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Story-telling through lighting in animated films

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The primary objective of lighting in animated films is to direct the audiences' eye and not lose their attention until the film credits roll. To achieve that, maintaining continuity and establishing focal points by setting a visual hierarchy is critical to success. Another objective of lighting is to support story and emotion by creating an environment that the audience can engage in and believe the characters are a part of. To acquire this, lighters need to identify the genre of the film, portray time and place, exhibit time of day and weather, and also determine the quality of light and key light placement. Lastly, lighting adds beauty to an otherwise flat image void of shadow and atmosphere, and delivers the audience to another world. This lecture will discuss the key objectives and processes of lighting within the framework of story-telling in animated films.

Biography

Kyoung Lee Swearingen has worked in the film industry for the last decade on a variety of features and shorts including Ratatouille, Walle, UP, Cars 2, Toy Story 3, Brave, Monsters University, Presto, La Luna, The Blue Umbrella, Mater's Tall Tales, Partly Cloudy, Ant Bully, and the Jimmy Neutron TV series. As a Technical Director of Lighting at Pixar Animation Studios, she focused on visual story-telling, mood, and look development through lighting. Her work has claimed numerous awards from the Academy Awards, BAFTA, Visual Effects Society, The American Film Institute, as well as many others. She received her MFA from The Ohio State University, BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design, and BS in Chemistry from Sungshin Women's University in Seoul, Korea. Furthermore, she has taught at various institutes and universities throughout Korea and the United States, and is currently an Assistant Professor of Arts and Technology at UT Dallas.

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