

Maya Creede-Penna

11 February 2026

Experimental as a Way of Encountering

Throughout my childhood, DIY music videos on youtube with a handful of views and DVDs of obscure Italian cartoons were my chosen forms of experimental media consumption. The unique animation style and humour of the tapes, not to mention the score consisting of Italian children's rhymes, kept me intensely intrigued and dedicated to further observation. The imperfections of the scrappy music videos is what excited me the most: they felt accessible and real in a way that was inspirational. In fact, my sister and I would often partake and produce our own. Does rewatching home videos from my parent's childhood repetitively also count as foundational experimental viewing? I am inclined to think it does, as my hyperfocus and persistent curiosity entrenched these into my brain somewhat abstractly. I remember certain scenes so clearly, the '70s quality only making the recordings more interesting to me. The candid, unpolished filming and background dialogue featured in a lot of these home videos still influences my perspective on video art and my own videography. I classify this content as experimental based on how my brain encountered and processed it, regardless of what it was made up of. This inclines me to believe that not only are the production, the content, and the concept possible factors in the determination of what is "experimental", but interpretation and perspective alone can deem something experimental.

For a long time, I relied on instagram reels to get my fix of video art, coming across the sort of content that I would consider experimental in its aesthetics in themes, not knowing much beyond that. The algorithm ensured the persistence of these visuals, until the short form videos almost

rendered my feed its own experimental broadcast as I scrolled. Admittedly, this form of rapid consumption contradicts my later point against urgency. The numb trance that such social media has the ability to put you in is certainly not how I want to experience art. However, I still see the worth in the small moments of inspiration and joy that can find you within it. Seeking out longer form videos of a similar essence, I return to my roots and seek experimental videos out on Youtube. I venture onto Internet Archive for a more speculative search, something that will inevitably turn into the conception of numerous new projects, but so does everything I absorb in a way. Sometimes, within my dreams, I stumble across an experimental warped conjunction of all the media I have recently consumed, and forget the details when I wake up. I like to think the vague mist of it that lingers strengthens my artistic integrity and shows up in my practice going forward nonetheless.

In discussing experimental media, I must acknowledge my position as a white person who privileges from settler colonial systems of oppression, and the place I occupy within experimental practice. Under settler colonialism, Indigenous media is frequently pushed to the margins as “experimental.” The term marks Indigenous work as peripheral to the mainstream, therefore “othering” it. This appears in the way film and new media advances settler colonial narratives (Masayesva, 2005). Even the language of “sharing” platforms implies equality and reciprocity, masking the imbalance of power that determines who controls production and distribution. In “Indigenous Experimentation,” Victor Masayesva argues that Indigenous artists adapt historically colonial technologies of film and new media for their own purposes of cultural preservation. In this way, experimental media can be defined by how much it subverts the colonizer’s indoctrination and challenges infrastructures of power (Masayesva, 2005). My access

and privilege within settler colonial institutions have facilitated my practice and granted me legitimacy in artistic and academic spaces. Thus, my gestures towards experimentation risk remaining formal disruptions that do not truly challenge the underlying structures of control.

Researching and absorbing art, philosophy, and politics is core to my experimental practice both in conceptualization and production. The assigned reading on BUMP TV describes the broadcast's accessible application process. It doesn't require credentials or an elaborate proposal, which removes the daunting barriers that often prevent ideas from being realized, fostering a more genuinely experimental environment with less censorship and constraint. This access reminds me of my numerous friends and acquaintances that are very creative and artistically inclined that don't create art. They express ideas to me enthusiastically, but they can't conceptualize the process of bringing them to life. I don't blame them, it's easy to get discouraged by the scope of an idea, especially due to the exclusionary aspect of many dominant artist spaces. Seeing things like BUMP exist is wonderful in how it can facilitate the realization and sharing of ideas accessibly. When they were still running, BUMP reserved a six hour long programming block for public submissions (Hampton, 2019). The fact that you didn't need to impress someone or fit criteria to get aired is particularly notable to me, largely in terms of how authenticity can emerge. In this framework, perfection isn't the goal, action is. This is a core aspect to what "experimental" means for me. From what I heard about the Artist Talk given by Sledd, and from what I can gather from the times I have encountered him in the classroom and watching SleddTV, there's a lot I can be inspired by from his practice. Sledd's practice favours turning ideas into tangible art without worrying about a polished outcome. He puts an emphasis on passion and intensity, highlighting the importance of finding your own unique perspective and

practice by embracing authenticity. By centering uniqueness and preaching the making of embarrassing art, Sledd is certainly aligned with my idea of experimental, and his embodiment of it is something I aspire greatly.

I am still discovering my own artistic identity and practice, with a long way to go particularly in how I hope to build community from it. The accepting environment of the experimental classroom has been an inspiration and guidance towards that. In fact, the back and forth of ideas I've had with my group for the experimental tv episode has been a distinct instance of open creativity and idea building without judgement between peers. This experience of true creative collaboration is something that will impact my practice and how I continue to participate going forward. An artistic collaboration like the experimental tv episode recalls BUMP TV and other community driven broadcasts that provide inspiration in this. An alternative example is the Kinngait Arctic Workshop Reel 1, which is a collection of stop motions by various artists at Kinngait. I appreciate the compilation of short works and their general simplicity, which removes the risk of seeking perfection and permits true experimentation. There's something very experimental about the quick nature of sand stop motion. The impermanence of the individual drawings and how short lived they are liberated expectations of perfection. In my notes from the initial viewing, "shapeshifting quality" is written down. I see where I was coming from as I watch it again now. The stop motion shows the process in how one shape transforms into another shape, even if the change itself (hand in frame or otherwise) is cut out. In certain hand drawn stop motions in Reel 1, the use of repetitive movements and colour changes create a lot of movement in a fascinatingly simple way. In some clips, the strategy of mixing up shots is used to create additional movement and depth. This draws a link to my own practice and how I edit my

videos. I think mixing up shots in this way adds an unpredictability that is another core aspect to experimental. It is something that deepens the storytelling of the piece and contributes to the overall message.

When I trace my relationship to experimental media, I see that it has never been a fixed genre for me, but rather a mode of attention. It is an approach rooted in curiosity that heavily values process and embraces interpretation as a creative force. For me, experimental is a practice of unabashed self expression and exploration that involves letting my mind wander and ideate freely. It requires questioning and unlearning structures of knowledge and interrupting systems of power. Often, “experimental” is acting based on intuition and taking risks without guarantees. It involves being patient with myself despite the deep rooted urgency in my nervous system. In this sense, my experimental practice involves slowing down, embracing imperfection, and building community as a form of protest. Ultimately, my experimental practice is less about achieving something particular and more about remaining open to transformation. To encounter the world from this perspective is to let it change me, and to allow that to shape what I make in return.

Bibliography

Artists at Kinngait animation workshop. “Arctic Workshop Reel 1” *National Film Board*, 1973.

<https://www.nfb.ca/film/arctic-workshop-reel-1/>

Hampton, Chris. “BUMP TV broadcasts 24/7 from the basement of an old Victorian — and anyone can have their own show.” *CBC Arts*, 2019.

<https://www.cbc.ca/arts/bump-tv-broadcasts-24-7-from-the-basement-of-an-old-victorian-and-anyone-can-have-their-own-show-1.4972943>

Masayesva, Victor. Selections from “Indigenous Experimentation.” *Transference, Tradition, Technology: Native New Media Exploring Visual & Digital Culture*. Walter Phillips Gallery Editions in association with Art Gallery of Hamilton & Indigenous Media Arts Group, 2005, pp. 173-177.

sleddofficial7467. SLEDD OFFICIAL [YouTube Channel]. YouTube.

<https://youtube.com/@sleddofficial7467?si=ErVMkrjViSOzdoDw>