

# EXCEPTIONAL MINDS

Nonprofit academy and studio training young adults on the autism spectrum  
for careers in the digital arts

Greetings prospective students! Registration and enrollment for our part-time Fall 2024 workshops is now open! Workshops are available to ages 14+.

Exceptional Minds' Seasonal Workshops offer virtual or on-campus courses in introductory and intermediate digital arts skills. These workshops are available to students aged 14 and older, providing an opportunity to explore various digital arts courses. Many participants continue into our full-time program and then pursue careers in digital arts and entertainment.

## **If you are a new student, you must complete the 2 steps below in order to be able to register for the fall workshops:**

1. Take an optional virtual tour in order to have all your questions answered.  
<https://exceptionalminds.classe365.com/form/view/toursignup>
2. Fill out an application including a diagnosis of autism and \$65 registration fee (to be paid [here](#)).  
<https://exceptionalminds.classe365.com/form/view/Application>

**Please keep in mind, registration below will not be valid until you've completed the application process in step 2 above.**

For complete information on our fall part-time offerings, see the following:

### **Programming Includes:**

- Small Group Workshops
- Drawing Lab
- Private and Semi-Private Lessons

### **Small Group Workshops**

Small group workshops have a 1:5 teacher to student ratio. Workshops are offered in a five-lesson package for \$850 or \$190 per class drop-in. **All workshops are virtual unless otherwise noted.**

The Fall Trimester is broken into two sessions. Please see the graphics below for details.  
**Course descriptions are available at the bottom of this document.**

# Fall Workshops

## Session 1: September 14 – October 21

\$850 for five lesson workshop | \$190 for one lesson. **(Virtual=V, In-person=IP)**

<b>Monday</b> Sept 16   Sept 23   Sept 30   Oct 7   Oct 21 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	<b>Tuesday</b> Sept 17   Sept 24   Oct 1   Oct 8   Oct 15 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	<b>Wednesday</b> Sept 18   Sept 25   Oct 2   Oct 9   Oct 16 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	<b>Thursday</b> Sept 19   Sept 26   Oct 3   Oct 10   Oct 17 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	Friday No workshops	<b>Saturday</b> Sept 14   Sept 21   Sept 28   Oct 5   Oct 12 <b>9:00 am to 11:00 am</b> <b>11:30 am to 1:30 pm</b> <b>2:00 pm to 4:00 pm</b>
<b>Animation Freestyle (IP)</b>	<b>Introduction to Unreal Engine(V)</b>	<b>Intro Video Editing Creation Lab (V)</b>	<b>Intermedia te Animation (V)</b>		<b>Character Design (V)</b> or <b>Digital Sculpting with ZBrush (V)</b> 9:00 AM - 11 AM <b>Intro to 2D Animation (IP)</b> or <b>Demo Reels with Adobe Premiere (V)</b> 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
<b>VFX/Motion Graphics: Title Design (V)</b>	<b>2.5D Animation with Blender(IP)</b>		<b>Photoshop Creation Lab (IP)</b>		<b>Drawing Workshop (IP)</b> or <b>Animate Me! (IP)</b> 2:00pm-4:00pm



# Fall Workshops

## Session 2: October 26 – December 5

\$850 for five lesson workshop | \$190 for one lesson. (Virtual=V, In-person=IP)

<b>Monday</b> Oct 28   Nov 4   Nov 18   Nov 25   Dec 2 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	<b>Tuesday</b> Oct 29   Nov 5   Nov 12   Nov 19   Nov 26 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	<b>Wednesday</b> Oct 30   Nov 6   Nov 13   Nov 20   Dec 4 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	<b>Thursday</b> Oct 31   Nov 7   Nov 14   Nov 21   Dec 5 <b>4 to 6 pm PST</b>	Friday No workshops	<b>Saturday</b> Oct 26   Nov 2   Nov 9   Nov 16   Nov 23 <b>9:00 am to 11:00 am</b> <b>11:30 am to 1:30 pm</b> <b>2:00 pm to 4:00 pm</b>
<b>Intermediate Video Editing Lab (IP)</b>	<b>Intro Video Editing Creation Lab (IP &amp; V)</b>	<b>VFX/Motion Graphics Freestyle (V)</b>	<b>Animation Storyboarding (IP)</b>		<b>Portfolio Building (V)</b> 9:00 am to 11:00 am or <b>Unreal Engine* (V)</b> 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM (*Special double session)  <b>Animation Freestyle (IP)</b> 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
<b>3D Character Building (V)</b>	<b>Intermediate Animation (V)</b>	<b>Private Lesson (V)</b>	<b>Graphic Design (V)</b>		<b>Character Design (IP)</b> or <b>Private Lessons (V)</b> 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

## Fall Workshop Registration

Session 1 runs September 14 – October 21 and Session 2 runs October 26 to December. 5. Please complete the Google form for [Session 1 Workshop Registration](#) and/or [Session 2 Workshop Registration](#) to begin the Workshop registration process. Please note that class size is limited and enrollment is subject to approval by the Associate Director.

## Drawing Lab

Drawing Labs are \$85 each, billed monthly. They take place every Wednesday from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM PST. Students can attend any or all sessions. Please complete this [Drawing Lab Registration Form](#) if interested.

## Private and Semi-Private Lessons

To request private or semi-private lessons for Fall 2024, please complete the [Private and Semi-Private Lesson Request Form](#). Lessons are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis depending on instructor availability, enrollment is not guaranteed.

## Links For Virtual Workshops and Lessons

For virtual workshops and lessons, you will receive the necessary Zoom links and instructions prior to the first day of class.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

## Course Descriptions, Dates and Times

### Session 1 • 5 weeks

Dates: Sept. 14 to Oct. 21

### Saturday: Sept 14 | Sept 21 | Sept 28 | Oct 5 | Oct 12

9:00 am to 11:00 am | 11:30 am to 1:30 pm | 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

(See graphic above for exact times)

**Character Design:** Students will learn how to take original characters and develop them into their own unique and memorable designs. Using Animate or Photoshop students will learn the basics of design, gain an understanding of the principles of gesture, posing, anatomy, and composition for developing compelling characters. (Virtual)

**Digital Sculpting with ZBrush Core Mini:** Learn the fundamentals of digital sculpting in ZBrush Core Mini. In this workshop, students sculpt simple organic forms in their computers with either a mouse or tablet. After learning the basic techniques, students will have the opportunity to bring their own characters or creatures to life. Open to beginner and intermediate students. (Virtual)

**Intro to 2D Animation:** Design and animate characters and environments using Adobe Animate software. Beginners will learn how to utilize the program to make their own simple animations, bringing amazing ideas to life! This very popular class gives students an overview of the Animate software and the animation process. Available in-person or online.

(In person)

**Demo Reels with Adobe Premiere:** Organize, create, and show the world your best work using Adobe Premiere Pro editing software. This workshop is for the creator who wants to add music, sound FX, and titles to their best work and build upon their editing knowledge.

(Virtual)

**Drawing Workshop:** Sketch, draw, sketch, repeat. This intensive drawing workshop challenges the student to draw outside of their comfort zone. Using visual prompts, students cycle through drawing exercises to bring their craft to the next level. A perfect workshop to build your portfolio.

(In person)

**Animate Me!:** Take your animation to the next level by learning how to apply physicality– including weight and momentum– and acting– including body language and facial expressions– to your animations. Film live-action references of yourself (or others, including pets), and use those to inform how to move your animated characters with pizzazz! Artists will work through classic animation exercises and explore techniques to make their action more believable using principles defined by famous Disney animators Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston. Students should have prior experience in Adobe Animate and an understanding of how to use keyframes.

(In person)

**Monday: Sept 16 | Sept 23 | Sept 30 | Oct 7 | Oct 21**

4 to 6 pm PST

**Animation Freestyle:** For students new to digital art-making or with a project in progress, this class serves as a place where creators can work alongside one another to accomplish their 2D Animation goals in Adobe Animate. Instructors will assist with students who are working on developing portfolio pieces, passion projects, and foundational animation and digital drawing exercises. This class is for all levels. This class can be taken multiple times and will be customized to the student skill level.

(In person)

**VFX/Motion Graphics– Title Design:** Students will have the opportunity to create their own original titles and sequences or one that mimics an existing opening of a favorite show or movie they've seen. The goal of the workshop is to combine text, music, and video to create kinetic typography projects while learning fundamental principles of animation and design. This class is for students that have some After Effects experience.

(Virtual)

**Tuesday: Sept 17 | Sept 24 | Oct 1 | Oct 8 | Oct 15**

4 to 6 pm PST

**Introduction to Unreal Engine:** Create virtual 3D worlds in this exciting game engine platform. Whether you're a gamer or creative storyteller, this workshop is designed to introduce you to the powerful tools and techniques for creating captivating virtual environments. Students explore the Unreal Game Engine Launcher, Interface and Blueprints to create their own 3D Platformer levels using premade and customized assets. Use of materials, lighting, and reflection captures will be introduced. No previous game engine experience required. Unreal Engine is a free download.

(Virtual)

**2.5D Animation with Blender:** Combine the best of both animation worlds– 2D and 3D– by creating 2.5D animation using the free open source 3D graphics software Blender. In this workshop students will learn best practices utilizing the grease pencil for animation while harnessing the 3D tools of Blender. This is an intermediate animation course for those students who want to develop techniques for designing assets that integrate seamlessly into a 2.5D environment as seen in features like Treasure Planet, Steamboy, and other imaginative shorts. This workshop is recommended for students experienced in 2D animation.

(In person)

**Wednesday: Sept 18 | Sept 25 | Oct 2 | Oct 9 | Oct 16**

4 to 6 pm PST

**Intro Video Editing Creation Lab:** Immerse yourself in the art of editing and the language of visual storytelling. This workshop demonstrates foundational theories of picture editing as students create, combine, and manipulate various clips and images into an impactful story. This workshop is great for beginners as it focuses on fundamentals using Adobe Premiere Pro and using multiple tracks and audio in a non-linear timeline.

(Virtual)

**Thursday: Sept 19 | Sept 26 | Oct 3 | Oct 10 | Oct 17**

4 to 6 pm PST

**Intermediate Animation:** Design and animate characters and environments using Adobe Animate software. Intermediate students can work on personal animation projects and shorts in a collaborative environment. This very popular class gives students an overview of the Animate software and the animation process. Students should have some familiarity with the Adobe Animate software prior to taking.  
(Virtual)

**Photoshop Creation Lab:** A foundational program for all media artists, whether animators, VFX, 3D, editors, or designers, Adobe Photoshop is the leading image editing and generating tool. Learn to harness the power of creative image making using color manipulation, layers, selections and masks. Let your imagination soar and add great work to your portfolio.  
(In person)

**Session 2 • 5 weeks**

Dates: Oct 26 to Dec 5

**Saturday: Oct 26 | Nov 2 | Nov 9 | Nov 16 | Nov 23**

9:00 am to 11:00 am | 11:30 am to 1:30 pm | 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

(See graphic above for exact times)

**Portfolio Building:** In this workshop, students will build and edit their personal media portfolios to reflect their strengths, interests and personal brand. This is the first step in presenting your work to the world, whether you're applying to an academic institution or getting your work seen by industry. Students will have the opportunity to edit, refine, and create work for their final output.  
(Virtual)

**World Building in Unreal Engine\*:**

(\*This is a special double workshop of 4 hours.) Embark on an immersive journey into 3D world building with game engine Unreal Engine. Whether you're a gamer or creative storyteller, this workshop is designed to introduce you to the powerful tools and techniques for creating captivating virtual environments. Students will gain a fundamental understanding of the Unreal Engine software interface and a basic working knowledge of Unreal's Blueprint Visual Scripting system. Using this knowledge, students will combine it with their creative skills to modify one of Unreal Engine's template projects.

(Virtual)

**Animation Freestyle:**

For students new to digital art-making or with a project in progress, this class serves as a place where creators can work alongside one another to accomplish their 2D Animation goals in Adobe Animate. Instructors will assist with students who are working on developing portfolio pieces, passion projects, and foundational animation and digital drawing exercises. This class is for all levels. This class can be taken multiple times and will be customized to the student skill level.

(In person)

**Character Design:** Students will learn how to take original characters and develop them into their own unique and memorable designs. Using Animate or Photoshop students will learn the basics of design, gain an understanding of the principles of gesture, posing, anatomy, and composition for developing compelling characters.

(In person)

**Drawing workshop:** Sketch, draw, sketch, repeat. This intensive drawing workshop challenges the student to draw outside of their comfort zone. Using visual prompts, students cycle through drawing exercises to bring their craft to the next level. A perfect workshop to build your portfolio.

(Virtual and in person)

**Monday: Oct 28 | Nov 4 | Nov 18 | Nov 25 | Dec 2**

4 to 6 pm PST

**Intermediate Video Editing Lab:** In this hands-on workshop where you'll explore the advanced features of Adobe Premiere Pro, perfect for those looking to enhance their video editing skills. Whether you're a content creator, animator, aspiring filmmaker, or hobbyist, this workshop is tailored to help you master the tools and techniques necessary to produce professional-quality videos.

(In person)

**3D Character Building:** In this workshop, students will learn the magic behind bringing 3D characters to life using Autodesk Maya. If you are new to animation, this course will help you learn the basics of 3D animation based on the 12 basic principles of animation. You'll learn animation concepts and techniques through a series of exercises using pre-rigged characters supplied by the instructor. This will build a solid foundation as you start your animation journey.

(Virtual)

**Tuesday: Oct 29 | Nov 5 | Nov 12 | Nov 19 | Nov 26**

4 to 6 pm PST



**Intro Video Editing Creation Lab:** Immerse yourself in the art of editing and the language of visual storytelling. This workshop demonstrates foundational theories of picture editing as students create, combine, and manipulate various clips and images into an impactful story. This workshop is great for beginners as it focuses on fundamentals using Adobe Premiere Pro and using multiple tracks and audio in a non-linear timeline.

(Virtual and In person)

**Intermediate Animation:** Design and animate characters and environments using Adobe Animate software. Intermediate students can work on personal animation projects and shorts in a collaborative environment. This very popular class gives students an overview of the Animate software and the animation process. Students should have some familiarity with the Adobe Animate software prior to taking.

(Virtual)

**Wednesday: Oct 30 | Nov 6 | Nov 13 | Nov 20 | Dec 4**

4 to 6 pm PST

**VFX/Motion Graphics Freestyle:** For students new to digital art-making or with a project in progress, this class serves as a place where creators can work alongside one another to accomplish their visual effects or motion graphics goals using Adobe After Effects. Instructors will assist with students who are working on developing portfolio pieces, passion projects, and technical exercises. This class is for all levels. This workshop can be taken multiple times and will be customized to the student skill level.

(Virtual)

**Thursday: Oct 31 | Nov 7 | Nov 14 | Nov 21 | Dec 5**

4 to 6 pm PST

**Animation Storyboarding:** Students will learn how a combination of shot angles, camera movements, and the principles of design can be used to create a visual story. They will also be exposed to professional examples of storyboards and animatics. By the end of this workshop, students will pick one of three prompts in order to create a one-minute animatic using Adobe Animate software.

(In person)

**Graphic Design:** Join us for an exciting introductory workshop where you'll dive into the world of graphic design using Adobe Illustrator. Whether you're a beginner eager to learn the basics or someone looking to enhance their skills, this workshop is designed to equip you with essential knowledge and hands-on experience in creating stunning vector-based artwork.

(Virtual)