

Getting animated: Students discover potential careers at art center camp in Anderson

Students discover potential careers at art center's camp

By Kelly Dickey | The Herald Bulletin
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ANDERSON — Going into the stop-motion animation camp, Malik Brown knew he was interested in art and creating characters and stories.

Now he knows what he wants to study in college.

“He’s come home talking about that,” said his mother, Crystal Brown. “It’s opening up a lot more to him as far as it’s not just cartoons, but he loves the animation side of things.”

For kids like Malik, the Anderson Center for the Arts’ stop-motion art camp last week didn’t just offer a fun summer activity, but a glimpse into potential careers.

Taught by a Ball State animation alumnus and a third-year graduate student, 30 elementary students and 14 middle school and high school students attended the center’s second week of art camps. The first camp focused on 3-D sculpting; the July 10-14 camp will focus on drawing, painting and printmaking; and the July 17-21 camp teaches ceramics.

Stop-motion animation uses physical objects that are moved between frames to give the illusion of movement. Popular films such as “The Nightmare Before Christmas,” “Fantastic Mr. Fox” and “The Lego Movie” have used the technique.

Instructor Colby Golden taught elementary students the basic forms of animation, while Casey Vernon taught the older group about the pre-production, storyboarding, script writing, character design as they made their own short films.

“And all these techniques are in the animation industry, so they get a little bit of a taste of how it actually works,” Vernon said.

Vernon, a Ball State graduate student, said growing up in a small, poor rural community, she needed art from a young age to create her own characters and stories. It saved her, and she wants to help other kids who need their own escape.

“For me, I just really think it’s important for kids and teens to have an introduction into something they love,” she said. “Our media and culture’s so saturated with TV shows, it’s really all they see, honestly. And for them, that’s kind of a pinpoint into their passion.”

Going into the camp at the beginning of the week, Malik, 14, knew he wanted to expand beyond his drawings. His free time is usually spent losing himself in novels or filling his sketchbooks.

His family always tells him to take advantage of his talents, never to slack off and to use his skills to their full potential. So when his grandfather told him about the animation camp, there was no question that Malik would attend.

Working with his group, creating characters, storyboarding, writing a script and working on the props helped him realize he wants to go to college and have a career in animation. He loves seeing his creations come to life.

“If I were God and he was making a person, that’s how I feel like,” Malik said. “I feel like I’m putting a lot of love and a lot of care into making these (characters) and making them pop out as if there were real people.”

Sharilyn McKinney, 15, said the camp confirmed that she wants a future in animation – with dreams of being an independent animator or making her way to a major corporation like Disney – even if stop motion isn’t for her.

“We’ve still been learning about the steps of animation, so it’s been helping me realize that if I wanted to do stop motion I could do it,” she said. “But I think I’m going to stick with 2-D because I’m still really good at drawing.”

Exposure to hands-on experience is crucial, especially in animation, Vernon said.

“You need to have that when you’re young because right now, what we’re doing here is a judgment-free zone,” she said. “College is not a judgment-free zone, so they need to explore and they need to express.

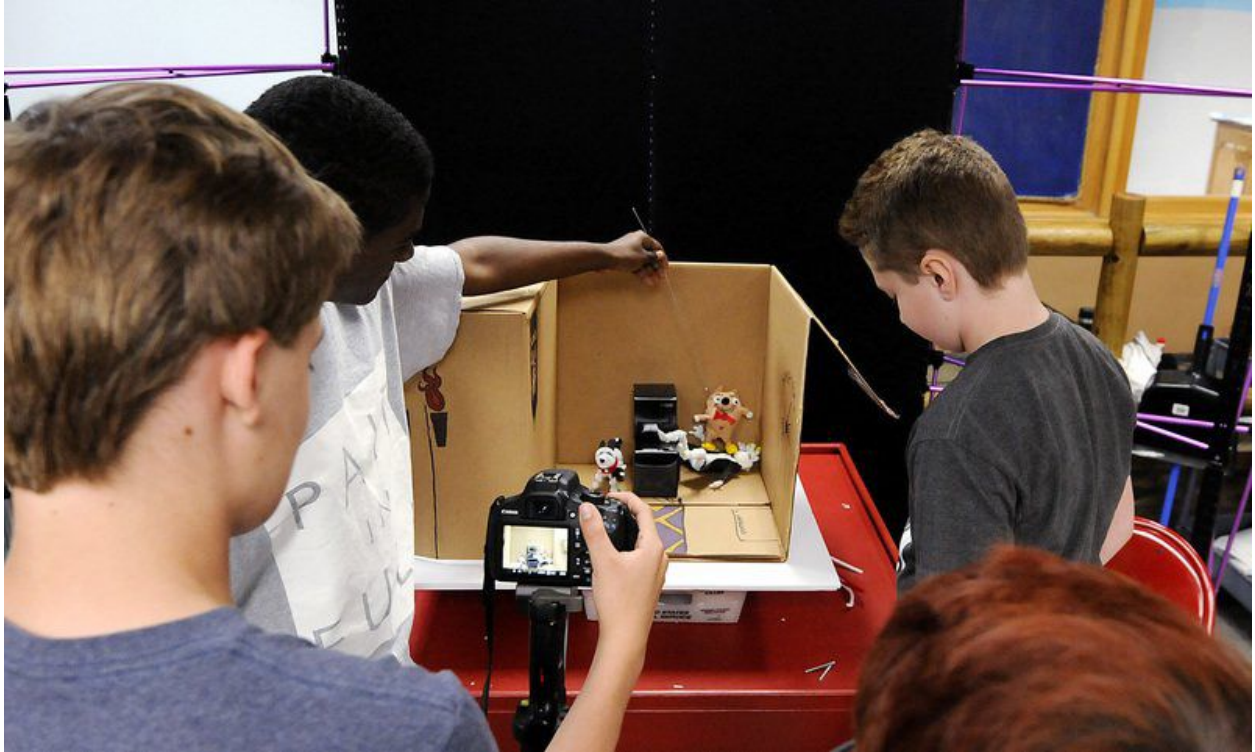
“They’re already building up passion and they’re into it, so if that is in their blood and in their life work and what they’re gonna do, then they’re gonna stronghold through it.”

Like Kelly Dickey on Facebook and follow her on Twitter @KellyD_THB, or call 765-640-4805.

Upcoming camps

- July 10-14: Drawing, painting and printmaking
- July 17-21: Ceramics

Cost for each is \$85. For more information about programming, go to andersonart.org or call 765-649-1248.



Isaac Borgman, from left, Malik Brown and Gabe Proudfoot put together the video portion of their stop-action animation project during Summer Art Camp at The Anderson Center for the Arts on Thursday.



Cartoonist Deon Parson, whose “Life with Kurami” strip appears daily in The Herald Bulletin, was a guest Thursday at Stop Motion Animation Camp at The Anderson Center for the Arts.



Nathanael Shoemaker, from left, Caden Lehr, Franky Cazres, and Tyler Terrell work on their stop-motion animation project. Thirty elementary students and 14 middle school and high school students attended the Anderson Center for the Art's second week of camps.