

Nurturing local animators for a global market

While the South African animation sector is still in its infancy stages, it has potential to grow exponentially, pending consistent work commitment from international studios.

By Cate Hunter and Roshin Schmidt, issued by False Bay College ^{21 Feb 2019}



Image by: Pascal Nzoni Mikulu.

2D Animation Learners Sbu Ngubelanga and Apelele Sezelwa working on Lip synching characters for Jabu's Jungle with Pascal Nzoni Mikulu of Pixcomm

South African produced work is receiving more and more international recognition. Mind's Eye Creative has done work for some shows on Netflix and was involved with an Amazon show that got nominated for three Daytime Emmys. [Triggerfish Studios](#) animated the short film, [Revolting Rhymes](#), which was nominated for an Oscar in the Best Animated Short Film category. says Mike Buckland, head of production at Triggerfish and the co-producer of Revolting Rhymes.

Tim Keller, director at [Sunrise Productions](#) says Talent sharing between animation houses is common practice, but Keller cites another challenge as the maintenance and retention of key talent, with experienced employees heading overseas for better opportunities.



Image by: Yolanda Mogatusi.

Pascal Nzoni Mikulu smiles with pride with the 2D Animation class for their character interpretations.

Clearing up the idea that the creative industries is all about drawing, there are numerous support career paths available to as skills learnt can be used in many career paths. According to the Harrington College of Design and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), “the job outlook for graphic design is bright. It’s a fast growing industry, and jobs are expected to increase by 13 percent by 2020.” This could be attested to the demand for fresh content across all entertainment platforms.

Through the partnership of the False Bay TVET College, 2D Animation programme, funded by MICT Seta and the College Work Integrated Learning department, the College students participated in amazing opportunity to learn and grow their artistic abilities and applications. These include:

Digital collaboration with **Pixcomm** owners of one of South Africa’s most widely watched television shows in the world. False Bay College’s 2D Animation Department worked on one of the episode from Jabu’s Jungle - The African Hare. An upcoming children animated series will be aired globally with an estimated 4 million viewership

Just Films, a Cape Town based production company, provided the learners with the opportunity to create 2D character artwork for their IP Fumi and Friends; which is currently in pre-production development. Fumi and Friends is a mixed media TV series for 5 to seven-year-old deaf children in foundation phase. Fumi and Friends will teach Sign Language while providing an opportunity for hearing impaired children to engage with a television show that aims to entertain while teaching to grow their imagination, creativity and to have fun while learning sign language.

1000 Hugs Productions, a Johannesburg based production company, provided the learners with the opportunity to create 2D character artwork for their IP Rapulani and Rapunzel; which is currently in pre-production development. Rapulani and Rapunzel will be a multi-platform and multimedia project including a 2D animated short film, early reader books, and potentially a television series for a 4 to 6-year-old, primarily girl target audience. Rapulani and Rapunzel was created by producer, director, screenwriter and actor, Yolanda Mogatusi, and grew out of her documentary feature titled ‘Hair that moves’. Yolanda realized the need to create body positive images aimed at the black African girl to counteract the normalization of Western ‘beauty’ standards in mainstream commercial animation productions.

On a more caring note, the 2D Animation students were invited by Ms Alta du Ploy of the Isivivana Multipurpose Centre for an outreach drawing experience.

After a walking introduction of the Isivivana Multipurpose Centre, the College students were joined by members of Umbambano – a self-organised youth group from Manyano High School in Ilitha Park, and children and care-givers from a group home called Ilitha Labantwana from Khayelitsha too.

The programme kicked off with a viewing of 'Just One Sip Frog' an animated art short film by brothers, animator Diek Grobler and illustrator Piet Grobler, to set the mood for engagement activities.

Inspired by the short film students participated in a fun character artwork drawings and storytelling workshop with the children of Ilitha Labantwana. Sharing ideas and styles, the False Bay TVET College students were able to impart some of their learnt drawing skills techniques with those who had yet to discover their creative ability. An eye enlightening experience for the children of Ilitha Labantwana that they too may continue to draw and make a career of it one day.

<https://themediainline.co.za/2018/04/south-africas-booming-animation-industry/>

<http://www.harrington.edu/student-life/blog/december%202013/graphic-designer-job-description-and-future-outlook>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cate Hunter and Roshin Schmidt are employees at False Bay TVET College.

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