

# Stop Motion Animation

By Samara Torres

# What movie problem does stop motion animation solve?

Stop motion animation is an intricate type of cinema effect. Its purpose is to create an illusion of continuous movement using physical objects. The beauty of stop motion animation is that it brings motionless objects to life. Each object is precisely moved by hand in between single frames. “The basic process of animation involves taking a photograph of your objects or characters, moving them slightly, and taking another photograph. When you play back the images consecutively, the objects or characters appear to move on their own.”

DragonFrame. (2021, July 24). *Introduction to stop motion animation*. Dragonframe. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://www.dragonframe.com/introduction-stop-motion-animation/>

# When did the effect first appear in cinema?

The effect first appeared in cinema in 1898. The film that it was shown in was called “The Humpty Dumpty Circus.” It was a short film that used dolls with jointed limbs to mimic the movements of circus acrobats. Unfortunately, the film is lost and there are no parts of the film that have been recovered.

# The Nightmare Before Christmas



Failes, I. (2018, September 4). *Henry Selick looks back on 25 years of 'nightmare before christmas'*. Cartoon Brew. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://www.cartoonbrew.com/interviews/henry-selick-looks-back-on-25-years-of-nightmare-before-christmas-163558.html>

# The Nightmare Before Christmas

One of the most well-known movies this special effect has appeared in would have to be “The Nightmare Before Christmas.” The film was directed by Henry Selick and was produced by none other than Tim Burton. The effect was executed by Pete Kozachik and a large team of animators. The animation crew consisted of 120 members with a total of 109,440 frames taken for the movie. “The process of pre-production storyboarding, animation production, editing, and voice acting added up to *The Nightmare Before Christmas* taking over three years to make.” Williams, J., &

Jordan Williams (868 Articles Published)      Jordan Williams is a Movie/TV Feature Senior Staff Writer for Screen Rant. She graduated from the University of Oregon in 2020 wi. (2021, October 24). *How long the nightmare before christmas took to make*. ScreenRant. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://screenrant.com/nightmare-before-christmas-time-make-how-long/>

# How does the effect work?

Stop motion animation is a very long, detailed process. Inanimate objects are used, like puppets, clay, or 2D objects and are physically moved by hand in small increments. Each time an object is slightly moved, a frame is captured one at a time. In the end, each frame will be put together one after another in quick viewing, The images will appear consecutive and will have the same concept as a flipbook .

Maio,

A., Alyssa Maio Alyssa Maio is a screenwriter from New Jersey, & Alyssa Maio is a screenwriter from New Jersey. (2021, January 12). *DIY Animation: What is stop motion animation & how to try it at home*. StudioBinder. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-stop-motion-animation/#:~:text=Stop%20motion%20animation%20is%20a,physical%20objects%2C%20instead%20of%20drawings.>



STech12, & Instructables. (2017, October 4). *Make a stop motion animation - for Beginners*. Instructables. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://www.instructables.com/Make-A-Stop-Motion-Animation-For-Beginners/>

# Steps to make stop motion animation

1. Create a Plan- What will your story be about? What items/objects will you need? What transitions will you use? Where will you shoot? What will your background be? What will be your desired lighting? Create a storyboard or moodboard
2. Number of Frames-The higher number of frames you have will result in a smooth, continuous look. About 10-15 frames per second.
3. Props- Figure out what props you need to create or gather. Practically any inanimate object will work.
4. Set everything up- A flat surface works best and will be easier to manipulate the objects. Set camera to position you want to shoot.

# Steps to making stop motion animation

5..Shoot scenes in still frames- Begin with one scene at a time. Set prop up, take a shot, and move it slightly. Take another shot and repeat process on all inanimate objects you want to move.

6 .Edit- Combine all still images into a video



By. (2015, February 20). *How to do stop motion animation*. Film School And Acting School Of New York Film Academy. Retrieved May 6, 2022, from <https://www.nyfa.edu/student-resources/stop-motion-animation/>



# Stop Motion Animation Designs

Some examples of the excellent stop motion animation designs you may be familiar with are:

## Coraline



Coraline was produced by Laika Studios which is an animation company that specializes in stop motion animation. The setting and landscape of this movie has such a dark whimsical look and feel to it. Coraline is especially unique because it was the first stop motion animation to be shot in 3D.

*Coraline in 3D.* Coraline in 3D | Computer Graphics World. (n.d.). Retrieved May 5, 2022, from <https://www.cgw.com/Publications/CGW/2009/Volume-32-Issue-11-Nov-2009-/Coraline-in-3D.aspx>

# Stop Motion Animation Designs

## The Fantastic Mr. Fox

The visual style of this movie along with the animation is so stunning to look at. I especially admire the use of colors incorporated into the landscape and characters. This film is a form of claymation that uses stop motion .



*Behind the filming of one of my favorite fantastic mr. Fox performances: Fantastic mr fox movie, stop motion, fantastic mr fox. Pinterest. (2012, June 8). Retrieved May 5, 2022, from <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/31103053646999717/>*

# Artists and Awards

Ray Harryhausen- (1939-2010)

He is notably known for specializing in visual effects and helped evolve stop motion animation. He won the Gordon E. Sawyer award given by The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts in 1992. It was given as a technical achievement for an advancement in visual effects.



Squires, J. (2018, October 25).  
*Unused Ray Harryhausen  
monster designs will be used in  
brand new film 'force of the  
trojans'!* Bloody Disgusting!  
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[https://bloody-disgusting.com/mo  
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brand-new-film-force-trojans/](https://bloody-disgusting.com/movie/3529649/unused-ray-harryhausen-monster-designs-will-used-brand-new-film-force-trojans/)

# Artists and Awards

## Henry Selick

He won the Winsor McCay Award in 2020 for his tremendous contribution in animation. He is best known for his work on *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Coraline*, and *James and the Giant Peach*



Staff, T. P. (2012, August 15). *Disney shuts down production on Henry Selick's stop-motion animated film*. The Playlist. Retrieved May 5, 2022, from <https://theplaylist.net/disney-shuts-down-production-on-henry-selicks-stop-motion-animated-film-20120815/>

# Final Thoughts

I believe that stop motion animation sets the pathway for such uniqueness and creativity that animators are able to achieve and show their talent to the world.. The films created from this special effect are so visually stunning and the long precise process that goes into making these movies are should most certainly be more admired. I cannot wait to see what the future holds for the innovative world of stop motion animation .