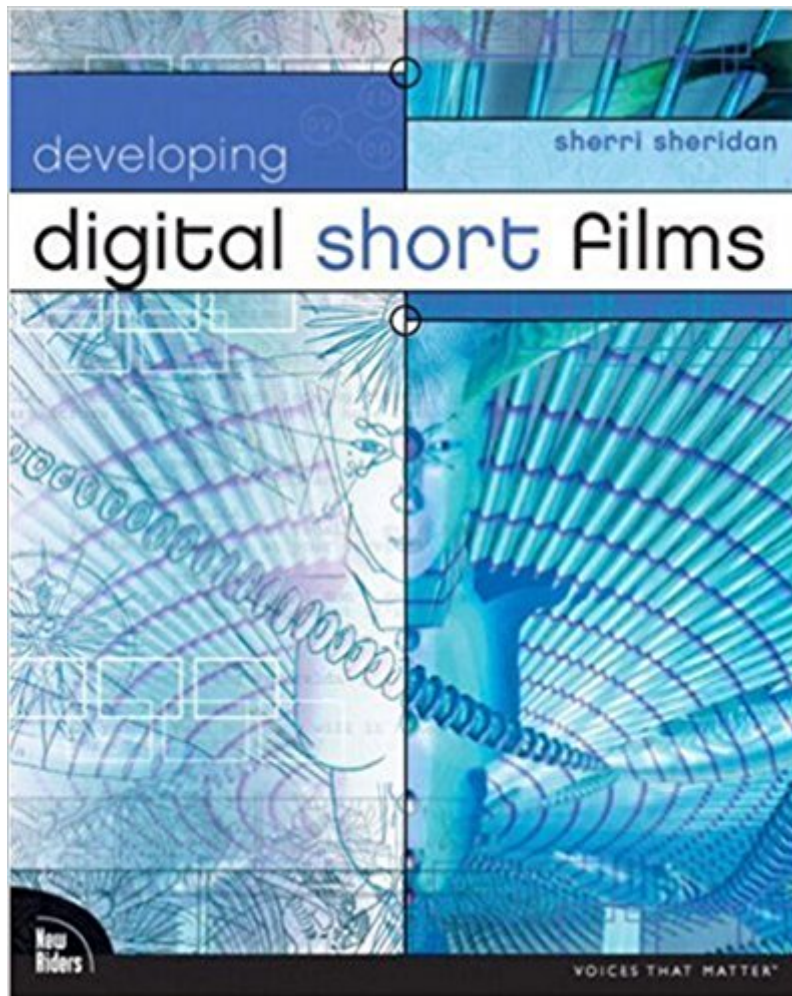




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# Developing Digital Short Films (Voices That Matter)



## Synopsis

The film market is shifting toward traditional desktop technology to create productions...digitally. Unlike traditional film production, though, digital films require producers to employ a different pre-production process. *Developing Digital Short Films* explores how unique character and set designs, bluescreen ideas, special effects, and simple 2D character animation techniques can be used as narrative devices for telling stories. Part One focuses on generating visual ideas that are ideal for digital production and creating a short film script. Part Two focuses on the visual pre-production of a short film and the issues that go through a filmmaker's mind as they struggle with how best to present their stories; this includes topics like 101 camera shots, frame composition, developing a visual look and feel, color maps, and creating storyboards and animatics. Part Three explores the different production environments of DV, 2D and 3D, and how they shape the telling of stories based upon the technological strengths of each style.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sherri Sheridan is the Creative Director at Minds Eye Media (<http://www.mindseyemedia.com>) in San Francisco, where she spends her time creating all sorts of digital projects. Over the years she has directed, produced, animated, written, and designed projects for a wide range of clients, including Fortune 500 companies, major record labels, TV/cable stations, feature-film studios, advertising agencies, and video game companies. She is the co-author of *Maya 2 Character Animation* (New Riders, 1999). Currently, Sherri is creating a series of international *Developing*

Digital Short Films Workshops based on the ideas in this book. She is also writing, developing, and directing several original scripts for digitally enhanced shorts and feature films. Over the years, Sherri has helped inspire thousands of graduate computer animation students from around the world, helping them to tell their own stories using their favorite digital tools, at the Academy of Art College in San Francisco. While teaching these students, she started developing the foundation for a unique step-by-step digital visual storytelling process, which has grown into this wonderful book. Before founding Minds Eye Media in 1995, she helped develop Shockwave Technology at Macromedia, and created the first Shockwave movies on the web. Sherri has a BA in English from U.C. Berkeley and went to San Francisco State to study interactive design and computer animation for her graduate work.

Good book!

Purchased this book to polish a 24-minute short screenplay. The story structure and content are solid now, and the characters believable. The lists are an AWESOME source of inspiration. Ready to shoot this Spring. Look forward to the DVD series. BTW, haven't made it through the second half of the book yet, but it looks great.

Sherri Sheridan takes you in her book *Developing Digital Short Films* through a very spectacular trip in the most interesting design topics which is about films and animation production industry. While moving through this interesting educational trip, you will find Sherri stands out with her tips, proverbs of famous people and exercises, which is the only way to fully digest the content of the book. This practice opens your eyes widely to see your favorite movies with a new vision. Every part of the film will remind you with a concept or a principle Sherri has mentioned in this book. Then you will realize how much interesting this field is. And for sure, a dream to create your own movie comes to mind. As said, "This book will not make you Steven Spielberg, but it is a good step to start with", this book gives you a strong background in the field of animation. Not only the people that interest in working in the field of short films who can use this book, but also all who work in the field of animation, including cartoons and web and digital animation. It will give the key to add a flavor to your animation and create eye-catching ideas with the principles used in film production industry. This book is divided into three parts that take you step by step to reach by the end of the book to create a complex idea. Enhanced with the exercises after every step. The first part (Digital Storytelling) prepare you to create your own story and develop it to create a story board for your film, in this part

you will learn the concepts and principles of creating interesting story and develop it through its stages using its basic elements (Plot, Character, and Theme). After writing your story, Sherri takes you to the next step in part two (Visualizing Your Scripts) which converts your story into a storyboard ready for production. In this part, you will learn how to use film elements like cameras and locations to well deliver your story target to the audience. This part is very important to learn the principles of filmmaking and animation. However, it is important for all who works in the animation field. The third part (Creating Digital Short Films for Different Production Styles) is about using different techniques to come up with your film into the production phase applying all what you learnt through the book. This book provides a great experience for all who work in the fields of films production, cartoon and animation.

This book has proved invaluable to me as the coordinator of a first year undergraduate course designed to introduce media students to film and video, as well as multimedia skills. Sherri's informal style of writing, coupled with her unpretentious approach to sharing her own experiences as a digital film maker, makes this an ideal text for first year students. This book captures the spirit of the convergence between traditional film and multimedia, and the countless examples and case studies presented throughout the book are a great source of inspiration for students. While many of the concepts addressed in the book are not new and have been adequately addressed in other texts, Sherri describes these concepts in a way that is highly engaging, and the comic book style illustrations appeal to a young audience (as well as those of us who are not so young). Of particular note are the chapters that deal with "generating new ideas" (something first year media students find difficult), "creating original characters, themes, and visual metaphors" and "developing plot points", as well as the final three chapters of the book that deal more specifically with the convergence between film and video and multimedia. Two of my lectures this semester were based on Sherri's analysis of several popular movies, and the sections of those lectures that focused on themes and also on the use of color palettes in popular movies were real winners! Moreover, Sherri was more than willing to communicate via email and made several resources available to me as a teacher to address particular student needs. When you purchase this book you are investing in a treasure trove of teaching tips, techniques and resources. Sherri's Website adds to the richness of these resources, and her commitment to inspiring and motivating budding film makers is evident in this book and Sherri's willingness to go the extra mile to further such educational ideals. Thanks Sherri for providing educators with such a powerful set of teaching tools at a time when we are challenged to meet the demands of a student population who need to be conversant with both

traditional and digital film making techniques.

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