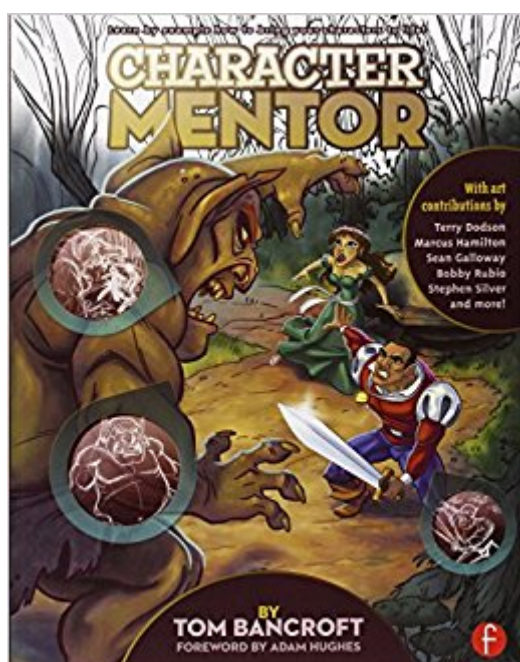


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Character Mentor: Learn By Example To Use Expressions, Poses, And Staging To Bring Your Characters To Life



Synopsis

You've researched your character extensively, tailored her to your audience, sketched hundreds of versions, and now you lean back content as you gaze at your final character model sheet. But now what? Whether you want to use her in an animated film, television show, video game, web comic, or children's book, you're going to have to make her perform. How a character looks and is costumed starts to tell her story, but her body language reveals even more. Character Mentor shows you how to pose your character, create emotion through facial expressions, and stage your character to create drama. Author Tom Bancroft addresses each topic with clear, concise prose, and then shows you what he really means through commenting on and redrawing artwork from a variety of student "apprentices." His assignments allow you to join in and bring your drawing to the next level with concrete techniques, as well as more theoretical analysis. Character Mentor is an apprenticeship in a book. Professional artists from a variety of media offer their experience through additional commentary. These include Marcus Hamilton (Dennis the Menace), Terry Dodson (X-Men), Bobby Rubio (Pixar), Sean "Cheeks" Galloway (Spiderman animated), and more. With a foreword by comicbook artist Adam Hughes, who has produced work for DC, Marvel Comics, Lucasfilm, Warner Bros. Pictures, and other companies.

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Tom Bancroft is a 30 year veteran of the animation industry. In his artistic career he has specialized in children's character designs, animation, video game development, and comic books. Formerly, he worked at Walt Disney Feature Animation for twelve years, animating on new Disney classics, including Beauty and the Beast, The Lion King, Aladdin, Pocahontas, Mulan, Brother Bear, and more. He is the author of the popular character design book Creating Characters with Personality: For Film, TV, Animation, Video Games, and Graphic Novels.

In the fields of animation and illustration, the craft of character design is often completely overlooked by the casual observer. Instead, the human eye perceives the most well-crafted characters as living things, whether we're looking at a sequence of frames or simply one static image, because the finest character designers have learned what exactly tricks the brain into seeing life in lines. There have been a handful of books over the last thirty years or so that have touched on this topic to one degree or another. However, these are very often oversimplified, starting with volumetric shapes and hurrying through the details to arrive at the quickest complete character possible. Such methods are certainly valid and universally applicable -- for first-year animation students, perhaps,

or fledgling comic book artists. Up until now, the question of what makes a character truly unique and lively has been left as something the novice must explore him/herself. Tom Bancroft's book is probably the first one of its kind that goes past this basic level. Right off the bat, Tom assumes the reader is not only intelligent but avidly interested in the details. He explores perceptual cues, the various methods of conveying emotion and personality (which are far more numerous than simply drawing a smile or a frown), and the tiny little decisions that can completely alter the way an audience will see a character, for better or for worse. Tom's experience as a veteran of Disney's traditional animation era really shines through here. And in an age where technology provides an ever-increasing range of shortcuts, it's ultimately all the more important that these techniques be detailed and passed on to the next generation of artists. Check this out -- you won't regret it.

Since I was 3 years old I wanted to be a Disney animator. I've practiced and practiced and gotten pretty far studying the masters of animation. But there was always just a little something missing. This book has already given me the boost I need. It has tons of helpful advice for anyone from novice to advanced users. Most books on character design really only scratch the surface. Tom Bancroft takes a chisel and turns that surface into a carefully sculpted work of craftsmanship. He allows us on the "outside" of the industry to finally get at all the juicy tips he learned in his time at Disney. Outstanding work, Tom. I'm forever a huge fan.

This book is very appropriate to my learning style. I bought it a while ago, when I was looking for books to help me with hand-drawn animation (this is NOT an animation textbook, by the way; it focuses on bringing your character to life. So, don't expect anything about timing and all that. And of course, you will need to have a character to start with). Level: intermediate (not for beginners in drawing; I have been drawing for more than 10 years, including 4 years at an art institute, and I still had to do some research and practice on anatomy while reading this book). Pros: - the chapters are well organized. Each will focus on a different feature of your drawing. - very helpful tips from a professional - there are exercises for each chapter, with student samples and instructor's comments on said samples Cons: (I can't really call this a con, but for lack of a better word, I'll just go with it) Don't expect this book to hand you all you need to know on a platter. It's a mentor, so you will still have to do some work on your own to find how to adapt the instructor's advice to your own style.

This book is invaluable as a resource for the various stages that go into designing and developing characters. It is an excellent teaching/learning resource for the beginner, and full of information that

experienced artists can apply to their work. I love Tom Bancroft's drawing style, and this book is full of illustrated examples of the tips and techniques he is describing. The illustrations are a nice size... one thing I hate is when art/instruction books have tiny little pictures that obscure detail... but these illustrations are a pleasure to look at. For a companion book, I would highly recommend another book by Bancroft... *Creating Characters with Personality: A Creating Characters with Personality: For Film, TV, Animation, Video Games, and Graphic Novels* I would, and will, give it the same review as this book.

This book was included in a purchase I did of several drawing books from various authors/artists. I wanted to experiment with various styles. This book provides more advanced ideas for your newly created character. This does not help with character creation but more for character refinement. This book helped me view my own creations in more interesting poses and camera angles. It brought them to life! I also enjoyed that each chapter included the result of a challenge/exercise the author gave to various expert artists in the industry... so you get the combined experience of several experts in one book.

This is an amazing book for artists who are getting stumped with how their characters' poses and expressions are turning out. There's so many tricks in here that the self-taught artist might struggle with discovering, but the tips and examples to go with it are SO helpful and make you realize that your art could have been a slightly different way and make a much bigger impact. There are assignments inside for artists to try out with helpful critique to show you how you could have expressed it better. The use of silhouette, expressions, angles, and poses are just a few things covered in this incredible book. Highly recommended, especially for the self-taught artist who needs a boost!!

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