CAREER GUIDE

edmi
africa digital
media institute

GETTING
STARTED IN
ANIMATION

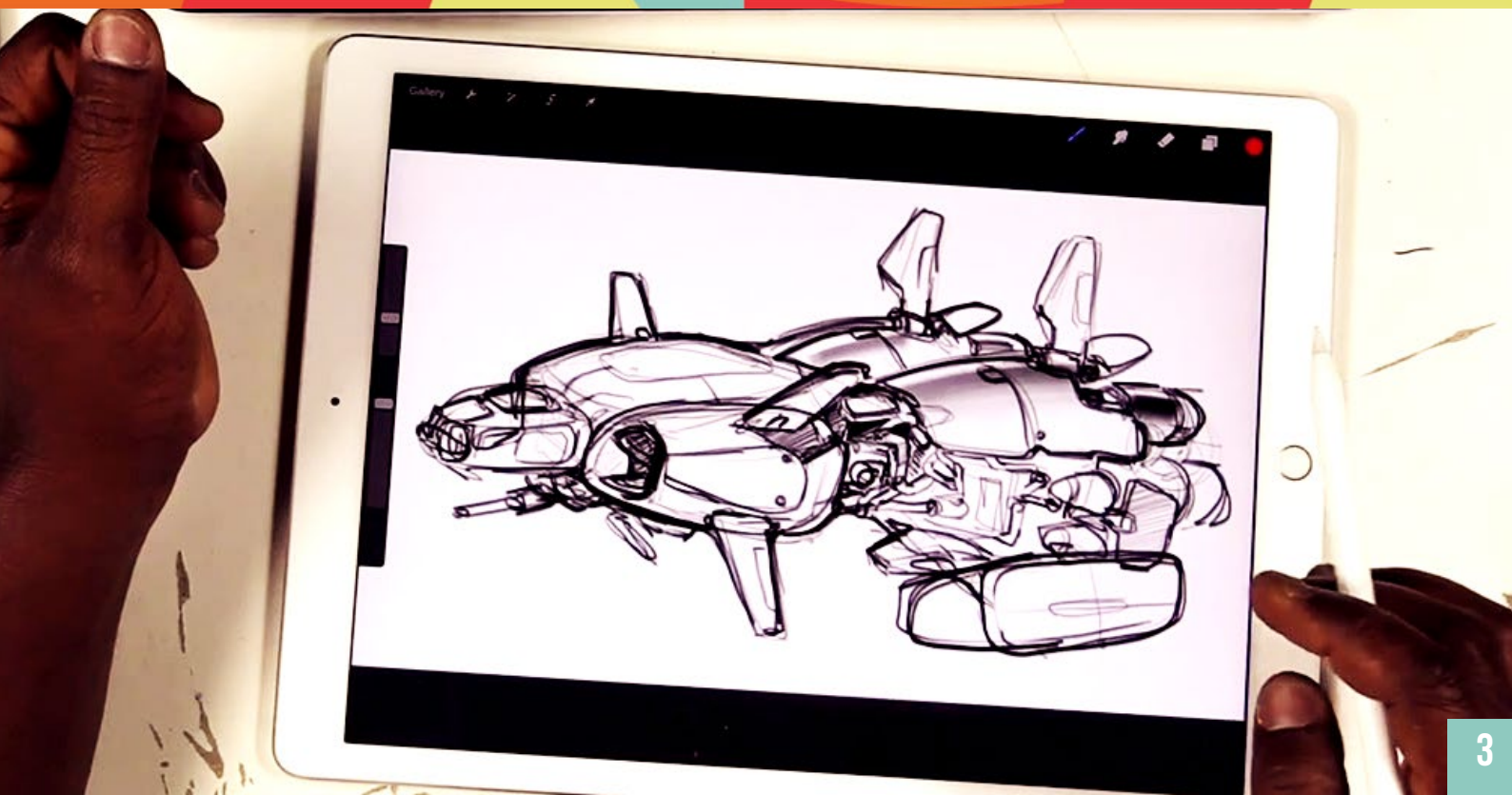# THERE IS NO JOY GREATER THAN PRODUCING SOMETHING FROM NOTHING.

David Pumpa

Senior Cinematics Animator at *Bend Studios*

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A CAREER IN ANIMATION

The rapid advancement of technology has made computer animation available to the masses and the animation industry is one of the fastest growing industries across the world. The size of the global animation industry was about US$244 billion in 2015. The major animation markets include the United States, Canada, Japan, China, France, Britain, Korea and Germany.

The demand for animated entertainment has expanded with the increase in broadcasting hours by cable and satellite TV along with the growing popularity of the Internet. In the past, animation series were aimed at children aged nine and below. In recent years however, TV stations have been producing animation series for teenagers, adults and the whole family. Animation series like The Simpsons and King of the Hill have been successfully aired on primetime TV.

As a fairly new artistic career path, animation is filled with opportunity and promises a career packed with continuous learning opportunities creating special effects or animation across various media. As an animator, you will find your skills in demand for across advertising, movies and video game industries. For instance, animators play integral, behind-the-scenes roles in action-packed blockbusters like Transformers, high-octane video games like Halo, trendy television commercials, motion graphics, special effects, medical explanations and much more.

CAREER OPTIONS

ART DIRECTOR

As an art director, you must be a leader; someone who inspires and guides the vision of the design team. You have to be able to recognize the talent in those around you and learn how best to get the best from your team.

While many industries – from publishing to marketing – employ art directors for any project or campaign that requires heavy visual elements, the role is even more prominent in animation.

An art director holds a very high position on any animation team, and most creative staff involved on a project report directly to him or her. As an art director, you will not only have the final say on what footage or stills are to be included in the final cut (as well as helping to coordinate and shape the entire project), but may also be required to train junior staff and manage budgets.

VIDEO GAME ANIMATOR

If you've spent countless hours playing video games and watching animation films, you can truly appreciate the intricate artistic detail and creativity that goes into producing the visuals for a video game.

As an animator in the games industry, you will be responsible for the portrayal of movement and behavior.

From the skills that you will have developed from your diploma course at ADMI, as well as personal practice, you will be able to give life to game characters and creatures, but sometimes you will also create other elements such as objects, scenery, vegetation and environmental effect

Video game animation is a specialty within the computer animation field that focuses on game design and interactive aspects of animation uniquely associated with video gaming. As a video game animator, you will be required to combine art and technology to create interactive animated images and environments for video games. In addition to traditional computer animation techniques, you will also employ storytelling skills in your game designs, as well as movie production skills, such as lighting, texture and movement. If you decide to pursue the career path of a video game animator, you will often work long weeks, including nights and weekends, especially when deadlines loom.

STOP MOTION ANIMATOR

As a stop motion animator, you will be part of a unique bunch. You will use models, puppets, or clay to create animated films, television commercials, branded entertainment, and more. Just a few of the best stop motion movies ever made include The Nightmare before Christmas, Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit, Chicken Run, Fantastic Mr. Fox, James and the Giant Peach, and Little Otik.

As a stop motion animator, you will require a high degree of discipline as it takes an incredible amount of skill, attention to detail and, above all, patience. What will set you apart from traditional 2D or 3D animators is that you must also set up physical rigs, usually to specification, in which to work with the models and camera equipment before using specialist software to bring it all to life in the editing suite.

3D MODELER

If you're interested in the realism, special effects and dimensional aspects of animation, you may consider a career as a 3D modeler

The 3D world is a new yet exciting and rapidly growing industry. As a 3D Artist ,you may work in media production to create elements for video games or 3D movies. You will also have the option to work in the growing field of medical illustration, creating 3D images of anatomy for research and diagnostics.

While this may sound like a fairly specialized job, as a skilled 3D modeler, you can find work not just in film and video games but also in engineering, advertising, manufacturing, architecture and many other fields.

FLASH ANIMATOR

As a flash animator, you will create animation for web sites, videos, advertising and marketing, games, education materials, and more. You will coordinate with creative directors to ensure that the animation compliments the design and works in harmony with the technology used to drive the finished product.

Predominantly working with the Adobe suite of animation tools, you will combine skills in illustration, graphic design and composition to create compelling 2D and 3D animation in Adobe Flash. Given the prevalence of the format in modern usage, Flash specialists are employed in just about every area in which animation is required but particularly in web applications and advertising.
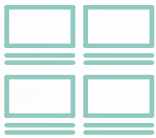
STORYBOARD ARTIST

If you're a great story teller and you can combine that with stunning visual art and drawing skills, this may be the career option for you.

As a storyboard artist, you will usually work hand in hand with animation and/or filmmaking teams to help map out a story from start to finish long before work starts. You will be required to take input from writers and directors. It will be your job as a storyboard artist to produce conceptual artwork from stills from which the production team can work. Given that a skilled artist can save everyone else an exceptional amount of time (and, ergo, money), they're highly sought after on film shoots, traditional animation, music videos and commercials.

WHAT'S NEXT?

What skills and experience do I need?

As an animator, you will need a range of creative, technical and communication skills to perform effectively in this role. Here are some common day-to-day duties and marketable computer animation skill sets you will require.

CREATIVITY

Your job as an animator is to bring a graphic element to life. It's also your job to know the best way to do this. You may be working with very little information from a client and the idea may not be clear. This is where creativity comes into play. You must be able to take a simple idea and turn it into a complex and appealing motion design piece.

TRADITIONAL ART SKILLS

Having knowledge of traditional art is very helpful during your design process and can give you an eye for the best way to communicate your motion design to the audience. During most motion graphics pieces, it's always easier to sketch out your ideas on paper than it is to build it in the computer only to find out that it's not working. Sketches can be done much faster, allowing you to quickly brainstorm different ideas, ultimately speeding up your workflow. You also won't feel as bad if you have to toss an idea since you didn't have to spend much time on it.

SOFTWARE

You should be proficient in the leading animation software, such as Autodesk Maya, Mari, and a variety of programs from Adobe's Creative Suite (notably Photoshop, Flash, Illustrator and After Effects). As an animator, you should wield cutting-edge digital animation techniques, such as motion capture, character rigging, 3D modeling and texture development, to make your on-screen creations come to life. You will also benefit from a working knowledge of physics and anatomy, as a deeper understanding of how and why things move will help you develop the most realistic animations.

GET INSPIRED

FATBOY ANIMATIONS - MICHAEL MUTHIGA

Fatboy Animations was founded in October 2010 as an animation company with an aim to provide content for the advertising and entertainment industry. Some time later, Michael Muthiga met the chief executive of Jamii Telecommunications who dared him to prepare an animated commercial for his company. Mr Muthiga took up the challenge and, a month later, he had come up with the first episode of the 3D television animation ads, popularly known as 'faiba'. The television commercial went viral among Kenyan audiences, prompting the animator to convert the project into a series, producing three more episodes of 'Faiba' by the end of 2016.

With a team of experienced creative's, from the television series produced for Disney channel, Fatboy Animations has the best talent the market can offer. The company serves the entertainment and advertising markets with rich content through production of entertaining media content for viewers and effective communication products for the advertising industry.

JOHN ALAN LASSETER

John Alan Lasseter is an American animator, film director, screenwriter and producer, who is the Chief Creative Officer of Pixar Animation Studios, Walt Disney Animation Studios, and DisneyToon Studios. He is also the Principal Creative Advisor for Walt Disney Imagineering.

Lasseter began his career as an animator with The Walt Disney Company. After being fired from Disney for promoting computer animation, he joined Lucasfilm, where he worked on the then-groundbreaking use of CGI animation. The Graphics Group of the Computer Division of Lucasfilm was sold to Steve Jobs and became Pixar in 1986. Lasseter oversees all of Pixar's films and associated projects as executive producer. In addition, he directed Toy Story, A Bug's Life, Toy Story 2, Cars, and Cars 2. (*Source: Wikipedia*)

ABOUT **ADMI**

Based in Nairobi, Kenya, the Africa Digital Media Institute (ADMI) is Eastern Africa's premier creative arts, media and technology training institution. With students, faculty and staff from over 10 countries, ADMI offers world-class training in Film & TV Production, Software Engineering & Design, Animation, Music Production, Sound Engineering, Graphic & Digital Design, Photography, Multimedia and Digital Marketing. ADMI provides an innovative platform through which the next generation of digital professionals and creative entrepreneurs get the training, mentorship and platform they need to turn their passion into a profession.

LEARN-AND-WORK
MODEL

ADMI's learn-and-work model requires students to rigorously engage with and contribute to industry throughout their academic experience. As a student at ADMI, you will be able to participate in Industry events which will enable you to gain industry exposure and connect what you're learning in class to industry trends, while also building your professional networks.

Our Work Placement program will further enable you to use the skills you learn in class to produce professional products for the school's employer partners. You will be held to high professional standards in terms of your attitude, behavior and work quality. By the time you complete your final term of coursework, you will have completed several client briefs, equipping you with invaluable experience in animation and an impressive portfolio to boot.

ANIMATION AT **ADMI**

Our program in Animation & Motion Graphics is designed with feedback from industry experts and covers essential skills and software, industry requirements and portfolio development.

The program revolves around current industry practices, and is taught by a team of highly qualified and experienced professionals using software packages such as Autodesk Maya, Adobe After Effects, Flash, Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere Pro and Dreamweaver. You will gain hands-on experience in areas such as animation (2D and 3D) and motion graphic design, using industry-standard computer systems.

This course offers all you need to start your career as an animator, motion graphic designer or concept artist.

TO GET STARTED IN ANIMATION AT ADMI

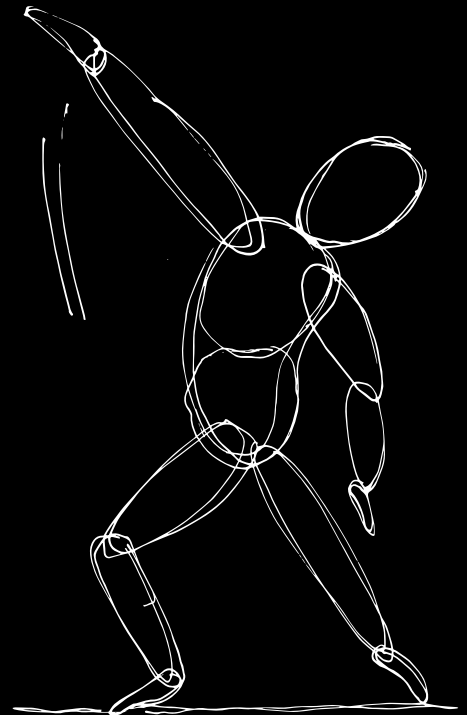## CLICK HERE

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