THE IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHY AND/OR CULTURAL IDENTITY ON ANIMATION PRODUCTION | 20 Minute Paper Presentation

(SAS2019-10946) - CIGGY BUTT BRAIN: TOWARDS A NATIONAL SENSE OF PLACE IN AUSTRALIAN ANIMATION

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Abstract

Australian animation historically struggles with what exactly constitutes a national voice. In a diverse and dispersed cultural industry, identifying those indicators that make Australian animation Australian can be elusive.

As Dan Torre and Lienors Torre point out there have been three main cultural strategies employed by Australian animators; embracing language that uses an extreme Australian vernacular and accent, rejecting Australian identity altogether by employing an unidentifiable accent to distance it from any national location at all or simply "resorting to bush animals" (Torre and Torre, 2018, p.3). These particular expressions, or alternatively disavowal of, national identity are created through character performance markers but there are other identifiers of Australian-ness in Australian animation.

This paper examines what constitutes a sense of nation identity in Australian animation through an analysis of animation layout and background design. The visual language of Australian place, especially that of suburban Australia, is often absent from contemporary works by Australian animators but there are notable exceptions in Michael Cusack's *Damo and Darren (2014)* web series and more recently Ludo Studio's children's TV series *Bluey (2018).* Taking these two very different examples as a departure point this paper argues for an Australian visual identity in contemporary local animation and how that contributes to an authentic national animated voice.

Palavras-chave : Australian animation, layout, background design