AD23300 Electronic Media Studio
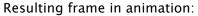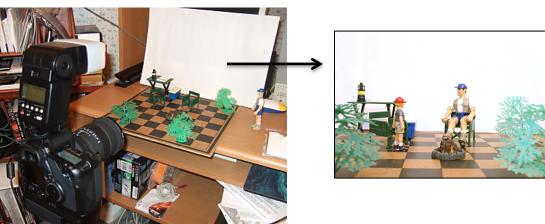Prof. Fabian Winkler
Fall 2013

Stop Frame Animation Guidelines

Here are a couple of things to remember when creating your stop frame animation:

(1) Record your still images at a relatively high resolution. The final resolution of your project is going to be 720x480, respectively 640x480 pixels (the original size can be up to 1920x1080 pixels though). For more information where all these numbers are coming from read: Electronic Arts Intermix' detailed "High Definition Video Guide" at: http://www.eai.org/webPage.htm?id=79

(2) Work with a tripod or find some other way to stabilizer your camera (use books, silly putty, etc. – anything that keeps the camera from moving). Be careful not to bump into the camera or move it while you are recording your individual shots (especially when pushing the photo trigger button – more professional cameras have a remote control and or allow you to connect a remote switch).

(3) Think about the composition of your scene (especially when working with actual objects): what do you want the audience to see, how far do you need to zoom in, what is in the foreground, what is in the background? You might have to construct a stage of sorts and/or a backdrop for your animation. The following two pictures illustrate nicely point 1) and 2)

Camera/scene setup: Resulting frame in animation:

Examples from: http://ericholsinger.com/photography/the-campsite-a-stop-motion-animation-short/

(4) Think about lighting – especially when you shoot indoors, it might help to bring in some extra lights (desk lamps, clamp lights, etc.) to make your scene look less flat and bring out the colors better.

(5) You can use edits in your project, resp. shoot your project from different camera angles. This is a little more advanced already, so if you haven't done anything like this before it might be better to keep the camera always in the same place.

(6) As you might have realized with project 02 (sound portrait), some recorded sounds don not sound at all like the original sound you recorded them from. For this reason, the final sounds in movies and television shows are often not recorded with the action but are made afterward by a foley artist. You'll be surprised to learn what tricks foley artists use to recreate real world and special effect sounds, see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNvKhe2npMM. You might have to specially record sounds for your final animation project, too.

The following links provide some online resources with interesting tutorials on how to create certain effects with stop frame animation strategies, they also provide further recommendations for a successful stop frame animation workflow. Remember that most of these tips and strategies are based on doing things the "right" way. Of course you can develop your own strategies or deliberately work against or break some of the rules. However you should know when you do so and why.

Tips and Tricks for Making Stop Motion Films-Online Resources:
- http://www.stopmotioncentral.com/articles-6.html
- https://sites.google.com/site/movies2bmade/tips-tricks-and-techniques
- http://www.stormthecastle.com/stop-motion-animation/ideas-for-stop-motion-animation.htm