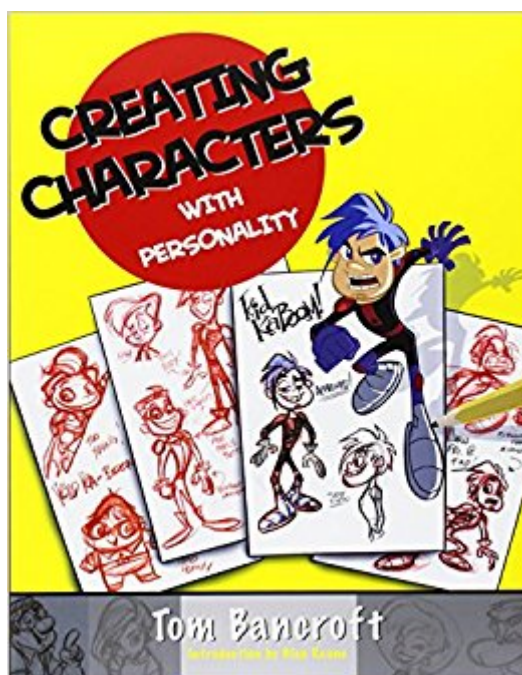


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# Creating Characters With Personality: For Film, TV, Animation, Video Games, And Graphic Novels



## Synopsis

From Snow White to Shrek, from Fred Flintstone to SpongeBob SquarePants, the design of a character conveys personality before a single word of dialogue is spoken. *Designing Characters with Personality* shows artists how to create a distinctive character, then place that character in context within a script, establish hierarchy, and maximize the impact of pose and expression. Practical exercises help readers put everything together to make their new characters sparkle. Lessons from the author, who designed the dragon Mushu (voiced by Eddie Murphy) in Disney's *Mulan*—plus big-name experts in film, TV, video games, and graphic novels—make a complex subject accessible to every artist.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tom Bancroft has been an animator for more than fifteen years, working for Disney and Big Idea Productions (producers of Veggie Tales). Most recently, he contributed to Disney's *Brother Bear*. He lives in Franklin, TN.

Another Tom Bancroft book that is a tremendous resource for the various stages that go into creating and developing characters. It is an excellent teaching/learning resource for the beginner, and full of information that experienced artists can apply to their work. I love Tom Bancroft's drawing style, and this book is full of illustrated examples of the tips and techniques he is describing. The illustrations are a nice size... one thing I hate is when art/instruction books have tiny little pictures

that obscure detail... but these illustrations are a pleasure to look at. For a companion book, I would highly recommend another book by Bancroft... *Character Mentor: Learn by Example to Use Expressions, Poses, and Staging to Bring Your Characters to Life* I would, and will, give it a similar review.

So I've been in a bit of an artistic rut for quite some time due to matters of style and character design. Just have been feeling my work is just kind of bland and a bit lacking in the uniqueness department, leaving me a bit depressed and frustrated at a hobby and possible career that I used to love greatly. After coming across this book and another of Bancroft's books, *Character Mentor*, I've been able to at least get myself somewhat on the path to achieving what I've been looking for. So a bit of info on the book. The book starts with giving you a bit of insight on the world of a character designer and the main types of such in the career field which is a little useful for someone wanting a bit of info to get them into learning more about the field. As you get more into the book you get small assignments here and there and one big one that is covered through the whole book: The fleshing out of an assigned cast of characters for a fake cartoon. With this project, you get some advice and examples from various illustrators and animators like Butch Hartman and Mark Henn at the end of each chapter. This book won't magically tell you the answer (wouldn't we all like such a book xD), but it will at least put you on the road to be more adept at making characters that truly match any descriptions someone might give you for whatever creations they may need. Heh wish I had this book sooner while I was in art school for animation.

Though I wish this book also had a chapter on how to draw men. This is why I am giving this book four stars. Other than that, this book is just what I needed.

I've grown to like Tom Bancroft's books and style of teaching. He has a way of really drawing you into what he's trying to say and gets you involved and interested. Some may see his style as a little too cartoonish but you can't exactly blame him since he worked for many years as an animator for Disney. In this book, Tom Bancroft discusses the importance of adding personality to your characters and giving them life. His focus is to get you thinking from step 1 to plan your character so that when a passer by sees him/her, they can immediately tell what sort of person your character is. Bancroft discusses things such as poses, body shape, expressions and the like for characters of different types including humans (male and female), animals as well as monsters. I would recommend this book to beginners although it can also be helpful for intermediate artists. The only

thing I'll add is to say that this book is definitely not a must have. It doesn't have secrets in there that you can't find anywhere else. Having said that though, Tom Bancroft teaches with a rich background and portrays things quite simply encouraging you to try it out as he teaches through.

The author of this book walks you through the steps and detailed exercises on creating a line of characters for a feature animation. You get a good glimpse into the process the professionals do when creating/planning a feature animation. If you want pointers on creating your own characters this is the book to have. I also recommend the Character Mentor as a follow-up book to this to help give your new characters life.

I ended up buying this book, I don't know why maybe I have a thirst for knowledge. When I received it in the mail I thought, "Oh man why did I get another dumb drawing book that I'll never use?" But I sat down and flipped through the pages. I saw a lot of interesting things. So I started reading the introduction and the author makes a point. There are plenty of books that show you how to draw technically but not a lot of books that show you how to make your character unique. This is a one of a kind book. I read the book in a week and I loved it. It shows you the basics of character design and even has an assignment that runs through the book. You're given a description of some characters and your task is to draw him using some of the guidelines that are in the book. The book covers sizes, shapes, variations, creating kids, animals, monsters. It's a really good read, and better than what I was expecting.

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