

COLLABORATIVE STORYTELLING ANIMATION, CASE STUDY: DAUMENREISE STOP MOTION ANIMATION PROJECT

Agatha Maisie Tjandra

Universitas Multimedia Nusantara

Visual Communication Design-Interaction Design

agatha@umn.ac.id

Maya Yonesho

Independent Researcher

maya_y@nifty.com

ABSTRACT

High mobility era these days bring new trends for everyone including animator to working travel and still have possibilities to create animation movie without their studio room. Gadget such as mobile device camera and small papers can be used by the animator to create photo sequence for creating stop motion animation movie. Moreover, new ideas for storytelling will come up from collaboration that probably happen along the animator's trip. The process for collaborative idea to make storytelling will increase the empathy of animators and audience with the movie. This paper use qualitative data by interview, existing study and experience study to explain the collaborative process of Daumenreise Animation project in animators' perspective and analyzing the movie by using storytelling elements in order to suggest a method to be applied in any small device storytelling media for animator traveler to create movie project.

Keywords; collaborative storytelling, stop motion, Daumenreise, mobile device, animation

BACKGROUND

Film has always been a collaborative enterprise (Mithcell, 2017) even for the independent artist or student. Independent Animation project commonly based on animation studio. Nowadays in new technology era, animation has new phase in supporting equipment. Largely to the portability of tablets, smartphones, and other such gadgetry

(Mitchell, 2017). The travelers animators are possible to create animation along the trip. For example sketchwalker usually using shot time to produce and at the same time enjoying the venue and trip where they were sketching.

One of projects that produce along the trip and using collaboration at the same time is Daumenreise. This project is popularized by Maya Yonesho a Japanese Independent Animator based in Germany. Daumenreise combining flip book and stop motion technique using mobile camera device to take the frames. In the collaboration technique, this project gives some freedom to animators work out of their studio, collaborate and explore new places to create the story. Daumenreise gives practical way for animators creating movies and at the same time not losing the moment along the trip.

This paper will explain the collaborative process of Daumenreise Animation project in animators' perspective and analyzing the movie by using storytelling elements in order to suggest a method to be applied in any small device storytelling media for animator traveler to create movie project.

LITERATURE STUDY

COLLABORATING PROJECT ANIMATION

To support this research, experimental animation can be a collaboration project. Collaboration actually fundamental part to make animation. Animation commonly use pre production, production and post production phase. One of project using massive collaborative animation that usually for student projects was MCAP (The Massive Collaborative Animation Projects). MCAP is a unique intercollegiate, multi-year, global animation production currently entering its third year of production. MCAP's purpose is to allow students and faculty from institutions around the world to join together in the creation of an original computer animation. An animation/visual effects production is a highly collaborative effort that utilizes multiple, interconnected teams. In MCAP, Collaborative, interdisciplinary, and interactive learning contributes to students' creativity. By working on a large production project, students can learn firsthand how a production pipeline works, coordinating work and building creative networks within an intercollegiate, international framework. This project has head committee production as team leader to guide the project (Joel et al., 2018). MCAP production includes; scheduling, motivating students, establishing successful model for recruitment and institutional engagement.

STORYTELLING IN ANIMATION

The idea of 'a story' may be understood as a sequence of events taking place over a particular period of time (Wells, 1998). Animation possesses the capacity to create new modes of story-telling, often rejecting the notion of a plot with a beginning, a middle and an end, in favour of symbolic or metaphoric effects. There are some factors that in animation key devices used in many animated films, or define an approach to staging a sequence of events. metamorphosis, condensation, synecdoche, symbolism and metaphor, fabrication, associative relations, sound, acting and performance, and penetration. Moreover, Wells explain each of those;

1. Metamorphosis is the ability for an image to literally change into another completely different image this means that it is possible to create a fluid linkage of images through the process of animation itself rather than through editing. This connecting apparently unrelated images, forging original relationships between lines, objects etc., and disrupting established notions of classical story-telling.
2. Condensation is compressing long story into short form animation. Condensation in animation priorities the most direct movement between what may be called the narrative premise and the relevant outcome.
3. Synecdoche, is a device by which the depiction of part of a figure or object represents the whole of the figure or object which compresses the logic of narrative progression and its dominant meanings into a single image. First, to signify the specificity of a narrative event and second, to operate as a metaphor within a narrative.
4. Symbol as an image vocabulary to bring implicit and explicit meaning of story
5. Fabrication using alternative version of material existence, recalling narrative out of constructed objects and environments, natural forms and substances, and the taken-for-granted constituent elements of the everyday world to create story.
6. Associative relations are principally based on models of suggestion and allusion which bring together previously unconnected or disconnected images to logical and informed rather than surreal effect.
7. Sounds creates the mood and atmosphere of a film, and also its pace and emphasis, but, most importantly, also creates a vocabulary by which the visual codes of the film are understood.
8. 'Acting' in the animated film is an intriguing concept in the sense that it properly represents the relationship between the animator and the figure, object or environment he/she is animating. Choreography means movements and staging that will represent the narration.

VISUAL STYLE ON HYBRID MEDIA ANIMATION

Hybrid media animation usually combine 2d and 3d technique of animation. The exploration of animation as storytelling medium using hybrid media can arise experimental terms. The term ‘experimental’ is self because, although the encapsulating terms ‘artists’ moving image’ or ‘moving image art’ would technically cover both the analogue and digital works that are covered in this collection, they de-emphasise animation as a specific technique (and ‘artists’ animation’ seems particularly redundant). explain about combination between 2D drawing and live action (Wills, 1998).

DAUMENREISE: COLLABORATION OF EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION FROM FOUNDERS’ PERSPECTIVE

Daumenreise is an experimental animation that popularize by Maya Yonesho who is an independent animator that focus on abstract animation. Her concept is “we can understand each other without necessarily understanding each other’s language” so she create animation movie and synchronize with language, sounds and music. Daumenreise firstly was made in 2006 when Maya lives in Vienna Austria called Wiener Wuast. Since then, Daumenreise has been produce in total 39 films from 35 cities in 22 countries until now.

Daumenreise is create as workshop project by Maya Yonesho. The developing process of making Daumenreise using preproduction, production and post production phase. Workshop participants as animators, start to draw idea sketches about the city. Maya as a project leader will suggest participant animators to make minimum 10 idea drawing which will put all drawings on the wall. Every participant will present the idea and choose the best key frames together. The order of keyframes will be choose by consider the good elements and find a funny together.

Production phase will begin when every participant should draw in between from their own drawings to the next person’s drawing. After finished the sequence, all animators go out of the room and shoot. Post production will collect all digital photos and edit, then play the film (Yonesho, 2019).

Daumenreise combine flipbook method with stop motion. In a frame of Daumenreise movie, there are 2 kinds of animation. Once is animation picture on paper that animate symbol of the city, culinary, landmark, event icon, cultures and habit, typical action, local hero, famous painting, opera, composer, discovery, etc. The second is “the frame”, landscape of the city, that tells about the trip in the city or real shape of the paper picture

(Yonesho, 2019). Daumenreise as an ‘experimental’ communicates the importance of creative processes that involve exploration, play and discovery and that allow for the embrace of the unexpected and non-prescriptive (Harris et al., 2019).

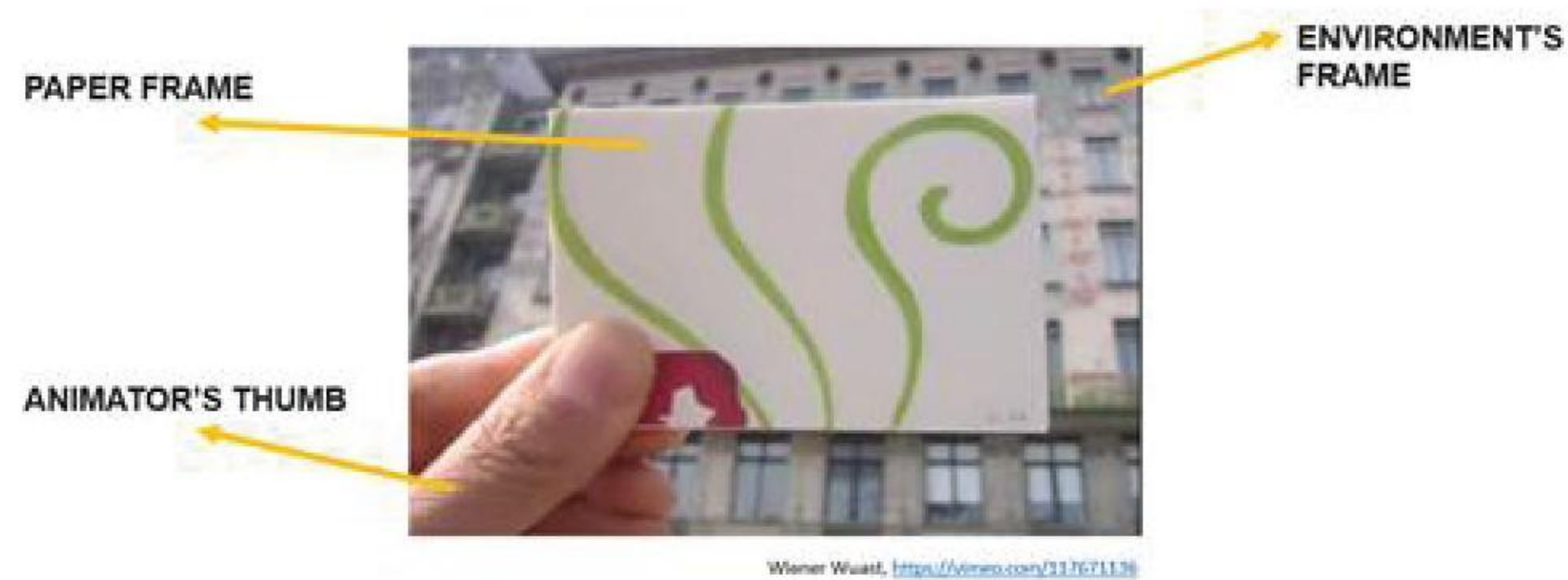


Figure 1. Daumenreise in a Frame

Paper animation make in production process through participants collaboration. The best picture, will choose and arrange together to make storyboard. Each participants as animator should make in between from one person to another. One of Daumenreise project is Wiener Wuast (2006, 4' 48" Maya Yonesho independent, Vienna, Austria). Wiener Wuast is a solo project of Maya when she lived in Vienna Austria. Wiener Wuast cant said as a collaborative storytelling. But this is a fundamental project for Daumenreise. Maya explain the atmosphere of Vienna city from her perspective including food, statue, architect of city, lifestyle in the middle of city and park.

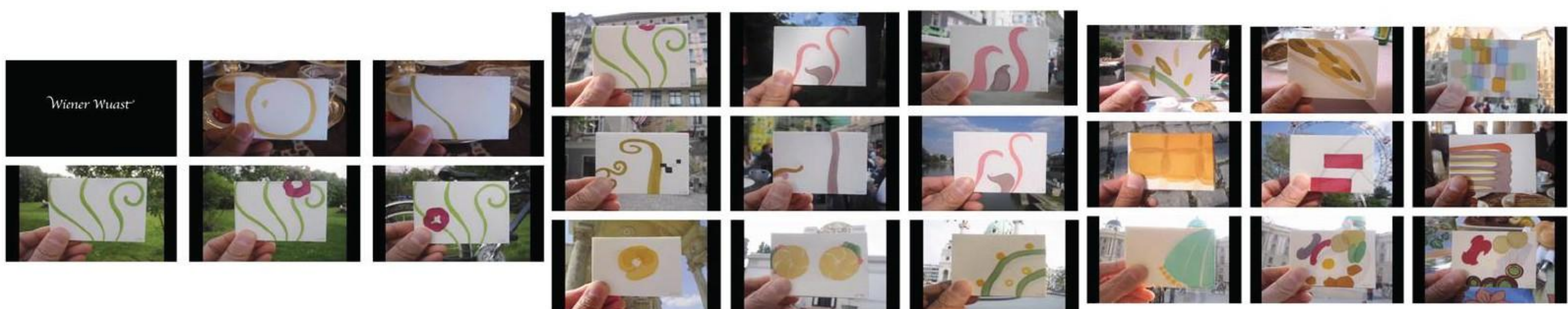


Figure 2. Wiener Wuast Sequences

METHOD

This research conduct qualitative data by using questionnaire for founder of Daumenreise as Project Leader and Animator as participants about their experience through Daumenreise project. Some questions are asked to Maya Yonesho about her perspective of Daumenreise in big picture and her experience of Daumenreise workshop and the result. Questions are conduct through email.

Participants questionnaire are using google form through Daumenreise facebook group. This questionnaire answer by 6 participants from Jogjakarta-Indonesia, Stressa-Italy, St. Louis-USA, Vienna-Austria. This questionnaire is as a beginning to know the

overview of experience the participants for in the future, conduct the forum group discussion.

ANALYZING THE COLLABORATIVE STORYTELLING

Based on the literature and experience of participant from the collaboration process, Daumenreise can be analyze from: its Collaborative process, Story that represent, through experience of Animator by using the participants questionnaire. This paper will analyze 3 movie of Daumenreise from storytelling perspective

DAUMENREISE IN ANIMATORS PERSPECTIVE

IN PERSPECTIVE OF MAYA YONESHIO AS FOUNDER AND PROJECT LEADER

There are some questions conducted to answer about collaborative process from Maya Yonesho's perspective. For her, the collaboration process of Daumenreise not only about arrange the team to make animation together. Its also about managing the time. Daumenreise basically from the thinking of it is good to finish in short time. So concentrating the work and watch the result quickly, because the group is only once in our life. This philosophy is adapted from Japanese tea ceremony, "ich go ichi e" = only one chance in our life time, which represent in Daumerise into; "The same meeting will never come again, so make it nice together" (Yonesho, 2019). Daumenreise is more like a lot of poem together, discover own place once again, and let audience imagine the atmosphere of the city. For Maya, Daumenreise is a Trip. Daumenreise project itself is the artwork of Maya, which is build by the movies from each city of Daumenreise movie. For her, travelling around and doing workshops itself is the unique art project (Yonesho, 2019).

Daumenreise is a good collaboration project which can make as small project or large project. Ideally, There are any number of people can work for Daumenreise, but it will be better to have around 15 people considering the amount of shots and editing process in the end. More than 20 will be hard to collect images and edit. It is possible to have many more participants but then it is hard to finish in a week, which Daumenreise mostly held on.

The process also collaboration idea from participants which are from art university students (of media, animation, art, painting, Japanese studies), Professors, Children from Art school, Animation Festival guests, staff, Children, Adults, and all range of age people who register from advertisement. They Finding the elements from their own city which the idea those were came more their personality than cultural backgrounds.

Daumenreise workshop is lively, like a live “improvisation” and become better. In this case, some unexpected accident is quite impressive. Maya said she was used red wine and coffee as drawing material instead of Copic marker because it was stopped at custom of the border at Bologna Italy. In Jogjakarta, The animator very enjoy the personal name sequence and give a nice influence for the future workshop.



Figure 3. Sottalportig animation in Bologna, Italy

DAUMENREISE IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF PARTICIPANTS

There are 6 participants from Stresa City (Italy), St. Louise (USA), Vienna (Austria), and Jogakarta (Indonesia). The questionnaire was conduct through Daumenreise group. In technical, almost of all don't have any difficulties creating along the process.

Questionnaire ask some questions about technical process when collaborating. Participant drawing pictures mostly create the character, city landmark and food. Some of them were draw more than 30 frames of in between animation another key frame, as Maya's suggest before, 3 frame per drawing, with 30 frame per second in NTSC for 4:3.

While doing the project, most of participants don't have a big difficulties related with technical including drawing tools. But 2 of them said have problem to find the best spot to take picture and using camera device, at that time when she 11 years old when join the Daumenreise workshop. Camera device is use to take a pictures. They make sticker as frame to put on the camera's view screen for a save frame area for paper animation.

The other questions about difficulties from collaboration process to create Daumenreise. Based on the answer, communication is the most problem. They give suggestions to keep well planning of storyboard and location continuity(from one to another location) to makes animation seamless and consistent, the others says sharing moment to make close each other in team member is good for collaboration process and more time to finish the project.

DAUMENREISE STORYTELLING

Daumenreise is a poem that create together through animation process from participants. The existing study of ANI-MEET will gives some recommendation of storytelling. There are 3 animation movies to analizing through storytelling by Wells. There are; ANI-MEET. This movie was created in 2010. The participants are students and professors in ST. LOUISE-USA. ANI-MEET is the 14th Daumenreise Animation, Sottalportig (2012, 2'13“-Bologna Italy) 32nd Daumenreise Animation by Maya Yonesho, Illustration Students and Young Artist 2010, and MENDEM GUDEG LEBAY (2012, 2'13“-Bologna Italy) 28th Daumenreise Animation by Maya Yonesho, Students Yogyakarta –Indonesia. These animation movie were choose based on the some participants are from and its unique making process to create story.

ANI-MEET



Figure 4. ANI-MEET screenshoot

In ANI-MEET, there are some key frame in animation paper draw some iconic things of st. Louise. Each transition can be took more than once to tells the background trip. There were also different visual style that makes Daumenreise become colorful and sequences that were drawn by some animators that use less than 30 frams, feels like a staccato. Story of ANI-MEET were create by local citizen or students that familiar about their town

SOTTALPORTIQ

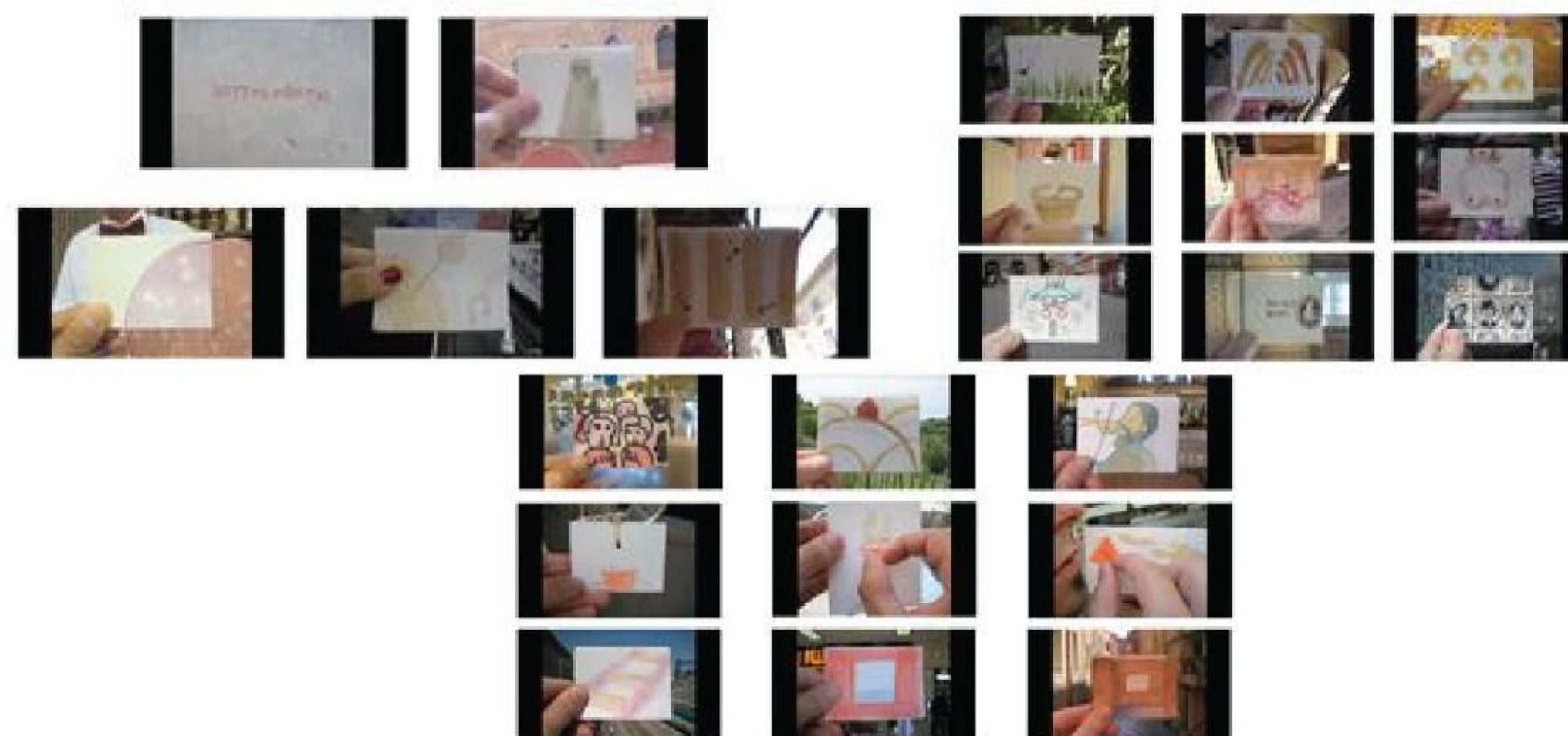


Figure 5. SOTTALPORTIQ screenshoot

MENDEM GUDEG LEBAY



Figure 6. MENDEM GUDEG LEBAY screenshot

This animation movie using splash effect to audience face by zooming the camera. Some of the frame are not using thumb to hold the paper, some technique to creating flow is continuing the frame. In scene wayang, there is a rotating scene and not using thumb as part of daumenreise. In overall, in Mendem Gudeg Lebay explore other way to hold the paper screen and including camera to create some effects.

CONCLUSION

Daumenreise project can be divided in to 2 forms; First is the workshop process, there are the workshop process when animators do the collaboration process to arrange the storyboard and the collaboration to create the scene between their picture to others. Furthermore, collaborative storytelling in Daumenreise is a poem, it also tells in narrative about the city as a topic in the animation. Secondly, Daumenreise as a result. Daumenreise using 2 medium in a frame, the main frame, which animator is collaborate with, and the second is the city frame which shoot while animators trip through the city and tells the path of their journey. Collaboration technique in pre-production and production process influence possibilities of animators to combine the idea. Collaboration storytelling in participant and founders' perspective probably have a chance to make Daumenreise method sustain in the future whether In Daumenreise community itself or spread outside. This research as one of the reference from participatory interactive storytelling with experimental media. Potential research of culture background and representation of symbol to depict story of city in Daumenreise project will be discussed in future

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Harris et al. (2019). EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION: From Analogue to Digital. New York: Routledge
- Joel, W. et.al. (2018). Massive collaborative animation projects: changing paradigms in animation education DOI: 10.1145/3215641.3215648.
- Miller & Carolyn H. (2004). Digital Storytelling: A Creator's Guide to Interactive Entertainment. Elsevier: UK.
- Mitchell, B. (2017). Independent Animation Developing, Producing and Distributing Your Animated Films. New York: CRC Press.
- Siegle, D. (2014). Technology: Student Animation Projects An Avenue to Promote Creativity and Learning. DOI: 10.1177/1076217514532276.
- Wells, P. (1998). Understanding Animation. New York: Routledge.
- Yonesho, M., Personal Communication Email, June 26, 2019
- Yonesho, Maya., Daumenreise; International traveling animation workshop project, discovery of local specialties and animation, *<http://www.ababo.it/ABA/wpcontent/uploads/2012/04/Daumenreise-info-paper.pdf>*