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The Animation Fulcrum

Suzanne Buchan

Artists' media—from paint, pencil, and charcoal to wood, metals, textiles, and photography—have had a constant, encompassing, and remarkably persistent presence in animation film. Although artists who make animation films remain artists in the view of curators, art dealers, and audiences, animators are not often perceived as artists per se except within a small but robust network that includes art historians, film festival curators, and some gallerists. This discrepancy between the art world's relatively quiet and limited reception of and engagement with animation is somewhat puzzling considering the form's fine arts-based production methods and its often exquisite and powerful artistic qualities. Response is broadening, however, as more contemporary artists turn to the technique to expand notions of movement, space, and duration in their work, and as animation's presence increases across media platforms. Animation is, indeed, a creative form that is challenging to define, and it defies relegation to any one description of artistic output and, consequentially, to any single discipline or subdiscipline. Because animation is a time-based art form, its critical counterpart is naturally to be found in film studies. In parallel to the art world, animation is slowly receiving a more distinct and concerted engagement from academics and critics, having long been relegated to the margins of the discipline. This is due in part to the complexity of the imagery, most of which is not photorepresentational and hence lies outside the discourses of realism that center on the photographic indexical representation of the world around us that most films present.

The Auteur Animation Film

The artist—or auteur—animation film, being less commercially driven, has greater affinities with the arts than with the majority of easily accessible animation. It bears a strong relationship with its maker, in that he or she has a much higher degree of control over process and finished work. Animation evidences intimate relations with fine-art practice, as many animators are, indeed, practicing artists who use the technique to expand the potential of their art and affect viewers and spectators by imbuing their films with a form of narrative over time that is distinct from the narrative of a single painting, sculpture, or installation. The *Animated Painting* exhibition is proof that, as a moving-image form, animation is becoming increasingly pervasive in other types of creative practice, in part because of its interdisciplinary affinities with other artists' media. That contemporary artists today are exploring techniques and technologies used in creating animation is not surprising in light of the fact that many artists, past and present, are stimulated by the possibilities open to them when they explore other media that can support the ones they already use for their creative works.

Working with the medium's predigital manifestations, animators have created an astonishing amount of materials using a variety of artistic practices—painting, sculpture, drawing, collage, and photography—to create their works in time-based form. Artists use and continue to explore these media to expand the languages of their static works—whether single canvas, sculpture, drawing, or photograph—enhancing them with new meaning and expression. With the increasing implementation of digital technologies, animation's shift from a fine arts-based to a digital moving-image medium is growing. This phenomenon is apparent in *Animated Painting*, which features artists who use traditional methods—painting and drawing especially—and this places them in a continuum with animation practice over a period spanning more than one hundred years. Nowhere do the languages of art and film intersect and merge more completely than at the fulcrum of animation filmmaking. Taking cues from the exhibition, and with a focus on the creative process rather than the finished

result as well as notions of introducing temporality into static art forms, I will explore three techniques in particular: painting, self-reflexivity, and collage. Using examples both by animators throughout the history of animation and by artists in the current exhibition, I hope to weave a modest tapestry that reveals how the techniques, styles, and languages of animation and the arts have evolved and the implications this may have on considering animation as an art form. I conclude with observations about the potential of recent curatorial practice to embed animation within a stronger artistic context and to soften the high/low arts divide that it has been subject to.

Animation and the Arts

Before the invention of the photographic image in the mid-nineteenth century, mimetic and creative visual representations of the world around us—and perhaps more pertinent to the artist, the worlds we imagine—were the domain of artists, architects, scientists, and performing artists. An author and artist who has revealed the relationships between these disparate forms of practice through his concept of “scripted space” is Norman Klein. His book *The Vatican to Vegas: A History of Special Effects* is a tantalizing proposal of the intimate relationships among animation, fine art, architecture, and sculpture long before photography was invented, and his most recent project, *The Imaginary Twentieth Century*, is a multimedia collage of images from these disciplines.

With the advent of cinema, artists working in static media began early on to explore animation film’s potential for creative imagination. These were mostly cartoon single-frame or stop-motion animations, soon to be joined by graphic, sculptural, and painterly arts. In early cinema, animation films were mostly a commercial venture, mirroring developments in burgeoning film production for mass audiences. Furthermore, artistic aspiration—many early animators were artists, illustrators, or print media cartoonists—was throttled by the strict rules governing commercial requirements for cinema screening, tending to focus on

simply drawn gag, slapstick, or cinema-derivative narratives. One of the earliest extant films that records an art form, albeit a popular one, is John Stuart Blackton's *The Enchanted Drawing* (1900) (Fig. 1), a film of the artist performing a "lightning sketch," a common vaudeville act at the time. Over the course of the film, the figures Blackton draws with chalk on a large upright sketch pad appear and metamorphose shape and form, and a developmental narrative unfolds. This is not an animation film, although it does include some film "tricks," yet it establishes the principles for how static art can transform over time, and this is central to the artworks selected for the *Animated Painting* exhibition. A later film that takes the same premise as its concept—revealing the development of the artwork in real time as it unfolds on the canvas—is *The Mystery of Picasso* (1955), by Henri-Georges Clouzot. The camera is positioned in front of a thin, opaque canvas behind which Picasso is at work with his brushes and paint media. The viewer is initiated into his process of artistic creation in real time as lines, colors, and forms appear and merge, and, more important, the viewer can observe the artist's unique creative and stylistic impulses as they occur. Although neither film is animation in a conventional definition of the term, the type of developmental imagery and experience of metamorphosis in both will influence many later animated works, including the Barnstormers' videos and Stan Brakhage's hand-painted films.

In the interwar era of the 1920s and 1930s, artists, architects, and others, mainly in Europe, began to explore animation's technical means to bring temporality and movement into otherwise static practices. Using single-frame shooting of drawn and painted abstractions, avant-garde artists created visual experiences they could previously only dream of—experiences of dynamic space, kinetic objects, and art moving in time. Best known today are Hans Richter, Viking Eggeling, and Oskar Fischinger, whose "Absolute" films remain exemplary of this period. In the visual progression of Fischinger's *Motion Painting No. 1* (1947), we see the development of a number of complex geometric and

abstract motifs that the artist incrementally paints on glass and shoots in single frame to create a pulsating, generative moving-art experience (that has, in moments, an almost digital aesthetic). The artworks for the film—different panes of Plexiglas that accrue layers of paint as the images evolve and that are replaced with new ones as Fischinger develops a new visual motif—are fascinating in themselves (Fig. 3), and Fischinger's paintings are held in many major collections around the world.

Fischinger's paint-on-glass films have remarkable resonances with the incremental technique used by the Barnstormers in a number of their works (Fig. 4). They build on a rich tradition of developmental drawn and painted animation—from Blackton to Brakhage—a tradition to which Caroline Leaf (pastels, oil paint on back-lit glass, scratching into film stock emulsion) and William Kentridge also belong. Yet the Barnstormers' process also has affinities with contemporary graffiti, especially in terms of their actionist creativity. We see the artists actively engaged in creating the work that is shot in single-frame—the basic principle of animation filmmaking—and what is most important, in the illuminating words of master animator Norman McLaren, is what happens between the images, namely, the incremental changes that take place between single-frame shooting that allow the artwork to change over time and appear to move in projection. Whereas Clouzot's film is remarkable in that it is a rare example of artwork changing in real time, the Barnstormers' films align with McLaren's description of the creative process, specifically the changes that are made to the artwork between frames that we do not see in the final projection of an animation film. What makes the Barnstormers' work so fascinating is that we see the artists themselves in a form of pixelated movement as they create the work—bodies that appear for fractions of a second in the frame. This possibility of making visible the creative process is an essential defining concept of the visual languages of animation, one that expands the definitions of art and that is apparent throughout the works in the exhibition.

Another phenomenon that is part of this visual language is the creation of imaginary spaces, objects, and motion. The figures, spaces, and events in most animation films have their origins in artworks—drawings, paintings, puppet animation sets, and the like. The spatial worlds of animation film are not physically accessible—we cannot enter a painting or drawing. Ruth Gómez’s colorful layered environments, Sadie Benning’s drawn observations of everyday life, and Takeshi Murata’s throbbing, psychedelic computer-graphic-whorled landscapes are all spaces that are created by artists’ media and hence not extant in the physical world. This is distinct from live-action shooting. Though we cannot reexperience a live-action film’s actual scenes, the spaces as we see them on-screen do exist in the real world and we can, in principle, visit these spaces. Yet there are some films that have elements of both these worlds. The Barnstormers’ animated action paintings and Robin Rhode’s chalk animations (Fig. 2) take place in a space we can physically enter, although we will never be in the presence of the creative process as it temporally unfolds on-screen.

The exhibition’s aim to “extend the language of painting and drawing, to literally ‘animate’ it, without releasing the work of art from its static nature and visual conventions” also draws attention to the self-reflexive process that is innate in most animation films while retaining the reference to the artworks’ origination in the single image, whether a drawing, a painting, or a manipulated photograph.¹ One self-reflexive tradition in animation filmmaking that is explored by some of the exhibition’s artists is the inclusion of the artist’s hand in the frame. Throughout the histories of animation film, these hands have been as diverse as the films in which they appear. Max Fleischer’s own hand, shot in single-frame live-action in the 1920s *Out of the Inkwell* series, creates Koko the Clown in front of our eyes with ink and a paintbrush. At the end of Chuck Jones’s anarchic cartoon masterpiece *Duck Amuck* (1953)—in which Daffy Duck is subjected to a series of trials and tribulations and mischievous sudden changes in the cartoon sets he is “in”—the gloved four-fingered cartoon hand at the

animation table, the person responsible for Daffy's woes, turns out to be none other than his archrival, ("Ain't I a stinker?") Bugs Bunny.

A more recent example is New York independent animator George Griffin's poetic revelation of the actual production of his film *Block Print* (1978) (Fig. 5). It shows the complexity of animation filmmaking, with the artist sometimes in partial view, at other times in full view, and pixelated during the process of creating the film from hundreds of photocopied images from a live-action shot made during a walk around a block in Manhattan.²

The Barnstormers' motion paintings, though usually shot from a greater distance to include the artist's bodies and full physical presence in the films, are a continuation of animation's self-reflexive tradition. They allow the viewer intimate access both to the process of materials that develop into artworks over time and to the creative process of the artists themselves engaged in image-making. Rhode's works employ this concept as well, and his use of white chalk echoes Blackton's lightning sketches; yet we could also regard Rhode's pieces as interactive, in that his work is performative in its strong emphasis on the body (or bodies) in view as well as on the development of the artwork using his trademark chalk. Interestingly, Rhode's technique and style have such appeal that he joins the company of animators and artists whose work has been appropriated, without acknowledgment, by advertising. A Nike commercial that is highly derivative of his work has been the subject of a number of online blogs that accuse the company of usurping Rhode's concept. This is a phenomenon that courses through much of animation history as well—many "innovative" music videos and commercials have their roots in the animation avant-garde. A further example of this is Tim MacMillan's "time-slice" technique that was appropriated by the makers of the blockbuster *Matrix* trilogy.³

Another artist in the exhibition sensitive to self-reflexivity is Kentridge, whose developmental drawing often includes a reference to the magical visual qualities of animation's principle of metamorphosis. The hand of his drawn character Soho Eckstein is an extension of Kentridge himself. A young master of drawn animation, Qiu Anxiong, who declares Kentridge as one of his influences, is represented in the exhibition with a recent work, *The New Book of Mountains and Seas, Part 2* (2007). He has been headlined as the "biennale wonder boy" in *Art Zine China*, and although his works are animation films, he has entered directly into the contemporary art world rather than the animation festival circuit.⁴ A reason for this may be his loyalty to traditional Chinese drawing styles combined with mythology and a contemporary awareness of the negative aspects of technology, environmental change, and political events. This also aligns him with Kentridge, whose works illuminate and critique the histories of apartheid in South Africa.

As an aesthetic language of art, collage has enjoyed immense popularity both with artists using the technique and with audiences who marvel at the creative novelty evident in the works. Though not overly prominent in the current exhibition, collage is distinct in the works of Jeremy Blake. The medium involves the layering of disparate images from other sources and materials spanning a wide range of media, from fabric, consumer packaging, and photographs to cutout images, typography, and newspaper clippings; it can include objects as well. One of the central techniques in the many isms of early twentieth-century art movements, including Surrealism, Cubism, and Futurism, collage (and the related techniques of bricolage and assemblage) allowed artists to explore other media and develop new languages of art that reflected and commented on the radical changes evolving in society, industry, and capitalism. Artists renowned for developing this form include Georges Braque, Kazimir Malevich, Hannah Höch, whose work with photographs contributed significantly to a collage technique known as photomontage, and Kurt Schwitters, whose works often included found objects and were constructed on a grand scale (he is considered

a precursor of installation art). Collage's integration into moving-image practices in this period was undertaken most notably by artists whose works are still considered avant-garde and experimental, and not as animation. Blake's invasion of indexical imagery with abstract forms and colors aligns him with the experiments of Len Lye. Active from the 1930s to the 1950s, Lye made direct animation films often using a form of collage. He would take a piece of found live-action footage and introduce elements of line and color to the single frames by painting, scratching, or literally making holes in the existing film stock to create vibrant, multilayered commentary and accompaniment for the live-action shots.

One of the appeals of collage is that it can be a "low-tech" form of animation, as it can rely on extant imagery and permit more creativity in developing a language or narrative through temporal collage. Whereas a collaged image such as that created by Höch or Malevich provides a dense set of information for the viewer to unravel, often resulting in different narratives for different viewers, single-frame-shooting animation results in a temporal collage that can overwhelm the spectator. An extreme version of this is Robert Breer's *Recreation* (1957), made while Breer was living in Paris, where he had studied and participated in the 1955 *Le Mouvement* exhibition at the Galerie Denise René, which included works by Pol Bury, Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp, and other pioneers of kinetic art. Instead of combining different elements within a single frame, Breer chose to string together disparate images on the filmstrip: for example, a frame of text followed by an image of an object followed by an empty colored frame. In projection, this barrage of twenty-four dissonant images per second creates a linear, time-based collage. Griffin suggests that it "represents [Breer's] effort to construct a stacked collage in time, a series of 'unrelationships.'"⁵ Breer, an artist who has long oscillated between the worlds of animation and fine-art practice, has produced a remarkable body of work, animated and otherwise, that embraces painting, kinetic sculpture, minimal line drawings, and collage. Griffin further notes that "it is impossible to see Breer's films without being reminded of the art

world movements and ideas that influenced him: Dada's anarchy, Abstract Expressionism's action, Pop's appropriational fun, Minimalism's severity."⁶

Other influential animated collage filmmakers include Frank Mouris, who won an Oscar for *Frank Film* (1973), and Stan Vanderbeek, whose 1959 political satire *Science Friction* is imbued with cold-war political commentary in keeping with collage's modernist roots.⁷ As a hotbed of political, intellectual, and artistic activity in the 1950s and 1960s, the West Coast was home to some of the best-known collage animators and artists, including Harry Smith, Bruce Conner, and Larry Jordan (who was friends with and influenced by Joseph Cornell). Jordan's cutout films often usurp drawings and engravings of architectural, landscape, and urban settings from previous centuries in which disparate objects take on new meaning and form new relationships when brought into close proximity or when their usual context is changed. Most of these filmmakers were also engaged in creative work outside the animated form.

Collage is a layering technique that usually remains on a single plane. Layering is often used in animation—it is the very principle of cel animation—and one of the most innovative discoveries for achieving the effect of depth in layered imagery was the multiplane camera. By placing different elements on separate layers of glass stacked vertically, animators could insinuate space and shifting perspectives among these elements. Blake's recombinations of representational photography and film, graphic elements, drawing, and painting add depth in a similar way, though he creates depth using digital techniques rather than with a multiplane. The results bear commonalities in technique and aesthetic with Paul Vester's *Picnic* (1987), which is a collage of architectural photographs and multilayered painted cels embellished with abstract forms and cartoonlike shapes and figures that also doesn't use multiplane systems (Fig. 6).

Blake's films also evoke comparison with 1960s West Coast psychedelia and the films of Jordan Belson, who used optical printing, natural phenomena, and other image manipulation techniques to create abstract, spiritually tinged worlds. Belson's *Samadhi* (1967) is evocative of inner states, made with the intention of creating a new visual language that breaks with indexical or mimetic narrative forms and explores subjectivity and the working of the mind unencumbered by expectations of realism; the more recent *Epilogue* (2005) extends these notions. Blake's use of vivid color and bold geometric forms, typography, and streams of color layered over live-action imagery is tempered by the slow dissolves he employs, which introduce an ethereal, almost gossamer quality (Fig. 7). Although some of the imagery appears as a background or basis for the superimposed colorful bands of light and fragments that appear and move through the frame, his films are collage in an extended sense. Rather than using the physical combination of cutout imagery and dense collection of extant imagery of more traditional collage films such as *Frank Film* or *Picnic*, Blake investigates and expands the time-based opportunities of digital animation and single-frame imagery to allow the collage itself to evolve over time.

Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Animation in Museums and Galleries

Self-reflexivity, painting, and collage are but three of the many methods that animators and artists share. Using other aesthetic, narrative, and stylistic techniques, artists are not only expanding languages of art but also engaging with a continuum of creative animation practice, a practice with the tantalizing potential to be made accessible to willing and increasingly visually literate audiences. Considering the number of animation exhibitions around the world in recent years, it is clear that there is a growing interest in curating animation, but the tendency is toward presenting ways that artists, and I mean artists in the art world economies, are exploring their practice through animation tools and techniques. They are increasingly usurping the expressive possibilities of animation, especially digital processes, but their work is often regarded as and presented in the first

instance as art, not as animation film. Promoting a higher regard for animation as an artistic practice can reveal and break with symptoms of certain sectors of the art worlds' interest and engagement in "high" art as distinct from "low" animation. Kentridge, whose opus encompasses moving painting, (animated) film, animated sculpture, installation, performance, single canvas or sheet drawing, and painting, is an example of someone who has erased this distinction. One of the few animation filmmakers to be included in museum and gallery exhibitions, Kentridge is indeed a phenomenon, a polymath working across a number of media and disciplines, exemplary for the ways that painting and drawing can traverse media and presentation forms in his work. There are hundreds of animators around the world with similar multidisciplinary involvement in the arts—George Griffin, Jerzy Kucia, and the Quay Brothers, to name just a few—who have yet to attain a recognized position within the art world.

Animation enjoys regular inclusion in museum and gallery film screening programs around the world. The recent Disney exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, and the *Pixar: Twenty Years of Animation* exhibition that is now traveling the world are exemplars of how more popular and commercial work is being made accessible to audiences in museum formats. With some notable exceptions described below, until recently animation exhibitions tended to occur at the fringes, whether in the form of radical artist-led installations (Griffin in New York in the 1970s) or festival-supported themed exhibitions such as those presented at the Fantoche animation festival in Switzerland, the Annecy festival in France, the UK's Aurora Animation Festival, or the inaugural Platform International Animation Festival in Portland, Oregon, June 2007. It is only in the last decade that, besides the trite commercial galleries selling animation cels as "art" to wistful Disneyphiles and Tex Avery fans, animation as an art form has found its way to into larger galleries and public spaces. There are a number of reasons for this: the low-art stigma that is attached to animation; difficulties in access and exposure to auteur and what could be

considered as artists' films, usually screened at specialist festivals; and the short film format, which in itself is a difficult form to distribute. Perhaps the most relevant reason is the sheer volume and variety of films, from commercial features and TV series to independent and artist-led films that all fall under the slippery term *animation*. Curators' exposure to, knowledge of, and understanding and treatment of the materials available to them vary widely, and lack of access may be reflected in the art industry's relative disdain for narrative animation as art. The Internet has a considerable role to play in this, as more and more films are made available on animators' home pages, museum and gallery sites, and the phenomena of YouTube.com and MySpace.com.

In light of animation's appropriation of fine-arts and crafts practices and methods in its production, from painting and collage to sculpture, etching, drawing, and even textiles, it is encouraging that curators have begun to explore the richness of filmmakers' archives and production materials as potential exhibition topics. Although exhibition and installation of animation have persisted over the years, the medium has tended to be subsumed into larger thematic curatorial concepts, such as the 2007 *Comic Abstraction* show at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Animation can be used to illustrate a particular expression of a movement (Dada, Pop Art, Fluxus), a technique (painting, drawing, digital media), or a political era. Exhibitions in the past few years have begun to take aesthetic, formal, and narrative features of animation itself as their themes. An example of this is *Animated Stories*, presented recently at the Sala Rekalde gallery in Bilbao, Spain, which took up the cause of artists who are critical in their work of the predominance of visual disinformation in today's culture. Three of the thirty artists—Kentridge, Gómez, and Ezawa—are in the *Animated Painting* exhibition.

Curating animation for museums and galleries can require sensitivity to the film's original intentions for viewers and consideration for how best to preserve this in a gallery setting.

These considerations include suitable lighting, exhibition architecture, screen formats, and sound design. Because (predigital) films were made for a cinematic screening situation, a number of issues arise as to the best way to reflect the filmmaker's intent. In exhibition practice, where the aim is to allow visitors intimate access to original works of art, a common curatorial solution is to install a monitor in a lit room, which achieves the opposite result. Instead of experiencing the original artwork—an animated film—meant for a cinematic screening context, viewers encounter fragmentation, an artwork presented in an unsuitable environment, much like watching an artist's film on a television monitor. Animation's historical relationship to other media and its pervasiveness in contemporary artists' practice can allow surprisingly creative curating.

Artists making work for museums and galleries are becoming sensitive to the implications of this form of public presentation, and moving-image work often appears alongside single-image artwork and production materials, which enhances visitors' awareness of that fact that the films are based on art, much like animation filmmaking. The 2005 *Trickraum: Spacetricks* exhibition at the Museum für Gestaltung, Zurich, touring Europe until 2008, presented films, artworks, and production materials by twenty-six animation filmmakers.⁸ In addition to showing all the films on large monitors, the main focus of the exhibition was the presentation of a wide range of the actual production materials that provided insights into the creative process of animation filmmaking. Conceptual sketches, notebooks, artworks, multiplane setups of many-layered cel fragments, objects, puppet sets, and tools created a sense of what happened between the frames, and the hand of the artist was made evident.

Other artists are seeing the potential for their works to be exhibited differently. The Quay Brothers, for instance, were commissioned by the Rotterdam Film Festival to create eighteen exhibition cases using materials from a variety of film sets for the *Dormitorium* exhibition

that accompanied the festival. Because the Quay Brothers work in puppet animation, the cases they made are fascinating explorations and presentations of the miniature worlds their films take place in. And exhibitions that unite related forms—such as *Histoires animées* (2007) presented at Le Fresnoy Studio National des Arts Contemporains in France, which combines *bandes dessinées* (comics), animation, and computer animation—also provide a combined platform for these popular forms of art, drawing attention to their aesthetic and formal relationships.

Just as there are many histories of art, there are many as yet unwritten, and yet to be curated, histories of animation film and its intersections with “high” art. For more than a century, the variety of styles, techniques, materials, and narrative strategies used in animation to create art that moves in time has kept pace with concurrent developments, schools, conceptual ideas, and styles in the art world. One might ask why these histories have not yet been explored to any great extent. One answer lies in the interdisciplinary nature of animation filmmaking and its inclusion of so many artistic media. As noted above, the discipline of film studies has begun to engage with animation film, and there has been an increased interest in animation especially since the digital shift, when the manipulated moving image began to infiltrate live-action filmmaking. This is most evident in CGI action blockbusters and the highly successful and popular feature-length animation films that have been flooding cinemas. It is interesting to remember that in the first three decades of the twentieth century, film was a popular form and not considered as art. Though now an established discipline, film studies evolved out of early attention to film by art historians who were drawn to its aesthetic and narrative qualities and its impact on spectators. Perhaps artists’ increased use of animation techniques in their work and curators’ growing interest in animation as an art form may initiate a similar shift in attitude toward animation film, acting as a fulcrum to redress the high/low art divide, and enabling access to a large

body of artist-led auteur animation films that effectively straddle and indeed merge boundaries of art and popular culture.

Besides the very real concern for locating and securing animation production materials for future generations who may never work with hands-on media, these artworks have a considerable role to play in our future understanding of just how pervasive animation has been in the development of moving-image culture and in the arts. But there is a long way to go to correct a common perception that animation is not art. On the BBC's website, one reviewer of the 2007 exhibition *Momentary Momentum: Animated Drawings* at Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, London (which includes Kentridge and Rhode), states, "It would be wrong to refer to these works as just 'animations.'"⁹ This comment is symptomatic of the common misconceptions of animation, as the Parasol Unit's selection of artists merges "just" animation with art, perhaps, in reversal, challenging in its own way the high/low divide. *Animated Painting*, both in its selection of works and in its sensitivity toward the best methods of their presentation to visitors, also redresses this misconception and contributes to a new paradigm for curating animation as art. In doing so, it takes a distinct stance in softening the art versus "just animation" dichotomy and in providing audiences with new and unusual opportunities to engage with the rich spectrum of the animated form.

¹ *Animated Painting* exhibition proposal, San Diego Museum of Art, August 2006.

² Griffin contributed a lovely essay on the theme of self-reflexivity to the publication that accompanied the 2005 *Trickraum: Spacetricks* animation exhibition co-curated by the author and Andres Janser for the Museum für Gestaltung, Zurich. See Suzanne Buchan and Andres Janser, eds., *Trickraum: Spacetricks* (Zurich: Museum für Gestaltung, 2005).

³ Designer and director Johnny Hardstaff examines this phenomenon and its implications on spectators and artists in “The Impossibly Real: Green Belting the Imaginary,” *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 2, no. 2 (June 2007): 187–202.

⁴ See http://new.artzinechina.com/display_vol_aid198_en.html.

⁵ George Griffin, program notes, Ottawa International Animation Festival, 2004, <http://www.geogrif.com/breer.html>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Scholar and critic Mark Bartlett has begun exploring the philosophical implications of Vanderbeek’s visionary thinking and making, by way of Vanderbeek’s agenda of a radical political and aesthetic critique of communications systems; see Mark Bartlett, “Stan Vanderbeek: Social Imagistics and the Culture-Intercom,” in *Mainframe Experimentalism: Early Digital Computing and the Experimental Arts*, ed. Douglas Kahn and Hannah Higgins (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming).

⁸ See note 1.

⁹ Francesca Gavin, “Moving Drawings at London’s Parasol Unit,” *Collective: The Interactive Culture Magazine*, March 8, 2007, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/collective/A20531611>.