

## ANIMATION

An animation film is a film which makes photographed drawings or inanimate images come to life. The essence of animation is to give the illusion of lifelike movement through single-frame photography. To achieve movement, a series of drawings arranged in succession, each one slightly changed from the one before it, are photographed frame by frame at an average of three frames or more, depending on the desired rhythm. When these series of shots are run on 24 or 18 frames per second in the movie projector, an illusion of lifelike movement is created. This is due to the principle of "persistence of vision," where the eye retains the impression of an image for about one-tenth of a second after the image has been removed.

There are three types of animation: **drawn animation**, **cut-out animation**, and **model or live animation**.

Drawn animation employs drawings to make an image move. The medium may be cel or acetate animation using acrylic colors. On each separate sheet of cel, every single movement requires the drawing of a new image. The animated cartoons of Walt Disney shown in the Philippines such as *Pinocchio* and *Sleeping Beauty* are the best examples of this type. In 1953, Filipino cartoonist Larry Alcala, creator of *Kalabog en Bosyo* (Kalabog and Bosyo), did a black-and-white exercise in movement on regular 8mm film

of a girl jumping rope and a boy playing yoyo. Other pioneers in animation were Jose Zaballa Santos and Francisco Reyes, who did the six-minute *Juan Tamad*, 1955, for a cooking oil product, Purico; and Nonoy Marcelo, who did a 60-minute feature, *Biag ni Lam-ang* (Life of Lam-ang), 1979, recounting the adventures and misadventures of the Ilocano epic hero, and a seven-minute cartoon clip for the Nora Aunor movie, *Annie Batungbakal*, 1974.

Cut-out animation utilizes cardboard figures, photos, or any flat material that can be cut out to form a collage. Though less time consuming, simpler and relatively cheaper, few filmmakers resort to it because the method lacks the smooth flow of movement that is seen in drawn animation.

Model or live animation is done by moving any three-dimensional object in front of the camera. Materials such as clay, sand, wire figures, puppets, or solid objects like bottles or stones are commonly used. An example of this process is *Hari* (King), 1982, a short work in clay animation produced by the Alcazaren brothers, Mike and Juan. It is a satirical commentary on the power struggle among different creatures who fight among themselves for the possession of a crown.

In mainstream cinema, animation is used for special effects, as seen in films like *Ibong Adarna* (The Adarna Bird), 1941, or *Ang Panday* (The Blacksmith), 1983.

Since the annual short film festival was initiated by the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines (ECP) in 1982 and continued by the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) from 1986 to the present, a number of outstanding talents have risen to prominence in the field of animation. Among them are Juan and Mike Alcazaren, Raissa Roque, Nonoy Dadvivas, and Roque Lee (Roxlee). The Alcazaren's *Huling Trip* (Last Trip), 1983, was a futuristic look into the radioactive era, when creatures would be devouring each other in order to survive. Another work, *Spit*, 1989, showed a cartoon character spitting with his saliva then changing into different forms and interacting with different illustrations. *Pagpula* (Becoming Red), 1984, commented on political and social issues.

Other notable animation films produced in the 1980s include: Claire Salaveria's *Anino* (Shadow), 1984, the story of an artist living the life of a shadow inside a box told with charcoal drawings; *The Criminal*, 1984, by Nonoy Dadvivas, Fruto Corre, Pablo Biglang-awa Jr, and Alfonso Ponce, about a criminal on the run who could not escape from himself; and two works by Monlee and Roxlee: *The Great Smoke*, 1985, a satire on nuclear war and its effects on the human race, and *Headset*, 1983, a humorous piece about a man with a

## FORMS

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headset that blares rock music in his ears. • J. David and L. Pareja. With notes from P. de Castro III, B. Lumbea, N. G. Tiongson