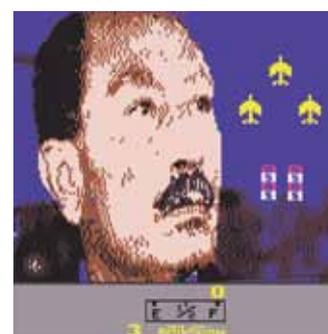




DIGITAL TOOLS – A New Educational Approach Children's Film First Seminar in Saint-Quentin, France

Cine-Jeune Festival's seminar on how to use innovative digital tools in film education in Saint Quentin on April 21st 2015 echoed both the Creative Europe Programme's fundamental need and the French government's desire in their directive to 'develop digital tools in schools' as expressed by the Ministry of Education. With the creation of a Digital Centre and a Masters degree in Cloud Computing and Editing at the local INSSET university, the city of Saint-Quentin has developed a tradition in digital education for children, parents and students. The Ciné-Jeune Festival is surfing on that same digital wave, with 'fantasy' as this year's festival theme and with a workshop on building digital robots. In this seminar the festival brought together 'many partners in a digital world'.



The seminar, moderated by Perrine Boutin (Master of Conference at University Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle in the Media & Cinema Department), provided an overview of initiatives and tools that exist in France, which are sometimes developed in different departments, but which overlap in content and methods. The initiatives briefly introduced were:

- **Kinétoscope**: which embeds short films in a pedagogical framework and makes a selection of 100 shorts legally available for schools through DVD and online platforms. Kinétoscope offers courses on specific thematic issues and film genres. The educational method is based on a 'question & answer' formula, guiding us from one dilemma to another. Kinétoscope (www.lekinetoscope.fr) provides its service to (paying) members.
- **Upopi** (Université Populaire des Images): a website maintained by Ciclic, collecting information (user content) about every aspect of 'the image' (including much more than just 'cinema'), using pictures, clips, study guides, time lines, analyses, etc. With its online publication 'Le Fil des Images' Ciclic addresses teachers with questions and debates about all things audiovisual. www.ciclic.fr; <http://upopi.ciclic.fr>; www.lefildesimages.fr.
- **Les Enfants de Cinéma** provides media education for children aged 6–12, and can be used by schools, but also by parents alike in order to offer their family a complete and satisfying cinema experience. www.enfants-de-cinema.com is a place to meet for teachers, pupils and parents, and also for cinemas who want to provide in their own media education. With 500 clips in the collection, pictograms guide you into a kaleidoscope of themes and motives. Words are only used to stir up the discussion. All other content is image-based.
- **Benshi** is an advisory website for families in search of suitable films for every age group. The core of the website are the film fiches that follow the national film release schedule. Mascot Benshi offers you more than just advice, as the website also collects dossiers, biographies, interviews, etc. Through a membership of local film theatres, kids can collect badges, which contributes to the website's community feeling.

Other tools presented in this session were:

- an educational course on a DCP (presented by Emilie Nouveau), in support of the short film 'Chouette Documentaire' (www.cinema-public-films.com).
- the booklet 'Education à l'image 2.0' (presented by Pauline Chassériau), on creative media literacy methods used in the arts and the world of digital media (www.acap-cinema.com).

Innovative Practices

In a series of closed sessions, four innovative practices were brought to our attention:

1. **The MashUp Table** is a portable on-the-spot-editing device that allows you to play around with all cinema ingredients. Starting with a basic frame, all sorts of sounds, voices and layers can be added. Besides being very exciting to every aspirant veejay or film freak, the MashUp Table also playfully introduces the audience to the essential building blocks of cinema and editing (www.mashuptable.fr).



The MashUp Table

2. **Machinima** uses a video game as the foundation for a storytelling course. Once you have development several characters (in a 'The Sims-kind' of way), an easy menu helps you to let them interact and guides you towards the most suitable framing and editing mode. The result is a rudimentary animated film. A basic version is free and available for educational purposes and can be installed on the school computer. (www.isabelleavers.com)

3. **The Serious Game Anim 2.0** is developed by 'Les Rencontres Audiovisuelles', an organization that works with film literacy outside the cinema environment, using mobile phones, tablets or other digital devices. The game is free available in 3 languages (French, English, Dutch) and introduces you to various stages of animation, with questions to answer and quests to fulfill. Every level extends your knowledge of cinema and animation techniques. You can even make your own animated film, starting from scratch (www.anim2-0.com; www.rencontres-audiovisuelles.org).



Les petits choses



Anim 2.0

4. **Les Petites Choses** is a digital application, based on the short film 'Les Petites Choses de la Vie' by Benjamin Gibeaux. This is a film/app without dialogues in which music plays a narrative role. The setup is the question 'how to let the bird escape from its cage?' Gibeaux is working on a follow-up through his next film about 'Adeline the Giraffe' (www.benjaminigibeaux.fr).

In the afternoon session, participants in small groups could further explored several educational formats. A treat for every creative participant!

Conclusions

The number of projects presented during the seminar proved that the world of digital tools is limitless. Everything seems possible! Even if several tools presented shared a mutual goal, they differed very much in impact, appearance and methods. Especially:

- The target audience: tools can aim towards a participative audience (pupils, children, youth,...) or on a grown-up, accompanying audience (teachers, parents...).
- The design: from the creative Digital Cinema Package to the online platform, from the mobile app to the MashUp Table... digital media comes in a wide aesthetic range. Some tools emphasize the visual aspect, others use a more formal approach to the digital universe.
- The intended purpose: some tools focus our attention on the impact of the image (inviting us to delve deep into movies or to watch them from a different perspective), others stimulate creativity. In education, both should go hand in hand.

The seminar's main question was whether digital tools can lead us to new educational approaches. It seems too early to answer this question. While many of those tools are still in the testing phase, only the future can tell if they will be used in the way that was intended by their creators, or if users will find new applications for them. (GH)



Based on the information provided by the Festival Ciné-Jeune de l'Aisne, Perrine Boutin, Céline Ravenel and Gert Hermans.

