Cartoons as Philosophical Catalysts: Unlocking the Potential of Visual Storytelling

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Introduction

Cartoons have had a major influence on my life. They have portrayed life, human experiences, and philosophy in a way that has taught me to embrace the absurdity of human existence. The cartoons I will discuss in this paper have greatly influenced my thinking. As part of this project, I attempted to study the philosophies of absurdism, nihilism, and existentialism as incorporated in these cartoons. However, I found that I enjoyed reading texts less compared to when these ideas were presented in cartoons. While ongoing research exists on the philosophical ideas used in these cartoons, my main interest lies in understanding why cartoons make philosophy so easily comprehensible. Could cartoons potentially be a powerful medium for discussing philosophy in today's world?

Chapter 1 explores the expansive scope of cartoons as philosophical catalysts. It examines animation as a unique medium that defies reality and creates paralogical worlds, allowing for the exploration of complex themes. Drawing on the work of scholars and thinkers, the narrative delves into the historical significance of cartoons in addressing societal absurdities. A notable example is Warner Brothers' Looney Tunes (1930) during the Depression era. The exploration also extends to contemporary adult animation, which has evolved from a medium primarily aimed at children to a platform that fearlessly tackles socio-political issues, mental health, and intricate aspects of identity and consciousness. Tobin's research (2022) on the role of adult animated series in stress coping mechanisms and Cambier's (2022) examination of feminist themes in "Tuca and Bertie" contribute to the understanding of how cartoons have evolved into sophisticated vehicles for philosophical discourse.

Chapter 2 examines three influential cartoons - ‘Rick and Morty,’(2014) ‘BoJack Horseman,’ (2015) and ‘The Midnight Gospel’(2020) - in detail. These cartoons are used as case studies to demonstrate how they blend frivolity with depth, exploring profound philosophical inquiries while maintaining visually engaging narratives. Each section analyzes the thematic richness

and visual storytelling techniques of these animations, highlighting common elements such as dark humour, emotional depth, surreal visuals, the concept of multiple worlds, symbolism, and dynamic storytelling. Through these case studies, the essay aims to demonstrate the power of visual storytelling in conveying intricate narratives and creating immersive worlds that enhance the understanding and experience of profound philosophical concepts.

Chapter 3 delves into the philosophy of animation as a medium. It defines cartoons as a fusion of sequential art and motion and explores how animation exists in a unique realm between reality and unreality. The chapter traces the historical relationship between animation and graphic print media, highlighting the intentional choices made by contemporary animations to blur the boundaries between animation and sequential art. By drawing on the philosophies of Deleuze, Massumi, and Torre, the chapter reveals how animation, as a virtual space, allows for liberated thought and the exploration of new experiences. Additionally, Torre's cognitive animation theory is introduced, explaining how the replication of movement from classic cartoons activates viewers' mirror neurons, creating a sense of familiarity and nostalgia that enhances the accessibility of complex themes.

Chapter 1: Scope of Cartoons as Philosophical Catalysts

Animation has gained widespread recognition as a medium that can take viewers on imaginative journeys beyond the constraints of reality. By treating logic as a spectrum, animation creates a realm that is paralogical by nature. This dichotomy between rationality and irrationality enables animation to tell a diverse range of stories. Every aspect, from the characters to the settings, is created from scratch, resulting in a heightened sense of unreality and plasticity that enhances the audience's acceptance of the stories being told. This unique aspect of animation allows for the exploration of complex themes and the creation of compelling narratives that may not be possible in other mediums.

In the paper "Animation of Existentialism", the author further discusses how the inherent absurdity of animation makes it an excellent medium for expressing existentialist thought. "In animation’s participation, the acceptance of absurdity is inherent; by creating participation a requirement, reality is suppressed by the creator’s will. It is an illusion of life that is both malleable and controlled, but the audience does not protest to the caricatured reality.” (Wapman, 2016)

Historical Significance of Cartoons for Philosophical Exploration

Embracing complex themes is not new in animation. Warner Brothers' Looney Tunes of the 1930s readily embraced absurdity. These cartoons highlighted the absurdity of the times, which were heavily influenced by the Depression. In an era when the nation's film screens were too serious and failed to adequately reflect the absurdity of the times, cartoons emerged as a suitable medium to portray the absurdity of the uncertain world. (Roquet,

2007). The Warner Brothers cartoons have been extensively studied for their parodic and deconstructive elements (George, pp. 300-302). Additionally, the film "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" has received high praise for its deconstruction and post-modern textuality (Cholodenko, 1991b, especially pp. 210-11). Ferrell (1991) argues that animations have the unique ability to evoke a Freudian sense of the uncanny, subtly bringing repressed longings into consciousness. An in-depth study conducted by Bruce D. explores the philosophical underpinnings of the popular Road Runner and Coyote cartoon. Bruce draws intriguing parallels between Albert Camus' Sisyphus and this cartoon. Although there is no direct evidence that the cartoon's creator intended to reference "The Myth of Sisyphus," Bruce raises an interesting question: "How is it possible for a cartoon to be much more than what an author may have set out to create?" He suggests that the answer lies in two features of the animation: its absurdity and its status as children's entertainment. According to him, these features create an ironic voice that liberates both the animator and viewer from the constraints of normal reality (Bruce, D. 2010). Cartoons can perform forbidden and disruptive actions because they are not taken as seriously as adult media. For a long time, animation has been primarily—if not exclusively—designed for children's entertainment. (Ben-dazzi, 1995, pp. 83–100). These cartoon shorts, combined with original productions, became a staple of children’s television (Crawford, 1991, p. 114).

Philosophical Depth in Contemporary Adult Animation

But what happens when this medium that is intended to be light-hearted caters specifically to adults? Today, contemporary adult animation explores a wide range of philosophical ideas while maintaining a playful visual style. Cartoons can effectively convey complex themes through humour and visual metaphoric allegories. Although many experimental animations approach these issues more seriously, my research primarily focuses on popular episodic cartoons that consciously and skillfully utilise their light-hearted nature to tell profound stories through humour and visually captivating sequences. These cartoons successfully blend serious subjects that may be challenging to comprehend with a touch of humour, enabling

them to capture and communicate complex ideas in an accessible manner. This characteristic has been prevalent throughout the history of the medium, making it appealing to a diverse audience.

In addition to the three cartoons (Rick and Morty, BoJack Horseman, and The Midnight Gospel) that I will discuss in-depth in the following chapter, cartoons today cater to a broader audience than just children. They fearlessly tackle a wide range of socio-political issues, mental health topics, and complex subjects related to identity and consciousness. What is noteworthy is that these cartoons can communicate complex ideas in a more digestible manner, thanks to their visually appealing and engaging medium.

Tobin's research examines the success of adult animated television series as a coping mechanism for stress and anxiety. The utilisation of self-deprecating humour and relatable narratives in these series is found to be a key factor. By recognising these narratives one can contribute to the creation of more beneficial media for future generations (*Tobin, 2022)*

Cambier discusses Tuca and Bertie as an example of feminist animation that presents a liberating and joyous redirection of gender and interpersonal relationships. The show offers a distinctly fresh and arguably feminist representation of love and family. Tuca and Bertie challenge norms and explore themes around female identity in a highly unconventional format. (Cambier, 2022)

Matt Groening, the creator of The Simpsons, skilfully captures and explores important aspects of Foucauldian philosophy. By incorporating a Nietzschean sense of playfulness and wit into his creations, Groening presents a refreshing and stimulating alternative to Foucault's portrayal of oppressive disciplinary power. (Hull, 2000)

Exploring Contradictions and Complexities in Animation

In Kirkland's study, the author delves into the complexities and contradictions that exist within the medium of animation. The study explores the interplay between animation's

simplistic and child-like nature and its advanced imaging technologies. It also sheds light on the various animation formats and how they are associated with different audiences. Furthermore, the study examines how animation intersects with modernity, labour politics, and considerations of age and audience. Three specific examples of animation are analysed: the children's television series, Charlie and Lola, the adult cartoon franchise South Park, and the family action-adventure film The Lego Movie. These examples utilize an imaginary child character and a handcrafted aesthetic to navigate the inherent contradictions and tensions within the realm of animation (Kirkland, 2019).

Cartoons, though often overlooked, have the unique ability to address complex themes in a manner that is both accessible and thought-provoking. By deliberately juxtaposing coherence and nonsense, rationality and irrationality, logic and illogic, these television shows effectively convey philosophical messages that might otherwise be dismissed as dull or uninteresting. Today, cartoons serve a purpose beyond mere entertainment; they provide a platform for engaging in philosophical conversations about self-reflection and identity. In a world where we increasingly recognise that things are not simply black or white, cartoons embrace the grey area, and the idea of a spectrum and serve as a valuable tool for exploring philosophical concepts.

Chapter 2: Philosophy in Cartoons (Case Studies)

The cartoons I will discuss today, Rick and Morty, BoJack Horseman, and The Midnight Gospel, have deeply impacted my artistic perspective. They exemplify how cartoons can effortlessly blend frivolity and depth. These animations serve as compelling examples of how the seemingly lighthearted medium can delve into profound philosophical inquiries, making complex themes accessible and enjoyable. What fascinates me most is the power of visual storytelling in conveying intricate narratives and constructing immersive worlds that enhance the understanding and experience of philosophical concepts. This exploration aims to identify and analyze common visual elements and crucial components within these animations that contribute to their success in communicating philosophically rich content accessibly. This chapter briefly touches upon the philosophical underpinnings of these cartoons, with a primary focus on dissecting shared visual storytelling elements that facilitate their capacity to explore profound subjects with impact.

Brief Overview of the Cartoons: 'Rick and Morty' follows the interdimensional adventures of Rick Sanchez, an alcoholic scientist, and his grandson, Morty Smith. This show combines sci-fi elements with dark humour, exploring various dimensions and existential themes.

'BoJack Horseman' depicts the life of an anthropomorphic horse who is a washed-up actor, as he deals with the challenges of fame, relationships, and self-destructive behaviour in a satirical manner. The show delves into themes of existentialism, addiction, and the pursuit of happiness in Hollywood.

'The Midnight Gospel' follows Clancy, a 'spacecaster' with a malfunctioning multiverse simulator, as he travels to different worlds and interviews beings on existential topics.

Philosophy explored in these cartoons:

“If sub specie aeternitatis there is no reason to believe that anything matters, then that doesn’t matter either, and we can approach our absurd lives with irony instead of heroism or despair” (Nagel, 1971)

“Nobody exists on purpose, nobody belongs anywhere, everybody’s going to die. Come watch TV”—(Rick and Morty, 2014)

There has been extensive research conducted on various philosophies such as existentialism, nihilism, and absurdism. These philosophies have been explored in depth through the works of renowned thinkers such as Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Thomas Nagel, and Friedrich Nietzsche. One such medium through which these ideas have been explored is the television shows Rick and Morty and BoJack Horseman. In these shows, profound themes of moral responsibility, the inheritance of moral faults, despair, loneliness, and the unintentional harm caused by our actions are examined, along with their psychoanalytical connections (Kotlun, 2018) (Haridha et al, 2021) (Schmuck, 2018). Furthermore, there is also significant research on how The Midnight Gospel delves into themes of existential dread, interconnectedness, grief, and spirituality. The unique conversational and podcast-style animation format of The Midnight Gospel allows for a more profound and comprehensive exploration of these concepts (Wisecrack, 2021).

Commonalities between the three cartoons that enable philosophical conversations:

Dark Humour: All three of the shows Rick and Morty, The Midnight Gospel, and BoJack Horseman use dark humour and satire to critique societal norms, institutions, and human behaviour. Rick and Morty satirises science fiction tropes, societal conventions, and human flaws, such as in the episode Pickle Rick, where Rick turns himself into a pickle to avoid therapy, leading to absurd and comical situations. Similarly, The Midnight Gospel confronts the topic of addiction through dark humour, as protagonist Clancy converses with Dr Drew

about his substance abuse struggles in the episode ‘Taste of King.’ This blend of comedy and introspection allows the show to approach sensitive themes in a thought-provoking and accessible way. ‘BoJack Horseman’ also masterfully employs dark humour and satire to tackle a wide range of social and personal issues, the episode ‘Hank After Dark,’ satirises celebrity culture as BoJack's former idol is exposed as a sexual predator. The show's ability to use dark comedy as a means of discussing uncomfortable truths highlights the series' effective use of satire.

Emotional Depth and Character Development: All three of the shows offer intricate character arcs and explore the emotional depths of their protagonists. Rick and Morty delves into the emotional struggles of its characters, specifically Rick's complex relationship with his family, highlighting themes of abandonment, self-loathing, and redemption. The emotional impact in the episode ‘Total Rickall’ is juxtaposed with the show's dark humour. In The Midnight Gospel, Clancy's journey serves as a vehicle for introspection and emotional growth. As he interviews various beings in different realms, he confronts his fears and vulnerabilities, such as in ‘Vulture with Honor,’ where he grapples with the fear of death and the fragility of life. ‘BoJack Horseman’ delves deep into the emotional turmoil of its titular character, exploring themes of self-destructiveness, trauma, and the search for redemption. The central focus of the show is BoJack's journey towards self-awareness and change. The emotional impact of the show is exemplified in ‘Fish Out of Water’, where BoJack navigates a foreign underwater world without the ability to communicate.

Visual Surrealism: All three shows use surreal and unconventional visuals to portray the characters' inner struggles and journeys. Rick and Morty features imaginative and absurd visuals ranging from bizarre alien landscapes to psychedelic dimensions, which enhance the comedic and philosophical elements of the narrative. The Midnight Gospel takes viewers to fantastical realms filled with surreal imagery and symbolism, with each episode presenting an abstract environment that complements the philosophical discussions and adds depth to

the storytelling. BoJack Horseman incorporates visual surrealism by integrating anthropomorphic animals in story-telling.

Multiple Worlds: In all three shows, Rick and Morty, The Midnight Gospel, and BoJack Horseman, the concept of multiple universes is utilized to add a sense of vastness and depth to the plot. In Rick and Morty, the core plot hinges on Rick's expertise in 'interdimensional travel,' while in The Midnight Gospel, Clancy's simulator explores dying worlds. BoJack Horseman takes a nuanced approach, crafting a world where anthropomorphic animals and humans coexist with jobs and lives akin to humans. The show further introduces an underwater city, adding an extra layer of uniqueness. The exploration of diverse universes enables the shows to delve into varied themes and present different character versions, offering distinctive narratives. The concept also injects an element of unpredictability and excitement as characters traverse dimensions, encountering diverse situations. The concept of multiple worlds also adds an element of unpredictability and excitement to the stories, as the characters navigate through different dimensions and encounter diverse situations. The use of multiple universes enhances the richness and complexity of the storytelling in these animated shows.

Symbolism and Metaphors: All three shows incorporate symbolism and metaphors to convey deeper meanings and explore complex themes. ‘Rick and Morty uses symbolism to represent existential concepts and emotional struggles, such as the recurring image of a broken portal gun as a metaphor for Rick's fractured relationships and inability to truly connect with others. The Midnight Gospel deeply embeds symbolism in its animation style through intricate and visually symbolic landscapes that represent different philosophical concepts, running parallel with the philosophical conversations creating a multi-sensory experience. BoJack Horseman uses visual metaphors and recurring motifs to communicate its themes, such as the recurring image of a submerged underwater view representing BoJack's emotional state and his struggle to confront his past. There is a recurring visual metaphor of a baboon jogging up the hill outside of BoJack’s house representing Albert

Camus' Sisyphus. (1995) At the end of season two, the baboon advises a struggling Bojack that it gets easier every day as long as he keeps doing it every day, which is the hard part.

Drawing Style And Nostalgia:

The nostalgic drawing style in these cartoons serves as a powerful storytelling tool. 'The Midnight Gospel,' created by Pendleton Ward of 'Adventure Time' fame, shares visual and tonal similarities that evoke nostalgia for Ward's fans. In addition to Ward's creations, it also captures the enjoyable and episodic vibe found in children's cartoons like 'Dragon Tales,' 'Steven Universe,' and 'Gravity Falls.' While 'Rick and Morty' also exhibits traces of these adventure cartoons' nostalgia in its background art, it does not directly mirror a specific children's cartoon. Instead, it actively embraces shaky lines and a purposeful 'bad drawings' style, making an unconventional choice that contributes to the show's irreverent tone. 'BoJack Horseman' takes inspiration from the timeless aesthetic of classic Looney Tunes and reimagines anthropomorphic animals. Schmuck's study (2018) explores the intriguing connections between 'BoJack Horseman' and Looney Tunes, and how it blends the old with the new. The nostalgic drawing styles in these cartoons play a significant role in shaping the overall aesthetic and tone of the shows, helping to balance out the weighty themes with a familiar visual language.

Dynamic Visual Storytelling: All three of the analyzed shows utilize dynamic visual storytelling techniques to engage the audience. Rick and Morty employs rapid pacing, creative camera angles, and imaginative shot compositions to create a sense of chaos and absurdity. The Midnight Gospel juxtaposes intense visual sequences with philosophical discussions to create a multi-sensory experience. BoJack Horseman employs long tracking shots and experimental visual sequences to explore characters' internal struggles and add depth to their personal stories. The use of these techniques enhances the narrative and makes the storytelling more effective and engaging.

Open-Mindedness: Cartoons encourage viewers to keep an open mind by offering a highly immersive experience that is free from the constraints of reality. This allows for limitless possibilities and unconventional storytelling, leading to a higher level of acceptance. In the episode ‘Hunters Without a Home’ of The Midnight Gospel, the viewer is confronted with conversations about ceremonial magic. It is easier to digest this information as a viewer, without forming any opinions, compared to listening to the podcast episode that this cartoon episode is based on. The fact that this information about magic comes from an unreal, whimsical, fish-bowl man character with pet cats makes it more believable than if it came from an actual human being.

Hunters Without a Home, The Midnight Gospel (2020)

Chapter 3: Philosophy of the Medium

To break down the philosophy of the medium, it is necessary to define what cartoons are, to begin with. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a cartoon is a film that uses animation techniques to photograph a sequence of drawings rather than real people or objects. By this definition, animation seems to sit somewhere between live-action movies on one side and sequential art on the other side. Due to its very nature, animation belongs in between a wider spectrum of storytelling. Animation can be considered a way of making (and making is thinking in a way (Helfand, 2006)) that doesn't conform to a set structure. By its very nature, it is paralogical. It combines the dynamic motion of film with the creative freedom of illustrations, creating a storytelling medium that defies the constraints of reality and allows for the imaginative exploration of limitless possibilities. When we blur these lines, a few mediums similar to one another that sit in the bigger bracket of sequential art-meets motion appear. If we treat this visual storytelling as a wider branch with live-action on one side that's extremely real and sequential art on the other end as extremely unreal, animation lies somewhere in between.

Since the 1990s, animation has been gradually blurring the lines between animation and live-action. Films like Toy Story embraced 3D forms and realistic textures, while movies like Avatar seamlessly blended live action and computer-generated animation (CGI). Over the past 30 years, animations have made significant progress in creating hyper-realistic visuals, to the point where it becomes difficult to distinguish between the two.

Animation, which originated from sequential graphic art, is closely connected to the world of comics. Scott McCloud accurately describes animation as a comic book with multiple frames, but with one key difference: instead of images being juxtaposed side by side in a

shared space, the sequential images are rapidly projected onto the same space one after another, creating the illusion of motion. (1993)

In the early days of animation, there was a significant influence from graphic print media. (*Klein, N.M., 1993)* The co-interrelation of these two fields in terms of aesthetics, mindset and semiotics is evident (Ajanović, M., 2011.) However, this blending of the two mediums was not a deliberate choice but rather a result of the technological limitations of that time. Due to these limitations, animation was much closer to sequential art than live-action movies in terms of realism.

However, animations like the Spider-Verse movies are challenging the norms and consciously use advanced technology to intentionally incorporate an unreal quality, embracing their origins in sequential art. Productions like Spider-Verse: Into the Spider-verse, Spider-Verse: Across the Spider-Verse, Entergalactic, and Undone blur the lines between animation and sequential art deliberately. Spider-Verse is inspired by and made to look like a comic book come to life, Entergalactic aims to resemble a moving painting, and Undone uses rotoscopic technology to transform a live-action sequence into an animation.

The ability of animation to constantly subvert and approach thinking subjectively and fluidly is precisely what makes contemporary animation so effective in handling complex ideas discussed in Chapter 1. Animation today shares connections with various Deleuzian philosophies. However, it is worth noting that philosopher Gilles Deleuze dedicated little space to discussing animation. (Schaffer, 2006) According to William Schaffer, in the one instance when Deleuze did address the subject, he somewhat dismissed its capabilities, considering animated film as a subset of early cinema. Nevertheless, contemporary researchers have examined Deleuze's post-structuralist philosophies in relation to animation. Deleuze's philosophy of the virtual, further explored by Manuel DeLanda, shares many similarities with animation as a medium. Spencer Roberts establishes these Deleuzian

perspectives in animation theory by discussing the work of various theorists, including William Schaffer, Thomas Lamarre, and Dan Torre.

The notion of the virtual in philosophy is a realm of possibility and potentiality that exists alongside the actual. It challenges traditional understandings of reality. DeLanda's philosophy of the Virtual emphasizes the importance of dynamic processes and interactions in the virtual and how they shape the actual (1952) Likewise, animation explores the virtual realm by constructing entire worlds that defy laws of physics and embrace the spaces in between, full of potential. Brian Massumi, a theorist influenced by Deleuze, extensively examines this aspect of the virtual and its similarities with computational thinking and the notion of potentiality it leads to. Massumi emphasises the connection of the virtual with simulation, describing potentiality as focusing on function, clarity, and the combination of elements that are already known in an unfamiliar context (Massumi, 2021).

Animation utilises a similar technique that involves placing familiar objects in unfamiliar settings. This is achieved through the use of anthropomorphic animals, familiar sounds, and sometimes even creating actual simulations within the storyline (further discussed in Case Studies). According to Spencer Roberts, animation has a unique ability to abstract patterns of movement from one entity and apply them to another. This can be observed in examples such as director Ang Lee 'puppeting' the CGI version of the Hulk using his own body, or in the anthropomorphic objects like a lamp and candle stand in Disney's Beauty and the Beast.

When the theory of the virtual is specifically applied to animation, it becomes even more apparent why animation serves as an unreal realm where the audience willingly embraces and immerses in the unreality of the medium. In a sense, animation is a virtual space that liberates us from rigid categories and conventional thinking, allowing us to challenge established norms and explore new, unexplored realms of thought and experience. In the context of Contemporary Adult Animation, it confronts viewers with familiar yet uncomfortable emotions such as depression, anxiety, and trauma within a surreal and

dreamlike setting. This enables viewers to examine complex themes from a detached perspective that is both relatable and non-personal.

Torre's Cognitive Theory Philosophy (2017) goes beyond Deleuzian philosophy to discuss this phenomenon in animation from a process philosophy and cognitive science perspective. While Deleuzian philosophy suggests that motion and imagery are intertwined, Torre argues that they should be considered as separate entities. When creating animation, it is important to treat motion and image as distinct components. Torre proposes that motion does not originate from the characters or objects themselves, but is imposed from outside during the animation process. Unlike live action, animation embodies the process of creation. Motion is not only a fundamental aspect of animation but also plays a significant role in our visuo-spatial working memory. According to Robert Logie (1995), our visual and spatial working memory should be understood as separate cognitive functions. Spatial working memory retains dynamic information about movement and sequences and is linked to physical action control. On the other hand, visual working memory is passive and stores information about static visual patterns. Research about 'mirror neurons' suggests that they play a role in our understanding of motion. Mirror neurons are parts of the brain that are activated both when we perform a specific physical activity and when we observe someone else performing the same activity. This suggests that mirror neurons can be compared to motion capture technology. Interestingly, we can recognize movement even when it is applied to an unfamiliar form. A classic example of this is seen in cartoons like Tigger from Winnie the Pooh, whose tail springs like a coil.

Torre's cognitive animation theory is crucial in understanding why contemporary adult animations feel so palatable when discussing somewhat harsh subjects. They utilize the mimicry of movement from ancestral, whimsical cartoons to evoke a sense of familiarity in viewers. By engaging mirror neurons, these animations tap into the same areas of the mind that were active while watching older cartoons. This creates a sense of comfort and childlike nostalgia through visuals. This nostalgic connection helps make complex themes more

understandable and relatable, as it brings forth familiar and comforting memories associated with simpler times. It allows viewers to connect with the animation on a deeper emotional level, enhancing their overall experience and facilitating a greater understanding of the underlying messages and themes being portrayed.

Conclusion

Based on the above research, it can be inferred that cartoons are a powerful medium for exploring philosophical conversations, particularly regarding consciousness and identity. Cartoons utilize visual storytelling elements such as dark humour, emotional depth, surrealism, symbolism, and dynamic storytelling to create an immersive and engaging experience for viewers. The unique nature of animation as a virtual space allows for the coexistence of a spectrum of ideas, providing a platform for the exploration of complex themes that may be challenging to convey through other mediums. From addressing societal absurdities in cartoons throughout history to contemporary adult animation that fearlessly tackles socio-political issues, mental health, and intricate aspects of identity and consciousness, cartoons have evolved into sophisticated vehicles for philosophical discourse. By embracing the absurdity of human existence and skillfully blending frivolity with depth, cartoons make philosophy easily comprehensible and accessible in today's world. It can be inferred that cartoons have the remarkable ability to captivate and provoke thought, making them an ideal catalyst for philosophical exploration.

In my artistic practice, I aim to create an immersive experience for viewers by exploring the concept of virtual space with vast potentiality. I plan to build an episodic adventure cartoon that takes place within the protagonist's consciousness, creating a realm where a variety of rational and irrational things may occur. This will provide an opportunity for open-ended conversations about identity and consciousness.

To balance out the heavy themes I plan to explore in this cartoon, I have chosen a visual style reminiscent of 90s-early 2000s cartoons. By tapping into viewers' childhood memories and invoking a feeling of familiarity, I aim to establish a deep emotional connection that enhances their viewing experience and leads to introspection.

To create a sense of both familiarity and unfamiliarity, I intend to combine familiar objects with an unfamiliar setting. By placing recognizable elements in unexpected and surreal contexts, my goal is to evoke wonder and intrigue. This contrast between the known and the unknown aims to enhance viewers' engagement, encourage active participation, and spark curiosity as they explore the animated world I have crafted.

My work combines elements from both comics and animation, resulting in a unique blend of artistic mediums. Drawing inspiration from sequential art, I incorporate fragmented narrative techniques and non-linear storytelling approaches into my animated works. This fusion of artistic disciplines allows me to create a captivating and engaging storytelling experience that resonates with viewers on multiple levels and encourages repeat viewing.

The philosophies discussed here deeply influence my artistic process. I am drawn to the concept of paralogical thinking and viewing logic as a spectrum rather than a rigid framework. By challenging traditional notions and embracing the fluidity of ideas, I aim to create thought-provoking and intellectually stimulating narratives. My work exists at the intersection of sequential art and animation, embracing the inherent qualities of both mediums while pushing the boundaries of storytelling.

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