

# 9.1 Representation and reconstruction of memories on graffiti Writing – Case study about animation as documentary strategy

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## × Abstract

The graffiti Writing, visual movement from the 1970s Americans, spread globally over the decades. Despite the large amount of visual material documenting it, it remains a cryptic and marginal subculture, little-known by large audiences, and sometimes misunderstood. The following paper presents an applied research project, whose objective is to investigate the contribution of animation to the documentation of this subculture, deciphering its interpretation for a broader audience. Through documentary fieldwork, with interviews, are registered Writers operating in different approaches, surfaces and styles. The fieldwork is developed by contextualizing a geographic area, in the province of Ferrara, in northern Italy. The research aims to define representation strategies and narrative reconstruction to document the disclosure and memories of this subculture in a specific geographical context, through the project for an animated short film. The choice allows the exploration of new concepts by the encounter of two distinct visual arts, the Writing and the animation.

**Keywords:** graffiti writing, documentary, animation, hybrid, Ferrara.

## 1. Introduction

This paper presents a theoretical-practical study investigating the possibilities of hybrid animation to explore new visual concepts through its encounter with the aesthetics of graffiti Writing. The research aims to present its results useful to the elaboration of an animated documentary short film defined by a language adequate to the theme to be portrayed.

In fact, the biggest challenge of the project on which this study is based is to represent a visual subculture - with its own specific language - through other visual media (animation), making this theme accessible wider publics.

The theoretical part of this investigation is based on the analysis of the history of Writing – from its emergence in New York and Philadelphia to its arrival to Bologna, regional capital near the contextualized area of study, in order to delineate its characteristics as a marginal and cryptic visual-culture.

Succeeding, the following paper presents a scrutiny to a selection of both fictional and non-fictional films outlined as hybrid animation, intending the purpose of understanding and defining strategies and technical-aesthetic solutions to design the project for an animated documentary short film about Writing.

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In turn, the practical segment, on which this paper is based, develops from interviews with three Writers and from the gathering of visual documentary material. Contextualizing the fieldwork on the province of Ferrara, in northern Italy, the project aims to document, translate and communicate the characteristics and memories of a global, but still little-known and marginal movement.

## 2. Offset of Writing culture

There is no way to identify exactly the beginning of the Aerosol Art or Writing movement. In fact, there are several hypotheses about the emergence of graffiti as a creative practice. Some claim that the movement appeared in the metropolis of New York, others in Philadelphia. (Ferri, 2016, p. 18)

In 1967, in Philadelphia, the names CORNBREAD and COOL EARL appeared written taking visual possession of the city, these nickname-writings drawn the attention of the local mass media defining the role of the name Writers, with their goal of gaining an “anonymous fame”. (Nelli, 2012, p. 15)

In New York the movement began during the end of the 1960s, but it was mainly the name TAKI183 that captured the attention of newspapers and New Yorkers: in fact, in 1971, an article in The New York Times dealt with Writing, presenting it as a phenomenon rooted in the urban fabric (Nelli, 2012, pp. 16-17). Since those years, in New York, especially in the neighborhoods of Manhattan, Bronx and Brooklyn, the number of names written on public walls has increased exponentially, developing new techniques and aesthetics, influenced by visual mass cultures. (Ferri, 2016, p. 18; Nelli, 2012, p. 28; Faletra, 2015, pp. 23-24)

Shortly, this juvenile suburban movement began to gain recognition on the arts and gallery circuit, in fact, in 1973, there was an exhibition of canvases painted by PHASE2, MICO and other Writers at Razor Gallery in New York. (Chalfant & Cooper, 2015, p. 7; Nelli, 2012, pp. 20-24)

Despite the infiltration of Writing in the urban fabric and in the art ambiances, the phenomenon was poorly documented. Only in the 1980s, with the growing interest of journalists, researchers and photographers, Martha Cooper and Henry Chalfant documented the movement, perceiving it, and the works themselves, as something ephemeral. Chalfant, in the book “Subway Art” (2015), states: “I imagined that graffiti would die in a few years and that I could have an unusual photo archive. I photographed in the spirit of historic preservation.” (Chalfant & Cooper, 2015, pp. 6-126).

419

### 2.1 The global disclosure of the movement

The growing interest of photographers and researchers created the basis for the global spreading of the phenomenon. The first fragmented and superficial images of painted trains arrived in Europe through music videos, TV series and films set on the outskirts of New York. Films such as John Badham's “Saturday Night Fever” (1977) and Walter Hill's “The Warriors” (1979) reported a reality where Writing's pieces inevitably characterized the city's scenarios. (Caputo, 2012, Cover)

But the European public did not understand the meaning of those paintings on the walls. Only in the first half of the eighties, with the help of the first films on the subject, entitled “Style Wars” (1983) and “Wild Style” (1983), thousands of youngsters outside the United States learned the techniques and dynamics of a movement until unknown. (Ciancabilla, 2015, p. 10)

Photography fulfilled the role of spreading knowledge on a large scale, thanks to a market of fanzines self-produced by the Writers themselves. Through photographers interested in the movement, the first official publications that documented Writing were born: “Subway Art” (1984) by Martha Cooper and Henry Chalfant and “Spray Can Art” (1987) by H. Chalfant and James Prigoff (Ciancabilla, 2015, p. 10) aided the movement to reach the main European cities. (Caputo, 2012, p. 72)

### 2.2 The Writing's arrival to Bologna

Bologna is reputed to be one of the epicenters of countercultures in Italy. (Caputo, 2012, p. 154) In fact, between the 1970s and 1980s, large student's groups were manifestating the dissatisfactions and anxieties of young people, preparing the city to welcome new thoughts and languages. In 1984, with the exhibition “Arte di Frontiera: New York graffiti”, curator Francesca Alinovi brought to Bologna for the first time some

of the greatest exponents of the artistic avant-garde of New York, showing the best of the first generation of American Writers (FUTURA 2000, DONDI , DAZE, LEE, CRASH, A-ONE, among others) (Caputo, 2012, pp. 233–254).

The New York subculture soon found fertile soil in the area between the railroad and the industrial sites that were gradually abandoned; in these spaces the first generation of Writers from Bologna was formed. First among all was DEEMO, which started between 1985 and 1987. MAGMA, MINED, RUSTY, SHAN R, DADO and CIUFFO joined the movement, some of them founding the S.P.A. crew (Caputo, 2012, p. 158).

Bologna and its artistic ferment attracted the American Writers PHASE2, who settled in the city for a few years, unwritten dogmas and theories of the discipline. The artist from New York had his first contact with Bologna in 1984, but it was in the 1990s that his relationship with the city became more intense, following the exhibition-festival “Dal Muro alla Pelle” (1994) (Papa, 2019).

Thus, in the following years, young people from the provincial areas of Bologna (an example is Ferrara and its small outlying towns), through events and festivals, discovered Writing movement and were influenced by its characteristic style developed in that city.

### 3. Hybrid animation and its potentialities

This chapter presents an analysis made to a selection of films, from fictional and non-fictional genres, which explore the encounter of animation with techniques and/or aesthetics belonging to different arts and visual cultures, with the aim of outline the possible strategies to adopt in the practical project exposed in this paper.

Non-fiction cinema and animation developed and defined their characteristics in parallel, integrating themselves and creating new cinematic genres and forms of representation. Furthermore, the hybrid genre of animated documentary, due to the freedom and possibilities that comes from animation, provides the integration of different techniques and aesthetic influences on the final work, contributing to generate to ways to represent the “real” (Lasagni, 2017; Penafria, 1999).

420 The word “hybrid”, in this context, indicates an element composed of different techniques and/or aesthetics. As a result, animated documentary can be defined itself as a hybrid cinematographic subgenre, as it results from the use of animation techniques in documentary films. But the same ‘animation’ is widely attributed to the concept of ‘hybrid’ in the contemporary context. The concept of hybrid animation encompasses numerous variants, but concretely arises from the interconnection and overlapping of different media and influences, both technical and aesthetic, resulting in a single sequence or frame. (Tavares et al., 2010) The hybridization of different aesthetic, technical and media influences in a single product allows new formulas to be reached and, above all, to broaden aesthetic and sociocultural discussions. Through hybrid animation, there is, therefore, the possibility of creating multiple layers of information in audiovisual products that emotionally engage the viewer and simplify the comprehension of a subject (Harris, 2020, p.17).

Conform the concept of hybrid animation, despite the wide cinematographic production and possible works to be considered, in this paper we want to highlight the shorts “Muto” (2008) and “Big Bang Big Boom” (2010) by street artist BLU, the feature films “Loving Vincent” (2017) directed by Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman.

Italian street-artist BLU conceived a hybridization of techniques and aesthetics deriving from street art, painting animation on walls. The short films “Muto” (2008) (see figure 9.1.1) and “Big Bang Big Boom” (2010) are animated with the stop-motion technique by paintings on urban surfaces, where each new frame hides the previous one. (Ciancabilla, 2015, pp. 90–95) The artist managed to give movement to what has always remained fixed on cities’ walls, and in a certain way attribute eternity to graffiti, ephemeral by its nature. These short films, in addition to their fictional narratives, bring and represent the concept of ephemerality of urban paintings, but concurrently use its temporality in order to exist.



421

- Figure 9.1.2 – Frame retrieved from the short film Muto4 (2008), directed and animated by BLU, in which it is observable the painted figure for the current frame, and the erased previous ones
- Source: Muto (2008)

“Loving Vincent” (2017) represents the first feature film entirely animated through oil painting. The film, that investigates the reasons for the death of painter Vincent van Gogh, was initially shot with actors and then, using the rotoscope technique, more than 65000 frames were painted on around 1000 canvases. (lovingvincent.com) Van Gogh’s works were the basis for the visual development of this film, where characters were developed similarly to the subjects portrayed in the artist’s paintings. The directors chose to make an oil-painted animated film because they believe that “you can’t really tell Vincent’s story without his paintings, so we needed to bring his paintings to life.” (lovingvincent.com) In this context, the hybrid of animation and Van Gogh’s pictorial language aesthetically provide the public with representation of Van Gogh’s artwork by adding layers of visual information to the narrative of the film.



► Figure 9.1.1– On the left, live-action footage with Eleanor Tomlinson, in the center the portrait of Adeline Ravoux painted by Van Gogh, and on the right the final frame of the film “Loving Vincent” (2017), D. Kobiela and H. Welchman  
 ► Source: n/a

The films analyzed in this section represented a fundamental step to delineate the practical part of this study, namely in the definition of technical and aesthetic choices. It was considered that hybrid forms of animation, other media, and/or visual references, which are the subject of the films themselves, provide the viewer with an immersive “experience” in the visual content that is intended to be represented. Furthermore, hybrid animation allows to create multiple layers of information, to simplify a subject for the public, enabling to reach new levels of understanding.

## 4. MISREADS: Project for an animated short film documenting Writing culture

Based on the stipulated results, we intended to define a project for an animated documentary short film about Writing.

Being a cryptic and niche subculture, it has remained marginal and known by few people, but currently the phenomenon is experiencing a period of great media exposure, especially because of the rapidness and easiest of social networks. But due to this nowadays readiness and broad access to the creation and diffusion of contents globally consumable, exist the possibility to communicate, to less informed audiences, concepts and information that are wrong or lacking in meaning, depth and memory (Musso, 2015).

For this reason, emerged the need to contribute to the documentation of the Writing culture, and to develop a project for a short film with traditional animation technique, which communicates the fundamental characteristics of this movement, by representing – and keeping intact – the memories and style of its protagonists, keeping them intact.

Therefore, this project intends to analyze the individual stories of Writers with different points of view and modus operandi, studying a historical period that goes from the mid-1990s to the present, circumscribed in the geographical area of the province of Ferrara, in Italy. This option permits to reconstruct a broader and more varied scenario, and narrate, through the memories of these protagonists, part of the history of Writing.

By the social record nature of the project presented in this paper, it was considered essential to gather documental material to be used in the film, such as interviews, photographs, graphic diaries, newspaper articles. This material was analyzed, and some elements selected to compose an atlas of useful documents for the technical and aesthetic definition of the project. In animation, the needs of a documentary work imply choices at both technical and aesthetic level, contributing, in the end, to achieve the objective of the film. For these reasons it is important to know in depth the subjects of the story, in order to translate their characteristics concretely in the development of the narrative, characters and scenarios.



## 4.1 The research

After having identified some of the first artists to adhere to Writing in the geographical area of our research, the study proceeded with the documentation through interviews to these Writers. The chosen artists, who adhere to the project come from small towns in the province of Ferrara and began to paint letters in different years over the last three decades. This is also. Due to the differences between these artists, – one of the main characteristics in Writing, the assertion as a unique individual, with its own style and characteristics – it is possible to represent the subculture relatively broadly despite the geographic frontiers of the research framework.

The sound content of the documentary will be based on the audio reports recorded during the interviews, in order to reserve the visual part of the short film to the function of representing the artists' memories and their artworks, through animation. This option provides the opportunity to explore new concepts through the encounter of Writing aesthetics with traditional animation techniques.

The first contact was established with the Writer MASK (b. 1979). Then, when presenting the proposal to three more Writers, only two agreed to collaborate: SAED (b. 1985) and IRASHI (b. 1994).

A first meeting was important to personally present the project and gain the confidence of the interviewees; since many Writers also paint illegally, it was necessary to explain that the video recordings of the interviews will only serve as a basis for the development of the animation, and that in no case – the live-action videos, the identities or other information that could be legally compromising the artists – will be published. In fact, the images recorded during the interviews will only serve as an analysis material to animate the facial and gestural expressions of the characters in the final short film. The interviews took place individually in closed spaces chosen by the artists, so that they felt comfortable and not constrained. Only one restriction was 'imposed' on the artists in the designation of the places for the interviews, for technical reasons, which were closed spaces and isolated from the outside sound. The recordings turned out to be great to be used as study material for script definition, storyboarding and character creation. Leaving the designation of locations to the Writers' preference turned out to be an advantageous option for the project, as it managed to enter the personal spaces of each artist; places that for various reasons reveal the personality of the interviewees. The environments designated for the interviews were namely: MASK's dwelling/study, SAED spray paint warehouse and IRASHI's atelier.

423



► Figure 9.1.3 – On the left, two frames retrieved from the interviews to IRASHI and SAED, and on the right an image toked during the interview to MASK  
► Source: Mattia Ronconi

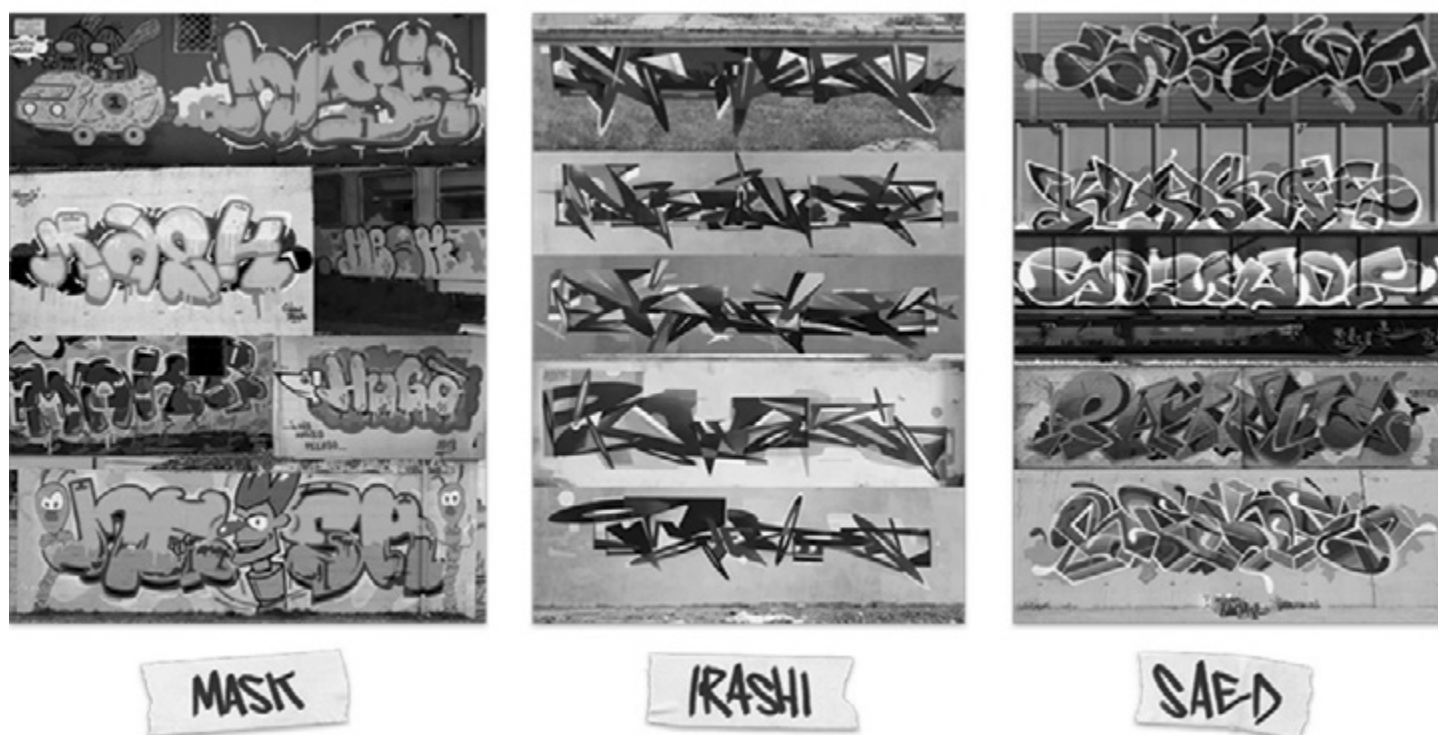
Furthermore, it was necessary to ask for the collaboration of the artists over the following months, in order to continue the gathering and selection of more visual documenting material inherent their works and memories. The information collected served as the basis for the later phases of characters and backgrounds design.

## 4.2 The analysis to the gathered material

After recording the interviews, it was important to carry out an accurate analysis of the contents to continue with the organization of the obtained information. Using video editing software to separate each part and create a preliminary index of the discussed topics, the memories were subdivided into macro-areas such as: how each artist came to know the phenomenon, how the movement has changed over the years, the motivation that led them to continue to write in the streets, what the outsiders think, among others. This decision helped to organize a list subdivided by artist, subject of the report, relevant points and duration. This resulted in schematizations and tables that separate the interviewees' memories, helping the storyline and script outlining phase, bases for developing the short film. Despite the interviewees' memories being very rich and interesting, for reasons of pertinence and time of the short film it was necessary to omit many testimonies.

In turn, the character design required a stylistic-aesthetic analysis that started from a selection of works from each artist, with the objective of identifying the methods of composition of the letters and defining the existence of recurrent geometries that characterize the letter-style proper to each Writer. This analysis, integrated with the study of the personalities of the interviewees, helped in the process of character design. In fact, in animation the character's appearance depends on its psychological and physical characteristics, which translate into geometric shapes, anatomical proportions, and chromatic palettes. Knowing the interviewees' stories was essential for defining the forms and metaphors associated with the characters. The choice to not illustrate our protagonists with naturalist drawings depended on the need to keep the Writers anonymous and, simultaneously, represent the artwork itself. Therefore, body shapes and proportions affect the way in which the viewer perceives the character. In fact, the psychology of forms is commonly used in animation and illustration in the creation of characters, and scenarios. This allows to visually communicate the personality of the character by giving it base shapes: square, circle and triangle. But it is through the combination of these three base forms that there is the possibility of communicating more realistic and appealing characters (Matessi, 2017; Stanchfield, 2013).

The analysis of the interviewees' aspects was developed in parallel with the study of the artwork itself, for this reason, schemes outlining observations about the technical and stylistic choices made by the adherents in their graffiti pieces.



► Figure 9.1.4– Graffiti pieces comparison  
► Source: Mattia Ronconi

Organizing schematic boards that delineate for each Writer the respective psycho-physical characteristics, contributed to take choices during the characters design phase, translating the personalities' aspects into forms, acting, visual metaphors and chromatic palettes.

The observations and choices taken with base on the analysis of the interviewees' personalities and physiognomies were compared and successively hybridized with the results of the study made to the letter-styles of each artist.

This choice derives from the Writing culture's concept whereby the development of a personal and unique Style is one of the fundamentals of the movement, and it can be said that it is one of the purposes of this practice, which caused a constant technical-aesthetic evolution over 50 years. In fact, according to the Writer Alessandro Ferri, also known as DADO, signs on walls are communications of individuality, Writers describe themselves through a visual language made up of shapes, compositions and chromatic palettes. Ferri (2016, pp. 13-14) states that "Style is the result of personal experiences filtered through a pictorial technique, and represents the Writers himself, his character and his own training."

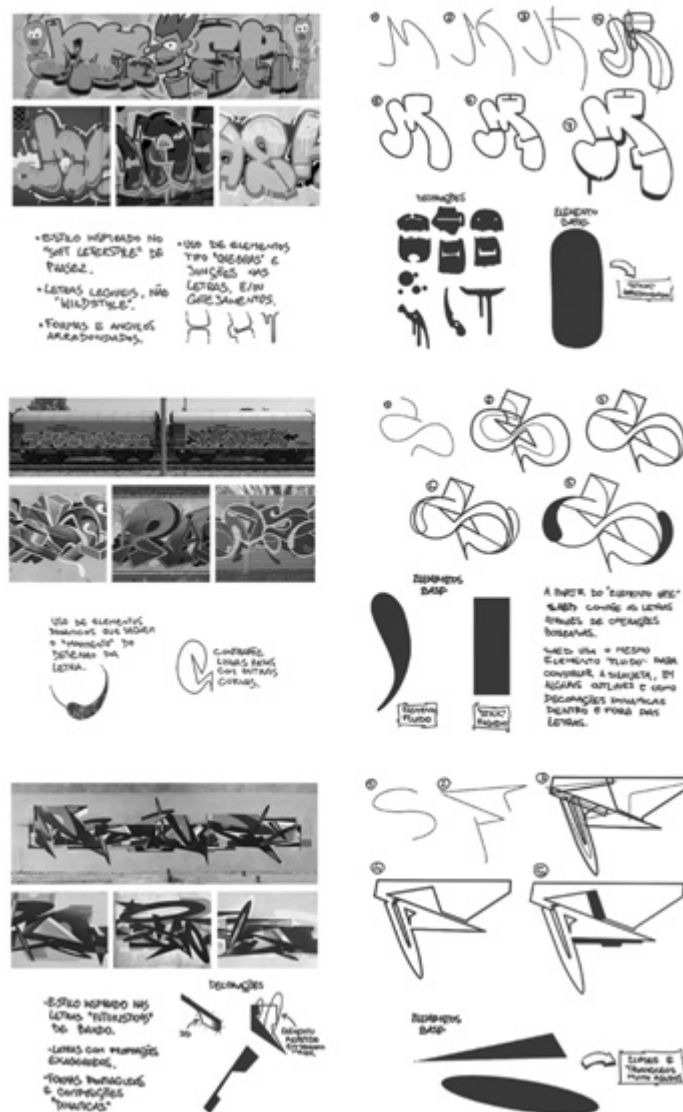
Thus, analyzing a selection of photos of the works of each artist, the presence of recurrent base forms and logics of composition of the letter was observed, in order to differentiate the artistic work of each Writer. Noting that respondents have unique Styles, defined by specific color palettes and distinctive graphic elements.

For this reason, the exploration of aesthetics and techniques to visually define the characters of this project was based on the visual language of Writing, and more specifically, on the letter-styles of each interviewee. Therefore, the analysis and understanding of the schematic construction and recurring characteristics in the letters, aimed to define the "minimum common denominator" of the artistic production of each respondent, and to identify the existence of a relationship between the form, the letter-style and the author himself.

After having selected, for each interviewee, a range of Writing pieces produced between 2018 and 2020, a comparative analysis of each piece was made, deconstructing the letters and mapping the recurring graphic elements and forms. The results of this study were recorded on graphic tables in which the base forms used in the letter structures, the construction schemes, and the recurrent elements are represented.

From these analyses, it was observed how each interviewee paints graffiti with their own unique and

differentiating Style, which is based on recurrent forms and structures that characterize their works. Between April and September 2020, the Writers were accompanied, on several occasions, during their painting processes, enabling field studies, helping to understand the dynamics of composition of the letters and pieces. The methods of each artist were recorded with the aid of a compact camera.



► Figure 9.15 – Board that outlines part of the analysis made to the letter-styles of each Writer participating to the project for MISREADS  
 ► Source: Mattia Ronconi

Comparing these analyzes with the study based on the psychology of forms applied to the development of characters, it was verified the existence of analogies between the elements and compositions used by each Writers, and the forms and poses attributed to the protagonists of this project.

Because of this, the visual definition of the characters was carried out, integrating the elements that characterize the Writing Style of each interviewee to the design and considering the rules based on the psychology of forms.



In this phase, despite being experimental, it was important to attend to the observations made during the analysis of the interviewees based on the psychology of forms, in order to define functional characters for the purpose of the project. The integration of these elements in the development of the characters allowed to represent both the artists and their works. By hybridizing the aesthetic languages of Writing with design techniques for animation, the interviewees were 'translated' into beings composed of abstract forms, the same forms used in the composition of each artist's graffiti letters. Through this visual option, the identity of the Writers could be kept anonymous, and they were presented through graphic 'masks'. This concept of representation of the individual(ity) through a graphic and visual communication/language, parallel to the need to maintain its anonymity, links to the Writing culture itself, in which artists want to be recognized (getting up) within the movement through the Style and/or tag itself but masking its own identity and hiding the practice from a society with different rules, which does not accept the phenomenon.

### 4.3 The definition of techniques and aesthetics

Since the project presented in this section of the paper is for a non-fictional narrative, its definition depended on the documents previously collected and selected: the audios of the interviews, documental material to support the narrative (archive photographs, sketches, newspaper articles, etc.). The stage of defining the script refers to the attribution of meanings to the previously organized narrative, giving visual existence to memories reported through actions or metaphors.

The interpretation and reconstruction of memories through animation techniques allows to add layers of information to the audio of the interviews, and to enhance the visual and rhythmic appeal that the short film needs in relation to appeal to the audience. In this way, the characters' reports alternate between animated reconstructions of the interview and representation of memories. In fact, animation techniques allow to visually transpose and illustrate intangible elements of the "real", such as dreams, sensations and memories. (Honesty Roe, 2013, p. 109)

426

Through the study made about the history and characteristics of Writing culture, it can be said that the artist PHASE2 was one of the pioneers of the movement, defining its foundations and developing new Styles, that were the bases for the future developments of new ones. In a section of the book *All city writers* (2009), the founder of the IGTimes fanzine, David Schmidlapp, writes that PHASE2 was an excellent 'collagist' and his works are well known within the movement", and his collage works were included in the fanzine itself (IGTimes). (Caputo, 2009, pp. 74-75) Perhaps, collage came to be widely used among Writers and the Hip-Hop movement: in the making of pamphlets to publicize the events, and even in the layout of many sketch-diaries. Notebooks, called blackbook inside of the movement, have been used since the birth of Writing to collect sketches, color studies, photos, and other documents relevant to the artist. In view of the objective of representing the memories of three artists, together with their works, illustrating a visual subculture, the aesthetic definition of the project depends on the use of numerous languages and techniques inherent to Writing culture, such as spray paint, painted walls textures, collage and representative solutions inspired by the style of blackbook. The use of a 'blackbook-style' works as an infographic solution in case the need to insert dates, real photographs, or other relevant information during a report.

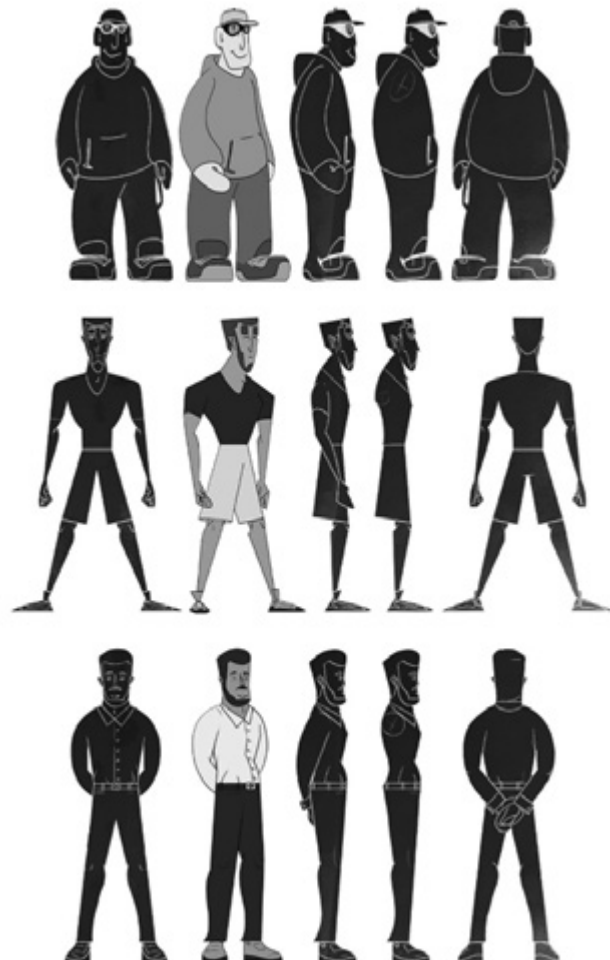
The short film, therefore, will have two representative spaces: ones are the spaces in which the interviews take place, here, the studio of each character will be represented, in order to communicate, through the props in the scene, the personality and work of each artist; other scenarios coincide with the memory and the intangible sphere of the "real": sensations, ideas, memories. For this reason, it was chosen to animate the actions and metaphors inherent to the memories, along the pages of a blackbook, as if they were recalled by going through a diary.

Regarding the characters design, outlining the elements, shapes, attitudes, and characteristics to be used, the model-sheets has been defined. This step went through several changes until reaching the desired result. Throughout the process, the importance of defining the characters' turn-arounds were realized, the following image illustrates how to represent the characters in various views, such as: front, three-quarters, side, and rear.



- Figure 9.1.6– Concept art for the use of the blackbook with drawings and photos to represent memories
- Figure 9.1.7 – Image retrieved from the storyboard, IRASHI speaks during the interview inside of his studio
- Source: Mattia Ronconi

During this phase, the characters' poses and attitudes has been hold in consideration as well, understanding how the integration of 2D shapes from Writing would complicate the purpose of maintaining a coherence of the character's shape throughout its movements. In fact, by changing from a key-pose to another, it is been observed the possibility in losing coherence between forms referring to a specific Writing letter-style. For this reason, it was decided to apply functional, and reasoned, adjustments to some parts of the figure – such as arms, legs and hands – depending on the pose and the dynamism of the intended acting, integrating different extrapolated-forms from the analysis made to the interviewees' Writing letterforms. By doing so, it is necessary to maintain coherence when drawing the character in various poses, such as the proportions of the body and face, and the elements and shapes to be used for their representation. The importance of defining character's poses and attitudes, considering their personalities, is essential to give them a true appearance, as the entire figure can communicate a sensation, and reveal the meaning of the words or feelings represented in the narrative through action (Thomas & Jhonston, 1995).



- Figure 9.1.8 – Turnarounds of the characters (from top to bottom) MASK, IRASHI and SAED
- Source: Mattia Ronconi



- Figure 9.1.8 – Model-sheet for the corporal and facial expressions of MASK
- Source: Mattia Ronconi

Attention was also paid to the definition of facial expressions, it was noted the importance of having model-sheets to animate the expressions of the face, which play a fundamental role in communicating the sensations of the character when recalling their memories. For the definition of facial expressions,

the real ones of the Writers during the interview recordings were observed. Therefore, considering the interviewees' characters, facial expressions were elaborated, applying shapes taken from their Writing letter-styles to mouth, nose, eyes, and ears. The recourse to graphic and simple expressions design, increasing a fast and easy emotion reading by the spectator, preventing misunderstandings in the representation and communication of the intended expression.

## 5. Last observations

In closure, the hybrid cinematographic genre of animated documentary, permits a creative approach to the "real", according to Grierson's definition of documentary as "creative treatment of actuality". (Lasagni, 2017, p.71) Animation provides new understandings of reality, helping to create easiest ways to read – and create knowledge over – intricate, little-known, and/or cryptic subjects. Based on the analysis carried out, there is a need for the documentary's narrative to be based on real facts accompanied by evidence that the same viewer perceives as 'truths', especially by using animation techniques, perceived commonly as fictional.

Furthermore, forms of animation that hybridize unusual aesthetics and/or techniques, when these are the main theme of the film itself, enables to create a product with multiple informational layers, capable of simplifying the theme to be addressed and translating it to wider audiences.

MISREADS, the project to be developed presented in this paper, is based on studies carried out on a selection of hybrid animation products and aims to find new technical-aesthetic solutions for the representation of memories from the Writing subculture, integrating the aesthetics proper to movement in character definition. Even the use of traditional animation, due to its plasticity, allows for greater expressiveness in the trace and exaggeration of forms, providing the use of metamorphosis and mutations, to simulate the fleeting and malleability of memory. The freedom of expression that characterizes one of the assets of animation, allows to hybridize languages and aesthetics of other artistic realities. In this sense, it was decided to explore the meeting of the technique of traditional animation with the aesthetics of Writing.

The artwork of the interviewees will be represented, in MISREADS, including, hybridizing, in the character design the letter-styles that characterize the graffiti pieces of each one. The idea to refer to this representative solution follows the concept being why by looking at a graffiti piece it is possible to recognize who painted it, because the piece reflects the character and personality of the Writer. (Ferri, 2016, pp. 13–18)

Recurring to two different representative spaces – the art-studios of each Writer to recreate the interviews, and the blackbook (diary) in which are re-interpreted the memories – helps the viewer to distinguish to timelines and narratives, separating the character speaking during the interview from the representation of the memory being reported.

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