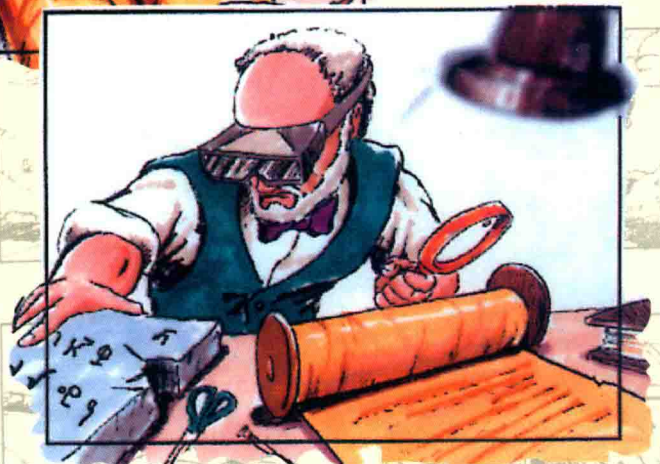
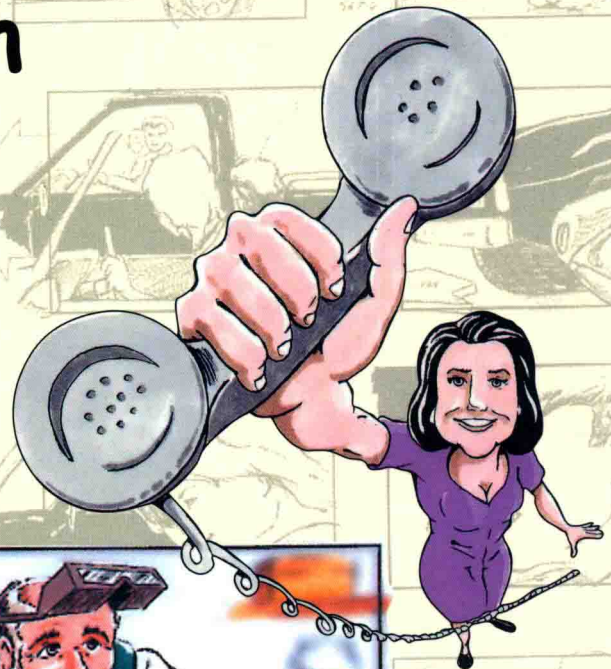


STORYBOARDS

MOTION IN ART

Second Edition



Mark Simon

STORYBOARDS: MOTION IN ART

SECOND EDITION

MARK SIMON



An Imprint of Elsevier

Boston Oxford Auckland Johannesburg Melbourne New Delhi

Focal Press is an imprint of Elsevier.

Copyright © 2000 by Mark Simon. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Permissions may be sought directly from Elsevier's Science and Technology Rights Department in Oxford, UK. Phone: (44) 1865 843830, Fax: (44) 1865 853333, e-mail: permissions@elsevier.co.uk. You may also complete your request on-line via the Elsevier homepage: <http://www.elsevier.com> by selecting "Customer Support" and then "Obtaining Permissions".



This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Simon, Mark, 1964-

Storyboards : motion in art / Mark Simon. —2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-240-80374-4 (pbk.: alk. paper)

1. Storyboards. 2. Commercial art—Vocational guidance—United States.

I. Title.

NC1002.S85 S56 2000

791.43'0233—dc21

99-043777

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

The publisher offers special discounts on bulk orders of this book.

For information, please contact:

Manager of Special Sales

Elsevier Science

200 Wheeler Road

Burlington, MA 01803

Tel: 781-313-4700

Fax: 781-313-4802

For information on all Focal Press publications available, contact our World Wide Web homepage at <http://www.focalpress.com>

10 9 8 7 6

Printed in the United States of America

**STORYBOARDS:
MOTION IN ART**

SECOND EDITION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my editors Marie Lee, Terri Jadick, and Maura Kelly. They have been not only incredibly responsive, but also a collaborative joy.

I would also like to thank all the people who have submitted samples of their work for inclusion in my book. In a book about graphics, it would be boring without any samples. A number of software companies were also incredibly helpful in sending me samples of their software for inclusion in this book. Every person and company is listed at the end of my acknowledgments with information on how to contact them. Each of them, by going the extra yard and pulling together not only their work but also getting the all-too-hard-to-get release forms, have proven their value in our industry and deserve patronage (hint, hint).

The producers and directors I interviewed are not only great people with whom to work, but they are also close friends. I thank you all: Nina Elias Bamberger, David Nixon, and Jesus Trevino.

And to the artists whom I interviewed and who participated in the coolest storyboard experiment ever done, you've helped future generations of artists more than you can imagine. Thank you for your help Joseph Scott, Mark Moore, Chris Allard, Keith Sintay, Willie Castro, and Steve Shortridge, and Dan Antkowiak, my long-time assistant.

The writers who lent their work to these exercises prove that every great work starts with the written word. Thank you Jenni Gold, Wayne Carter, Troy Schmidt, and my lovely wife, Jeanne Pappas Simon.

Over the last couple of years, my assistants have been extremely helpful in tracking down all the information and people in this book. Your help allowed me a few hours of sleep each night: Dan Antkowiak, Bill George, and Jason Teate.

To my parents who taught me I could do anything, I love you both.

And of course my wife, Jeanne. You allowed me to spend far too many nights finishing this book late at night, and you continue to support me through all of my crazy ideas. You are my life. You are also the miracle-maker in creating our children, Reece and Luke. I love you.

Patronize these people and companies. (I love being subtle.)

Macromedia

Flash

Internet animation software

800-457-1774

Human Software

Squizz!

Image-manipulation software

408-399-0057

www.humansoftware.com

Keith Sintay

Artist/Animator

818-834-7325

Jeanne Pappas Simon

Writer

407-370-2673

Jenni Gold

Gold Productions

Writer/Director

407-380-3456

Troy Schmidt

Writer

iamtodd@aol.com

Chris Allard

Storyboard Artist

617-964-9062

Wayne Carter

Writer

awc54@aol.com

Willie Castro

Laser Storyboard Artist/Animator

407-859-8166

www.av-imagineering.com

Steve Shortridge

Storyboard Artist

423-232-5191

EPL Productions, Inc.

Film, video, special effects, computer animation,
game development

1100 Hali Ridge Ct.

Kissimmee, FL 34747

407-397-1770

Dan Antkowiak

818-679-8236

storyboards@aol.com

Thomas Miller

Liquid Digital Illustrations

423-928-8090

digisaur@preferred.com

Jesus Trevino

Director

323-258-0802

Klasky Csupo

Animation Production

Storyboard Artists:

Steve Ressel

Cathy Malkasian

Jeff McGrath

Paul Demeyer

323-463-0145

Black Belt Systems

WinImage

Image manipulation and morphing software

13 Turning Wheel

Glasgow, MT 59230

800-888-3979

www.blackbelt.com

Stage Tools

Bill Ferster

OnStage!

Previsualization software

540-592-7001

www.stagetools.com

David Nixon

David Nixon Productions

Commercials, industrials

407-352-5259

Kai

SuperGoo

Image manipulation software

805-566-6200

PowerProduction Software

StoryBoard QUICK ARTIST

Storyboard Artist

Preproduction and animatic software

800-457-0383

Sunbow Entertainment

Animation Production

100 Fifth Avenue

New York, NY 10011

212-886-4900

And, of course, if you need to get a hold of yours truly to offer me the next Spielberg picture, I can be reached at:

Mark Simon

Animatics & Storyboards, Inc.

Storyboards, animatics, character design, After Effects, animation production

407-370-2673

www.storyboards-east.com

CONTENTS

	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>viii</i>
Chapter 1	Introduction	1
Part One	The Business of Storyboarding	5
Chapter 2	Getting Started	7
Chapter 3	Résumés	9
Chapter 4	Portfolios	12
Chapter 5	Education and Skills	15
Chapter 6	Materials	18
Chapter 7	How I Got Started	21
Chapter 8	Benefits to Production	23
Chapter 9	Who Hires Storyboard Artists	26
Chapter 10	How Productions Work	32
Chapter 11	What Producers Look For	36
Chapter 12	Pricing	39
Chapter 13	Licensing	42
Chapter 14	Trade Practices	45
Chapter 15	Format	48
Chapter 16	Agents and Artist Reps	50
Chapter 17	Business Aspects	52

Part Two	The Art of Storyboarding	55
Chapter 18	Presentation Boards versus Production Boards	57
Chapter 19	Animation Boards	60
Chapter 20	Laser Show Boards	65
Chapter 21	Comps	68
Chapter 22	Animatics	71
Chapter 23	Styles	77
Chapter 24	Directing	80
Chapter 25	Working with Directors	82
Chapter 26	Visual Design	91
Chapter 27	References and Research	99
Chapter 28	Illustrated Camera Techniques	108
Chapter 29	Numbering	112
Chapter 30	Contrast and Mood	116
Chapter 31	Special Effects	118
Chapter 32	Conceptual Illustration	122
Chapter 33	Frame Design	126
Chapter 34	Computers and Software	129
Chapter 35	Tricks of the Trade	135
Chapter 36	Presentation and Delivery	140
Part Three	Interviews	143
Chapter 37	Mark Moore: ILM Storyboard Artist	145
Chapter 38	Chris Allard: Storyboard Artist	147
Chapter 39	Joseph Scott: Storyboard Artist	150
Chapter 40	Willie Castro: Laser Storyboard Artist/Animator	152
Chapter 41	Jesus Trevino: Television Director	155
Chapter 42	David Nixon: Commercial Director	163

Chapter 43	Nina Elias Bamberger: Children's Live Action, Puppet, and Animation Producer	170
Part Four	Exercises	175
Chapter 44	Exercise 1: Visual Storytelling	177
Chapter 45	Exercise 2: TV Western	178
Chapter 46	Exercise 3: Commercial	186
Chapter 47	Exercise 4: Animation/Cartoon	190
Chapter 48	Exercise 5: Animation/Superhero	196
Part Five	Storyboard Experiment	201
Chapter 49	Experiment	203
Part Six	Appendices	211
Chapter 50	Resources	213
	Recommended Books	213
	Periodicals	220
	Resource Guides	221
Chapter 51	Forms	222
	TV Storyboard Form	222
	Animation Storyboard Form	223
	Feature Film Storyboard Form	223
	Sample Storyboard Invoice, Page 1	224
	Sample Storyboard Invoice, Page 2	225
Chapter 52	Schools Offering Storyboarding	226
Part Seven	Storyboard Samples	233
Chapter 53	Storyboard Samples	235
	Glossary	263
	Index	267

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The storyboard is an illustrated view, like a comic book, of how the producer or director envisions the final edited version of a production to look. This view of the production is the most effective form of communication between the producer or director and the rest of the crew. Just as building plans direct construction crews to build a house the way an architect designed it, storyboards direct film and TV crews to produce a project the way the director designed it. Each drawing instantly relates all of the most important information of each shot and defines a singular look for the entire crew to achieve.

Storyboards actually started in the animation industry. In the early 1900s, the great animator Winsor McCay was creating comic strips for his amazing animations. These were certainly some of the earliest storyboards. Later, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, scripts for the emerging animation field were typed out in the format of live-action scripts. This very quickly caused complications. A written description of an animated action does not necessarily get the right idea across. If the script said a character had a funny expression on its face, what does that mean? It's easy to write the words "funny expression" or "funny action," but animating a character to achieve it is much more difficult. The animators were finding out that a written gag was often not funny when translated into animation.

To remedy this, the "storymen" (there were no women in the story departments back then) began to draw sketches of the salient scenes and gags. Very quickly they started adding more and more drawings to their scripts until it became customary to sketch the entire story. In order for the entire story-writing team to see the sketches, they were tacked up on the wall. Someone had the bright idea of putting these sketches onto large pieces of beaverboard (thus the term "storyboard"). Beaverboard was used extensively for partitions and ceilings, and it is a lightweight, fibrous board that is easy to push tacks into. This was advantageous for the storymen, who were tacking up hundreds of drawings. With the drawings on such boards, the entire story could also be moved and viewed in another room.

Animations at the time started holding written descriptions down to a minimum. Writing was limited mostly to dialogue and simple camera instructions. If an idea did not hold up graphically, it was rejected.

Storyboards are now used to help develop a script, flesh out an idea, enhance a script, and/or visualize a finished script. Development of animations often use storyboards throughout the entire production process. The *Star Wars* epics used storyboards to work out ideas and scenes before the script was complete. They are a

great device to help develop a project in all phases of production.

Over the years, the practice of storyboarding has become more prevalent in live-action shooting. Although animations have every scene storyboarded without exception, live action storyboard use is mostly limited to commercials, as well as action, stunts, and special effects scenes in movies and TV shows.

A well-done set of boards is beautifully representative of any visual motion, like a comic book; the images flow together to tell a story. The line work may be somewhat rough, or it may be very tight and detailed, but what is important is properly visualizing the flow of the story.

You've heard that "A picture is worth a thousand words." In the entertainment industry, a picture is worth much more than a thousand dollars. When people read a script, everybody gets a different image of what it should look like. The producer and the director, however, are the ones who make the final decision. Without a set of boards to represent exactly how they want a scene to look, any number of things can go wrong. Statements might be heard on the set like, "Oh, that's what you meant," or "What are you doing?!!! That is NOT what I asked for!!" If everyone is working towards the same vision, miscommunications such as these will not happen.

In the golden years of animation, in the days of Chuck Jones, Tex Avery, Bob Clampett, Friz Freleng, and Walter Lantz, the directors drew most of their own storyboards. As animation studios grew, tasks were delegated to others. Only recently has the trend of directors doing their own storyboarding begun to grow again. Some of the newer animators, such as John Kricfalusi of *Ren and Stimpy* fame, feel that it's important for cartoon writer/directors to draw their own boards.

He feels that it's important for stories to be written by cartoonists who not only can write; they can draw. Cartoons are not just funny writing, they are funny images and sight gags. Cartoonists know the capabilities and limitations of the medium and can best take advantage of it. Writing alone can't do this. Cartoons are best when they do the physically impossible and deal with exaggeration.

Live-action storyboards are generally done in pre-production, as soon as a script is in its final stages. Storyboard artists will work mostly with a director to illustrate the images in his or her mind for the entire crew to see. At times they may work with a producer, if the producer's vision is the guiding force in a project, or prior to a director signing onto a project.

The other person a storyboard artist is likely to work with is the production designer. The production designer holds the creative vision of a project regarding everything behind the actors, including not only sets and locations, but also props and, at times, costuming. The look of the sets and locations will be extremely important to the character's action. A storyboard artist may help out with the look of a project in a number of different ways. The production designer will supply the artist with all the visual information needed. Storyboard artists may also be asked to draw conceptual illustrations of what the sets or locations should look like before detailed designs and construction starts.

The people running a low-budget production may think they are saving money by not using boards, but quite the opposite is true. The lower the budget, the more organized the production has to be in order to accomplish the difficult task at hand. Any misunderstandings or bad communications can throw the already too-tight schedule out the window. The more a project is boarded, the better the preproduction will

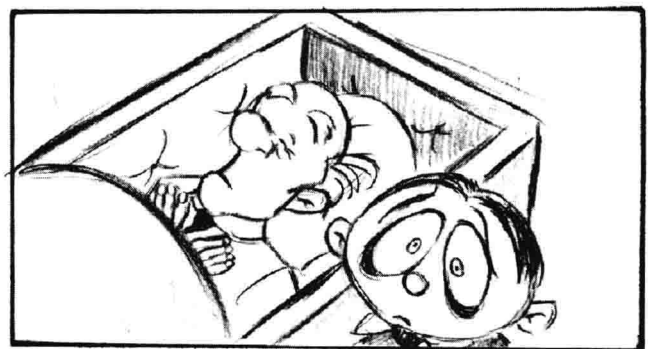
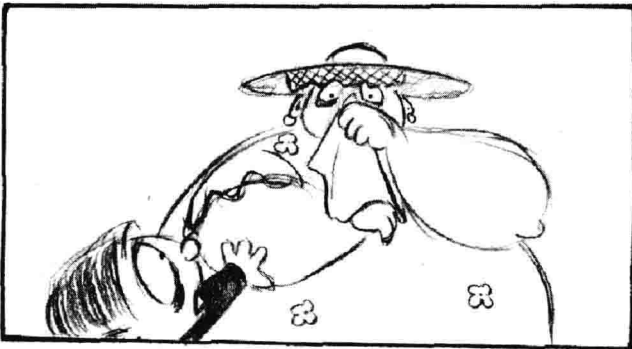


FIGURE 1.1 Winslow boards by Keith Sintay.

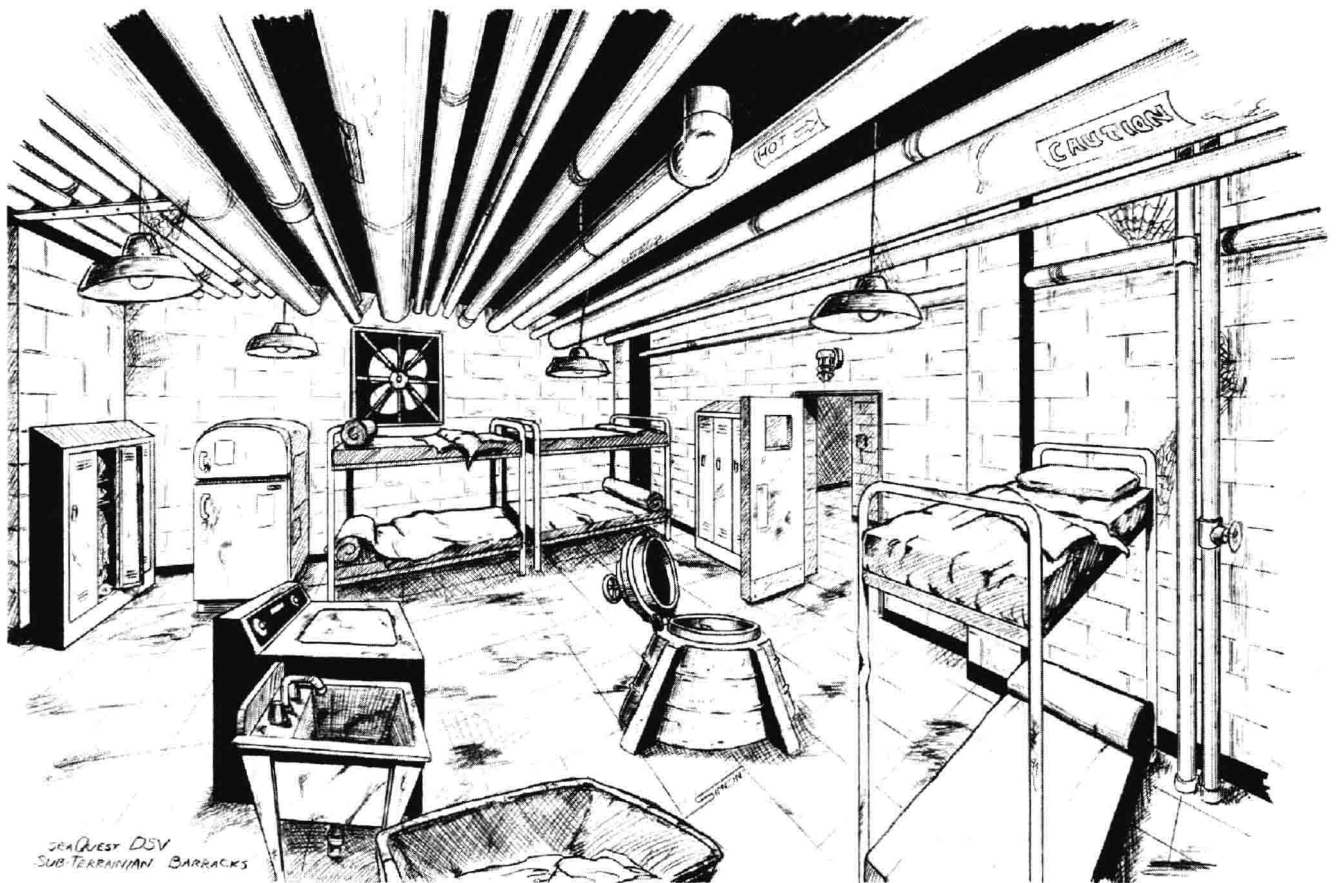


FIGURE 1.2 SEAQUEST DSV. RENDERING of subterranean barracks. PRODUCTION DESIGNER: VAUGHAN EDWARDS. ARTIST: MARK SIMON. (© by UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS, INC. COURTESY of MCA PUBLISHING RIGHTS, A DIVISION of MCA, INC.)

be, the less overbuilding of sets and props will happen, and the faster the crew will move in unison to get all the coverage in shots. Instead of shooting every angle for possible edits, every edit is shown on the boards, cutting the extra cost of film and processing, as well as the labor expense of shooting excess footage and wading through miles of useless film in the editing suite.

For example, I storyboarded a number of scenes on a shoot for Chuck E. Cheese pizzerias. This shoot used a walk-about, a character suit of Chuck E. that someone walks around in, instead of animation. After looking at the boards, production decided that they wanted the walk-about to have a different hairstyle for one segment. Deciding this with the storyboards was much

cheaper than having realized it while an entire crew stood around waiting for a puppet's hair to be changed.

Drawing storyboards is a wonderfully exciting and creative outlet. A storyboard artist is crucial in both the flow of a story and in the organization of a shoot. Good storyboarding requires knowledge of directing, editing, storytelling, and camera techniques. Add artistic talent and the ability to work with others to tell a visual story, and you too may enjoy illustrating in the exciting world of entertainment.

For producers, directors, and other crew people who don't draw, knowledge of storyboarding is just as important, for it will enhance your ability to communicate with your crew and in the end help you tell a better story and run a better production.



FIGURE 1.3 *JONATHAN'S TOWN* boards by Mark Simon. (© 4friends Prod., Inc.)

PART ONE

**THE BUSINESS OF
STORYBOARDING**

CHAPTER 2

GETTING STARTED



FIGURE 2.1 *SEAQUEST DSV*
boards by MARK SIMON. (© by
UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS, INC.
COURTESY OF MCA PUBLISHING
RIGHTS, A DIVISION OF MCA, INC.)