

PRACTICE-BASED ANIMATION RESEARCH | 20 Minute Paper Presentation

(SAS2019-10951) - EXTENDING EMPATHY: IMAGINED PERSPECTIVES IN ANIMATION RESEARCH AND STORYTELLING

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Lynn Tomlinson investigates expanded animation as an artist, curator, scholar, and professor. Her award-winning animated projects explore environmental and historical stories told from unusual points-of-view, using clay-on-glass and other tactile methods. *The Elephant's Song* (2019), the story of the first circus elephant in America, has screened in over two dozen festivals around the globe, from Annecy to Ann Arbor, Hollywood to Hiroshima, and won the Global Insights Stellar Award at the Black Maria Film Festival, among other awards. *The Ballad of Holland Island House* (2014), the story of the last house on a sinking island in the Chesapeake Bay, received a prize from Greenpeace, screened in three dozen festivals, was included in *The Animation Show of Shows*, and is part of MoMA's education collection. Tomlinson is a Assistant Professor at Towson University outside Baltimore, MD, and has led workshops at universities including TNNUA, Bennington, BGSU, and the University of Michigan.

Abstract

This practice-based paper illuminates my strategies for animation research, storytelling, and image-making. In speaking from my perspective as animation artist, scholar, and educator, I articulate the complex web of creative influences, exploratory research, and experimental production processes involved in creating my two recent award-winning short films, *The Ballad of Holland Island House* (2014) and *The Elephant's Song* (2018). Through painterly mixed-media animation processes, my clay-on-glass films and intermedia projects investigate environmental and historical stories told from non-human points-of-view, true stories told from imagined perspectives, extending empathy beyond its traditional reach. My presentation visualizes the creative impact of experimental animation mentors (Sky David, Sheila Sofian), the direct influence from masterworks in independent animation (*When the Day Breaks, Crac!*), and a variety of other art and musical influences that are revealed in the work. I explain my pre-visualization process where instead of a storyboard or movement pencil test, I edit a collage mashup from found video, period artworks, and historical photos, and use this to structure my films. The photographic or filmic trace behind my moving landscapes grounds my non-fiction stories in reality. By lifting the curtain on my own creative process, I explore how animation can tell specific historic stories that have broad, complex, and international resonance in this Anthropocene era.

Palavras-chave : Experimental, clay on glass, under the camera, Process, Non-human