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The Best Schools of Animation in Italy

Here the list of the best Schools of Animation in Italy



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Short Movie “46 Centimetri”, Graduation Film from “Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia”

To work at Pixar and earn an Oscar nomination (with the short film *La Luna*), Enrico Casarosa from Genova had to study in New York at the Fashion Institute of Technology. In the '90s, it was difficult to find animations courses in Italy, but the situation has changed. Although they are not as famous as the French schools (Gobelins, Supinfocom) and English schools (Royal College of Arts), excellent animations schools have developed in Italy to educate young professionals in the world of animation and special effects. We chose five of such schools to highlight in this article; they cover a wide range of budgets, objectives, and techniques.



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Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia (Turin)

This is the most prestigious school of animation in Italy. It is the Piedmont branch of the National School of Cinema (located in Rome, Milan, L'Aquila, and Palermo). Recently, the school changed its location from the hills of Chieri to the actual city of Turin. The coursework lasts for three years. The first year concentrates on the basics of animation; the second year allows the student to choose traditional or 3D animation; the third year consists of a final project (a completed short film including the screenplay and final editing). This year, two of these final projects were selected for the Festival of Annecy (the most important festival of animation in all of Europe).

The school offers different opportunities to its students including internships at Cartoon Network (London), Boing, and other animation studios in Italy. Donato Sansone is one of the school's most famous alumni, and he created Videogioco. Other alumni from the school have worked on films including Frankenweenie, The Avengers 2, and Persepolis. In general, this animation school is the most attentive to cinematographic taste and culture. The courses cost around 2,000 euro.



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Big Rock (Roncade, Treviso)

If you grew up with the myth of Industrial Light and Magic and have a love for special effects, this is the school for you. Surrounded by greenery, Big Rock is located in a farmhouse in Roncade (Treviso), a place made famous for its connection to the accelerator start-up H-Farm. Founder of H-Farm, Riccardo Donadon also became a partner of Big Rock (that had originally opened in Verona in 2005 before moving to Roncade). This school produces 3D generalists and allows you to work not only on Vfx (where most bigrockers flourish) but also on animation cinema. The school teaches and uses the software Maya. The next set of courses will begin in September, the master course costs 5,000 euro. The alumni from this school are everywhere: one graduate from the school, Federico Favaro, worked on the film Gravity that won an Oscar for special effects. The registration for upcoming classes are already open.

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ied (Milan and Rome)

The Institute of Design (IED) produces excellent animators as well. The next set of courses will begin in October 2014. With no courses in traditional animation, the IED creates specialists in 3D (with a Diploma in CG Animation) who can work on films, TV series, videogame design, post-production cinematography, and special effects. Throughout the years, the school has developed many excellent technicians: lighters, riggers, modelers. The most successful graduate of IED is Rino Stefano Tagliaferro, class of 1980. He is one of the most original and recognized videomakers and animators in Italy. His last animated short is called *Beauty*. His past works have been shown in festivals in Annecy, Ottawa, and New York.



Rainbow Academy (Rome)

Rainbow is perhaps the main animation studio in Italy, a success story that started with Winx (that will be 10 years old in 2014) and confirmed by Mia and me (a series sold in 50 countries). Two years ago, Rainbow founded its own Academy, an external school (so one does not necessarily go work for the mother studio after graduation) whose main strength lies in its integration with the manufacturing processes of Rainbow.

Working in such a close connection with Rainbow studios allows students to use tools that are rare in other Italian schools including the render farm and the green screen room. There are five courses starting with Digital Production (that lasts seven months) using software Maya as well as specialized, one-on-one courses for professionals. The courses cost up to 8,500 euro.

Online courses

Looking at the careers of those in the world of animation, many professionals are self-taught and never attended a true animation school. These professionals developed their skills using the Web, following forums and studying tutorials. For this reason, it is important to highlight two online courses.

The first is SquashNStretch, managed by Filippo Dattola, one of the most important Italian Vfx artists (currently, he is the character animator of the London studio MPC and is working on *Guardians of the Galaxy*). The course lasts 10 weeks and costs 350 euro. Due to the professional formation of Dattola, who started as a modeler, the focus of these courses is on character design, the artistic projection of the characters. Most students study 3D animation, but there are also courses in 2D. Another important online course is VFX Wizard, based on a model of e-learning so the student can enter the virtual campus at any moment.

The course costs 99 euro a month for modules that can last 4, 7 or 12 months.

The focus is on visual effects both in 2d and in 3d with a generalist vocation.

VFX alumni are able to transition smoothly from one task to another in the creation of an animation product. **One of the school's alumni is Michelangelo Frisoni who is currently working on visual effects for a YouTube series called Video Games High School (more than two million views per episode).**



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