

ANIMATION

WORLD

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MAGAZINE

July 1998

Adult Animation and Comics

Late Nite With
Space Ghost

Anime Porn

NYC:
Underground
Girl Comix

Yellow Submarine
Turns 30

Frank & Ollie
on Pinocchio

Reviews: Mulan, Bob & Margaret, Annecy, E3



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Cover: *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* is launching into its fifth season on Cartoon Network. Animated character TM and © Hanna-Barbera Productions. All Rights Reserved.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Heather Kenyon

Editor's Notebook Is it all that upsetting?

Who knew that adult animation was so upsetting to so many people or that the very idea is a difficult one to grasp? Those of us that are more familiar with animation than just Saturday morning are so used to the concept that animated films can be directed toward adults. For instance most of the films screened at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival are not for kids. They are serious pieces of art, even though some may be humorous, that show an artists unique take on the human experience. Of all the visual media I have seen in my life some of the most moving are from animated films. In the realm of animation, Saturday morning is a sliver of what is out there and yet the general public is unaware of this. There is an amazing world out there for them to discover! But how?

Way back in November, Piet Kroon offered us a real treat in Los Angeles. With the help of the Consulate-General of The Netherlands and Warner Bros. Feature Animation, Piet screened his new film, *T.R.A.N.S.I.T.*, to a nearly filled auditorium. It was quite a collection of the animation industry and proved to be a great night of seeing old friends and acquaintances. It was like a mini-festival with a screening of other works, including TVCs *When the Wind Blows*, which was produced by *T.R.A.N.S.I.T.*'s Iain Harvey. People enjoyed the screening; everyone agreed that such events should happen more often and, while this was a private affair, thought such

events would appeal to a wider audience. The demand to see these films is out there. It is just finding the proper channels to get these animated pieces screened where the general public will notice them. Art galleries and special screenings sometimes take place but one must be diligent and seek them out. I salute people like Cartoon Networks Linda Simensky who have brought short films by independents to major networks. Spike and Mike are taking a grand step up by presenting *Spike and Mike's Classic Festival of Animation* which is currently touring, and includes *T.R.A.N.S.I.T.* I hope that as the popularity of animation grows, as everyone says it is, a more diverse and interesting range of animation will reach the mainstream audience. The people reading this magazine are the people who have this power.

How can it be that Mr. Tibor Clerdouet, Mr. Yvan West Laurence and Mr. Cedric Littardi are on trial for presenting a magazine about adult animation, not porn mind you but animation made for an adult audience, to adults in France? This is not a country run by a strict religious or totalitarian government. This is France—known for its laissez-faire attitude. We must actively seek to expand animation knowledge to the public to protect our own, not just from legal action, but also artistically. A wider range of demand will protect the health, depth and vitality of our industry. Is animation really going through a renaissance or is it just an



expanding of the stuff regularly seen on mainstream television and at the local cineplex? It would be exciting if an appetite for the avant garde could be cultivated.

I can see and understand that animated pornography is not for

everyone. When doing research for the anime porn article (no, really), we received boxes of tapes from the distributors and I took them home to see what all the fuss was about. Well, lets just say, I don't think I'll be signing up anytime soon to get on the company's mailing lists. But you know what? That's my opinion and if there are folks out there that want to buy every single release — good for them. I hope they are happy. As long as adult material is distributed through the proper channels so it cannot get into the hands of minors, I have no problem with its distribution, and neither should anyone else. No one is forcing anyone to watch if they don't want to.

Adult animation really does run the gamut. From *The Simpsons* to *South Park* to *Bob and Margaret*, to animated pornography to adaptations of classic literary tales to the latest special effects and festival winners—animation is anything but kid stuff and while we may know that, a lot of folks don't.

Until next time...
Heather

Rankin/Bass Rehash

I'm really glad I read your review of the Rankin/Bass book (Maiko 2.12) before plunking down some cash for it.

I was really hoping that it would contain some behind the scenes material, as well as information on the puppet fabrication, etc. I can't believe that these puppets were thrown out! I love Rankin/Bass stop-motion animation, and the very thought is revolting!

Where the heck would someone get more information on Rankin/Bass animation? There isn't any significant information about their shows on the web, at least not that I've found. I know that their productions were done in Japan for the most part, but there's got to be somebody out there with the information.

All of the elements which you indicated are missing from the book are the exact ones I was hoping this book would have. Again, thanks for the review, it saved me some money.

I still can't believe they threw those puppets out!

Thank you,
Travis Cutbirth

More Roto Info Please

Today I received my update on the contents of the May issue and immediately went to the "Rotoscoping in the Modern Age" article by Marian Rudnyk (Rudnyk 3.2). As a future roto artist, it was particularly helpful to me as to the

exact type of work I will be expected to perform in a "real world" post-production environment. It is exactly the type of information (tips/specific techniques) I need to learn/hear and I commend Mr. Rudnyk on his article. I hope more articles of this nature are contributed to AWM.

Thank you,
A Future Roto Artist

P.S. Does he have any tips for rotoscoping hair extremely accurately against a not-so perfect bluescreen?

Marian responds:

Thank you for the kind comments. AWM has indeed run some fine articles on a variety of interesting aspects of the animation industry. I was pleased to add my article on the often neglected and/or forgotten field of rotoscoping. Also, I wish you well in your new rotoscoping career. It's a very tough market out there with so much of the new 3-D software encroaching on our "turf."

As for rotoing fine details of hair against a not so perfect bluescreen... I have to tell you: you're lucky to have even that. More often than not, in my experience, you are rotoing a matte within a manner of background and foreground clutter, and even blurring of the to-be-matted subject, confusing and challenging you. My advice is practice makes perfect. The more you do it the easier it

will become. Knowing where to set up your key-points to get the precisely moving curves to create that "perfect" matte is still an art in and of itself.

I can tell you this though: for most software you will use, such as Matador, it is better, when doing complex fine detail, to use B-Splines rather than Bezier curves because the "handles" get in the way and clutter your work. Also, the B-Splines offer better control if you set up your points in clusters around key areas. Take the time to get the feel of working with them, at first they may seem slower to work with, but in time you will "fly" with them! For large simple mattes however, go with Bezier. For me, this has worked best.

Good luck to you!

*Marian Rudnyk
Digital Artist
(Titanic, Armageddon)*

Vacuums Anyone?

I am working on a project that requires knowledge of classic gags in animation. One area in particular that has risen to the top of my list is Vacuum Gags. I currently know of a few old Warner Bros. treatments, the Roger Rabbit gag, and a gag used in a classic Tom & Jerry episode.

Could you please help me with any information that you may have or point me in a direction that could help me? I appreciate all of your time.

Thanks,
Christopher Malnar

Editorial assistant Katie Mason did some research and responds:

Good luck on your cartoon gag searches. Some cartoon vacuum gags that occurred to me were in Compressed Hare, Mouse Placed Kitten, and Its Nice to Have a Mouse Around the House, all classic Warner Brothers cartoons. For summaries of these and other Warner Brothers cartoons, see Jerry Beck and Will Friedwald's Looney Tunes & Merrie Melodies: A Complete Illustrated Guide to the Warner Bros. Cartoons.

Under the Digital Radar

In response to Laybourne 3.3.

Dear Mr. Laybourne,

Although you bring up many fine and thought provoking points, I wish to respond to your question, "But aren't computers their own art form?" Here at Modern Cartoons we specialize in real-time animation driven with motion capture from body suits and face trackers. Everyday we create animation that is truly the art form of the computer. It has its roots in rotoscoping and therefore traditional animation and a bit of puppetry and plain old human performance, but the animation we produce takes a rather unique form and is enough unlike its ancestors to be its own.

During a taping session, we get impromptu performances, directorial spontaneity and especially hilarious outtakes — things that the computer affords. The imagery that we create is truly cut-

ting edge, not so much because it is on the forefront technologically but because it walks that edge between what you've seen and are familiar with and what is fresh.

I'm sure that you could site many projects, from *Toy Story* to *South Park*, that use the art form of computers in a new way, but I found your questions to be a definite and celebratory yes and would prompt you to think of some additional queries.

As to where the mediums breakthroughs may go, Modern Cartoons is currently following a path towards TV — not exactly one that leads "below the radar."

Regards,
Conor Libby
Creative Producer
Modern Cartoons Ltd.

Kit responds:

You're dead-on that motion control techniques are clearly emerging as a form that goes well beyond the technique's roots in 3-D, puppetry and stop-motion. The alchemy of digital form always seems to breathe fresh life and startling new dimensions into its own source materials. In that process what you guys at Modern Cartoons are doing will, in due course, become the source materials for a next wave of innovators.

Editorial note: To find out more about Modern Cartoons read "A Conversation With....Chris Walker and Corky Quakenbush," in our February 1998 issue, where Chris Walker, President of Modern Cartoons spends an afternoon with outrageous animator Corky Quakenbush.

Whose Golden Age?: Canadian Animation In The 1990s

In response to Robinson 3.3.

Dear Mr. Robinson,

Thank you for your excellent article. I wanted to comment that I recently graduated from Vancouver Film School, Classical Animation, and I certainly agree with what you said about such industrially-oriented programs. I did survive however, and to my knowledge, I am the only person who has come out of Vancouver Film School to have made, or is in the process of making, another film independently. I have been joined by another woman from my particular course and we have set up "Pigpen Pictures" in a garage here in darkest Wiltshire, U.K. We are really doing this for the love of it and we have much to learn and relearn. So, I just wanted to say that these intense vocational courses don't beat the art out of everybody, though they sure give it a try, and for me it was also a beginning.

Yours,
Maita Robinson

Jared Doesn't JUST Sing!

In response to Jackson 3.3.:

If you let the "about" box in Macromedia Director 6 go on long enough, Jared eventually appears, bouncing around the screen, singing away.....

Brian Nicolucci

Thanks Brian. This editorial staff is sure to try it out soon!

DIG THIS!

SIGGRAPH's Electronic Theater Celebrates 25 Years of Discovery

by Wendy Jackson

SIGGRAPH '98 is coming up, and that means the Computer Animation Festival will once again be *the* showcase for the past year's best computer graphics work. This year, in addition to the festival's Electronic Theater and Animation Theater, SIGGRAPH has expanded the festival to include two new programs. SigKIDS Theater includes films such as *Antics*, a 90-second short for Nickelodeon, and *Dick and Jane Do Math*, animated sequences for a PBS series called *Life By the Numbers*. In honor of the 25th conference, organizers have also programmed Film Show Classics, a selection of important milestones in computer graphics history.

"Finally computer graphics is where we knew it could be, beyond the mechanics," said Ines Hardtke, chair of this year's festival and head of digital imaging at the ACI East and Animation Youth East divisions at the National Film Board of Canada (NFBC) in Montreal. She and a jury of four others, whose names will be revealed the first day of the conference, sorted



SIGGRAPH 98's colorful logo characters are brought to life in 20 short films called "in-betweens."

through 650 submissions to select 134 films for screening. An additional 20 "in-betweens" — short i.d. films incorporating the colorful SIGGRAPH logo characters, created especially for this event — will be shown throughout the festival programs, which will run every day of the conference, July 19-24.

Light and Sound Are This Year's Smoke

The festival has grown to be an annual milestone, and to have one film selected for screening in the program is a great honor. Every year there are a few pieces which are talked about well after the conference is over. Last year, one of those films was *Digital Smoke*, a simple yet hyper-realistic CG visualization of rising smoke, created by John R. Anderson at University of Wisconsin-Madison. Asked what this year's "smoke" will be, Hardtke cited films which break new ground in the visualization of two elements: natural light, as depicted in *Rendering With Natural Light* by Paul

Debevec (creator of last year's eye-popping *FACADE*), and *Underwater Sunbeams* by Henrik Wann Jensen, and sound, as explored in *Music for Unprepared Piano* by Robin Bargar and *Marienkirche* by Tapio Takala.

Firsts for this year are a live Internet demonstration of improvisational animation in *The Making of Sid and the Penguins*, and *Hand-Drawn Spaces*, a dual screen motion-capture performance piece choreographed by Merce Cunningham, who will be present with his collaborators to present a special demonstration of the multimedia exhibit/film.

CGI Categorized

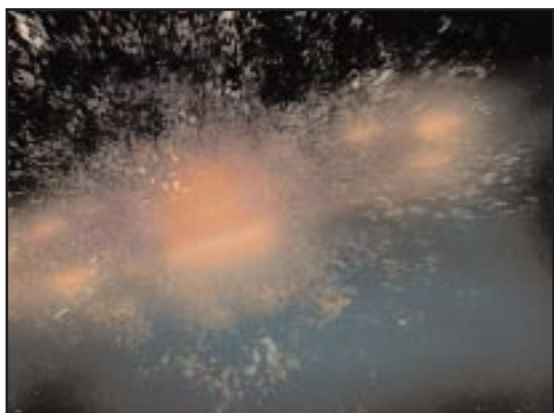
Interested in what light transport in a nonhomogeneous medium with isotropic reflection looks like? The festival includes several **scientific, mathematic and visualization** animations like the described *The Cornell Box - Up in Smoke*. Others include *Chaco: A Sacred Center*, a visualization of ancient dwellings in New Mexico and the self-explanatory titles *News From Hubble Space Telescope* and *Southeastern United*



Rendering With Natural Light by Paul Debevec. Image courtesy of SIGGRAPH.



Hand Drawn Spaces choreographed by Merce Cunningham. Image courtesy of SIGGRAPH.



News From Hubble Space Telescope. Image courtesy of SIGGRAPH.

States Fly-By. **Motion-capture** demonstrations include *Spacetime Swing* by Autodesk, made with a new technique for retargeting motion data to characters of different sizes, and *Advancing Captured Motion* by LambSoft, made with a technology which applies motion capture data to a character's proportions and structures that are different from the performers.

Other types of animation in the festival include **visual effects** sequences from movies such as *Deep Impact*, *The Truman Show*, *Event Horizon*, *Flubber*, *George of the Jungle*, *Mouse Hunt*, *Quest for Camelot*, *Small Soldiers* and *Starship Troopers*; **location-based entertainment films** such as *Race For Atlantis*, an IMAX 3-D film by Rhythm & Hues, and *Wild River* by Sega Enterprises; **television commercials** by Rhythm & Hues, Medialab, Glassworks and Buf Compagnie and game animation sequences such as *Grim Fandango* by LucasArts Entertainment.

Animation shorts featured in the festival include the latest Oscar winner *Geri's*

Game, produced at Pixar; *The Physics of Cartoons*, a character animation by Steph Greenberg; *Ellipsoid*, a geometric metaphor for the busy lifestyle of Tokyo; *Pings*, a pilot for a future series by Exmachina, *Zai-jan*, Nobuto Ochiai's pilot for a CG feature, *The Sitter*, Liang-Yuan Wang's examination of the ironic relationship between humans and technology, and *1001*

Nights, a musical film with computer animation by Noriaki Kaneko and Tim Miller of Blur Studio, which was featured in last month's Dig This...

Student films include *Jakata* by Ringling student Jeff Baker, which recently won the gold student Academy Award. A selection of student and graduate research projects created at MIT, New York University, University of Washington, and other schools are also included.

The Computer Animation Festival will end with the anticipated premiere of *Bingo*, the first animation short fully produced with Alias/Wavefront's new, next-generation animation software, Maya. Directed by Academy Award nominee Chris Landreth (his 1995 film, *The End* was also created at Alias), *Bingo* is based on a neo-futurist play called, "Disregard This Play."

For complete film listings and conference highlights, visit www.siggraph.org. *Animation World Magazine* will publish a SIGGRAPH '98 special report in



Bingo by Chris Landreth. © Alias/Wavefront.



Jakata by Jeff Baker. Image courtesy of SIGGRAPH.

August, with articles covering various aspects of the CGI scene.

Wendy Jackson is associate editor of Animation World Magazine.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

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Late Nite With Space Ghost

by Heather Kenyon

It isn't everyday that we see a talk show host suddenly ask a surprised guest what they think of his "massive bulk" or declare in Spanish that he is wearing a white spandex body suit and a cape — but then not every show is being broadcast from the Ghost Planet and hosted by an interplanetary superhero named Space Ghost. This is the case with *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* and probably explains why it is the most demented late night talk show on the air today.

Entering its fifth season, it is clear that the unique Cartoon Network show, starring the black-hooded crime-fighter of Hanna-Barbera fame and sidekicks Zorak and Moltar, has found a niche and a strong, almost cultish, following.

Wouldn't it be funny to introduce Space Ghost as a talk show host? - Mike Lazzo

The Humble Beginnings

It was way back in the spring of 1993 when Cartoon Network's Senior Vice President, Programming and Production, Mike Lazzo was holding a meeting in his office with fellow programming staffers Khaki Jones and Andy Merrill. They were pondering a new way to make the *Wacky Races* cartoon fresh and interesting, and thought of taking the episodes and piecing them together so it was like they were driving across the country. "Coast to Coast," said Merrill. Meanwhile, the television in Lazzo's office was playing the afternoon episode of *Space Ghost*. "I've always loved

Space Ghost," explained Lazzo, so he said that the next time they got together, they would have to discuss a *Space Ghost* stunt. However, all that night Lazzo kept turning the idea of doing something with *Space Ghost* over and over in his mind. At the same time the talk show wars between David Letterman and Jay Leno were at an all-time fever pitch. The next day he came in and mentioned in an off-hand way, "Wouldn't it be funny to introduce *Space Ghost* as a talk show host?" We laughed and thought it was funny, but that it wouldn't go anywhere." However, the thought continued to linger in the Programming offices and Lazzo admits, "I was adamant because it was one of my favorite cartoons, so I asked Andy to go in and edit a *Space Ghost* pilot."

Splicing clips from the vintage 1966 series, *The Space Ghost and Dino Boy*, with footage from a pre-packaged press interview with Denzel Washington, programming coordinator Merrill edited the footage together in a tape storage closet and added a booming *Space Ghost* voice-over using a Radio Shack microphone. "We howled with laughter," states Lazzo at questions like, "What is your secret identity?" and "Do you have enough oxygen?" This two-minute "pilot" was enough to earn them the money to do five shows.

Although funny, Merrill's tape was too rough and they sought a slick Hollywood production company. However their test was too slick. "This is a talk show



© Cartoon Network.

that takes place in Outer Space. It should be different," says Lazzo. So the programming department decided to keep the production close to home in Atlanta, Cartoon Network headquarters. Crawford Communications, an Atlanta-based production company, was selected. Crawford Communications and Turner Broadcasting, Cartoon Network's parent company until last year's Time-Warner merger, have grown hand-in-hand and Lazzo really credits the Crawford team. "We think they are great. We couldn't have done this without them," he says. As Turner grew and gave more work to Crawford, Crawford expanded, keeping pace with the cable giant, and soon doing most of their work.



Space Ghost with his co-hosts Zorak and Moltar.
© Cartoon Network.

the mouth around the words."

Interestingly enough, all these shows start as radio plays. "We don't have a show until we are satisfied with how it sounds, which is just like animation. You record the track, cut it from an audio standpoint and then place the footage that makes sense

around that audio," says Lazzo.

This is a talk show that takes place in Outer Space. It should be different. - Mike Lazzo

The Show's Personalities

It was a Crawford Communications' animator named C. Martin Croker who actually added one of the shows most popular elements in an initial meeting. In a discussion about Cartoon Network's desire to incorporate some of the original shows villains into the cast as musicians or sidekicks, Croker suggested using Zorak and proceeded to mimic the character's voice. Lazzo immediately loved his Zorak. Croker soon proved to pass muster as Moltar as well, and would later become even more invaluable by providing all the new animation commissioned by the show.

From straight man Moltar to the ever-plotting Zorak, the sidekicks have become just as important as Space Ghost and add much of the show's humor. "People really respond to a band leader that isn't a toadie who is in agreement with everything, but rather who is out to destroy the host! He is like the anti-sidekick," says Lazzo who then adds jokingly, "I think

this appeals to something in this post modernistic society in which we live. I mean, how many times have you looked at Ed McMahon and thought, 'Are you really laughing?'" Two other characters, Brak and Lokar, have appeared in several episodes and Brak now co-stars on *Cartoon Planet*, a *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* spin-off that debuted in July 1995 on TBS Superstation and later on Cartoon Network.

Capturing the Guests

Space Ghost became a legitimate project but still didn't have a dedicated producer. "Keith Crofford had always been a friend of mine, the best line producer in Atlanta," says Lazzo. Searching for in-town recommendations, Lazzo called Crofford for a name. Crofford, who had just wrapped the award-winning *Ruby in Paradise*, found the project intriguing and agreed to sign on temporarily. "I liked the dichotomy of going from the self-important world of independent filmmaking to the surreal world of cartoons," says Crofford. A few months later, he accepted a full-time post. "Keith came in and made sure we got what we wanted," says Lazzo. "If it weren't for Keith, it wouldn't have happened. He is the first full-time *Space Ghost* staff member."

The first 15 shows were written by the programming department. "Our day jobs were scheduling cartoons and then every evening we would go into our conference room and say, 'Okay, lets try and be funny with this,'" Lazzo recalls. Merrill and Jones had a hand in scripting the first episodes, a task that requires a transcript of a pre-taped celebrity interview. This document contains the only unalterable element of the entire production—the celebri-

The Production Facts

To keep production costs down, animation from the original *Space Ghost* series is reconfigured onto a new set. Lazzo describes the process: "Basically, what we did was we went in and roto-scoped out from the original cartoons—the '60s cartoons, not the '80s version—quite a few key shots where we had lip movement. We could then remove that image from the original cartoon and place it into any background we wanted. Once we did that we were able to go to Crawford and ask them to create a background." Once a 3-D looking set was decided on, "Crawford filmed the set from several angles and then the roto-scoped Space Ghost is dropped into that new environment. Each shot of Space Ghost has lip movement, 'lip flap.' We then go in and take the Avid [a non-linear editing system] and make the lips match the words we are putting in his mouth. This technology is not that old. Seven or eight years ago we probably couldn't have done the show. We would have had to make the words match the existing lip flap but because we are able to edit digitally, we can actually synch up the dialogue. We simply freeze it, hold it, start it and stop it to form

ty's verbal responses to Space Ghosts questions. The rest is open to comedic interpretation, including the questions themselves, asked variously by producers, the disembodied voice of Space Ghost and even, for a time, young actors bedecked in an ill-fitting Space Ghost costume.

Crofford explains that in the beginning he and Lazzo were finding it difficult to present the show's concept to guests, owing to the fact that there wasn't any footage to show and that Space Ghost was a somewhat forgotten superhero. "We felt it would add an element of fun to the interview if the guest was actually talking to a 'real' superhero," says Crofford. Acting students from New York and Los Angeles were hired to wear the white-and-yellow Space Ghost suit and ask questions from a position just out of camera range. Lazzo recalls one such actor. "I didn't see the guy, but apparently he was not possessed with a superhero physique," he remembers. "In addition, he thought he was Shakespeare. So we had a guy sitting directly in front of the guests saying in a Shakespearean voice, 'DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH OXYGEN?' They were laughing in his face." The Bee Gees, for instance, having just arrived from a Howard Stern taping, got so tickled producers could only use about 19 seconds of their appearance.

People really respond to a band leader that isn't a toadie who is in agreement with everything, but rather who is out to destroy the host!

- Mike Lazzo

"I think we did it four or five times until it was like, 'We can't do this anymore,'" concludes Lazzo.

Since then, interview questions are asked through a phone-patch directly in the guests ear, who is instructed only to *imagine* speaking to a superhero. "To talk to people who have done this, this is the strangest, most bizarre interview experience they have ever had. They can't see the interviewer and they are just looking basically at bright lights and a camera and hearing a voice in their head ask all these insane questions," laughs Lazzo. About 20-25 questions are written for each guest; some are standard and others are specific for the guest.

Crofford agrees, "Occasionally we like it when a guest seems like a deer caught in the headlights, but good interviews are important too." Lazzo adds, "Sometimes we will get just unusable footage because it is so strange to people, but some people love it and have fun with it and we actually like both." To add to the unconventionality of the situation, interviews are almost always done at CNN Bureaus. Crofford acknowledges the debt *Space Ghost Coast To Coast* owes to CNN, whose executives granted permission to tape celebrity interviews in their studios, a process that continues to this day. "We could never have gotten this show off the ground without their cooperation," says Crofford.

"We soon became adept at grabbing celebrities passing through town promoting their books," says Crofford. "Susan Powter, Bob Denver and Dawn Wells were all booked in this fashion."

The Show's Staff

Lazzo and Crofford soon realized that an Atlanta-based production would require an Atlanta-based voice talent. A casting call

proceeded, and soon over the small speakers of the programming department stereo came George Lowe's booming baritone, sealing his future. "I play him a little more whacked out, a little more acerbic than the original," says Lowe.

Lazzo gives much of the credit for the shaping of the show to Andy Merrill and Khaki Jones. "Without Andy and Khaki the show would have been very different," says Lazzo. "The programming department created *Space Ghost Coast To Coast* and I think that's born out by the pilot, which is far closer to the what the show became than the first episode, 'Elevator.' Andy gave Space Ghost his personality to a large degree—there's a tonality there that's all him. And Khaki brought in this absurdity or whimsy aspect."

We felt it would add an element of fun to the interview if the guest was actually talking to a 'real' superhero.
- Keith Crofford

Many of the early scripts were shaped in part by a young freelance writer named Matthew Maiellaro, a talent brought in by Crofford to assist with the show. Editor Michael Cahill is responsible for the unique Space Ghost editing style first evidenced in "CHiPs," an episode in which two fairly obscure guests, Joe Franklin and Bill Carter, are made more interesting by the insertion of odd pauses and strange moments. "We made it a practice to just keep the tape rolling when George was in the booth," says Crofford. "Cahill was a master at snatching George's comic ad libs, general crankiness and random questions to the producer, then spinning them into comic gold."

New Faces

After the second season around 15 new faces were brought onto the show. As Lazzo tells it, "We had to program the network, so we actually had to hire professionals for the show!"

People involved with the early productions, like Merrill and Jones, moved on to other projects. Khaki Jones is now a senior program executive who helps develop such projects as Cartoon Network's preschool programming venture with Children's Television Workshop, *Big Bag*. While Merrill is still involved with the show such as lending his voice, he is now very involved with Cartoon Network Online. Matthew Maiellaro and editor Michael Cahill, have left the Ghost Planet to pursue other interests. To replace them people like Evan Dorkin, creator of the *Milk and Cheese* comic book series, and a second team of outside writers, consisting of Spike Feresten, who netted an Emmy nomination for the infamous "Soup Nazi" episode of *Seinfeld*, and Steve O'Donnell—both writers for *Late Show With David Letterman* at the time—were brought in by Crofford. Joel Hodgson, creator of the television series *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, is another notable talent who, along with writing partner Nell Scovell, wrote an episode of *Space Ghost Coast To Coast* in Summer 1995.

Currently, *Space Ghost Coast To Coast's* production crew consists of Lazzo, Crofford, Merrill and several others. Dave Willis, supervising producer, was named producer in August 1996. Vishal Roney, production coordinator, spends long hours coordinating work between Space Ghost in-house staff and outside production companies. Nina Bishop is the

show's fifth talent coordinator to pluck stars for the show, after Tanya Bergan, Robin Agranoff, Keith Crofford and Isabel Gonzalez. Gus Jordan, meanwhile, assists with production and answers the volumes of e-mail, letters and faxes that arrive at Ghost Planet each day. Pete Smith is another writer/producer for the show. Smith and Merrill wrote the songs for the infamous Space Ghosts Musical Barbeque CD. This August Rhino Records will release another Cartoon Planet, Space Ghost CD titled, *Surf and Turf*, which will include about 20 new songs.

It is clearly a parody but it seems so ridiculous that it almost becomes a completely different thing. - Mike Lazzo

The Success

"We were surprised by the reaction people had to the show and thought, 'Hey, we should do more of these,'" Lazzo explains. Today there are 56, 15-minute episodes or roughly 20 half-hours. "Several of the shows, we consider to be the shows we learned on and we don't air those. We figured it out around show five." Lazzo goes on to explain that, "Last year it averaged a 1.1 which is 20% above the network average so we are very happy with it."

Space Ghost has definitely developed a huge following, especially in colleges. "It has been phenomenal to see the kind of grassroots response we got, based on a 15-minute show that airs in late night. Particularly in the early days when we were only in 15-20 million households." The success is chalked-up to the fact that the show is so unique and different. "I don't think you can say you've

seen anything like *Coast to Coast* before," promises Lazzo. "It is clearly a parody but it seems so ridiculous that it almost becomes a completely different thing. It is the freshness of a concept that hasn't been seen before."

What's next on the Ghost Planet horizon? How long will these odd transmissions filter down to the television homes of our planet? Time will tell, but it's nice to think that bouncing around the satellites beyond our skies is a show about an interplanetary crime fighter, packing magical gizmos and a short temper, just trying to talk to some celebrities. It might not be the embodiment of anyone's dreams for technology, but it sure causes a ruckus when you stumble upon it with the remote. *Space Ghost Coast To Coast* will continue to be entertainingly erratic and dizzyingly off kilter. It is a show for the impassioned few who dare to entertain the absurd, hanging on Zorak's every embittered utterance and howling with glee whenever Moltar conjures up an image of "CHiPs." This sixties' superhero has come full circle into a nineties phenomenon.

Space Ghost Coast to Coast can be seen on the Cartoon Network Friday nights at 11:30 p.m. EST/PST.

Heather Kenyon is editor-in-chief of Animation World Magazine.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

THE BEATLES' YELLOW SUBMARINE TURNS 30: JOHN COATES AND NORMAN KAUFFMAN LOOK BACK

by Karl Cohen

Editor's note: Due to Apple Corp's decision not to promote the 30th anniversary of The Beatles' Yellow Submarine, and subsequent legal restrictions about publishing art on the Internet, this article does not contain any images from the film.

Many people are too young to remember the impact the feature *The Beatles' Yellow Submarine* had on the animation industry and American society when it was released in 1968. At the time it was produced, Disney dominated the animated feature market with traditional-looking products that were released once every three or four years (*Jungle Book*, 1967). With the release of *Yellow Submarine* the world actually changed.

Despite the critical acclaim of his design work for the film, Edelmann never worked on another animated feature.

The film contained music, a spirit and an amazing look that delighted and charmed the Western world. This simple fable helped people regain a more positive attitude about life and reminded them it was okay to smile and have fun. Some people who had dressed conservatively before they saw it were suddenly wearing bright colors, costumes and the latest in mod fashions. Hippies painted Yellow Submarines on their vans and in San Francisco a Beatles fan painted a

scene from the film on the front of her house.

More importantly, the direction by George Dunning and the brilliant design work by Heinz Edelmann influenced the look of advertising art. Suddenly 7 Up, General Electric and other corporations were promoting themselves with animated TV commercials and print campaigns inspired by the feature. Most studios producing animated TV commercials were barely surviving before *Yellow Submarine* was released. After it came out everybody who worked with the new look was busy well into the next decade making a good living creating ads full of rainbows, butterflies, flowers and other motifs. Some of the mixed-media techniques introduced in the film inspired the "blendo" style still seen on TV. The feature also showed Ralph Bakshi and other non-Disney directors that they might be able to create successful animated features as well.

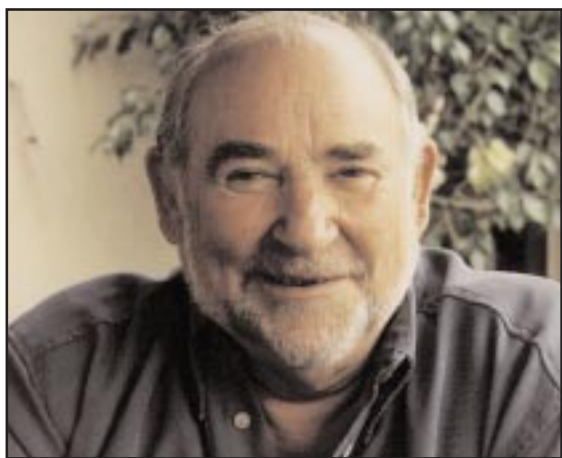
The Creatives Behind the Film

Although *Yellow Submarine* is a milestone in animation, little has been written about the



Yellow Submarine's director George Dunning looks over artwork with one of the film's artists. Photo courtesy of John Coates.

people who actually created this classic. At the time of the film's release a lot of credit was given to producer Al Brodax who turned out to be an executive producer with King Features, the company that paid for the production. He shared writing credit with Lee Minoff, Jack Mendelsohn and Erich Segal. The Beatles got music credit of course, and Heinz Edelmann, a German-speaking Czech graphic artist, was recognized as



John Coates, who was the real producer of the film was simply listed as "Production Supervisor." Things were different in 1968. This photo of Coates was taken recently at the World Animation Celebration in Los Angeles. Photo by Wendy Jackson. © AWN.

the films talented designer.

Director George Dunning's name was on the screen in big letters as was TVC (TV Cartoons), the animation company in London that created the film. Unfortunately, the press wasn't familiar with their names so not much was written about them. The staff of TVC was relegated to the fine print in the screen credits and press releases, even though their involvement was essential in the production of the film. Without TVCs esteemed opinions concerning creativity and imagination, *Yellow Submarine* might have never received financial backing. TVC, in 1967, was simply a very young and inexperienced production company. John Coates, who was the actual producer of the film was simply listed as "Production Supervisor." If the film had been made recently, Brodax would have been listed as Executive Producer and Coates as Producer, but things were different in 1968.

One reason there was little recognition for the people who created the visuals was the attention the media gave to the music. The media was also fascinated by

the idea that Erich Segal, then a Yale Greek and Latin professor, worked on the script. When the film was made the contract with TVC didn't go into details about publicity and name placement in the credits. It probably didn't dawn on anybody to demand that the distributors press agents educate the media about the people who worked on the film behind-the-scenes.

John Coates said at the Creative Filmmaking Conference '97 (Tel Aviv, Israel), that he and George Dunning

were so inexperienced that when it came to contract negotiations they didn't even know they could own a percentage of a film's gross or profits. They simply made the film for a fixed amount of money. Unfortunately, *Yellow Submarine* went over-budget and they lost money making it. Their participation in the feature ended when they previewed the answer print for King Features. It was approved and they were given their final payment for their work. King Features never made contact with them again.

When [the Beatles] first saw the boards they expressed surprise as they had been led to believe the film was going to be Disneyesque.

The Collaboration Begins

Before making *Yellow Submarine*, TVC had produced *The Beatles*, a 39 episode TV series "produced" by Al Brodax and King Features. It turns out that King Features owned exclusive rights to the Beatles' cartoon characters.

The TV program featured prerecorded songs by the group. Each segment was built around one song. Professional voice actors did the spoken voices of the Fab Four. Paul Frees did the voices of John and George and Lance Percival did Paul and Ringo. The show premiered in September, 1965, and grossed \$3 million the first year. It ran as a weekly show on ABC until 1969.

John and Yoko came by to see rushes, and Paul would drop by to see their progress and to say hi to friends who worked there.

Dunning, who directed the feature, was a Canadian who moved to London in the late 1950s to head UPAs overseas studio. Just after the studio folded he held a meeting in a pub and invited John Coates, Richard Williams and Denis Rich to attend. Coates, who began his career in the film industry after WWII with the Rank Organization was invited to run the new studio being formed. TVC is still in business 40 years later and is still headed by Coates (Dunning died in 1979).

When Coates and Dunning got the contract to do the feature they had a difficult time finding the right art director for the production. Eventually they saw the work of Heinz Edelman in *Twen*, a German magazine, and flew him to London for an interview. He did a few sample drawings and was hired. Coates said, "We loved his work."

While planning the production it was realized the script didn't have a well-defined enemy. Edelman is given credit for inventing the Blue Meanies to serve that

role. In an interview, Edelmann added yet another name to those who contributed to the film's script. He said, "There was never one script. We had about 20. Roger McGough was responsible for much of it." McGough was a Liverpool poet who was brought in to add a Liverpool flavor to the soundtrack. He was paid U.K. £500 for his work, but was not given screen credit.

When the film was in production Edelmann worked closely with Dunning. Edelmann watched over everything and would often go around at night and correct animators' drawings when they went off-model. Despite the critical acclaim of his design work for the film, he never worked on another animated feature.

Apparently the press wasn't told that voice artists had been used to do the Beatles' voices as *Variety* (July 24, 1968) announced to the world that, "The Beatles' voices are instantly recognizable as their own."

Interaction with the Beatles

Coates is often asked about the Beatles' involvement in the production. He explains that they didn't have any real input in the visuals. Everything had already been planned out when the Beatles first saw the storyboards. However, he does add that when they first saw the boards they expressed surprise as they had been led to believe the film was going to be Disneyesque.

During the production, the four celebrities visited the studio four or five times as a group. At least one visit was a publicity

photo shoot. Members of the group did visit the studio as individuals from time to time. John and Yoko came by to see rushes, and Paul would drop by to see their progress and to say hi to friends who worked there.

There had been discussions about using the Beatles to do the voice track, but since it was impossible to get all four together for recording sessions, professional voice artists were used instead. Coates says none of the Beatles were pleased with the voices chosen to represent them, but they all loved the rest of the film. Apparently the press wasn't told that voice artists had been used to do the Beatles' voices as *Variety* (July 24, 1968) announced to the world that, "The Beatles' voices are instantly recognizable as their own." The film's credits simply list Paul Angels, John Clive, Dick Emery, Geoff Hughes and Lance Percival as "voices" without saying which parts each person performed. A published report says Clive did the voice of John, Hughes did Paul, Peter Batten did George and Angels voiced Ringo.

Norman Kauffman, who joined TVC in 1963 as an apprentice, was also present at the conference in Tel Aviv. He is now the company's secretary, financial controller and production accountant, and has recently been appointed a director of the company. Kauffman says that they were told in August, 1967, that the film had to premiere in London in July, 1968. The production had barely begun and they had less than a year to finish. He says having to create the film in a short period of time "was a nightmare, but a lot of fun!" They got used to working long hours and had to run two shifts in

the ink and paint department. Today, once work on the animation has begun, it takes TVC nine months to do a half-hour TV show.

Kauffman first met the Beatles when TVC was about to begin work on the TV series. There was a party at the original TVC studio on Dean Street. Kauffman was told to give John Lennon a bottle of wine. They met, talked and drank together for the first time when Kauffman found Lennon drinking out-of-sight under a table in George Dunning's office.

It turns out that Lennon had enough of the public that evening and didn't want any more fans coming up to him. The Beatles had been to the theatre and left early for the party after they were discovered by the public. Lennon's reaction to guests at the party doing the same thing was to find a place where he could hide. Kauffman has a photo of himself under the table with Lennon!

The production had barely begun and they had less than a year to finish.

Innovation at Every Turn

Kauffman says Dunning decided the graphic look of the film would be built around the 12 Beatles songs to be used in the production (four new songs were written for the feature). The film was released in England with 12 songs, but in the US the song "Hey Bulldog," featuring a three-headed animal, was cut. The British print ran 89 minutes and the American version was 85 minutes long. Each song was given a special graphic look incorporating some of the latest graphic tech-

niques being used in TV commercials, fine art and by illustrators. John Halas in his book *Masters of Animation* calls the film "a catalogue of the graphic styles of the late sixties."

Several technical innovations were tried out in the film. Special effects supervisor Charles Jenkins used polarized light, cellophane and a rotating filter to create the unusual cycle of color at the end of the sequence where we first meet George and in the visual finale near the end of the film. The visual finale also incorporates back-lit special effects that produce glowing forms of light.

It is still a fresh and exciting film with brilliant and innovative visuals.

In "Eleanor Rigby," sequences of still photographs were used to form cycles of action. The images were Xeroxed copies of photos to form high contrast images. For example, we see an old brick building with ten windows and in each window we see the same woman petting the same cat over and over. In another sequence we see two women at a table lifting food to their mouths over and over. Xeroxed photos are still used in some TV commercials.

When the *New York Times* reviewed the film (Nov. 14, 1968) they called it a "truly nice" work and said "there are completely lovely visual ideas" in it. One exciting visual moment is the woman riding a horse in the sky in "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." The art was done using loose brush strokes rather than having the paint fit neatly within carefully inked lines. The paint continuously

changes its shape and color and at times glowing stars or diamonds are seen. The visuals of the song constantly change, becoming more wild and overwhelming with the changes in the music.

Op and Pop Art inspired some of the sequences as did art forms that defy classification. The work goes far beyond the psychedelic poster art of Peter Max, an artist popular in the late 1960s. The "Sea of Holes" backgrounds capture the visual excitement of the Op Art of the European master Victor Vasarely. The "When I'm Sixty-Four" number features so many different kinds of design work (each group of ten numbers is in a different style), that it is impossible to classify the look of the sequence.

Fans of traditional Disney features sometimes have a difficult time with the film. They are used to strong narrative plots with well-developed characters that adhere to the designs laid down on the model sheets. They have trouble accepting the aesthetic approach of *Yellow Submarine* which stresses creative imagination and allows the visuals to constantly change. The film takes many risks with its playful use of colors and forms.

Still an Inspiration

Seeing *Yellow Submarine* again in Israel, almost 30 years after it premiered, was a wonderful rewarding experience. It is still a fresh and exciting film with brilliant and innovative visuals. The surreal animals, mechanical inventions, use of words and numbers on the screen, and other playful touches remain wonderful whimsical creations. The awful puns and non-sequitur jokes remain delightfully corny. The simple plot is still plausi-

ble enough to take you along on this adventure to save Pepperland. Only a sour old cynic would want to see the Blue Meanies win. If you love the music of the Beatles, you will probably have their tunes dancing around your mind for days after you rent the film at your local video store. It would be wonderful if King Features and United Artists would release the 89 minute directors cut in honor of the film's 30th year.

Norman Kauffman says that when they made the film they knew it would influence the art of their times. Today, he wonders if the film would still have had the same impact on the art world and public if it hadn't featured music by the Beatles.

It is now rumored that Apple Corp. and MGM might re-release the film next year and publicize the film's 30-year anniversary, however, nothing is confirmed at this time. It would be nice to see this film be re-released in at least the festival circuit and art theatres if not in a wider, general release, so that an entirely new generation can enjoy and be influenced by the magical art of *Yellow Submarine*.

Karl Cohen is President of ASIFA-San Francisco. His first book, Forbidden Animation: Censored Cartoons and Blacklisted Animators, has recently been published by McFarland Publishers. He also teaches animation history at San Francisco State University.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The Creators of *The Beatles' Yellow Submarine*: Where Are They Now?

by Robert R. Hieronimus, Ph.D.

In order to be truly appreciated, *The Beatles' Yellow Submarine* is a film that has to be experienced rather than just watched. In 1968 when I experienced *The Beatles Yellow Submarine*, it was common to sit through several showings of the picture, watching it over and over. I sat through it alone, with groups of friends and fellow seekers, and watched a whole generation fall in love with the *Yellow Submarine*'s bursts of color, its visual and Liverpudlian puns, and montage of mythic images that sweep over you to the tune of the most magical music The Beatles ever created. It was a grizzled human who didn't leave the theater after the *Yellow Submarine* Experience feeling more positive about the world and the power that Love has to overcome all Evil.

Being an artist myself, specializing in large city murals and commissioned watercolors, I was entranced with *The Yellow Submarine*, and determined to one day find out who was responsible for what I thought was a masterpiece of subliminal meaning and powerful symbology masked behind the exquisite color and ingenious design.

Although I began researching the film in late 1968, it was not until 1991 that I began to answer most of my questions with a series of interview specials with the primary creators. Many of these interviews were broadcast on my radio program, 21st Century Radio (currently heard on WCBM 680 AM, Baltimore, 7-9 p.m. EST Sundays, and on their web site). It didn't

take long to realize there was no one great genius who created *The Yellow Submarine* from start-to-finish as a mythical "Hero's Journey" imbued with hidden meanings. Instead I learned *The Yellow Submarine* is more like what its art designer Heinz Edelmann calls, "the ultimate piece of white noise," meaning it was truly a composite of contributions of dozens of different talents. There were many times that they were literally making it up as they went along.

But if you had to single out one person for credit, it would have to be art designer Heinz Edelmann, definitely the leader of the parade. Edelmann was responsible for every piece of the design throughout the film, all the Pepperland characters, all the monsters and Meanies, and most of the design of the other scenes. Edelmann is also the one mostly responsible for the storyline as it grew from the original simple script in the vein of the ABC Beatles children's cartoon series, to a psychedelic experimental animation landmark reinforcing The Beatles' essential message that Love overcomes all. Thanks to Edelmann's knowledge of the classics, and to the writing direction of Erich Segal, a professor of Classics at Yale, *The Yellow Submarine* seems to flow like the classic/mythic Hero's Journey. The Beatles a la Odysseus.

So with the contributions of a dozen or so talented individuals on the central crew, combined with Edelmann's avant garde design, *The Beatles' Yellow Sub-*

marine sparked a new spirit in animation, and a whole new generation of artists were turned on.

July 17, 1998 is the 30th anniversary of the debut of *The Yellow Submarine* at Piccadilly Circus in London. Photos of this mob scene are always featured in good Beatles retrospectives, and it will be forever remembered by all the three dozen Yellow Submarine contributors I've interviewed. In honor of this event, let's take a look at where many of these creators went after that day, and where they are today.

It was a grizzled human who didn't leave the theater after the Yellow Submarine Experience feeling more positive about the world and the power that Love has to overcome all Evil.

Bob Balser, Animation Director

One of the few American artists on the team, Bob Balser directed and storyboarded all the scenes that were pre- and post-Pepperland: Liverpool, the travel sequences through the various seas, and the return. Bob and his wife, Cima, fondly recall an overnight "meeting" with Edelmann and his wife, and a bottle of Scotland's finest whiskey, when they hashed together one of the "final" scripts. After *Yellow Submarine*, Balser opened his own production company in Barcelona, Spain where he produced TV series like *The Jackson 5*, *The Lion*, *The Witch* and *The Wardrobe*,

Peanuts for CBS, *Barney* for BBC and many more. Recently his credits include *The Triplets* for HBO, and currently he is in Turkey directing a TV series called *Bay Dogs*, a take-off on *Bay Watch*. Balser has won many international awards and is the member of many professional affiliations.

I learned The Yellow Submarine is more like what its art designer Heinz Edelmann calls, "the ultimate piece of white noise..."

Al Brodax, Producer

Al Brodax originally suggested the idea of a full-length animated feature based on *The Beatles' Yellow Submarine*. He was the head of the motion picture/television department of King Features Syndicate when he brought the idea of an animated film to The Beatles. After *Yellow Submarine*, Brodax went on to produce, write and direct several Emmy award-winning television series including ABC's *Make A Wish*, and *Animals*, *Animals*, *Animals* starring Hal Linden. In the 1980s Brodax served as consultant to several firms including Marvel Comics, Computer Graphics Laboratories and the New York Institute of Technology. He is currently writing an adventure/comedy novel entitled *Jokka* and plans to produce a live action movie in the U.K. next year called *Fish Story*.

John Coates, Line Producer

A partner with Dunning in TV Cartoons (TVC) when *Yellow Submarine* was proposed, John Coates oversaw the production unit (that eventually grew to more than 200 people) that produced the film in less than a year from

designs to its London premiere. Since *Yellow Submarine*, John has continued to run TVC, working with many of the animators who worked on *Yellow Submarine*. They produced several award winning pieces, including *The Lion*, *The Witch And the Wardrobe* which won a 1979 Emmy Award; *The Snowman* which won awards all over the world including an Oscar nomination and a British Academy Award in 1983; from 1986 through 1988, TVC produced the full-length feature film, *When The Wind Blows* from Raymond Briggs' celebrated book; *Granpa*. followed in 1989; *Father Christmas* in 1991; and in 1995 a full-length feature length version of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind In the Willows* and William Horwood's book *The Willows in Winter* which won two prime time Emmy Awards. Most recently in 1996 they produced *Famous Fred* which has won a British Academy Award, the 1997 Grand Prix at Annecy and the Grand Award Trophy for Best Children's Program, the Gold Medal for Best Family Special at the recent New York Festival and an Oscar nomination in March 1998. TVC's current productions are an adaptation of Raymond Briggs' *The Bear and Ollie Get Off Our Train!*, both due to be screened at Christmas 1998.

Alison de Vere, Background Supervisor

Alison de Vere is spoken of fondly by all the creators of the *Yellow Submarine* not only as the talented background supervisor ("the most luminous interpreter of Heinz's illustration and artwork" says Charlie Jenkins), but also as "Eleanor Rigby." Alison's image was used as the lonely girl portrayed in this opening musical

sequence where Charlie Jenkins' special effects mixed live action/photography with animation. After *Yellow Submarine*, Alison formed her own production company and to her credit has several award-winning short features including *Cafe Bar* (1975), *Mr. Pascal* (1979), *Silas Marner* (1984), *The Black Dog* (1987), *East of the Moon* (1988), *The Angel and the Soldier Boy* (1989), *Psyche and Eros* (1994), and *Mouse and Mole* (1996). Her son, Ben, is also a designer, working with her in her company.

George Dunning, Director

Dunning was ill during much of *Yellow Submarine's* 11-month creation, but he is responsible for creating the dynamic "Lucy in the Sky" sequence, which he did with the assistance of Bill Sewell. Before *Yellow Submarine*, Dunning's Canadian/British company, TVC, directed *The Beatles* television series for America (1967), together with Jack Stokes, one of *Yellow Submarine's* animation directors. This Beatles series led to TVC being commissioned for the production of *Yellow Submarine*. Dunning is credited with keeping the production on the straight and narrow to ensure a quality artistic piece. He is the only one wearing a suit in most of the photographs of the artists working in the studio on *Yellow Submarine*. In 1967 Dunning also produced the only triple-screen cartoon, *Canada Is My Piano*. After *Yellow Submarine* in failing health, in 1969 he did *Memory*, *Moon Rock 10* (1970), *Horses of Death* (1972), *Plant a Tree* (1973), *The Maggot* (1973), *Damon the Mower* (1974) and *Teamwork* (1976). He was working on Shakespeare's "The Tempest" when he

passed away in 1978.

Heinz Edelmann, Art Designer

Edelmann hates talking about *Yellow Submarine*, and calls it "the albatross around his neck". Rightly regarded as one of this generation's major contemporary graphic artists, Edelmann's characteristic visual language sets him above transient trends and fashions. After *Yellow Submarine*, Edelmann teamed with special effects designer Charlie Jenkins and background supervisor Alison de Vere, and formed a small studio in London where they produced "about a dozen commercials, a few film titles and almost-almost, almost-sold three of the five feature projects I had written." After 1970 Edelmann turned his talents to book design and illustration, magazine illustration and numerous posters for films, theatre, concerts, animation and advertising. He is internationally renowned for his posters, illustrations and typography, and has had several one-man-shows in Europe, the U.S. and Japan. He has also been teaching for 30 years and recently retired as a Full Professor at the Stuttgart Academy of Fine Arts. His daughter, Valentin is also an accomplished designer, currently accumulating her own fame.

Charlie Jenkins, Director of Special Effects

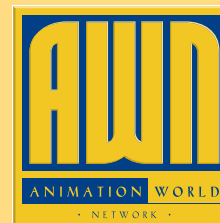
Charlie Jenkins' contributions to *Yellow Submarine* cannot be overstated, beginning with locating Heinz Edelmann and suggesting him to King Features as the artistic designer for the film. Before *Yellow Submarine*, Jenkins had worked with Richard Williams (*Roger Rabbit*) developing experimental graphics, film titles and multi-exposure techniques, plus he

used the Oxberry aerial image system. Jenkins originated the method of loose painted rotoscoping of live-action images, a technique used successfully throughout *Yellow Submarine*. Jenkins' contributions include the opening scene of Liverpool to "Eleanor Rigby" (in which the live-action images of many of the *Yellow Submarine* animators are featured as extras), the journey of the Submarine through time and space as it leaves Liverpool, as well as the "Northern Song" and the "All Together Now" end sequence. After *Yellow Submarine*, he formed Trickfilm Workshop in London with Edelmann and De Vere, where his clients included Paul McCartney ("Maybe I'm Amazed" film), and Diana Vreeland, editor of *Vogue*. Jenkins' career took off in photography, production, design and advertising and his clients included Franco American Films, Fanta International, Peter Beard and the Kennedy family. His work took him all over the world. He's worked or lived in Madrid, Africa, India, Brazil, the Caribbean, the Pacific, the Far East, and Miami. In the 1980s he moved to Argentina. Today he calls Buenos Aires home and continues to "cast and peruse the production logistics of a territory yet to exist on the world production map."

July 17, 1998 is the 30th anniversary of the debut of The Yellow Submarine at Piccadilly Circus in London.

Antal Kovacs, Dubbing Editor

Hungarian Kovacs has been active all over the film industry and all over the world for decades. He has directed, written, edited and produced both anima-



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DESIGN/LAYOUT :

Ged Bauer

ADVERTISING SALES

North America : Dan Sarto

Germany : Thomas Basgier

UK: Alan Smith

tion and live-action films, plus, he's lectured, and written three novels. Some of his titles include *Blow Up*, *Interlude*, *The Great White Hope*, *Dead Reckoning*, and *Waterbabies*.

David Livesey, Key Animator

David Livesey had his own well-established Group Two Animation Studio when he was sub-contracted from TV C to do key animation for *Yellow Submarine*. After *Submarine*, Livesey freelanced and worked for Cosgrove Hall Productions, TVC and others as key animator on such productions as *Snowman*, *Waterbabies*, *Heavy Metal*, *Christmas Carol*, *The Cobbler and the Thief*, *Sam Whiskers*, *Wind In the Willows*, *The Blockies*, and many others. In the 1990s Livesey began teaching at the British Animation Training Scheme at the Museum of the Moving Image and the National Film and Television School. Recently he published a graphic novel, *The Buggane of St. Trinians*, and is currently working as a key animator on *The Bear* for TVC (their last film).

Geoff Loynes, Key Animator

Since *Yellow Submarine*, Geoff Loynes has worked as a freelance animator on many TVC productions like The Beatrix Potter Series', *When The Wind Blows* and *Wind In the Willows*. He also worked on *Heavy Metal*, *Water-ship Down*, *F.R.O.*, *Digswell & Daisy*, and *Pond Life*.

Sir George Martin, Music Director

Commonly nicknamed "The Fifth Beatle," George Martin was knighted in 1988 for his services to the music industry. During the course of his career he has been awarded two Ivor Novello

Awards and five Grammys. Martin composed six original orchestral pieces for the *Yellow Submarine* sound track, which Producer Al Brodax compared to the creations of J.S. Bach, and were released as the B-side to The Beatles' album *The Yellow Submarine*. Martin is recognized as one of music's most versatile and imaginative talents. He has produced no less than 30 number-one singles in the U.K. alone. Before and after The Beatles, he has worked with some of our generation's finest talents including Peter Sellers, Dudley Moore, Bob Dylan, Elton John, Sting, Carly Simon, Peter Gabriel, Sinéad O'Connor, Elvis Costello, and more. He has recently produced his final album *In My Life*, already gone Gold in Australia, a successful representation of his most treasured friends and heroes (like Goldie Hawn, Robin Williams, Bobby McFerrin, and Sean Connery) giving their renditions of some of his favorite Beatles songs.

Thanks to Edelmann's knowledge of the classics, and to the writing direction of Erich Segal, *The Yellow Submarine* seems to flow like the classic/mythic Hero's Journey.

Roger McGough, Dialogue and Joke Writer

A native of Liverpool Roger McGough was brought into the project after Segal left with the instruction to provide authentic Liverpoolian-sounding dialogue and local color jokes. After *Yellow Submarine*, McGough distinguished himself in the world of poetry and pop music, as a Fellow of Poetry at the University of Loughborough, a member of the Executive Council of Poetry Soci-

ety, and an Honorable Professor of Thames Valley University. Recently McGough was awarded the OBE (Order of the British Empire) from Her Majesty's government.

Millicent McMillan, Assistant to Heinz Edelmann

Millicent McMillan was one of only two direct assistants to art director Heinz Edelmann, and he credits her with making the Blue Meanies blue, when he wanted to make them red as an obvious reference to the Cold War. Since *Yellow Submarine*, she has worked on and off for TVC for 30 years, doing background and/or design for *The Snowman*, *Granpa*, *Father Christmas*, and with Alison DeVere's production company doing commercials, *Mouse and Mole* and *The Angel and the Soldier Boy*. She also worked on Pink Floyd's *The Wall*. One of Millicent's three children was a *Yellow Submarine* baby, born just after the film was finished. In fact, she was so pregnant at the London Pavilion premiere, that she was unable to batter the crowds to get in and missed it!

Jack Mendelsohn, Script Writer

Mendelsohn's contribution to the long stream of scripts turned in for *Yellow Submarine* was significant enough for him to be singled out (from 40-plus people who made contributions) to receive, along with three others, "Written By" credit on the film. Mendelsohn also came from the earlier King Features production of *The Beatles* TV cartoon series, and after *Yellow Submarine* he continued with a very busy and illustrious career writing for television and animation. He's worked on *Laugh In*, *The Carol Burnett Show*, *Tony Orlando and Dawn*, *Three's*

Company, The Return of Dennis the Menace, and in animation on *Yogi Bear's Christmas Special, Archie, Sabrina, George of the Jungle, Super Chicken, Hey, Hey, Hey, It's Fat Albert* and *Muppet Babies*. More recently he did *Sinbad the Sailor* and *Donkey Kong*. He is currently working on a semi-fictionalized memoir/novel about his decade of living in Mexico City during the 1950s.

Erich Segal, Ph.D., Main Screenwriter

During the 11 months of *Yellow Submarine's* production, over 40 writers and artists contributed at one time or another in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to create a finished script for the animators and actors. The one writer who stands out as having contributed the most and having the greatest success at cobbling together the many shreds and pieces and contributions of the artists and other writers is Erich Segal. Segal was a young assistant professor of Classics at Yale University at the time Al Brodax found him and flew him to London for several weeks of furious writing. Everything on *Submarine* was done hurriedly, under enormous deadline pressure, and Segal remembers not being allowed to leave his hotel room except for his daily jog. After *Yellow Submarine*, Segal went on to immediate international fame with his best-selling novel, *Love Story*, made into the blockbuster film starring Ryan O'Neal and Ali McGraw. Today he is the author of eight novels, including *Oliver's Story*, and *Man, Woman and Child*, and two international bestsellers that became major motion pictures. *Doctors* brought him to the number one spot on the New York Times best-

seller list for the third time. Segal has also published widely on Greek and Latin literature, subjects he has taught at Harvard, Princeton, and Yale. He is currently a fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford.

Jack Stokes, Animation Director

Jack Stokes was not new to animating The Beatles when he began to work directing and storyboarding all the Pepperland scenes in *Yellow Submarine*. He had directed the ABC Television series for TVC, and also designed the titles for *The Beatles' Magical Mystery Tour*. After *Yellow Submarine*, Stokes kept busy with commercials and several other full-length feature films which he directed, designed and/or storyboarded including *Tiki Tiki* (1969-70), *Little Mermaid* (1972), *Water Babies* (1977-78), *Heavy Metal* (1980-81), *Castle for PBS* (1981-1982), *Asterix* (1984-1985) and many more. Most recently he was director and did layout storyboard for *Tailor of Gloucester* (1992-1993), *Prince Valiant* (1994) and *Tales of Peter Rabbit and Friends* (1994). Stokes is the recipient of many international film and animation awards.

Mike Stuart, Key Animator

Mike Stuart also worked with TVC before *Yellow Submarine* as a trainee animator on *The Beatles* series. After *Submarine* he worked on *The Happy Prince* for Potterton Productions, and then for Trickfilm Studios on commercials. From 1977-1981 Stuart worked with Pink Floyd and Gerald Scarfe on the animation for *Wish You Were Here, Animals* and he did 90% of the animation for *The Wall*, followed in 1981-1983 by *The Meaning of Life* with Terry

Gilliam. From 1983-1993 he formed Stuart Brooks Animation Ltd. producing mainly commercials, as well as two half-hour episodes of the Beatrix Potter series from script to screen, *Samuel Whiskers* and *The Pigling Bland*. Since then he's worked on *Bamboo Bears*, was animation director on *Wind in the Willows* and storyboard for *Willows in Winter* for TVC. He is currently working on two ten-minute series, *Kipper* and *Pookie*.

In the late 1960s Dr. Robert R. Hieronimus traveled with numerous rock and roll bands as spiritual advisor and poster designer, as he began his long career as a muralist and painter. His highly acclaimed occult and symbolic murals include the 2,700 square foot prophetic "Apocalypse" at the Johns Hopkins University. Together with his wife and partner, Zoh, Bob operates a media research service called Hieronimus & Co., Inc., providing story and guest ideas and materials to television, newspapers and radio worldwide. Their work has been featured on ABC Radio, CNN, C-SPAN, PBS, and in dozens of leading publications like The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The New York Times Magazine, The Chicago Tribune, The Boston Globe and The San Francisco Chronicle.

Dr. Robert R. Hieronimus is presently at work completing his long-delayed history book on the turbulent journey of The Beatles' *Yellow Submarine*, and how it evolved from Liverpool to Pepperland. This book should see publication by the summer of 1999.

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The Mainstream Business of Adult Animation

by Sean MacLennan Murch

I'm sitting on a plane, headed for the Banff Television Festival in Alberta, Canada. The topic of adult animation weighs heavily on my mind. I have been asked to moderate a panel regarding the future of animation. The panel topic is admittedly a broad one but the more I contemplate these two issues, the more I realize that they are intrinsically linked. Put more simply, adult animation is emerging as the key to survival in an increasingly difficult industry. Difficult, because the proliferation of new cable and specialty channels has effectively spread out the available revenue over a larger market, thereby decreasing each broadcaster's buying power. From a ratings standpoint, broadcasters are being forced to define further their target audience in response to the multitude of new channels.

How does this affect animated children's programming? Specialty youth and children's channels are enjoying strong ratings in their age demographic. Thus, broader-based network and cable channels are being pushed to refocus their efforts on a different demographic. Rather than competing for young eyeballs in the traditional morning and after-school blocks, they look to older audiences. The result: a decrease in shelf space for animated children's programming. This trend has, in part, paved the way for animated adult programming.

Animation Grows Up

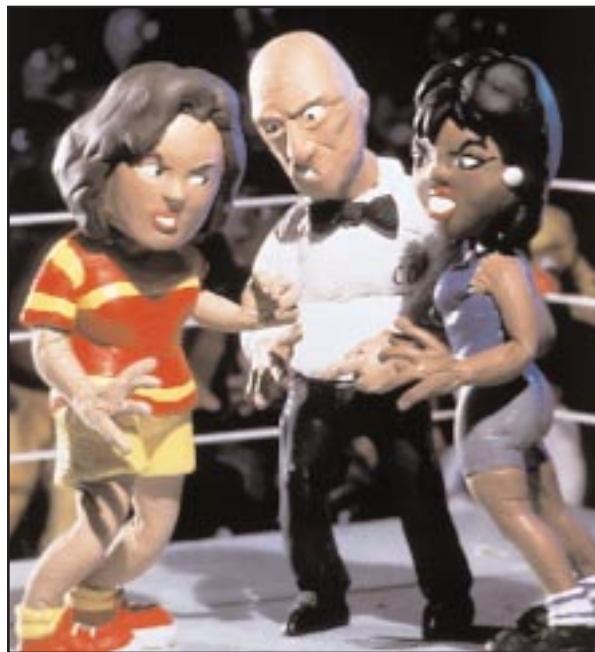
From a creative standpoint, this is widely received as good news. It's no secret that the majority of animators and writers prefer to work on shows aimed at an older audience. Abby Terkuhle, president of MTV Animation and creative director of MTV, was North America's first pioneer in the area of adult animation. His network continues to produce and showcase the kind of programming that has made this genre feasible both domestically and abroad. On the topic of creative process, Abby points out that, "For us, producing adult animation is in some ways akin to the creative process experienced in music. It gives our writers and animators an opportunity to experiment with their art and to come up with new

techniques and formats. Going back to the early days, it started with something as simple as splashing paint on the MTV logo."

Put more simply, adult animation is emerging as the key to survival in an increasingly difficult industry.

Looking at the line-up of successful animated programming in North America this year, it is apparent that the industry has moved to a more sophisticated, edgier and decidedly older audience than that of three years ago. Even our children's shows are skewing older with shows like *Rugrats*, *Sam & Max* and *Cow and Chicken*. There are also more animated adult programs than ever before. As Terkuhle points out, "The success of shows like *Beavis and Butt-head*, *The Simpsons*, and *King of the Hill* have allowed for a wider acceptance of adult animation in the marketplace. There was always a stigma attached to animation—that it was just for kids. While we are still challenged by that perception, the industry has come a long way to accepting adult animation as viable programming. As a result, we currently have programs like *Daria* and *Celebrity Death Match*."

Bob and Margaret is an adult series due to air this fall on Comedy Central in the US, Channel 4 in the U.K.



MTV is once again pushing the envelope of prime time animation with *Celebrity Death Match*., a clay animated show featuring caricatures of public personalities. Shown here: Rosie O'Donnell vs. Oprah Winfrey. © MTV.



As Canada's first ever prime time animated series, *Bob and Margaret* will, in many ways, set the tone in this country for how animation will be perceived by the prime time viewing audience.

and Global Networks in Canada. The series is based on Alison Snowden and David Fines Academy Award-winning short, *Bob's Birthday*. In a recent discussion with Fine, he pointed out that he has, "always been inspired by films from the NFB and Britain that are adult films like *The Big Snit* [by Richard Condie] and *Why Me* by Janet Perlman. Alison and I have always

been making adult films. The big transition has been doing adult series for prime time television, for the general population. That has happened because of *The Simpsons*, in the first instance. It led to a whole renaissance of quality animation, for children as well as adults, like *Ren & Stimpy*. The marketability and huge potential of animation was re-realized because of the Simpsons."

There was always a stigma attached to animation—that it was just for kids. - Abby Terkuhle

Risk Taking May Pay Off

From a program development and sales perspective, there is a major challenge to be faced. How do we convince broadcast programmers that an animated half-hour sitcom can go head to



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head with its live-action counterparts? Certainly, the precedents are there. *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill*, *Beavis and Butt-head*, and *South Park* to name a few. The stigma remains though. Animation is for kids. At this stage, most programmers will admit to the success of the aforementioned shows. However, there is an often an underlying supposition that these shows were "one-offs," that they got lucky. This is an increasingly difficult argument to sustain when the successes just keep coming.

As the competition for finite advertising dollars increases, it will be necessary for broadcasters to take more chances.

Part of the problem is that by and large, we work in a fear-based industry. Most broadcasters are afraid to roll the proverbial dice. There is too much at stake. Ratings, advertising revenues, and ultimately careers are lost with bad programming decisions. There are, as always, exceptions to the rule. Abby Terkuhle is one of them. As Abby points out, "We have always taken chances, and they have paid off. With a network so closely linked to the music industry, it is essential to not only keep up with the times, but to stay ahead of them." As the competition for finite advertising dollars increases, it will be necessary for broadcasters to take more chances. In some ways, it is less a matter of taking chances, and more a question of keeping up with the Joneses. As Comedy Central, MTV and Fox enjoy much success in this area, other broadcasters may be taking a risk if they don't begin to explore the world of adult animation. Many of North America's current programming

blocks include an animated sitcom. These blocks will often hinge on that show, putting more than just one half hour slot at stake.

Character Makes the Difference

What separates the successful adult series from the rest? Fine suggests that, "It is the writing quality and the voice quality. If you look at a show like *South Park*, the strength is in the writing and the characterization. If the stories aren't there and the characterizations aren't there, it doesn't matter how good it looks." In terms of *Bob and Margaret*, David's hope is that the series will be "viewed and enjoyed as funny stories, not put into the pigeon hole of, 'This is animation.' It should be a prime time series that happens to be animated, as opposed to an animated series put in prime time." As Canada's first ever prime time animated series, *Bob and Margaret* will, in many ways, set the tone in this country for how animation will be perceived by the prime time viewing audience. As we roll into the fall, we will also see more animated prime time series out of the U.S. and indeed, internationally, with shows like *Stressed Eric* from the U.K.

If the stories aren't there and the characterizations aren't there, it doesn't matter how good it looks. - David Fine

Animation has undoubtedly matured as an industry. Some people will argue that adult animation today is merely a renaissance of the early days, when cartoons were played in the theater ahead of adult features. Realistically though, it goes much further than that. Innovations in design,

technique and format have made the animation industry as diverse as live-action. Today's animated programming runs the gamut from children's to drama, sitcom to variety, and even reaches as far as documentary. It is now widely accepted as a medium with which to entertain, inform, and to unleash the imagination of the viewer. The freedom of animation allows us to tell stories that cannot be told in live-action, and often adds considerable value to those that can. The recent success of all-day animation services like Teletoon and The Cartoon Network provides evidence that there is a demand for animated programming of all types. It is now the responsibility of creators, writers and producers to keep the momentum going with well written, provocative and entertaining shows.

Sean Murch has worked in the development, production, financing and sales of animated film and television programs for the past eight years. He has lived and worked in London, Paris, San Francisco, Vancouver and most recently, Toronto. In 1998, Sean joined Nelvana Enterprises as Director of Canadian Sales and Distribution. In addition to his sales duties, Sean also sits on Nelvana's development committee and is responsible for program development in Canada.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The Anime "Porn" Market

by Fred Patten

What is Anime? There is a general awareness today that the market for anime is growing in the U.S. However, there is less awareness—or agreement—as to exactly what “anime” is.

“Anime” or “animé” is the Japanese word for cinematic animation, taken from the English word “animation.” To the anime enthusiasts in America, “anime” means any animation produced in Japan, no matter the intended audience—whether a TV cartoon series for young children (*Samurai Pizza Cats* and *Sailor Moon* are two recent examples, and there was a Japanese TV animated serialization of *Heidi, Girl of the Alps* in 1974, eight years before Hanna-Barbera’s *Heidi’s Song* feature), an animated adult cultural feature (there have been two feature-length animated productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*), or an action-adventure thriller filled with violence and sexual situations.

To the anime enthusiasts in America, “anime” means any animation produced in Japan, no matter the intended audience..

However, since the main American market for anime consists of teens and adults looking for light entertainment, that is just about all that gets licensed for American release. Most juvenile cartoons and the adult intellectual animation tends to remain on their studios’ shelves in Tokyo. As a result, a perception has been

growing in America that “anime” is synonymous with violent, sexual animation only. A February 1, 1998 *New York Times* story on contemporary Japanese animation comments on its wide range, but emphasizes that “animé refers strictly to ‘adult’ Japanese animation ... racy, battle-ravaged animé ... ‘pornimation,’ as some of the steamier romps with Western-looking women, from college girls to the princesses of sci-fi legend, are sometimes called in the United States ... animé is all violence and sex ...” The article also refers to one of Japan’s most popular children’s TV cartoon stars, the robot cat Doraemon, as “scantily clad;” an innuendo equivalent to identifying Donald Duck or Porky Pig only as cartoon characters who go about in public without any pants on.

This has reached the point that major American animation presenters with Japanese titles in their lineups are trying to disassociate themselves from the “anime” label. Michael Johnson, president of Buena Vista Home Entertainment, said in *Daily Variety*, February 13, 1998, of Disney’s forthcoming U.S. release of Hayao Miyazaki’s 1997 Japanese box-office-record-breaking feature *Princess Mononoke*, “This is not *anime* ... its

not effects-driven or violence-driven.” Mike Lazzo, vice president of programming for the Cartoon Network, assured the public in *USA Today*, December 18, 1997 that anime is not shown on American TV. “Japan animation is so different from what airs here ... Its far edgier, adult and violent. Anime isn’t very story-based ... The story is hard to follow.” When it was pointed out that the Cartoon Network shows *Speed Racer* and *Voltron*, both juvenile action-adventure TV cartoon series produced in Japan, Lazzo said that “neither show is in the style of anime.” (In the original Japanese version of *Voltron*, the Earth is completely destroyed by the space villains. That episode is



Urotsukidoji, the best-known “anime porn” title, and the one which started the American adult video market. Image courtesy of Central Park Media.

omitted from the heavily rewritten American version.)

This evolution of the definition of anime will doubtlessly be intensified by the increasing importation of Japanese animated adult erotic fare, to mix with the action-adventure anime market. When the first anime-genre videos were released in 1990-91 through mail order and direct sales to the comic-book fandom specialty stores, it was understood by this market that these were animated equivalents of movies like *The Terminator* and *Die Hard*, full of explosions, blood-'n-guts, adult dialogue, and often a brief risqué nude scene. Around 1994 the anime videos expanded into the major video mass-market chains and became accessible to the general public, which tends to assume automatically that all animated cartoons are safe for children. This resulted in the necessity for warning advisories on the video boxes such as "Contains violence and nudity;" "Contains brief nudity and mature situations. Parental discretion advised;" and, "Recommended for Mature Viewers." But these

did not yet include explicit sexual titles.

Anime's Beginnings

Asian attitudes towards eroticism have always been more open than those of the West. One of the earliest Japanese TV cartoon series was *Sennin Buraku* (*Hermits' Village*), a fifteen-minute late-night erotic humor anthology roughly equivalent to "Playboy's Ribald Classics" which aired from 11:40 to 11:55 p.m. for two months in 1963. Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989) is revered as the father of both Japan's comic book and animation industries, writing and illustrating the series known in America as *Astro Boy* and *Kimba, the White Lion*. It is less well known that Tezuka also tried to create a popular acceptance of animation with intellectually artistic mature themes. In November 1966, he produced *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a *Fantasia*-like transformation of Mussorgsky's famous composition into a modern political cartoon, presenting the musical "pictures" as satirical portraits of ruthless corporate bosses, affectedly

aesthetic artists, scandal-mongering journalists, rebellious teens, vapid TV personalities and the like. In June 1969, he released *One Thousand and One Nights*, a 128-minute adult adaptation of *The Arabian Nights* full of adventure, Rabelaisian humor, and all the erotic innuendo of the original Persian tales. This was a

major theatrical release, intended by Tezuka to be comparable to Western live-action movie adaptations of such adult literary classics as *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Lolita*.

The article also refers to one of Japan's most popular children's TV cartoon stars ... as "scantly clad;" an innuendo equivalent to identifying Donald Duck or Porky Pig only as cartoon characters who go about in public without any pants on.

Japanese animated explicitly adult cartoons developed along with the general animated direct-to-video market. The first Japanese Original Animated Video (OAV) title was a science-fiction drama, *Dallos*, released in December 1983. The third OAV release, on February 21, 1984, was *Lolita Anime I: Yuki no Kurenai Kesho* * *Shojo Bara Kei* (freely translated, *Crimson Cosmetic on the Snow* * *Young Girls' Rose Punishment*). This half-hour video, first in the short-lived *Wonder Kids* erotic anime series, consisted of two 15-minute dramas of rape and sadistic sexual torture/murder of schoolgirls, whose spirits exact a gruesome supernatural vengeance. Of the seventeen OAVs released during 1984, six were "general" and eleven were pornographic. In 1985, after the viability of the direct-video market for action-adventure anime had been established, the total was 28 action-adventure titles to just another eleven porno titles. The Japanese domestic OAV market has grown accordingly, over the past decade, with 1997's output of 162 "general" titles and 62 erotic titles (including some multiple vol-



Osamu Tezuka tried to create a popular acceptance of animation in 1969 with *One Thousand and One Nights* which contained all the erotic innuendo of the original Persian tales. © Tezuka Productions.

umes of series) being about the average ratio.

The Anime Porn Players

There are differences of opinion as to what constitutes "anime porn," but four anime specialty video producers have special labels for their releases which primarily emphasize nudity and explicit adult sexual situations. These are A.D. Visions' SoftCel Pictures series, Central Park Media's Anime 18 series, Media Blasters' Kitty Media series, and The Right Stuf International's Critical Mass series.

The other anime specialty producers state that they are not interested in getting into the video erotica market. However, most of them have at least one adult feature in their catalogues which includes a brief but intense "shocker" scene such as a graphic rape. For some sensibilities, this is enough to establish the movie as pornography.

Two such companies, Manga Entertainment (ME) and Streamline Pictures, feel that their video box art makes it clear to the public that their anime titles are adult action-adventure rather than eroticism. Chicago-based Manga Entertainments media relations representative, Danielle Opyt, says, "Due to the basic nature of anime, all of our videos bear a distinctive sticker showing our Manga Man cartoon spokesman and our flaming Manga Entertainment logo, with the warning, 'Manga Man Says Parental Discretion Advised.' This covers everything from strong language to brief nudity and graphic violence." Carl Macek, president of Streamline Pictures in Los Angeles, says, "We have always presented anime for a wide range of tastes, from

child-friendly to movies whose main characters are engaged in such obviously mature activities as smoking and drinking cocktails. Those which contain brief but intense adult situations carry an appropriate warning notice. In 1994 we arranged with Orion Home Video to distribute most of our titles, and Orion created a "Not For Kids" sticker which it has automatically put on all the Streamline video boxes. This includes the whole range from PG-level content to R-level content."

Central Park Media and *Urotsukidoji*

The best-known "anime porn" title, and the one which started the American adult video market, is the notorious *Urotsukidoji: Legend of the Overfiend*; first of the "erotic grotesque" (more popularly known as "tentacle porn") genre. This began in Japan with the January 1987 release of the first of a five-video adaptation of Toshio Maeda's horror comic-book novel, produced by West Cape Corporation, best known in America for its *Space Cruiser Yamato*/*Star Blazers* space adventure series. *Urotsukidoji* is about the invasion and conquest of Earth by oversexed supernatural demons who enslave humanity and use our women as their sexual playthings. Generations pass. There are human plots to destroy the monsters, which often attempt to take advantage of their sexual obsession and turn it against them. The tale becomes more complex when a third group eventually emerges of human/monster crossbreeds, rejected by both parents. They are intellectually inclined to join the humans, but their intense carnal drives are still

too uncontrollable to make them comfortable allies for the human rebels. Sequels eventually extended the series to eleven videos.

The first *Urotsukidoji* episode, a complete story in itself, was dubbed into English by John O'Donnell, president of New York City's Central Park Media (CPM) video distribution company, which had been releasing adventure anime videos since October 1991 under its U.S. Manga Corps label. *Urotsukidoji* was actually premiered theatrically in London at a two-day anime film festival on October 30 - 31, 1992, where it played to sold-out screenings on both days. Its American release was at NYC's Angelika Theater in January 1993. It began a national art theater tour in June, which resulted in local press coverage practically everywhere it played about how "Japanese animation certainly isn't like American animation!" CPM scheduled it for a video release in August, 1993.

According to Valerio Rossi, CPM's marketing/production coordinator, it was the company's realization that *Urotsukidoji* was too sexually intense to fit into its U.S. Manga Corps "boys' adventure" line that led to the creation of the separate Anime 18 label. All five episodes were released, both on video tape and laser disc, between August and December 1993. They sold so well, and generated so many requests from anime fans for more of the same nature, that CPM's Anime 18 releases have been appearing steadily since then. Plus, the original 35 mm *Urotsukidoji* story is still popular on the art theater circuit as a mid-night feature.

A Closer Look at the Labeling

A.D. Vision, in Houston,

released its first anime video in November 1992. For the next two years, its A.D. Vision Films label included both regular action-adventure anime and some of the milder erotic comedies such as *F3 (Frantic, Frustrated & Female)*, often with editing of brief explicit scenes to make them suitable for a "Parental Guidance Recommended" warning. The company's first release under its SoftCel Pictures label, reserved for an emphasis of explicit adult scenes, was *The Legend of Lyon* in November 1994. A.D. Vision put out 19 SoftCel Pictures releases during 1995 and 12 through the first half of 1996, some of which were rereleases of previous A.D. Vision Films titles in their unedited form.

Janice Williams, A.D.

Visions production coordinator, says that the company has had very few SoftCel releases since June 1996, but that is not because they have not sold well. "They are almost all still in print and selling very consistently. A.D. Vision made a tremendous investment in mid-1996 to license a great quantity of general anime titles. We are currently working through a big production backlog getting them onto the market before we can pro-



F3 (Frantic, Frustrated & Female), one of A.D. Vision's earlier releases, is now available in rerelease on its SoftCel Pictures label. Image courtesy of A.D. Vision. © 1994 WAN YAN A GU DA/Pink Pineapple.



Adult-themed or explicit anime releases in the U.S. are usually accompanied by warning labels. Samples shown here are courtesy of Streamline Pictures, Manga Entertainment and Central Park Media.

duce new SoftCel releases. We constantly get e-mail requests from our fans asking when we are going to put out a new SoftCel title. We will definitely resume them soon."

The Right Stuf International, in Des Moines, does not consider itself really in the adult market. President Shawne Kleckner says, "Manga Entertainment released an edited version of *Violence Jack* and a lot of fans wanted to see it uncut, so we arranged with ME to release an unedited edition (in November 1996). It was too intense for our regular Right

Stuf line, so we created the Critical Mass label. Then in 1997 we had a chance to license a really funny adult comedy, *Weather Report Girl*, and we did not want to pass it up. We do not have any specific plans at present for any more Critical Mass releases, but there will doubtlessly be more when the right titles come along."

The newest anime specialty producer/distributor, New York City's Media Blasters, actually began with its adult line, Kitty Media. President John Sirabella says, "Our first video was *Rei-Lan: Orchid Emblem*, on May 6, 1997, and we have released at least one Kitty Media title every month since then. I was already working in the anime field with the Software Sculptors line through Central Park Media, and I saw that there was a large Japanese adult animation source which was still relatively untapped for this country. The potential American market was very good, but the existing anime distributors were only putting out a few releases. They had solid gen-

eral release catalogues, and they were nervous about the repercussions of getting into the adult market in a major way. So I started Kitty Media to be the best and biggest company in the adult anime market. Now that we have a solid backlist of over a dozen titles, we are expanding Media Blasters beyond the Kitty Media label. Our first AnimeWorks label release, which carries a "Kid Safe = For Audiences of All Ages!" logo, was *Ninku the Movie* in March. We are also starting a couple of live-action labels, Kaiju Productions for monster movies in the *Godzilla* and *Rodan* vein, and Tokyo Shock for the Japanese equivalent of the Hong Kong action thrillers. It has been the success of Kitty Media that is making this growth possible."

Asian attitudes towards eroticism have always been more open than those of the West.

Anime Does Not Equal Pornography

A.D. Vision, Central Park Media and Media Blasters are all happy with the adult market, but they are not as pleased with the public's perception of it as synonymous with pornography. Sirabella says that, "There are varying degrees of adult," some of which do not involve eroticism at all. "One of our new Kitty Media releases, *Dark Cat*, is definitely not for children. It is a shocking horror film with intense violence, but no sexual situations."

Two CPM staffers are more perturbed by the public's dismissal of all anime as pornography. Valerio Rossi says, "Frankly, we are considerably disturbed by what seems to be a growing trend to consider

anime as nothing but sex and brutal violence. That is a complete distortion of CPM's catalogue. Our Anime 18 titles, as popular as they are, account for only about 10% of our anime releases; between 5% and 10%. CPM releases almost a half-dozen anime videos a month among four different labels. There are two or three U.S. Manga Corps releases and one or two Software Sculptors releases every month. Those are popular action-adventure, horror or comedy titles. The U.S. Manga Corps anime is more mainstream and the Software Sculptors titles are more "alternate" or artistic. Our main Central Park Media label, which is our general label for mostly non-Japanese videos such as live-action documentaries, only includes an anime release every two or three months. Those are usually adaptations of Japanese literary works, such as *Grave of the Fireflies* and the *Animated Classics of Japanese Literature* series. Our Anime 18 titles average only one a month or six weeks; maybe eight or nine a year. So that's only eight or nine adult titles compared to 45 to 50 anime titles a year without sexual content. That makes it very frustrating to hear someone say, 'Oh, yeah, I know about anime. It's those porno cartoons from Japan.'"

Jeff Zitomer, CPM's supervisor of production and marketing, feels that even the anime that emphasizes sexual content is misrepresented by being equated



Weather Report Girl, one of a few titles released on the Right Stuf's Critical Mass label. Image courtesy of the Right Stuf. © 1994 O.B. Planning/Toho Co. Ltd.

with pornography. "There is an important misconception in thinking of the adult anime labels like Anime 18 as animated pornography. If you look at actual pornographic videos, you'll see that they have no real story, no characters or character development, no attempt at imaginative camera-work—just close-ups of straight sex. The adult anime market is actually aimed at viewers who want intense adult situations in real stories, whether its dramatic action or humor. There are eleven video volumes in the *Urotsukidoji* saga, and its story progress is actually more important than the sex. You could fast-forward through

the naughty scenes and still have an interesting story to follow. The sexual nature of the story puts it into a unique category; it's not just a horror movie with a lot of sex scenes which could be taken out without changing the story. The Anime 18 line is not a porno line as much as a next step in animated storytelling for mature audiences, as the next step in adventure films beyond PG is an R rating. Our Anime 18 titles are for adults who want even more mature situations and dialogue in their suspense or their comedy, but who definitely want a story and interesting characters rather than just naked bodies engaged in sex."

There are differences of opinion as to what constitutes "anime porn."

U.S. Restrictions

However, the sexual content of the adult anime market is undeniable. This has created some special emphases in acquisitions and marketing. John Sirabella says, "There are definite legal restrictions which must be taken into consideration. The main problem is that U.S. child pornography laws forbid showing children in sexual situations, so all the characters in erotic videos have to look 18 or older. But this is not a restriction in Japan. Also, Japanese women are so small that even one who is supposed to be an adult may look underage by our standards. We have to turn down more adult anime titles than we can accept because the characters look too young to be called adult."

CPM's Jeff Zitomer concurs. Due to the American tendency to assume that cartoons are for kids,

CPM is very careful that the packaging of every Anime 18 video makes it unmistakable that it contains adult content and is for adult viewers only. This is done in a tasteful manner which emphasizes the story's dramatic content rather than a sex-appeal hard-sell, but which leaves no way that a parent or a video-shop clerk could mistake it as suitable for children or young teens. Also, due to recent federal child pornography laws, the packaging and a special video header at the beginning of the tape states clearly that the entire cast is 19 years old or older.

The adult anime market exists primarily through direct sales: mail-order to customers, and wholesale to specialty shops which cater to anime and to comic-book fans. CPM's Joe Cirillo, sub-licensing coordinator, says that at the anime fan weekend conventions which are spreading around America, "The Anime 18 titles often almost sell out by the end of the first day." All three companies refer to their adult labels as safe, steady sellers. In comparison with the general anime market, there are no best-sellers but no bombs, either. Also, there are almost no adult titles which start off selling strongly but soon taper off. They just sell steadily—and without requiring the advertising expenditures needed to promote the general anime titles.

Speaking of the comic-book specialty market, CPM is also a publisher (as CPM Manga) of American editions of Japanese adventure comic books, especially those which are the sources of the anime titles which CPM sells. The company is about to launch an adult label, CPM Manga X, beginning in July 1998. The May issue of *Diamond Dialogue*, the promo-

tional magazine of Diamond Comics Distributor, describes CPM Manga X as "... bringing Japan's best adult manga to American audiences ... in a 32-page, black-&-white format priced at \$2.95 per issue. The line will open with the English translation of the manga version of the adult anime classic *Urotsukidoji: Legend of the Overfiend* #1, written and illustrated by Toshio Maeda. The manga will contain many scenes which were not included in the video series ... (A highlight of the first issue for *Overfiend* fans will be a manga treatment of the film's classic scene in the nurses office.)"

On the whole, the anime distributors have not been able to get their adult labels into the general home video market yet. Cirillo refers to the major video distributors and video retail chains as "staying clear" of adult anime. Sirabella says that some distributors and chains carry the Kitty Media titles, while others will not take them. All three anime distributors try to produce two versions of their releases (but with some titles this is not possible); one uncut for the adult market and a "general release" version that will be acceptable to the chains like Musicland and Sam Goody's.

***Urotsukidoji* is about the invasion and conquest of Earth by oversexed supernatural demons...**

Still Outside the Mainstream

The general American adult TV/video market remains largely untapped. Cirillo says that *Penthouse Comix* has reviewed some of the Anime 18 videos, but that the adult pay-per-view TV channels are mostly not interested.

Sales to the American erotic-shop market have been very small, and the anime distributors have mixed feelings about trying to increase them. Sirabella says, "The adult book and video specialty shops have a bad reputation for non-payment. Also, the American erotic video industry is used to price-points of \$9.95 or less, which we can't sell at. And the anime specialty industry is having enough trouble with anime's reputation as nothing but sex & violence for us to want to risk making it all look even more like pornography through guilt by association by increasing anime's visibility in the sex shops."

(Intriguingly, the first adult anime to be released in America appeared in adult book shops in the late 1980s. *The Brothers Grime* was a three-video cartoon-pornography series produced by Excalibur Films, Inc. of Fullerton, CA in 1986, 1987, and 1988, using titles primarily from Japan's *Cream Lemon* series, the most popular of Japan's erotic anime before *Urotsukidoji*. Since Excalibur Films had no creative ties to the anime field, there was no attempt to remain faithful to the original versions. A secretary at Excalibur says that *The Brothers Grime* is still selling well today, and she has no idea why the company never followed those three videos up with more anime imports. The *Cream Lemon* series is one in which most of the characters appear to be much too young to be plausibly described as over 18.)

None of the anime distributors are willing to discuss sales figures, but John Sirabella makes a broad estimate that adult anime is about 30% to 40% of the overall anime market. "If the general market is \$100,000,000, that means

that the adult videos are selling \$30,000,000 to \$40,000,000 a year." This is disputed by CPMs sales director, Mike Pascuzzi, who estimates that the adult sales only make 15% to 20% of the general market. "Don't forget that there are several other anime video releasers such as Viz Video, Pioneer, AnimEigo and Urban Vision which do not have an adult label at all. They may have a few individual titles which require a Mature Audiences warning due to R-level content, but they are not really in the adult market." This may be a difference in perception as to what constitutes the "adult anime market" as distinct from the general market. Would a raunchy adolescent comedy full of college-fraternity style humor such as panty raids, peeking into the womens'-gym showers and foul-mouthed dialogue, but no explicit sex, count as an adult or as a general sale?

That makes it very frustrating to hear someone say, 'Oh, yeah, I know about anime. It's those porno cartoons from Japan.'"
- Valerio Rossi

Although the dividing line between general anime and adult anime may be vague, there is a definite adult market. All the anime companies producing for that market agree that sales are steady, and increase as a direct result of the number of titles available. There is no sign yet of any saturation level. As long as production in Japan turns out 50 or 60 new titles per year, there appears to be the potential for unlimited growth. Many, though not all, of the adult cartoon videos range from mild eroticism to explicit pornography. However, there does not seem to be a broad

correlation between the anime pornography audience and the market for American-made stag cartoons and live-action sex films. The overlap so far is minor, and the American general erotic video/TV market does not seem to be interested in tapping into the lode of Japanese animated titles.

The immediate concern of the American anime industry is not expanding its adult market share as much as doing damage control to keep a public conception from solidifying that all anime is pornographic, which could be highly injurious to the potentially much larger market for general action-adventure anime. Ironically, anime enthusiasts—the hard-core fans as well as the manufacturers—have been citing for years the theatrical animation of Hayao Miyazaki as well as popular TV series such as *Speed Racer* and *Sailor Moon* as examples of the best in anime, which they have hoped will transcend the "anime cult" reputation and popularize Japanese animation with the general public. Now these titles are being marketed to the general public, by major American animation purveyors who are denying that they are anime—who are promoting them as "much better than that notorious Japanese low-quality sex-&-violence anime." The next couple of years may see which definition of anime will become standardized in America.

Fred Patten has written on anime for fan and professional magazines since the late 1970s.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Animation Land: Adults Unwelcome

by M. Cedric Littardi

Editor's Note: Since this article was written, the trial that it is about has been postponed until February 16, 1999. Mr. Littardi is seeking letters of support and advice from people in the animation community. He may be contacted by through Animation World Magazine at editor@awn.com.

On June 23, 1998, M. Tibor Clerdouet, M. Yvan West Laurence and M. Cedric Littardi (myself) will be judged at the 17th chamber of the equivalent of the High Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) in Paris. The charges: all three of us have been in previous years publishers and/or editors in chief of the French magazine *AnimeLand*.

AnimeLand is an eight year-old magazine dedicated entirely to animation. It was created at a time when Japanese anime was broadcast on French television and seen by many young adults who were, on the whole, ashamed to watch because of the general belief that animation is for children. The magazine has since its birth focused on two ideas which until then were considered opposite: reaching the general public, rather than purely professionals, and keeping them interested with highly specific and often technical features.

During the past eight years, *AnimeLand* has constantly grown and recently reached an average of 30,000 copies printed and disseminated through France's general press distribution network. For a time the magazine

focused on Japanese anime, then grew step by step to a more general perspective, bringing the readers along. It has become a privileged partner with many organizations working in the animation arena, such as various publishers and the Annecy festival. We have run a great number of lengthy articles on a variety of subjects such as: the making of animation, the treatment of death or other philosophical and mythological matters in various cartoons, technical interviews with people working in the field, etc. If it is true that the magazine has been known to talk about cartoons both violent or erotic in nature, this has never been the major focus.

We have stated that the magazine has been created with the scope of establishing animation as an artistic genre and not a commercial by-product for kids.

Law 49-956

So what is this whole issue about? The answer is: law 49-956 billed on July 16, 1949 about "publications aimed at youth." The text concerns "publications, periodical or not, that by their nature, their presentation or their aim, appear as mainly intended to children and adolescents." There is hardly any jurisprudence about this law, and the only legal inter-



pretative text we are aware of, states that "these publications will be easily recognizable".

Law 49-956 details various administrative obligations, like sending various administrative organizations, including a control committee, a certain number of copies of each issue beyond those already sent by any "regular" publication. The staff checks that these publications, "Do not include any illustration, any tale, any chronicle, any heading, any insert presenting under a favorable light banditism, lies, theft, laziness, cowardness, hate, debauchery or any act qualified as crime or offense or of a nature to demoralize childhood or youth or to foster or keep going ethnic prejudice." The penalties for breaking this law are a standard one year in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

Our History

One year ago, *AnimeLand* caught the attention of the state prosecutor. We answered his letters with a list, justifying why *AnimeLand* was not to be considered a youth publication. This proved not to be sufficient, and all three of us were then seen by the police for a deposition. We have stated that the magazine has been created with the scope of establishing animation as an artistic genre and not a commercial by-product for kids. As such, the editorial staff decided that it was an ethical issue for the magazine not to be considered a publication aimed at children. Furthermore, the government officials were provided with all the available statistics about our readership, which clearly demonstrated that fewer than one third of them were under the legal age of 18, with very few under the age of 15. This clearly places *AnimeLand* in a category where it is less read by youth than several other types of magazines (hard rock, skating) that do not fall under this legislation. Again, this did not prove to be sufficient, and the prosecution went on surprisingly quickly for the French judicial system. All three of the accused were notified of the trial in May, leaving hardly any time to organize a defense. Whatever the outcome of this trial, it will have been costly in both effort and legal consul to everyone involved. However, it might well be worth the pains since whatever the result, it will become part of legislation.

Is This Modern France?

Of course, the whole issue probably sounds surreal to most of us. How is it possible that nowadays, with the numerous efforts by the animation industry to aim pro-

ductions toward a larger and more diverse audience, the authorities in place still consider animation to be a kids-only media? It is almost like going back to the darkest periods of the Comics Code Authority censorship. Old prejudices die hard...

Whatever the outcome of this trial, it will have been costly in both effort and legal consul to everyone involved.

It isn't by sheer chance either if this is about children. Authorities and parents always think they can decide what is for children and what isn't because they know better. But do they? Several cartoons already broadcast in France have clearly not been aimed at children but, apparently, powers in place considered them to be, by the simple fact that they were cartoons. The best example of this is probably the Japanese cartoon, *Hokuto no Ken* (*Fist of the North Star*), which was too violent to be fit for children, but aired nonetheless.

After June 23, the issue will probably reach its conclusion in September, when the final judgement will be handed down...however the fight against prejudice will go on.

Astonishingly, there is no similar law concerning broadcasts. However, CSA (Superior Council of Audiovisual), a surprisingly influential organization, has strong censorship powers, even if theoretically they are only consultative. If the general public really feels that animation is only for children, then any channel wishing to broadcast more adult-oriented cartoons will be threatened by repercussions, as has already been the case with

TF1. In the early 1990s, TF1 was airing a lot of Japanese anime, exposing them to serious problems with the CSA. Finally, they had to stop airing the shows. Furthermore, channels such as France 3 use a strange strategy since they know there would be problems, not from the children but from the authorities, if they broadcast new adult shows. Therefore, they rebroadcast old Japanese series (*Captain Harlock*, *Rose de Versailles*) so as to not bear the brunt of the risk.

If this is happening in France, it could happen anywhere in the years to come. Adult-oriented animation is apparently, perhaps hopefully, becoming more and more of an issue, because it seems that not everyone is ready to accept it. It is our sincere hope that the results of this trial will be in our favor and contribute toward a tide to make the general public consider animation in a different light. After June 23, the issue will probably reach its conclusion in September, when the final judgement will be handed down...however the fight against prejudice will go on.

Cedric Littardi is one of the founders of the AnimeLand magazine in France and has worked as a specialized journalist in various European countries. He created the first Japanese anime label in France (KAZE Animation) and now works as a consultant in all graphic and animation areas.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The State of Visual Narrative In Film And Comics

by Peter Chung

How does one justify the activity of making comics, or, for that matter, movies? What could be more frivolous, a worse influence on today's youth, and a greater erosion on the public's literacy and grasp of higher cultural values? However there is nothing inherently less serious or respectable about visual narrative media as compared to traditional literature — only in the debased way that the majority of comics artists and filmmakers use them. In fact, the best visual narratives push the audience to levels of interpretation so new and so complex, that they aren't even recognized by the public. This is the source of the power of popular media; they affect the audience subconsciously. Even so, the lack of visual literacy in the general public is suffocating the progress of both comics and film as serious artistic tools.

As a writer and director of animated films, I've often been inspired and influenced by the great comic book artists. But even while I take in their pleasures with quiet gratitude, I've always felt that the very qualities which enthrall me are probably too elusive, too rarefied, to ever be appreciated by the mainstream public. For me, it is that deeply personal sense of discovering something hidden, something which might be missed by too casual a glance, that is the reward offered by art in any medium. Yet the current atmosphere of commercialized production of visual media, works against this from happening.

We may regard comics as a rudimentary type of film, lacking movement and sound. Looking at the problems with comics lets us study the basic nature of visual narrative and eventually reach a

better understanding of the importance of film.

Comics And Hollywood: An Unhappy Marriage

The dismal state of comics in the U.S., both as an industry and as an art form, gives little hope that it can break through as a medium with an influence beyond the closed subculture it now occupies. I rarely pick up comics any more. I'd rather watch an old movie on video to satisfy my retinal needs. As for reading, I prefer an actual book than to suffer trying to decipher the incoherent page layouts of today's comics.

Ironically, the wide dissemination of comics-derived films and TV. programs can be blamed for the decline in both the level of public interest in comics, and in

Comics creators are only too eager to perpetuate this cycle by offering characters tailored with an obvious eye toward movie deals and merchandising licenses.

the quality of the output of comics creators. That is, the success that comics enjoy by their acceptance in the more mainstream media of film and TV. is the very thing which is suppressing their artistic evolution.

When Hollywood adapts comic characters to the big screen, there is an emasculation effect whereby producers and directors, refusing to acknowledge



Peter Chung.

serious themes present in the original work, exploit only the "high-recognition/high concept" aspects for their own commercial ends. Comics are regarded as trafficking in stereotypes, and thus, as a source, provide an easy excuse for directors unequipped or unwilling to handle

complex characterization. Mainstream audiences, seeing only the bastardized movie version of a comics character, have their preconceptions confirmed, thus inhibiting their desire to consider picking up a comic book to read.

Comics creators are only too eager to perpetuate this cycle by offering characters tailored with an obvious eye toward movie deals and merchandising licenses. These characters can be recognized by their flashier costumes, bigger muscles, bigger breasts, wider array of props, weapons, and vehicles, and most importantly, their pre-stripped down personalities (mostly consisting of a single facial expression), ready for easy portrayal by untalented athletes/models. Hardly a comic book character appears today without this aim in mind, and the trend is effectively dumbing down the readership.

Text Vs. Image: The Unresolved Problem

There is very little care or interest on the part of today's comics artists in the craft of storytelling. The readers are not demanding (those who have



long left the store), therefore the artists feel no need to learn the brass tacks of visual continuity. The truth is that making a good comic book is a lot harder than most artists realize. (Knowing the difficulty has kept me from entering the field, in spite of occasional requests by editors for me to join in. Mostly, I'm dissuaded by witnessing the poor public response to artistically worthy comics.)

Recent American comics seem to fall into two camps:

1. The writer-oriented type, characterized by a narrative laden with running commentary (often the interior monologue of the main character) which makes the drawings seem gratuitous—in fact, a hindrance to smooth reading, since the text seems complete without them—and which makes me wonder why I don't just read a real book instead. To me, this style is antithetical to the nature of visual narrative. A comics writer who relies heavily on self-analyzing his own story as he tells it: *a.* doesn't trust the reader to get the point; and *b.* hasn't figured out how to stage events so that



In August New Line Cinema will release *Blade*, a live-action feature film based on the Marvel comic book *Blade the Vampire Hunter*. Comic image © Marvel and film still © B. Talamon/New Line Cinema.

their meaning is revealed through clues of behavior, rather than direct pronouncements of a character's thoughts.

2. The artist-oriented type, characterized by nonstop action/glamour posing, a fetishistic emphasis on anatomy, unclear geography (due to the near absence of backgrounds), confusing chronology (due to the total absence of pacing), and the sense in the reader that the pages have been contrived to allow the artist to draw only what he enjoys drawing and leaving out what he does not, regardless of its function in the story being told. Many young artists aspire to work in comics because they enjoy drawing the human figure. Typically, they collect comics to study and copy the techniques of their favorite artists. The mastery of illustration technique is laborious in itself and they have no time or inclination to read the stories in the comics they buy. Then they eventually become working professionals, drawing comics which are bought only for their flashy artwork.

Comics Aren't Literature

What is rare to find is a work marked by the good integration of art and story; of form and content. I've found through working alongside comic book artists, that they have little awareness of the principles of film grammar. While I believe that the comics medium is more forgiving than film in the allowance for "cheated" continuity, I have no doubt that the legibility, and thus accessibility, of comics by a mainstream public would be improved greatly by the application of filmic language.

In order to approach a critical method of judging comics' value as visual narrative, we must first decide where they belong in the scale between visual media and literature. Because they are printed on paper, we refer to them in literary terms—comic *book*; graphic *novel*. In practice, the fact that comics stories convey scenes through images rather than through description, make them work on the reader more like film. Still, I wouldn't insist that comics be judged according to the criteria we use on film, since no one seems to agree on what those are either.

A good film is one that requires the viewer to create, through an orchestration of impressions, the meaning of its events.

Literature Vs. Film

People often repeat the fallacy that "film is a passive medium". The statement is usually elaborated like this: "When I read a story in a book, I have to use my imagination to conjure up what the characters look like, the sound of their voices, the appearance of their surroundings, the house, the landscape. When I see a movie, those things are all nailed down

for me, so I don't feel as involved." What the person is describing are the most obvious aspects of a given story, that is, its *physical* properties. They are, in fact, the least interesting and least important components of a story. I do not read books in order to imagine the physical appearance of things.

They are not comics inspired by other comics, but rather by dreams, obsessions and yearnings.

Conversely, there are things which are typically spelled out in a book, but which must be imagined in a film. These are the intangibles, the important stuff; what are the characters thinking and feeling? Novelists have the advantage of being very explicit about the internal experience, and they indulge it, often to the detriment of the reader's power to infer. Good writers are the ones who maneuver around this pitfall. A book's ability to describe thoughts and feelings is a liability, not an advantage, if used to declaim its themes rather than evoke the desired consciousness in the reader.

Unfortunately, in practice, a great many mainstream filmmakers regard it as their job to inhibit interpretation by the viewer. No doubt, this is due to the increasing commercial pressures of the movie industry. Coming out of the theater after a thought-provoking film, I've heard viewers comment, "I was confused because I didn't know who I was supposed to be rooting for." Doesn't it occur to them that maybe that decision was being left up to them? That the exercise of our interpretive faculties is what makes our minds free? These people are usually the same ones who complain that movies don't let them use their imaginations.

In a review of *Aeon Flux* in the *L.A. Times*, the reviewer remarked that the director (me) wasn't doing his job in defining who in the story was good and who was bad, and thereby accused said director (me) of being "lazy". The presumptuousness of such an attitude would make me laugh, if only it weren't so prevalent.

A good film is one that requires the viewer to create, through an orchestration of impressions, the meaning of its events. It is, in the end, our ability to create meaning out of the raw experience of life that makes us human. It is the exercise of our faculty to discover meaning which is the purpose of art. The didactic imparting of moral or political messages is emphatically *not* the purpose of art—that is what we call propaganda.

It is, in the end, our ability to create meaning out of the raw experience of life that makes us human.

The inevitable challenge for anyone working in narrative film or comics is how to convey the internal states of the characters. Understanding this issue is the key to discerning visual versus literary storytelling. Resorting to the use of voice-over narration or thought balloons is a literary solution that undermines the power of images (the exception is in cases where narration is used ironically in counterpoint to what is being shown, e.g. *A Clockwork Orange*). For certain subjects, strict realism, where the mental realm of others is impenetrable, can be effective (e.g. *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*). However, I would find it depressingly limiting as a filmmaker to be restricted to physical reality to express the world of ideas. Realism has the effect of granting

primary status to the external, whereas in our experience, the internal is often the more important. The great filmmakers understand this trap — that strict "realism" is, in fact, the least true interpretation of our experience of life; that a work springing from the imagination which adopts the guise of objective reality can only be a lie.

Comics: The List

Here is a list of my personal favorite comics stories in no particular order. My choices are based as much on mastery of narrative form, as on originality of conception. Each of them appear to have been impelled by an inner vision; they are not comics inspired by other comics, but rather by dreams, obsessions, yearnings.

1. *Baptism, Makoto-chan, Fourteen* by Kazuo Umezu
2. *Savannah* by Sanpei Shirato
3. *Mighty Atom, No-man, Phoenix* by Osamu Tezuka
4. *The New Gods* by Jack Kirby
5. *The Airtight Garage, Arzach* by Moebius
6. *The Incal Saga* by Moebius and Jodorowsky
7. *The Tower, The Hollow Earth Series* by Schuiten and Peeters
8. *The Jealous God, Envie de Chien* by Cadello
9. *Be Free!* by Tatsuya Egawa
10. *Hard-Boiled* by Geof Darrow and Frank Miller

Peter Chung is the creator of Aeon Flux, the animated series on MTV. He studied animation at CalArts and has worked in the animation industry since 1981. He currently resides in Los Angeles.

NYC Wonder Women

by Samantha Allison Berger

I have been a serious reader and collector of children's books from the time I could read--and even before. When I read books like *Where the Wild Things Are*, *The Giving Tree*, and *Sylvester and The Magic Pebble*, I instantly connected with this medium and the wonderful relationship between text and image together on the page. It was clearly the thing that I wanted to do when I grew up.

When I did "grow up," or at least got older, I discovered comics and graphic novels. YEEEEY! It was like children's books--but for grown-ups! However, I may not be talking about the type of comics with which most people are familiar. I too had a huge misconception of what comics were. Even the word "comics" implies a meaning which isn't reflected in the kind to which I'm referring. To me, "comics" had always meant "the funnies"--those cutesy blurbs in the newspaper, like *Charlie Brown*, *Family Circus*, and occasionally actually funny ones, like *Calvin and Hobbes*. Or sometimes "comics" meant comic books, like *Archie*, *Superman*, and *Casper*. Let's face it, the same word "comics" is even used for comedians! There should be a new word for the good ones.

Getting Introduced

In 1994 I heard about a project two women in Philadel-



Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus* originally rocked my world with the comic form.

phia, Debbi Rogow and Sheri Grasmuck, were working on. It was a comic book aimed at girls in the 8-13 age range and was going to be an alternative to *Archie*. They felt comics were under-used as a medium to reach children, especially girls. They believed there were no comics for girls to read except *Archie*, which has two girls with identical hot-bods, and different color hair fighting for Archie's affection, and stuck in 1955. Oh, and Barbie also had her own comic. Not the best in the way of role-models.

Panting, I paid, parted, and headed home, so engrossed, I was reading while walking, and smacked into a mailbox.

This project, called *Get Real* would be published by their new-found company, C.O.L.L.A.G.E (Comics, Arts and Gender). It had intentions of having a multi-ethnic group of characters, and dealing with "real problems" in the "real world." It could also function as a literacy tool, and touch on some female health issues while it was at it. Maybe it could be in public schools....maybe it could be in women's health clinics...It aimed high and had a lot of potential.

After contacting them and reading their proposal, I began writing and illustrating comics about the painful teenage years.

We worked together, and ultimately, I began editing their scripts, and designing some of the pages or doing thumbnails for the artist. They ended up using many of my stories, but having their artist re-draw them in his Archie-esque style. The end product is great in intention, but a bit more didactic and politically correct than my goals aspire to be. This started me thinking....maybe I should do my own book.

It was Art Spiegelman who originally rocked my world with the comic form. Although my mother had told me throughout the course of my life to read the graphic novel *Maus*, she was *my mother* after all, and out of sheer stubborn-rebellious-young-spirit, I simply couldn't honor her request. It was the principle of the thing.

But, one day while I was working on the *Get Real* project, I stumbled into the Strand bookstore and saw *Maus* was on sale. Without even considering, I bought it, brought it home, and started to read. I could not put the book down. When I came to the end and discovered it was only the first volume, and the book left me hanging, I ran back to the Strand at top speed to get the second volume. Panting, I paid, parted, and headed home, so engrossed, I was reading while walking, and smacked into a mailbox.

Never has a story been so well told as in *Maus*. The images stained my mind. Nightmares followed. I was moved, a changed

person. It was the dawning of a new time. These were comics. Real comics. Autobiographical comics.

Searching for the Underground

There simply had to be more and I began my search. I went to all the comic shops in New York, and this was the typical scene: You go in and check your bag with the blue-haired, multi-pierced hipster behind the

counter. You make your way past the *X-Men*, *X-Files*, and X-Rated comics. Keep going past the Trekkies and teens pricing out *U.S.S. Enterprise* figurines. You go down the aisles, past superhero shelves, past *Dungeons & Dragons*, past the thrillers, horrors, and mystery novels. There, usually tucked away in the very back of the store, is the "indie," the "underground," the "alternative," section. That's where you find the good

stuff.

And that is precisely where I went. Since comics are usually pretty inexpensive, I went for it and bought a whole bunch that looked good to me. I bought Eric Drooker's graphic novel *Flood*. I bought Peter Kuper's book *Stripped* and the very first full issue of a comic called *Girltalk*. That night I had myself one hell of a read.

Each one of those books had a profound effect on me, each in its own way. *Flood* is a powerful graphic novel, with almost no text, which I have re-read time and time again. I felt a deep connection to it, having grown up much of my life in alienating, cold New York City. I found Eric's storytelling exceptional as well, hard-hitting and deep, like *Maus*, and inspirational. I wrote to him to tell him how much the book had affected me.

Never has a story been so well told as in *Maus*. The images stained my mind.

Peter Kuper's book, *Stripped*, "An Unauthorized Autobiography," tells the story of young Pete's journey through awkward adolescence, de-virginization, "very little sex, way too many drugs, and rock-n-roll," and his "first love/hate relationship." I was laughing so hard, I literally fell off my chair. After I read it, I read it out loud to friends, and we all laughed heartily into the night. This book motivated me to do a comic called, *The Stripped Strip*, about my reaction to reading his book, and I sent it to Peter.

Girltalk is a collection of comics by all different women and one very cool man. It is edited by Isabella Bannerman, Ann Decker and Sabrina Jones. The stories

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Girltalk # 4, with cover art by Sabrina Jones.

deal with everything from *First Love*, to *Singin' those Postpartum Blues*, to *Old Flame*, to a graphic biography about Marilyn Monroe. What can I say? It's a fantastic book. I laughed, I cried, I declared, "It's better than *Cats*," and then I wrote to the editors to tell them how much I enjoyed their work.

That night I had myself one hell of a read.

So, I pick out these comics and I love them and write to the authors independently of one another. Then one day, I pick up an issue of *World War 3 Illustrated*. It's a compilation of political comics on one unifying theme per issue. There I found all the people I had

written to together in one book! Peter Kuper, Isabella Bannerman, Ann Decker, Sabrina Jones, Eric Drooker and many, many more. Not only are they all there in the same book, but they all know each other! Crazy coincidence? I think not. It was right then that I realized it was a small intimate group of people doing this kind of work, and all here in New York City!

Jumping In!

To make a long story into a long summary, I

began taking Peter Kuper's comic course at School of Visual Arts. It was there I met my first comic-book partner Ursula O'Steen, and we started our own comic, *Pure Friction*. We featured work from many *Girltalk* and *World War 3* artists, and tried to expose people to other great comics while we were at it. Two years later, I'm about to release a graphic novel called *The Dungeon Diary* and Ursula will be coming out with her book *Wrong* in January of 1999.

Rather than hunting through the back shelves of local comic shops without a clue, there's a quicker way to become aware of all the great comics out there. Here it is. I will give you a list of the stuff I think is the best of the best.

If anyone had given me this list years ago, I would have been eternally grateful. Here goes:

- *Girltalk*. Edited by Isabella Bannerman, Ann Decker, and Sabrina Jones; published by Fantagraphics.
- *World War 3 Illustrated*. Published by Confrontational Comics, founded by Peter Kuper and Seth Tobocman some 18 years ago; distributed by Mordam Records (Go, Mordam, GO!).
- *Stripped*.
- *Bleeding Heart*.
- *Wild Life*.
- *Life and Death* by Peter Kuper; published by Fantagraphics.
- *Give It Up!* A book of Kafka short stories; illustrated by Peter Kuper; published by NBM.
- *Eye of the Beholder* by Peter Kuper; published by NBM.
- *Flood* by Eric Drooker; published by Four Walls, Eight Windows.
- *Maus* by Art Spiegelman.
- *Seven Miles A Second* by David Wojnarowicz and James Romberger; published by Vertigo Verite, a sub-sub-division of DC.
- *Understanding Comics, the Bible for the medium*, by Scott McCloud; published by Kitchen Sink Press.
- *Slutburger* by Mary Fleener; published by Drawn & Quar-

terly.

- *Meatcake* by Dame Darcy; published by Fantagraphics.

- *Dirty Plotte* by Julie Doucet; published by Drawn & Quarterly.

- *Naughty Bits* by Roberta Gregory; published by Fantagraphics.

- *Peep Show* by Joe Matt; published by Drawn and Quarterly.

- *Muthafucka* by Lance Tooks and company; published by Danger Funnies.

- *Just Who The Hell Is SHE Anyway?* by Marisa Acocella; published by Harmony Books.

- *Marilyn-The Story of a Woman*, a graphic novel about Marilyn Monroe, by Katherine Hyatt; published by Seven Stories Press.

**I laughed, I cried, I declared,
"It's better than Cats!"**

Coming Soon...

War In The Neighborhood, a graphic novel by Seth Tobocman; published by Autonomedia.

There's a "short" list to get you started. Should you want to get these through the publishers, here's a few addresses that might be helpful:

Fantagraphics
7563 Lake City Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115
(800) 675-1100 (for a free catalog)

NBM Publishing
185 Madison Avenue Suite 1504
New York, NY 10016

Four Walls, Eight Windows
39 West 14th Street Room 503
New York, NY 10011

Kitchen Sink Press
320 Riverside Drive
Northampton, MA 01060

Drawn And Quarterly
5550 Jeanne Mance St. #16
Montreal, Que H2V-4K6

You may want these



Pure Friction.

addresses to contact the publishers and get some of these comics. You may also want it to pitch them your own comic book ideas. But most importantly, you may need it to write and request some of these comics stay published and keep coming out. Comics are rather endangered. It's difficult to track their profit, which is low to begin with since they're so cheap. It's also often difficult for them to reach their desired audience, since women are usually scarce in comic book shops. (And who can blame us?) Since most book stores and newsstands will not carry comics, it really depends upon strong word of mouth and letter writing. Girltalk is on hold right now but I have a feeling, after you check out some of these comics, you'll

want to write to the publishers, and keep them around for years to come.

Samantha Berger edits and publishes the comic book Pure Friction. Her self-published graphic novel, The Dungeon Diary, will be released in 1999. By day, she writes, draws and narrates children's books on tape for Scholastic in New York City.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

So, You Want to Open An Animation Art Gallery? You're Darn Tootin'!

a response to Tim Stocoaks unabridged editorial which appeared in the November 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine*

by Ron Merk

Editor's Note: This is an unabridged editorial submitted by Ron Merk in response to Tim Stocoaks's editorial. We invite people to submit such editorials to us for publication and to respond.

As someone who has been involved in the creation, publication and marketing of limited edition animation artwork, I feel that Tim Stocoaks's editorial is so skewed with sour grapes and personal anger, that it screams for a very calm response to provide some balance to the issues raised.

In his editorial, I'm afraid that Tim is guilty of the same kinds of evasions and avoidance of issues as those people in the animation art business about whom he is complaining. To me, Tim's editorial seems more like a personal diatribe against the very industry he seems to adore but secretly hates for apparently rejecting him. While I can't comment on every issue or claim he made in his editorial, I'll do my best to respond, point by point.

First, not knowing Tim, I couldn't possibly comment on his opening paragraph about not being able to get into the animation industry, the alleged poor handling of his portfolio by Cal Arts, his inability to get a job in the "real" business of animation, and his "logical" decision to substitute a career of selling animation art for one of actually creating animation. However, I do read a great deal of

frustration between his lines of venom-filled prose, and some relief on his part that he's no longer part of the animation-art selling business, but not that much relief, since he took it upon himself to write what I believe is a distortion of the facts. Perhaps he truly believes what he said in the editorial. I frankly believe that the actual situation in the animation art business is quite a different picture from the one Tim paints. So, here goes.

1. Tim claims that the animation art galleries are poor relations of the animation production industry, who pick through the refuse of the production companies to stay alive.

That's simply nonsense. Animation sellers are the best place to send the cream of the animation art crop. They have the customers waiting with baited breath for the best original art coming out of the studio vaults. The studios, in fact, make quite a point of creating special cel and original background set-ups called "one-on-ones" of great moments from a particular film. A "one-on-one" is a set-up normally consisting of an original production drawing, a cel (either an original cel, if the film was done in traditional ink & paint technique, or one created for sale, but based upon the original drawing, if the film was painted in the computer) and a background (either original or a copy). What Tim does not say here is that the

informed animation buyer can never be the victim of a professional sales vulture, as long as the buyer knows exactly what he or she is buying. More about what is "original" and what is a "reproduction or limited edition" later in my response.

He took it upon himself to write what I believe is a distortion of the facts.

2. All animation art is not valuable and all animation art is not garbage.

Tim's blanket statement that animation art is garbage but valuable garbage, is just one more attempt to paint everything with the same sour color. It's not true that the studios considered animation art garbage 50 years ago. Much of the studios' original drawings and backgrounds have been maintained in studio archives, especially those studios which have survived the ups and downs of the animation business these last 50 years. Drawings and backgrounds were preserved because they are the true "original" art in the animation process. Cels were routinely washed and re-used, not only because it made economic sense, but also because cels were really "copies" of the original animation drawings, no matter how artfully they were traced and painted. Of course, there are those in the animation business who would tell you that some of

the finest examples of animation art that exist today come from the ink and paint ladies of the Thirties and Forties, and I don't take exception to that position.

The fundamental difference between my opinion and yours is that I believe that animation art is Art with a capital A.

Just ask the archivists at Disney if they want to dispose of any of their pre-production renditions by Salvador Dali for the film *Destino* that didn't get made. Oh, that's by a real artist. That's different, right Tim?

Therein lies the rub, Mr. Sto-coak. The definition of art. At the bottom of all your arguments lies the pernicious implication that animation art is not art. Of course, that may be your opinion. I suppose you think that the Sistine Chapel ceiling painting by Michelangelo is just interior decoration, and that Mozart was just dashing off little ditties for the rich to play at their parties in order to pay his bills.

The fundamental difference between my opinion and yours is that I believe that animation art is Art with a capital A. Not all of it, of course, but some. If you had ever run your fingers over the sublime original drawings of Chernobog by Bill Tytla, or the exquisite original backgrounds of Eyvind Earle, or the inventive layouts of Ken O'Connor, you would know in your heart that there are artists of the highest level working in animation, and what they produce (can we use the word produce or does that sound too much like a factory, Tim?) is, without a doubt, art, in the commonly accepted understanding of that word.

You say all this animation

art is trash now and will be trash in 50 years. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and I'm so sorry you just don't "see."

3. You really take the concept of the limited edition to task, Tim.

Didn't you know that many of the finest artists from the end of the last century, and all during the present century, created limited editions of their work. Surely you've seen the stone lithographs of the work of Mucha, Picasso, Chagall and Toulouse Lautrec. Is this garbage because they took advantage of technology to create these "limited edition copies?" Didn't they supervise the printing, the mixing of the inks, and the application of the plates to the paper? Or did they make their art more accessible to the public by creating items at a lower price than an original painting? After all, isn't it the artist's job to reach as many people as possible with his art? Or is the medium more important than the message, Mr. Tim? Yes, studios do create limited editions of animation art. This was born of two necessities, I grant you. One is to make money, and the other is to fill an ever increasing demand for animation art while the supplies of original art dwindled and became quite expensive. Do you have some problem with capitalism, too? Having been involved in the creation of more than 200 different limited editions involving, among others, all of the Warner Bros. characters, the MGM characters by Hanna-Barbera, many of the Japanese characters, including Speed Racer and Astroboy, plus Fleischer Studios characters like Popeye and Betty Boop, and having given them the kind of attention that "true art" deserves, I can tell you that limited editions have

filled a great need on the part of collectors.

The company with which I work from time to time, Tooniversal, recently created a series of limited editions under the omnibus title, *The History of Animation*. The first four releases in that series are images from short films created by animation legend, Ub Iwerks. These are films which, unlike the major studio films, have changed ownership many times, and fallen into disrepair and disrespect, but which feature brilliant examples of the zany animation style of the early 1930s period. Since nearly all of the original art from these films has been lost, and nearly all of the Iwerks Studio personnel are no longer with us, Tooniversal sought out the present owner of the films, and located one artist who had worked at the studio at the time the films were made, animator Irv Spence. After Iwerks, Spence went on to a long and distinguished career as one of the top animators of the Tom and Jerry Cartoons at MGM.

Didn't you know that many of the finest artists from the end of the last century, and all during the present century, created limited editions of their work.

We were lucky enough to locate a few original drawings, and were also given access to 35mm prints of the films, from which many frame blow-up photos were made. Then, working with the Tooniversal artistic team and Irv Spence, wonderful moments from these films were recreated, and then produced as a series of limited editions. Two black & white and two color images were created. Great care

was taken to duplicate not only the character drawings and background paintings, but also the color palettes of the films, which included the early color processes Cinecolor and Technicolor. Every possibility to make the pieces authentic and artistic was explored, and I believe, successful in creating pieces of animation art, yes I said art, which stand on their own as art. They were hand-inked and hand painted, making each one in some sense, a unique piece, not identical as Mr. Stocoak states.

Art and one's definition of what is good art is a very personal and subjective issue.

In creating the Ub Iwerks pieces, we felt that we were providing some form of recognition to both the films and their creator. Our main motivation, believe it or not, Tim, was not just to make lots of money on the unsuspecting public. The people who have purchased the Iwerks pieces are true animation aficionados whose personal collections were made more full and yes, more important, by the inclusion of the Iwerks pieces. While I am not suggesting they are as "valuable" as originals, they certainly fill a place in serious collections, since originals are nearly impossible to find.

Mr. Stocoak's apparent contempt for the buying public is clearly illustrated by his statement that the public snatches these limited editions up faster than if they were originals. This simply is not true. By and large, the people who are collectors on a regular basis are well-informed about what they are buying, and in fact, quite specific about what they like and what they will buy for their

collections. The level of sophistication among animation art collectors is very high, so I don't think that many of them will just snatch up limited editions indiscriminately as Tim indicates is the case.

Art and one's definition of what is good art is a very personal and subjective issue. Not all limited editions are great animation art, just as not all "real art" (sorry Tim, I couldn't resist) is not great art. There are levels of good, bad and indifferent in all things, including animation art. Mr. Stocoak seems to have even more serious objections about having some "old animator sign them," and slapping some "over-important seal on the front," his quotes not mine. Well, Tim, we live in a country that created the star-system. Its really hard to avoid. We have it in politics, movies, sports, and yes, animation art! I frankly like the idea that some "old animation celebrities" sign the pieces. The old folks were responsible for the development of the art of animation, so why not have the "real animation artists" (my quotes, this time) sign them.

Tim seems to think that old animators have signed their names so many times, that the signatures can hardly still have value. Its the art that people buy, not the signature. I've never seen anyone buy a blank sheet of paper with Chuck Jones' signature, no matter how nice the paper. Its the image that appeals to an art buyer, and image that is created by the signer. So, while its secondary to the piece's value, the signature is important because it tells us that the artist/signer was involved in the process of the creation of the edition. Its important because art that is signed is more valuable over the long term, and easy to

identify as authentic. In a business where "authenticity" is of extreme importance, original signatures are part of that authentication process.

Tim also makes derogatory references to the seal which is affixed to limited edition art. Well, Tim, if collectors did not have some way of determining if the edition is authentic or someones Aunt Tillie is doing knock-offs in her garage, collectors would undoubtedly be getting ripped off by unscrupulous operators. The fact is, the animation art industry goes to extraordinary lengths to make sure that the integrity of their art work and editions is beyond reproach.

One should always remember the old Latin adage, *caveat emptor*, which means "buyer beware."

In addition, it is the law in many states, that all forms of limited edition art must follow certain rules. Seals and certificates are required by law. Check California's Code of Civil Procedure, Section 1740 et seq., and its very clear that producers of limited editions are doing the very things that protect the public from the kinds of abuses that Tim seems to imply are taking place in the marketing of limited editions. There are also all sorts of Federal laws about interstate commerce which protect buyers from fraud. All of these must be and are observed by the industry. Tim refers to "one particularly beloved and aggressively marketed veteran animator" who "has signed his name over sixty thousand times" (Tims quotes and number), yet fails to mention this animators name. I would guess that its Chuck Jones, though I

could be wrong. Chuck has lived longer than most of his contemporaries from The Golden Age of Animation, done more films, and been quite well marketed by Warner Bros. and his daughter's company, Linda Jones Enterprises. So what if he's signed whatever number of pieces he has signed. No one ever confided such a number to me, Tim. But even at 60,000 pieces, that's barely one piece for every 100,000 people on earth. Not exactly a glut, is it? Besides, what does the signature have to do with the real value of the art in the first place? People look at the image, not the signature. Picasso probably signed as many pieces in his life. Does it make the art less than art because it's signed? Does it make the earlier signature less valuable as Tim alleges? Do art buyers want bargains from Picasso's blue period because he signed many thousands of printed pieces late in life? No, of course not.

4. Tim has serious objections to creating other products based on animation, and selling them as limited editions.

Since people collect all sorts

of things, rights owners to animation characters naturally look to create the kinds of things that people want to buy. That's capitalism again. It's hard to avoid in these days of bottom line corporate thinking. Art has a long history of artists from one discipline creating work based upon art from another discipline. Music can be based on poems, or images, or be reinterpreted from other music. Images in art have been worked and reworked since the dawn of the human race.

In my experience, most dealers are honest and reliable, and good business people.

After all, Tim, the whole process of the artist is the combining and re-combining of elements which the artist finds interesting, in order to create something entirely new which is uniquely the work of that particular artist. While you may object to artists creating pewter statues or bas reliefs of Bugs Bunny, certainly the artist involved has the right to do it his way. That is the right of an artist. Whether or not a character is "on model" as they say in the anima-

tion business, may not be the point of the art at all. Picasso was never sued by his models for not "reproducing" them in a naturalistic way, and the art world marveled at how "off model" he rendered the reality that he saw. Creative talent has a right to sign their work, no matter how objectionable you might find that practice.

5. It's wonderful that films can be made without acetate cels.

That doesn't mean that art work based on the film is less "real." If the cel is beautiful, created by hand, and accurately reflects or interprets the same frame from the film which was colored and composited in the computer, is the cel less beautiful? I don't think so. Of course, the buyer should be made fully aware that he or she is getting a cel that was not really used to make the film. Truth in advertising is essential. Is the cel worth less than one that was used in a film? That's a question that only market forces and subjective opinion can answer.

Are sericels just cel images grafted onto plastic by the serigraph process? Depends what you mean by the words "grafted

Bonus HTML Features

Every online (HTML) issue of *Animation World Magazine* contains additional features not found in the download or print Acrobat version, such as Quicktime movies, links to Animation World Network sites, extended articles and special sections. Don't miss the following highlights that are showcased exclusively in this month's *Animation World*

Magazine HTML version:

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.4/3.4pages/3.4cover.html>

Bonus HTML Features

- **Here's A How de do Diary: April**

Includes a Quicktime movie from Barry Purves' film, *Next*.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.4/3.4pages/3.4purvesdiary.html>

onto plastic." There's an entire artistic process in creating serigraphs. All of the great artists of this century created serigraphs based on their paintings. Since not everyone can afford an original oil painting, this was a wonderful way for an artist's work to be sold and seen by many more people than would see the original work. Creating a serigraph is an exacting process. It certainly isn't a "grafting" process, as Tim alleges. Once again, I urge buyers to always know exactly what they are getting. If a salesperson tells a buyer that a sericel "is just like an animation cel," they are not being honest. You can always shop for a reputable dealer with whom you feel comfortable.

I have found that most people who buy animation art try to be well informed about what they buy.

The Coca-Cola Polar Bears are not being sold as "original animation art" as Tim suggests in his editorial. I called Mr. Craig Wolfe of Name That Toon which publishes this edition, and discussed this matter. Craig told me that the pieces are clearly labeled as part of a limited edition, and not as original animation art. Tim also erred when he said they were being transferred onto sericels. Sericel is not a form of material, Tim, but a process. The bear images are in fact, transferred to acetate, using a process similar to lithography, according to Craig Wolfe. Get your facts straight before you complain the next time, Tim.

6. Animation art dealers are like all dealers of any commodity.

There are good ones and bad ones. My advice to buyers is to make sure they know with

whom they're dealing. Use common sense. Ask around. If you have a problem with a dealer, make sure you pressure the dealer to correct his error when and if he makes one. If you pay with a credit card, "all sales are not final." You can always protest the charge on your credit card, and stop your credit card from paying the dealer. If the dealer has defrauded you, you can always call a lawyer, or take the dealer to small claims court.

7. Selling animation art as an investment, if that is what a dealer is claiming, is most likely against the law.

Essentially, if someone claims that anything they are selling you is an investment, and they are not a licensed securities broker, they're breaking the law. If anyone tells you that the art has historically gone up in value, as much original art has done, that's fine. But if they say it will continue to go up, they're telling you a lie which is predicated to induce you to buy. I think the lawyers call this fraud.

8. It's not true that animation art never goes up in value.

Since I have no information about the *Mutant Ninja Turtle* cels that he claims he saw with a \$3.99 Toys-R-Us label, I can't comment. But like any commodity, and art is a commodity, there is a market value. Market value is determined by supply and demand, just like anything from diamonds to automobiles. If the demand is great for a specific item, the price tends to go up.

Tim's opinion of art dealers trying to trick the owner of valuable animation art work into selling it to the dealer for peanuts just doesn't deserve comment from

me. If every dealer worked the way Tim alleges, none of them would be in business for very long. In my experience, most dealers are honest and reliable, and good business people. It just isn't good business to take advantage of a customer. They never come back!

9. Again, I won't lower myself to respond to Tim's assertions that animation gallery and studio store employees know nothing and are out to bilk the public.

This simply isn't true. I have found that most people who buy animation art try to be well informed about what they buy. Knowledge is power for the consumer. One should always remember the old Latin adage, *caveat emptor*, which means "buyer beware." The only thing I would add when reading editorials is, "reader beware."

10. Regarding Tim's comment about Warner Bros. marketing all sorts of merchandise based on their classic characters, all I can say is, 'Nothing imitates success like success.'

Yes, lots of people have made money selling Warner Bros. merchandise. Is there something wrong with that, Tim?

Since 1991, Ron Merk has art directed more than 200 limited editions, featuring characters such as Speed Racer, Superman, Astroboy, and characters from Warner Bros., MGM, King Features and others.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Here's A How de do Diary: April

by Barry Purves

Editor's Note: Lumps, warts and all, for eight months Barry Purves will share his personal production diary with us for his current project with Channel 4, tentatively titled Here's A How de do. This film will take a look at three men: Gilbert, Sullivan and Richard D'Oyly Carte. D'Oyly Carte brought



Barry Purves.

and formed the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, which performed Gilbert and Sullivan operas for 100 years. While the trio worked together for roughly 25 years, their relationship was strained at best. How will the production of their story go? All we can do is read along monthly and find out...

April 1st

No April Fools pranks thank goodness. My sense of humor does leave me under pressure. I took the trainee animators to *Animal Crackers*, my third time. They loved it, though to be in the front row, and so much part of the action, came as a shock to them all. Of course the Marx Brothers dragged them onto the stage; Groucho miraculously had Sue on her feet, arthritis and all! Hopefully they would have learnt something from the sheer physicality of it all: the timing, the slapstick, and wonderful pratfalls are a lesson to all animators.

April 2nd

Rushing round as usual,

but threw a small wobbly with myself in the morning. Confidence about the film flew out the window. I suppose I am wanting to make this film many things, possibly too many things. Above all, it must be clear. I was cursing myself

for not being able to do gags. It's bizarre that I can watch everyone else's films and see the mechanics of the gags, how they are set up and timed, but I can't do it with my own films. The Marx Brothers came round the studio—a lovely situation. We were all in awe of them, and they were totally in awe of us. It would be great to collaborate somehow.

Stuttgart airport was like a home for lost animators.

I think I've storyboarded Episode One, but like D'Oyly Carte, I'm 'lying awake with a dismal headache, and repose is taboo'd by anxiety.'

The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company have been in the news trying to get funding to keep them alive. The Houses of Parliament were apparently alive with the sound of MPs singing G and S. Gilbert would have approved.

Panicking, trying to get ready for the busy week ahead.

April 3rd

On the Jury at Stuttgart Ani-

mation Festival:

Stuttgart airport was like a home for lost animators. Suddenly, there was a sea of familiar faces, chatting as if we'd only seen each other yesterday. Actually, most people were suffering from various forms of jet-lag. This particular festival is enormously generous in inviting guests from all over the world. It is my favorite festival, without a doubt, as I feel very much at home, and am flattered by the respect I get here. Still, it's an honor to be on the jury along with Paul Driessen, Garri Bardin, Thomas Meyer-Hermann and Florence Maihle. Illustrious company indeed, though the variety of different languages looks a little ominous.

Ironically, the catalogue has got me down as filming both *The Nutcracker* and *Noye's Fludde*. Will I ever get to film either?

April 4th

Names are not my strength, and already I'm hideously confused, and unable to put the right film with the right face. I've already seen more animation than most people see in a lifetime. Our jury discussions have been passionate, but not aggressive; one jury here, actually came to blows! It is disheartening to have to say some films are better than others, especially looking at the variety of budgets and facilities they have. All the films are good to have got this far, and it is very difficult to have to be so critical and dismissive, but we are trying to be fair and constructive.



Marx Brothers puppets. Image courtesy of Barry Purves.

April 5th

I've certainly earned my keep here so far—so much talking, and so many opinions expressed. My workshop was unexpectedly crammed and very lively. The language did not present any problems. If in doubt, I just flap my arms around a lot, and most people can understand me. As always, I got very passionate and emotional, and started pontificating about nonsense really. More films and more discussions. Tonight, the legendary yearly Stuttgart party at Prof. Ade's house saw me sat on a sofa with Tyron Montgomery and Jan [Pinkava], fresh from his Oscar triumph last week. Looking at the three of us, it seemed like an Oscar-themed version of *All About Eve*.

April 6th

The jury nearly passed out in the screening tonight for lack of food. We'd ordered a meal at a restaurant, and one hour and forty minutes later there was still no sign of it. 'This is not a bistro,' we were snappily told. The jury spent the screening sharing a single bag of peanuts. Oh, the extravagance!

Real life intruded sharply,

with Amanda phoning to say Pa is in hospital with a third stroke. I'm not quite sure what to do. This certainly put everything in perspective.

In the very early hours of the morning, drowning various sorrows in the bar with a good chum

Frank, I got a glimpse of a very seedy side of what goes on in hotel bars. The words 'paid companions' spring to mind.

April 7th

The news about Pa had made me a bit tense and snappy today, but sitting with Clare Kitson in a lovely old wooden restaurant, chatty about Gilbert and Sullivan, eased the strain a bit. Though, of course, she keeps reminding me how much this film is costing and how good it has to be. Help! I went for a swim and managed to sing the complete film, word perfect, as I did the lengths, though one trio got a little hairy and I nearly sank.

I went for a swim and managed to sing the complete film, word perfect, as I did the lengths, though one trio got a little hairy and I nearly sank.

Had some very satisfying feedback from the workshop—words such as 'inspiring' and 'motivated' are always good to hear.

The final jury discussion saw me a little stropky. Four smoky hours was too much, and

though we did not all totally agree, we were all happy with the final choices. A lot of give and take, and I think we made the right decisions. Nothing won from Britain, or with any real puppet work.

April 8th

Various filmmakers are giving me peculiar looks, trying to read my mind for the results, some even coming on somewhat strong. Too late, we've made our minds up. As a jury member, you certainly have some power. The ceremony went very well, with most people agreeing with our choices. However, one person came up to me and rather forcefully jabbed me several times, saying, 'Let me tell you about innovation!' Clearly he was not happy with our Innovation Award. We have tried to be fair, and not emotional. Certainly, the generosity of the awards here, and the prestige, will help someone's career, and so we can't be too light-hearted about all this. There is a responsibility.

The famous circus tent outside the theatre was awash with various emotional animators, saying tearful good-byes. To outsiders we may look an odd bunch, obsessed with minute trivial details, but we do love what we do, and we love others who share our passion. In just a few days we had all become a rather close bunch—quite a few hearts broken and otherwise. I witnessed a few emotional undercurrents.

April 9th

The circus tent was little more than a rain drenched frame this morning. Very sad. How could all that passion, discussion and flirtation have gone so quickly? Certainly breakfast was very

thin on the ground this morning. A lot of animators had disappeared in the night, leaving only the ritual of the business cards.

It had been a joyous week. It never ceases to amaze me that my silly, little and trivial films have been taken all around the world and have given me so much warmth and respect. How nice it would be to have that respect in England! It is not an important job that I do, but I love it, and for that I am grateful.

Back to reality, a very difficult reality, and a big push to get Gilbert and Sullivan going.

To outsiders we may look an odd bunch, obsessed with minute trivial details, but we do love what we do, and we love others who share our passion.

April 14th

Properly back in the office, though I spent all Easter Monday in here catching up with the post and such. The Stuttgart Festival already seems a distant memory. It's almost a separate life. I can't begin to describe to the people here. It is just a blur of images and faces—a bit like me in the office today. I'm beaver away at the storyboard and design issues, but haven't really thought of the larger picture of Gilbert and Sullivan, of the studio, or cameraman, or everyone complaining that there is not enough money to do what I am asking. Where does this relatively large budget go? There are so many people involved with this film. How I envy animators such as Phil Mulloy or Bill Plympton who can have an idea, make the film with only a few people, and then go onto the next project. Everything I do unfortunately becomes

such an *event*.

April 15th

A few worries about the film are taking up too much space in my head. It always amazes me that in spite of a seemingly long period of time for a film, everything is still such a rush. Plus, we still only get one chance at everything; one chance at the animation, one chance at the sculpting. Even the recording of the music, the most important element, has to happen in a few hours. The outside world probably thinks we sit around luxuriously honing everything time and time again until we are satisfied. The reality is very different. All this was brought about by the frustrations of not having the actual music to listen to—I won't have it until a week before I start filming. This will necessitate a mad panic as most of the choreography will have to be done the night before filming.

I was also forced to make a compromise with the puppets. Finances dictate that the puppets can either have controllable blinks or decent mechanical hands, but not both. I've gone for the hands. I really try to get so much expression from the hands.

April 16th

I saw the finished sculpt of D'Oyly Carte's head this morning—quite stunning. Joe has given him tremendous hair (I won't raise the issue that the character has just woken up!).

I've felt somewhat out of control today. Too much fussing about with other important areas of G and S has given me little time to work on what I should be doing.

I watched Mike Leigh's heart wrenching film *Secrets and Lies* last night and wept buckets. I

really do hope that our G and S film can go out with his film of G and S, though the length of his films would seem to rule out the addition of a short film. The distribution company may also worry that we give too much away too soon. I had a letter this week from one of the senior figures of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, saying that the head of Channel Four should know what 'Here's a How de do' means, and that I shouldn't even contemplate changing the name to *The Gilbert and Sullivan Story*.

April 17th

Last night went to Birmingham Royal Ballets *Edward II*: monumental, passionate, gory and brave. I so admire the choreographer, David Bintley, trying to push the boundaries of what is usually expected of ballet. Where does it say that ballet has to be cute or about swans? Who would have thought a ballet about the undignified and horrific death of an early British King by red hot poker, would have an audience cheering. A pretty full audience was obviously prepared to give something different a go. If only animation producers would take note.

There was a second production meeting with everyone, and we have thrashed out Episode One and as good as locked it off. Nick's designs are getting there, though we are still in danger of being too straight. We still do not have the cross hatching on the costumes right yet.

Never have I been so ready for the weekend, though it will be all traveling, emotion and work.

April 20th

A weekend with Pa in hospital and by Ma's grave is more than enough to put the pressures



Shakespeare in *Next* by Barry Purves. Image courtesy of Barry Purves.

of making a film into perspective. With a few rather emotional thoughts still with me this morning, I took awhile to get into G and S mode, but once there I was racing. The long, very flooded journey down to Cambridge had given me some all too rare time to think straight and calmly, and without distractions. I've been able to think of ways of making things simpler and the design more coherent. In every day I find I must have some time to myself.

It is not an important job that I do, but I love it, and for that I am grateful.

Had an exhilarating afternoon working with Wyn at the piano. We went through every note of the score, making sure that each note had a purpose, that it wasn't wasted nor took up valuable time. We are happy with the score now. It's certainly full of energy and life, but what a jigsaw it is. What a lot of work it has been to get the music into exactly three minute chunks.

Was amused to see in the *Independent*, an article saying that Gilbert and Sullivan really are lowest common denominator stuff, and shouldn't be performed. Then there's Channel Four thinking Gilbert and Sullivan is high-brow stuff for an elitist audience. There's a how de do!

April 21st

I was still excited after having gone through the music score in detail yesterday. I can't wait to hear our particular and rather punchy arrangements. Sullivan's music still excites me enormously. 'It bubbles with wit and good humor,' as Jack Point says. There is so much warmth in these operas, and this warmth is contagious. I hope I can get this across in the animation.

Nothing moved forward much today. It's not too easy having my producers two hundred miles away. Geography can slow things down.

Only three more days training the animators. I shall miss them, but I do need that space in my head.

A model of the bed appeared and it bounces—very exciting.

April 22nd

Sadly we have lost Tristan, the lighting cameraman I had hoped to use. What makes it even harder is that he is a big G and S fan, and likes my work. His letter of declining was written as a G and S song—brilliant.

I'm now at the end of storyboarding Episode Three, and already my drawings have fallen to pieces. For each three-minute episode I'm doing about 75 drawings. It does take too much time.

Went to look at a potential studio—a good space among other units all beaver away.

More examples today of having to penny-pinch with this budget, and yet for Channel Four it is an enormous budget. It's hard having to keep cutting back and back.

Real life has made me a lit-

tle sluggish and emotional and tetchy today. I listen to Sullivan's music and escape into a world of happy endings and big chorus numbers.

April 23rd

And a happy 434th birthday to Bill Shakespeare. It amuses me that a few people refer to this date as if it were my birthday. It is a good feeling to be strongly associated with Shakespeare through *Next*. After all that intense work, I feel protective toward Shakespeare, as I do to all my puppets. A strange permanent and intimate bond is always formed. The Shakespeare puppet has been in Oslo today at a Festival. He has literally been 'round the world.

Where does it say that ballet has to be cute or about swans?

The penultimate day for my animators, and they are all looking a little sad. That happy group is about to be broken up, and no-one quite knows where they go from here. They have been a marvelous bunch and are all pretty damn good animators, with a lot of humor and feeling for it. The change in 12 weeks has been astonishing.

Possibly we have a cameraman for G and S...

April 24th

Such a frantic day. I've not even opened my storyboard for G and S and there is such pressure to get it done. I'm still only drawing Episode Three.

Accountants were in this morning—this is all a little worrying. I'm not too good at dealing with the nuts and bolts, and it certainly stops me concentrating on what I should be doing. Things like Schedule D and P45s [self-

employment taxation and employment paperwork] are a complete mystery to me, but talk about what the bassoon is playing in *The Mikado*, and that's another matter.

A visit from Philip Bowman, an animation producer I met in Brisbane. He was fascinated by the scale of the studios here. It would be good to go and set something up down there.

My animators finished today. Champagne at lunch saw us all a little rosy. Their thank you card to me was a photo of their three puppets as The Marx Brothers, quite brilliant, as was their present of a collection of Gilbert and Sullivan cigarette cards. I was very touched and shall miss them. But now I have to put all my so-called words of wisdom into practice. Can I do it after so long away from a camera?

April 27th

A trainee-free day, but I still couldn't resist the temptation to keep popping down to see how they were doing.

A couple came to see me today with an idea for an animated film—and very good it was too. I wish I could help, but I have more than enough problems trying to raise finance for my own films. It saddens me to see the amount of films I have written and storyboarded that have never had funding. So much effort, emotional investment and research, and they just lie there stillborn.

A quiet day in the office and I cracked on with all the necessary lists of props and so on. I think I need to turn the screw a bit as I get the feeling people view our start day as still a long way away. It's not that far at all.

April 28th

I didn't pause for breath all

day, and the complexity of this film has really dawned on me. It is huge! I've been trying to give the impression that I have answers for everyone, and that each department is as important as the others. I am so focused on Gilbert and Sullivan that I fear that I'm losing track of anything unrelated. Karen is gamely trying to keep up with me, and look after the day to day running of the office.

I spent the evening with

I listen to Sullivan's music and escape into a world of happy endings and big chorus numbers.

Mandy and Jane walking through some of the more difficult choreographic bits. I was horrified to see the video as I am perfect casting for Sullivan—stout! The girls were a great help in just working out some of the logic, and we certainly laughed. I hope I can get a dance feel to it. I'm worried of course that I will only get the barsheets a few days before I start filming.

Jean Marc the cameraman came by train from Paris to see us—my knowledge of technical matters was slightly exposed.

April 29th

Totally shattered after using up all my gray cells yesterday, but have spent today quietly watching the video from last night terpsichorean efforts. I never use live-action as direct reference, (the timing is so very different, and, boy, do I loathe rotoscoped animation), but this will help me simply work out who should be where at what point in the music. Of course, I'm still working to our piano track. I'm probably going to get such a shock when I hear the orchestra. Will I recognize it? Where did that

twiddly bit on the oboe come from, and should I animate something to it?

Had a call from Angela [Lubbock], whose short film, *Mitzi and Joe*, had caused such excitement in Hollywood. She's come back to England with just a few weeks before she goes under. There is no justice.

April 30th

Fascinated to read an article saying how all the Lottery grants have produced such appalling films, with only one or two exceptions. Do I commit hubris and think that anything I ever made on that scale could change that? Let me make *Noye* and we'll see.

Note: The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie from Barry Purves' film, *Next*. © Bare Boards Productions.

Read Barry's previous diary in last month's issue of *Animation World Magazine* [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.3/3.3pages/3.3purvesdiary.html>].

Barry Purves is a Manchester-based filmmaker. Through his production company, Bare Boards Productions, he has directed several stop-motion animated films and commercials, including Next, Screen Play, Rigoletto and Achilles.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Annecy's First Annual

by Buzz Potamkin

Annecy this year was, *je n'est sais pas*—how do you Americans put it?—you know, well, just different. It didn't feel like Annecy (not crowded enough), it didn't work like Annecy (in other words, it was actually efficient for the most part), and with the absence of any unified give-away T-shirt, it didn't really look like Annecy (although, in the ages-old European tradition of the great unwashed mass of *citoyens*, it did smell like Annecy). In fact, I think anyone who entered the Bonlieu Theater or Imperial Hotel this year was whisked away to another location, far from those dazzling memories of yesteryear; all the way to a Festival and MIFA that will forever be changed by becoming the centerpiece for the creation of the Euro-Studio.

It is MIFA that has pushed Annecy to be an annual, even at the cost of the Festival's ASIFA International accreditation.

Before I left New York for this trip, I had a chance discussion



Festival director Jean-Luc Xiberras, made an appearance on the MIFA floor, where he was warmly greeted by many delegates and friends. Photo by Ron Diamond. © AWN.



with an old friend about the Annecy he knew 25 years ago or so. An Annecy that was a window on the quirky world of animation, an Annecy that brought together every other year the tightly knit but loosely organized *artistes d'animation* for a chaotic week of film watching, gossip and good living. (His most vivid memory is of being crushed as the then communist—and starved for luxuries—Eastern Europeans stampeded over him to devour the capitalist *canapes* at the annual picnic on an island in *Lac d'Annecy*.) That Annecy is gone.

The marketplace—MIFA (acronym for the French version of International Market for Animated Film)—has taken over. It is MIFA that has pushed Annecy to be an annual, even at the cost of the festival's ASIFA International accreditation. Before I am accused of being a hidebound conservative of the worst kind, let me say that being an annual is not all bad. It cuts down to 12 months the time it takes me to catch up with people who live a few blocks or a cheap phone call away, it allows me to ascertain more quickly which of the horde of shows "in production" one year were never actually started, and it perks up my diet

with *Savoyard* cooking on a more regular schedule. And, not the least, it underscores the way in which the center of the international animation business has moved to Europe.

The focus on co-production within Europe became the main theme of the conversations that surrounded every table in the bar and on the terrace...at the Imperial Hotel.

Those of you who remember my thoughts on Annecy '97 (*AWM*, 7/97) will not be surprised to read that my thoughts on Annecy '98 reflect the continuation of this trend to Euro-Animation. The lower-than-last-year attendance of Americans only underscored the obvious nature of MIFA as an Euro-Event, and the focus on co-production within Europe became the main theme of the conversations that surrounded every table in the bar and on the terrace (when the weather allowed) at the Imperial Hotel, not to forget the \$100 a plate lunches and dinners at the *haute cuisine* restaurants lining the lake between Annecy and Talloires. (However, it is ironic that



This year's festival brought together two generations of animators. Pictured: Disney legend Joe Grant with recent Oscar winner Jan Pinkava. Photo by Ron Diamond. © AWN.



Jean-Luc Xiberras catches up with Annick Tenenge, who was assistant director of the Annecy festival before joining AWN as general manager in 1996. Photo by Ron Diamond. © AWN.

these conversations did take place predominantly in English, even among Europeans, or at least that's true for most of those I witnessed.)

And these conversations were more to-the-point than in previous years, as the producers and distributors present at MIFA got down to the serious discussion of picking each others' pockets (or the pockets of each others' governments in most cases). And there was the problem.

Here is a composite of several conversations I had with dismayed French producers: "Our European Community market is bigger than the U.S., our advertisers have money to spend, but the constant contention between our national authorities over local content and production location makes it very difficult to mount a pan-European show. We may make a French-content show in France, with a Spanish co-distributor providing finance, and have it be very successful in the ratings in France, but what does that mean to someone watching the show in Spain? Plus the Spanish may make a Spanish-content show that rates well there, and even have an English co-producer, but what does that do for an audience in England? Our market is big, but your

market in the States is really the only 'single market,' that the press and politicians keep promising us here. We can make a show that is a success in one country, or even two or three, but we still have to discover how to create a show that will be a true European show in the way that your American shows satisfy your large market in the States."

Which brings us back to the festival, and the search for creative content. And this year it was a search. The annualization of the Festival may not have caused a drop in the number of entries, but the quality was not up to the standard of last year or '95. The commercialization of the European animation industry has removed many of the better minds and hands from the independent film arena, and the selection this year was the proof of that pudding. However, this trend should now reverse, and I for one have great hopes for the Festival next year (or perhaps the year after).

The Euro-Show is a strong contender for the future of animation.

And why should that trend reverse? Most American studios were not only absent from MIFA, they have even abandoned for the most part the frenzied search of previous festivals for Euro-talent to fill the no longer empty chairs in Burbank, Phoenix and Florida. There is now a chance for Euro-talent to stay in Europe, and make shows for the home market, even to aim for the "single market" Euro-Show that is this year's Holy Grail. The Euro-Show is a strong contender for the future of animation.

After many years of talent

loss to this side of the Atlantic, the drain is slowing, even reversing. The Euro-Studio can now become a reality, with strong creative and production skills honed on the past decades experience of sub-contracting and co-producing with North American partners. The Euro-Exhibitors, even those owned by US media conglomerates (Nick, Fox Kids, Cartoon Network, etc.), are responding to the possibility of a pan-European creative synthesis, and spend a fair amount of time and energy looking for Euro-Shows. "We're Europeans, the network is European, we program for Europeans," says Finn Arnesen, Cartoon Networks London-based VP Programming and Development, "and we're out there looking for cartoons that have the unique flair and style of European humor."

Mark my words. Before too long, the creative, audience and marketing success that gets the cover of *Time* and *Newsweek* will be the Euro-Show. While it is not an Euro-Show (it has solely English roots), and it isn't animated, *Teletubbies* isn't far off the mark. But the next *South Park* may well be *Parc du Sud*.

A list of this year's festival winners is also included in this issue.

Buzz Potamkin is an award-winning independent producer, best known for The Berenstain Bears and Dr. Seuss. Before he escaped L.A. for New York, he had been president of Southern Star Prods and then executive vice president of Hanna-Barbera Cartoons.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

E3: IT'S AN ANIMATED YEAR

by Joseph Szadkowski

What may have surprised the more than 41,000 attendees at this year's three day Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Atlanta from May 28-30 was that the primary colors and wackiness of classic animation was as noticeable on the show-room floor as mutant battles, graphic violence and adult themes. Game developers are beginning to see the bright lights of fun animation after spending years within the darkness of surreal environments that have, in the past, been the hallmarks of games

designed with a primarily male demographic in mind.

"We did a very violent game before *Spyro the Dragon*, filled with a lot of destruction, mayhem and darkness. Working on this all-ages title has been a refreshing change for us to do something that is bright and doesn't have overt violence or blood," said Todd Price, president of Insomniac Games. "At the end of the day, we were happier. The morale in our office improved significantly because we can all play the game, look at the characters and laugh even though we have played it a hundred times." *Spyro The Dragon*, being developed for the Sony PlayStation by Insomniac Games, Inc. and Universal Interactive Studios, takes players on a 3-D action-adventure with a mischievous purple dragon. The game's worlds are graphically stunning as players are immersed into interactive fantasy realms. *Spyro the Dragon*, a one-player action game, will be available for the Sony PlayStation in September 1998.

Games From the Blockbusters

From Universal Studios and Sound Source Interactive, the rich graphic environments from *The Land Before Time* and *An American Tail* have emerged as CD-ROM edutainment products for children, ages three to six. *The Land Before Time Kinder-*

garten Adventure and *Math Adventure* educational CD-ROMs teach through interactive animations and sound components. Completing activities will lead to rewards of full color video clips from the movie. Another favorite animated movie from Universal Studios, *An American Tail*, continues Fievel the mouse's journey from Russia to America. Combining the appeal of the movie with learning activities, children will enjoy nine, detailed illustrated chapters, 25 story scenes and more than 60 hidden clickable animations. Both *Land Before Time* and *An American Tail* titles are available for Macintosh or PC in the fall.

Working on this all-ages title has been a refreshing change for us to do something that is bright and doesn't have overt violence or blood. - Todd Price

Small Soldiers' Squad Commander, developed by Hasbro Interactive with DreamWorks and Universal Pictures, offers live-action and animation blended with scenes from the new movie. *Squad Commander* takes children ages nine and older on an adventure that poses a real-time strategy challenge through 20 missions. Puzzles are layered, requiring players to use problem-solving skills as well as computer skills to fend off a constant stream of "enemy" fire. The game, available for Windows, will be on retailers shelves in June.



Spyro the Dragon, a one-player action game, will be available for the Sony PlayStation in September 1998. Photo by Joe Szadkowski.



Disney Interactive is planning several games based on the upcoming animated feature film, *A Bug's Life*. Photo by Joe Szadkowski.

Disney Interactive continues the magic of the movies through CD-ROMs that teach and entertain within interactive, 3-D worlds. Adding to the already extensive roster of CD-ROM releases being developed is the *Mulan Animated Storybook*, scheduled to coincide with the movie's theatrical release. The rich detail of the movie has provided the CD-ROM developers with a deep artistic palate upon which to create. Children, aged five to nine, will enjoy multiple story screens featuring the character Mulan's village and home land of China. Story screens are filled with clickable animations, puzzles and multi-leveled educational activities that will help users build critical and creative thinking skills.

More Disney films finding new life as electronic games can be found from THQ, Inc. who is releasing cartridges for the Game Boy based on Disney's *Mulan* and the Disney/Pixar *A Bug's Life*. A

Bug's Life will be an action/adventure game for the hand-held system featuring dozens of characters from the film and nine levels of game play. It is conveniently scheduled to be released in time for Christmas.

Fans of *A Bug's Life* will also want to stay alert for the November release of the Disney Interactive CD-ROM based on the movie. An action/adventure game for children ages three to seven, the film's characters are brought to life for interactive activities that promote on-screen and off-screen play.

Mulan for Game Boy lets fans of the film continue the battles being fought by Fa Mulan, a young woman who disguises herself as a soldier in order to regain her family name honor. An action/adventure game, players will enjoy solving puzzles and engaging in battles as they work through ten levels of gameplay. Game Boy fans will find *Mulan* by THQ, Inc. on retailers' shelves in July.

Nintendo is ready to fight back against PlayStation's dominance with *Poke'mon* for Game Boy.

Onto the Small Screen

Expanding their playing field, THQ, Inc. will also release *Rugrats* for Nintendo 64, PlayStation and Game Boy beginning in November. A non-linear, third person, action/adventure game, players control their favorite characters of the Emmy Award-winning Nickelodeon animated series. The game provides players with a

below-the-knees perspective of fully explorable environments and objects.

American television cartoons, *Blue's Clues* and *South Park* were very notable at E3. There was a lot of excitement around Acclaim Entertainment's display of the core *South Park* characters Cartman, Kyle, Stan and, of course, Kenny. The PC video game allows players to kill the ever-reincarnated Kenny and should be available sometime in 1999.

Part of the Nickelodeon dynasty of children's entertainment includes *Blue's Clues*, the educational television series featuring the flop-eared Blue and pals. The CD-ROM programs bring the television show to interactive life and allows young players to touch, move and interact with Blue's world. Being released from Humongous Entertainment and Nickelodeon, *Blue's Clues* will initially include two programs, "Blue's Birthday Adventures" and "Blue's ABC Time Activities." Each program will be filled with activities and learning fun found in the television show. Fans will find the Humongous Entertainment CD-ROMs on retailers' shelves this fall.

Favorite animated shows for children and adults alike are *Animaniacs*, *Pinky & the Brain* and *Looney Tunes*, all from Warner Brothers. SouthPeak Interactive has been awarded the license to create interactive CD-ROM programs featuring the studio's cast of animated characters and clips.

The Looney Tunes Jigsaw Puzzles line includes: *The Complete Bugs*; *Cosmic Capers with Marvin the Martian*; *Assorted Nuts starring Taz and Wuv*; and *Marriage* highlighting the romantic escapades of Pepe Le' Peu. All pre-

sent one and two sided puzzles showing scenes from more than 20 Looney Tunes releases. Looney Tunes Jigsaw Puzzles will be released for the PC in fall.

Pinky & The Brain World Conquest challenges players with an arcade-style strategy game. The playing field is a series of mazes where gamers must build, destroy and move walls while claiming territory. For solo-play or as a multi-player game with up to eight participants connected via a modem, *Pinky & The Brain* will be available this fall for PC play.

Travel the Warner Brothers Studios "back-lot" in the *Animaniacs Adventure Game*. Players assume the identity of popular characters in order to thwart the evil plan of Thaddeus J. Plot to destroy the old Animaniacs' films. Animaniacs will be on store shelves for PCs this fall.

Buck Bumble is scheduled to buzz in during the late summer and might be one of the year's most popular games.

New From Japan...

Nintendo is ready to fight back against PlayStation's dominance with *Poke'mon* for Game Boy. The animated *Poke'mon* television show, which is the highest-rated children's animated show in Japan, is moving overseas with



There was a lot of excitement around Acclaim Entertainment's display of the core South Park characters. The game will be available in 1999. Photo by Joe Szadkowski.

steamer trunks packed with licensing products, and more than 150 unique little "pocket monsters" (the translation of *Poke'mon*) for Game Boy players to collect, train, swap and capture during this role-playing adventure. *Poke'mon* is coming to the States in September.

Sailor Moon has been one of Japan's most successful animated television programs and has enjoyed a cult following in the U.S. *The 3D Adventures of Sailor Moon* by 3VR, Inc. can now be found on retailers shelves. The action and adventure includes a 3D Magical Puzzle Room, Fashion Salon and Fitting Room, Galactic Moon Library, Crystal Fighting Area and Moon Castle TV Show enhanced by the Sailor Moon Theme Song. *The 3D Adventures of Sailor Moon* provides girls with a sophisticated heroine and immersive environment that will have their male counterparts begging for a chance to play.

UBI's New Offerings

UBI Soft Entertainment provides animated family entertain-

ment with *Rayman 2*, the sequel to the action-adventure classic that debuted in 1995. *Rayman 2* blends humor and suspense in a 30-images-per-second 3-D environment. This release has Rayman escaping an intergalactic zoo to release his caged friends and find the source to the Great Power. Find it on the shelves for Nintendo 64 and PC in time for Christmas.

Rayman 2 for PlayStation will be released the first quarter of 1999.

Expanding their animated character library, UBI Soft also announced *Buck Bumble* is scheduled to buzz in during the late summer and might be one of the year's most popular games. Buck Bumble is a Cyborg Bee who battles mutant insectoids that are enslaving the Earth's native insect population. The bug eye view of a 3-D world encompasses over 20 eerie environments to walk through or fly over during full arcade action and driving gameplay. Buck Bumble will be a multi-player game released for Nintendo 64.

Joseph Szadkowski writes on various aspects of popular culture and is a columnist for The Washington Times.

Note: Readers may contact any Animation World Magazine contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

Disney's *Mulan*: A More Modern Heroine

by Andy Klein

Having exhausted the canon of classic European fairy tales and children's books that provided the basic story material for five decades of animated features, the filmmakers at Disney have, in recent years, turned to the Middle East (*Aladdin*), colonial America (*Pocahontas*), and Africa (*The Lion King*). (They have also turned to the world of adult literature, leading to their ambitious, but misbegotten, version of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.)

An Asian Classic

Now—and it's about time—they've looked to the Far East, where there is a body of fable at least as rich and well-recorded as in Europe. The new *Mulan* cleaves relatively faithfully to the bare bones of the oft-told Chinese legend of Hua Mulan, a young woman who is supposed to have taken her ailing father's place in the Emperor's army during a fierce invasion.

No previous Disney feature has been so centrally concerned with gender roles...

Disney has changed her family name from Hua to Fa—which is no great sacrilege, since even the historical records of the real Mulan can't seem to agree on her name or even the century in which she lived. In Disney's version, China is threatened when an army of Huns, led by Shan-Yu (voice of Miguel Ferrer), breach



The atypical Disney gal, indeed: Mulan incognito.
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the Great Wall. The Emperor (Pat Morita) demands that one man from each family in his kingdom join the fight. Elderly, infirm Fa Zhou (Soon-Tek Oh), the only male in the Fa family, prepares to do his duty. To protect him, his doting daughter, Mulan (Ming-Na Wen), cuts her hair and goes off in drag in his place.

There is nothing new about cross-dressing comedy—even in family films—and much of the humor in *Mulan* derives from the heroine's attempts to understand and imitate male characteristics. (Think *Tootsie* in reverse.) Thanks to her cleverness, she becomes the best of all the soldiers—not surprisingly, given what louts most of the genuine males are. Still, when her decep-

tion is uncovered, she is drummed out of the corps.

Of course, further crises require that she save the day once again.

The secondary nature of the romantic subplot really represents a change.

Romance Isn't the Answer

No previous Disney feature has been so centrally concerned with gender roles and only *Beauty and the Beast* came within shooting distance of *Mulan*'s modern take on the subject. Like Belle, Mulan is smart and plucky...and a complete outcast. Even more than Belle, she has to take charge of her fate. And, way more than



Following a disastrous encounter with the village matchmaker, Mulan is comforted by her father, Fa Zhou. © Disney Enterprises, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Belle, she finds her eventual fulfillment independent of a romantic resolution.

The new film shows Mulan discovering along the way that she doesn't have to accept her preordained position.

This is still a Disney film and thus, it upholds *most* of the traditional values that have marked the studio's animated feature output for 60 years. However, the secondary nature of the romantic subplot really represents a change. Mulan isn't waiting for her prince to someday come; when he does arrive, having known her primarily as a man, and having learned to admire her for her deeper qualities, the romance is muted and subtle. While Belle was an independent type from the start, the new film shows Mulan discovering along the way that she doesn't have to accept her preordained position. Our introduction to the character shows her nervously preparing to impress the town's imperious matchmaker; only by

finding a suitable husband can she satisfy her family's honor. When she bungles the interview, it is implied that she has no further options. Curiously, these scenes, while amusing, are the weakest part of the movie. While they may be thematically important, they are so tangential to the rest of the plot that they delay the film from getting down to business.



If the film does draw fire for cultural insensitivity, it's likeliest to be for its chief comic supporting character, a dragon named Mushu, shown here with his cricket companion, Cri-Kee. © Disney Enterprises, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Taking From the Culture

Not surprisingly, the animators have drawn their visual inspiration from Chinese and Japanese sources. The characters' simple lines and the clean look of the backgrounds resemble classic Asian painting. Plus, the filmmakers haven't "Westernized" the characters' features. The film should draw none of the complaints that greeted *Aladdin*. If the film does draw fire for cultural insensitivity, it's likeliest to be for its chief comic supporting character. Mulan's three army buddies (voiced by Gedde Watanabe, Jerry S. Tondo, and—!—Harvey Fierstein) may be cut straight from the standard Disney pattern, but her main advisor, a diminutive dragon named Mushu, is more than a little out of time and place, sounding like a cross between George "The Kingfish" Stevens and a Baptist preacher. Admittedly, a jive-talking dragon in sixth-century China is pretty irresistibly funny and Eddie Murphy does the most with the material he's given. ("So, Miss Mans decided to take her little drag



Mulan's CGI sequences, in particular the big battle between the Huns and the Chinese, are the most memorable scenes. © Disney Enterprises, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

show on the road," he pouts, after Mulan decamps for the army.)

Humor Anyone?

Howard Ashman, please come back to life!

That said, the material is nowhere near as good as what Robin Williams and James Woods respectively delivered in *Aladdin* and *Hercules*. *Mulan* will not take its place as one of the all-time funniest Disney features. (During the last decade, it's the Musker/Clements unit that has consistently turned out the studio's most hilarious features.) Despite its simplicity, or possibly on account of it, the animation is often beautiful, if rarely eye-opening. The CGI sequences, in particular the big battle between the Huns and the Chinese, are the most memorable scenes. *Mulan* could have been the perfect opportunity for Disney to incorporate some of the techniques and styles that distinguish Japanese anime, but there is little,

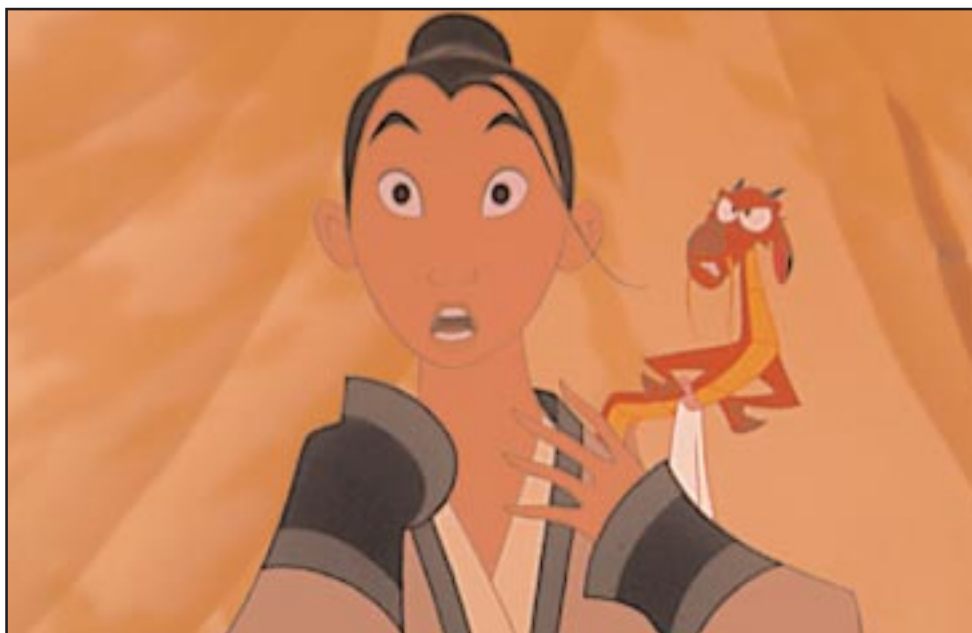
if any, such influence on display.

With the exception of a great funk track at the end, the song score, sad to say, is distinguished from other recent Disney efforts only by its lack of humor. There is only one funny number, "A Girl Worth Fighting For," and it's only moderately funny at best. Howard Ashman, please come back to life!

Mulan. Directed by Tony Bancroft and Barry Cook. Written by Rita Hsiao, Christopher Sanders, Philip LaZebnik, Raymond Singer, and Eugenia Bostwick-Singer. Score by Jerry Goldsmith; songs by Matthew Wilder and David Zippel. Produced by Pam Coats. With the voices of Ming-Na Wen, Lea Salonga, Eddie Murphy, B.D. Wong, Donny Osmond, Harvey Fierstein, Jerry Tondo, Gedde Watanabe, Matthew Wilder, James Hong, Miguel Ferrer, Soon-Tek Oh, Freda Foh Shen, Pat Morita, June Foray, Marni Nixon, George Takei, Miriam Margolyes, James Shigeta, and Frank Welker.

Andy Klein is a film critic for the New Times newspaper chain. He is head of the animation committee for the Los Angeles Film Critics Association (LAFCA).

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Bob and Margaret:

An Ordinary Couple Goes Prime Time Worldwide

by Maureen Furniss

This summer, a new animated series, *Bob and Margaret*, is appearing on the air in England, Canada, the United States and elsewhere. It features a husband and wife in their mid-40s who, along with two pet dogs, manage to deal with the day-to-day stresses of their ordinary lives. Created by Alison Snowden and David Fine (aka Snowden Fine), the series is based on the creative duo's 1995 Academy Award winning short film, *Bob's Birthday*. In the United States, *Bob and Margaret* debuted on Comedy Central on June 22, 1998. It airs Mondays at 10:30 p.m. (ET/PT), following

another animated series, *Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist*.

Judging from "Burglary," the one episode I had seen as I wrote this review (which was before the show's debut in the U.S.), it seems that the series has promise. The dry humor I generally associate with British comedy is certainly there, with unexpected narrative developments adding twists to the story in interesting ways. I laughed out loud several times, which is either an extremely good sign or an extremely bad sign, as most of the series I have laughed at have been canceled because no one else seems to

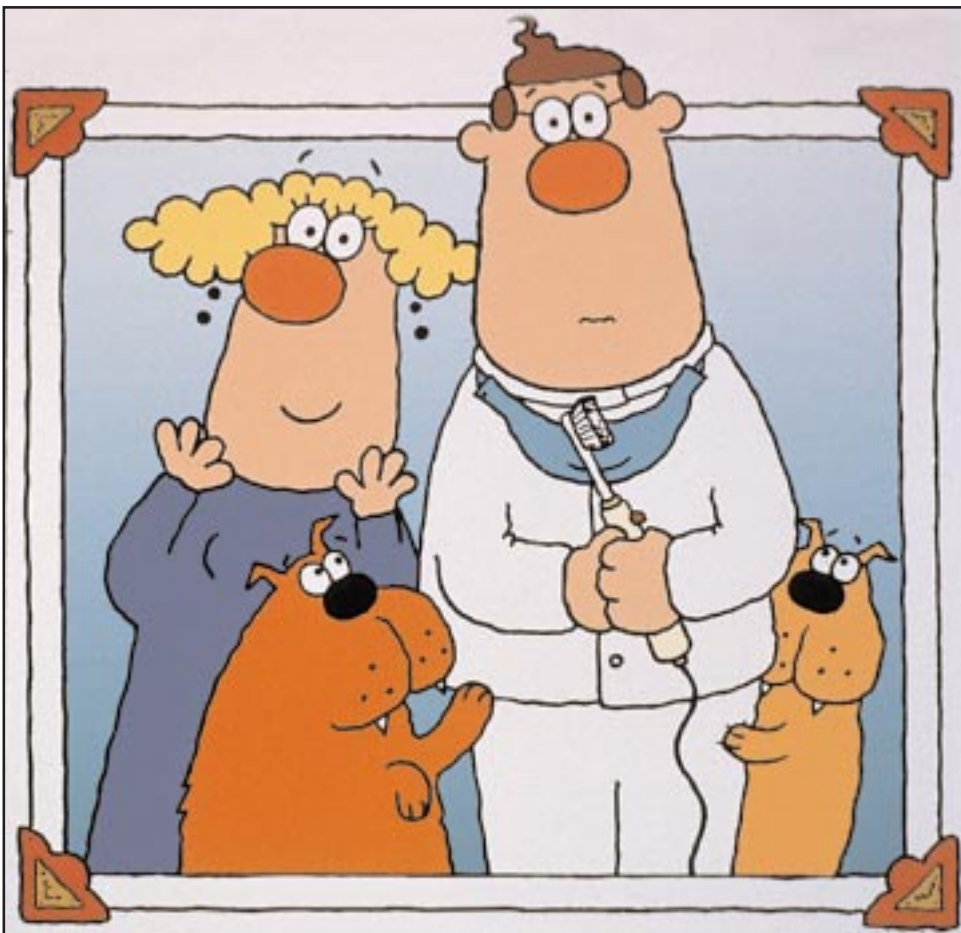
think they are funny.

The Broadcasting Hurdle

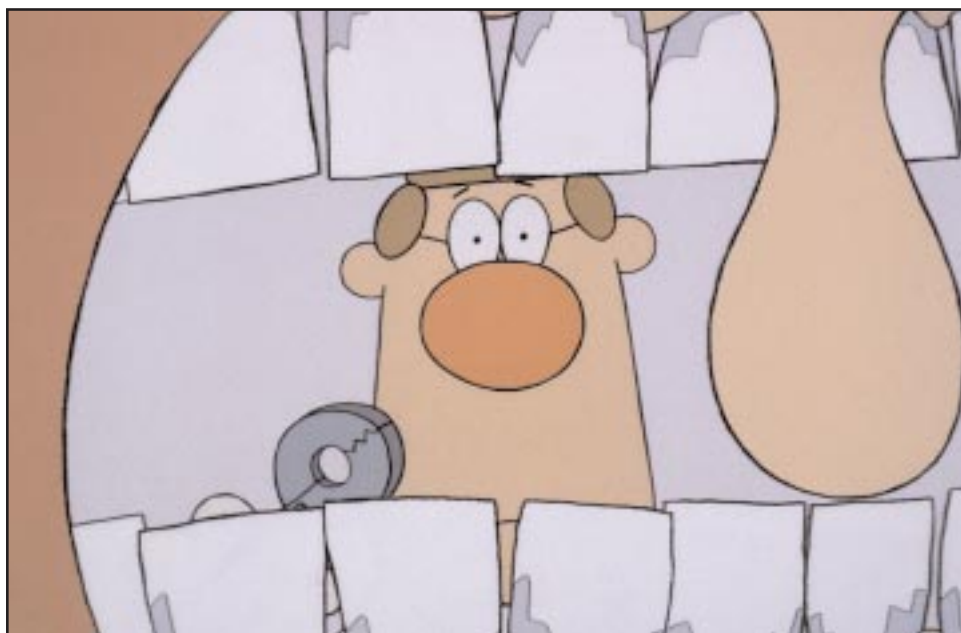
In an article from the January issue of *Televsual*, a commentator posed the question: "Is this the U.K. answer to *The Simpsons*?" In more ways than one, this is an interesting point to query. As practically everyone knows, *The Simpsons* has been instrumental in demonstrating that prime time animation can be a success. In the United States, *King of the Hill* is perhaps the most fortunate beneficiary of this 'revelation', having reaped its own rewards as a huge prime time hit on the Fox Network, where *The Simpsons* also airs. Nonetheless, at the 1997 International Animated Film Market (MIFA) held in conjunction with the Annecy festival, a panel of international animation executives discussed the viability of prime time animation in their own countries, which included the United Kingdom, Germany and France. They lamented the fact that it remained difficult to convince broadcasters that an adult-oriented animated series had a place in a prime-time slot.

Within recent years British television has broadcast many innovative animated works aimed at older viewers...

However, within recent years British television has broadcast many innovative animated works aimed at older viewers, including two series: *Crapston Villas* (created by Sarah Ann



Margaret, Bob and their dogs, William and Elizabeth. Courtesy of Comedy Central.



A mouth's eye view: Bob the dentist. Courtesy of Comedy Central.

Kennedy) and *Pond Life* (created by Candy Guard), both of which were launched in 1996. These series were given support by British television Channel 4's Clare Kitson. For some time, it seemed that the fate of *Bob and Margaret's* position in British programming was uncertain. The *Televisual* article quoted Fine as he explained that "the slot C4 gives the series could make or break it. 'I hope that they don't put us out at 5:30 or something like that, but I think they are clear that it's made for adults, and should be shown at around 9 p.m.'" If broadcasters are willing to support it, *Bob and Margaret* may become the first series produced outside the U.S. to gain financial success and international attention in prime time. I'm not sure *Bob and Margaret* would ever rival the success of *The Simpsons*, but I think it has the potential to make a strong showing.

The Best of Two Worlds?

To me, the appeal of *Bob and Margaret* falls somewhere between the American series *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*, and the British *Crapston Villas* and

Pond Life. Like the American works, it centers on domestic family life as experienced by a rather ordinary couple who don't accomplish much. Fine says, "Real people just keep doing the same dumb things over and over. Real people don't always develop, real people stagnate, just like Bob and Margaret." Well, that formula worked for the immensely popular American live-action series *Seinfeld* — and to some extent the same formula is employed in both *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*, though they also tend to tackle 'issues' of some sort.

If broadcasters are willing to support it, *Bob and Margaret* may become the first series produced outside the U.S. to gain financial success and international attention in prime time.

However, within the United States, differences in the exhibition of the three series affect their content to some extent. In contrast to the two American animated series, which are shown on public airwaves by a network broadcaster

(Fox) and thus are subject to the government Broadcast Standards and Practices regulations, *Bob and Margaret* is being aired on a cable network, which is not bound to the same level of censorship. As a result, it can be somewhat more 'broad' in its comedy than even *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*, and the Fox network pushes the limits of network television. For example, the Burglary episode manages to work in nudity, bathroom humor and at least the possibility of gruesome violence during a scene when Bob is shown disrobing and sitting nude on a toilet. Since he's taken off his glasses (those 40-somethings don't see as well as they used to), he doesn't realize that the burglar robbing everything in his house, while the sleeping Margaret drools on her pillow, may at any moment bludgeon him with a meat cleaver! I know it doesn't sound funny the way I write it, but I swear it works in the show.

Other things struck me as humorous just because of how they are played out. A great example occurs in an exchange between two lethargic cops who are supposedly investigating the burglary. At one point, one of them gets a toffee from her colleague and finds it's all fuzzy with lint — but she eats it anyway! It really does play more funny the way Snowden and Fine write it. For American audiences, the Britishness of the characters alone is likely to earn the series some points. The police officers and the robbers are particularly appealing; I thought the supporting characters in the episode provided most of the humor. It will be interesting to see whether Snowden Fine's decision to make each episode a 'stand alone' show, without links

between the episodes or the supporting casts (which add so much to the popularity of *The Simpsons*), has any affect on the series' success overall.

The comedy in *Crapston Villas* and *Pond Life* and the overall appeal of those two series would seem to be a lot more specialized than that of *Bob and Margaret*. There was some concern among 'consultants' that *Bob and Margaret* would not be of interest to young viewers, due to its focus on an angst-ridden couple who are in their 40s. Based on seeing one episode, which admittedly is not much of a sample, but with the benefit of knowing *Bob's Birthday* and other works by Snowden and Fine, it seems to me that the series actually has the potential to attract a fairly wide audience. In any case, it seems a wider range of 'family' viewers would be drawn to the everyday experiences of the characters in *Bob and Margaret*, than to the raucous raunchiness of *Crapston Villas* (see the *AWM* article "Jill McGreal's 'Out of the Animation Ghetto: Clare Kitson and Her Muffia'" [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.2/articles1.2/mcgreal1.2.html>] for a bit of dialogue), or the female-centered narratives of *Pond Life*, which is subject to that old 'men won't watch women's stuff' argument.

It seems to me that the series actually has the potential to attract a fairly wide audience.

The Fine Print and Details

Technically, the work in *Burglary* looked fairly good. I saw what appeared to be smudges and fuzziness in images, but overall the animation is smooth. Com-



Courtesy of Comedy Central.

pared to *King of the Hill*, it almost looks like full animation. Okay, that's a bit of an overstatement, considering that these characters are anything but the lively singing and dancing types one might find in a Disney feature, but thank goodness for that!

The history of the series' development is interesting. As the story goes, Snowden and Fine were bombarded with calls following their win of an Academy Award for *Bob's Birthday* in 1995. Although they had visions of working with an American studio, the artists, who are British and Canadian, decided against a partnership with Universal Pictures because it wanted the characters in *Bob and Margaret* to be more 'Americanized.' Fine says Universal was concerned about the series' "Britishness and wanted to change it. They wanted to have it set in the US, or make Bob and Margaret have loads of American friends."

Snowden Fine had developed a relationship with Channel 4, which picked up 25 percent of the series' production costs, and then sealed a deal with the Canadian production house Nelvana, which paid for the remaining 75 percent of the costs. The series

was pre-sold to Channel 4 in the UK, Comedy Central in the U.S., and Canada's Global Television. Each of the thirteen 22-minute episodes currently in production is budgeted at U.K. £270,000 (at a June 1998 conversion rate, approximately U.S. \$440,000 each). Layout, design and storyboarding, as well as digital painting and compositing using the Animo system, is being done by Nelvana, while animation is being completed in the Philippines. Fine says he is happy to be removed from the production details, explaining that he wanted more time for the creative work and voice recording, which is done in London: "We are avoiding the drudgery of animation, like painting cels. I hate all that."

It is certain that many eyes will be on the Snowden Fine series as it airs this summer, including those of investors who will be interested to see if the series can indeed attract audiences in prime time.

Visit Alison Snowden and David Fines web site in *AWN's Animation Village*, which includes images from the Oscar-winning animated short, *Bob's Birthday* [<http://www.awn.com/snowden-fine/index.html>].

Maureen Furniss is the editor and publisher of Animation Journal, a scholarly journal based at Chapman University, in Orange, California, where she is an assistant professor in the School of Film and Television.

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For The Love of Prague

book review by Adam Snyder

Gene Deitch's *For The Love of Prague* begins in late October, 1959. A confused, extremely nervous American animator is being transported deep behind the Iron Curtain on a Soviet-built DC3-copycat plane. He wonders aloud, "What the hell am I doing here? Who is this guy Snyder? Am I being set up?"

The anxious animator is Gene Deitch, who had recently left CBS Terrytoons where he had created such unforgettable characters as Tom Terrific and Manfred the Wonder Dog. The mysterious Snyder is my father, William L., who had founded Rembrandt Films a decade earlier to import films to the U.S. from Europe. After distributing such classics as Jiri Trnka's *Emperor's Nightingale* and Albert Lamorisse's *White Mane*, he had just begun producing animation in Prague.

***For The Love of Prague* is not the story of one man's love for an ancient, magical city, or even of his experiences as the only American to live in Prague during virtually the entire Cold War.**

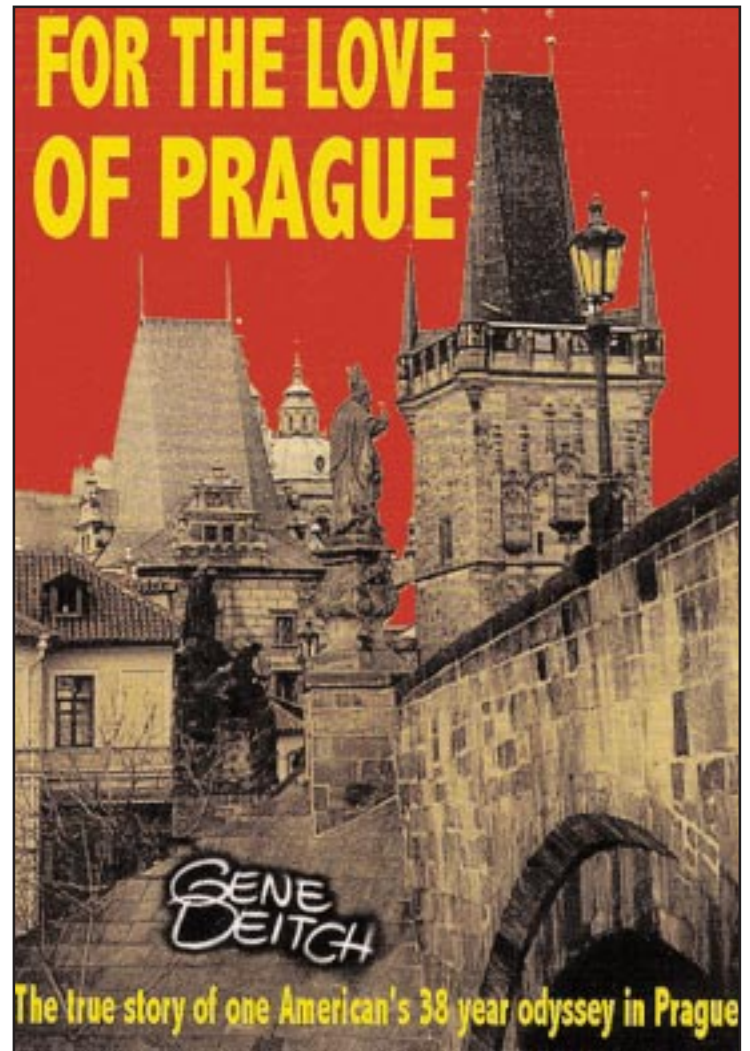
To Go Where?

Several months earlier my father had walked into Gene's Manhattan animation studio and, puffing on his signature Cuban cigar, proceeded to give Gene one of the great snow jobs of the Cold War. "I'm told you're the best animation director in New York," he

told him. "I want you to go to my studio in Prague."

Gene laughed, wondering why someone would have an animation studio in Oklahoma. He was remembering his basic training days at Camp Gruber in Muskogee, when he and his buddies would go to a bar in a nearby poke town named Prague. "No, not Prague, Oklahoma," my father responded with his typical swagger. "Prague, Czechoslovakia."

Gene had never even had a passport before, and was dubious about traveling to a Communist country on someone else's lark. So my father gave him an offer he couldn't refuse. If Gene would go to Prague and straighten out production on a cartoon he was producing there, my dad would finance Gene's pet project—*Munro*, Jules Feiffer's story about a four-year-old boy drafted into the Army. When Gene still expressed reluctance, my father



also promised, in writing, that he would not have to remain in Prague for more than ten days.

One of the most heartbreaking sections of the book tells of how she lost custody of her son ... because she was in love with an American capitalist.

Enter Fate

The fates had other ideas, however. Gene promptly fell head-over-heels in love with the city on the Vltava River, and never again

would return to the United States to live. However, *For The Love of Prague* is not the story of one man's love for an ancient, magical city, or even of his experiences as the only American to live in Prague during virtually the entire Cold War. Rather, it's about how Gene left behind everything he knew—his friends, his family (including a wife and three sons in New York), his career, his entire way of life—to be with the 4'11" dynamo he met during his first few days in Prague. More than anything, *For The Love of Prague* is the story of Gene's four decades with Zdenka Najmanova, his "self-assured, in control, in command, unshakably optimistic, fearless, competent and talented" wife and professional partner.

In 1958 my father established a special 'Snyder unit' at the famed, state-owned, sole Czech studio. He even imported a state-of-the-art Portman camera from America. To run it, he hand-picked Zdenka, one of the few people in Czechoslovakia who spoke English. For the first week Gene was in Prague however, Zdenka refused to talk to him. She was appalled that this "American" had been recruited to "save" the project on which they were working. Today Zdenka—now Zdenka Deitchova—is still a bundle of energy; a



October 28, 1959. Bill Snyder welcomes Gene Deitch to Prague.
Photo courtesy of Gene Deitch.

self-proclaimed workaholic who, save for vacations and a single two-week bout with the flu, has not missed a day of work during more than half a century as a producer at the famed Czech animation studio. Never one to mince words, she has managed over the years to play havoc with the English language, often with amusing results. Like the constellation she calls the Big Diaper. Or that New York is crowded with skyscrapers. And that the Earth someday might be threatened by investors from outer space, causing Gene to envision rows of little green men coming down the gangplanks of their flying saucers, each carrying a briefcase!

Zdenka, too, was married

when they first met, and even more than Gene, risked everything so they could be together. One of the most heartbreaking sections of the book tells of how she lost custody of her son, David, solely because she was in love with an American capitalist. The most harrowing pages tell of how in 1985 David sought asylum in the West. Gene vividly describes the frightening experience of driving him to freedom. Gene could have been expelled from the country, and Zdenka might have been denied travel, or worse.

A Special Situation

All during my childhood, Gene and Zdenka's love story, their experiences under Communism, as well as my father's own mysterious adventures in that other world, were part of Rembrandt Films lore.

After reading *For The Love of Prague*, tales of jazz concerts, their many friends, the absurdities of the Communist bureaucracy, and other details of their lives behind the Iron Curtain, confirm for me what from afar and through the eyes of a child, I had always imagined. Despite living under a totalitarian regime, without many of the physical comforts we took for granted, in many ways he and Zdenka led a storybook life. Working for western animation clients and holding a U.S. passport, Gene enjoyed a special status. He could hop in his car and drive to West Germany any time they needed coffee, a new tape recorder, or other hard-to-find items. He and



Gene and Zdenka photographed during a visit to San Francisco, March 1998. Photo courtesy of Wendy Jackson.

Zdenka traveled regularly to Western Europe together, although Gene was required to write a letter to the government inviting her to travel with him to a specific place and return with him at a specific time.

Gene likes to say that in all the years he lived in Prague he never met a Communist...

Gene likes to say that in all the years he lived in Prague he never met a Communist, meaning that he never met a true believer. It's a simple enough statement, but like many anecdotes in the book it reveals a larger insight into the Communist culture. My chief complaint is that I would have liked to learn more about his work at the animation studio, but that book is now in the works, Gene assures me.

Remembering the Good Times

For me, of course, the most painful passages concern Gene's falling out with my father. But Zdenka and I prefer to remember only the good times—the excitement generated by one of my dad's visits to Prague in the 1960s, his buying antiques for a song, throwing dinner parties on a boat as it sailed under the Charles Bridge, handing out nylon stock-

ings to the women and bottles of Jack Daniels to the men. Even Gene admits that he, "cannot forget the great fun we had together, and the great creative burn we both raced through." I buried my father last week. And as I reread Gene's book, I was reminded that no matter what was going on between them, part of my father's legacy was the impact he had on one man and one woman whose story is told in *For The Love of Prague*.

In 1995 Adam Snyder, president of Rembrandt Films, began collaborating with Gene Deitch on *The Nudnik Show*, which now has been distributed by Sunbow Entertainment in more than 20 countries.

For The Love of Prague (1997, ISBN 80-7205-467-8) is only available from its exclusive distributor, Peter Lemkin, P.O. Box 136 CZ-110 01 Prague 01, Czech Republic, or via e-mail: <plemkin@terminal.cz>. Price is U.S. \$20 per copy, which includes air mail postage to anywhere in the world. Only personal checks and cash are accepted.

Adam Snyder is President of Rembrandt Films, producer of Nudnik and Friends, distributed by Sunbow Entertainment, and other cartoons and several series distributed by Palm Plus Productions, including classic animation from Zagreb Film and the Sofia Animation Studio, which are packaged into two thirteen part series, Maxicat and Friends and Three Fools and Friends respectively.

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An Afternoon with Ollie Johnston, Frank Thomas and Pinocchio

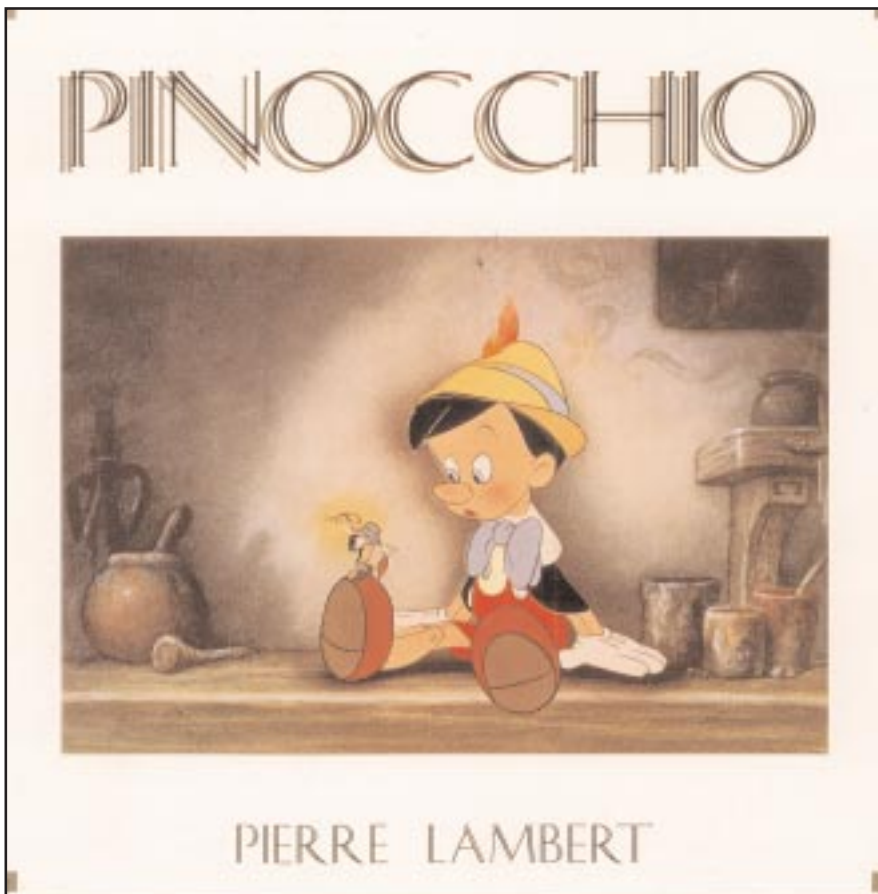
by Charles Solomon

Pierre Lambert's *Pinocchio*, originally published in France by Demons et Merveilles and in an English translation by Hyperion, ranks as the loveliest animation book of recent years. The pages seem to overflow with exquisitely reproduced cels, backgrounds, drawings and set-ups. Recently, two of the Nine Old Men of Disney, Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas, who animated key scenes of the title character, sat down with animation critic Charles Solomon to discuss Lambert's work.

Charles Solomon: What were your reactions to the book?

***Pinocchio* lends itself to a book of this quality. - Ollie Johnston**

Frank Thomas: I thought it was exceptional. When it first came out, I was amazed they would spend that much money on all of the technical aspects of putting the book together—the artwork they were able to find, the paper, the coating on the paper to get true colors, everything that Walt was trying to get in there. It didn't



have quite the sparkle that I remembered in the picture, but it sure had everything else. If you like *Pinocchio*, this is really the place to see it.

Ollie Johnston: That's what I felt. *Pinocchio* has more wonderful locales than almost any other picture—almost more than *Snow White*, and is more refined. There are the wonderful shots of [Gustave] Tenggren's looking down on the city—just fantastic! I never get tired of looking at them. The text is good, but the art dominates the book, and it should. There are errors in the text, as in all the books.

CS: How accurate and thorough do you think the book is?

OJ: Somebody says that Eric Larson took over Fred Moore's Lampwick at the end, when he turned into a donkey, because he knew how to draw animals from living on a farm. That's not true: Fred did that stuff. I know, because I was working on a couple of

scenes and worked with him.

CS: Milt did some of that too, didn't he?

OJ: He did a lot of the Pinocchios. I just did two or three scenes in there. Bill Tytla did not work on Geppetto. (To Frank) And didn't it say that you worked on the character of Alice?

FT: Probably. In reading through the book, the errors bothered me, but then I got to thinking, "Well, it's got the spirit of the thing." The quotes from the guys, even though they were wrong—if he'd gotten the right people, I think

they would have said the same thing. So from one standpoint, it doesn't hurt the book. A technically accurate book is pretty hard to get, and it would be a different type of book. Of course, being a perfectionist you always think, "Why couldn't they do a book that would be all this?" Kimball gets a lot of credit on *Peter Pan*, for Captain Hook, but there's no mention of the Indian Chief, whom he did a very good job on.

OJ: He didn't do any of Hook.

FT: He did the Indian Chief, he did the Lost Boys.

OJ: *Pinocchio* lends itself to a book of this quality. We had Claude Coates, we had Tenggren. We had the animators, we had [Hugh] Hennesy and [Charlie] Philippi, those great guys. One reason, of course, for the level of quality was Walt: he was behind every idea, every character, every word, every color and literally every thing. That was the last picture he was that closely involved in.

CS: What do you think interested him in that story to begin with? In the book, he says that Walt haunted the nearby library's children's department and that's where he found it.

OJ: I'm not so sure that's correct. He probably read some of it but I don't think he read all these books.

FT: Not all the way through.

CS: I wonder what attracted Walt to the story in the first place, since the original *Pinocchio* is such a nasty little puppet.

FT: It has a fantasy to it that stimulated his thinking. He could always split off something that annoyed him, if he also found elements that looked good to him.

OJ: Frank and I started on a couple of scenes that never got shown. The drawing of the little puppet looked more like Freddy Moore's sketches at that time. But then they put the thing back into story (development). In the mean time, Milt came up with the more boyish puppet, who was softer and more appealing. Fred came in and said, "My god, that Milt Kahl can draw, Jesus!"

In reading through the book, the errors bothered me, but then I got to thinking, "Well, it's got the spirit of the thing."
- Frank Thomas

CS: What about the story of Ray Disney and the cigar?

FT: Ray didn't even seem to be part of the same family as Roy and Walt. So it was okay for him to sell his insurance. There was this big meeting in Sweatbox Four, which was this nice room with soft chairs. We were all sitting and trying to look intelligent, talking about what the Fox should be. Nobody was getting anywhere, when suddenly the door opened and there was this kid with this cigar. He didn't say anything you could understand, he just went on and on. When he closed the door, we all looked stunned. And Walt said, "There's your fox!"

CS: One of the sequences Pierre writes about is yours, Ollie: *Pinocchio* telling the lie and his nose growing, which is one of the key

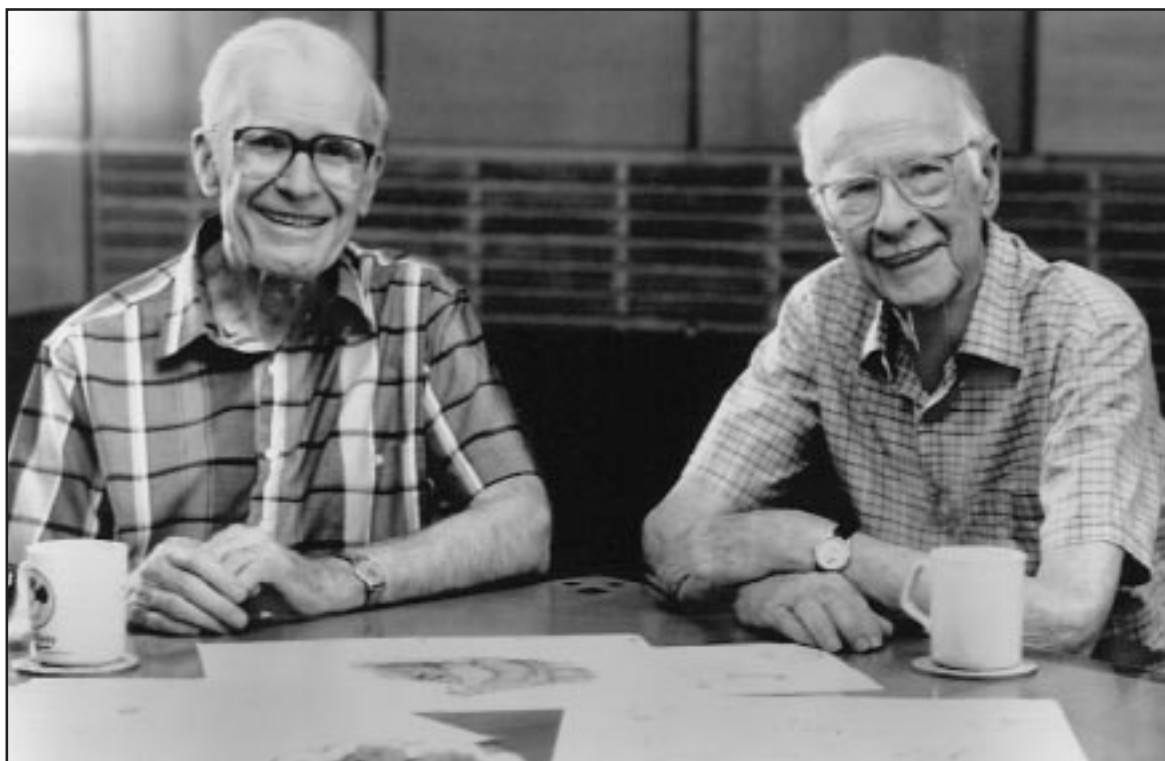
moments in the film. What do you remember about those scenes?

OJ: Well, I know I was pleased to get it. Frank did the long nose sequence at the end. I did the stuff where it was starting out to grow and he was worried about his father. When the Blue Fairy appears, he's hiding, on the floor, all the time with his hat off. Frank helped me with the drawing there.

FT: *Pinocchio* was constructed wrong for something like that. His head was far too big; his arms weren't short but they were right next to his legs. So usually you'd turn the head like this to get the hat within reach [he tilts his head to one side]. You'd have him touch a little bit of the brim and take it off

OJ: I knew the scenes where his nose would start to grow was real big stuff to do. I felt like I was living a charmed life at that time, having stuff that good. Frank took over on the long stuff, and I did the last scene.

FT: It was after Ollie started on the thing that someone said, "Why don't we have some leaves come out of the nose?" That led to another idea, then I went up there one day, and here's a whole new chunk of the storyboard, with the bird's nest, the two eggs and the birds that popped out and flew away. I said, "Wait a minute! This can't be!" I didn't do the leaves or the birds, but I had to do *Pinocchio* way down here at the end of this vaulting pole, trying to balance it. If he said anything, there would be this six foot pole whipping back and forth. Different guys did the nest, the leaves and the birds—on the drafts, we had



Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston. Photo by Karen Quincy Loberg, courtesy of and © 1995 the Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

about eight names.

CS: What about "I've Got No Strings," Frank?

FT: I'd say that was mainly [Wilfred] Jackson and me. We didn't know enough about dancing to make up a dance, but we wanted to find some movie that had a simple little dance or a vaudeville comedian who had some fancy little step. We found one in somebody's version of Gilbert & Sullivan's "Mikado." It had the kick with one foot, and the other foot just coming along each time he kicked, so that looked funny.

I felt pretty strongly that it ought to be very amateurish. I was talking to Milt one day and said, "He's never rehearsed this, he doesn't know what he's going to do, he's making it up as he goes along. I'm going to have him be late on his sync on some of the words." Milt looked me and said, "Are you crazy?!? God! That's the

lousiest idea I've ever heard anywhere!" I was looking at it just the other day, and when Pinocchio says, "I've got no strings, to hold me down," the gesture comes after he says, "Down." That was just what I wanted it to do, and no one has objected, although I can still hear Milt scream, "Oh for Christ's sake!"

A lot of people feel *Pinocchio* is the apex of animated features.
- Charles Solomon

CS: In both of those sequences you had to deal with something that's very difficult to bring off in animation: something happening to the character that he's not expecting—he trips or his nose starts to grow. There's no anticipation: the character has to be as surprised as the audience. I've seen a lot of animation where that kind of thing doesn't work, but it does in *Pinocchio*.

FT: We had to be aware that you couldn't anticipate a stumble, anything that happens to him. At the end of the scene, when the audience applauds him, he claps, too—this is what we do, I guess. I was looking for anything that showed he was only born last night; he had no experience to draw on. He had to be very wide-eyed and innocent-looking. When the girls in the dance start

coming in, he didn't know what to make of them. That was kind of fun because the only way to make the girls different from him was to keep them staring wherever the eye was painted on. It couldn't be in the gestures, because they all were puppets together.

That was a tough battle for me, to get it to feel like he was still a puppet and the girls were puppets, and get a balance there. We also had to get his concern about them, and get them to look like they enjoyed him or were having a good time or whatever. [To Ollie] I guess you and Eric came along with the French girls. By that time we had the thing going.

CS: Another thing that strikes me about *Pinocchio* is that the film doesn't pull its punches. Where it's scary—Lampwick's transformation and Monstro—its *really* scary. I think a lot of recent films have tended to pull back from that kind of power.

OJ: Well the whole thing on Pleasure Island where the guy sends the donkey back, "You can still talk." Geez, this is powerful stuff.

FT: I think it could have been stronger. It's Walt's way of thinking, "Oh that's as mean as he needs to be." When he did *Snow White*, I think he was surprised that he was criticized for making the Witch so fearsome.

OJ: He didn't think she was going to be that believable.

FT: I think he was worried the other way, that people would hiss and boo at her, like the villain in *The Drunkard*.

OJ: I don't think he felt that picture was going to grab people the way it did. I don't see how he could have imagined it.

FT: On *Pinocchio*, he hadn't changed his mind about the Witch yet, so he was still able to get some of the strength. That's where the story was. It had gotten so believable in a strange fantasy land, with so many fantasy situations. You don't see Lampwick again—you don't have any scenes of him saying, "Don't leave me alone." There are a lot of things you could have done to dress it up. Shortly after that we were doing *Bambi*. The story guys wanted Bambi's mother to be seen when she was shot, falling to the ground, blood on the snow. But Walt said, "You guys don't need that."

OJ: Then they wanted to kill Thumper in the second half.

CS: A lot of people feel *Pinocchio* is the apex of animated features.

Snow White may be warmer, there are parts of *Bambi* that are more beautiful and *Dumbo* will make you cry more readily. But in *Pinocchio*, everything works in a way that's never quite been equaled.

If things had gone the way he'd (Walt) planned for the next ten years, there's no telling where he would have gone. - Frank Thomas

OJ: I think that's because of Walt's involvement. In the book, the author says Walt was never again as close to the stuff as he was on *Pinocchio* and *Snow White*. I think that after he got off *Pinocchio* and on to *Fantasia*, it was a different kind of a picture and a different type of involvement. When he came to *Bambi*, the money situation and the war were causing problems, although I think he turned out a real gem. I think this was his last major involvement.

FT: If things had gone the way he'd planned for the next ten years, there's no telling where he would have gone. He believed in *Fantasia* so strongly and we've talked many times, where the studio would be today if it had gone over.

CS: The way *Snow White* did.

FT: If there'd been no war and if there'd been money from *Pinocchio*.

OJ: He'd have been doing wonderful things.

FT: He would have gone out into the Field of Dreams. He wouldn't have done another picture like *Pinocchio* and he wouldn't have

done *Cinderella* that was so much like *Snow White*. We wouldn't have done any of those pictures; they all felt to me, working with him, that he was held in. He was trying to make it the best he could, but this wasn't really what he wanted to do. During that time he was nervous.

OJ: Towards the end of that period, when he started on his locomotive, I'd see him out in the shop, and he said, "I got to get this place so it doesn't hang on one picture all the time." He knew he had to do something to put that place back on a sound footing, but it wasn't necessarily going to involve him in the way he had been involved.

Charles Solomon is an internationally respected critic and historian of animation. His most recent books include The Disney That Never Was (Hyperion, 1995), Les Pionniers du Dessin Animé Américain (Dreamland, Paris, 1996) and Enchanted Drawings: The History of Animation (Knopf, 1989; reprinted, Wings, 1994). His writings on the subject have appeared in TV Guide, Rolling Stone, the Los Angeles Times, Modern Maturity, Film Comment, the Hollywood Reporter, Millimeter, the Manchester Guardian, and been reprinted in newspapers and professional journals in the United States, Canada, France, Russia, Britain, Israel, the Netherlands and Japan.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

The Hollywood Animation Union (M.P.S.C. #839)

by Tom Sito

Anyone who is a fan of Hollywood knows there are big gaps between the official record and the hidden realities of Hollywood. But it's not just details of some movie stars' sex habits or scandal that are glossed over, the fact that Hollywood artists formed labor unions to protect themselves from the power of movie studios and their corporate overlords is treated as non-history by the media. That Groucho Marx, Frank Capra, Joan Crawford, Dorothy Parker and Boris Karloff worked tirelessly to build Hollywood's unions is rarely mentioned in their biographies.

Before 1941, salaries were a free for all, anywhere from \$6.00 to \$500 a week, and Saturdays were a mandatory work day.

Likewise in Toontown. Crack open any animation history book and see if they mention that Chuck Jones walked a picket line, or that Maurice Noble, Bill Tytla, Art Babbitt, John Hubley, Selby Kelly and Bill Melendez risked their careers to create an animators' union. The animators of Max Fleischer formed their union in 1937. The Hollywood artists won their recognition in 1941. Jack Zander, Frank Thomas, Ollie Johnston, Eric Larson, Dave Tendlar and Bill Scott all once served as union officers.

Animators in Florida are represented by Screen Cartoonists



The M.P.S.C. headquarters are located at 4729 Lankershim Blvd. in North Hollywood, California. Photo courtesy of M.P.S.C.

Local 843, in Paris by the Syndicat National des Techniciens Cinématographique, in London by BECTA, in San Francisco by Local #16 and in Winnipeg by Local #832. Animation unions at one time also existed in Chicago, Minneapolis and New York.

The M.P.S.C.

Today Hollywood animation artists and techs are represented by the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists & Affiliated Optical Electronic & Graphic Arts Local #839. It was formed in 1952 and its first signatories included top Disney artists like John Hench and Nine Old Men Les Clark and

Milt Kahl. Today the M.P.S.C. is 3,000 strong, counting among its members the animators of Walt Disney, DreamWorks, Warner Bros., MGM, Hanna-Barbera, Rich, Hyperion and many more.

Before 1941, salaries were a free for all, anywhere from U.S. \$6.00 to \$500 a week, and Saturdays were a mandatory work day. The M.P.S.C. guarantees basic working conditions, wage minimums and overtime after 40 hours per week rules. The union also arbitrates disputes artists can have with their employer and provides free legal advice. Some bosses accuse the union of inhibiting creative freedom; but the union takes

no position on aesthetics. Its only purpose is to safeguard the working conditions of artists.

The M.P.S.C. publishes current information on wages and personal contracts so an artist is not negotiating blind, okays visas and helps unemployed members find work

The sorry state of the American health system is well known. The M.P.S.C. provides some of the best health insurance in California — the Motion Picture Health and Welfare plan. It provides major medical, dental, optometric, pharmaceutical, chiropractic and acupuncture coverage. The plan covers same-sex couples, cannot refuse you if you have a pre-existing condition like diabetes or cancer and follows you from job to job for up to one and one-half years after you leave the industry. Best of all, while in many U.S. companies money is deducted from your paycheck to pay for



Tom Sito.

your health insurance, in this plan the employer contributes and your pay is unaffected.

The M.P.S.C. is also the guardian of the old age pensions of animation folks. The popular myth that animators keep drawing into their 90s or become rich from Disney stock is only true for a tiny percentage. The great majority of animation artists eventually reach an age where their energy or creative powers have diminished, or they just don't want to compete anymore with the ever growing

crowd of young, eager talent. The hard reality is with the exception of Walt Disney Studios, a union studio, no animation studio has ever stayed around long enough for an artist to retire from. No one ever retired from UPA or MGM. Without our union pension fund, many Golden Age animation artists would have no recourse in their sunset years.

In addition, the M.P.S.C. has added a multi-employer 401k plan, an additional way that members can save towards their retirement and take out interest-free loans on their account.

One of the most popular services the M.P.S.C. provides is the American Animation Institute.

The M.P.S.C. throws its support to political issues like making common cause with the National Cartoonists Society and the Writers

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nominated film *The
Big Snit* by director
Richard Condie



Guild to oppose a California law that forces freelance artists to pay business taxes. They also have supported historical preservation groups like Hollywood Heritage to preserve animation landmark buildings like Hanna-Barbera's old headquarters at 3400 Cahuenga Blvd.

What does this have to do with the love of cartoons?
Nothing and everything.

The A.A.I.

One of the most popular services the M.P.S.C. provides is the American Animation Institute. It was formed in 1980 to further the retraining of our members and to provide a low cost way new talent could get animation training. All of the A.A.I.'s teachers are current working professionals who drive to the classroom directly from their studios. Past lecturers include Milt Kahl, Art Babbitt and Cliff Nordberg. The renowned drawing teachers Glenn Vilppu and Karl Gness conduct workshops at A.A.I. as well. The classes cost in the range of \$80-\$100.

The A.A.I. offers classes in character animation, inbetweening and cleanup, life drawing, background and figure painting, storyboarding and character design. Most classes are at night but some weekend workshops exist as well. You don't have to pay for a full semester of classes like a degree program; you pay on a class by class basis. The A.A.I. is considered adult education and is a non-accredited school. Classes begin with a three week required seminar called "Introduction to the Industry."

There are two enrollment periods, one in the spring and one in the fall. Sometimes there is a waiting list to enroll and a class could close out before you have a chance to apply. When the A.A.I. was started the total student enrollment was around 40. With the current boom in animation 750 students enrolling with dozens more being turned away or put on a waiting list is not uncommon. The union office staff is small and they must cover union issues as well as A.A.I., so please be patient.

To reach the union office with questions or if you wish an A.A.I. catalog mailed to you call (818)-766-7151. The A.A.I. reservations only number is (818)766-7746. The M.P.S.C. 839 is located at 4729 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91602-1864. The fax number is 818-506-4805. AWN has links to our web site through the Animation Village.

Our Satyagraha

Finally what does this have to do with the love of cartoons? Nothing and everything.

In a perfect world there would be no need for unions because everyone would get their fair share. The last time I looked, this wasn't yet a perfect world. Isn't talent enough? History has proven it isn't. Most businessmen who invest in animation love the medium as much as the artists do. However, the M.P.S.C. was created to guard against those who are just seeking a quick buck or stepping up on the necks of others; those who consider animators just 'wrists' and naive children. That is our Satyagraha.

The Irish patriot John Cur-

ran said in 1815, "It is the common fate of the Indolent to see their rights become prey to the Active. The condition upon which God hath given us Liberty is eternal Vigilance." That quote was not given to me by my college professor but by the late Bill Scott, animation writer, director and voice of Bullwinkle the Moose, who was also a passionate union activist.

At the National Cartoonists Society annual meeting, we were addressed by Joanne Schuster, the widow of Superman co-creator Joe Schuster and the model for Lois Lane. Siegel and Schuster were the two 19 year-olds who sold away their creation, Superman, for \$130 and never saw any of the tens of millions of dollars profit their creation made. In 1978, blind and indolent, they received pensions only after public protests by united cartoonists. Mrs. Schuster told us, "All artists should stick together because only then do you have *real power!*"

Let the love of animation guide our hearts but not cloud our minds to the realities of modern business.

Tom Sito is a 20-year animation veteran and teacher whose credits include He-Man and the Masters of the Universe, The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin, The Prince of Egypt and Paulie. He was elected president of the animator's union M.P.S.C. 839 in 1992 and has served in that capacity ever since.

Note: Readers may contact any *Animation World Magazine* contributor by sending an e-mail to editor@awn.com.

by Wendy Jackson

Business

Microsoft Sells Softimage To Avid.

Softimage, a 12-year-old animation and graphics software company which became a wholly owned subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation in 1994, will merge with Avid Technology, makers of the Avid Media Composer and Symphony editing systems, forming one company. Microsoft has sold Softimage to Avid for a combined \$285 million, part of which is Avid stock, so Microsoft will retain significant equity in the company. Montreal, Canada-based Softimage, makers of Softimage 3D, Toonz (2-D) and the new, "next-generation" Sumatra 3-D animation software will now be responsible for Avids overall high-end graphics and effects business. Softimage president Moshe Lichtman said, "A focused effort will get underway to incorporate mutual technologies and architectures in future products with the goal of building the broadest, most integrated product line on this planet. As we look ahead, we feel very strongly that Softimage, in combination with Avid, is in the most powerful position in its history to fully realize our Digital Studio vision and to deliver the most powerful, integrated production environment to our customers."

Anime On Trial! On June 23, Tibor Clerdouet, Yvan West Laurence and Cedric Littardi were scheduled to be put on trial in the

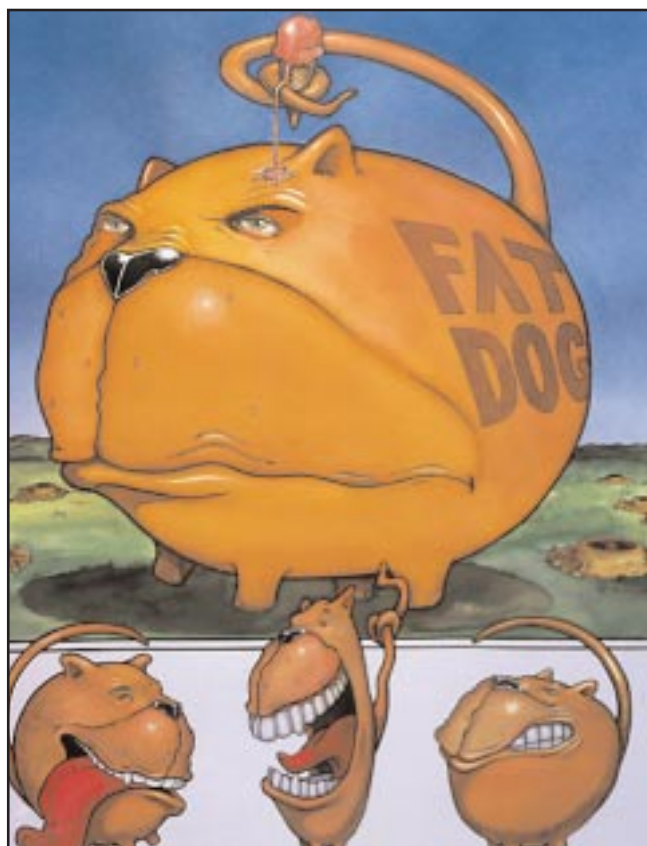
High Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) in Paris on the charges because they were previous publishers and/or editors of *AnimeLand*, an eight-year-old French magazine about animation. The trial has been postponed to February 16, 1999. The three men are facing charges that the magazine violated the French Law 49-956, billed nearly 50 years ago, which states that publications believed to be "aimed at youth" must not contain "any illustration, any tale, any chronicle, any heading, any insert presenting under a favorable light banditism, lies, theft, laziness, cowardice, hate, debauchery or any act qualified as crime or offense or of a nature to demoralize childhood or youth or to foster or keep going ethnic prejudice." The standard penalty for bypassing this are a year in prison and a fee equivalent to U.S. \$5000. *AnimeLand*, which often features images from adult-oriented Japanese anime, claims to be a publication aimed at and read by adults, not children. However, the challenge they face in court is to prove that an adult audience for animation exists. "This trial is a good occasion to

fight for the image of animation as a media beyond kids," said Cedric Littardi, one of the men on trial who is seeking letters of support and advice from people in the animation community. He may be contacted by e-mail at kaze@planete.net.

Mr. Littardi has also written an article about the case, which is included in this issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

Sunbow & Cartoon Network Deal.

Cartoon Network U.K. has formed a co-production arrangement with Sunbow Entertainment, an independent production



Sunbow's *Fat Dog Mendoza* will be the first in a series of co-productions partially financed by Cartoon Network Europe. © Sunbow Entertainment.

company recently acquired by Sony Wonder. In the multi-year deal, Cartoon Network will invest in international co-production of animated series including *Fat Dog Mendoza* for air in 1999. Additional co-production partners for this series are planned. "We have significantly grown our audience across Europe since our launch four years ago and it was always our intention to introduce original commissioned series," said Lynne Frank, senior vice president and general manager of Turner Entertainment Networks International Limited.

Cinar Acquires Another Publisher. Montreal, Canada-based Cinar Films Inc. has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Charlotte, North Carolina, U.S.A.-based publisher HighReach Learning, Inc. for U.S. \$18 million and Cinar stock. HighReach is an 11-year-old company which specializes in publishing educational materials for pre-school children. Last year, Cinar acquired Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, launching its educational product division. The division is now called Cinar Education and is headed up by recently-appointed president Hasanian Panju, previously chief financial officer of Cinar Films. Cinar president and CEO Ronald A. Weinberg said, "Several fundamental trends underscore the high growth potential of the educational market, such as the growing school-age population, increased private and public investment in education heightened educational standards and the growing use of technology in the classroom." Cinar has built a

library of animated series based on children's books, including *Arthur* and *The Busy World of Richard Scarry*.

People

Laybourne Launching New Company. Geraldine Laybourne, often described as one of the most powerful women in the entertainment industry, has left her post as president of Disney/ABC Cable Networks to form her own diversified media company. With ABC as its first investor and client, the still unnamed company will focus on creating branded content for the Internet and television, targeted mainly at women and children. Prior to joining Disney/ABC in 1996, Laybourne was president of Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite, a company she joined in 1980 at its beginning. Laybourne said, "With the explosion of new technologies of the Internet with traditional media, I see many of the same conditions today that existed 20 years ago." She added, "The interplay between television and the



Will Vinton Studios' new vice president of production, Keith Shartle. Photo courtesy of Will Vinton Studios.

Internet allows deeper connections than ever before." Prior to joining Nickelodeon in 1980, Laybourne was a teacher and advocate of media education.

Musical Chairs. Portland, Oregon-based **Will Vinton Studios** has hired **Keith Shartle** as vice president of production. He was previously senior vice president and an executive producer at Dream Quest Images in Los Angeles, where he has worked for the past 16 years, and was the third employee hired in the company which now has 220 employees. . . . North Hollywood, California-based **Film Roman** has hired **Peter L. Kaufman** as vice president of business and legal affairs. He was previously director of business and legal affairs at Live Entertainment. For Film Roman, he will focus mainly on their expansion into live-action production, while Amy Lynne Pucker will continue to handle most of the animation deals. . . . Montreal, Canada-based software developer **Discreet Logic** is conducting an executive search for someone to fill the president and CEO position which will be vacated by company founder **Richard Szalwinski** who remain as chairman of the board. . . . **Manhattan Transfer** senior digital artist Tami Feldman will relocate from New York City to Miami, Florida to work at sister company, **Post Edge**. The two subsidiary companies of Video Services Corporation have formed a joint post-production division which will be headed by vice president **Dan Rosen**, who is also president of Manhattan Transfer. . . . New York City and San Francisco-based **Curious Pictures** has added sev-

eral new people to its computer animation team: Christopher Gwynne is now CG supervisor and senior technical director, B. Ian Hayden is senior technical director, Owen Demers is senior technical director and CG texture and lighting meister and David Baas is senior character animator. .

. . **MGM Animation** has signed actors Betty White, William Macy, Peri Gilpin, Jeffrey Tambor, Harve Presnell, Wallace Shawn and Joe Pantoliano as the voice cast for the new animated series, *The Lionhearts*. . . .

Nickelodeon has signed **Rob Mitterthal** to an exclusive first look film and TV development deal. Mitterthal is co-creator and executive producer of the animation variety show *Kablam!*, which has just been renewed for 26 new episodes. . . .

Santa Monica, California-based post production and effects studio **POP** has hired visual effects supervisor **David Sosalla** and executive producer **Joe Gareri**. Both Sosalla and Gareri were previously at effects house Pacific Title Digital where they worked on films such as *Deep Impact*. . . .

Steve Hagel has left his post as sales and marketing manager at animation supply distributor ChromaColour International, where he had been for five years. He has moved to **Newhaven Media**, a production facility also in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where he is now the business development manager for animation. . . . Santa Monica, California-based visual effects/post-production studio

Digital Magic Company has hired **Mark F. Miller** as executive vice president and managing director. He was previously president of Unitel Hollywood. Digital

Magic also brought on **Chris Jones** as Fire artist. Previously employed at The Post Group, Jones worked on several animated series such as *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*. . . . Two people have recently exited executive posts at Childrens Television Workshop (CTW): former vice president of program development **Dolores Morris** has joined HBO as vice president of original programming for HBO Family Channel. In addition, CTW's former vice president of production Marjorie Kalins is now co-producing a feature film called *Elmo in Grouchland* with CTW and The Jim Henson Company. . . . German broadcaster ZDF Enterprises has promoted **Volker Lehmann** to head of acquisitions/business affairs, a role in which he will oversee ten acquisitions executives. He was previously in charge of acquisitions of all children's programs, documentaries and TV movies. . . .

Platinum Studios, a European comic book literary rights company has hired **Bill Kunkel** as director of interactive development for its U.S. entertainment arm, based in Los Angeles. He has been a journalist, game designer and consultant in the gaming industry since 1978. Platinum also promoted **Paul Benjamin** from manager to director of creative affairs. Benjamin's background includes working on licensing of animation properties Looney Tunes and *Space Jam* at Warner Bros. Consumer Products. . . .

California Institute Of The Arts has hired **Suzan Pitt** as faculty member in its experimental animation department and animator/puppeteer **Janie Geiser** to head up a new puppetry program. For the past year, Pitt has

been teaching at Ringling School of Art & Design in Florida. Animation World Magazine has featured profiles of both Pitt [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.11/articles/leger1.11.html>] and Geiser [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.2/3.2pages/3.2chimovitznyc.html>] in past issues. . . . **David Vogler** has been named vice president/creative director of **Nickelodeon Mediaworks**. Since 1995, he had been vice president of Kids Content for Disney Online. He will now relocate from Los Angeles back to New York, coming full circle to where he worked before Disney, as executive producer of Nickelodeon Online. . . .

Jayson Raitt has joined **MGM Animation** as manager of creative affairs. He was previously at Columbia Tri-Star Television Distribution. . . . In line with recent expansion of its commercial division, Palo Alto, California-based **Pacific Data Images (PDI)** has signed New York City-based agency **Claire Garrett Alden** for East Coast representation. PDI is represented in the Midwest by Bill Rabin & Associates, and on the West Coast by Lynda Woodward & Associates. . . . Animation director **Andy Staveley** has joined London-based animation studio, **Aka Pizazz** as staff CGI animator and is also being represented as a commercial director. In between commercials, he is working on a short film called, *Night Saves the Day*.

In Passing...

Ken O'Connor. Legendary Disney layout artist Kendall O'Connor died of natural causes on May 27 at his home in Burbank, California.



Mulan. © The Walt Disney Company.

He would have turned 90 years old on June 7. Born in Perth, Australia, O'Connor emigrated to the U.S. in 1930. In 1935, he was hired as a layout artist at Disney Studio, where he worked until his retirement in 1974. Some of his career highlights at Disney include designs for 13 animated features including *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Fantasia*, *Cinderella*, *Peter Pan* and nearly 100 shorts, including the 1953 Oscar winner, *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom*. He also taught at California Institute of the Arts; among his students were John Lasseter, John Musker, Henry Selick, Mark Kirkland and Tim Burton. O'Connor has received an ASIFA-Hollywood Annie Award, a Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Golden Award and a Disney Legends Award. Funeral services were private, but O'Connor will be remembered by a scholarship fund for animation students. Donations may be sent to:

Kendall O'Connor Animation Scholarship Fund
P.O. Box 3535
1634 North San Fernando Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91508-3535, U.S.A.

Contributions and inquiries about the fund are welcome. For information, call (213) 849-1728.

Phil Hartman, a well-known comedian who was also a voice actor for animation, was shot to death by his wife on May 28 at his home in Encino,

California. He was a frequent guest voice on *The Simpsons*, playing characters such as past B-movie star and infomercial host Troy McClure, lawyer Lionel Hutz, fast talking salesman Lyle Lanley, political figure Evan Conover, Barts adoptive "bigger brother" Tom and even Moses. Walt Disney Pictures recorded Hartman as the voice of a character in the dubbed English version of the Japanese animated feature, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, which has not yet been commercially released in the U.S., but is currently touring film festivals.

Films

Mulan, Disney's 36th animated theatrical feature film, opened in U.S. movie theaters on Friday, June 19. Directed by Barry Cook and Tony Bancroft, *Mulan* is the first feature to be primarily produced at Walt Disney Feature Animation Florida, which opened in Orlando nearly two years ago. In the Disney tradition of adapting classic tales, *Mulan* is based on a 2,000 year-old tale of a young girl who joins the Chinese army. The

films cast includes voices by Eddie Murphy, Pat Morita and June Foray, and songs written by Matthew Wilder and David Zippel. In case you haven't noticed the billboards and TV advertising, the film's opening will also be promoted on talk shows and specials airing on Disney-owned networks ABC and the Disney Channel.

Note: This issue of *Animation World Magazine* features a review of *Mulan* by Andy Klein.

Lost Disney Short Found. A rare 35mm nitrate print of *Alice's Spanish Guitar*, an animated short film made by Walt Disney in 1926, has recently been found and donated to George Eastman House International Museum of Photography of Film. It is the only nitrate print of this film known to have survived. The eight-minute black & white film combines live-action with animation, like the 17 other films in the *Alice in Cartoonland* series, which starred child actress Margie Gay trapped in an animated world. The George Eastman House hosted the annual summer school for the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), through June 26, and is also home to the only permanent film preservation school in the U.S., The L. Jeffrey Selznik School of Film Preservation.

For more information about George Eastman House, visit the "Hidden Treasures" article in the March 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue.2.12/2.12pages/2.12engleestman.html>].

Fox Vamps Up Next Feature. Fox Animation Studios has con-

firmed another animated feature in development; a musical based on the story of *Dracula*. It is expected that the film will be the third release from Fox Animation Studios, which made its debut with *Anastasia* last fall and is still in pre-production on its second feature, *Planet Ice*, slated for a 1999 release. The *Dracula* film is being developed with Josh Whedon and his production company, Mutant Enemy, which is also developing several other vampire-themed projects, including another live-action feature based on the TV series property, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Whedon's other projects in animation include writing the screenplay for Disney/Pixar's *Toy Story*, as well as one of the songs for *Simba's Pride*, Disney's direct-to-video sequel to *The Lion King*.

Fox Not Freezing *Planet Ice*. Ten development personnel and artists involved in pre-production on Fox's next animated feature, *Planet Ice*, were given lay-off notices and completed their last days of work on May 29. The film's former director, Art Vitello parted ways with the project at least one month ago. However, resulting rumors that the film has been canceled are being denied by Fox Animation Studios. Division president Chris Meledandri said, "The film

was never in production. It is still in pre-production." He added that the studio "currently has a very small crew on the film," which is in the process of "finding out exactly how they are going to make it." In February, Fox announced that the film will be released in 1999. Fox is expected to make a new announcement regarding *Planet Ice* soon.

Television

Toons From Planet Orange is the name of a new half-hour special featuring eight animated short films commissioned by Nickelodeon and directed by artists in Australia, Germany, Latin America, U.K. and the U.S. It is the first animated project by Nickelodeon's Worldwide Development Group (WDG). "The mission of WDG is to discover fresh talent from around the globe and provide [them] the opportunity to develop and produce their innovative, irreverent ideas," said Albie Hecht, president of Film and Television Entertainment for Nickelodeon, "[as well as] a chance to develop their characters into future Nickelodeon toon stars." The shorts are: *Agent Green* and *Ego From Mars* by Kapow Productions, *Snout* by Fudge Puppy Productions, *Helmmut and the Killer Nose* by Anton Reidel, *La Hora de Hombre Cacto* by Darío Adanti and Bárbara Perdiguera, *Vida De Sapos* by Metrovisión Post Producción, *Spider and Fly* by Elm Road on the Box and *Hector the Get Over Cat* by John R. Dilworth. *Toons From Planet Orange* will air simultaneously on August 22, on Nickelodeon chan-

nels around the world, in several different languages.

Nick Turns Off In Germany. Citing weak advertising sales and increased competition for viewers, Nickelodeon has ceased broadcasting its channel in Germany. The channel, launched nearly three years ago, was challenged by the launch of Kinderkanal, a new advertising-free cable channel launched last year by German broadcasters ARD and ZDF. Nickelodeon hopes to regain its presence in Germany by licensing programming to native broadcasters in the future.

Sony Launches Anime Channel. Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE), in partnership with Japanese animation studios Toei Animation, Sunrise, Kyokuichi Corporation and Nippon, launched ANIMAX—the first 24-hour satellite channel devoted to anime—in Japan on June 1. Masao Takiyama, a former executive at Fuji Creative, has been named general manager and CEO of the channel, which will be headquartered in Tokyo. ANIMAX will be one of 171 channels on the new digital platform, SkyPerfectV!, which aims to reach two million subscribers by the year 2000. Programming will consist of animation produced by founding companies.

Fox Animating '99 Line-Up. Hoping to expand on the success it had with *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*, The Fox Broadcasting Company will add three new animated series to its prime time schedule in mid-season (early 1999): *Simpsons* creator Matt Groening's *Futurama* [AF



Toons From Planet Orange. © Nickelodeon.

4/14/98], Eddie Murphy and Will Vinton Studios' stop-motion *The PJs* [AF 2/17/98] and newcomer Seth MacFarlane's *Family Guy*. While *Futurama* and *The PJs* were planned and in production well before this announcement, *Family Guy* is a relatively unplanned pilot by MacFarlane, a 24-year-old graduate of Rhode Island School of Design who was recently discovered by Fox executives. MacFarlane's student film first brought him to Hanna-Barbera's attention where he made *Larry and Steve*, a What A Cartoon! short for Cartoon Network in 1995. Specific nights of the week on which the three new series will air have not yet been announced. In a related move, Fox will relocate *King of the Hill* from its post-*Simpsons* Sunday slot to an 8:00 p.m. Tuesday slot, preceding a new live-action series, *Costello*, starting in fall '98. The *Simpsons*, entering its 10th season in fall '98, will stay put on Sunday, but will be followed by another new live-action comedy, *Feelin' All Right*, set in the 1970s.

Commercials

Spotlight. Wondering who does the visual effects for those Chihuahua trend-inducing Taco Bell commercials? The spots' talking dog is filmed in live-action then manipulated with animation by Michael Killen at Los Angeles-based **Post Logic Studios**, using Discreet Logic's Inferno soft-

ware on an SGI Onyx. . . . Palo Alto, California-based **Pacific Data Images (PDI)** created a computer-animated spot for Gatorade called *Frost: Who's Bad Now!* The spot depicts a fire-breathing mechanized beast chasing a live-action runner who is saved when he steps into the Gatorade Frost "world." PDI's proprietary software was used by animation director Cliff Boulé, character animator Adam Valdez, effects animator/modeler Krzysztof Rostek and assistant animator Chanda Cummings. . . . Burbank, California-based **Renegade Animation** created animated 60, 30 and 15-second spots for Cartoon Network's "Get Tooned Sweepstakes" promotion. Daffy Duck serves as narrator for the spots which aired in May. The director was Darrell Van Citters and the animator was Ken McDonald. . . . London-based **Bolexbrothers** (*The Saint Inspector*) created a spot for Coca-Cola's Nestea called *Kwiki-Mart*, in which a skeleton enters a convenience store, and turns into a snowman after drinking the cool beverage.

Director Dave Borthwick utilized stop-motion animation with computer animation effects. . . . London-based **Aka Pizazz** created a 30-second spot called *Martians* for Swedish agency Observa Greys client, Yes washing liquid, in which aliens come to earth and discover the product, only to be so impressed, they return to their planet with hundreds of bottles. Director Marc Craste used Animo for 2-D animation with added CGI effects. . . . **Aka Pizazz** also created a 30-second commercial currently airing in South Africa, called *Sledgehammer*. The 3-D stop-motion spot for Dispirin aspirin pays homage to the animated Peter Gabriel music video of the same name. The director was Steven Harding Hill. . . . Lastly, **Aka Pizazz** director Philip Hunt (*Ah Pook is Here*) directed the first of three spots for mobile phone operators, Orange. Hunt's thumb-nail line animation of a stick figure was enlarged and made into replacement cut-out figures, which were animated against blue screen and composited into col-

lage environments with a Henry system. The second Orange spot is being directed by Marc Craste and the third by Dominic Griffiths, all at aka Pizazz. . . . Another London-based studio, **Passion Pictures**, created three 30-second spots for Gardenburger, based on painterly, 2-D art by children's book illustrator Dan Yaccarino. Director Alyson Hamilton's back-



A Cartoon Network promo by Renegade Animation. © Cartoon Network.



Computer Café's Ladybug commercial for New Organics Company. Image courtesy of Computer Café.

ground includes a recent stint as lead character animator on Warner Bros. feature, *Quest for Camelot*. . . . Hollywood, California-based **Acme Filmworks** created a 30-second promo spot for *The Tex Avery Show* on Cartoon Network. Director Ashley Lenz used traditional character animation composited with added grain and some original background footage from Tex Avery cartoons to achieve a seamless result. Digital ink and paint was done at Virtual Magic. . . . Santa Maria, California-based **Computer Café** created a computer-animated commercial for the New Organics Company, featuring a computer-animated ladybug interacting with live-action. Ron Honn served as animation director, David Ebner as technical director/animator and Oliver Hotz as lead animator. . . . New York City-based **AMPnyc** is producing three, five-second station ids for Primestar Satellite Television, using three distinct animation styles: water colors, full character animation and a "childrens

storybook" look. . . . Also in New York, **Curious Pictures** director Joan Raspo created a 30-second spot for Kellogg's Smart Start cereal called *Seize the Day*. The spot combines animated type and graphics atop live-action photography of the product. . . . Another recent typography commercial by **Curious Pictures** is *What's Missing*, a 60-second spot for Showtime Networks which also incorporates animated graphics, all

directed by Denis Morella. . . . New York City-based **Brian Diecks Design** created a promo spot called *The Xtreme Experience* for ESPN, using 3-D wireframe animation and 2-D animated type. . . . Boston-Massachusetts-based **Loconte Goldman Design** created a package of bumpers for the History Channels new five-part series, *Dream Machines*. The spots directed by Arne Jensen and animated by Erica Neiges, combine live-action photography with animated effects. . . . Toronto, Canada-based **Spin Productions** created two, 30-second computer animated commercials for Cadbury Chocolates, using Alias/Wavefront's Maya software. . . .

Home Video

Tell Me Who I Am. Positive Communications, Inc. has released a 35-minute animated video for kids aged 3-11, depicting African heritage. Titled *Tell Me Who I Am: The Journey Begins*, the video was



Swan Princess III. © Columbia TriStar Home Video.

directed by James A. Simon and produced by Wantu Enterprises. The musical story is currently available by direct order from PCI (\$19.95). Call 1-888-WHO-I-AM-2 or visit www.poscomm.com.

Swan Princess III. Columbia TriStar Home Video will release the direct-to-video title, *The Swan Princess III and the Mystery of the Enchanted Treasure*, produced by Nest Entertainment and directed by Richard Rich. The video features a 72-minute film with five songs and a 12-minute *Sing Along* sequence featuring songs excerpted from all three *Swan Princess* films. The video will be available in stores August 4 for \$14.95 (SRP). A tie-in promotion and rebate will run on packages of Kid Cuisine Frozen Meals in August and September.

Anime Update. Following is a list of anime video releases scheduled for June, July and August. Right Stuf International: *Toward the Terra* and *Godmars*. . . . Media Blasters/Kitty Media: *Chimera*, *Earthian - The Beginning of the End* and *Sexorcist*. . . . A.D.V. Films: *Space Adventure Cobra*, *Tekkaman Blade II*, *Slayers: The Motion Picture*, *Dirty Pair Flash: Mission 2 Act 1*, *Dragon Knight* and *Rail of the Star* (new English dub). . . . Central Park Media: *Silent Service*, *Nightmare Campus: Volume 1*, *Fobia 1*, *The Slayers: Volume 7*, *Gall Force 1: Eternal Story*, *Harmageddon*, *Voltage Fighters!* *Gowcaizer: The Movie* and *Great Days of the Century*.

Many of the above listed anime titles are strictly for adults. This issue of *Animation World Magazine* features an article by



Reader Rabbit's Kindergarten. © The Learning Company.

anime expert Fred Patten, taking a closer look at the burgeoning market for "anime porn."

Time For Melody Time. On June 2, Walt Disney Home Video released Disney's 10th animated feature, the 1948 film *Melody Time*. Starring Donald Duck in several roles, the film is a collection of musical stories—or chapters—such as *Pecos Bill* and *Johnny Appleseed*. Some of the songs are performed by The Andrews Sisters. *Melody Time* runs 75 minutes, is unrated, and is being offered for U.S. \$22.99 (SRP).

Internet & Interactive

Quick Bytes. The Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), the world's largest event dedicated to showcasing interactive entertainment and educational software and related products, took place May 28-30 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Exhibitors included **Microsoft** and **Sega** who gave a sneak peek at their collaborative new gaming

console called Dreamcast, slated for release in Japan in November, and in the rest of the world in 1999. Microsoft and Sega have been developing this product for nearly two years. It will utilize a version of the Windows operating system, and will include a modem for networked gaming and Internet access. . . . **DIC Entertainment** has signed an agreement to represent **The Learning Company's** educational CD-Rom game character, Reader Rabbit, for worldwide television, video and licensing. DIC will immediately begin developing the property for domestic and international television programmers and the direct-to-video market. . . . **Electronic Arts** announced and is showing off its slate of upcoming 1998 games for various platforms, including *Small Soldiers*, based on the upcoming DreamWorks film of the same name which includes computer animation by ILM. . . . Meanwhile, on the internet, Bristol, U.K.-based animation studio **Fictitious Egg** and director Andy Wyatt have launched a Shock-

wave-viewable animated series called *Tommy Sausage* at www.eggtoons.com. Warning: this is an adult cartoon! . . . Macromedia's Shockrave game site is featuring a new animated game by **Ezone Corporation** called *Lenny Loosejocks Goes Walkabout* [www.ezone.com/lennyworld]. The game follows the title character through the virtual town of Pullyapantsup, Australia. . . . **Goblin Entertainment** has launched *The Joe Psycho & Moo Frog Cartoon Show*, an Internet cartoon series viewed with Macromedia Flash [www.goblinstudios.com]. . . . **Marvel Interactive** is using RealFlash to bring its comic characters to life in a new series of Internet "radio-plays" called Marvel's Excelsior Theatre. The web site [www.marvelzone.com] became subscription-based (\$34.95 per year) on June 15. . . . The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (C.B.L.D.F.) is hosting an on-line auction, featuring original art by artists such as Frank Miller. . . . **Comedy Central** recently redesigned its *South Park* web site [www.comedycentral.com/south-park/] to include a new "Behind the Scenes" section featuring storyboard samples, an episode guide and Q & A with the shows creators. . . .

More animation-related gaming news is featured in Joseph Szadkowski's E3 review in this issue of *Animation World Magazine*.



Prince of Egypt. © DreamWorks LLC.

Technology

Tools Of The Trade. Phoenix, Arizona-based **Rainbow Studios** recently purchased five licenses of LambSoft's **Pro Motion** software, which enables animators to combine motion capture data with keyframe animation. Rainbow is using Pro Motion in production of a 3-D feature film called *Billy Jellybean*. . . . Numerical Design Ltd. has released a new 3D Studio MAX plug-in called MAXImmerse, which enables animators and game developers to view and interact with scenes in real time. . . .

. . . **Colorland**, an animation studio in Shenzhen, China has gone completely digital in its ink and paint services with 45 ANIMO workstations. This transition has taken place over the past two years, during which time the studio has worked on projects for studios such as Yoram Gross Village

Roadshow, Southern Star and BRB International. . . . **Discreet Logic** recently sold 40 of its Silicon Graphics O2 effect* systems to a new digital cinema school in Japan called **Movie Movie**. Starting in October 1998, the two-year program will offer classes in digital compositing, motion capture and character animation. . . .

Studios: What technology are you using to create animation? Software developers: Who is using your product and for what? Send your news to "Tools of the Trade" at editor@awn.com.

Licensing

Licensing Show News. The annual Licensing Show took place at the Jacob K. Javitz Convention Center in New York City, June 9-11. It is here that producers of animated properties made deals with licensees to create toys, games,

software, apparel and other products based on their characters. Some news was: Canadian company **NELVANA** is lining up licensees for its six new animated series to air on CBS in fall 1998. *Franklin* will be featured in a promotion of Polygram home videos and Eden plush toys at the U.S. chain of stores called Zany Brainy. *From the Files of the Flying Rhinoceros* will be featured on posters with the U.S. Postal Service and as a new ice cream flavor from Baskin Robbins. . . . Saban/Fox Kids signed Parachute Publishing and HarperCollins to create a series of children's books based on the *Life With Louie* series. . . . Nickelodeon recently struck a promotional deal with Campbell's Soup to tie in with *Rugrats* and *Blue's Clues*. . . . Australian company Southern Star is handling licensing for Cosgrove Hall and ITel's stop-motion animated series *The Animal Shelf*. Ladybird Books has signed on for story and activity books, and Bluebird Toys has developed a plush line.

Also during the Licensing Show, the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association (LIMA) presented its annual LIMA awards on June 10. The animated-related winners are: Licensing Agency of the Year and Licensee of the Year: Nickelodeon's *Rugrats*.

Licensee of the Year/Soft Goods:



Dexter's Laboratory: The Musical Time Machine. © Cartoon Network.

Happy Kids for *Rugrats* children's apparel.

License of the Year (worldwide outside the U.S.): Warner Bros. Consumer Products Looney Tunes property.

Music

Prince Of Egypt Brings 3 Albums. DreamWorks Records will release one soundtrack of songs featured on the soundtrack of, and two albums of songs inspired by DreamWorks Feature Animation's debut effort, the animated musical drama, *Prince of Egypt*. The albums, featuring recordings by performers such as country artists Reba McEntire and Randy Travis, and R&B and pop artists Boyz II Men and Jars of Clay, will both be released prior to the film's theatrical release on December 18.

Dexter Rocks. Kid Rhino recently

released *Dexter's Laboratory: The Musical Time Machine*, an album featuring songs from Cartoon Network's animated series about a boy genius who conducts experiments from a hidden laboratory in his room. The 30-minute recording is available on CD (\$15.98) and cassette (\$9.98).

Education

Mentors Wanted!

Workforce LA, a non-profit organization serving Los Angeles schools, is looking for

volunteer mentors to coach high school students at its Animation Boot Camp in August, 1998. Fifty teenagers from the L.A. area, many of whom are from at-risk environments and in danger of dropping out, need your encouragement and expertise! Needed for two to four hour assignments are a director, character animator, composer, sound effects designer, in-betweener, clean-up artist and AVID editor. For information, call Evelyn Seubert at (213) 224-6191.

Events

The Exhibition L'imaginaire De La Ville. showcases backgrounds and characters from a 16-minute animated film *Les Aventures de Guede* produced in Abidjan, Africa by the French Studio Entracte with the participation of children. The exhibit runs until July 2, 1998 at Kodak headquarters, 26 rue Villiot,

75012 Paris, France.

Animated Exhibits. With all of the current public interest in animation, chances are that somewhere near you, there's some animation-related art on display. Animator **Mo Willems** and his father, Casey Willems, a ceramicist, are showing their sculptural works in a joint exhibition called "Father and Son" at Gallery Henoch in New York City, June 11-July 4, 1998. . . . **The Museum Of The Moving Image** (MOMI) in London will feature an exhibit tied to the July 24 U.K. release of Warner Bros.' animated feature, *The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot*. The show runs July 1 - November 18. . . . **The International Museum Of Cartoon Art** in Boca Raton, Florida is featuring an exhibit titled "Garfield: 20 Years and Still Kicking," June 19 - August 30.

Last Month In Animation

The following is a list of events which took place since the last issue of *Animation World Magazine* was published. These listings are published weekly in the *Animation Flash*, a free newsletter which is distributed by e-mail. Subscribe now! Are there animation events going on in your area? Share your regional event news with the international readers of the Animation Flash! Please send announcements to editor@awn.com, at least eight days in advance.

* Monday, June 1. San Jose, California, U.S.A. A team of executives from Walt Disney Feature Animation (Paul Yanover, Dean Schiller, Ben Croy and Mark Kimball) demonstrated and discussed the

computer networking technology used in feature production, at the ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode) Year '98 Conference held at the San Jose Convention Center through June 5. For information, visit www.atmyear.com

* Friday, June 5. Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) presented the 1998 Senior Film/Animation/Video Festival at 7:00 p.m. in the RISD Auditorium. For information, call (401) 454-6233.

* Friday, June 5. Eugene, Oregon, U.S.A. The University of Oregon presented a show of student work in animation and motion graphics. For information, visit <http://aaa.uoregon.edu/~animate>

* Friday, June 5. Santa Monica, California, U.S.A. Glenn Vilppu taught a class in "Figure Drawing for Animation" at DH Institute of Media Arts. For information, visit <http://www.dhima.com>. If you can't make it to this class, take Glenn's free, "virtual" life drawing class on-line on Animation World Network. His new series launched in the June issue of *Animation World Magazine* [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.3/3.3pages/3.3vilppudrawing.html>].

* Saturday, June 6 - Friday, June 12. Bradford, England, U.K. The Bradford Animation Festival took place at the National Museum of Photography, Film & Television. Competition included four categories, and additional programs include workshops, short

film compilations, a special on *The Simpsons*, and a retrospective of Ray Harryhausen, who was be present to host the closing night ceremony. For information, contact sutherland@nmsi.ac.uk or call ++ 44 1274-773399 (ext 274.)

* Saturday, June 6 - Sunday, June 7. Washington, D.C., U.S.A. Comic book artist Frank Miller made an appearance at two locations of the stores, AnotherUniverse.com, to promote his new Dark Horse Comics series, *300*.

* Sunday, June 7. London, England, U.K. The British Film Institute's National Film Theatre started its kids programming series, Junior NFT with a screening of *The Secret of N.I.M.H.* (1982). Call 0171-928-3232.

* Tuesday, June 9 - Thursday, June 11. New York City, New York, U.S.A. The annual Licensing Show took place at the Jacob K. Javitz Convention Center. For information, visit www.licensingshow.com.

* Wednesday, June 10. Glendale, California, U.S.A. ASIFA-Hollywood continued its Careers in Animation series with a lecture on storytelling by Francis Glebas, at Glendale Community College (GCC). ASIFA is also continuing its Life Drawing Workshops at GCC on Wednesday evenings (7-10 p.m.) and Saturday mornings (10 a.m. - 1 p.m.). For information on both programs, call (818) 842-8330 or (818) 240-1000 ext. 5158.

* Thursday, June 11. Los Angeles,

California, U.S.A.

The L.A. United School District and AnimAction presented the Team Awards VIII at UCLA's Wadsworth Theater from 7 to 9 p.m. This annual event honors middle school students who have completed animated anti-smoking public service announcements with the AnimAction program. For information, call (310) 455-9912.

* Thursday, June 11. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

The Women in Animation Writers Group held its monthly seminar at 7:30 p.m. at Saban Entertainment, 10960 Wilshire Blvd. The topic was "Developing the Script." Call (818) 360-8321.

* Thursday June 11 and Saturday June 13. Erlangen, Germany.

The German-subtitled version of Hayao Miyazaki's animated feature, *Mononoke Hime* (Princess Mononoke) was screened at 8:30 p.m. at the Erlangen Comic-Con.

* Thursday, June 11. Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.

The Nashville Independent Film Festival (formerly Sinking Creek) included a screening of animation, including *Gabola the Great* and *Cartoon Network's B-Sides: Rarities, Out-Takes, & Oddities*.

* Friday, June 12 - Sunday, June 14. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. The ShowBiz Expo took place at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Events include panel discussions titled "Pitching Your Animation Project" with speakers from Fox and DreamWorks, and "All CG Movies" with speakers from Universal and PDI. For information, visit www.smp.te.org.

* Friday, June 12. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

The Children's Entertainment Association (CEA) held its annual members meeting at 9:00 a.m. at the American Federation of Musicians' HQ, Paramount Building, 1501 Broadway. It was followed by a conference on the kids' music business. For information, contact askCEA@aol.com.

* Saturday, June 13. Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.

The Nashville Independent Film Festival hosted a workshop titled "Pushing the Boundaries of Animation in Film" with independent animator Ellie Lee at the Belmont United Methodist Church. For information, visit www.nashville-filmfestival.org.

* Saturday, June 13. Chatsworth, California, U.S.A.

The Learning Tree University held an all day seminar on Writing for Animation, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., taught by Jean Ann Wright. Call (818) 882-5599.

* Sunday, June 14. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A.

The 1998 Student Academy Awards ceremony took place at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Winners are listed in this month's issue.

* Monday, June 15. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

Women in Animation (WIA) and Women in Film and Television (WIFTA) hosted an evening with Faith Hubley. Her films *Seers and Clowns*, *Beyond the Shadow Place*, *Time of the Angels* and *My Universe Inside Out* will be

screened. Call (212) 679-0870.

* Tuesday, June 16. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

UCLA presented its annual "Prom" screening of student animation work at 7 and 9 p.m. RSVP to (310) 825-5829.

* Tuesday, June 16 and Wednesday, June 17. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

The third Virtual Humans conference took place at the Universal City Hilton. Speakers included Steve Williams (Complete Pandemonium), Jeff Kleiser (Kleiser-Walczak), Andre Bustanoby (Digital Domain) and Greg Panos (Performance Animation Society). For information, visit www.vrnews.com/events/vh3main.html.

* Wednesday, June 17 - Sunday, June 21. Zagreb, Croatia.

The 1998 Zagreb Festival of Animated Films took place and Gunnar Strøm will review the festival and the winners for *Animation World Magazine's* August issue. For programming information, visit the Zagreb web site, accessible from Animation World Networks Animation Village. <http://www.awn.com/awneng/village.html>

* Thursday, June 18. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

Christie's East held a large auction. It included an animation art section featuring art from *Snow White*, *Pinocchio*, *Fantasia*, *Bambi*, and the Disney short, *The Brave Little Tailor*. For information, call (800) 395-6300. To learn more about how Christie's auctions work, visit *Animation World Magazine's* November 1997 issue for

"Inside Christies: A Conversation With Elyse Luray-Marx" by Heather Kenyon [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.8/2.8pages/2.8kenyonmarx.html>].

* Thursday, June 18. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation's Writers Group met at Rhythm & Hues Studios, 5404 Jandy Place in the Marina del Rey area. The topic was "What Writers Should Know About the Traditional and CG Animated Commercial Pipeline," with speakers Jane Stephan, Ian Dawson, Bill Kroyer and Michael Crapser.

* Friday, June 19. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Members of the animation community gathered for a silent auction to raise money for independent animator Sarah Petty, who suffered a series of misfortunes and is in need of financial support. Artists who donated pieces for the auction include Frédéric Back, Faith Hubley, Paul Driessen, Janet Perlman, Bill Plympton, David Silverman ("The Simpsons"), Andreas Deja, Eric Goldberg and Joe Grant. Sarah Petty's film *Furies* and John Canemakers *Bridgehampton* will be screened. For information call Tom Sito at (818) 695-6425. For those who could not attend the event, the artwork is also being showcased and bids are being taken via the web (before and after the event) at www.fleetingimage.com/auction.

* Saturday, June 20. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation's Computer Animation Group meets on the third Saturday of every month at Rhythm & Hues Studios, 5404

Jandy Place in the Marina del Rey area, for a pot-luck lunch with great networking opportunities. Call (310) 448-7500.

* Saturday, June 20 and Sunday, June 21. London, England, U.K.

The British Film Institutes National Film Theatre continued its kids programming series, Junior NFT with screenings of *Rock-a-Doodle* (1990) on Saturday, and *Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina* on Sunday. Call 0171-928-3232.

* Tuesday, June 23. Dana Point, California, U.S.A.

The Digital Living Room (DLR) conference, organized by Upside magazine and other sponsoring publications, took place at the Ritz Carlton Laguna Niguel. The event included a Video, Animation and Special Effects Festival. For information visit www.digitallivingroom.com

* Tuesday, June 23 - Sunday, June 28. Cardiff, Wales, U.K.

The Vital! Animation Festival took place. *Animation World Magazine* editor-in-chief Heather Kenyon moderated a panel discussion titled "Animating the Internet" on June 25 at 12:00 p.m. For information about the festival, including complete program listings, visit www.vital-animation.org.

* Wednesday, June 24. Burbank, California, U.S.A.

ASIFA-Hollywood presented Tom Sito's "An Evening With..." series featuring the animated couple, Bill and Sue Kroyer. For information call (818) 842-8330.

Awards

Student Academy Awards. The Student Academy Awards program is a national competition conducted by the Academy and the Academy Foundation. Each year over 300 college and university film students from all over the United States compete for awards and cash grants, with films being judged in four categories: animation, documentary, dramatic and alternative. This year's ceremony took place on Sunday, June 14 in Los Angeles. The gold prize (\$2,000) in the animation category was awarded by voice actor June Foray to two students from Florida's Ringling School of Art & Design, Peter Choe and Neal Nellans, for their film, *Jakata*. The silver medal (\$1,500) went to *Switchback* by Kyle Clark from the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles and the bronze (\$1,000) went to *Put On A Happy Face* by Suzanne Lee Twinning from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. To promote opportunities to the students beyond the evening, a compilation presentation of the gold medal award-winning films is circulated each year free of charge to educational and non-profit organizations nationwide, utilizing a grant from the Eastman Kodak Co.

Annecy Winners.

The 1998 Annecy Animation Festival is reviewed in this issue. Winners are included with the article.



DESERT ISLAND SERIES

compiled by Wendy Jackson

On A Desert Island With....Some Consenting Adults and a Cartoon Talk Show Host

This month, we asked a selection of people related to this issues themes of comics and animation for adults what films they would want to have with them if stranded on a desert island.

Alison Snowden and David Fine from U.K. recently premiered their first television series, a prime time cartoon for adults, *Bob and Margaret*, based on their Oscar-winning short film, *Bob's Birthday*. Denis Kitchen is a comic book artists and founder and president of Kitchen Sink Press, a Massachusetts, U.S.-based comic book publishing company. And Space Ghost, this months cover model, is a superhero from Ghost Planet, Outer Space who has his own talk show on Cartoon Network.

Alison Snowden and David Fine's Finest:

These are in no particular order. It was enough that we could agree on this list without trying to agree which is number five and which is number six!

1. *The Big Snit* by Richard Condie. Real adult animation before *The Simpsons*. It was a big influence on us.
2. *The Simpsons* by Matt Groening. Groundbreaking series which heralded a renaissance in smart, original animation with great voices. (Phil Hartman, R.I.P.)
3. *The Hill Farm* by Mark Baker. Stunning student film by a friend and badminton adversary.
4. *Radio Days*. One of Woody Allens best. His combination of writing, character and visual sense is inspiring.
5. *The Street* by Caroline Leaf. One of the most original and moving short films ever. Who would think that such stylized oil-on-glass animation could have such humanity and feeling?
6. *Down By Law* by Jim Jarmusch. One of the most original and hilarious feature films ever. Does American film get any better?
7. *Fargo* by the Coen Brothers. Hmm. Maybe it does. Its a toss up.
8. *Creature Comforts*, Nick Parks tiny, perfect gem.
9. *Why Me?* by Janet Perlman and Derek Lamb. A great bit of acting, humor and story in a simple, but effective style which was inspiring.
10. *On Land, At Sea and in the Air*, Paul Driessens elegant and wonderfully timed film.

Denis Kitchen's Picks:

As a comic book artist and publisher I'm not specifically an animation expert. I only know what cartoons made me laugh out loud, or whose images and styles left deeply imbedded and enduring impressions. Here's my top ten personal favorite cartoons:

1. Early Betty Boop, especially *Bimbo's Initiation* (Fleischer Bros.).
2. *Pinocchio* (Disney).
3. *Fantasia* (Disney).
4. Early *Popeye* (Fleischer).
5. *Superman* (Fleischer).
6. Mom and Pop in *Wild Oysters* (Fleischer stop action).
7. *Ren and Stimpy* by John Kricfalusi.
8. *Screwy Squirrel* by Tex Avery and Preston Blair.
9. *Hell's Bells* (1929 Disney Silly Symphony).
10. *The Simpsons* by Matt Groening.

Space Ghost

Space Ghost, the one cartoon character, is also the only one who selected all live-action films. He insists that these are indeed his picks and not merely the first eleven entries of the 1983 *Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide*.

1. *Aaron Loves Angela* by Gordon Parks Jr.
2. *Aaron Slick From Punkin Crick* by Claude Binyon.
3. *Abandoned* by Joseph M. Newman.
4. *Abandon Ship!* by Richard Sale.
5. *Abbott and Costello Go to Mars* by Charles Lamont.
6. *Abbott and Costello in Hollywood* by S. Sylvan Simon.
7. *Abbott and Costello in the Foreign Legion* by Charles Lamont.
8. *Abbott and Costello Meet Captain Kidd* by Charles Lamont.
9. *Abbott and Costello Meet Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Charles Lamont.
10. A tie between *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* by Charles Barton and *Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man*. by Charles Lamont

The Dirty Birdy by John Dilworth



Asian and Computer Animation, August 1998

This month *Animation World Magazine* looks toward Asia. Jackie Leger profiles Tezuka Productions and Museum in Japan, while Dr. John Lent takes a look at Ram Mohan and the animation industry in India. Recently, China has been making strides into the animation business. Veteran animation consultant Milt Vallas takes a look at their bid. Milt will also describe the latest digital tools used by studios around the Asian continent. Plus, Anne Aghiou and John Merson take us inside Vietnam for a look at their production facilities. As far as computer animation goes we have two exciting articles. Bill Fleming is going to point out invisible CGI, while Michelle Klein-Häss is going to tell us how to build an affordable home studio.

Other articles include Barry Purves' monthly production diary, Glenn Vilppu's next life drawing lesson and event reviews from Cardiff, Zagreb and the Singapore Animation Festival. An exciting new computer generated 3-D film, *Azimuth*, is reviewed by Judith Cockman so don't forget your 3-D glasses and finally, David Kilmer's long awaited *The Animated Film Collector's Guide* is put to the test by Emru Townsend.

We will also be featuring a special magazine supplement on SIGGRAPH! Don't miss our SIGGRAPH 98 Special Report, going online August 10th. Not everyone can get to SIGGRAPH this year- so join us for an in depth report on the people, companies, products, and technologies that lead the way at this year's conference.

Animation World Magazine 1998 Calendar

Television	(September)
Independant Filmmakers	(October)
Licensing and Merchandising	(November)
Family Animation	(December)