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Printing Animation

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Abstract

A critical practice proposal that examines how animation can be reclaimed from the ephemeral and digital and returned to a tangible and material visibility.

The proposal takes its cue from Disney's partnership with Xerox and photomechanical printing processes in the late 1950s when in response to the complexity of the animation design for feature animation '101 Dalmations' (1961), Ub Iwerks simplified the ink and paint process by copying the animator's paper drawing directly onto acetate cell and removing the intermediary inking process.

My research methodology involves a reengagement with a mechanical, machine and tool based craft process (screen printing, monoprinting, photocopying and typewriting) not to imbue the discipline in a romantic quasi-medievalism, nor to propose further economies in the industrial production pipeline, but instead to reintroduce notions of serendipity, chance, wrongness, interruption, iteration and materiality.

Printing is a rich repository for metaphor: duplication, doubling, remaking, copying, contact. These characteristics allow animation to explore, inhabit and exploit the liminal space between digital production and analogue mechanical processes.

This approach also suggests how classical animation production and print processes may be repurposed to create a new hybrid tangible animated state that is visible, material, spatial and plastic - existing outside the conventional notions of animated time.