

Voice of Reallusion Education

Subject: Previs Production

Interviewee: Satoshi Yamaguchi, Chairman of ACW-DEEP & Lecturer of Chuo Technology & Design College, Japan

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Chuo Technology & Design College 3D CG Animation course is taught by industry veteran Satoshi Yamaguchi. Yamaguchi is the founder of ACW-DEEP, a company established in March 2013 providing previs services for film and ad companies. Previs is shorthand for 'Pre-visualization', the term was adopted by the film industry for the pre-production planning phase that involves visualizing the storyline and cinematographic concepts.

The 3D CG Animation Program does not only teach the tools, it also teaches fundamental concepts such as character design and the significant history of CG animation. This two-year program will also enhance the student's ability to cope with pressure thereby enhancing their competitiveness in the industry. "Other colleges tend to only teach Maya, however, my students learn the entire concept and work-flow of previs, which will give them a competitive advantage in their career." - Yamaguchi

Previs has uses outside of the animation and CG industry. Skills learned in previs can help with careers in other industries such as logistics, food, and advertising because they demand same key concepts and abilities of pre-production.

How do the students become so fluent in film production in a rapid two-year program?

In the 3D CG Animation Program, students are taught to use Maya and fundamental knowledge of the film industry. Because of the rapid speed of the program, Yamaguchi has a preference for iClone animation software for teaching previs. iClone can save a lot of time because it provides an abundance of 3D models, whereas in Maya one would have to learn and create models from scratch. Yamaguchi believes that iClone is the most efficient and convenient tool to teach previs and speed up the learning process.

How does one succeed with previs?

In 2007 Yamaguchi started to promote previs, back when it was an unfamiliar concept in Japan. Yamaguchi initially struggled with spreading this idea that he had learned in Hollywood to Japanese directors and cinematographers, therefore he had spent many years adapting and communicating previs concepts to the liking of the Japanese film makers. In his opinion, great previs techniques should be flexible to meet the demands and work flow of different cultures. From his experience, successful previs is not just in the production itself but the efficiency of communication and convenience brought to clients. Furthermore, he feels that real-time previs can be of even greater value.