flexibility that allows animation as a form to survive, evolve and adapt to social changes in the face of the political, cultural and technological changes in society in past years. Analysis of my practice therefore offers both innovation and familiarity through continuous practice and its observation and exploration.

Implications for animation practice

Casam (1994: 1) argues that knowing oneself means to know the extent of our knowledge of our particular thoughts, sensations, perceptual experiences, physical properties and actions. Self-knowledge requires self-awareness, where mind intuits and guides itself of its inner state. Such knowledge raises the professional knowledge and expertise of an animator, or any other professional, to a state where one is not only aware of the actual 'job' one is doing, but in fact is aware of what goes on in the mind of the performer (the animator) before, during and after the action. It is also an attempt to understand and analyse what prompted certain choices and actions.

Teekman (2000: 1134) argues that learning from experience contributes to 'know how' or 'practical knowledge'. Trusting this 'know how' requires courage on behalf of the learner because it requires a shift from reliance on abstract, analytical rule based on clinical reasoning using past concrete experiences. The ability to do this signifies the move towards expert practitioner. The expert animator is not just an animator with a lot of experience, but a practitioner who can freely move between two types of knowledge and is able to select and transform knowledge appropriate to situation and thus improve the animation practice. Schön (1983) confirms that this ability to move between theory and practice ultimately results in professional growth

of the practitioner. However Teekamn (2000: 1134) explains that it should not be automatically assumed that reflective thinking equals immediate learning, equals improved animation practice. Reflective practice is something one needs to learn during time and experience and contemplation and actively seek it.

Such an approach opens up lines of inquiry to practitioners' claims to knowledge. Thus enabling animators to explore their practice and becoming of the possibility of alternative ways of realising one's practice. Once practitioners notice that they are actively constructing their practice and become aware of the sense of authorship that becomes explicit to them, they may begin to see the need for reflection-in-action. At the same time the academic aspect of such inquiry may then provide the practitioners with theory and methods to be able to explain what goes on in their practice. Overall, each animator that explores their filmmaking whether in theory or in practice contribute to the accumulation of what Schön (1991: 327) has described as an 'organisational reservoir of knowledge' about their experiences, which may become exemplars for future action.

Bibliography

Aboulafia, M. (1986) *The mediating Self; Mead, Sartre and Self-Determination*, Yale University Press, London, UK.

Bendazzi, G. (1994) *Cartoons, one hundred years of cinema animation*, London: Libbey John & Company Ltd.

Bordwell, D., Thompson, K. (2001) *Film Art an introduction*, Sixth edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Boud, D. (1999) 'Avoiding the traps: seeking good practice in the use of self assessment and reflection in professional courses', *Social work education*, vol.18, no. 2, pp.121-132, 1999.

Caranfa, A. (1990) *Proust; The Creative Silence*, Bucknell University Press, London, UK.

Cassam, Q. (1994) *Self-knowledge*, Oxford University Press, UK.

Culhane, S. (1998) *Talking Animals and Other people; the autobiography of a legendary animator*. N.Y: Da Capo Press.

Dewey J. (1910) *How we think*, Heath and Company, New York, USA.

Drury, N. (1979) *Inner Visions; explorations in magical consciousness*, Law Book Co of Australasia.

Elkins, J. (1999) *What painting is*, Routledge, UK.

Furniss, M. (1999) *Art in motion; animation aesthetics*, London: John Libbey pbl.

Gilder, N. (2006) 'Theological Compatibilism & Animation: Vessel of Wrath', *ImageText: Interdisciplinary comics studies*, Vol. 2, Issue 2 (2006), http://www.english.ufl.edu//imagetext/archives/v2_2/gilder/index.shtml

Gray, C., Malins, J. (2004) *Visualizing Research; a guide to the research process in Art and Design*. Hants: Ashgate Publishing.

Hammersley-Fletcher, L., Orsmond, P. (2005) 'Reflecting on reflective practices within per observation', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 30, No. 2, April 2005, pp213-224, ISSN 0307-5079 (print),/ ISSN 1470-174x (online)/05/020213-12, DOI: 10.1080/03075070500043358

Hatfield, C. (2004) 'The Presence of the Artist: Kim Deitch's Boulevard of Broken Dreams vis-a-vis the Animated Cartoon', *ImageTexT: Interdisciplinary Comic Studies*, vol. 1, Issue 1 (2004), ISSN: 1549-6732, http://www.english.ufl.edu//imagetext/archives/v1_1/hatfield/index.shtml

Higgs, J. (Ed.) (1998) *Writing qualitative research*, Hampden Press, Sydney, Australia.

Hill, J., Gibson, P. ed. (1998) *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

Hollinshead, K. (1998) "Disney and commodity aesthetics: a critique of Fjellman's analysis of 'Distory' and the 'Historicide' of the past", *Current Issues in Tourism*, vol.1 no.1 p. 58-119, September 1998.

Jay, P. (1984) *Being in the text; self representation from Wordsworth to Roland Barthes*, Cornell University Press, London, UK.

Kristeva, J. (1991) *Strangers to ourselves*, Harvester/Wheatsheaf, UK.

Lamb, T. and Bourriau, J. (ed.) (1997) *Colour: Art and Science*, The Darwin College Lecturers, Cambridge University Press, UK.

Leslie, E. (2002) *Hollywood Flatlands; Animation, critical theory and the avant-garde,* London: Verso pbl.

Mezirow, J. (1990) Preface, in: J. Mezirow et al. (eds) *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood: a guide to transformative and emancipatory learning*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Orland-Barak, L. (2005) 'Portfolios as evidence of reflective practice: what remains 'untold', *Educational Research,* vol 47, no 1, March 2005, pp. 25-44, Routledge.

Pilling, J. ed. (1997) *A Reader in Animation Studies*. London: John Libbey & Company Pty Ltd.

Pye, D. (1968) *The nature and art of workmanship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sarbin, T. R., Scheibe, K. (eds) (1983) *Studies in social identity*, 'Narratives of the self' by Gergen and Gergen, pp 254-273, Praeger, UK.

Schön, D. A. (1983) *The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*, Basic books, New York (First edition).

Schön, D. A. (1991) *The Reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*, Aldershot : Avebury, UK.

Seaman, M. (1999) *'Performing the Self in Australian Documentary Film', Identities in Action!*, MA Latrobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia.

Simon, M. (2003) *Producing Independent 2D character animation; Making and selling a short film*. London: Focal Press.

Sito, T. (2007) 'Walt's Jalopy: Animator Training through the Decades', *Animation World Magazine*, http://mag.awn.com/?article_no=3012, 26/2/07.

Smith, R. (1994) *Drawing Figures*, Dorling Kindersley, London, UK.

Taylor, R. (1999) *The encyclopedia of animation techniques*, Oxford: Focal Press.

Taylor, M. C. (2001) *The moment of complexity, emerging network culture*, London: The University of Chicago Press.

Teekman, B. (2000) 'Exploring reflective thinking in nursing practice', *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 2000, 31 (5), 1125-1135.

Thomas, B. (1991) *Disney's Art of Animation, from Mickey Mouse to Beauty and the Beast*. New York: Hyperion.

Ward, P. (2006) 'Some thoughts on practice-theory relationships in animation studies', *Animation: an interdisciplinary journal*, 2006;1;229; doi:10.1177/1746847706065845, http://anm.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/1/2/229.

Wasko, J. (2001) *Understanding Disney; The Manufacture of Fantasy*, Oxford: Polity Press (Cambridge) & Blackwell pbl.

Waugh, P. (1984) *Metafiction; the theory and practice of self-conscious fiction*, Methuen, London, UK.

Wells, P. (2000) *Understanding Animation*, Routledge: London, UK.

Wells, P. (2002) *Animation and America*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick: New Jersey.

Wells, P. (2002) *Animation; Genre and Authorship*, Wallflower: London, UK.

Williams, R. (2001) *The animator's survival kit; A manual of methods, principles and formulas for classical, computer, games, stopmotion, and internet animators*, Faber and Faber: London.

Williams, B. (2000) 'Collage Work as a Medium for Guided Reflection in the Clinical Supervision Relationship', *Nurse Education Today*, (2000) 20, pp 273-278, Harcourt Publishers, http://www.idealibrary.com

Wood, A. (2006) 'Re Animating space', *Animation an interdisciplinary journal*, vol 1(2), pp 133-152, Sage pbl, London UK., http://anm.sagepub.com.

Yip, K.S. (2006) 'Self-reflection in reflective practice: a note of caution', *British Journal of Social Work* (2006) 36,777-788.

Zakia, R. D. (2002) *Perception & Imaging*. Focal Press, Butterworth - Heinemann, USA.

List of interviews

Biran, Y. (30/9/2006) *animator*, *Red Sheep* studio, London.

Bringas, S. (17/10/2006) *director and animator*, *Animus films* studio, London.

Devine, K. (19/5/2006) *principal lecturer and course leader of animation*, School of Art, Design and Media, Portsmouth University.

Ernsby, S. (15/8/2006) *studio manager and animator*, 'SweetworldTV', London.

Leslie, E. (15/05/2006) *animation critic and Reader in Political Aesthetics*, Birkbeck University of London, London.

Mair, J. (21/6/2006) *associate senior lecturer* (course leader of illustration), School of Art, Design and Media, Portsmouth University.

Newland, P. (20/3/2007) *senior research fellow*, School of Art, Design and Media, Portsmouth University.

Palacios, E. (10/5/2006) *senior animation lecturer*, School of Art, Design and Media, Portsmouth University.

Wells, P. (11/4/2006) *Director of the animation academy and animation critic*, Loughborough University, Leicester.

Central arguments of papers presented in conferences

'Animator as a medium that channel creative flow through analytical thought.'
Open Platform, Spiritualist's church, Avenue Rd, Southampton, April 2007.

'Animation narrative has several levels, from story to filmic elements.'
Narrative/Non-Narrative/Anti-Narrative conference, a conference on film and narrative structure, School of Art, Media & Design, University West England, Bristol Nov 2006.

'By putting down to words the experience of film making in animation, a new level of writing and animation analysis is explored.'
Great Writing 2006 Conference, School of Creative Arts, Film & Media, Portsmouth University, June 2006.

'Animation being a reflective medium naturally leads to development of self-reflective methods in the process of research.'
Postgraduate conference on **'**Methodological issues and ethical considerations**'** Leeds Metropolitan University, May 2006.

Central themes of art exhibitions

Exploring the relationship between visual and verbal expressions.
"Waterised Words", films and painting exhibition, 3rd Floor Art Centre, Portsmouth, Feb 2007.

Communication the sense of self observation to the public.
"Waterised Words", films and painting exhibition, Portsmouth University Eldon Gallery, Jan-Feb 2007.

Exploring the different sense of authorship between moving images and still images.
"The Spirit Within", Acrylic exhibition, Southsea Synagogue Gallery, June-July 2006 On line exhibition. http://www.caerleon-arts.org/dekel.htm

Underlying positions of the animation film *The Truth* in film festivals

Comparing experience of animation practice between different artists, and how personal background shape the practice.
Portsmouth Screen 06, Portsmouth Film and New Media Festival, Portsmouth UK, 10-19 Nov 2006.

Attempting to situate my practice in relation to other practitioners.
5th Hull International Short Film Festival, Hull UK, Sep/Oct 2006.

Analysing the advantages in disadvantaged of my practice in commercial context.
Hiroshima Educational Film Market, Japan, 24-28 August 2006.