

**VISUAL STORYTELLING: STRUCTURE & FORM** ART 218F  
Fullerton College CRN 14219, 3 Units Fall 2018, Saturdays 11:30 - 6:30 pm, room 1002  
Instructor: Marshall Vandruff [www.marshallart.com](http://www.marshallart.com) [mv@marshallart.com](mailto:mv@marshallart.com)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** To learn the craft of structuring visual stories in various forms.

**COURSE CONTENT:** Intense survey and application of story structure for visual media. Students begin by analyzing stories, creating many “premises”, and developing one to completion with script, twelve key frames, and a promotional image.

### CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This lecture and lab course will introduce students to classic story structures and how the visual story offers unique opportunities and requires unique demands. The camera and the image reveal structure to the audience, and the form gives meaning to the events. Students will study the forms and formats of graphic novels, animation, and films, to help them create their own story worlds and characters to develop into finished visual stories.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon successful completion of ART 218F, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the evolution of story form, and how it applies to modern visual media.
2. Propose a series of story ideas to be made visual, narrowing it down to one worth developing.
3. Develop a full "step treatment" of a story, and present a pitch with visual aids to "sell" the story.
4. Discern between the use of character sheet, storyboards, reference material, and rehearsal in a story pitch.

**EVALUATION:** Grade-point division:

Misc Homework Uploads and Involvement in Class Sessions . . . . . 30 points  
**Midterm** (Oct 13): 100 Story Premises; Three Story Outlines with Promo Images . . . . . 30 points  
**Final** (Dec 8): One 10-20 minute original story written, keyframed, and pitched . . . . . 40 points  
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS FOR COURSE . . . . . 100 points

Late work receives no credit. Treat the deadlines as if you were in the profession.

Not following directions lowers your grade. See **HOW TO PRESENT YOUR WORK**.

### PROJECTS & ASSIGNMENTS:

#### Oct 13: MID-TERM

- 100 Basic Story Premises**, one-to-three sentences each, uploaded as a pdf at midterm (10 points):  
Consider character/setting, goal/obstacle. Name the genre. Seek these three qualities: conflict, stakes, irony.  
You can include a major reversal or two, and the outcome. Have two students assess them for the three qualities.
- Three Developed Story Premises w/Images** uploaded as three jpg slides at midterm (20 points):  
Using the class criteria, write a one page outline for each 10-20 minute story idea.  
Include an image that serves as a promo, poster, cover, or package for each story.  
The stories can be related or separate, but apply our class lessons.

#### Dec 8: FINAL

- Story Screenplay:** 10-30 pages formatted to industry standards, uploaded as a pdf (10 points)
- Pitch with Promo Image and 12 Keyframes:** One slide and 1-3 minute pitch of your story to the class (30 points)

**MATERIALS:** Use any materials you like that are appropriate to the problems you’re trying to solve.  
Most projects can be done with pencil and paper, but you have the option to paint, animate or shoot video.  
Celtx software is free and will allow you to write in screenplay format, otherwise the only digital requirement is presentation.

### BOOKS RECOMMENDED (none required):

- STORY by Robert McKee
- THE ART OF DRAMATIC WRITING by Lajos Egri
- MAKING A GOOD SCRIPT GREAT by Linda Seger
- CREATIVE FILMMAKING FROM THE INSIDE OUT by Dannenbaum, Hodge & Mayer
- REBEL WITHOUT A CREW by Robert Rodriguez. Inspiring! A model for success.

### SESSION SCHEDULES:

- 11:30 – 2 pm:** Responsive ideating, review of work, and instruction. Prep for next week.
  - 2 – 3 pm:** Break
  - 3 – 6:25 pm:** Case studies: analysis & discussion. Lab-time. Prep for next week.
- To make the most of our formal class time, commit to full attention with electronic media off.

## **STRUCTURE & FORM Fall 2018 Weekly Schedule:**

- Aug 25: Intro to Story. Course Outline. Premises from Titles, Characters, Settings, Events.  
Assignments: Watch these three movies: **Paper Moon, The Artist, Bullets Over Broadway.**  
Review this outline, especially HOW TO PRESENT YOUR WORK, and prepare the uploading checklist.  
Post on a single 1920x1080 jpg slide: Twelve premises (original ideas or reboots). Upload before 11pm Fri Aug 31.
- Sept 1: Characters: Types, Roles, Counterpoints, Contradictions, and Arcs. Protagonists.  
Assignments: Watch **Bart the Daredevil** and **Groundhog Day.**  
Post on one slide: 3–7 drawings of characters you know, like, dislike, or want to include in stories.
- Sept 8: Desire, Conflict, & Reversals: Bart the Daredevil.  
Assignments: Watch **Radio Bart** and one of these movies: **The Killing (1956), Midnight Run, The Verdict.**  
Brainstorm premises based on Desire/Obstacle, compare with other students.  
Post on one slide: photos of settings you know, or images/settings you want to use in your stories.
- Sept 15: Premise Evaluation: Conflict. Roles for Actors or Artists. Radio Bart.  
Assignments: Watch **Krusty Gets Busted**, and one of these: **The Elephant Man, Fresh, Raging Bull, Blue Jasmine.**  
Have two students critique your premises for *conflict*. Choose one to develop for conflict. Begin drawing rough images.  
Post premises/rough images on a single slide ONLY IF YOU WANT FEEDBACK.  
If you want to share setting photo collections, upload them at any resolution in a .zip file, NOT on a single slide.
- Sept 22: Premise Evaluation: Stakes. Setups & Payoffs: Krusty Gets Busted.  
Assignments: Watch **The Otto Show.** Have two students critique your premises for *stakes*.  
Choose one premise to develop by amping up the stakes. If you want feedback, post ideas/images on one slide.
- Sept 29: Premise Evaluation: Irony. FC Photo Hunt. The Otto Show.  
Assignments: Watch **Bart Gets an F.** Have two students critique your premises for *ironies*.  
Choose a third premise to develop by enriching ironies. Post 1-3 ideas/images for feedback by Oct 5 at 11pm.
- Oct 6: Premise Evaluation: Protagonist Responsibility. Bart Gets an F.  
Upload your MIDTERM Oct 12 before 11pm: one *pdf* containing 100 Premises;  
three *jpg* slides each containing a single developed outline with accompanying image.
- Oct 13: MID-TERM: 100 Premises, 3 Developed to “Outline w/Promo Image”.** Pixar List.  
Assignments: Watch **The Telltale Head.** Read three screenplays this week. Re-arrange the Pixar List to your liking.
- Oct 20: Interest Strategies. The Telltale Head. Third from the Sun. Key images and thumbnails.  
Assignments: Watch **Itchy, Scratchy & Marge.** Read three more screenplays.  
Consider shifting interest strategies for your story, and prepare to discuss. Begin ideas for key images.
- Oct 27: Theme, Metaphor, Controversy, Didacticism & Propaganda. Itchy, Scratchy & Marge.  
Assignments: Consider “four corners of contrast” for your themes, prepare to discuss. Read one more screenplay.  
Watch **Toy Story** if you haven’t seen it. Post on one slide: Twelve clearly readable “Key Image” thumbnails.
- Nov 3: Toy Story  
Assignments: Consider a “false ending”. Watch **Back to the Future** if you haven’t seen it.  
Write one scene from your story in screenplay format, have two students read it critically for format. Post as *pdf*.  
Develop your Key Images without finishing them. Post progress as the usual 1920x1080 *jpg(s)*.
- Nov 10: Back to the Future. Shot Structure and Editing.  
Assignments: Get student feedback on reversals. Post a reversal chart for your story on one slide by Nov 30 at 11pm.  
If you need help on Key Images, post them on a slide separate from your reversal chart.
- Nov 17: CTN Animation Expo
- Nov 24: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)
- Dec 1: Feedback on developing work. Pitching a story.  
Prepare your Pitch. Post your Key Images on one *jpg* slide, and your finished screenplay as a *pdf* by Dec 7 at 11pm.
- Dec 8: FINAL PRESENTATIONS.**

## HOW TO PRESENT YOUR WORK:

**Weekly Homework and Projects:** Upload digital files at this page on Friday nights previous to class by 11 pm:

<https://www.dropbox.com/request/Dz3hvDf9U98inn0gLgH5>

If the above link doesn't work, *copy and paste* the URL. Once it works, bookmark the Dropbox link to upload weekly homework.

**LAYOUTS:** 1920 x 1080 horizontal slides, because the display screen is horizontal.  
Lay out images to delete excess white space. In other words, make it easy to see things on the page.  
Include the fewest pages possible, but rather than overcrowd a page, break it up into separate pages.

**RESOLUTION:** Make all files 1920 wide x 1080 pixels high.  
DPI is not relevant for presentation. Pixel dimensions are. 1920 x 1080!  
If you need more space, or to "zoom in" for details, present extra 1920x1080 images.

**FILE FORMATS & NAMING:** Submit work as *jpeg* files with three-letter extension *.jpg* (no *e*).  
"jpeg compress" the files efficiently (between 8 -11), but not so low that it damages the image (like 6 or lower).  
Include your name in two places:

1) **On the image**, integrated into the pixels, like with a promo piece.  
Include semester and year on Midterm and Final (though its a good habit to always include them)

2) **As first part of file name**, no spaces. Use underscores (not hyphens) for necessary divisions.  
For example: MarshallVandruff\_Idea01\_EnlightenmentScene.jpg

Give each file a unique name. If you name a file MyProject\_Design.jpg each week, it overwrites your previous image.

Frank Guthrie has presented short YouTube videos for his class that use similar criteria as ours:

DART 001 Part 1 - File Creation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzgjvO4X7TI>

DART 001 Part 2 - Naming & Export: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5fExrl08Ds>

If you are brand-new to Photoshop, you may want more of Frank's instruction at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y\\_xEV3hW84&list=PL-ICJfw11Fupd4A6-17wWJ2AQImcE27aB](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y_xEV3hW84&list=PL-ICJfw11Fupd4A6-17wWJ2AQImcE27aB)

Let's do this like pros. Your work must meet these specs. If it does not, or if it is late, you do not receive credit for it.  
If in doubt, or if you are not digitally competent, ask for help.

## UPLOADING CHECKLIST:

- Δ The layouts are efficient and images read clearly on the screen
- Δ The image has your name embedded into the pixels on each frame
- Δ The file is 1920 x 1080, RGB, jpeg file with the extension .jpg (no "e" in jpg)
- Δ The file name begins with your name, no spaces or hyphens - underscores only
- Δ The atomic clock says the time is previous to 11 pm on Friday night before the homework is due

**MAKE IT EASY!** Go to this URL and download a ready-made template:

<http://marshallart.com/SHOP/misc-pages/assignments/template/>

**FOR MOVIES:** Unless we find a convenient way to upload movies, bring them on flash keys or any quick-transfer medium to the class computer. Follow the same naming conventions. For example:

MyName\_ShortFilm\_WonderfulV4.mov (MOV's or MP4's only)

Criteria: 1920 x 1080, H.264 codec, AAC audio, 24 frames per second, progressive scan, square pixels.

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Fullerton College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. Verification of the disability must also be provided. Disability Support Services functions as a resource for students and faculty in the determination and provision of the accommodations.

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