The Spark!
Visual Development For Animation

:: Course Syllabus ::

Hello, my friends!

I'm Chris Oatley! I was a character designer and visual development artist at Disney until I left to pursue my passion for teaching.

I founded The Oatley Academy of Visual Storytelling in August of 2012, with the mission of creating the most personal art education available online.

A community of focused, passionate artists has been gathering here ever since.

This is the current syllabus for The Spark.

The Spark is our course on Visual Development, taught by Sarah Marino.

Sarah will teach you how to create pro-level visual development art, and provide you with a clear understanding of every creative role in an animated production. Class sessions are held in a virtual classroom, in real time.

If, however, you are unable to attend the live classes, all the sessions are recorded and will be made available to you.

Sarah is also extremely passionate about helping her students prep their portfolios for CTN-X and other professional events and opportunities.

You will benefit from Sarah's amazing ability to identify the source of your struggles and help you cultivate significant growth as a painter and storyteller.

And… If history is any indication, you will establish new, lasting friendships and collaborations with your fellow students.

    - Chris

The overall assignment is to redesign a fairytale, or folktale, as a tool to reinvent and explore a world in a style that has its roots in research and reference.

Week 01: Introduction

- **Class Discussion:** What is Visual Development?
- **Assignment 1:** Style Boards

Week 02: Style

- **Portfolio Review:** Part 1
- **Homework Review:** Style Boards
- **Assignment 2:** Character Exploration

Week 03: Characters/Shapes

- **Portfolio Review:** Part 2
- **Homework Review:** Character Exploration
- **Assignment 3:** Flat Color Passes

Week 04: Visual Storytelling – Characters / Location / Composition

- **Portfolio Review:** Part 3
- **Homework Review:** Flat Color Passes
- **Assignment 4:** Value Thumbnails

Week 05: Value

- **Portfolio Review:** Part 4
- **Homework Review:** Value Thumbnails
- **Assignment 5:** Prop Design

Week 06: Production Design

- **Homework Review:** Prop Design
- **Assignment 6:** Hero Prop Design

Week 07: Layout

- **Homework Review:** Hero Prop Design
- **Assignment 7:** Tight Drawing & Layout

Week 08: Color

- **Class Discussion:** Painting Process Part 1
- **Homework Review:** Tight Drawing & Layout
- **Assignment 8:** Color Keys

Week 09: Light

- **Class Discussion:** Painting Process Part 2
- **Homework Review:** Color Keys
- **Assignment 9:** Final Painting

Week 10: The Art of Development

- **Final Class Discussion:** What We Learned
- **Homework Review:** Final Painting