

Stacey Ray

Comparative Technologies | Spring 2015

Midterm Report & Journal Entries

WEEKLY JOURNAL

Week 2 | Goals and Objectives

This week was all about content. I switched the focus of my project from Google Sketchup to learning how to create and edit videos, and along the way, stumbled into the idea of creating animation or illustrated stories. This seemed so much more relevant to me because of all that I am doing right now and thinking about in regards to creating and evaluating programs and how video media can really be effective in telling a persuasive story, presenting a program or even evaluating a program or event. I spent a lot of time this week thinking about what I wanted this video to be and why it might exist, as well as how I could incorporate different processes for my learning experience. I confirmed the subject for my video, which would focus on portraying the value of keeping a sketchbook as well as operate as a sort of promotional device for the newly created JSMAC Sketchbook Collective. I have been doing a lot of work around journals for the last two terms so it makes sense to create a video explaining the effectiveness of keeping a journal/sketchbook. I set goals for my project; things that I wanted the video to achieve, and I started brainstorming what components would actually make up the video content. These might include still images, time-lapse video of me drawing, voice-overs, animation, word-maps and interviews.

Week 3 | Research

Learning about animation was the primary goal this week. On Tuesday, I visited Eric's middle school class to talk to his students about their stop-motion animation projects. This was incredibly helpful because I learned just how simple it really is, and this knowledge gave me the ambition to jump right in. They were all using an iPad app to record stop-motion images. I learned that the most difficult part is getting the right angle and keeping your hand out of the image. It seems that stop-motion is pretty easy, but just time consuming. I will have to be sure to give myself plenty of time. I did a little bit of research on video and animation, looking up tutorials for apps or software I might use, and the best way to get started. I looked up some other videos about sketchbooks in YouTube to get some inspiration and discovered a few that combined video with animated illustration overlaid on the video as well as still images included. I definitely like the layering of illustration and video and want to investigate that next week. I started working on a script or outline of the video. I am struggling a bit with this because this is a new medium and I'm not really sure what it can do. I am wondering if I will have more success if I just jump in and go with it. I feel like I am off to a slower start than I would like. Haven't produced anything yet.

Week 4 | Animation

I worked more on the script this week, separating it into four parts and coming up with a title. I have an idea of where content will fit in and how the content might be represented. Still struggling a bit with what my animation will actually look like and how it might actually manifest itself in the video. Part of the work this week was really getting a handle on the mission and objectives of the JSMAC Sketchbook Collective so that I could properly represent it in the video. That is all now finalized. I investigated tools and resources for animation and filming, discovering an app for Android called Lapse It that would probably be the most comparable to the one that the middle school students were using. It focuses on automated time-lapse video but also does stop-motion. I spent some time experimenting with it this week, practicing animated illustration. I discovered the difficulties in arranging perspective, the right focus, lighting as well as orienting the tablet so that I could draw comfortably. I definitely need a tripod in order to do this properly. Explored the layered video/illustration concept but didn't really find much in the way of helpful resources.

Week 5 | Video

I feel like I am starting to make more progress. I have a much better idea of what the video will actually contain, and have reached out to two artists who I know have kept very robust sketchbooks and might be willing to contribute video interview material. I sent them interview questions and have already received two videos and some images from one of the artists that will be a perfect fit for my video. I visited Eric's class again, this time to learn more about filming and video editing. I followed one of the student teams around as they filmed a scene for their video. Very simple process and I feel comfortable that I can transfer my formal art and photography knowledge over to film production. Same concepts of composition, tone, contrast, etc. The students were using iMovie to edit their videos which looked really simple. I haven't had the chance to get to know Premiere very well yet so I am a little worried about that. I rented a camera and tripod from the library and provided my own video commentary about what role my sketchbooks have in my own life. Over the weekend I used the stop-motion setting on Lapse It to create a walk-through of each page of my sketchbooks. I feel like I now have some good material, but it definitely needs edited down. Next week I need to spend some time with Premiere and need to get some animation finalized.

Week 6 | Animation Production

Now that I am much more comfortable with the animation process and have spent time practicing, I created the illustrated/animated introduction to my video. It was a long process for such a short time-lapse, and I will have to edit out my hand in a few areas, but I am happy with the result. I also heard back from the second artist that I contacted, and it looks like I will have an interview and images from him as well, which is great because he is a published sketchbook artist that is really one of the best emerging illustrators out there. I also did a very short time-lapsed drawing in my own sketchbook but want to do one or two more. I need to do a little bit

more animation and a lot of editing. I also need to start looking at music. AND get to know Premiere!

MIDTERM REVIEW

I feel a lot better about where I am at than I did a few weeks ago. I spent a lot of time early on thinking about goals and objectives within the video as well as exploring processes, resources and tools. This meant less time actually creating but now I feel like I have had a chance to start producing. I have received materials from others but have done my own video “self-interview”, time-lapsed drawing and animation. So far I have an animated introduction, guest interviews, a time-lapse video of a “guest” artist doing a five hour long drawing session in her sketchbook, a short time-lapsed drawing that I made, self-interview, and walk-throughs of my sketchbooks. Most of this is pretty rough right now so I have a lot of editing ahead of me.

When I first got started I was a little intimidated by the idea of creating a video and doing animation but learning from the Cal Young Middle School students really helped me realize the simplicity in these technologies and the resources that are so readily available for use in producing a high quality video. It took a bit of time but now that I have jumped in head first, I feel much more confident in my abilities, and what I am able to produce. I was able to produce a decent amount of content in a short time once I dug in, so now I feel that I have more consistent momentum going in the project.

Moving forward I need to focus on editing, while still bringing in some new content. This new content includes additional time-lapse drawing, animated storytelling, voice-overs and music selection. I also need to time-lapse a few more sketchbook “tours”. They may not all make it into the final video, but for me personally, having those is really rewarding. My concerns moving forward are learning Premiere and the time it will take to curate and edit everything, but as with everything else, once I learn and jump in, I know that it will go faster. So far, I have been thrilled with what I have created and excited to pick up these new skills which I know I will continue to use and develop.

MIDTER TIMELINE

Week 6 | Begin editing videos in Premiere; over the weekend, finish time-lapse sketchbook “tours” and finish all animation to tell my story, including closing and any time-lapse drawing; finalize script for voice-overs

Week 7 | Focus on video editing; do all voice-overs; take video and photographs of JSMAC Sketchbook Collective meeting; take video and photographs of World of Work journaling workshop; come up with ideas for music

Week 8 | Focus on video editing; finalize music selections

Week 9 | Final touches on Sunday and Monday. Present my project Tuesday (I will be gone during week 10); evaluate what I could have done better or differently; finish final reflections/journal entries