

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

### (SAS2019-11039) - ANIMATION IS A REFUGE: 'MIGRANT' DWELL IN THE STORIES OF THE MIND.

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#### **Joan Ashworth**

Ashworth is an artist/ filmmaker & independent scholar whose animated films explore women's rights, meadow swimming, gothic fantasy & the fertility of mermaids. Ashworth's research includes multidisciplinary

#### **Abstract**

Animators are watchers. They absorb movement, gesture, stance, expression of feeling. Inviting refugees in Palermo, Sicily, to animate, to condense their thoughts, *their* watching, into simple silhouettes has resulted in interesting expressions emerging from the screen. Animation can facilitate conversation. Hannah Arendt is very enthusiastic about conversation, about the importance of sharing ideas with other people, to be part of a society of some kind in order to feel human. Arendt states that "understanding is closely related to the faculty of imagination". Refugees can use animation and imagination to express shapes, spaces and stories held in the mind and build understanding.

Through donating animation skills to Marina Warner's project *Stories In Transit* it has been possible to support migrants' cultural imagination. "When faced with deprivation and uprootedness". Warner asks "can myths, legends, and stories provide alternative shelter, where a refugee might feel at home? Can imaginative works of myth, fairy tale and fable – map geographies of home onto surroundings that are not home: can a story provide shelter?"

To give attention to a migrants' creativity, to notice a detail in an animated sequence and what it is expressing, is to value and recognise their humanity. It removes the superfluous tag that gets attached to refugees, and makes them relevant, creative, contributors to our world on the move.

**Palavras-chave : Refugees, animation, imagination, stories, Arendt**