

Stacey Steers

the lantern

Filmmaker Stacey Steers to showcase
trio of short films

By Sarah Upton
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A still from the short film "Edge of Alchemy," by Stacey Steers. Credit: Courtesy of Stacey Steers

Stacey Steers takes a cut-and-paste mentality when it comes to her films.

The filmmaker will be showcasing her trilogy of handcrafted short films at the Wexner Center for the Arts on Thursday.

Steers' animated films "Phantom Canyon," "Night Hunter" and "Edge of Alchemy" were all made in the past 10 years and use paper collage to create the onscreen images.

Steers said she became interested in film through her ex-husband, who was a documentarian. She combined her interest in film and the skills she developed during art school and pursued filmmaking, specifically animation. She began taking film classes at the University of Colorado, but had to teach herself as there was no animation program at the time.

The animation skills Steers honed contributed to her different way of producing these works. The lack of formal training became a contributing factor to her success, she said.

“It’s part of the reason I’m a very quirky animator,” Steers said. “I have a really particular way of approaching it and it has to do with not having learned to be more efficient. It’s funny how disadvantages can, in a weird way, become advantages over time.”

Steers said when she visits the Wex she will be showing her films chronologically, so audience members can see a dramatic change in her style of filmmaking. She also will do a presentation that shows the audience how she produces her work.

Steers said she sets herself apart by incorporating clips of old silent films into her work, and shows loose yet apparent storylines.

“I take them out of silent films where they’re doing one thing, and put them in my film and turn that thing into something new with a whole new plot line,” Steers said. “My narratives are very loose, they’re not linear particularly, but they’re there.”

David Filipi, director of Film/Video at the Wex, said he likes to bring filmmakers to campus who have recently released a film. He also said he invited Steers because he believes the process of handmade animation and the transformation of inanimate objects into the finished project is interesting.

“They’re these handmade films that she’s kind of making herself kind of frame by frame,” Filipi said. “I really find the process interesting, so it’s kind of amazing to think these kind of inanimate, flat objects kind of produce the effect that the finished films do.”

The newest film that Steers will be showing is titled “Edge of Alchemy.” She said the film is like “Frankenstein” in the sense that it is about a human creating another human. The difference is, it’s a woman scientist that creates another woman.

The film also touches on a more serious subject: saving the bees.

“The newest one also has a kind of subtext of hive collapse,” Steers said. “So, there’s a lot of bees in that film.”

Steers will be speaking and screening her films on Thursday at the Wexner Center for the Arts at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for members, students and seniors for \$6 and the general public for \$8.