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EXPLORING SELF-ARTIST IDENTITY THROUGH HYBRID ANIMATION

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EXPLORING SELF-ARTIST IDENTITY THROUGH HYBRID ANIMATION

A Master's Thesis

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THROUGH HYBRID ANIMATION

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I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Communication and Design.

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING SELF-ARTIST IDENTITY THROUGH HYBRID ANIMATION

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March 2025

This thesis accompanies my experimental animation film, *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*. It explores the development of my visual identity through experimentation and analog animation techniques. By analyzing key moments in the history of experimental animation, I discovered and applied unique storytelling approaches that shaped my artistic language. Moving away from digital production, the project highlights how analog methods expanded my creative practice. The technical and design aspects of the film are also detailed in this paper.

Keywords: Animation, Direct on Film, Experimental, Non-Camera, Visual Identity

ÖZET

Hibrit Animasyon Yoluyla Kişisel Sanatçı Kimliğini Keşfetmek

Özkaya, Faize Nur

Yüksek Lisans, Medya ve Tasarım

Tez Danışmanı Asst. Prof. Marek Brzozowski

Mart 2025

Bu tez, deneysel animasyon filmim I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away’e eşlik etmektedir. Çalışma, deney ve analog animasyon teknikleri aracılığıyla görsel kimliğimin gelişimini incelemektedir. Deneysel animasyon tarihindeki önemli anların analiz edilmesi yoluyla, sanatsal dilimi şekillendiren özgün hikâye anlatım yaklaşımlarını keşfettim ve uyguladım. Dijital üretimden uzaklaşarak gerçekleştirdiğim bu proje, analog yöntemlerin yaratıcı pratiğimi nasıl genişlettiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Filmin teknik ve tasarımsal bileşenlerine de bu çalışmada ayrıntılı olarak yer verilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Animasyon, Deneysel, Görsel Kimlik, Kamerasız Animasyon

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This project tells a complex tale about the self-expression and self-discovery of artists through experimental animation. In this project, this narrative carries traces of the artist within it. These carry character-specific expressions such as symbols, characters, and metaphors specific to the artist. Animations produced using experimental techniques tell the inner and personal journeys of the artists while at the same time allowing the artist to discover new methods of expression. These methods help the artist to find and expand their identity and, at the same time, to create a unique visual identity.

The project supporting this thesis is the film *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*, created with hybrid animation techniques. The intended result is discovering and developing an original artist identity using various techniques. At the heart of the project is the non-camera technique used to create the underlying images. The goal of this method, which will be covered in full in the thesis, is to produce continuously moving images directly on analog film strips through hybrid animation techniques. The scenes, drawn in detail directly on the movie frames with frame-by-frame technique, are created by combining them in a digital environment. The combination of digital and analog techniques increases the technical diversity of the project. Apart from a visual story created by images drawn on film stocks, the photography discipline in the narrative gives the project a multidisciplinary approach. It adds diversity to the storytelling and depicts the variety of techniques used in story formation. This project, created with the sound collage technique to develop storytelling aurally, highlights the experimental

approach to narrative. This project, which does not adopt linear storytelling, emphasizes the diversity of techniques used to convey the narrative. In the combination of this diversity, the result forms the whole of the story. The unity in combining different techniques depicts the artist foregrounding the identity in new mediums, regardless of the technique. The experimental animation project and thesis were produced based on this technique. The techniques used in the production process of hybrid animation create a space of self-identity that is waiting to be explored by the artist. This created space allows the artists to test themselves with different mediums. It creates diversity in the way artists express themselves visually. With the artist's experimental approach to mediums, this diversity offers the chance to transfer their line to different media. The artist observes that the lines that reflect their identity are also distinguishable when they use other mediums. Animation creates a metaphorical space where artists can explore their characters and uniquely convey complex expressions. Even if similar techniques are used, the artist's visual narrative form creates a texture in which the artists experience their own experience through the cultural or labeled motifs they use.

The importance of the project 'I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away' lies in the experimental approach in the production process and the new identity discoveries that this approach reveals. The visualization of the scenes of the film was created by inking images onto 35 mm film strips. What distinguishes this project from other films with similar techniques is the figurative approach and detailed environmental design on a small-scale canvas. During the film's production process, experiments were conducted using films of various sizes, such as 8 mm, 16 mm, and 35 mm, while discovering their own artistic identity. As will be explained in detail in the Project Overview section, the technical production part of the movie was the collection of film stocks of different sizes. The estimated amount of film stocks was calculated based on the estimated duration of the movie. During this stock accumulation

process, various sizes of film stocks were obtained. These different sizes are 8 mm, 16 mm, and 35 mm, and it was decided to collect and use 35 mm film strips after drawing experiments by the artist. In choosing this size, the detail of the scene that emerged as a result of the artist's experiments was distinctive. The 35 mm film strip created a drawing space for the artist that was visually understandable and where details were not lost. In total, 5,700 film frames were used in the production of this project.

As will be discussed, work has begun combining film stocks. These works emphasize the experimental approach in hybrid animation. In these approaches, the artist aims to express the methods used by watching and analyzing the works of artists who have come to the forefront with their own artistic identity in the history of experimental animation. In this form of expression, essential stages such as washing the films, adding texture, and reconstructing them have brought the artist's identity to the forefront. In this experimental production process, using similar techniques inspired by past productions has led to results that emphasize the artist's visual language and add new interpretations to these techniques. This project, which aims to show the emergence of the artist's identity through a hybrid and experimental approach in visual narrative, has not only followed a hybrid approach in narrative. Finally, all of them together are presented in a plot in which the artist experiences and reflects her identity. This analog technique used during production characterizes the experimentation in forming the images and visually supports the experimental narrative used in the storytelling. Separating the visual story from the digital output aims to create a unique visual language that bears the artist's analog traces. This visual language, together with the analog aesthetic of the film, is inspired by the avant-garde and brutalist art movements of the period in which the technique emerged.

The question this project-supported research seeks to answer is how

the production of experimental animations enables artists to explore their identities. The exploration of these possibilities begins with a survey of experimental animations produced in the past using a variety of techniques. This research examines the methods of original artists such as Len Lye, Norman McLaren, Harry Everett Smith, and Stan Brakhage. In addition, by examining the points where artists can reflect on their identities, such as visual style, materials, methods, and narrative, it seeks an answer to how experimental animation helps the artist discover their identity. In the theoretical part of the thesis, *Experimental and Expanded Animation* (MacMillan, 2018) are used as primary sources to explore the critical role of experimental animation in the exploration of the artist's authenticity: *New Perspectives and Practices* (MacMillan, 2018), where MacMillan's approach to the concept of experimental is examined, and *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (Kandinsky, 2000), where Kandinsky's original definition of the spirit in art is analyzed and interpreted. These works will play an essential role in the study. Based on Kandinsky's definition of the original artist identity as the soul in art, this research argues that the artist identity is the soul of the animations created with hybrid animation techniques and experimental approaches. It presents new approaches by detailing the perspectives of authors such as MacMillan, Harris, Buchan, and Wells on experimental animation and their interpretations of the concept of experimental. In line with the conclusions reached, this study aims to reflect the artist's original identity by using hybrid techniques in the experimental animation project *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*, characterized as the artist's spirit in experimental animation.

This study and thesis aim to investigate the potential for examining artistic identity in experimental animation. Leslie's analysis of "The Cartoon Manifesto" in Beckman's 2014 book *Animating Film Theory* highlights that experimental animation is a group effort that combines the distinct identities of the fine arts with mechanical frameworks. The

project combines conventional animation techniques with experimental narratives and pictures to investigate the potential of experimental animation in examining identity. The project intends to expand artistic identity through novel hybrid methodologies by looking at various story kinds, artistic identities, and visual solutions. This experimental approach allows one to find artists that inspire them and investigate narrative and visual authenticity. The versatility of visual expression gained via experimentation gives a new dimension to artistic identity by expanding modes of expression in a liberated environment and surpassing the technical conventions of animation.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Defining Experimental Animation

Examining experimentation's definition, history, and applicability in this section is necessary to realize the potential of experimental animation to shape the artist's self-identity. In addition to this study, a classification of the project into experimental animation is examined. The definition of experimental animation is usually explained through contrasts of traditional storytelling. It has a narrative that is defined as the opposite of the traditional cinema and storytelling framework. It reflects a subjective experience far from the conventional narrative language. This experience can be observed in the storytelling and techniques and forms used. Harris, Husband, and Taberham (2019) explain:

“When discussed in largely aesthetic terms, experimental animation is often characterized by what it is not. ‘Non-objective,’ ‘non-narrative,’ ‘non-linear,’ ‘non-normative,’ and ‘unconventional’ are some of the words central to the vocabulary used to describe this multifarious art form. Although, in some ways, negation feels like a frustratingly indirect and imprecise way of defining it, avoiding a circumscriptive definition is a way of allowing for the wide range of aesthetic and conceptual approaches, styles, techniques, materials, and media that have been identified as experimental animation since the beginning of the twentieth century. ” (p. 2).

It is a subjective narrative language in which the artist gains its form by going beyond normative patterns without a linear story pattern. When the project's experimentation is discussed within the framework of

this definition, the fact that it has a narrative language without a story mold is evidence of experimentation in the narrative. It has gained a distinctive form in production by combining different techniques with original expressions. Since experimental animation has no limiting visual language and technique, this definition can be constantly renewed and take on a new form. These variable new forms are the reason why it is called 'experimental.' The fact that the word 'experimental' has such flexible limits has enabled this project to aim to present a new form by pushing the limits in terms of technique and narrative. Combining digital and analog methods, this project proves that experimental animation is renewable.

In the book *Experimental and Expanded Animation: New Perspectives and Practices*, MacMillan (2018), rather than a fixed definition of experimentalism, it is the approach of the artist who produces experimentally within the mentioned narrative to a wide variety of aesthetic (subjective) images and images. This concept combines various techniques and resources to create a whole. The artist is assisted in expressing their subjective experience through the project *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*, where these diversities are expressed in experiences. The significance of experimenting in this project turns animation into a medium for showcasing novel methods and individual findings. These findings build a link between animation and art that goes beyond the logic of constant production. The term "experimental" describes a manner of expression that varies from artist to artist and can be interpreted differently by the artist based on the medium. The artist shapes the project's distinct artistic personality, reflected in this experience.

Experimentation, which has an open-ended definition, such as "food for the soul" mentioned by Kandinsky, emerges from an individual journey and experience (Kandinsky, 2000). It highlights the aesthetic pleasure of the artist. This aesthetic pleasure is the soul of that work, and this uniqueness, combined with a single title, provides countless varieties to the film industry. Looking at these comprehensive and different definitions, Kandin-

sky's definition is the most appropriate for the *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* project and the exploration of identity in experimental animation that this thesis argues for. In this definition, Kandinsky defines the effect of aesthetic pleasure in art on the experience as an identity. He attributes the main reason for this effect on the viewer to how the artist expresses himself. These forms of expression are not limited to being sensory. These forms, which are also evaluated thematically, can be a line drawn or a texture used by the artist. In the approach of this thesis, the spirit in art described by Kandinsky emphasizes the artist's forms of expression, the way they reflect their inner world. These individual expressions help the artist to discover their identity in experimental animation and bring this subjective experience to the viewer. This issue, which will be explained in detail in the following sections with the connection to artist identity, emphasizes that aesthetic pleasure can vary from artist to artist and that the concept of identity foregrounds the experience of artist identity while subjectivizing the experience.

This spirit in experimental animation is a narrative that emerges due to the interaction of the artist's symbolism and metaphors with their visual language. The main goal of the produced project is to reveal the artist's soul with symbolism and metaphors. The aesthetic pleasure aimed to be awakened in the audience is made possible by the union of the project and the artist. As a result of the techniques that the artist will use differently from his previous productions, it is aimed to preserve his visual style. Thus, the spirit mentioned by Kandinsky will reach a visible level with the film. According to Buchan (2013), the logic of animation production is at the center of the cinema concept. Animation shapes cinema and experimental cinema and provides continuity and dynamic images. When we go into the fundamental movement dynamics of cinema to define experimental animation and determine its boundaries, it is possible to see its connection with the production process in animation. Within the framework of this definition, the avant-garde can find a place for itself within the inclusiveness of cinema. The importance of the project at this point is to increase the visibility

of experimental animation in Turkey within the framework of cinema. This visibility is to show that artists' identities are sustainable in cinema.

Harris, Husbands, and Taberham (2019) state that the avant-garde approach has many overlapping points with its critical presence and marginalized narrative languages (p. 3). Marginalized narrative offers the artist a playground outside the rules. The time spent in this playground is the primary creative process of the extraordinary images and narrative form created by the artist (Wells & Moore, 2016, p. 268, Chapter 13). The "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away" project is a concrete study of the authors' approach. The artist created their original narrative using their visual style without following guidelines. The artist turned the project into a playground and employed metaphors and symbolism. The creative and unrestricted area served as the foundation for the production process. It was created using an innovative process while still maintaining historical aesthetics. The direct-on-film technique underlying the project reflected the artist's subjective visual language. In this medium, where the artist demonstrates their form, it shows no limit to the person's creative mind and imagination.

While experimental animation contains subjective experiences and interpretations, it also shows the whole of lines and images that reflect one's own identity. Kandinsky's book stated that an artist might draw attention by exhibiting a certain level of "originality" or "eccentricity" rather than being expected to convey a message. (Kandinsky, 2000). Kandinsky's emphasis on originality and authenticity expresses the artist's identity in his work. This view describes a narrative far from direct narratives. When an artist conveys a unique emotion or expression with their style and way of feeling, it creates a new expression that is unique to the artist. This uniqueness is also utilized in experimental animation. The following sections will investigate the transformation of the artist's identity into visual language by examining Kandinsky's definitions through experimental animation.

Experimental animation presents the person's subjective opinions and experiences and the lines and images that comprise the identity. The artist produces experimental animation without worrying about the message; their films are a signature. The signature is lines and narrative style. The "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away" project was produced with the aim of originality rather than the concern of addressing society or carrying a message. The artist's primary concern was preserving the visual identity during production. The use of analog technology in the film's creation and comprehensible yet abstract narrative language brought the artist's unique talent to light. The project's natural strengths were the artist's use of visual narrative and the lines' uniformity.

According to MacMillan (2018), "By definition, an experimental study should 'test' something. In an artistic rather than scientific context, what is being tested at a particular point is open to debate" (p. 61). The concept of experimenting formed the foundation for the project's design, which MacMillan defined as a test conducted in an artistic setting. The technical stages of manufacturing were observed to ensure that suitable protocols were followed. The artist's visual aesthetic and narrative integrity were tested during the process. This work emphasizes the significance of experimental animation's creative process in forming an artist's personality. It plays with many different visual and audio styles.

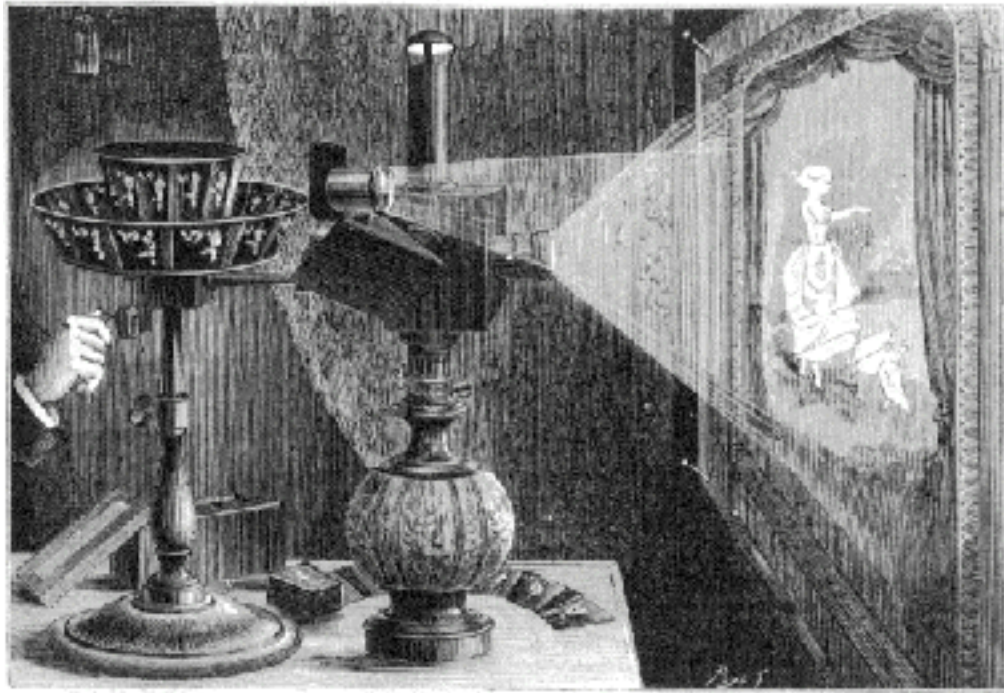
The audience's participation in the artistic experience is another crucial area where experimental animation is attempted. How the audience should establish this interaction and the questions they should ask are how they should interact with the resulting work. When we think of blockbuster films produced for commercial purposes or, independently of this, general mainstream films, we see that there are essential cinema and screenplay rules. The primary things a film must have to attract the audience are a straightforward plot, a fundamental problem, heroes and enemies, and the effect of the movie on the audience. The aim is to make the result and experience understandable during the audience's interaction with the film. At

this point, experimental animation is distinguished from this traditional narrative within the scope of experimental cinema because it presents thematic and emotional resonance subjectively and uniquely. This project is a departure from the conventional interpretation of film. The artist provides the audience with significance by letting them into their world. This endeavor aims to enthrall and involve the audience. The concept of experimentation now makes more sense. The audience will simultaneously find this experimental presentation both enticing and unpleasant, as it pushes the boundaries of meaning and creativity.

Aware of the contribution of the experimentalism mentioned above to production and the artist, the project titled "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away" aims to reflect the subjectivity in the narrative by using a different technique that the artist has not experienced before. Testing the non-limiting feature of the word experimental focuses on blending its approach to aesthetic images with its self-identity. Adopting the artist's definition of aesthetic pleasure, as mentioned by Kandinsky (2000), as a principle, it aims to reveal the artist's aesthetic pleasure with this project. It combines the "spirit" of experimental animation with the fine arts background by using different techniques. It aims to create a signature work as a visual style by using the term "playground" mentioned by MacMillan (2018) in the technical phase of production. The resultant narrative's metamorphosis into a subjective experience opens new avenues for the viewer to explore.

2.2 The Emergence of Experimental Animation

It was mentioned that the framework of experimental animation is dynamic and infinitely changeable on its own. A closer look at the historical evolution of experimental animation offers verifiable proof of the dynamic structure's transference among artists. Thanks to the memorable and guiding traces created by artists, researching historical experimental animation has the details of the period that emerged. In this field, where every period



Nouveau praxinoscope à projection de M. Reynaud.

Figure 1. From "Praxinoscope," by Wikipedia Contributors, 2024, Wikipedia.

has its pioneer, various techniques emerge with renewed forms. With its unlimited field of discovery, its potential has increased throughout history. This examination presents the discovery of how multiple techniques were used in their periods and how they reflect the self-identities of the artists. Together, they help explain the place and essence of the methods used during the project's production in experimental animation. This historical process, which will be processed in detail, makes it possible to understand the essence of the visual language created and to make the relationship between technique and self-identity in the history of experimental animation understandable.

The existence of experimental animation is based on a multifaceted historical background. When we reduce the emergence of animation to moving images, it coincides with the beginning of the 19th century using devices such as Zoetrope and Thaumatrope (Veras, 2022). However, experimental animation, independent of traditional animation, is later in its emergence process. Experimental animation emerged at the end of the 19th cen-

tury and the beginning of the 20th century (Macmillan, 2018). The experimental process comes into play using a simple device called Praxinoskop, whose inventor was Émile Reynaud, creating an illusion of sequential and continuous images (Pikkov, 2010). This intentional illusion is the first beginning of experimentation in animation production (Pikkov, 2010). With the emergence of the avant-garde art movement, artists began to explore unusual techniques and abstract expressions.

Experimental animation gains a personal narrative form with a new perspective with this artistic movement. These terms introduce the artists of the era. The story of experimental animation benefits from the subjective and artist-focused viewpoint offered by these creative movements. This study explores the sensations available during the technique's age and tests the possibilities. The film's innovative application of the direct-on-film technique honors the original contemporary perspective while preserving the period's historical artifacts. This interpretation represents the artistic developments of the time and the artist's self-identity images.

The evolution process of experimental animation, the emergence of artist identities, and the significant influence of art movements are comprehensively discussed under the following heading. The existence and progress of experimental animation are made understandable. Artist identities are reflected in experimental animation's development process by combining visual images with the original narrative forms of the artists. Examining the birth of experimental animation facilitated the application of the technique of the project called *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*. As discussed below, knowing the history of experimental animation helped to adopt analog techniques and blend them with an original language.

2.3 Development of Experimental Animation and Techniques in History In The Scope Of Pioneers

When experimental animation's existence and development process

are examined in detail, we see pioneer artists who have made outstanding contributions. They have become pioneers in the history of animation by abandoning traditional animation patterns and producing new visual techniques and original images. These pioneer artists, who are considered comprehensively, have added different and characterful aesthetics to the meaning and visual images in animation within the framework of the experimental factor. These colorful landscapes are used for high-key, emotionally driven moments. The tale of the animation is strengthened by the backdrop colors, which also add to the fluidity of the visuals. It shows scenes in analog colors, in contrast to other scenes. Fischenger experimented with cutting-edge technological methods that influenced the development of experimental animation. It examines how these techniques become a tool to reflect the self-identities of the artists in practice. With the emergence of animation, Emile Raynaud pioneered the Praxinoscope illusion device and the Optical Theater, which are mechanisms that include motion illusions (Buchan, 2013). The Praxinoscope device has a simple working mechanism. As seen in Figure 1, Raynaud arranges the images in a complementary manner around a cylinder by the principles of motion.

With the 360-degree rotation of the mechanism, all movement is smoothly reflected to the viewer (Buchan, 2013). He enabled the viewer to interact with the resulting moving image. He transformed the Praxinoscope mechanism into a more complex one and created the Optical Theater. He offered a more immersive experience with this device. Instead of cylinders, he used glass plates as a canvas and brought his colored images together with the viewer (Cholodenko, 2008). The vital difference between the first mechanism and this mechanism is that the images can now be projected onto screens. It is also the first animation and cinema history to use animation as a storytelling tool (Bendazzi, 1994). When these mechanisms were produced in 1892, the word experimental had not yet emerged. However, the emergence of the animation concept is considered the first of purely experimental attempts. Raynaud, who achieved one of the firsts of his peri-

od, took his place in cinema and art history with the simple mechanism projection system he invented for visual storytelling. His studies in terms of the general movement principles of animation were a great pioneer for the animation works produced in the past and today. Raynaud's invention and narrative form were necessary for accumulating knowledge for the research part of the project. The research of Praxinoscope and Optical Theater techniques was reflected in the project as the perception of movement. The way the artists conveyed the movement they wanted to communicate to the audience with contemporary techniques provides a perspective to ensure the fluidity of movement in the project. Emile Cohl is the source of inspiration for the dynamic narratives created by Raynaud. He made his mark in animation history with his first feature-length animated film, *Fantasmagoria*

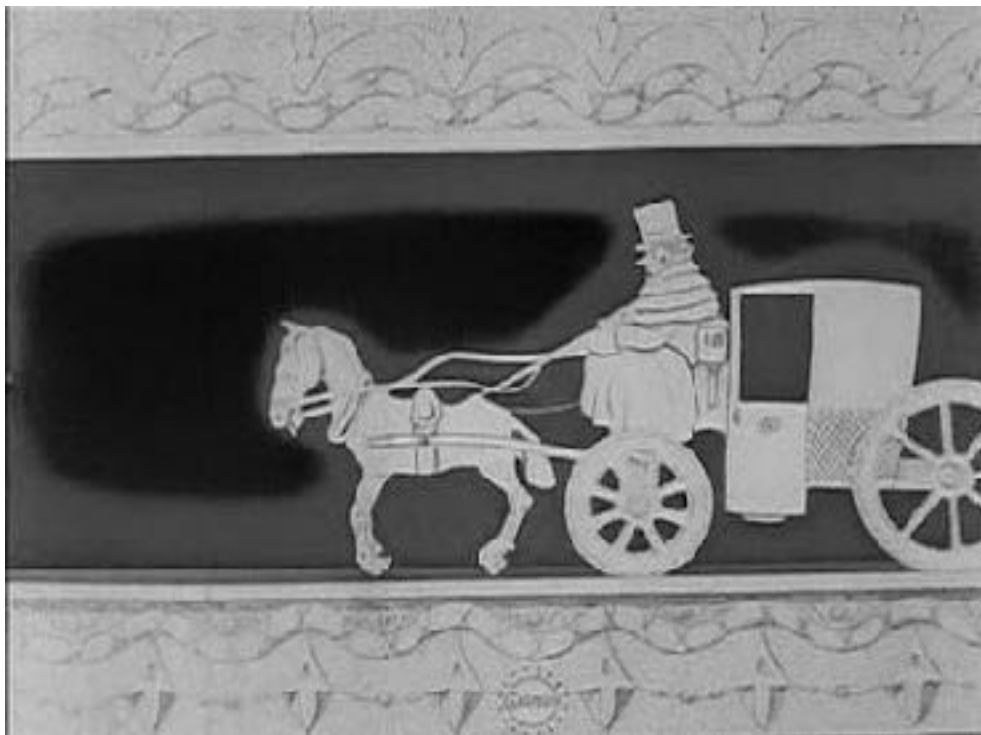


Figure 2. From En Route (1910) Directed by: Émile Cohl. [Film still] France, 1910, Gaumont Studio

(Bendazzi, 2016). Cohl is of great importance for experimental animation.

Although not labeled as experimental, his productions can be considered the beginning of experimentalism. He does not adopt a linear narra-

tive in his productions and has created his line and movement by experimenting with new techniques. The visual language he uses in his works and the fact that the lines constantly renew themselves and are in a state of transformation emphasize the experimentalism in technique and narrative. He diversified his storytelling methods technically. As in the example in Figure 2, he used the Cut-Out animation technique to create moving images by fluently changing the positions of the figures he wanted to animate on the canvas he used within the framework of movement principles (Bendazzi, 2016). He used this technique while producing the film *Fantasmagorie* and created the movements of the figures he used by using this technique (Bendazzi, 2016). Cohl's technique played an essential role in the implementation part of the project. Due to this technique used by Cohl, the figures have limited movements.



*Figure 3. From Fantasmagorie (1908) Directed by: Émile Cohl.
[Film still] France, 1908, Gaumont Studio*

Despite these limited movements, he presented fluent dynamic visuals to the audience with manual intervention in the scenes. This part of

the research showed that the movements should be minimal in the production part of the project. Due to the small size of the canvas on which the drawing is made, minimizing the movements of cut-out animation dominated the production process. Unlike Raynaud, Cohl added a new aesthetic perception with his characteristic drawings. His animation works show traces of Cohl's drawing style and character. Cohl, who took up the concept of experimental animation, created an artist identity, and his works were presented to the audience as signatures. Thanks to Cohl, one of the project's main goals is to develop self-identity by combining due subjective with original visual style. This visual style reflects the individual expression of the producing artist and is coded as a character unique to him. It becomes a reflection of the inner world. Cohl's creation of a unique language with the figures he created for himself helped Cohl's identity as an artist to be seen in his films. At this point, experimental animation is a form in which unique personal visual languages find a new expression.

The techniques we see in the animated film *Fantasmagorie* are not limited to these; as exemplified in Figure 3, there is also the negative animation technique and hand-colored frames. The negative animation technique adds white lines to black canvases to emphasize movement. Hand-colored allows the viewer to experience texture, color, and movement more vividly. The research of the negative animation technique provided the creation of aesthetic depth and contrast in movement for this project. In the project, 36 mm stock negative films were used as canvases. Manually intervening in these films aimed to give the analog aesthetics created by *Fantasmagorie*. The direct drawing of figures on negative films and their progression destroyed the layer between the figure and the space. Thanks to this technique, the hostile movements of the figures were drawn with white ink on the film frames painted in black. Inspired by this technique of Cohl, this technical application stopped the movement of black and presented a new layer to the viewer with limited limits. The fact that Cohl's productions are not called ex-

perimental does not mean that the works produced are not experimental. When evaluated during the period, it should be remembered that applying and experimenting with techniques is also a part of experimental production.

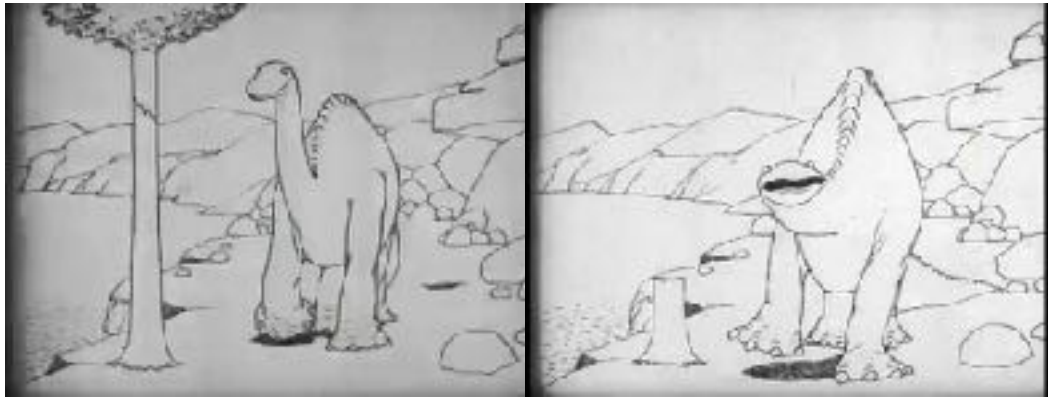


Figure 4. Gertie the Dinosaur (1914), Directed by Winsor McCay. [Film still] the United States, 1914, Box Office Attractions Company

Winsor McCay, who emerged in parallel periods with Cohl and is an essential name in animation history, came to the fore with his experiments in animation techniques (Hoffer, 1976). In the animated film *Gertie The Dinosaur*, the dinosaur Gertie figure he used in the 4th figure led to technical innovations. McCay brought a new dimension to character animation and created a new interaction with the audience (Hoffer, 1976). He gave his Gertie figure a fluid movement dynamic with the keyframe technique. This animation produced by McCay shows that drawings should progress in a particular order to provide fluidity of movement. In the project called "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away," the fluidity of movement was inspired by the movement illusion created by McCay. In the production part of the project, the movement skeleton of the first figures was drawn on the strips, inspired by McCay. These movements follow each other with a specific order interval. After a fluid movement is captured, the background detailing is started. McCay brought the perception of depth and environment detail together with the audience with this technique. With the stability of the surroundings in the background, McCay takes control of the

mise-en-scene. With this technique, he creates an original scene. The scene frames created by McCay are provided by designing the backgrounds of the scenes to be processed in the project. This production of McCay includes drawing and movements of the figure from different angles as if there were a camera. In this project, McCay technically challenges the artist's identity, inspiring the placement of cinematographic angles on 35 mm film strips.

In addition to the experimental concept, Wassily Kandinsky's theoretical and formal contributions, which pioneered the emergence of abstract art, led to the development of experimental animation (Cruz, 2010).

Kandinsky brought abstract art together with a broad audience in sensory, emotional, and thematic forms. Although he did not have a production directly related to animation, he contributed to experimental animation with emotional and thematic resonance (Cruz, 2010). Kandinsky, who has applications in abstract art production and the emotional resonance of colors, has inspired experimental animation artists. His work *On Spirituality in Art* includes definitions of art that overlap with experimental animation (Kandinsky, 1946). Abstract art, defined as a spiritual environment, activates the inner and spiritual side of the person when it interacts with the viewer (Kandinsky, 1946). Kandinsky, who argues that colors and forms have an emotional power, states that these combinations imply a particular spiritual state (Kandinsky, 1946). The overlap of his theories and productions with the concept and definition of experimental animation begins at this point. The signature figures of artists who produce experimental animation with a subjective narrative language allow their identities in storytelling to come to the fore. Kandinsky (1946) explains: "Every artist, as a creator, has to express his personality (element of personality)." (p.55). Based on this quotation, Kandinsky argues that experimentalism is the defense of art emerging from a concrete form and becoming an identity of the artist. This defense, which became the principle of the project, kept the artist's identity at the forefront during production. The primary output of the project, influenced by Kandinsky, describes the artist's identity as a spirit

by using experimental animation as an art tool. An original storytelling language requires an original spirit (Kandinsky, 1946). The abstract art forms and theories pioneered by Kandinsky paved the way for discovering personal forms of expression that form the basis of experimental animation.

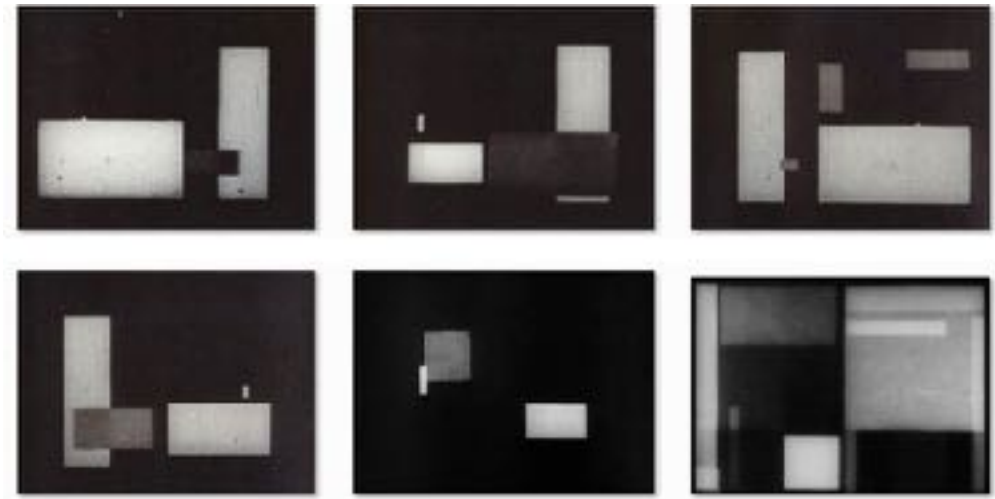


Figure 5. Diagonal-Symphonie (1923) Directed by Viking Eggeling.
[Film still] Germany, 1923.

Kandinsky's abstract art theories and productions were a great source of inspiration for Viking Eggeling, one of the pioneers of experimental animation (Cruz, 2010). Eggeling brought a new form to experimental animation and contributed to it with abstract concepts and a notation system (Cook, 2011). Eggeling presented an abstract narrative to experimental animation with his Diagonal Symphony, an example of which can be seen in Figure 5. He was one of the first artists to work abstractly in the development process of experimental animation (Cook, 2011). By transferring Kandinsky's style of expression and interaction in abstract art to moving images, he revealed how movement in animation should be experienced through abstract concepts. The Food for the Soul theory emphasizes the emotional resonance that abstract images can create in the observer. Based on this emotional resonance, Eggeling created a visual story by interacting colors and abstract figures with music. This interaction, in which colors and geometric forms are combined with notes, makes a fluid

and harmonic moving image. Eggeling presented the concept that Kandinsky referred to as the nourishment of the soul, with Eggeling's abstract narrative, a spiritual experience that directs the viewer to his inner world. As a result of this research, the abstract images used in this project production process were depicted with colors and notes to convey their narrative to the viewer.

The dynamics that Kandinsky called the soul of art emerge through the soul of notes and the movements of figures. In the experimental animation production process, he used the system he called the notation system, which determines the foundations of animation and is also a regulator. This system has become an essential system in the role of the regulator of the experimental animation production process on behalf of the artist. He created an auditory echo in the audience by using music as the basis of movement dynamics (Elder, 2007). With the emphasis and tone of the notes and the harmonic combination of the figures, this auditory echo presented the narrative power of the aural and visual combination in experimental animation to the audience. The rhythmic movements of abstract images help to experience the music visually. To capture this harmony in the project, the aim is to think of the movements as a whole with sound.

Eggeling's production process is learned, and this harmony is considered during planning. It includes plans in which the spiritual character of the artist comes to the fore rather than his visual character by using abstract images in the scenes. This project, produced by considering the harmony of music and movement that inspired Eggeling, aims to take the viewer on an inner journey using abstract images.



*Figure 6. Rhythmus 21 (1921) Directed by: Hans Richter.
[Film still] Germany, 1921.*

Vikin Eggeling and another innovative artist, Hans Richter, worked together on his abstract animation pieces (Foster, 1998). In a similar vein as Eggeling, Hans Richter created abstract pieces for his experimental animations. A vital point distinguishing Richter from Eggeling is that art movements inspire him. As seen in Figure 6, Richter, inspired by experimental art movements, reflects his inspiration from the Bauhaus and Dada movements in his productions (Foster, 1998). He discovered new dimensions and techniques in experimental animation with these movements.

Artists such as Hans Richter, influenced by the Dada movement, produced works that deliberately kept chaos and absurdity together in their productions. Richter's Dadaist approach was the source of inspiration for the narrative part of the project. The language used by Richter in the narrative emphasizes rhythm and images. In line with this inspiration, it was decided that the project's narrative would be monologue-free and dialogue-free. Inspired by Richter's approach, the project aimed to combine movements where images come to the fore and rhythms emphasize images. The

Dadaist movement's influence on experimental narrative was employed in place of a linear plot. The project's goal was to use hybrid methods to elevate individual tales. This first-person account will give the project a distinct personality. He highlights the contrast between his figures in *Filmstudie* (1926), one of the earliest experimental animation creations, using light and shadow. He mimics the fluid motions of abstract figures in this way. In this production, Richter builds a psychological depth to the film by keeping his own experience at the forefront in the images he uses. In the *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* project, metaphors were adopted as a narrative language unique to the artist. Richter's way of processing abstract images emphasized the effect of simplicity in visuals. In the project's production, a visual narrative in which figures come to the fore rather than the crowded and detailed narrative used by the artist in his productions, such as *Fish Out Of Water* and *There Is Nothing Called Home*, is aimed. The minimalist movements of the black images in this narrative mirror the artist's mental condition during the creative process. Personifying the project, this phase creates an opportunity to illustrate the growth and emergence of the artist's individuality.



Figure 7. Ghosts Before Breakfast (1928), Directed by Hans Richter. [Film still] Weimar Republic, 1928.

From a technical perspective, Richter's experimental approach is more evident in the film *Ghosts Before Breakfast* (1928). In this film, as seen in Figure 7, he turned the Dadaist approach, one of the art movements of the period, into a production principle (Elder, 2007). The Dadaism movement adopts the concept of art for art's sake rather than art for society. It becomes one of the basic principles of the project. This project, based on the concept of art for art's sake, emphasizes the artist's way of expressing himself rather than the concern of being understood and seen. Eliminating the problem of being understood creates a more significant space for the artist to express himself. Thanks to this freedom, the project offers a more subjective narrative to the audience.

In the film *Ghost Before Breakfast* (1928), which Richter produced with the stop-motion technique, he disregards the basic rules of animation and creates his unique movement dynamics. The unpredictable sharp movements of the figures in the film are observed. By creating an atmosphere far from traditional visual languages, he offers the audience a new world to choose from. The storytelling style he created, which completely breaks away from traditional animation, provides the audience the freedom to experiment and the effect of a director's signature. It is seen that he aims to create contrast in color, which is one of his concepts that is similar to Eggeling's. By creating contrast in the transition between colors, he offers the audience something that has not been seen before visually (Elder, 2007). The project called *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* aims to make the previously unseen that Richter offers the audience while exploring artistic identity. Therefore, it is produced using hybrid techniques. While each method carries the artist's signature in itself, when they come together, they form a whole. This whole is the artist himself. Richter's use of various techniques in the production process creates a new field for artists who will emerge in experimental animation.

Oskar Fischenger, who has a visual aesthetic taste similar to Hans Richter, places great importance on interacting visual figures with

music in experimental animation production, like Eggeling and Richter. Oskar Fischenger's experimental animation *An Optical Poem* reflected the movement of colorful abstract figures on notes, regardless of their forms, in harmony with the rhythm of the music (Brown, 2019). He used these colorful movements and the optical sound he developed and pioneered (Brown, 2019). This system, developed by Fischenger, is the sound created by scanning processed film strips using a lightbox or a vital light source (Brown, 2019). As each figure is scanned under the influence of the light source, the figures' unique sounds are created (Brown, 2019). The combination of these sounds and the entirety of the abstract figures provided the visualization of the music. The importance Fischenger gave to the interaction of music and visuality inspired the project aesthetically. As will be discussed in detail in the production section of the project, the music used in storytelling consists of sound collages. These sound collages are as crucial in the project as the images. The notes emphasize the movement of the pictures. The photos, which become one with the sound, emphasize the intensity and harshness of the emotions.

Having a similar production mission to Eggeling, Fischenger introduced the concept of colored music, which he called *Farbenlichtspiele*, to experimental animation. In this concept, unlike Eggeling's production, abstract forms reacted to even the slightest note tone in music as a movement. The *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* project adopts a black-and-white visual language that is far from other productions. However, inspired by Fischenger's use of color, the 36 mm film strips used as canvas are colored using marbling paints during the chemical process. These colorful backdrops are used for dramatic, intensely felt scenes. The background colors improve the images' flow and contribute to the animation's plot. It shows scenes in analog colors, in contrast to other scenes. Modern methods that Fischenger worked with impacted the production of experimental animation. He demonstrated how figures in experimental animation take on

form in addition to being characters when combined with a note. The visual aesthetics of this project are diversified and elevated by the techniques employed by Fischenger in its production. Lye has demonstrated no restrictions when it comes to playing with experimental animation using the freely available materials he employs, much like the artists previously stated who place a high value on figure and sound synchronization (Jones, 2016). His technique, which he calls Tormen, is a scattered texture system he creates using materials we can easily observe daily, such as paint, ink, and oil on film strips using his body parts (Stephen, 1929). This technique takes experimental animation from the two-dimensional world and presents moving images with organic textures and visual effects. Lye's technique progresses in parallel with the direct-on-film technique used in the project *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*. Inspired by the techniques used by the artist, this project gains a new texture by direct interventions made on the film's surface. This texture produces a similar personal aesthetic image to Lye's. They frequently appear as burn marks, scratches, and hues in the movie. This method demonstrates that the film is a hand-made oil by emphasizing the animation's textures. It proves that the project is one-of-a-kind and irreplicable.

Through his handcrafted animations, Lye showcases his distinct individuality as an artist in experimental animation. In his experimental animation *Free Radicals* (1958), he uses a metal base as a strip instead of conventional canvases with an innovative approach (Jones, 2016). The figures he creates by drawing on metal surfaces gain a rhythmic movement thanks to integrating the pieces with music (Jones, 2016). This technique he used in the film's production inspired the scenes in the project to avoid repeating each other aesthetically. In some scenes of the project, inspired by this technique of Lye, the film's surface was painted black. Then, the figures were processed with a metal tip using sculpting tools. A visual was obtained as a negative version of the previous scenes. This scraping technique established a connection between the artist and the film during the

production process and increased the analog feel of the project.

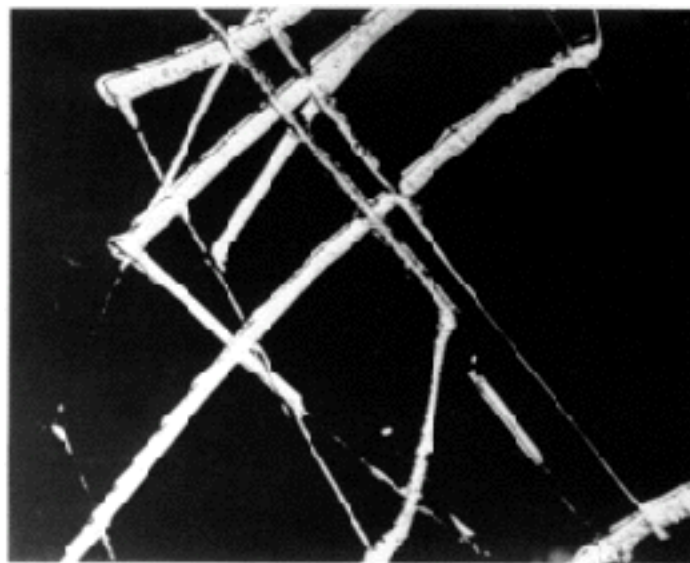


Figure 8. Free Radicals (1979) Directed by Len Lye.
[Film still] United States, 1979.

As seen in Figure 8, Lye, who attaches great importance to the perception of depth and layers in his films, takes his experience to a different point by adding transparent materials with a spider web texture to the film strip. Observing the feeling of different textures added to the film while watching is possible. The project aims to bring different textures together. During the manipulation of the film in the production process, a colored powder with a sand structure was obtained by mixing marbling paint and hydrochloric acid. This powder was mixed with water bleach and transferred into a plastic cup. After the film was washed in this liquid, colored textures were formed on the film. What distinguishes Lye from other experimental animation artists is that he creates a new purpose by detaching the materials he uses from daily activities (Stephen, 1929). Within the scope of the field of experimental animation, limitlessness can be experienced with Lye in the form of visual narrative. While offering a visual and auditory feast, he also gives the audience a perception of depth and texture in experimental animation.



Figure 9. Hen Hop (1942) Directed by Norman McLaren. [Film still]
United States, 1942, National Film Board Of Canada

Norman McLaren was one of the pioneering artists who produced experimental animation simultaneously with Len Lye. Both artists brought unique technical methods to experimental animation. They brought originality in storytelling and subjective expression of visual images to experimental animation. McLaren emphasized the importance of technical diversity and original techniques in storytelling in experimental animation (Jordan, 1953). Using the film strip as a canvas, he drew figures directly onto these strips, as exemplified in Figure 9 (Jordan, 1953). With the continuity of the drawings, the moving images gained a filmic texture and dynamic action. Unlike other artists, McLaren's contribution to the project was his use of animation as an art. He used film as a canvas. 36 mm film strips were used in this project, but rather than the small size of the strips like McLaren, the aim was to use this strip as a canvas. A large environment was fitted into a small canvas. With this perspective, it became a tool through which the artist's identity came to the fore. McLaren's contribution to the project is to increase the artistic value of the compositions. The project has an artistic concern rather than a concern for understanding.

McLaren produced animations without a camera using the drawing technique on film. With his characteristic drawings, coloring, and drawing, he created moving images that reflected his unique identity (Russett, 2004). Norman invented an analog editing system while telling stories directly on film. Using an optical printing machine, he added visual effects to his experimental animations analogously (Russett, 2004). McLaren also used this machine to combine and distort the scenes he drew and integrate them. He also added a new dimension to the animation by removing it from its abstract framework and incorporating it into the real world with the pixelation technique. This technique brought together the stop-motion technique and live figures. The *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* project, which will be discussed in detail in the subtitles, was created with hybrid techniques. However, it processed the visual effects analogously inspired by McLaren.

Like the artists detailed above, Harry Smith and Robert Breer are two pioneers in experimental animation. These artists, who produce experimental animations focusing on time, space, and aesthetics, reflect sensory and auditory resonance in their works (Taberham, 2018). Harry Smith worked on a storyboard using a technique similar to McLaren's, and he used the direct animation technique to create his abstract figures. Smith ritualizes the story by using abstract and mysterious images in his works. As Taberham also mentioned, this ritual provides the viewer with an artistic meditation with resonance. With the combination of the artist's subconscious and technique, an abstract narrative is created in the story. Smith's approach paved the way for the project's poetic and imaginative narrative. Rather than colors, the mystery of the notes and images is presented as a whole. Various art disciplines are involved in Smith's animation productions. One of these is the collage technique. This technique adds new layers to the narrative and allows different visuals to work together. In the *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* project, some moments interrupt the story that emerges between scenes where the artist manipulates his photo. The purpose of these scenes is to create a harsh, flow-breaking language that

adds depth to the animation and shows the artist's true self. This deliberate disruption is a part that pushes the viewer away from the flow while connecting them to the story.

Unlike McLaren, he reflected colors in his abstract works from a semiotic perspective in his films. He used colors as a storytelling tool, starting with each color's identity and meaning (Taberham, 2018). While Smith used the meanings symbolized by colors, Breer focused on the movements of the figures he used in his animations (Taberham, 2019). With the kinetic art principle he adopted, the sudden and dynamic movements of the figures in the animation became the artist's signature (Taberham, 2019). These animations, which he produced against Breer's principle of movement, formed the cornerstones of the principle of movement in the project. Instead of a fluid movement, the stasis in the movements came to the fore. In this way, the environment and the figure came to the forefront of the project. These movements reflected the perception of real-time in a contrasting way. He explained the independence of time and movement from each other with the sudden changes in the movements of the figures. He created a three-dimensional visual experience for the audience by altering the viewpoints of the photographs he utilized. This visual alteration enhanced the experimental quality of the animations created. These artists demonstrate how experimental animation can differ from artist to artist and how experiencing evolution on a personal level is possible. When examining some of the pioneers in the development process of experimental animation, regardless of the period they were produced, even if similar techniques were used, the works carry the artists' signatures. Examining these periods makes understanding experimental animation in a historical and cultural context easier. It makes it possible to see the touches of the artists in their productions by considering the periods they produced. When we look at its importance in terms of the project, examining the techniques used by the artists makes it possible to start the production process with theoretical knowledge. In addition, it facilitates the emergence of an origi-

nal method for the artist by observing different approaches in practice. It offers the creation of an original identity and visual language by being inspired by the application forms of various artists.

In the experimental animation project, *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away*, hybrid techniques such as direct-on-film, scratching, and abstraction can be observed. The use of these techniques carries the traces and experiences of past artists. A personalized aesthetic language and narrative form are developed and transferred to new artists. The techniques and visualization styles transferred during this discovery become signatures in another form. It brings one of the project's main goals, self-identity, to the forefront. The limitlessness of experimentation and the absence of specific patterns give rise to free expression, visual narratives, and techniques for artists. Experimental animation practice has become a constantly renewed art form. Experimental animation takes a dynamic, unpatterned form inspired by perspectives, ideas, and styles.

2.4 Identity In Experimental Animation: Norman McLaren & Len Lye

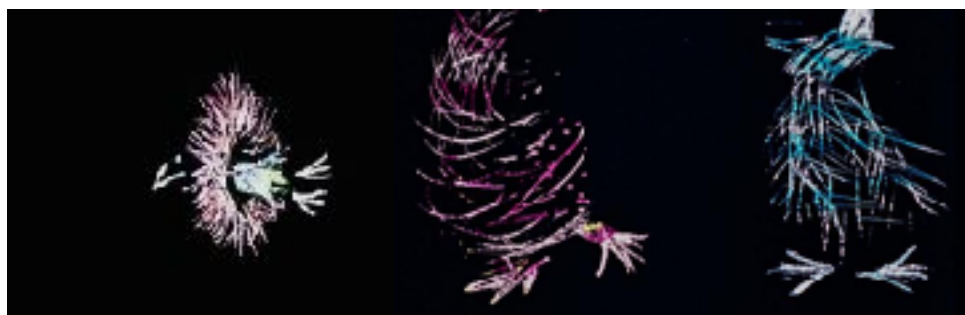


Figure 10. Blinkity Blank (1955) Directed by Norman McLaren. [Film still] Canada, 1955, National Film Board Of Canada

Experimental animation offers a free expression of the artist's identity and situations. Far from traditional contexts, this experimentation helps artists express their identity directly. It carries a narrative free from the concern of meaning and connection. While allowing the artist to experiment with different techniques, the techniques used in the production bear

traces of the artist's identity. This identity reflection is conveyed to the viewer through similar elements such as the movement of lines, line character, color, and texture. In free production, the artist does not try to fit his identity into a mold. By ignoring the constraints of linear and traditional narratives, the artist helps to create more subjective, intuitive narratives and lines. The formation of these lines carries a subjective narrative about the artist. Instead of producing within the framework of rules, the artist conveys a subjective visual story in which he/she/they controls his/her/their own movement dynamics and visual language. This subjective story continues as a reflection of the artist's own identity.

The emergence of identity is based on storytelling and unique style. These visual identities are a big part of originality and experimentation, distinguishing artists from each other and making them unique. The drawing style and narrative forms help the artist's identity be distinguishable and carry a signature quality. This distinctiveness constitutes the artist's identity. Inspired by the works and techniques of Norman McLaren and Len Lye, this project examines the films produced by these directors using the same method.

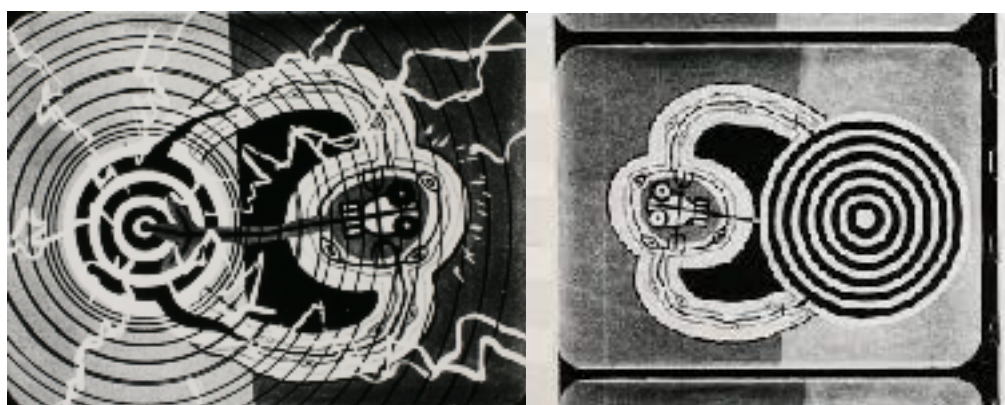


Figure 11. Tusalava (1929) Directed by Len Lye. [Film still] United Kingdom, 1929, The Film Society

The films with still images above were produced by different directors using similar techniques. Both artists used the direct-on-film

technique in their production, using techniques such as scratching, drawing, and painting directly on the film strips. As mentioned before, this technique reinforced the artist's relationship with the material and enabled direct intervention in the production. When the relationship between this technique and the artist is examined, the subjectivity of experimental animation within the framework of experience is emphasized. There is a figurative approach in Norman McLaren's production. He adopted a simple, uncomplicated language. His crowded and uncomplicated visual language is reinforced by using the negative space of the film strip outside the figures to create a movement cycle. Unlike Len Lye, he created gaps in the narrative. Using the simplicity of visual language and engraving, he created rhythmic gaps in the film. Using negative space, these gaps prove that the invisible has movement and energy rather than the visible figures. Instead of filling every frame, he used the freedom of experimentation to create movement spaces in the statistics. Through these gaps, the viewer completes the movement with their perception, and an interaction emerges. Although similar techniques are used, the artist's perception and expression give the animation a unique character.

On the other hand, when Len Lye is examined, although similar techniques are used, he adopts an abstract but evocative figurative approach. He did not prefer to use color. Instead of simple lines, he used more crowded figures. Despite using similar techniques, Norman McLaren aimed to create an emotional depth with his lines and experimented with narrative.

On the other hand, Len Lye presented this experience to the viewer more objectively. Inspired by primitive forms and aboriginal culture, he looks for ways to reflect his identity as an artist. The film *Tusalava* is an indication of experimentation and a reflection of the process of Len Lye's search for his identity. These organic figures resembling human cells, observed in the figure, are in motion throughout the film. They move in complete synchronization with the music in a transformation and merger.

These forms create movements specific to their physical characteristics. These movements are not only a characterization of the figures but also a reflection of Len Lye's identity.

Within the framework of this comparison, the freedom of experimental animation is an essential factor in creating and reflecting the artist's identity. The difference that emerges when the use of similar techniques is combined with the different experiences of the artists is the artist's identity. These identities carry subjective, unique, and characteristic values. They are presented to the viewer's experience as a reflection of the artist's identity. The possibilities of technique and experimentation prove that visual expression has no limits. This limitlessness meets the artists' subjective experiences and inner world, showing how visual language can become unique despite using similar techniques. These acquired artist identities result from the relationship between the essence of art and the form of the figures that Kandinsky talks about. Kandinsky (1946:19) mentioned:

“An artist, in such times, is not even expected to have a message but can attract attention through some particular *"originality"* or *"eccentricity"*”

Originality and authenticity are a big part of experimental animation. The examples above show that the lines and narratives reflect the artist's inner world and are part of the identity. The frames produced and the originalized techniques indicate the differences in the artists' identities. Although Len Lye uses the same technique as McLaren, he offers a new visual experience by specializing in the analog textures he adds to the film. On the other hand, McLaren achieves this differentiation by creating the movement of negative spaces, as mentioned earlier. Experimental animation production is a process of the artist's search and discovery of their identity. Kandinsky (1946:144) mentioned:

“ What a great discovery on the artist's part, when the cessation of the frantic search for subject matter, or for a means of concealing the fact,

that they felt its lack. Magnificently simple, as most of the great things in the world are, is the beautiful basis of non-objective painting. It finds itself purely in the aesthetic emotion, in the direction of the pure aesthetic spirit, through the artist's mind, and directly out to the observer.”

The concept of food for the soul, as mentioned by Kandinsky, appears to the viewer as the artist's identity in experimental animation. It is the aesthetic spirit that shows the artist's identity. Experimental animation production does not carry aesthetic concerns like any other artwork or narrative. An inner experience replaces this aesthetic concern with the viewer. Far from this concern, experimental animations offer the artist a free space for identity discovery. Thanks to this opportunity, the artist makes the audience experience the aesthetic pleasure Kandinsky talks about through movement and identity.

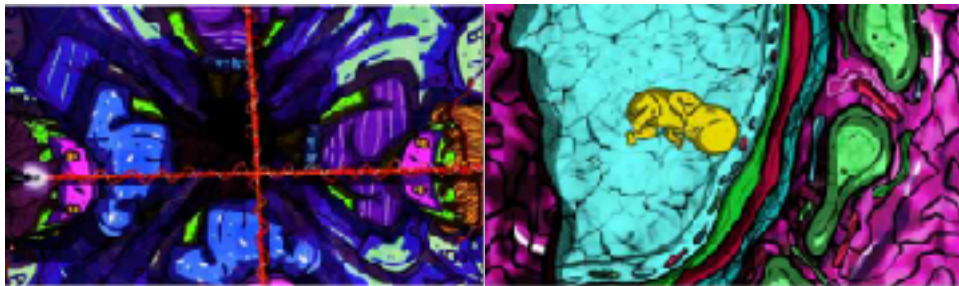


Figure 12. Fish Out Of Water (2023) Directed by: Nur Özkaya. [Film still] Turkey, 2023



Figure 13. There Is Nothing Called Home (2023) Directed by: Nur Özkaya. [Film still] Turkey, 2023



Figure 14. I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away (2024) Directed by: Nur Özkaya. [Film still] Turkey, 2024

As mentioned, the experimental animation project “I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away” was created by drawing on 35 mm film stocks. This project aims to reveal the distinctiveness of the artist's identity, regardless of technique. It also shows that with the free production space that experimental animation provides during the discovery of an artist's identity, different methods can be experienced, and the continuity of the artist's identity can be ensured. The characteristics of the figures and lines used in the artist's previous experimental animation films, *Fish Out Of Water* (2021) and *There Is Nothing Called Home* (2023), are shown in Figures 12,13,14. By aiming to preserve this visual identity, the distinctiveness of the visual language can be maintained by using different experimental animation techniques. As examined in the figures, the reflection of the artist's identity in my productions has been preserved regardless of the canvas. The artistic language that tries to be preserved within the possibilities offered by canvases has a similar language with lines. The visual language of the scene from the movie “I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away” in Figure 90 has lines consistent with Figure 14. In conclusion, the free playground offered by experimental animation proves that the artist can maintain his identity through different techniques. It also emphasized the importance of experimental animation in the artist's discovery and development of their identity.

2.5 Technical Case Studies For “I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away”

In this section, the techniques of the pioneer artists of the experimental animation mentioned above and the application stages of those close to the project's artist identity are examined in detail. This research, supported by the project named "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away," aims to reflect the stages in the original reflection of the techniques of the project by matching them with the artists. The first of the features examined in the methods used will be to explore the stages in practice. Its goal is to change these phases into a shape that fits the artist's identity. Another goal is sketching an application route to establish a narrative flow. Upon closer inspection of the forms, it became apparent that these methods would become the visual language of the project. They also developed the original narrative language, seeing the possibilities of the location. It talks about the advantages of this new form of expression and how it might strengthen the artist's individuality.

2.5.1 Begone Dull Care (1950):



Figure 15. Begone Dull Care (1949) Directed by Norman McLaren.

[Film still] United States, 1942, National Film Board Of-
Canada

The experimental animation *Begone Dull Care* (1950), directed and created by Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambart, was technically made by processing directly on film. Exemplary arts practices such as drawing and painting were used while working on the film (Pinson, 2017). It includes harmonic movements of abstract figures accompanied by jazz music composed by Oscar Peterson. As seen in Figure 15, the reflection of the visual technique used in the film reflects texture and a lively control of movement. The frame of this short film, approximately eight minutes long, was visualized by the hands of the creators. The production of *Begone Dull Care* began with Oscar Peterson composing the initial music, followed by Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambart's response to the abstract images that harmonized with the harmonic rhythm of the music (Pinson, 2017). Examining this production process aims to analyze the techniques used in detail and apply the methods used in the project's production process by reflecting the artist's style.

Curiosity about the project's technological development is piqued because the abstract figures, created directly on celluloid during the film's production, moved rhythmically and beautifully in sync with the music. Skilled in this area, McLaren has made short films using these methods in the past, including *Fiddle-de-dee* and *Hen Hop*. McLaren used a Lightbox-style tool to capture the fluid movement dynamics used by today's traditional animation producers (Pinson, 2017). However, McLaren used a simple mechanism where light passed between two glass frames. While using this mechanism, he could observe successive frames using the frames he drew as a grid (Pinson, 2017). In digital animation productions, this method is called onion skinning. The need for this digital technique arose during the production of the project called "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away." However, in this project, which was processed on film strips analogously, this technique had to be done in a way that was far from technology. The aim was not to spoil the analog texture of the film. Inspired by this technique used by McLaren, a silhouette of the movements that the figure

would perform on stage was drawn on an A4 paper to maintain the project's visual flow. Then, A4 papers and films illuminated with Lightbox were placed on each other. Figures were drawn on top of the silhouettes following the movement sequence, and fluidity was achieved.

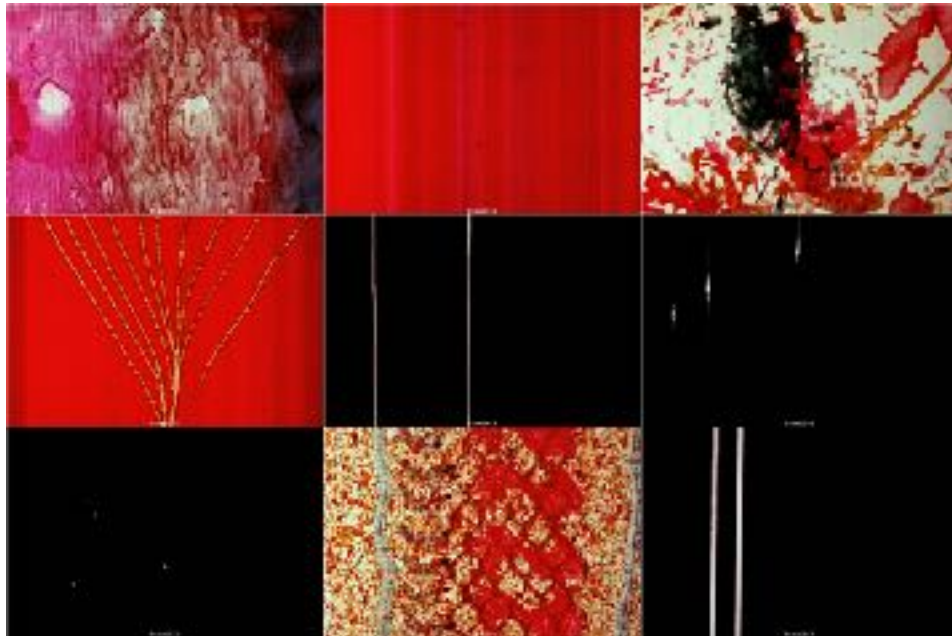


Figure 16. Begone Dull Care (1949) Directed by Norman McLaren. [Film still] United States, 1942, National Film Board Of Canada

In one section of Dobson's (2006) article about McLaren's production time, he explains that he worked by dividing the music into pieces. He states that they created 5- 5-second movements during this process and watched them with Evelyn by combining them with the sound. He states that they started again as a negative result by experiencing the effect of harmony on the audience. Considering the fast flow and length of the music, this process seems quite long and challenging. As McLaren stated, due to his previous works, he had his visual language that worked with the music.

For this reason, he stated that they measured the emergence of the music while working with Peterson (Dobson, 2006). When I say measurement here, I mean that they used a mechanism called dope-sheet, which is

used to record musical measurements on paper (Dobson, 2006). These measurements were numbered and marked on the 35 mm film to be used. This technique, used to ensure visual and auditory integrity, was an essential source of inspiration for the project. The *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* project transfers this system to the digital environment. If we talk about this part, which will be explained in detail in the third part, it is aimed to increase the rhythm in the narrative. Before the sound design, the sound chart of this project, whose music production process is completed, was drawn. In the editing part, the flow of movements is harmoniously reflected to the audience per this sound chart. In the part where the sound increases or the notes change, the parallel movement of the figures is observed. In Figure 16, they used ink, watercolor, and cellular paint to pro-

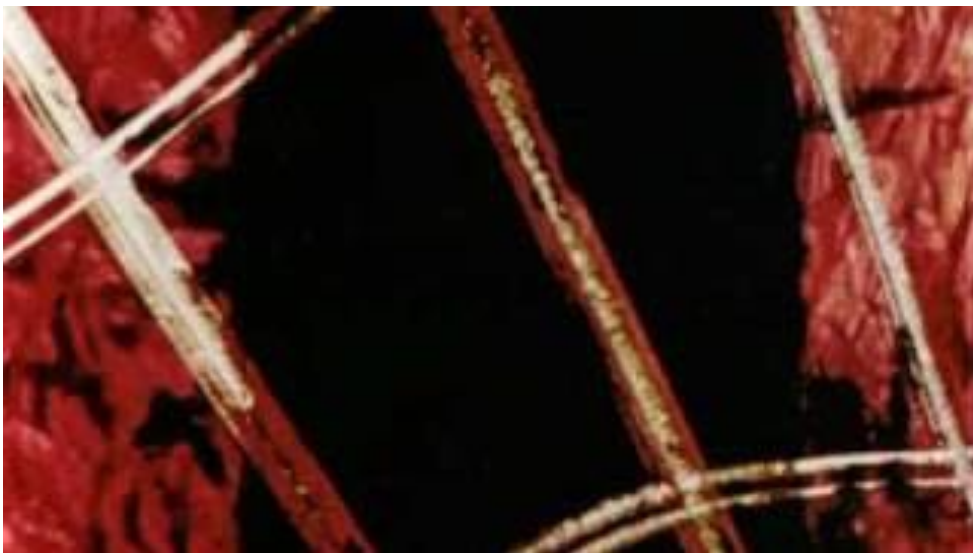


Figure 17. Begone Dull Care (1949) Directed by Norman McLaren. [Film still] United States, 1942, National Film Board Of Canada

vide visual variety through color and texture in the film. They used various tools to use these paints (Pinson, 2017). They transferred the textures of multiple objects, such as brushes, spray, paper, and sponges, to celluloid. As in Figure 12, they created stencils with the logic of using stencils by spraying paint on celluloid with a stencil (Pinson, 2017). They poured them onto film strips by taking advantage of the fluid properties of paints such as wa-

tercolor and ink. After that, they divided and dried the figures on the paint after sprinkling them with powder paint. These methods gave the visual story a variety of textures and nuances. They made the uniqueness produced by experimental animation attempts in the visual language visible. Texturizing celluloid creates a framework that reveals the artist's identity. These artists experimented with and influenced new texture-creation techniques during the project's development. The movie's textures were added by trial and error. The cinema used these textures and applied effects like burning and scraping coloration. The purpose of these textures is to stimulate the senses of the observer. Norman McLaren, one of the most significant sources of inspiration for the project "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away" by drawing directly on film stock, showed the advantages of this technique. One of the advantages found in this part of the research was that errors in the application were immediately noticeable. By experiencing frames, drawing analogously makes the previous and next movements visible and predictable. It also allows immediate intervention in the scene. This makes it easier to reflect fluid movements without skipping between frames. McLaren states that drawing on film is no different than drawing on canvas. As an artist, based on experiences and examination of examples, it is concluded that reducing the canvas will not change the result. Conventional and digital methods were used to create earlier experimental animation projects. The project aimed to capture a distinct language in the story while eschewing the digital comfort zone and utilizing an analog methodology to mirror the visual identity.

2.5.2 Tusalava (1929):

The experimental animated film *Tusalava* (1929), created and directed by Len Lye, integrates avant-garde cinema and surrealism. Lye's dialogue-free film is close to a primitive view of the story and a visual narrative language. The transformation of abstract figures into complex works

offers traces of the beginning of life (Figure 18). The soundtrack is a collaboration between Jack Elliot and Florian Goltz. The fact that the sounds in the film are outside of the dialogue has caused the auditory and visual points to be more distinct. This has provided a more visual experience for the viewer. The connection felt while watching Len Lye's film, the project "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away," aims for the viewer to establish a similar connection with the film. Therefore, it aims to offer the viewer a visual journey. Inspired by Lye, this project provides a dialogue-free narrative where visual images emerge. The aim is for the viewer to follow the narrative of the visual images rather than the dialogues. In this way, it is aimed to lock the viewer into the film visually and auditorily and to question the movie.

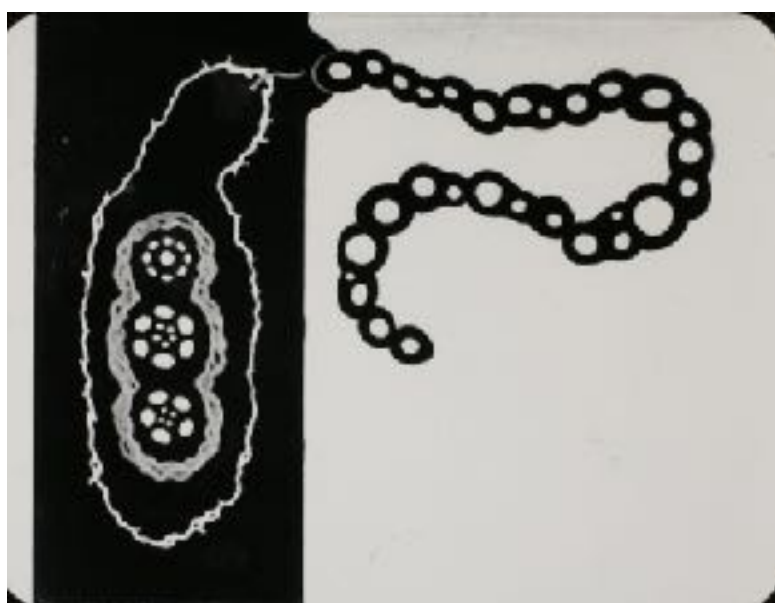


Figure 18. Tusalava (1929) Directed by: Len Lye.
[Film still] United Kingdom, 1929.

As seen in Figure 18, Len Lye wanted to convey a simplified image of complex life and its evolution in this film. At the beginning of this black-and-white film, we observe the beginning of life. When the visual approaches of today's animated films are examined, it would be correct to say that Tusalava (1929) has a more primitive figurative approach. Organic and biomorphic images become a tool to tell the cycles of life and living

things in the film. The narrative evoked by the visual description shows that the figures are in a constantly dynamic and mobile structure. It tells the audience it is in a changing cycle with the analogy of life and living things. This story, provided only by the change of images without dialogue, proves the power of images. What is particularly important in the project is to offer a perspective of the artist's inner world. This presentation is to be done in the original language. The artist's shifting moods throughout his work and his interpretation of the situation are depicted in these pictures by Lye. By limiting the project's subject matter to love, we can study the artist's unique perspective and track the artist's emotional development throughout the production process.



Figure 19. Tusalava (1929) Directed by: Len Lye. [Film still]
United Kingdom, 1929.

In addition to Lye's creative method, texture is an essential storytelling component. Inspired by Aboriginal culture, Tusalava drew 4,000 frames on 35 mm celluloid. During drawing these frames, a light table was used to observe the movements (Stephen, 2017). This light table system was often used by cartoonists of the period and was widespread in the cartoon industry. When Len Lye used this device, he would place the film he

was drawing on the next movie, predict the movement to come and pull the new movement position (Stephen, 2017). This approach adopted by Lye was combined with McLaren's onion skin technique to provide fluidity of movement more quickly in the project. When the figures drawn in the painting *Tusalava* (1929) are examined, it is seen that the hand-drawn visuals, which have never been seen before, are integrated with textures and create a flow. The use of these textures created a tangible sensory interaction in the viewer. Inspired by this richness of texture, textures were added to the film strips used in the project.

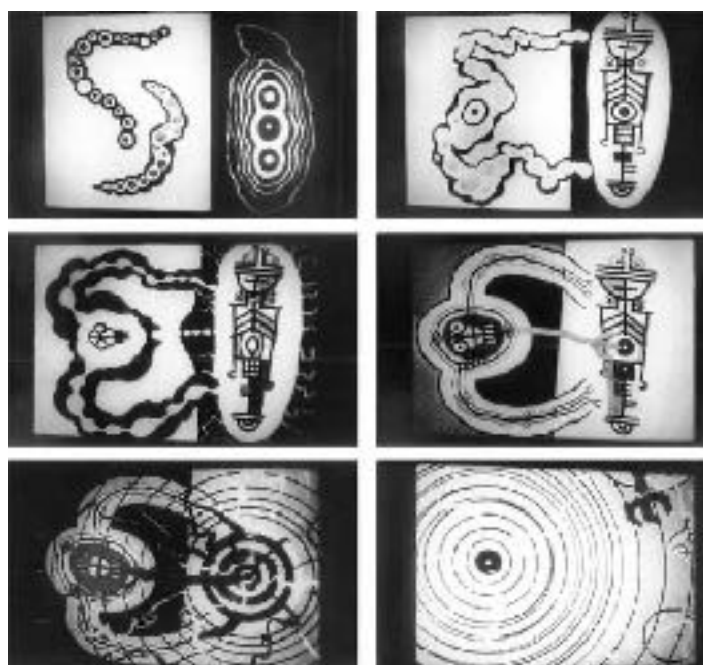


Figure 20. *Tusalava* (1929) Directed by: Len Lye.
[Film still] United Kingdom, 1929.

Len Lye's figurative approach to visual language was one of the pioneers of figure studies in the project. He visualized the growth of the cell-like figures he portrayed in the film with caterpillar-like shapes (Figure 19). This imaginative approach showed that using figures instead of abstractions to tell a story on 35 mm film was possible. Although the figures drawn were not the same as the figures we see in real life, he added evocative figures. Lye's imaginative approach showed that it would be more beneficial to take

a creative approach to visual narration rather than directly describing the event. Len Lye created three rings resembling a womb in a scene in *Tusala-va*. He made a relationship with the womb by organically animating these three rings (Figure 20). He then presented birth in a concrete and, at the same time, abstract way with an original drawing figure by Len Lye symbolizing people. Len Lye's ability to reframe and transform the commonplace profoundly affected the idea. The project aimed to adapt combined movements into figures using his language creatively. By playing with the viewer's viewpoint, Len Lye redefines movement for figures whose shapes do not influence their movement. This demonstrates how the figure's viewpoint has evolved and acquired new significance.

2.5.3 Gertie the Dinosaur (1914):

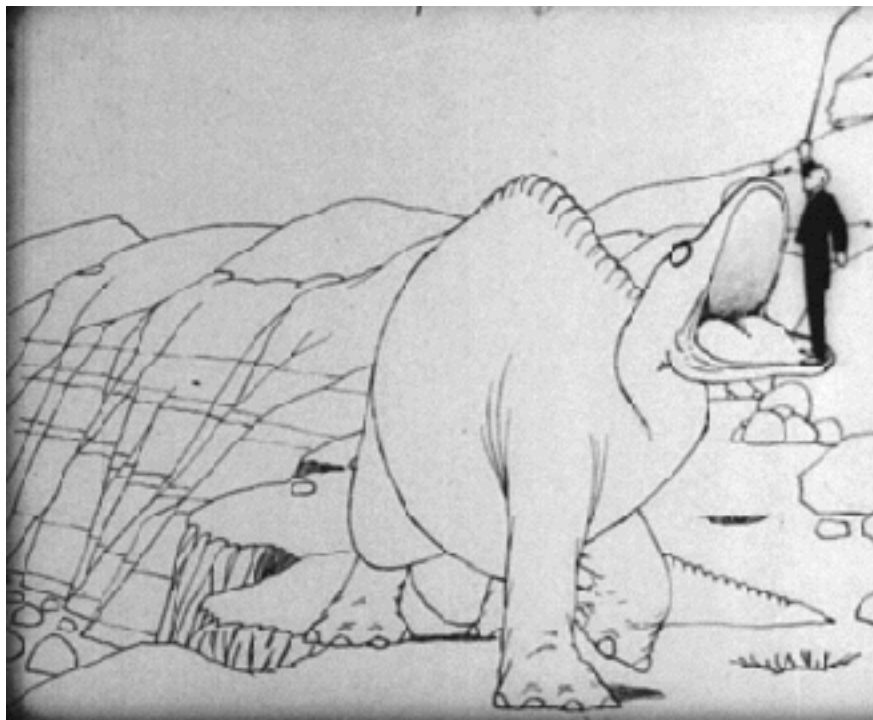


Figure 21. Gertie the Dinosaur (1914), Directed by Winsor McCay.

[Film still] United States, 1914.

Gertie the Dinosaur (1914), directed by artist Winsor McCay, is the first film in which the artist worked on the background and characters in

detail, as in figure 21 (Nathan, 2013). During the film's production, he used 17 x 22 cm rice paper as a canvas to animate the frames (Nathan, 2013). He used rice paper because it does not absorb ink due to its structure. At the same time, its semi-transparent feature makes it easier to compare the action in the previous scene (Beckerman, 2003). He did not use the dimensions of the canvas he used for the fluidity of the movement in the film (Beckerman, 2003). He placed a 15 x 20 cm frame inside the canvas. This prevented shifting between scenes. Instead of the total size of the 35 mm film that was decided to work on in the project, based on Winsor McCay's technical uses, a 2-3 mm area was created inside the canvas. The scene is framed. In this way, the stability of the environment is maintained in the successive scenes. Working in an analog way in animation requires drawings to be done meticulously. Scenes need to be drawn and overlapped in a planned manner. McCay carefully plans and processes the movement of the figures in his productions. The fluidity of the movement is achieved thanks to the attention he gives to the movement of the figures. This technique had both a positive and negative effect on the project. Applying the framing technique narrowed the working area but, in addition, increased the fluidity of the movement. McCay's aim in this research was to ensure that the animation's movement was at the right time and in the right way. He uses his breathing as a reference to show the dinosaur Gertie character breathing correctly (Canemaker, 2005). This shows that he cares a lot about increasing the quality of the audience's experience. McCay, who had never had the chance to observe the movement of a dinosaur before, consulted with the staff of the New York museum (Canemaker, 2005). He solved his approach to the unknown in animation through observation and research. The project "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away" was worked on an unknown canvas for the artist: 35 mm film strips. McCay's competence in research and application was aimed to be reflected in the project.

McCay found a new technique during the production of this film, which he called the "McCay Split System" (Beckerman, 2003). If we

briefly describe this system, it is the division of movements in animation according to their order of importance. It consists of first drawing essential poses, such as the action's first, middle, and last frames, and then the empty poses between those. This marks the first drawn scenes as critical frames (Nathan, 2013). This system is a pioneering technique in the history of animation (Beckerman, 2003). This technique is the vital frame technique used by today's animation programs. Drawing movements was made more accessible for the artist by this technique, which served as the primary guideline for the project's fluidity of movement. McCay's rigorous hand production methodology played a critical role in eliminating uncertainty from the project's development. The main scene was identified by dividing the movements of the figures. The selection of the opening and closing frames identified the movement's beginning and ending. The movements of the figures were then shown as trailing each other to the destination.

CHAPTER 3

PROJECT OVERVIEW

3.1 I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away

I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away will start in early 2022. Most films by experimental animation film producers discovered during the literature review before starting the project were watched and analyzed. In this section, the reasons for the emergence of the project, the results obtained from the research, and the application of the techniques learned in the project will be examined in detail. The methods used by pioneers such as McCay, McLaren, and Lye were investigated on the way to the completion of the project. Inspired by the subtleties of Norman McLaren's camera-less animation technique and the textural traces left by different objects on Len Lye's film strips, experiments were made on textures in the application. The notation system used by Fischenger and McLaren was digitized and used in the rhythmic editing of the animation. The technical part of this project was realized by examining the prominent artists of experimental animation history and adopting the techniques they developed. The aim of the project is for the artist to discover their self-identity freely and, at the same time, to make this self-identity they have developed visible. It aims to present an original perspective by focusing on the personal and internal themes that experimental animation presents in the narrative. Explaining this technical experience in detail seeks to show how the artist identifies the techniques carried from the past to the present with self-identity.



Figure 22. There Is Nothing Called Home (2023) Directed by: Nur Öz kaya. [Film still] Turkey, 2023

After the artist's second experimental animation film, "There Is Nothing Called Home," the story to be told in the next project was created using sentences repeated in his digital diary. The sentences that make up the story in this combination result from a 6-month emotional journey. The film aims to directly reflect the extremes of the emotional cycle the artist has experienced in life. Unlike the previous productions, this project is wholly focused on self-emotions and one's unique understanding. In this production journey, the artist goes beyond the safe zone with a different technique, other than the previously experienced frame-by-frame digital animation technique.

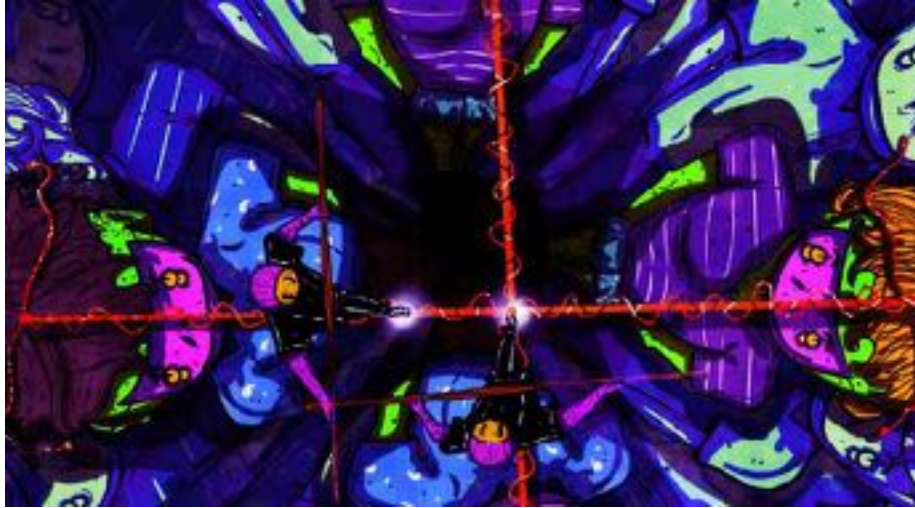


Figure 23. Fish Out Of Water (2023) Directed by: Nur Özkaya. [Film still] Turkey, 2023

The differences between the effects of emotions experienced daily on the individual during the project production and their impact on the environment were observed. When it was deemed necessary to create this effect, an art discipline was determined by the concept of narrative and freedom. Before deciding on this discipline, the resulting illustrations' chaotic and grotesque structure and the characters' stagnation created a contrast. It believes that the figures experienced the characteristics and emotions attributed to the created figures. It concluded that this experience, through the animation, reflected the figure's situation. In this direction, the production discipline was experimental animation.

When the artist's experimental animation productions are examined from a broad perspective, it is observed that the central theme focuses on self-perception and loss. Regardless of the art discipline, the artist uses consistent visual language while processing these subjective subjects. Producing grotesque narratives in different art disciplines, such as sculpture, analog productions, collages, and video, draws attention to the permanence of the visual language and the continuity of visibility. Although these productions carry similar themes, they help the artist develop an identity and turn to different narrative forms. In an artist's productions, he distorts the structure and nature of the figures by starting from their perception forms. This unique distortion and visual style present an aggres-

sive visual language. The artist avoids using digital techniques in experimental animation productions and produces a project called *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* with a hybrid method to avoid repeating the visual language.

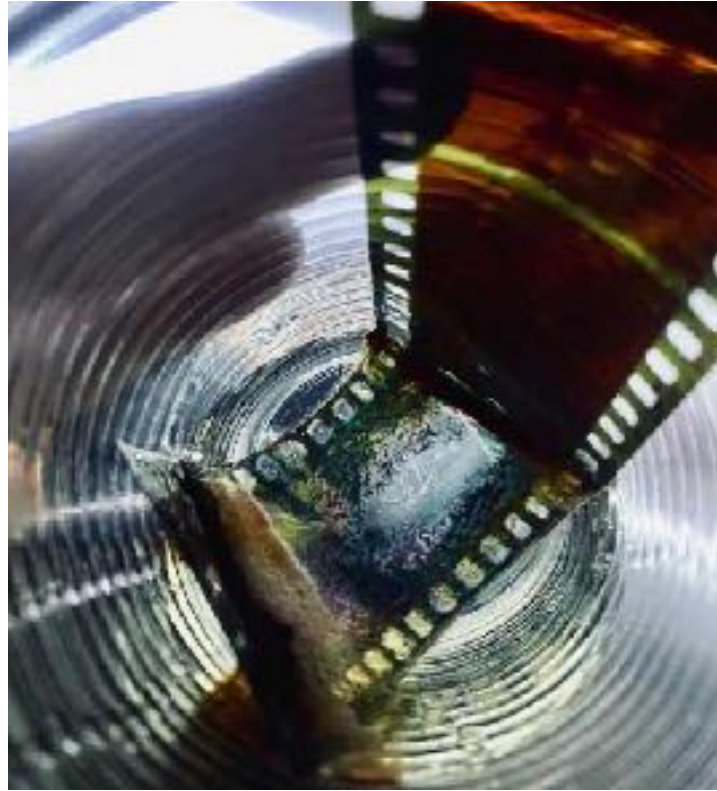


Figure 24. Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation with the celluloid [Photography]

The project stands out technically and artistically from the artist's productions. The combination of hybrid techniques makes the project unique in technical terms. To create scenes, it was produced using the direct film animation technique, also known as camera-less animation. This technique is called camera-less in film production. It is an animation technique processed directly on analog film strips without using tools. It disrupts the existing image and gives it a new motif using analog techniques, such as drawing, painting, engraving, and light on film strips. This application is a technical experiment in animation. This thesis project adopted this technique.

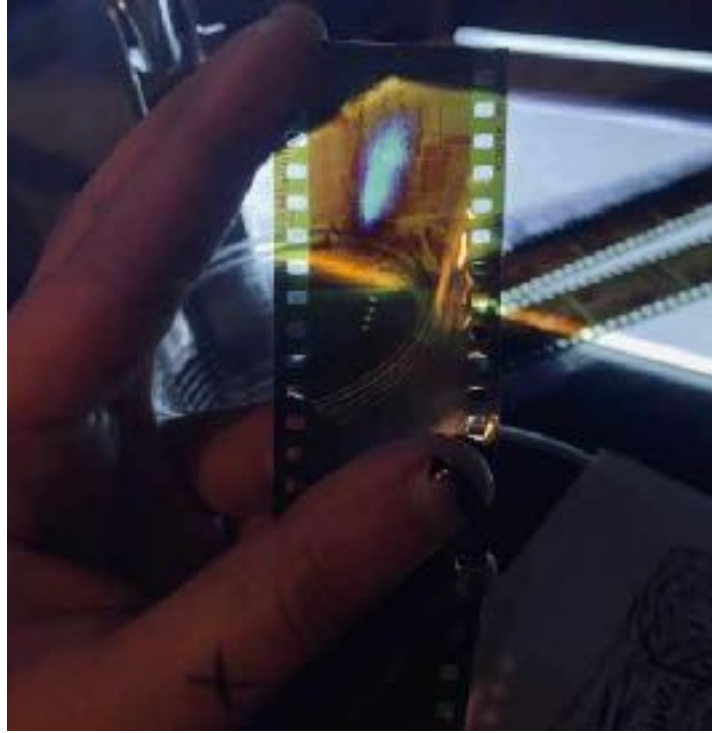


Figure 25: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation with the celluloid [Photography]

The techniques aimed to be used in the production part of the project were prepared with great care thanks to the artist's research in the theoretical part. First of all, it was decided to determine the size of the canvas to be drawn on. 8 mm, 16 mm, Moreover 35 mm film strips were purchased from second-hand and antique markets in Ankara. This size variety allowed the artist to experience which size gave a more satisfactory result in the narrative. The artist aimed to learn the material he would work with first. Conducted experiments on the film strips using tools such as acrylic and oil paint used in traditional art disciplines. These experiments provided the opportunity to observe how permanent the paint would be on the film. The permanence of the visuals on the film strips was a significant factor in scanning and preserving the strips. Another important reason was that the artist aimed to have the audience experience the original examples of the scenes together with the film in the exhibition form he planned. The long drying time of the acrylic and gouache paint used and the fact that they became one with the film strip hurt the production

process in terms of time. The slippery structure of the film strip and the fluidity of these paints created an obstacle. After this experience, the artist decided to try ballpoint and felt-tip pens. During this experience, the artist discovered that the metal hardness at the tips of acrylic and ink drawing pens created a scraping texture on the film strips. These pens' usability and time-frame evaluation was done by making random drawings. Then, it was decided to use acrylic and ink drawing pens as a tool. In line with this decision, the artist, who wanted to work on details despite the frame being 36 mm, provided various pen tips. It was decided to draw the details to be added in the scenes drawing with the help of a magnifying glass using 0.003 mm, 0.01 mm, and 0.1 mm pen tips. While getting to know and experience this material, the artist developed technical skills with different solutions, and it became possible to work on details within a small 36 mm frame.

While working on the drawing material, experiments were conducted on the provided film strips of different sizes. First, 0.001 mm acrylic pencils were tried on 8 mm film strips, but the desired result still needed to be obtained. This size required an increase due to the artist's detailed approach to his visual language. Since visual language is an integral part of the artist's identity, it was decided that the surface to be transferred should be of a size that could accommodate this. Then, experiments were started on 16 mm strips. Drawings that approached the artist's visual style were obtained compared to the previous size. However, since this project was an animation project, it was decided that the movement of the figures and the background should also be considered. A wider film strip that could carry a detailed background to add depth to the viewer was switched. The last chance, 35 mm film strips, were tried. This experience gave it a larger playing field compared to the previous strips. It was decided that the film's scenes would be drawn on 35 mm film strips. These decision-making processes provided the artist with impressions of how the production process would proceed, and the first significant steps for the project were taken. A

short animation loop was created after determining the film strip size and materials used.



Figure 26: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation with the celluloid [Photography]

This was a preview of how the whole process would proceed. To avoid using all the film stock on hand, the artist used 36 film frames to make the movement more straightforward. Using these strips, the artist aimed to animate the rocking of a toy horse. First of all, the sequential numbers of the scenes were written in small letters on the film strips, which were ready to be processed. In this way, the aim was to ensure the continuity of the consecutive movements during the merging. In this project, analog and digital techniques were combined, and digital techniques were used to merge the images. With the help of a high-resolution scanner, the scenes were scanned in order and filed in a numbered manner. The aim was to maintain the texture and defects of the film during this scanning. Various options were tried during the scanning. As a result of this trial, it was decided to scan the films in billions of color formats. This format prevented

the loss of textures by coding each tone on the film separately. Despite being created with a hybrid technique, it was decided not to make any digital interventions to the scenes to maintain the project's analog texture. After scanning, the images were named with sequential codes and transferred to the Procreate application. In the animation production section of the application, the scenes were arranged following their order. As a result of this arrangement, a 4-second toy horse swinging animation was obtained. To observe the flaws in this loop in detail, the scenes were duplicated using

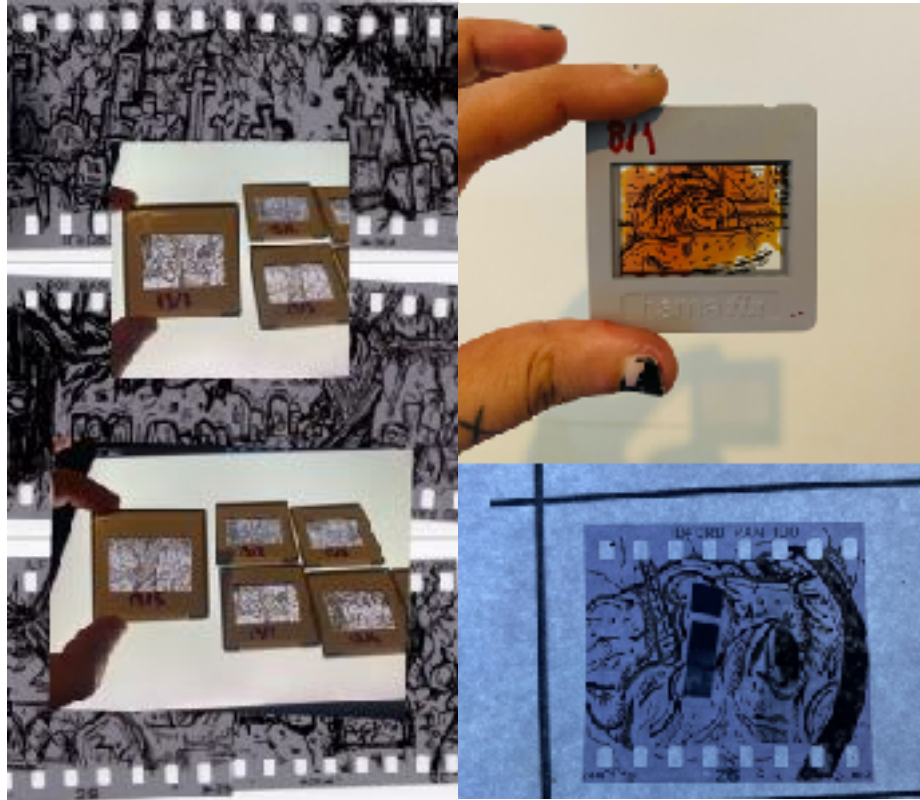


Figure 27: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation with the celluloid [Photography]

the Adobe Premiere Pro program, and a fluid loop was obtained. Thanks to this loop, the horse's swinging was given movement for a more extended period than it had by using 36 film frames. Thanks to this experience, the artist discovered they could make continuous movement possible by using as few stock films as possible. The artist decided to test the fluidity of the movement and the film's visual style with sound. To test the harmony of sound and image, the artist chose to benefit from the sound archive they

had recorded. The artist selected the sounds in this archive and then combined the desired sound, the creaking door sound, with the image. The artist achieved harmony by matching the sound and image using the Adobe Premiere Pro program. After testing the technique, transfer, and compatibility with the sound, the storyboard phase of the film started. This storyboard aimed to combine the main character's moments rather than a linear storytelling visual.

While preparing the storyboard, the introduction part of the film was first worked on. The aim was to introduce the movie to attract the audience and arouse curiosity. In addition, the film should have a clue about its texture and the film. With the information from the literature review, introducing the movie with a mechanism from the history of animation was likely suitable for its mission. It was deemed appropriate to use a device in the stereoscope format called View-Master Model G, which was produced in 1962. The mechanism of this device, which resembles a model of glasses, is summarized as a disk in a circular format and a button used to turn it. The images of successive photographs are seen by placing the disk in the glasses and pressing the button quickly. It was decided that these glasses, produced to present pictures, would be used as animation frames by displaying sequential images and intervening in them.

The films in the disc were painted black with the help of an acetate pen inspired by Len Lye. The letters of the film's name in Turkish were engraved on the movie, respectively, with metal-tipped materials used in sculpture making. After testing this mechanism with the eye, it was decided that the film would start with this device. Only with individual experience, in other words, methods of transferring the image seen with an eye to the digital environment were considered. It was decided to reflect light directly to the part where the device frames were using a light source. The phone's camera was placed parallel to the light with the help of a tripod. The phone's camera was fixed to the eye placement part of the device. After this fixation, the shooting was started, and the image of the letters written on

the frames was obtained by pressing the device button. The obtained image also included the mechanism inside the device in an unplanned way. Since this mechanism showed that it worked analogously and was suitable for the film's structure, it was decided not to crop it. In the storyboard study, the time agreed for the film's start was 15 to 20 seconds. Based on this time, the recorded image was transferred to the Adobe Animate program and divided into frames.

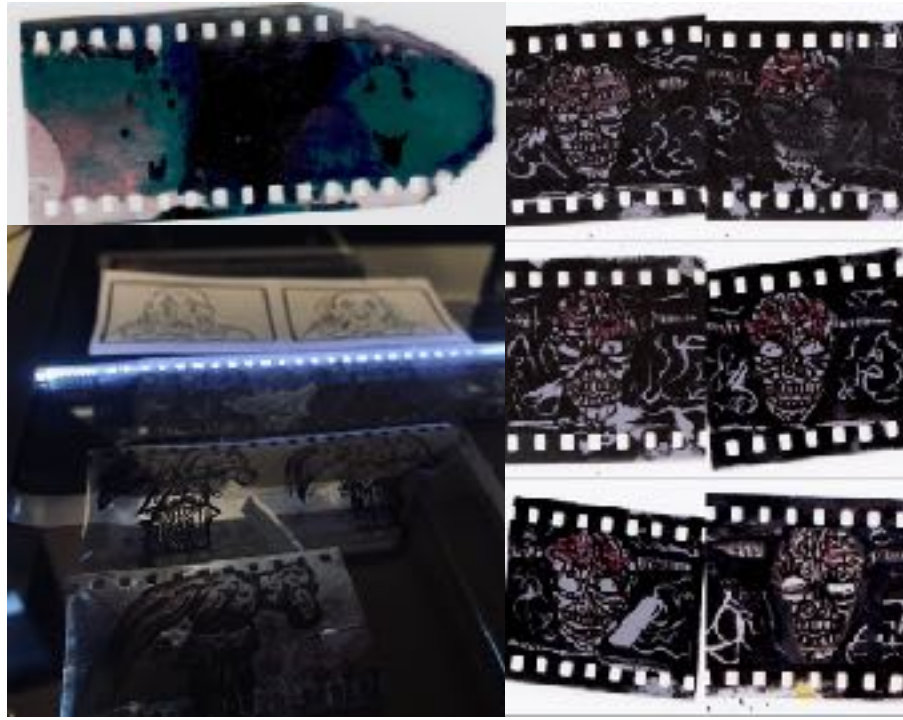


Figure 28: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation with the celluloid and scanner [Photography]

The freeze frame technique of Winsor McCay, one of the pioneers of animation and thoroughly researched, was combined with a digital method. This method was applied to digital media by deleting images between the divided frames. After the freeze frames were cleaned, the introductory part of the film was ready. The experimental nature of the production process is emphasized in this part of the project. The transformation of mechanisms into a new purpose and the artist's use of this for a purpose that suits their identity proves that the creative process has begun. This innovative process creates a suitable and accessible environment for an orig-

inal experimental animation along with the development of the artist's identity.



Figure 29: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation with the celluloid and scanner [Photography]

As the storyboard section nears completion, a solidarity call for film stocks was made using social media platforms. The call aimed to draw the audience's attention by emphasizing the project's subject, technique, and importance. Thanks to this solidarity call, the power of the artist's audience was used, and unused films were collected from people. As the collected film stocks accumulated, local photographers were visited as reinforcement. Here, washed, burned, and unused film strips were collected by explaining the project. The strips developed by the selected local photographers but left by their owners were taken. It was mentioned that the images would undergo reprocessing for security reasons and be used as textures. When sufficient film strips were obtained based on the storyboard, the size of the canvas to be drawn was determined. The area covered by a scene in the storyboard was calculated, and it was estimated that there were eight holes per scene. These eight holes determined the drawing area of each scene.

After this determined size, a solution was produced to exhibit and protect the drawing on the film. This solution is to store the drawings in

slide frames. Slide frames play a significant role in preserving and displaying analog photographs. The aim was to draw and place the frames drawn inside these frames. Then, the scene and frame numbers were written in the upper left corner. Thanks to this method, the drawings were physically protected and gained the value of an exhibition format. By using slide frames for their intended purpose, the analog structure of the film came to the forefront of the project.



Figure 30: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation [Photography & Scanning Image]

After the films were cut with the specified 8-hole scales, the aim was to distort the images on them. While the pictures were being distorted, the aim was to add a new texture to the film. For this purpose, an amateur film washing bath was carried out in a home environment. This washing bath used chemicals found at home instead of those used when washing the film. The aim was to stay within the budget limit allocated for the film using chemicals found at home. In the first trial, a small plastic tub was used. 300 ml of water and equal dishwashing detergent were added to this tub. The mixture was mixed, and the films were placed in the tub. The films,

which were left in the tub for 20-30 minutes, were removed from the tub due to the interaction of the chemical combination. However, since they were kept for a long time, the image and the texture remained on the films. As a result of this experiment, a completely transparent film strip was obtained. Although the desired result was not obtained, it was decided to use these films at points where the scenes could have been more complex. Since it would be used as a blank canvas, the complexity of the scenes would provide a balance with the transparency of the film. As a second trial, film stocks with colored photographs were used. This time, instead of

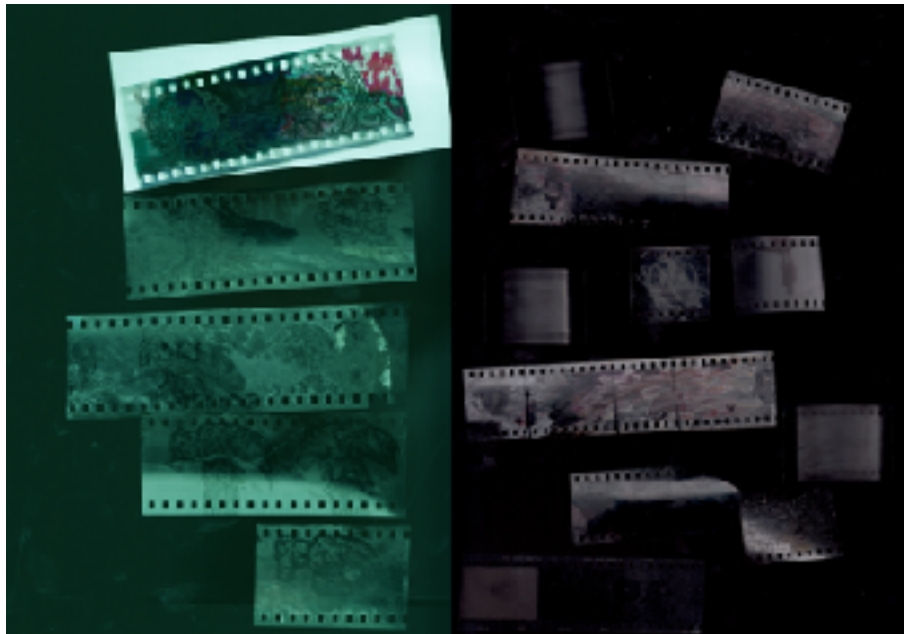


Figure 31: Nur, Özkaya. (2023). Experimentation [Scanning Image]

detergent, it was decided to use hydrochloric acid, a potent chemical found at home. After the same tub was washed and dried, it was ready for the new mixture. This mixture consists of hydrochloric acid and water. It was decided to reduce the number of films put into the mixture and to shorten the waiting time. After placing the films in the mix, they were kept for 10-15 minutes. After this waiting, it was observed that black burn marks formed on the film strips, and the film's color turned towards a sepia tone. As a re-

sult of this experiment, the desired texture was obtained and applied. Hydrochloric acid was used, which provides textural distortions. Adding color to the films and the textures obtained is also a part of this stage. It was thought that color should be added to the prepared chemical bath to create color on the films. Thanks to this stage, the project got closer to the targeted visual language and the use of distorted textures. A missing point in the movie was revealed thanks to trial and error. Inspired by Len Lye, it was decided that an original intervention should be needed to add texture to the film.

After finding a solution to the lack of texture in the film, experiments were started for the color requirement. First, gouache paint was added to the hydrochloric acid and water mixture, which was determined as the basic mixture. Hot water was used to increase the film's interaction with the mixture. After the films were placed in this mixture, they were again waited for 10-15 minutes and observed. As a result of this waiting, it was observed that gouache paint did not leave a permanent color or trace on the film due to its oily structure. It was experienced that the color that existed when the film's surface was touched was temporary. At this point, where the permanence of the color was essential, it was decided to try acrylic paint. Although acrylic paint left a more apparent trace than gouache paint, it was observed to form a fragile layer on the film when it dried. This layer would likely crack and fall off during the drawing of the scenes. Therefore, it was decided not to use acrylic paint. A search was started for a color medium less dense than water. As a result, the artist decided to try the marbling paint available at home.

The same mixture was made again, and marbling paint was added to it with the help of a dripping tool. The films were placed in this mixture and left for a similar period. As a result of this experiment, a fluid-colored image was observed in the movie. Films with natural color transitions were obtained with the desired porous texture. Thanks to this experiment, it was decided that the primary materials would be hydrochloric acid and mar-

bling paint. A waxed paper was used to dry the fluid and wet texture on the films. The films were placed on these waxed papers, considering the color transitions. They were left on a sunny balcony to dry. Although the figures in the movie were drawn based on black, it was aimed for these colors and textures to add a new dimension and depth to the film. When the storyboard was taken as a basis, it was observed that the colors that symbolized the emotions that certain scenes wanted to evoke in the audience were determined. These colors were coded with the scenes and helped to provide the visual and sensory integrity of the film with the guidance of the storyboard.

After the basic materials and scenes required for production were formed, the determination and search for auxiliary tools to speed up the process began. To ensure the fluidity of the movement in the animation, a lighted magnifier was supplied with the guidance of Professor Marek, the project and thesis advisor. This lighted magnifier makes it possible to see and process 36 mm squares in more detail. A problem arose during the use of the magnifier. When scenes were drawn on the film, the direction of the light was parallel to the hand, leaving a hard shadow on the drawing area. The disadvantage of this shadow is that the drawn area is not seen. As a solution to this, the tools used by McLaren in the production process were examined in the literature review. While examining the production processes, a device called Lightbox, used by McLaren, was found. This device made it possible to eliminate the shadow formed during drawing. The Lightbox product was supplied and tested using virtual shopping platforms. This device works with the logic of an LED panel and carries an A3-sized platform with a scratch-proof plastic glass structure on its surface. Thanks to this platform, the LED panels are not damaged. When the film strips are placed on these panels, the light source coming from under the strips is turned on. Thanks to this source, the film strips are illuminated from under the drawn surface, and shadow formation is prevented.

After shadow formation is prevented, it also helps the scenes to fol-

low each other. To ensure fluidity of movement, the drawn scenes are placed on top of each other and illuminated with the help of light. Thanks to this lighting, the maximum line that the next movement can take is drawn. As a result, the continuity of the movements that follow each other without skipping is ensured. Each scene is numbered within itself.

The scanned frames are named with scene and movement codes in the file belonging to the project on the computer. As a result of these numbers, it is calculated that the project consists of approximately 5,700 frames. This process required regular and meticulous work. Every frame that is skipped or incorrectly numbered directly affects the result. For this reason, the meticulously digitized frames ensured that the film maintained the fluidity of movement.

This project, which aims to be created in a hybrid way, has followed a handmade path by making all the film scenes analogously. The term hybrid comes into play when this analog technique is combined with the digital. After the scenes are drawn on the film strips, combining them in a digital environment is decided. The analog texture is thus transferred to a digital environment. It is aimed to determine a program to determine the playback speed of the film scenes and to calculate the duration of the scenes. An application called Procreate has been used to adjust and experience the frame rates quickly. This application creates a canvas with a 1920×1080 pixels resolution, which will be the film's display size. The scanned and numbered scenes are arranged in a particular order on this digital canvas. An average of 24 frames per second is targeted. However, since each scene has different movement dynamics, this number varies. Thanks to the playback speed determined based on the scenes, the narrative integrity of the film is ensured while the fluidity of the animation's movement flow is created. At this point, when hybrid techniques come together, a visual language specific to the artist emerges.

After the movements were combined in the digital environment, it was decided to proceed with the general arrangement of the film. Despite

the effort to stick to the scenes drawn in the storyboard, additions were made to the movie with scenes that came to the artist's mind during the production process. After these additions, it was noticed that there were gaps between the successive scenes due to the different brands of the collected films. As a solution, a point of the figures was determined, and these points were ensured to overlap in the following scenes. In this way, the fluidity of the movement was maintained. When the main product to be presented to the audience was considered, the different strips of the film created a problem. As a solution, this difference was hidden with the similarity of the drawings by presenting the holes of the film strips in the same line. As a result, it was decided to preserve the existence of the upper and lower parts of the film strips in the finished product. The aim was to present the audience with a more organized image instead of scattered continuous images, and the objective was to play the films in an analog frame. This frame emerged by placing a phone camera on the viewfinder of the analog camera called Zenit 12XP. This was achieved by shooting a white wall with a phone camera so the frame could be seen through the camera's viewfinder. The frame to be placed inside was masked using the Adobe Premiere Pro program. In this way, while digitally combining, the aim was to preserve the texture of the films to be placed inside the frame. With this method, the viewer only focuses on the framed image, which was aimed at not leaving the movie during the screening process.

After the film's scenes were combined with Procreate, they were brought together with the Adobe Premiere Pro program. After the editing was completed, the usefulness of the movie experimented with to create texture was considered. Then, when the texture of these films was examined, it was decided to scan them with the help of a scanner due to their washed, burnt, and bubbled structures. After this scanning, it was added as a layer on the film. Thanks to the texture additions, the original identity of the film was strengthened, and a rich visual was aimed to be presented to the audience. After the necessary visual touches were made, the sound de-

sign process that would support the dark and analog structure of the film was started. The artist aims to bring his sound design experience to this film's forefront. Unlike the artist's previous film productions, they aimed to integrate sound design into this project with a new approach. The artist decided to create a sound collage consisting of different sounds from different tools that could work harmoniously when viewed as a whole. In line with this decision, the artist used sound sources with evocative tones rather than the sound effects we should hear in the scenes. Access to sound sources was mainly created by taking from its sound archive, while in some scenes, it used authorized sound archive sites. To describe the integrity and strikingness of the film, much time was devoted to the sound design. In this way, it provided the viewer with a visual depth while at the same time adding a factor that deepens the experience sensorially. After the film was made whole, the artist edited the film without dialogue, bringing the images to the forefront. This editing is focused on images and sounds. Instead of music playing in the background until the film's end, it was decided to use sounds that would take breaks in between. For this reason, the aim was to find a melody to strengthen the story. In the artist's previous experimental animation project, "There Is Nothing Called Home," the artist's mother sang a lullaby childhood. In this project, the artist aimed to return to his childhood and add traces of himself.

For this reason, the artist decided to use the anonymous tongue twister "Beauty? Ugliness? Modeling by the pool?" The meaning of this tongue twister is a tongue twister that describes clear contrasts. It contains adjectives defined as good and evil. During this tongue twister, the people playing the game generally choose good adjectives. This closeness to what is good contrasts with the self-sabotage and tendency to evil in the film, creating a balance.

In this way, the artist added a new depth to the movie's meaning. Ways were sought to adapt this tongue twister to the film. After deciding that the film's general mood was dark and grotesque, a style befitting this

theme was sought. It was concluded that the opera genre would be a good fit for this film. Izem Topal, an opera singer, was contacted. Working together with the director, practices, and experiments were made. Then, with the studio recording, the desired dark but familiar childish feeling was achieved in the film. The viewing time of the film is precisely 4 minutes and 1 second. The duration of the opera music obtained from the studio recording is 1 minute and 20 seconds. In the sound design section, the artist separated the songs according to their pauses and placed them in the film. This way, a sound with pauses compatible with the image was obtained instead of a continuous song.



Figure 32. *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* (2024) Directed by: Nur Özkaya. [Film still] Turkey, 2024

When the film's final version was combined with music, the artist realized that they could not see the total reflection of their self. Since the film was a self-criticism towards their self, they decided they should also be in it. The artist used the scanner in the scene's drawing process for themselves this time. While reflecting the stream of consciousness in the film strips, the artist also scanned their face and integrated it into the film. The director's hidden character in the narrative was presented to the audience as a character. The artist selected from the scanning results using different angles of their face. In line with this selection, the artist also digitally

manipulated the photographs by choosing red, which was appropriate for the film's theme. However, this manipulation was not about not making the person's face visible. Since these photographs would be used as a dividing tool in the film, it was decided to write notes on them. These notes were excerpts from the artist's diary and contributed to the narrative. The notes were written by printing the photographs and writing them with white paint using a thick brush. Then, when the paint dried, they were scanned and integrated into the film. No random attitude was taken regarding the placement of the images. A path has been followed that draws the audience into the story and guides them simultaneously. These images, which sometimes push them out of the story, aimed to take them back into the film with the sound and image that followed. When the director watched the film, it created a sense of satisfaction. As a result, the experimental animation film produced using the hybrid technique called "I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away" emerged.

After the film was completed, the exhibition phase was started. This phase was in May 2024, and the project consultants Professor Marek and Professor Treske played an essential role in the film's exhibition. This project, which was planned to be presented without lights, was described as the film's kitchen. Here, a presentation of the labor and determination spent in the production process was prepared for the audience. Presenting some of this project, which consisted of 5,700 frames, was possible. However, the scenes where vital scenes in the film, where colors and textures were highlighted, were exhibited.

The presentation of these scenes was inspired by the Lightbox, the tool used by the artist to draw the scenes of the film. The artist designed three light boxes with the help of a master. These light boxes are 60x60 cm square and have LED lights under a square white background. One hundred film frames were placed on the surface of each light box with slide frames. This placement was easy because the frames were numbered in advance. The slide frames were placed on the panels with an adhesive that

can be removed and re-glued. Then, it was hung on the walls with a ceiling hanger. The power cables of the panels were connected to the power source with the help of a triple. The dark environment was illuminated with lighting, and the frames of the film could be examined in detail. A slide player corner was set up to give the audience an analog experience in the exhibition. In this corner, a film with 50 slide frames was projected onto the wall with the help of a projector. Switching between the film strips was provided with a wired remote control, and an analog examination of the 36 mm film strips was provided. The entire film was projected with the projector and speakers in the middle of the hall.

The director, who had previously produced experimental animation film productions using digital media, experienced a new challenge by following an analog approach. This challenging production tested the director with the size of the field they worked in and was a work that required patience with trial and error methods. The artist revealed their identity as an artist who renewed themselves with the desire to succeed and produce. With his result, the artist showed the original aspects of experimental animation and their artistic identity.

3.2 Critical Questions

3.2.1: What is experimental about this movie?

The cameraless animation technique in drawing the film's scenes differs from animation production techniques. In traditional animations, scenes are generally drawn with a viewer-focused perspective. The framing of the scenes is done with a fixed camera view or in the way people are accustomed to perceiving. However, in the direct drawing technique on film, the artist limits themselves to a small area and reflects the pure flow of their imagination by not recognizing visual boundaries. This project, which combines analog and digital narratives in terms of technique, results from

experimentation in technique.

This technique allowed for experimentation and going beyond what was planned during production. Drawing scenes analogously allowed the artist to change the scene instantly. These interventions generally progressed by adding textures to scenes drawn on the film strip. Various materials were used to disrupt existing textures. Instant interventions played a significant role in obtaining an experimental image visually and technically. They characterized the originality of the film. The experimental path followed in the film's production was also followed in the storytelling. Only the turning points of the character were included in the storytelling. Abstract images and concrete images were used to describe these turning points. In this film, which is an instinctive storytelling, another part that supported the narrative and wanted to stand out was the sound design. Inspired by McLaren's notation system, the artist separated the sounds during the sound design and made a rhythmic video arrangement using the sound rhythms. The artist managed to preserve his identity, which is the most crucial point of the film, and reflected it in the film. The artist, who protected his visual language even on a small canvas, created an original narrative. When the film is viewed as a whole, it is concluded that it is the fruit of an experimental journey.

3.2.2: What role did the experimental animation project *I Was So Afraid Of You Running Away* play in developing artistic identity?

This project plays a significant role in forming and developing the artist's identity. The artist's talent was pushed to its limits thanks to the technique. The artist, who follows a detailed approach in their productions, worked on the scenes in detail on a 36 mm canvas. The artist conveyed this to the audience with a new medium while maintaining their visual consistency. A discovery process was also experienced during the production.

These discoveries helped to increase the knowledge gained by experiencing new tools. This film, produced by working on different textures, developed the artist's instinctive production since it was produced analogously. This instinctive production expanded the artist's limits of expression and offered a freer narrative. Thanks to this freedom, the originality created by the visual language presented by the artist came to the fore.

When the films where the technique was used were examined during the literature review, abstract works that were far from detailed were seen. The artist aimed to produce a more complex film using a similar technique and added a new layer to the past. The result was distinctive from the movie previously created using a similar method. Obtaining a different result using similar techniques shows that the artist maintains their linear stance and that their artistic identity is at the forefront.

3.2.3: How do I see the place of my work in this animation's historical and cultural context?

From a historical point of view, the film I created combines the techniques of pioneering experimental animation artists like McLaren and Len Lye. On the one hand, it is a bridge that carries today's technology and storytelling. I call this project a work that explores the intersection between the past and the future. On the one hand, it continues the technique that McLaren pioneered at the birth of experimental animation. Throughout this production, I experienced the paths master animators took by refusing to produce in today's conditions. I have created a historical project that foregrounds the experimental journey of manual production.

While preserving the technical traditions of the practice, I aimed to push those boundaries. Instead of animating abstract shapes or simple lines in the films, I animated complex figures with details. In a small space, this helped my craftsmanship to come to the forefront, along with my identity as an artist. This animation, in which I told an entirely personal story, actu-

ally turned into a project where I pushed my artist identity out of its comfort zone and pushed my limits. I have provided diversity to the historical development of animation in this movie, in which I have woven thematic and emotional touches into every frame.

To summarize, when I look at my project within a historical and cultural framework, the biggest mission of this project is to sustain a deep-rooted exploration while at the same time pushing these boundaries with my forms of expression and visual language. Thanks to this mission, I position the film as a communication between the past and the future.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The different results of different definitions of experimental animation meet at a single common point. This common point is the emergence of the artist's identity. This field, which has no clear-cut definition, can be described as a way in which the artist reveals his identity by using the context of movement and character to discover his own identity. This space, where the artist directly reflects their identity, presents the viewer with fragments of his/her identity instead of a prescribed story. This is not just a technique or a narrative but a tool directly reflecting the artist's identity and visual language. Within the framework of this definition, it is concluded that although similar techniques are used in their productions, the artists produce in a unique style. In line with this conclusion, when the artists' production processes are examined in detail, they offer a new perspective on techniques with their interventions. Analog techniques in the production process provide a space for intervention, requiring the artist to interact directly with the material. When this field of intervention is viewed from Kandinsky's "food for the spirit" framework, the aesthetic pleasure created by experimental animation turns into a wave created by the combination of rhythm, dynamics, colors, and textures rather than a static object.

This research and project closely observes the identity formation of the artist in the production process and provides evidence of the potential for authentic identity in experimental animation. Evaluating the project within the scope of the thesis question, it is concluded that experimental animation reveals the artist's identity. Guided by Kandinsky's concepts, it has been determined that aesthetic pleasure and spirit are visible in the production of experimental animation by showing the artist's identity. This project, which was produced by utilizing the techniques of master artists

such as Norman McLaren and Len Lye, was in direct contact with the artist and strengthened the bond between the material and the artist. Thanks to this direct working method, the artist tested to show his identity with different materials and managed to preserve the originality of his lines. In this project and research, the role of experimental animation in developing and demonstrating an artist's identity is explored. While the project explores the emergence of artist identity in experimental animation, it raises new questions. Whether this field has no clear boundaries and can create a definitive identity has dominated. In the production process, which develops itself and constantly adds new techniques, it has also presented that the identity cannot be fully completed and will be in a constant state of development. Experimental animation, which has no static definition, has helped to understand that it will not harbor a static artist identity.

The identity that this project embodies breaks away from traditional narratives and stereotypes, taking the viewer on a dark visual and aural journey. Compared to the artist's past works, the scenes drawn on 36mm film strips and the sound design depicting these scenes carry similar images that reflect the artist's true self. This project, which was drawn analogously and combined digitally and included different techniques, allowed the audience to reflect on the director's inner world and have no boundaries of narrative forms. When we look at the layers of the project, we see traces of the director's childhood in the sound design, while we observe traces of instinctive emotionality in the visual language he uses. In this project, where we see a reflection of Kandinsky's concepts, the analog layers deepen the project and carry traces of the artist's identity. While these traces emphasize the artist's ability to tell a unique story, they also show that he is a craftsman who can combine his creativity in various fields of art.

In line with the resulting project, this thesis aims to explore the application techniques of experimental animation films that bear the traces of unique artist identities. This exploration emphasizes emerging artist identities and discusses the methods and expressions of artists producing experi-

mental animations. This unique project takes an experimental approach in both narrative and technical terms. It has provided new insights into the future of experimental animation. The study's results suggest that the technology used can have positive and negative aspects of experimental animation in today's digitalization and artificial intelligence world. The place of experimental animation in original production is indisputable, but the fact that this production is a long process leads to the widespread use of emerging digital tools. Tools such as artificial intelligence in animation production have started to replace analog techniques. It is a matter of debate that production with this rapidly developing technology may cause the artist's original identity to become invisible. On the other hand, as a new form of visual expression, it can also be a time-saving tool in production.

Since the animations produced using digital tools contain continuity and repetition, it is predicted that the artist's identity will not come to the fore. In this context, a point will also be formed between artists who produce original products and digitalized artists. However, within the scope of this thesis and project, I am closer to the idea that the original emergence of the artist's identity can be achieved through analog interventions and instinctive lines. The artist's one-to-one interaction and intervention with the material and production proves that the artist has a say in the resulting work. This shows the identity of the artist. With the development of technology, it is predicted that the number of original productions will decrease in animation, where production processes will be short and easy. However, the artist who can sustain these original productions is expected to create an extra difference in the visibility of the artist's identity.

To summarize, this project and research concluded that experimental animation creates an effect of self in the artist's production. This relative conclusion does not have a definite truth like the definition of experimental animation. This field, which constantly renews itself, is one of the reasons why the artist's identity is constantly transformed and does not stop. It is debatable how these rapidly developing technological possibilities and attractive advantages, such as

getting faster results in a shorter time, will affect the artist's preservation of his identity. However, what is certain is that experimental animation does not just describe moving figures and stories that do not coalesce. It is a free presentation and exploration of the artist's own identity.

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