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PhD Dissertation Abstract

**UNDER THE WATERWEEDS**

**MATERIALITY IN STOP-MOTION ANIMATION**

The aim of this PhD dissertation is to analyze how the materiality of the medium in clay animation impacts the creative process and the audience's reception of the artwork, with a particular focus on the animated film *Under the Waterweeds*.

This dissertation is structured into three chapters. The first chapter provides a historical overview of clay animation, emphasizing two-dimensional techniques, including clay painting. It then examines the influence of technological advancements on stop-motion animation and, through an analysis of both historical and contemporary artists' statements, explores the reasons behind their preference for animation techniques involving material manipulation.

In the second chapter, Laura U. Marks' *Sensuous Theory* of cinema is applied to investigate the concept of materiality in stop-motion animation. This section addresses filmmakers whose work has impacted my understanding of materiality in film, analyzes the textual layer of *Under the Waterweeds*, and details my animation technique of choice: clay painting illuminated from below, highlighting the aspects of this technique that enhance the haptic quality of the film image.

The final chapter delineates the production process of *Under the Waterweeds* by stages, describing the distinctive features of my creative approach. It focuses on the artistic aspects of the technique employed and discusses how it allows for modifications of the conventional production workflow.