

Charles Scott Gallery Animation Definitions

Production

We define production as anything used in the creation of an animated short, TV show, feature, etc. So, for example, production material could be “rough” drawings (see below), layout drawings, preliminary character sketches, model sheets, cels, backgrounds, etc. NOT necessarily seen in the final production. Some collectors define Production more narrowly: as art that appeared on screen, using “Pre-Production” to denote all the art that came before that. Examples of what Production material would NOT include: advertising packets for the film, “presentation” cels, posters, trading cards, sericels, limited editions, etc.

Fan Art

NOT production art. We do sell Fan Art and often it is gorgeous art made by skilled artists. Often it is a stylized view of favorite characters or situations. But we will NEVER define it as production art and always request our artists sign and date the art when possible to make it clear that it was not used in any production.

Limited Editions

Art created AFTER production or aside from production. Not used in the creation of the short, film, etc. Often Limited Edition cels, for example, are hand-painted by skilled artists (versus Sericels which are mass produced), limited in quantity and frequently designed and signed by a master animator. Limited Editions were often produced for films that have little surviving production art.

Sericels

Mass produced art for the aftermarket (like a poster, etc.). Art created AFTER production or aside from production. Not used in the creation of the short, film, etc. Not usually hand-created, but machine created in large quantities. Geared towards consumers who could not afford the high prices of production art or limited editions.

“Presentation” Art

Art created AFTER production or aside from production. Often created by the same animators who worked on the production, but sometimes by advertising companies. Often “perfect” poses of characters to be used in advertising. Limited in quantity, so collected and valuable, but at the Charles Scott Gallery we generally don’t buy and sell them because we cannot guarantee authenticity due to the nature of the art.

Cel

Short for Celluloid. It is the clear sheet of material that has the image lines on the front and paint on the back. Originally made of nitrate (a dangerous material no longer used), then acetate. Originally, it was laid over a drawing (for example of a character) and the lines of the drawing were hand-painted (traced) onto the front. Then, later, the lines were transferred to the front of the cel via a Xerox process. The cel is then flipped over and the colors are painted

on the back. Cels are no longer used in most larger productions, as the process is done on a computer. A picture of each cel would be snapped by the camera, then the next cel in the sequence (with the character on the cel progressed slightly through their movement) would be snapped by the camera, then the next and so on. When the film is played at the normal, fast rate, we see motion on the screen. Much like a flip book you would make as a child.

Cel Setup

When more than one cel are placed on top of each other to make an image. For example if the mouth is on the top cel and the rest of the character is on another cel underneath. In that way, costs could be kept low and different things put into motion while others stay stationary. For example, a mouth could be on one cel and the body on another. The body cel could stay constant through many frames while only the mouth cel would need to be changed and swapped out frame by frame.

Key Master Setup

All the cels AND the matching original production background that make up a single frame exactly as seen and used on camera in the final production.

Rough's or Rough Production Drawing

Often a preliminary drawing to the final one. The final or clean-up drawing can also be traced right over the Rough. The Rough is often looser, with many lines outlining the shapes instead of the thick, continuous lines of a clean-up or final, leading to a bit of a confusion of terms.

Clean-up or Final Production Drawing

The drawing used to create the cel. Often with very clean and defined lines. Sometimes drawn over the original Rough sketch.

Key Production Drawing

A drawing done by a Key Animator. This is often a more senior or experienced animator. They would do the "key" drawings – ones with the facial expressions that were the most important or movements that were most important. The "in-betweeners" would then come along and draw all the drawings in-between these key drawings. Often have a timing key on them – a little chart with numbers that tell which drawings need to be done in-between.

Layout or Layout Production Drawing

Often has the outline of a "screen" on it. Done early in the process to show key scenes or moments with more detail than a storyboard. May be missing details of the final scene.

Storyboard

A single panel or multiple panels that are meant to lay out the rough story of the show or feature. The art is often very rough, but often has dialogue underneath. Copies are often made and then edited as the story changes. There is often only one original storyboard set (made up of many pages of panels), but copies were made for various members of the production team.

Even the production copies can be collectible since there were so few made. However, modern copies can also be made by some dealers, so caution is recommended with copies.

Background

Basically, a hand-painted scene that is the backdrop on screen. The cels are placed over the background when filmed. There are few backgrounds for every hundred or thousand cels. They are hand-painted and can be simple or elaborate. Some were done in oils, gouache, acrylics, watercolors.

Background Key

A small (often 4" x 5") preliminary version of the final background. Sometimes done by a U.S. animator to send overseas for final creation of the background. Sometimes used as preliminaries to get a feel for a series or to be corrected before the final, larger and more complicated background is created.

Model Sheet

Meant to keep characters consistent throughout the life of a production and across many animators. A sheet of paper with various poses of (usually) a single character from many angles. The "original" model sheet – done in pen or pencil is EXTREMELY rare. Copies were then made of this to hand out to animators. The copies were sometimes lithographic in the early days of studios like Disney. Mimeographed at some studios like Warner Brothers in the 1950's/1960s. Then Xeroxed after that. Even the production copies can be collectible since there were so few made. However, modern copies can also be made by some dealers, so caution is recommended with copies.

Model Cel

Similar to the Model Sheet, but done on cel material. Often with full colors painted on the back.

Color Reference

A drawing or cel with "call-outs" - lines pointing to parts of the characters on the cel with numbers at the other end. The numbers represented specific paint colors so the Ink and Paint department folks would know what colors to paint parts of the cel.

Additional Terms

12-field and 16-field

Cel and paper sizes. 12-field is approximately 12.5" x 10.5" while 16-field is approximately 13.5" x 17". Smaller 10-field sizes have been used in the 21st century, particularly in Anime measuring 8.5" x 11".

Pan Drawing or Cel

A cel or drawing used when the camera "pans." So one dimension is larger than normal.

Courvoisier Cel

One of the original attempts to sell cels. Done by the Courvoisier company in the 1930's and 1940's. Cels were trimmed and mounted to a background – often with a wood-look.

Disney Art Corner Cel (with gold sticker)

Cels were sold out of a store in Disneyland for a while. They're a fairly standard, trimmed size. Often with paper backgrounds (not usually from the same movie). They all usually have a gold sticker on the back.