

ANIMATION

WORLD

Vol. 3 Issue 5

MAGAZINE

August 1998

# Asian Animation and Computer Animation

Malaysia's  
*Kampung Boy*

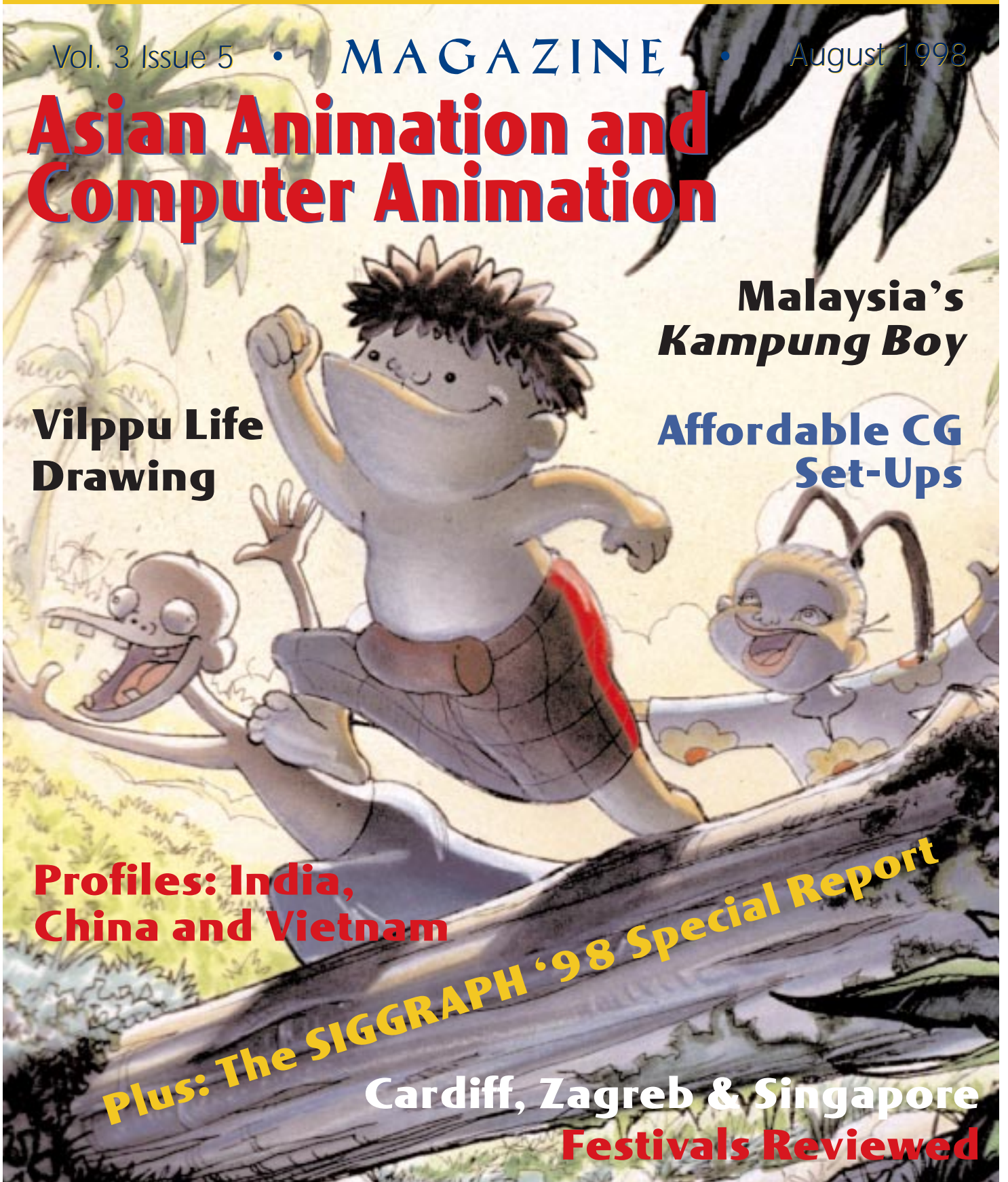
Vilppu Life  
Drawing

Affordable CG  
Set-Ups

Profiles: India,  
China and Vietnam

Plus: The SIGGRAPH '98 Special Report

Cardiff, Zagreb & Singapore  
Festivals Reviewed



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A multi-media co-production of *Animation World Magazine* and *Visual Magic Magazine*, AWN's SIGGRAPH '98 Special Report feature articles, news, reviews, product announcements and a special "company profile" section. Highlights include a survey of women in the computer graphics industry, an education spotlight on SIGGRAPH courses and panels, an update on the SIGGRAPH documentary in progress and a special selection of Quicktime video clips of animated films showcased in this year's Computer Animation Festival and Electronic Theater. AWN's SIGGRAPH '98 Special Report will be available exclusively on the Internet on the AWN web site.

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**Cover:** *Kampung Boy* is a new animated series about a youngster in Malaysia, designed by the cartoonist, Lat. An international co-production between the Philippine Animation Studios in Manila, broadcaster ASTRO in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and U.S. distributor Matinee Entertainment, *Kampung Boy* is an international co-production in the truest sense of the word. The show was recently screened at the Singapore Animation Fiesta and will be showcased this month at the Hiroshima Animation Festival in Japan. Cover image and Quicktime movie © 1998 Matinee Entertainment.

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# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Heather Kenyon

## Old countries are learning new tricks...

The dog days of August are bringing another exciting issue of *Animation World Magazine*. This month we are taking a look at Animation in Asia and Computer Animation. We are spotlighting three up-and-coming Asian animation-producing countries: China, India and Vietnam. Plus, in honor of SIGGRAPH, we are also issuing our first magazine supplement in conjunction with *Visual Magic Magazine*. The SIGGRAPH '98 Special Report will be on-line on August 11, 1998.

Asia continues to become more and more sophisticated in its production capabilities. Japan, a world leader in producing animated footage, has brought the art to a new level, plus has manga and animation so integrated into its culture that, as Jackie Leger reports, Osamu Tezuka is regarded as a national hero. Korean and Philippine studios are continually innovating with new technology and expanding facilities. Many large Asian studios now have offices in Los Angeles in order to facilitate the animation process between North America and Asia. Indeed, Korean studio Rough Draft performed quite a coup by setting up a sister studio in Los Angeles and snatching the high-profile, new Matt Groening series, *Futurama*, away from U.S. mainstay Film Roman. Could this be the dawning of a new trend?

In the past, in terms of large commercial productions, Asian studios have done the labor-intensive work, primarily layout through camera, while all design work, voice recording, color keying, scripting, storyboarding and post production were done in either the North American or European home studio. Perhaps this tide is turning. Will we see Asia nibbling at the production steps that were customarily seen as processes that needed to be completed on home turf? Asian producers have certainly made it clear that they are ready for the next step and are developing their own shows and shopping them at the markets. On such series they will naturally be doing all of the production. Yes, the tide is turning and Asia is trying to change from strictly a production house to a creative player on the global market scene.

In Asia, however, there are levels of preparedness for this new role. Japan, Korea, the Philippines and Taiwan are the current leaders, having had an active animation industry fostered by importing work. In fact, one hears stories of work being so plentiful, that studios in these countries farm it out through the back door to places like Bali, Malaysia and other growing Asian animation countries. While this might get domestic production managers hopping mad,



it is expanding the animation industry throughout Asia. Three countries currently preparing to make bids at the big time are India, Vietnam and China.

I am hoping Asian, American and European studios can work more closely on intelligent co-productions, bringing fresh, new Asian properties to our marketplace. These ancient cultures have spawned fascinating tales that I am sure would have global appeal. How many more times can European and North American audiences see re-hashes of the same old standard fairy tales and legends? Why, if children all over the world can understand U.S. programming, can U.S. children not understand programming from other regions? *Kampung Boy* is such an example. This bright, lively cartoon not only features universal story lines, like children being afraid to pass a certain

locale, but might even be more interesting as it shows how Malaysian children dress, eat and sleep. This is a "fresh, new approach," we just need someone to be brave enough to take it.

In this issue, beyond the SIGGRAPH '98 Special Report, we are also touching on computer animation. Michelle Klein-Häss has put her mass of acquired knowledge to the test by putting together "Small Studio/Home Studio: An

Overview of Low-End Computer Aided Animation Choices." This incredible how-to article should be enough to start you on your computer animating way, whether you prefer 2-D or 3-D. We are also highlighting a film by a true trailblazer Staceyjoy Elkin. Her film *Azimuth* is the first anaglyph, computer-generated animation to make it to tape. So dig through your junk drawer, pull out a pair of those funky 3-D glasses and enjoy!

A certain bright spot for us all this summer has been Disney's *Mulan*. *Mulan* has proven that yes, audiences will still watch an animated film if the story, music and design are good. This summer has been marked by films that are supposed to be huge, but turn out to be little. No film, not even films like *The Truman Show*, which did well with critics and audiences alike, are showing any legs or staying power. Could the leggiest picture of the summer be *Mulan*, a traditional animated feature? Hollywood, big effects blockbusters take a step back! The success of *Mulan* has not only brightened the faces of our jaded children, but has also made a lot of folks in feature animation breath a sigh of relief. Maybe this market can support all of these films, maybe the production houses will all keep going—provided the films they produce have good stories, taste and break the mold, even if just a little.

I'd also like to send a special thanks to David Kilmer, who has helped me meet a long term debt to one of my brother's best friends. It is amazing how easy it is to find a rare animated short or two, if you just know where to look and who to call to order it. Within five minutes, I had located the titles, the supplier and was on the phone to make my purchase. Thank you David for your *Animated Film Collector's Guide*! It is a life saver...or at least a useful tool in resolving bets.

Until Next Time...  
Heather

## CAREER CONNECTIONS

**Animation World Network's recruiting section offers free postings and access to artist resumes as well as recruitment advertisements**

***"The recruiting site reaches thousands of artists from all disciplines, quickly and efficiently. AWN certainly lives up to its name world-wide."***

**-Machi Tantillo  
Director of MTV Animation**

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## An Animated Detail

In response to: The Anime "Porn" Market (Patten 3.4)

The *New York Times* did not describe Doraemon as scantily clad. They were referring to *Visionary by U-Jin*, which had a genuine scantily clad female android from the future named Doreimon. Of course, it was a reference to the kids show, but it wasn't a kids show itself.

Sincerely,  
Ken Arromdee

---

## In Support of Littardi

In response to: Littardi 3.4

Though working in the animation field and living in France, I was not aware of M. Littardi's problems. I do agree that this trial sends us back to the dark ages of "Pétainism." [Editor's Note: *Pétain was the right-wing temporary president of France during Germany's WWII occupation of the country.*] Wasn't law 49-956 edicted by Vichys government? France is supposed to be the champion of the 'droit d'auteur,' which includes the right of writing and publishing freely. As far as I can see, *Anime-Land* is not exactly *Mein Kampf*! This trial is a shame as far as freedom of expression and the press is concerned. Besides, any child can switch on the television and see people dying on the 20h news, or copulating in a show 30 minutes later. All of this sounds like sheer hypocrisy. Animation for adults must exist.

Sincerely,  
Pierre Colin-Thibert  
Writer for animated childrens series, as well as many radio and television screenplays.

*We have heard from Animation World Magazine readers around the world in support of Tibor Clerdouet, Yvan West Laurence and Cedric Littardi. M. Littardi is still seeking letters of support to use in his trial.*

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## The State of Visual Narrative In Film And Comics

I totally and emphatically agree with Peter Chung's assessment of "The State of Visual Narrative In Film And Comics" (Chung 2.4) especially where comics are concerned. These days I purchase comics solely for the artwork (and at that, I have to be extremely choosy) because the stories are so bad. The last comic book I thoroughly enjoyed was *Batman Adventures: Mad Love* by Paul Dini and Bruce Timm. It was very fast paced, but told its story purely through pictures and dialogue. It was actually good! Unfortunately, DC Adventures Comics are the best ones to read because they follow a show that translates the super-heroic medium very well. However, whenever they throw in a thought balloon, I'm automatically annoyed.

In addition, comics creators are now out for the loot and are sometimes getting it. Look at McFarlane's *Spawn*, a highly over-rated, dark comic book. Its out-selling Marvel and DC titles! That

just shows how much the market has hit bottom. Most American comic art, in trying to combine Japanese manga and some badly drawn exaggerated fan looking art style, fail in achieving the effect. It has flash, but like violence, one can become desensitized to that flash. I guess this is just one symptom of the fast food culture of America.

I believe many animators should be doing comics because they have great knowledge of pacing and visualizing. I've enjoyed Bruce Timms and Brad Raders comic book work because they offer a great deal of additional material unknown to the reader.

Sincerely,  
Neil A. Hansen

P.S. I want Peter to try out a series of graphic novels featuring a heroine named Kelly Green by Leonard Starr and Stan Drake. These fast-paced adventures opened my eyes to really good writing and illustration. Even though they are out of print, they are worth the hunt.

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

# Dig This!

## Metrovision Puts Cinema in Reverse

by Wendy Jackson

Persistence of vision is the phenomenon that enables us to see motion pictures—a rapid succession of still frames—as a continuous reality. Cinema has been designed on this phenomenon, and we have constructed the idea of a cinematic experience being one in which we, the viewer, sit still while images pass before our eyes.

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**What if we were to keep the images still and move the people instead?**

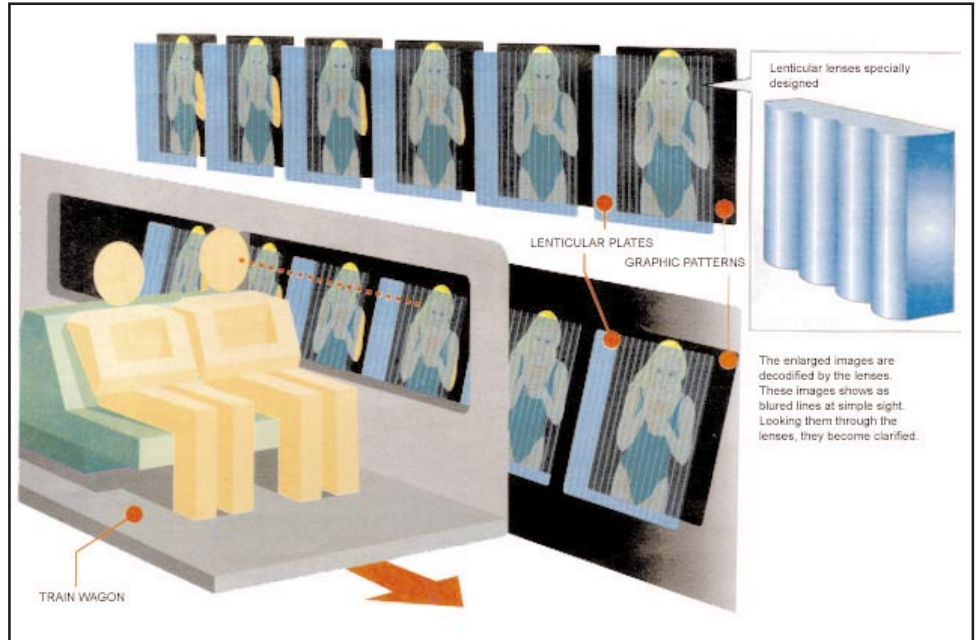
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### What If?

What if we were to keep the images still and move the people instead? This is the thought that motivated a group of engineers, artists and scientists in Santiago, Chile, to develop a system that literally reverses the cinematic experience as we know it. Enrique Vial, a civil engineer with the Catholic University of Chile, and Dr. Miguel Lagos, a physicist with the University of Chile, formed a company called Optek S.A. in 1993, sharing space with Vial's animation studio, Cineanimadores S.A. Five years later, they have patented "Metrovision," a system which enables passengers on a moving train to view animation as they pass through tunnels.

### But How?

The Metrovision system uti-



This illustration demonstrates the set-up of the Metrovision system. Image courtesy of Optek S.A.

lizes many of the same optics principles discovered by pioneers in the 19th century who developed optical toys such as zoetropes and phenakistoscopes. Metrovision, in fact, could be described as a sort of "human zoetrope." As the train moves, it passes a series of still images outside, at the passengers' eye level.

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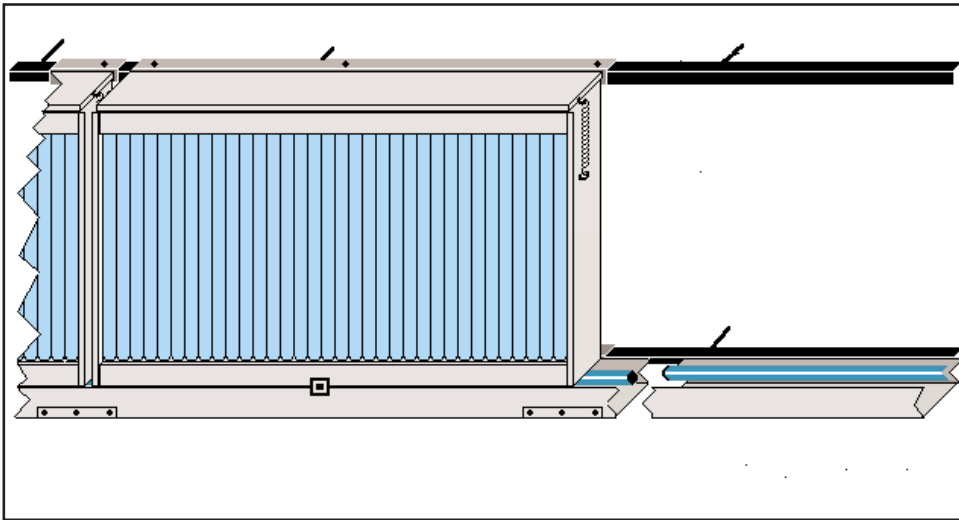
**The Metrovision system utilizes many of the same optics principles discovered by pioneers in the 19th century...**

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Vial explains: "On the tunnel walls we place panels, approximately 900mm long by 600mm high and 100 mm deep. The clarity of the animated images depend on the train speed; 30 Km

per hour up to 60 Km per hour averages 10 to 20 meters or panels per second."

What may seem like a simple idea actually took years of research, development and testing. "We can positively say that ours is not a trivial solution. There are others that have worked in similar areas, but their solutions have not yet been practical in regards to both the physical phenomena and economic feasibility," said Vial. He added, "We believe that this project would not have been possible ten years ago," citing that recent advances in computerized, numerically controlled machines, computational software, techniques for graphic applications and the development of new optical plastics materials



Close-up of a lenticular panel. Image courtesy of Optek S.A.

were of capital importance for the success of Metrovision.

### How Much?

Although the system has been temporarily installed in the Chilean subway for testing, Metrovision has not yet been permanently installed in a public transit system. The advertising agency J. Walter Thompson has assessed the systems use for advertising purposes, and has come up with a pricing plan that would permit investment recovery for advertisers in a few months.

**We believe that this project would not have been possible ten years ago - Enrique Vial.**

"We are now negotiating with an important foreign subway, which we expect to conclude nicely, so soon we should be able to start this as a business." Vial concluded, "We are completely sure that once we are in one subway, we will immediately be 'in the market.'"

The possibilities to expand animation to new venues is exciting. Hopefully, systems like Metrovision can be used not only for

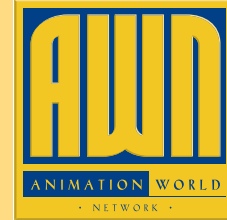
commercial purposes but also for artistic means.

*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](mailto:editor@awn.com).

What else should we dig? Every month, *Animation World Magazine* will highlight the most interesting, exciting happenings in animation, in "Dig This!" Send us your ideas, suggestions, videos, products or works-in-progress today. You dig?

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# RAM MOHAN AND RM-USL: INDIA'S CHANGE AGENTS OF ANIMATION

By Dr. John A. Lent

India has produced animation sporadically for 83 years and steadily for more than half that time, facts that are generally buried beneath the hoopla given the popular and gargantuan feature film industry.

This relative obscurity may be about to change as foreign animation houses move further into Asia to mine inexpensive labor pools, as Indian television channels proliferate and demand large chunks of programming, and as domestic studios and training centers open up to serve these and other needs.

Mumbai (Bombay), India's Hollywood, is home to most animation studios, although a few others have operated elsewhere in Hyderabad, Madras, and New Delhi. Silvertoon and Creat Communications, both in Mumbai, are engaged primarily in subcontract work for U.S., French, and British studios, using digital ink and paint and compositing system. Silvertoon's current project is a feature production of *Hanuman*, a Hindu mythological character. The project was commissioned by an English producer. Crest Communications, whose forte is 3-D CGI, produces pilots for Los Angeles studios. Drawing on its pool of about 100 alumni, the Zee Institute of Creative Arts (ZICA) in Myderabad, recently switched from animation

training to production. Its first assignment is an animated feature, *Bagmati*. The demise of the three-year-old course left the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad as the sole formal animation training center.



## RM - U S L — India's Top Studio

Foremost among Indian animation houses in size, longevity, and quality of work is RM-USL Animation, established in April 1997, when Ram Mohan Biographics formed a partnership with United Studios Ltd., India's leading post-production studio. President of the company and animation guru, Ram Mohan said the purpose of the merger was to build a facility with enough space (about 5,000 square feet) and equipment (13 Animo work stations) to handle large volume work, mainly for export.

One of RM-USL's immediate accomplishments was the strengthening of its personnel pool, which was increased from 30 to 120 in one year. Mohan said that before 1997, staff shortages limited Ram Mohan Biographics mainly to the production of short commercials, and when the firm

attempted bigger works, foreign collaboration was sought. He gave me an example: "When we took up *Meena* for UNICEF in 1992, we had a staff of 20-25 artists and we felt we did not have the capacity to handle production of all 13 episodes." Thus, many early episodes were designed and storyboarded by Ram Mohan Biographics, but animated at Fil-Cartoons in Manila.

To ensure a continuous flow of talent, RM-USL recruits artists from the finest art schools and then provides them with in-house animation training; first through a six- to eight-week program for newcomers who join at entry level as in-betweeners, and then in an ongoing series of courses in advanced animation for upgrading clean-up artists to the animator's level.

---

**One of RM-USL's immediate accomplishments was the strengthening of its personnel pool, which was increased from 30 to 120 in one year.**

---

The added space, equipment, and personnel allow RM-USL to operate at four levels, according to Mohan: "[a] high quality animation for commercials, for which we have a separate team of animators, [b] high-end animation on subcontract for studios in Los Angeles, [c] low-end, low-budget, limited animation shows for local and Asian sponsors, and [d] in-house productions which RM-USL will try and market on its own."



RM-USL's cast of characters. Courtesy of Ram Mohan.

After one year of the partnership, RM-USL's production record is rather impressive. The studio has designed, animated, and post-produced three 12-minute episodes of *Meena* for UNICEF (South Asia), focusing on the girl child of South Asia; animated one 16-minute episode of *Sara* for UNICEF (East and Southern Africa), dealing with the problem of the African adolescent girl; animated, on subcontract, two 24-minute episodes of *Adventure of Oliver Twist* for Saban International, and started pre-production work on a 13-part serial of 24 minutes each, called *Jo Killat*, for Singapore Television. The latter, co-produced with UTVI of Singapore, is one of several collaborations Mohan has had with foreign companies. In the early 1990s, he co-produced with Nippon Ramayana Films and producer Yugo Sako, *The Legend of Rama*, a 135-minute, award-winning animated feature. He and Sako are now discussing the possibility of co-producing *Krishna*, another feature based on Indian mythology.

RM-USL takes pride in its

capacity to work on the total concept, from visualization to post-production, handling customized projects and meeting deadlines with high-quality work at competitive quotes. For example, the *Meena* episodes had a total budget (excluding language dubbings) of U.S. \$60,000 each, the *Sara* episode, U.S. \$90,000 (including production, post-production, and dubbing in three languages), and the *Adventures of Oliver Twist* episodes, U.S. \$60,000 each. Mohan admits the latter price is rather low, but said the work gave RM-USL the "opportunity to be measured, *in terms of quality*, against other Asian competitors."

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**From the Indian perspective, to do animation for Hollywood is an opportunity for young people to find a career. - Ram Mohan**

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### Animator Ram Mohan's Visions

Some of Mohan's long-held aspirations have been realized with the establishment of RM-USL.

When I interviewed him July 10, 1993, Mohan was optimistic about the future of animation, pointing out that of 15 studios in India, already three or four were computerized, that a three-year diploma course in animation was in the works for the Film and Television Institute in Pune, and that initial contacts with foreign animation clients had materialized. He said, "If we had assurance that studios abroad would send work here, we would have to train animators and get more space. I'd start with 100 animators." To Mohan, using relatively inexpensive Indian labor to process overseas animation was not exploitative: "From the Indian perspective, to do animation for Hollywood is an opportunity for young people to find a career. There are very few chances for artists and this would open up a large area of employment."

Reiterating several times the problems incurred by a lack of trained animators and working space, he cited instances where jobs were lost because studios could not deliver work on time. Mohan also saw Modi Entertainment's dubbing of Disney animation into Hindi for Doordashan television as a potential problem, since it could minimize chances for local animators. However, he was quick to point out the advantages of Disney's presence, especially the building of interest for animation training of Indians in the Disney style. He concluded that all in all, local animation would not suffer because "in all the years that Disney was not here, animation still did not grow."

A science graduate, Mohan began his career in 1956, when he joined the governmental Film Division, then in the process of

developing an animation unit. For the most part, he was self-taught and early on, adopted the Disney style. In 1968, he joined Prasad Studio, a live-action feature film company in Madras that had invested in animation and needed someone to do the hands-on work. He started Ram Mohan Biographics in 1972.

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**Several organizations and individuals have attempted to advance Indian animation during the past eight decades, but without much sustained success.**

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### India's Long Tradition of Animation

Animation reaches deep in India's twentieth century history. In 1915, the father of Indian cinema, Dhumdiraj Govind Phalke, produced the animated *Agkadyanchi Mouj (Matchsticks' Fun)*, followed by *Laxmicha Galicha* (animated coins), and *Vichitra Shilpa* (again, inanimate animation). Because the war in Europe had slowed

imports, including film, Phalke was forced into making shorter works than features, so he resorted to cartoons and documentaries.

The first Indian animated film with a soundtrack, *On a Moonlit Night*, was released in 1934, and credited to composer and orchestra leader R.C. Boral. A few others followed, but not frequently or consistently, like *Lefanga Langoor* (1935), produced by Mohan Bhavani, *Superman Myth* (1939), directed by G.K. Gokhale and produced by Indian Cartoon Pictures, and *Cinema Kadampam* (1947), supervised by N. Thanu. However other film cartoons must have been released to justify the existence in the late 1930s of the Mumbai-based Indian Cartoon Pictures.

With the opening of the



Ram Mohan, left, and one of his key animators, Ajit Rao, July 1993. Photo by John A. Lent.

Cartoon Film Unit, part of the government-operated Films Division, true animation production came to India in 1956. The U.S. International Cooperation Administration helped financially, and former Disney animator Clair H. Weeks, in India as part of a cultural exchange program, provided training. Weeks also collaborated with veteran animator Gokhale to bring out the unit's first work, *Banyan Deer*, adapted from a Buddhist Janaka story.

The Cartoon Film Unit released a new film biannually until 1962 when production dou-

## 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/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5cover.html>

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Includes a Quicktime movie of the animated series, *Kampung Boy*, which is featured on the cover of this issue.  
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5toc.html>

- **Vilppu Drawing Online: Spherical Forms**

The on-line version of this article includes three Quicktime movies of master drawing instructor Glenn Vilppu demonstrating drawing techniques that every animator should know!  
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5villpu.html>

- ***Azimuth*: Get Those Red/Green Glasses—3D Has Made It To Tape!**

The on-line version of this review includes a Quicktime movie of *Azimuth* by Staceyjoy Elkin.  
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5cockman.html>

bled to four films per year. Most of the animated shorts had educational or social themes. However, a few art films were produced and a notable exception was *Radha and Krishna* (1958). Based on a Hindu legend and Pahari painting, the film was directed by Shanti Varma



The workplace of Ram Mohan Biographics, Bombay, July 1993. Photo by John A. Lent.

and Jehangir S. Bhowmagary and received several awards. Pramod Pati also directed art films in animated form. Many prominent animators owed their training to the Cartoon Film Unit; besides Mohan, they included V.G. Samant, A.R. Sen, B.R. Shendge, G.M. Saraiya, R.A. Shaikh, R.R. Swamy, V.K. Wankhede, Shaila Paralkar, and Rani D. Rurra, the latter two are among the earliest women animators in India.

### The situation in the 1990s seems to be different and more encouraging...

Outside the Cartoon Film Unit, opportunities opened up for animators in the 1970s and 1980s, with the launching of independent production houses and the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad. Chief among independents were Climb Films and, of course, Ram Mohan Biographics. The first to specialize in computer animation, Climb Films was started by Bhimsain, a musician and producer-director of live-action film.

Not much formal animation training occurred in India

before NID was set up. Initially, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the institute invited in foreign animators such as Weeks, Roger Noake, and others to teach its staff of graphic designers and artists. After these NID trainers (key among them are I.S. Mathur and R.L. Mistry) were taught by the outsiders, a two-year animation workshop program was created to recruit and train new animation faculty, and finally, in 1985, a two and one-half year advanced entry program for students was developed. A condensed one-year scheme was added in 1986. Both faculty, especially Mistry, Binita Desai, and Nina Sabnani, and students have produced a body of animated film that emphasizes educational and developmental issues such as dowry, road safety, energy, and family planning, as well as artistic and literary themes.

### India's Current Opportunity

Several organizations (particularly Cartoon Film Unit and National Institute of Design) and individuals (notably Phalke, Gokhale, and Bhowmagary) have attempted to advance Indian animation during the past eight

decades, but without much sustained success.

The situation in the 1990s seems to be different and more encouraging, at least for two reasons. First, the merger of Ram Mohan Biographics and United Studios Ltd. has made available the resources that Mohan earlier had said were missing, namely equip-

ment, space, and know-how. Second, the tie-ins with animation firms elsewhere, either through co-producing or subcontracting, allow Indian studios to upgrade their technical skills and enlarge their budgets, which if used wisely, should allow them to engage in more domestic animation.

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

by Milt Vallas

I have been asked a good many questions over the years about my experiences living and producing animated films in China. In response, I often reply that explaining China is analogous to the old saying about the three blind men trying to describe an elephant. Each man touches a different part of the elephant and so their descriptions are extremely varied.

## The mediocre quality of work in those early years reflected more the animator's lack of experience than anything else.

A great deal has changed since I first went to China in 1985. I believe to try to understand what is presently happening in the animation and television industries in China, you must begin by looking at the larger picture, the country itself. China is a country of 1.5 billion people living under a political system that can be highly schizophrenic and at times, paranoid and xenophobic. 'A mystery wrapped up in an enigma,' to paraphrase another old saying. The growth of the animation and broadcast industries in China is reflective of the overall changes that have occurred in the economy specifically, and throughout Chinese society in general. These changes are still on going and are basically driven by China's desire to become one of

the leaders in a global economy. More simply put, China wants their slice of the pie and they realized that to do so, they needed to modify their political philosophy to accommodate their economic goals. Remember, the Chinese have only been Communists for fifty years, while they have been pragmatists for well over two thousand years.

## Deng Xiaoping and the Open Door

Arguably no individual was more influential in China's change of direction than Deng Xiaoping. He emerged from great disfavor during the Cultural Revolution to become China's Paramount Leader and most energetic and influential adversary for economic and social change. Somehow he walked the very thin line of advocating the development of an open, market based economy, while still upholding the basic tenets of a socialistic society. Not an easy task. Under Deng's leadership China's economic policies began to shift noticeably in the early Eighties. Special Economic Zones (SEZ) opened in Shenzhen and Zhouhai in Southern China and others followed around the country. These zones were established to provide foreign investors specific areas to build factories and plants and establish headquarters for service

based joint-venture businesses. Tax incentives were offered along with beefed-up infrastructures and relaxed customs regulations, all meant to entice foreign investment and new technology into China.

## Early Animation Production in China

When I arrived in China in 1985 I had few expectations of finding a studio able to handle the production I was producing. At that point in time Asia already had a number of successful studios spread throughout Taiwan, Japan, Korea and beginning in the Philippines. My client however had specific reasons for wanting to place the work in China. The financial group backing the film had other ventures in China and were seeking ways to use their *potential* RMB (non-convertible) profits to produce a product that could be exported and sold for hard currency outside of the country. In other words, the film had to be produced in China.

At that point in time there were really only two animation studios to be considered. Shanghai Animation Studio and Jade Animation in Shenzhen. Shanghai Animation was a state-owned and managed studio which produced films for the home market. The company had been in existence for a number of years and had a number of talented artists but they were not familiar with western animation techniques or timing. Also, being the quintessential state-owned company, the bureaucracy was so thick you could cut it with a knife. The other studio, Jade Animation, was a new joint-venture



company located roughly 60 miles from Hong Kong in the new Special Economic Zone in the city of Shenzhen. Jade was owned and operated by a large broadcast group in Hong Kong (TVB). It had been established to produce animation for TVB and provide ink and paint services for numerous Japanese studios. Neither of these studios felt right for the project I was to produce. Jade was primarily an ink and paint service lacking animators, while Shanghai Animation was too entrenched in the bureaucracy of a state-owned company.

As things turned out, we ended up producing our project at a start-up studio located in Guangzhou (Canton). The studio was a joint venture between Shanghai Animation which supplied the artists, The Pearl River film company which supplied the facility and a Hong Kong partner who supplied the money.

In the ensuing fourteen months I experienced more ups and downs than I can recount. The majority of artists were young and away from home for the first time, while trying to learn new techniques and meet a set of requirements with which they were not familiar. Looking back now at that experience, I am surprised that we were able to accomplish what we did. The film was finished after much delay and sold to The Disney Channel, BBC and a number of other distributors. Sadly, the effort all but destroyed the studio. The operation was a success but the patient died. After the completion of the film the Hong Kong partner withdrew its financial support, citing heavy losses on the project. The remaining Chinese partners then asked if we wished to take the place of the departed Hong Kong partner in the joint venture. After giving due consideration to this

offer, we decided that we would be better served to start fresh and build a new studio from the ground up.

In late 1987 Pacific Rim Animation received a license to open for business within the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. Obtaining the license as a wholly owned foreign company was another story unto itself. To this day I am not absolutely sure how we did it, but I do know that the process rivaled any grand opera in the machinations that were undertaken to accomplish it. To my knowledge this was the first, and to this day, the only license granted to any company in the film business to operate in China without a local partner.

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**The cost factor is still favorable for labor when compared to Korea, Taiwan and certainly Japan.**

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In the following seven years Pacific Rim Animation produced over 500 half-hour animated shows, worked on three feature films and several television/video special projects. At one point the studio employed nearly eight hundred people and was the largest studio in China. I believe the company played a seminal role in the development of the animation industry in China; although those who followed probably learned more from my mistakes than they did from anything else. Within three years a number of joint venture studios began to appear on the scene and the growth of animation production in China was well underway.

**The Current Status**

Today the animation industry is well established in China. Five or six large studios dominate, but there are perhaps as many as

80 small studios spread throughout the mainland. Many of these are subsidiaries of broadcast groups or other media companies. The industry has more or less centered itself in and around Shanghai with studios spread widely over a several hundred mile radius of the city. In the small town of Suzhou there are two of the largest studios, Wang Films Shouzhou and Hong Ying (Red Eagle), plus a number of small office branch studios of other companies. Both Wang Films and Hong Ying are Taiwanese and have auxiliary studios in Shanghai, as well as operations outside of China. Wang Films, possibly the most established of all Asian studios, operates in Taiwan, Thailand and Indonesia as well as China. Shanghai itself has a number of studios including the patriarch Shanghai Animation and Shanghai Morning Sun, another Taiwanese venture. Shanghai Animation has now opened an auxiliary studio created to compete for overseas production. Hong Kong Animation Services is yet another producer of animation in the area and employs a group of satellite studios set up in cities surrounding Shanghai. In the southern city of Shenzhen, the industry is still very well represented by two other large studios, Jade Animation and Colorland Animation. Both of these companies are Hong Kong joint ventures and compete with several smaller studios which are either state supported (Oriental Hong Ye - CCTV) or Japanese operated satellite operations (Rising Sun Animation), working exclusively for parent studios in Japan.

The major change I see within the industry in China over the past fourteen years is the increase of talented artists, directors and production staff available to the studios. In the beginning,

like any new industry, there wasn't any staff available who didn't require a good deal of training. The mediocre quality of work in those early years reflected more the animator's lack of experience than anything else. As in Taiwan, Korea, Japan and the Philippines before, Chinese animation has matured and grown with time. Studios have learned what their clients expect and have now had the time to both train and polish their staff so as to deliver what is expected. Management has also matured and technology has been embraced to help the studios produce large volumes of work within demanding time frames. Nearly all of the large studios offer digital ink and paint services which remedies many past problems caused by sub-standard film laboratories and poor camera equipment.

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**New broadcast groups are forming daily and Chinese television, once a wasteland of tractor repair programs and Communist Party talking heads, is reinventing itself feverishly.**

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In summation animation production in China is alive and doing very well. The cost factor is still favorable for labor when compared to Korea, Taiwan and certainly Japan. The number of animators has grown substantially over the years and with the largest population in the world today, it seems that the talent pool will continue to grow to fill any foreseeable needs of the industry.

If there is a downside I would only say that the animators in China must become more integrated with the product they are producing. The system of paying artists in China is similar to the systems used throughout Asia in television animation. Animators, background and layout artists are given nominal salaries but really

make their living on a piece rate or footage system. In other words, the more they produce the more they earn. This system is effective but has some built-in problems. If artists feel no connection to the work they are doing and derive no pride or enjoyment from their efforts, they will naturally produce at the lowest and fastest possible level of acceptance. While this is unfortunate, consider if you were asked to make a film in a language you couldn't understand, had no idea what the story was about, and never saw your work fit into the final product after you were finished. Further consider that for most of your life you had little or no knowledge of the humor, history or art of the culture for which the film was intended. Unlike Japan, Taiwan, Korea or the Philippines, China has only recently been exposed to our culture. I believe however that this problem is solving itself as young artists continue to come into the industry, and as long as China keeps its window open to the world.

### **Television and Cable Industries in China**

If the animation production business in China has grown and matured, the broadcast side of the business has shot off like a rocket. New broadcast groups are forming daily and Chinese television, once a wasteland of tractor repair programs and Communist Party talking heads, is reinventing itself feverishly.

During my early years in China I often watched CCTV (Central Television) for a lark. If I had understood Mandarin (all CCTV is broadcast in Mandarin), I could have learned a great deal about how to cure swine diseases, increase the yield of my rice crop, better serve the Communist Party or decrease the rodent infestation in my city or town. If I wished to

be entertained I might get lucky and see some ballroom dancing, acrobats or watch a lady in a People's Liberation Army uniform sing an uplifting song about a hero of the revolution. I was often glued to the set.

The Chinese television system was simple. You had CCTV broadcast throughout the country on one and then later, two stations. Secondly, you had provincial television stations which, if possible, were even more bland and unexciting, broadcasting local programs and controlled by provincial government agencies. The key word here is *controlled*. In a country where no one was quite sure from day to day what was permissible, risk-taking was not a trait to be encouraged. All local broadcasters took their cue from CCTV, and Central Television walked and talked nothing but the straight and narrow party line.

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**Bingo! The very same thing that grew the television industry in the U.S. in the Fifties and Sixties is now happening in China.**

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Today, hundreds of television stations now compete with one another across China. CCTV now has 12 stations in its network and last year reported revenues of 2.8 billion RMB (divide by seven for dollars). Shanghai Television has its own *Sesame Street* show for kids, in Chinese. Chinese broadcasters are showing up at NATPE, MIP, Annecy and other television markets around the world appearing ready to do business. Chinese agencies are even inviting outside industry trade delegations to visit and help promote the growth of the industry within China. What's going on? What happened to all those great shows on tractor repair and where's the guy who used to urge me to stay

on the socialist path? Well, I think they're still around somewhere but they've been lost in the explosion of programming that is sweeping across this huge and ravenous country.

Before I attempt to explain why I believe this has happened, let me first touch on the new broadcast groups themselves. First and still the leader, is the official broadcast arm of the Chinese Communist Party, our old friend CCTV. Central Television is the BBC of China. It is operated by the Central Government and has by far the largest footprint within China. Now expanded to 12 stations, it generates revenues from advertisers while continuing to receive government funding. Being the official government television broadcast group, it has the advantage of producing more original programs than the other network groups with the Bureau of Radio and Television Broadcasting doubling CCTV's budget for new programming from last year. Next, as far as size, is probably the City Wireless Network which pieces together over 200 stations throughout China. This group consists of many provincial and city broadcast stations and has grown a great deal in a short amount of time. Possibly the most aggressive and popular broadcaster in China is Shanghai Television. A second broadcaster in the same area is Oriental Television, also based in Shanghai. Both of these groups are also government controlled but operate with greater entrepreneurial freedom. Following the Shanghai groups are Beijing Television and Guangdong Television which have strong local followings in their regions.

### **The Almighty Dollar**

All right, you may ask, but how do all these broadcasters work? Well, to start with, they are

all somehow attached to the government on some level. Either they are part of the Central Government like CCTV, or they operate under the auspices of provincial, city or town broadcast bureaus. How tightly they are controlled depends on where they are and to whom they answer. Their funding comes in the form of government subsidies and more and more from advertising revenues. In a way, these groups are not unlike the PBS Network here in America. They are supported by government subsidies, instead of corporate grants and public endowments, but they all look to secondary advertising revenues to grow and prosper.

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**A recent article in the *International Herald Tribune* estimated that our trade deficit with China will surpass Japan's next year.**

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Returning to a point I made earlier in this article, to understand how any of this works requires that you first understand the compromises China has made in its political philosophy in order to achieve its economic goals. The Chinese explain the return of Hong Kong with a slogan: One country, two systems. What that means is that it's permissible to adopt capitalistic ways of doing business as long as the result is deemed to be for the long term good of the country and the party. Hypocritical? Confusing? You bet, but that's the way it is.

Looking at a few more numbers should shed some light on what is happening in the Chinese broadcast industry. Begin with this, China has a population of over 1.5 billion people and within that society nearly forty percent of the households now have televisions. Further consider that now the Chinese economy is

growing by leaps and bounds, many of the people in those households have money to spend on products and services that advertisers want them to use or buy. Bingo! The very same thing that grew the television industry in the U.S. in the Fifties and Sixties is now happening in China; over 1.5 billion potential consumers sitting in front of television sets waiting to be entertained, informed and sold a better bar of soap.

Remember the old barter system where producers, advertisers or their advertising agencies would finance a program and give it away to stations in exchange for air time they would use to advertise their product? It is now a common practice in China. In exchange for the rights to broadcast a program you can split three minutes per half-hour with the station and sell your Golden Ox face cream, Great Wall beer or Flying Pigeon bicycle. Stations and network groups all over China are in a frenzy, swapping programming and advertisers, with the same intensity as commodity traders on Wall Street. Does this sound like Capitalism?

And where do all these advertising dollars (RMB) come from? A good deal comes from you and me. A recent article in the *International Herald Tribune* estimated that our trade deficit with China will surpass Japan's next year. The late Deng Xiaoping would be delighted.

### **Chinese Business Philosophy**

Returning to television, what's all this mean to foreign companies who desire access to sell their programs and their products in this ever expanding market? For the most part, I think this will be a very long and very difficult journey for the large majority trying to establish themselves in China. I believe many will try



because the potential is so great, but I fear most will not achieve great success in the near future. My views are based upon my personal experiences in China, and my understanding of the society and culture. I have seen too many business ventures start with high expectations and smiles all around, only to die slowly in an ocean of frustration. I know that many large broadcast groups, both American and European, are negotiating for broadcast, satellite and cable deals within China at this time. I wish them success, but I will be truly surprised if they receive any substantial concessions from Chinese broadcasters or media groups.

**I have seen too many business ventures start with high expectations and smiles all around, only to die slowly in an ocean of frustration.**

I believe the Chinese side knows exactly what cards they hold and the huge potential of their own market. China will solicit help from the outside in order to build their industry, both in technology and financing, but forget about them giving away the farm. Remember, no matter how you view these broadcast groups, they are still under the control directly or indirectly of the Chinese government. They might appear eager to deal but they will always have a very specific agenda which is a mix of culture and politics. In China there is no win-win business philosophy. There has to be a winner and a loser. For a number of years in Hong Kong, there was an advertising campaign of television spots to promote a very expensive brand of French cognac. Though it was a series of commercials made over the years, they all conveyed the same theme. A Hong Kong or Chinese business man was closing a deal with a foreign-

er. The foreigner was always depicted as brash, loud and not very bright. In contrast, the Chinese business man was always cool and patient. The deal was negotiated and the foreigner gloated, thinking he had got the better part of the deal. Of course there was always the closing tag, where the Chinese business man disclosed his hidden agenda. His foreign adversary was always left stunned and embarrassed upon learning how he had been bested. The Chinese man then celebrated his victory with a glass of cognac and a smug smile into the camera. Doing business in China is difficult. The Chinese may at times walk like a duck and quack like a duck, but you've never met a duck as shrewd and patient as this one.

I want to add that despite the doubts I've expressed above, I would not exchange the ten years or so I spent living in China for anything. I have a great respect and admiration for the people of China and have numerous friends within the country. I believe my remarks are pragmatic and realistic and are based upon my belief that the Chinese are too intelligent and savvy to give away anything without receiving something greater in return. Remember the trade deficit. I also wonder if Western television product will travel as well in China as it has throughout the rest of the world. This is not to say that companies in other industries like McDonalds and Coca-Cola have not done well and that others will not succeed, but I can't help but believe that any major inroads by foreign groups into Chinese broadcasting will be a long time coming, and not easily won without paying a heavy price. The pot of gold is definitely there and it can't be ignored, but staking a claim will take perhaps more patience and perseverance than

we possess.

## Looking Back

So much has changed since I first traveled to China: the country has modern hotels, the economy is booming, you can eat and dance at the Hard Rock Café or grab a Big Mac if you're tired of noodles and dim sum. Animators no longer work for 50 dollars a week and you don't see any Mao jackets being worn on the streets. I almost want to say, "What a shame." China has changed and so have I. I continue to work on projects in China and still travel there quite often, but at times I miss the old, crazy days of building a studio and working with people who were so eager to learn, not only about animation but about different people and cultures. I retain very positive memories of those early years and I am very glad to have been there at the beginning.

*Milt Vallas is an animation executive with over 30 years experience in the industry. He was president of Pacific Rim Productions and oversaw the operations of Pacific Rim Animation Studios in China and Manila for seven years. He currently is a consultant to a number of clients and specializes in the development, financing and production of animated projects. His company, Media Vision is located in Studio City, California.*

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# EMERGING VIETNAM

by Anne Aghion and John Merson

Producers of animation are always on the lookout for the next great opportunity. In recent years some animation producers have been creating titles in Vietnam. At first glance, Vietnam would seem an unlikely location for producing high-quality animation. So why is the country emerging as a significant site? Who is producing animation in Vietnam, and what has their experience been? Finally, what are the prospects for continued growth in the Vietnamese animation industry?

Since the war, and up until the late Eighties, the state studio in Hanoi, run by the Ministry of Culture, was the only animation house in Vietnam. They worked mainly on institutional and educational films. All their animators were trained in the Soviet Union, and worked traditionally without any concerns for the bottom line.

## The pioneers that marked the beginning of the modern era in Vietnamese animation came from Japan in 1991.

The pioneers that marked the beginning of the modern era in Vietnamese animation came from Japan in 1991. They settled in Long An, about 30 miles from Ho Chi Minh City, and were in operation for a little under two years, then closed down. However, they left a great legacy of relatively well-trained animators for their successors to build on.

## Pixibox Makes A Move

Their immediate successor

in 1994 was French. "They probably decided to set up shop there because there was no one else in the country," recounts Anne Collet, the current managing director of Paris-based Pixibox Studios, about the decision of the company's management in 1994 to move into Ho Chi Minh City in a partnership with the Education and Audiovisual Center. Pixibox Studios, part of the Humanoids group of companies, is the largest 2-D digital animation studio in Europe, and today produces mainly for the television series market. Sparx\*, its sister company within Humanoids, and one of the leading CG houses in France, operates the 3-D side of the studio in Ho Chi Minh City.

Anne Collet wasn't part of Pixibox Studios at the time they established themselves in Vietnam. But for over ten years, in her capacity as a manager of production houses, she has worked all over Asia, including Japan, China, South, and even North, Korea, and she says the Vietnamese are "terrific workers, and once they know how to do a job, they really do it well."

Pixi Vietnam, run by Didier Montarou, a film editor by training, has close to 250 staff spread over two locations in Ho Chi Minh City, and offers services that range

from 2-D pencil animation, to 2-D digital ink and paint, to 3-D CGI key-frame animation, the latter being directly operated by Sparx\* Paris. The production model they have chosen to follow, is to do the compositing, modeling and rendering of the images in the home studio, in this case, in France.

To hear Anne Collet talk about it, it sounds like the studio in Vietnam is really her pet project. She visits every three to four months to convey the "European philosophy" she wants to maintain there.

"We give priority to quality and to new technologies. In Vietnam, we

work exclusively for producers who want quality."

To illustrate this, she proudly says that the translators and interpreters who work in her studio regularly win the yearly government contests for the best translators in the country.

Pixi Vietnam is able to handle about 70 minutes of pencil animation a month, and more than double that volume in digital ink and paint. On the 3-D side, they churn out close to 60 minutes per month. Pixi Vietnam's clients include the French Canal+ subsidiary, Ellipse, for whom they work regularly, Canal+'s other subsidiary Medialab, Dupuis, and



Canadian producer Nelvana who also uses the facilities in Vietnam.

In Pixibox's wake, half a dozen foreign animation producers have tried to establish studios in Vietnam with various degrees of success. Foremost among these is Ed Dua of Morgan Interactive. One Friday afternoon in December of 1994, Ed Dua, CEO of Morgan



**Ed Dua, CEO of Morgan Interactive. Photo courtesy of Morgan Interactive.**

Interactive, was staring out the window of his San Francisco office. In spite of the spectacular view, Ed could not help worrying about a difficult issue facing his young company, a producer of high-quality animated titles for the children's edutainment CD-ROM and TV industry. Both businesses were growing fast and were highly competitive. In order to keep pace with the industry's growth, Ed knew he had to find a solution that would enable him to expand Morgan Interactive's animation production capacity at a cost that would allow him to remain competitive.

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**One of the main reasons these Vietnamese ventures are so productive, is the exceptionally strong Vietnamese artistic tradition.**

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### **New Media Comes To Town**

Morgan Interactive produces multimedia CD-ROM titles for many large publishers, including Houghton Mifflin, McGraw Hill, Virgin Interactive, and others. Recently, Morgan also began

developing pilots for animated TV programs. The company designers were very talented, and Morgan Interactive was able to win most of the projects for which they submitted proposals. That was the good news. The bad news was rapidly escalating costs. Producing animated titles in the Bay Area had recently become prohibitively expen-

sive, and the difficulty of finding talented animators and programmers was occupying an increasing share of Ed's time.

Ed thought about a recent comment one of his venture capital investors had made to him. Jean-Marc Merlin, a partner of H2O, was building The Press Club, a high-end hotel, restaurant, and conference facility in Hanoi. In describing his experiences in Vietnam, Jean-Marc had told Ed how impressed he was with the quality and quantity of art schools in Vietnam, and noted that a number of French companies had begun producing animated films there. He wondered if perhaps Vietnam might help Morgan Interactive in its quest to build production capacity at an affordable cost.

Today, under the leadership of Phil Tran, who was born in Vietnam and educated in the United States, and handled Morgan's entry into Vietnam while a young lawyer at the Philips Fox firm in Hanoi, Morgan Interactive Vietnam has turned into a large facility that employs more than 150 animators and programmers.

Other companies that set

up operations there in the last four years include: Korean studio Hahn Shin, one of the larger South Korean studios, which works in a partnership with the Orthopedic Center in Ho Chi Minh City to train the handicapped to do in-betweening and traditional ink and paint, and Worldwide Animation, a subsidiary of Philippine Animation Studio, Inc. and a traditional 2-D pencil and ink and paint studio, who some say could be either in the process of closing down, or converting to a digital facility. Philippine Animation Studio Inc. declined to comment on the future of the company.

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**The widespread use of English is an advantage Vietnam shares with India...**

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### **Vietnam's Unique Position**

It helps to view this expansion of animation in Vietnam in the context of the country's remarkable adaptation to the global economy of the 1990s. The three keys were the collapse of the Soviet Union, the opening of full diplomatic relations and trade between the U.S. and Vietnam, and the emergence of the Internet. As Vietnam's leaders watched the collapse of their major donor nation, they looked for alternative sources of aid to rebuild their war-ravaged economy. The solution they seized upon was market capitalism in the form of private foreign investment. By opening their economy to investment from private companies, they managed to bring in more than \$20 billion in funds, not to mention invaluable technology transfers from Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Australia, and European nations.

When diplomatic relations with the US were re-established in

1995, an additional source of private foreign investment was found, as well as access to funds from the World Bank, the IMF (International Monetary Fund), the Asian Development Bank, and other international organizations. Finally, Vietnam's link to the Internet dramatically lowered the cost of communications between Vietnam and the rest of the world. Particularly for producers of digital animation, the Internet allowed low cost file transfers between Vietnamese production facilities and a company's far-away design centers.

Sparx\* managing director Guillaume Hellouin, whose company is currently at work on the Nelvana, Disney Channel and Métal Hurlant Productions' co-production pre-school series *Rolie Polie Olie* explains: "Our production philosophy is that Vietnam and Paris run in perfect harmony. We operate as if the two studios were on two separate floors of the same building. And our partners, with the appropriate passwords, can go into a dedicated FTP web site at any point and look at any particular scene that either Paris or Ho Chi Minh City is working on, on a quicktime file." Hellouin insists on doing only the key-frame animation in Vietnam, and keeps the modeling and rendering in Paris.

Similarly, Morgan chose to keep its design activities in San Francisco, where its most experienced animation designers are based, many of whom were drawn from Disney and other leading companies. These top designers provide both direction and feedback to the animators and programmers based in Ho Chi Minh City.

It just so happens that Vietnam's time zone is 15 hours ahead

of Pacific Standard time. Ed Dua likes to joke that Morgan works twice as fast as most companies, since the work produced in Vietnam during the first 12 hours of the day is then transferred back to San Francisco around the time that U.S. producers are beginning their work-day. The U.S. team then has 12 hours to review and comment on the progress being made, after which files are sent back to Vietnam for the start of the next cycle.

### Native and Colonial Influences

One of the main reasons these Vietnamese ventures are so productive, is the exceptionally strong Vietnamese artistic tradition. Vietnamese culture has always put a lot of emphasis on drawing and painting. "They traditionally train sculptors and lacquer painters, because these industries have job openings," explains Anne Collet. The French reinforced this tradition during their hundred-year colonial period by encouraging the formation of art schools.

At Pixi Vietnam, Anne Collet has put a lot of effort into training and has even set up a one-year program which enrolls about 40 new people a year, a dozen of which come out as full-fledged animators. In conjunction with the Vietnamese government, she is also starting a new program next September geared specifically at animation at the School of Fine Arts in Ho Chi Minh City. "We will start a new curriculum over five years," she explains. "Our plan is to teach students

basic drawing techniques, with an eye to anatomy for animation."

Training also played a part on the 3-D side at Pixi Vietnam. "We had developed a pioneering method in France to convert traditional 2-D pencil animators into 3-D animators in record time. We applied it to Vietnam exactly like we had done in Paris," says Guillaume Hellouin. The animators there "work under the guidance of one of the top CG animators in France, who moved to Ho Chi Minh City for us almost two years ago," he adds.

Ed Dua also cites widespread knowledge of English as another reason for Morgan's success in Vietnam. He credits the French colonial era with introducing the Vietnamese to a Western-style alphabet, making it much easier for Vietnamese students to learn French and English. Today most Vietnamese high school and university students study English. As a result, the animators and programmers hired by Morgan are nearly all fluent in the language. This makes it much easier for Morgan staff to train their Vietnamese counterparts and explain new pro-



Sparx\* worked on the CG-animated series, *Bob and Scott*. © 1998 Fox Kids. All Rights Reserved.

jects. The widespread use of English is an advantage Vietnam shares with India, where many observers of the Indian software development scene see it as a major contributor to India's success.

Both Anne Collet and Ed Dua also praise the work of their managers. "It's a hard country to handle," says Collet, who explains that the French managers and head animators who work for her "either pass the first three-month period and adopt the place, or else break down because it's too hard, or they become too sick." The head animator at Pixi Vietnam is half French, half Vietnamese, and has had an easier time of it. For his part, Ed Dua doubts that Morgan would have made nearly as much progress without Phil Tran's leadership. His "great advantage is that he combines his understanding of Vietnamese culture with his U.S. education and management style," he says.

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**In her studio, Collet hopes to add 100 staff members per year for the next seven years.**

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### **An Expanding Picture**

Looking to the future, Udo Sabiniewicz, who heads FX Animation and Anicolor in Germany, should be opening a studio in Ho Chi Minh City in the next few weeks, a project he is undertaking in close collaboration with Gerhard Hahn's Hahn Film Productions. They plan to work mainly on the modeling of 3-D animated backgrounds in Vietnam, and will keep the texturing and rendering in Postdam. Udo has had many years of experience in Southeast Asia but chose Vietnam because "it's the best place to find very high skilled workers at such wages."

Several years ago, when he tried to set up his first venture in Vietnam, Udo taught a few classes in computer imaging at Ho Chi Minh City's largest private university, Van Lang. Through his contacts there, he has been able to find the skilled staff that he will need for his new studio. He hopes to have 30 to 40 people trained to work on Silicon Graphics machines within the next four months. Hahn Film is one of the leading animation houses in Germany. They have produced many series for television, like *Benjamin Blumchen*, and features for theatrical release, including *Werner Beinhart*, a major blockbuster in Germany.

Ed Dua, for his part, is confident that he can continue expanding the organization he has built in Vietnam. As to expense levels, Ed estimates that Morgan's cost of completing animation projects is about 30% less than it would be if all of the work were done in San Francisco. This figure takes into account the fact that design work is done primarily in the US, and that travel and communications costs are higher than they would be if all work were done locally. These savings, which Ed terms substantial, also reflect the cost of setting up operations in Ho Chi Minh City. Suffice it to say that Morgan can afford these costs because it does a large number of projects for its many partners, and is in Vietnam for the long term. No company could expect to achieve these savings if it had to set up operations in Vietnam for a single project.

In her studio, Collet hopes to add 100 staff members per year for the next seven years. Then she'll stop "because I want to bring them to the feature level. I plan to take half the staff, and have them work on features, and

keep the rest of the animators to continue to work on television series."

Hellouin has feature ambitions also. "Right now, we handle top-quality, full key-frame, almost full animation, with seven to eight characters per scene, all fully animated and even some animated backgrounds," he explains. In addition to *Rolie Polie Olie*, he has been working regularly on *Bob and Scott*, a series of cartoony interstitials in the Tex Avery style, which Fox Family Channel just licensed for broadcast in the fall. "Down the line, I hope to set up a full feature quality team, and we're close," he beams. "It takes a lot of energy, it's a difficult and lengthy process, but five years down the line, I hope to have a powerful, pleasant studio. I feel like I'm gardening, trying things out here and there, and some grow and bloom in the right way, and others you have to trim or pull out completely."

*Anne Aghion is an animation production consultant based in France and the United States, who worked with Pixibox Studios.*

*John Merson is a consultant and director of several software and Internet companies, including IBM, Intuit, and Net Earnings. He has helped several software companies establish partnerships in Vietnam, and advised the Vietnamese government on software policy.*

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

# Small Studio/Home Studio:

## An Overview of Low-End Computer Aided Animation Choices

by Michelle Klein-Häss

Computer-aided animation has truly come into its own in the 1990s: from computer multimedia and games, to television commercials, all the way up to animated features like *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life*, and *Small Soldiers* and animated TV series like *Reboot* and *Beast Wars*. However, most of these cited examples use very expensive equipment, like Silicon Graphics workstations, and either custom software like that used at Pixar or expensive packages like Softimage 3D, once distributed by Microsoft and now distributed by Avid, which runs over \$10,000 U.S.

However, things are beginning to change in both large animation studios and smaller outfits. Programs like 3D StudioMAX by Kinetix are running on high-end WindowsNT workstations with eye-popping results, and Lightwave3D by NewTek has made incredible inroads in both WindowsNT and Power Mac shops. In both cases, the machines that run this powerful software are heavily "tweaked," with massive amounts of RAM and large arrays of super-fast hard drives that cost large sums of money. These more reasonable software packages are only more reasonable by degrees: 3D StudioMAX costs \$3,500 U.S. per workstation, and Lightwave3D costs \$2,000 U.S. per workstation.

2-D animation packages are similarly in the stratosphere.

Disney uses its own proprietary scanning, inking, painting and compositing program, called CAPS. Other major studios use packages like Softimage Toonz and Cambridge Systems' Animo, which require high-end SGI or WindowsNT workstations to use. Softimage Toonz is \$13,000 per workstation, and works on SGI and high-end WindowsNT workstations. Cambridge Systems' Animo only runs on SGI and high-end Intel workstations running NeXTStep, and checks in at U.S. \$9,000 per license.

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### Here's some specs on what you need at the heart of your Small Studio/Home Studio.

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The fact is, however, that less expensive, off-the-shelf PCs and Macintoshes can be used for professional results in computer-aided animation. In the past few years, 3-D packages as inexpensive as \$200 have emerged to allow students and animators who want to do their own independent projects to create very attractive and fluid animation. Because of the more specialized nature of 2-D paint and compositing software, there are no packages of this kind to match such a low price point. However, for between \$500 and \$1,300 U.S. per license, very powerful 2-D programs are available, and one can only hope that with more and more people looking to do animation projects

on personal computers that lower priced programs will emerge.

To run most of the programs we will be mentioning in this overview, one needs a good, strong computer system, be it on the Mac side or the PC side. Macintosh of course tends to run significantly more expensive, but the Mac's superior ease of use and its OS-level support for sophisticated color graphics and color control make it highly recommended for these sorts of applications. However, with intelligent use of third party programs and attention paid to enhancing the video subsystem, a PC running Windows95 or Windows98 is competitive with the Macintosh for these operations; and in some cases there are no Mac versions of these programs, particularly in the case of AXA Personal Edition, a well-recommended 2-D paint and compositing package.

Here's some specs on what you need at the heart of your Small Studio/Home Studio:

#### For PC Clone

High-speed Intel Pentium MMX, AMD K6, Intel Pentium II, Intel Pentium II Xeon or AMD K6-2 CPU, running at least 200MHz. Intel Pentium Celeron and Cyrix CPUs are not advisable for animation due to various design weaknesses. Wavetable sound card, either PCI or ISA based. The Soundblaster AWE-64 or the Soundblaster/Ensoniq PCI-64

sound cards are excellent choices. Other wavetable sound cards are good, too, but stay away from OPL-3 or OPL-4 based sound cards. Those use FM synthesis and sound like old arcade games.

A 16-bit sound system is more than sufficient for our purposes. 17-inch or larger monitor...the bigger the better. True 3-D video acceleration.

The 3-D cards you install side-by-side with a 2-D video card which are designed for computer games will not help you with computer animation. Look for Direct3D and OpenGL acceleration, and for chipsets like the Riva 128, Permedia 2, ATI 3D Rage Pro, and Rendition V2200. Look for video RAM amounts of 8MB or greater, although you can get by with 4MB if you are running a 17-inch monitor. TV Video Out is a consideration if you want to output your animations direct to video. You will also need 64MB or better RAM. There are people who say that more than 64MB RAM will cause a slowdown on Windows95/98...not so. Just adjust your "virtual memory" downward until you get Windows95/98 to use your installed RAM and only resort to the swap file to disk in emergencies.

4.3GB HD (hard drive) is bare minimum. Look into the new huge UltraDMA EIDE hard drives. They are only a hair less fast than a fast and wide SCSI drive at a frac-



**The iMac: Macintosh's new answer to the affordable home computer. But can it handle animation software? Time will tell...Photo by Terry Heferman. Courtesy of Apple Computer, Inc.**

tion of the price. However fast and wide, SCSI and Ultra fast/wide SCSI is still the performance champ.

4 to 16x (speed) CD-Rom is ideal. Faster CD-Rom drives are often finicky about less-than-perfect CD-Roms. However, slower CD-Roms are harder and harder to find, so if you can only get a 24x, grab it. Drawing tablets are a personal matter. If you like them, get one with which you can feel comfortable. You can use a mouse, but make sure you are comfortable with your mouse. Don't be afraid to switch pointing devices around.

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**There is no such thing as a cheap 2-D animation program, unless you count the shareware and freeware programs out there for doing little animated .GIFs for the World Wide Web.**

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Scanners can be helpful in 3-D, and they are indispensable in 2-D animation. If you want to use standard animation paper, you will need a large-format scanner.

UMAX and Epson make dynamite scanners, and have oversized formats available. If you can handle using 8.5" x 11" regular paper and can get your own Acme punch, scanners as inexpensive as \$80-\$100 will work beautifully. Again, look at UMAX and Epson, but don't be afraid of no-name scanners if you can get a crack at trying them out before you buy them. You will need to mount a peg-bar on your scanner to

keep your images straight.

### **For Macintosh**

604e or G3-based PowerPC CPU. However, bear in mind that MacOS X, due next year, will not run on anything other than G3. PCI Macs with G3 CPU upgrades should be fine, though. 17-inch or larger monitor...the bigger the better. True 3-D video acceleration. If your Mac only has an ATI Rage or ATI Rage 2 chip onboard, look into PCI video cards like ixMicros Pro Rez and Ultimate Rez and ATIs Xclaim and Nexus lines. If you don't know what video chip is used in your Mac, find out. Same advice on video RAM for PCs goes for Macs...if you cannot fit more than 2MB of video RAM onboard your Mac, its time to look for a video card. If you don't have Video outputs from your Mac, get a card that can do that like the Xclaim VR. All the RAM you can afford. 64MB is bare minimum...the MacOS can utilize as much RAM as you can throw at it. It depends on your Mac. Modern

PowerMacs use plain EIDE hard drives internally, which is slow and poky compared to Ultra fast/wide SCSI. However, your external SCSI chain only gives you 5MB/second throughput, which slows down external SCSI drives. You might do well to add an internal SCSI card, or to get just the fastest rated EIDE HD you can. PowerMac 8500, 8600 and 9500 and 9600 machines have fast SCSI internal cables so those are ideal Macs for the job, particularly with G3 CPU upgrades. 4GB is an OK size, but you might want to look at a much bigger HD. The CD-Rom you got stock with your PowerMac is fine. See my PC advice on pointing devices. With the ADB bus, you can daisy-chain pointing devices, so you can get the best of both worlds...a good mouse (Apples ADB Mouse that came with your system is a fine one) and a good drawing tablet. Again, use my PC advice, and remember that Macs can only use SCSI scanners. Any scanner that has a P next to its model name or which says "Parallel Port Model" or "EPP Model" is PC-only.

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**None of the programs I will discuss here are over \$500 U.S., which is really good news.**

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### **Backing It All Up**

Other items that are helpful for your small studio/home studio computer system are a good backup drive. The Iomega Jaz or SyQuest SyJet are the best choices for the Mac and decent choices for PC. PC users have the additional choice of the SyQuest SparQ drive, which uses cartridges with a capacity of 1GB, identical to the

original Jaz drive but with a media cost one-third that of the Jaz. The SparQ comes in IDE and Parallel Port versions, the IDE being the best choice due to its faster and more reliable performance. Unless you have already invested in the Zip drive, don't bother. For \$12-\$20 per cartridge you only get 100MB of storage. When bought in three-packs, the SparQ media costs \$33 and holds ten times as much. Another thing to stay away from are tape drives. Yes, they are extremely cheap on media prices, and the costs of tape drives have gone way down, but they are very slow. The tape drive on my PC takes two hours to back up, then verify 200 MB of data. I'm throwing out that tape drive as soon as I can afford a SparQ.

### **Let's Talk Money...**

Anyway, all told, a PC of the caliber you need to run most of the programs I will mention here will probably set you back no more than \$1500 to \$2,000. Macs, of course, are more expensive, but if you are willing to look at refurbished Macs you can get an 8600 for less than \$2,000. The G3 upgrade can be less than \$800, and the RAM upgrade will probably add \$200 or \$300 to that.

The monitor, however, can run \$400 or so for a good 17-inch monitor and soars into the stratosphere from there. Monitors are the most expensive elements of a computer system at this point. A few years ago, RAM was the big expense. I remember a comic book startup I was involved with which spent \$10,000 on 128MB worth of DIMMs. Now an 128 MB SDRAM DIMM will cost about

\$128 if you are lucky — a collapse of a hundredfold in price. Good monitor manufacturers include Viewsonic, Hitachi, MAG Innovation and (if they are to your taste, some find them harsh to look at but they certainly are sharp) Sony. Good economy brands include Optquest, Viewsonics economy brand, and Princeton. The brands that Apple put their mark on are usually very nice, albeit expensive. If you want to use a PC monitor on a Mac, you will need an adapter. This adapter is easy to get and your dealer will probably pre-figure it for you.

OK, so now you have your computer. Here's a quick overview of some good software packages available to you.

### **2-D Animation Tools**

Unfortunately, the market is kind of limited and very, very rich. There is no such thing as a cheap 2-D animation program, unless you count the shareware and free-ware programs out there for doing little animated .GIFs for the World Wide Web.

Currently you have two choices under \$2,000 (That's right, \$2,000!): AXA Personal Edition and Linker Animation Stand Multimedia Edition. Animation Stand Multimedia Edition is \$500, but will only export at a resolution of 512 pixels by 384 pixels, which is fine for cutting Quicktime and/or .AVI files for CD-Rom or the Web, but insufficient for video. AXA Personal Edition is a fully-functional version of the program missing only a few features for heavy-duty production, and costs \$1,300. AXA has distinguished itself by being used by overseas animation house AKOM for electronic ink and





**Fluffy, an independent film created with Hash Animation:Master, has been screened at animation festivals around the world.**

paint and compositing on the TV series *The Tick* and *Casper*.

If you are on a Macintosh, the only choice you have is Animation Stand Multimedia Edition. AXA is a PC-only product. One can only wish that someone at REI, the software company that makes AXA, would see fit to port AXA to Macintosh. However, with all the fear, uncertainty and doubt spread by those who profit from the Win-Tel monopoly, it is unlikely such a port will happen. If you perceive that there is no market for a port of your software to a platform wrongly perceived as dying, you will probably not bother.

An additional expense of doing 2-D animation on computers is either a large-format scanner or your own Acme punch (yes, that's what animation paper punches are called — this might be the origin for all those Acme products in classic Warner Bros. shorts) to punch letter-size paper to use at your animation table.

field paper might feel a little constrained on letter-size paper. It's a trade-off. In any event, you mount a pegbar on your scanner to keep your drawings in registration. AXA comes with a calibration target to help you properly position the pegbar.

When I mentioned the dilemma I had in recommending a 2-D package on Usenet, I received several e-mails about a common kludge that animation students often use: the combination of using Photoshop to scan the drawings and Premiere to composite and assemble the drawings into finished animation. The trouble is, the cost of Photoshop and Premiere, when bought as full products and not as upgrades or under a student discount, is just about as much as AXA Personal Edition, so you might as well opt for either AXA or Animation Stand Multimedia Edition.

However, the paucity of choices begs the question: when

Unfortunately either route is expensive. Decent-quality large format scanners by makes like UMAX and Epson cost around \$2,500 to \$3,000. An Acme punch costs something like \$400; a big expense, but at least more reasonable than a big scanner. However, an anima-

tor used to 12-

will someone put out a truly inexpensive 2-D animation solution? Since MetaCreations seems to be very keen on putting out inexpensive 3-D animation products, and has flirted with 2-D animation in its consumer product Art Dabbler, why don't they put their prodigious talents to work on a Small Studio/Home Studio Ink, Paint and Compositing program?

One last program in this category needs to be covered, and that is Macromedia Flash. However, I will discuss Flash in a later segment of this article.

### **Plentiful 3-D Programs**

The picture brightens considerably when you look at the embarrassment of riches available to the Small Studio/Home Studio animator in 3-D. There are many choices available, from hobbyist level to professional quality. None of the programs I will discuss here are over \$500, which is really good news.

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**Of all the programs I have examined for this article, Martin Hash Animation:Master 98 is the most promising and most useful for serious animators.**

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The company which has strength in numbers in the low end of 3-D is MetaCreations. From the low end to the high end, their line-up includes Ray Dream 3D, Bryce3D, Ray Dream Studio 5 and Painter 3D.

Ray Dream 3D is MetaCreations' entry-level program. It is designed to take the neophyte by the hand and teach them the basics of 3-D animation. It uses the familiar "wizards" approach to guide the user through steps like

setting a stage, animating existing objects, or modeling his/her own objects. One of the coolest things about Ray Dream 3D is the provision for exporting your work as animated .GIFs for the World Wide Web. It seems as if MetaCreations has not only 3D animator wannabes in mind, but Web developers as well. The price is right, too: \$100 or less.

Bryce 3 is a program like no other. It is designed from the ground up for the creation of sophisticated landscapes, and is set up in a very intuitive fashion. Want to "play God?" You can here. This new version allows for animating the landscapes, like adding rushing water, rustling leaves and night skies that change. Bryce 3 would be a fine tool to use in connection with other programs like Ray Dream Studio 5 or Martin Hash Animation:Master 98.

Ray Dream Studio 5 is the high-end, semi-pro version of Ray Dream 3D. It is a polygon-based system like 3D StudioMAX, and has a feature set comparable to the \$3,500 U.S. system. It also uses advanced features like physics models and collision detection, a rarity on the low-end. The program is available at less than \$300 U.S. at most outlets, and can be expanded with plug-ins. The MetaCreations web site lists only two plug-ins, but promises more to come.

Painter 3D is not a 3-D animation program as such, but a drawing program which allows the real-time decoration of 3D models. The sometimes arcane process of applying textures, surfaces and "decals" onto 3-D models is turned into an intuitive

process, familiar to anyone used to Photoshop, Illustrator or MetaCreations' own Painter programs. Painter not only works with Ray Dream Studio 5, but programs like 3D StudioMAX and Lightwave 3D. It usually runs about \$300 "street price."

One of the most exciting aspects of MetaCreations' products is that they are working with Microsoft on a Web content architecture called "MetaStream." Not many details are available on this new system, but it promises to provide Web designers and video game programmers a way of plugging in files created in Ray Dream Studio 5 or Ray Dream 3D and presenting them in an economical, fast-loading fashion. We'll stay tuned for future details.

Martin Hash Animation:Master 98 (AM98) is not as well-known as Meta Creations' line of products, but in a lot of respects it is the most powerful program on the low-end of 3D. Unlike even Ray Dream Studio 5, AM98 is used extensively in professional settings, including TV commercial production and video game character design. Duke Nukem and his opponents in the smash hit game *Duke Nukem 3D* were all designed using AM98.

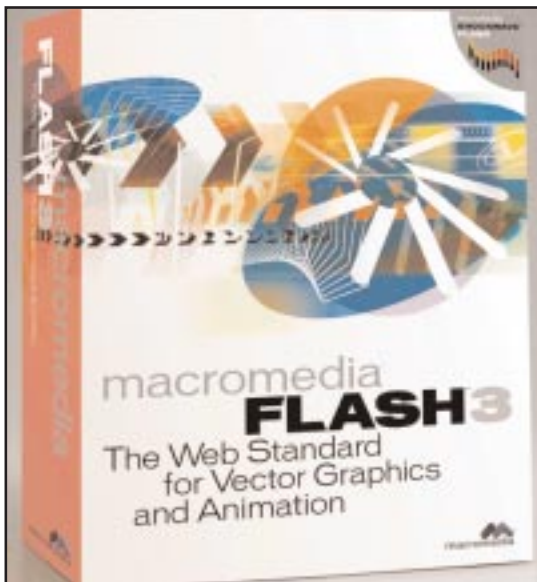
AM98 is not a polygon-based system, but a spline-based system. As such, it has more in common with the tools that Pixar developed in-house to make *Toy Story* and *Geris Game* than with 3D StudioMAX or Softimage 3D. Lightwave3D has a somewhat similar concept going called NURBS, but NURBS are similar, but not exactly the same as the splines that are at the heart of AM98.

AM98 can be used for all

the classic 3D clichés like fly-throughs and flying logos and whatnot, but what it excels at is character animation. The entire program is set up and optimized for creating characters, from the realistic to the cartoony, and animating them in a realistic fashion. The results can be nothing short of magical. When I first saw AM98 in action at the New Animation Technology Expo, I was impressed by how the results compared to the computer animated commercials done by Will Vinton Studio and Mainframe Entertainments cartoon series *ReBoot* and *Beast Wars*.

AM98 is put out by a small software company, Hash Inc., which doesn't have the budget to buy space in computer catalogs and advertise in the big computer magazines. They sell direct from their web site and by mail order. What AM98 has that a lot of the low-end animation programs don't is a very faithful, very clueful group of passionate program users. It's a lot like the following the Mac has: people get downright evangelical about AM98 and are very willing to share their experiences with the program. Once you start using AM98 there is a host of tutorials on various aspects of the program available all over the World Wide Web. There are people on the AM98 e-mail mailing list talking about producing collaborative animated films with the software, and sharing rendering time. Plus, almost no question is a bad question on the list, and list members are happy to answer questions and help newbies.

Oh, and did I mention the price? \$200 for the product, and all the upgrades and betas you



The amazing Flash3! Photo courtesy of Macromedia.

want for a year. Each subsequent years subscription costs \$100. Its an incredible bargain. There is a \$700 version which adds the ability to set up an unlimited number of workstations to do distributed rendering, but thats primarily useful for bigger animation studios. Of all the programs I have examined for this article, Martin Hash Animation:Master 98 is the most promising and most useful for serious animators. If you are used to 3-D modeling using a polygon-based program, you might have a little bit of a learning curve. If you are an absolute beginner, you will also have a learning curve to deal with, but again, the help is out there.

One last package in this category of software is one just released by NewTek, called Inspire 3D. Inspire 3D is a low-end package by the same company that developed Lightwave3D, and shares many of its features. It is unclear from the documentation on Inspire3D that I have been exposed to what changes have been made in Lightwave to arrive at this more limited program.

Apparently NewTek is targeting this not only at people who are looking to get into 3-D animation, but also at web developers (with full support for VRML 2.0) and graphic artists. Some of Inspire 3D's features are the ability to export as Photoshop files, use Photoshop filters, and take Illustrator files and extrude them as 3-D objects.

### And Finally, the Web

Lets take a look at the Web, a new medium, and its new tools. In the past three years, an entirely new medium has sprung up: The Internet. From people throwing Quicktime and .AVI files onto the Internet and the occasional animated .GIF, now there are new media types which are specifically designed for the low-bandwidth conditions of the Internet.

Macromedia Flash is now in its third iteration, and has become quite ubiquitous on the Web. Currently my web site, Animation Nerd's Paradise, is running two different web cartoon programs made with Flash. You can find them in the ANP "Funny Pages" at <http://anp.awn.com/funnies/>.

Flash is perhaps the most affordable 2-D animation format available. For \$300 you can get Flash 3 and have almost all the tools you need to create web cartoons. If you like to draw on paper rather than use a tablet or a mouse, you will need a scanner (a pegbar and Acme-punched paper is good but not entirely necessary) and a vector art program like Adobe Illustrator or Macromedia Freehand. A good audio record-

ing and editing program is also helpful. Some good ones on the PC front are Cool Edit Pro and Sound Forge XP. However, all the tools you really need to bring it all together are there in Flash.

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### Flash has one Achilles' heel, and that is sound.

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You do not need to have anything up on the web server you choose to host your web cartoons other than the proper MIME-type set on the server. If your hostmaster doesn't have it set, tell them that its application/x-shock-wave-flash . Nothing is capitalized, there are two dashes and one forward slash. Ask your hostmaster nicely and it should be a breeze.

Flash has one Achilles' heel, and that is sound. Sound is often tinny and odd in Flash, and lip synch is loose at best. Oddly enough, the way to get around the sonic weaknesses of Flash is to turn it into RealFlash. Consult Animating the Web: RealFlash in Animation World Magazine for the entire skinny on how to process a .SWF file into the composite RealFlash format. Unlike plain RealMedia files and Flash files, RealFlash requires a server to pull the pieces of the presentation together. However, when RealNetworks releases its G2 Basic Server later this year, you will have a free-ware tool to deploy RealFlash on your web server. Again, ask your hostmaster nicely.

Another technology which is beginning to come of age on the Internet is VRML. VRML is pronounced VER-mill, and the acronym breaks down to Virtual Reality Modeling Language. VRML is now in its second iteration, and

there are now reasonable tools available to create virtual worlds on-line.

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**VRML is now in its second iteration, and there are now reasonable tools available to create virtual worlds on-line.**

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Even though VRML is a text format like HTML, it is pretty much impossible to hand-code VRML. You have to have some sort of tool. One good VRML editor is made by Cosmo, a spin-off company from Silicon Graphics. Its called Home Space Designer and its basically a scaled-down version of their \$600 Cosmo Worlds program. There are other programs that can do VRML, including the new NewTek product Inspire3D and to a lesser extent, AM98. But Home Space Designer is specifically designed to create VRML, and its only \$100. Unfortunately, Home Space Designer is only available for Windows95/98 and WindowsNT. No Mac version currently exists.

VRML is still in its infancy. VRML plug-ins are often unstable, particularly on the Macintosh side.

But its a promising technology, and all the people who got on the SGI site to play with the virtual Sojourner Mars Rover came away with a little thrill. It will be interesting to see where the technology takes us.

With the evolution of the World Wide Web, and the rise in availability of wider bandwidth like Cable Modems and xDSL, the future of rich media on the Internet is very bright indeed. Once the average speed on the Internet accelerates beyond 28,800 bps, towards the megabits-per-second realms of Cable Modems, xDSL, satellite modems and other wonders planned for the future, we might see cool stuff like video on demand, and TV-like broadcasts. When this happens, a new chapter may indeed be written in the history of mass media.

The glory of the Web is that now Freedom Of The Press doesn't just belong to those who own a press and have distribution. Anyone with a computer and an Internet account can be a publisher. Hopefully in the future, anyone with a computer and an Internet account will have the power to

become a TV programmer or a movie mogul.

This article will be continued on Animation Nerds Paradise, including more in-depth reviews of the various products mentioned. We will also be interviewing animators who have their own Small Studio/Home Studio, and bring their insights to you. ANP is located at <http://anp.awn.com/>.

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# Here's A How de do Diary: May

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 Heres A How de do. This film will take a look at three men: Gilbert, Sullivan and Richard D'Oyly Carte. D'Oyly Carte brought Gilbert and Sullivan together 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...*



Barry Purves.

reproduce the sound of an oboe or violin with truth. I may only have ten players for our film, but they are there with human rhythms and unpredictability. I laugh though to think that the union says, if players play a second instrument, they get another,

smaller fee. I'm glad I did not write in a triangle for a single note!

I've attacked the storyboard for Episode Four today, and this really does charge along angrily and should be fun to animate.

## May 5th

A three day break from G and S, and I've lost the momentum somewhat. I've also returned to work under a cloud of melancholy: perhaps it was another round of hospitals and sickness that has done this, perhaps its the spectacularly damp and un-spring-like day, perhaps its a realization that this film is never going to be what I want it to be. How can I pay homage to G and S, and put all my passion for their work, into a mere 15 minutes? My sleep is interrupted by songs and snatches that I've left out. Perhaps the melancholy is a panic that we are only a few weeks from starting and there isn't really much to see yet. I've not even finished the storyboard. I don't even know what is the final image.

## May 6th

Its ironic that as I storyboard the scene of Sullivan col-

lapsing and being put to bed, I have felt very much less than a hundred percent. Thats the last thing I need now. With every day accounted for until the end of the year, I cannot afford to be ill. Maybe I should not have eaten that bacon that was a month past its sell by date.

I was pleased to tackle a piece of staging in Episode Five that had worried me. I've solved the problem with a good piece of sleight of hand and don't need to revert to any effects. I think that Episode Five will be very moving or hideously sentimental. Its a fine line.

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**At the moment it is a bit frightening that we are filming in five weeks.**

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## May 7th

Still feeling somewhat under the weather and it did not make a very busy and difficult day any easier. I really do need to have some time to myself with the script, well, just time to myself. I'm feeling the pressure. It is possible that there really is only so much information the brain can hold.

Another big production meeting, and I think things are starting to get made, but at the moment it is a bit frightening that we are filming in five weeks.

## May 8th

Still not too well, and had to go home in the afternoon. The thought occurred to me that I was still in my 30s when I made my last

## May 1st

A composer arrived yesterday with the demo music for Sues *Dynodogs* pilot and we both loathed it. So electronic, with no musicality at all. This was the very worst example of music for children's animation—bland pap. It made me so angry; angry that anyone would think that this could inspire children to listen to music. Why is music so often an afterthought or considered a lesser element? This was written to some sort of mechanical program with no feeling for melody or character. I fear no real instrument came within miles of the studio.

It did make me appreciate the pleasure and luxury of being able to work with an orchestra for Gilbert and Sullivan. Nothing can



**Not just a British thing: A poster from a Japanese production of *Warship Pinafore*. Gilbert & Sullivan are loved worldwide! Image courtesy of Barry Purves.**

film; do I still have the stamina and concentration for this marathon?

### May 11th

A weekend of culture lifted the spirits and recharged the batteries: Hal Prince's epic *Show Boat*, and a double bill of Stoppard's *Inspector Hound* and Shaffer's *Black Comedy*; this last being a piece of total inspiration, and a reminder of just how wonderful and inspiring live theatre can be. A succession of ever more manic gags left me breathless. I'm afraid no film, animated or otherwise, has done that to me. Knowing the danger of live theatre gives everything an edge missing from anything else.

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**On the whole, and this is awful for me to say, animators don't have the vitality and adrenaline of performers, and that's what gives me a buzz.**

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I also went to a memorial service for Simon Jeffes, the man behind the most uplifting and joy-

ous music I know—the Penguin Café Orchestra. No music has had a deeper effect on my life.

Happily, I think I have finished the storyboard today; well over 300 drawings (very basic drawings, I have to add) for 211 shots during the 15 minute running time. The average shot is just over 4 seconds. This should give things a lively pace.

### May 12th

Carte's bedstead has arrived, and it is quite a work of art—very exciting. Richard has managed to incorporate the letters G and S into the fine metal work. This prop will be featured a lot, so it's just as well to have all the detail. Carte's skeleton is finished, and Gilbert is nearly there. Slowly, things are happening.

On the radio at the moment are several commercials for conservatories, using 'and he polished off the handle of the big front door' from *HMS Pinafore*. It certainly stands head and shoulders above the other jingles, but...

### May 13th

A few more props are appearing. Now it starts to get exciting. The cut-out of D'Oyly Carte's wife is here, looking resplendent in her wedding outfit. Just reading a book about G and S, I saw that when Queen Victoria famously commanded the D'Oyly Carte to perform *The Gondoliers* in Windsor Castle, Gilbert's name was accidentally left off the program. You can see that Gilbert might have been a little miffed. I remember seeing my film *Next* in a program as having been directed by a certain Nick Park.

The animators that I trained and Sue were taken out for a sunny lunch by Cosgrove Hall.

They are all full of exciting things in development and suddenly, I felt an outsider. I really don't know what my future is after G and S.

Happy 156th birthday Sullivan!

### May 14th

A good long talk to Clare Kitson and I think we have sorted out a few things about the film. We are both quite happy with the title *G & S—The Long and the Short of It*. Not only is this a line from *Princess Ida* and is sung in our film, but it says something about our condensed version of their story and about the men themselves. It's also got a catchy rhythm. We also talked about the difficult subject of "Fair Moon to Thee I Sing." I do understand Clare wanting this film to have as many recognizable songs as possible, but I'm keen to make the story work firstly. And, if I'm being awkward, I think we should draw people in with the old favorites and introduce them to a few new songs. Hopefully, I was not too stubborn or difficult about keeping the score the way I wanted it—well, more than that, the way it works.

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**I think, after animating for 20 years, that I can get puppets to do what I want, but is what they do the right thing?**

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But I do hope that the film is more than just a pot-pourri of "classical Monday Pops." I've worked hard at the story and motivations and the rhythm of the piece.

### May 15th

A thought: if G and S are performing as if in a seedy vaudeville, to whom are they perform-

ing? Do I let them look at the camera, or just some focal point off screen? If I show some footlights, does this make it all too literal?

A glorious heatwave has made concentrating rather difficult. What a shame we can never animate outside.

I've been at a bit of a loss today. Timing the music and barsheets is my next big slog, but I don't get the music for a while. I tried to break down the shots into a daily schedule, and totally frightened myself. I don't know how I can do 12-14 seconds of all singing and all dancing each day. All three puppets are in nearly every shot. There is very little time allowed for costume changes or relighting. The only way I'll get this footage is if no one slows me down, and if I do my homework. My crew must be in the same gear as myself.

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**What I really hope to produce is a piece that bursts with infectious energy and real joy.**

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### May 18th

Glorious sunshine all weekend has seen us all coming in rather pink but cheerful. Also, I went to a ceillidh on Saturday and jiggled fit to drop. I think the adrenaline is still going as I was like a whirlwind today, charging through a meeting with the VAT [tax] people, a production meeting and various other meetings. It's either the adrenaline, or I'm starting to get excited and apprehensive about the film. At the production meeting, Nick produced a lot of final artwork and Richard has several nearly finished props. We are going to get there. One of the animation students is currently testing the bouncing bed. It will

be a lot of difficult and time-consuming work to get this to bounce, but I'll use it sparingly and effectively.

### May 19th

Headed off to south of Barcelona, to lie on a beach for a week, reading and absorbing the script—that is the intention anyway.

### May 20th

These are not the sunny Spanish shores that Gilbert had in mind when he wrote *The Gondoliers*. He would have been so horrified at the amount of flesh on display. I gather he was furious if too much of a lady's legs were shown on stage. He strove for innocent merriment the whole time, so I can only imagine that the three men in drag in *Princess Ida* must have slipped through on a bad day.

### May 21st

My mind is totally neutral with G & S lurking but not intruding. Someone at the hotel happened to be singing a song from *Ruddigore*, which pleased me to no end. He was British but even so. I've been carrying the script around as a prop, to give me a purpose. I'm not that good at being totally idle, or succumbing to relaxation. I'm always usually on the outside of a group of revelers, unable to join in—a bit pathetic really.

### May 22nd

Walked about 18 miles in blistering heat and didn't get to see the script at all. Now I'm racked with guilt and panic. Whilst I'm at this remove, everything appears to be frighteningly disorganized. I don't mean because I'm

not there, but because things are not getting done. It terrifies me that we are so near shooting and the basic financial groundwork of this film is a mess.

### May 23rd

A day of the old and the new. I visited a marvelously preserved Roman Amphitheatre. I'm very partial to theatre buildings of any kind. Interestingly, here in Taragona, they'd built a church in the arena to atone for the early bloodthirsty days. Then to Port Adventura—a theme park based on Polynesia, the Wild West, Mexico, the Mediterranean and China, and done with much taste and loving detail. Little details seemed so bizarre that they had to be authentic. Happily the performers were of the appropriate nationality. The rides incorporated the country's theme with real wit and respect. One ride was the Dragon Khan—well Barry Kahn't. The whole atmosphere was just right and there was no fear of being assaulted by a six-foot rodent wearing white gloves! A very sophisticated park and a treat.

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**Music is so important in my work and today has been quite thrilling.**

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### May 24th

We record the music a week today and I've never even looked forward to anything so much. It is a thrill for me to work with such performers and I feel at home with this passion and activity. Sadly, I don't always find that passion in the animation circles. On the whole, and this is awful for me to say, animators don't have the vitality and adrenaline of performers, and that's what gives me

a buzz. To direct the singers and discuss the music score is a pleasure indeed.

I'm ready to go home now. I'm worried about things.

### May 25th

Met two pub landladies on a week away, and whilst they were not particularly G and S lovers, we did manage a very spirited trio from *Pinafore*, on the beach. Ah, the English on holiday...

### May 27th

Back in the office and a million things to catch up with. First thing was to get up to speed again. A lot of props have appeared since I've been away and they look tremendous. I'm a little worried that we haven't got the cross hatching effect totally right yet. A long bubbly talk with Clare Kitson from Channel Four. She is about to do a writing course, and is worried about having to come up with ideas in front of other people. Publicly exposing one's creativity is never easy. I think, after animating for 20 years, that I can get puppets to do what I want, but is what they do the *right* thing? That's the difficult bit. Still, the most painful moment for me on any film, is showing the rushes to other people. I'd like to watch them in private, alone.

Guess what? We still haven't got a title for this film. *G & S—The Long and Short of It* has been rejected as 'G and S,' apparently, sounds too elitist. It sounded colloquial to me. We may well get back to *Here's a How de do* which would be too ironic.

### May 28th

My father died during the night—pain deprives me of any

words.

### May 29th

A relief, or an escape, to be thinking of work today. It saddens me so much that Pa won't see the film, for which, of all the films of mine, he had so much enthusiasm. G and S has always played a part of our family life ever since I was very young. Ma was often going to see friends in amateur productions, and Pa talks of taking numerous girlfriends to the D'Oyly Carte. Both at school and University, I was constantly involved in various productions. It is only Amanda, my sister, that remains untouched by my passion for opera.

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**Four hours to record our 15-minute soundtrack may sound a lot, but it is certainly not.**

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Now the music will have some very painful subtext. A last study of the score before Sunday's recording. I cannot wait to hear the orchestrations. Hopefully, I will be able to get a lot of character and detail out of the performers, as well as right notes. We really don't have much time during the recording. Four hours for 15 minutes of music from scratch is quite a tall order. What I really hope to produce is a piece that bursts with infectious energy and real joy. Looking in the evening paper nearly every National Trust property seems to be having summer G and S concerts and galas. These operas will never die.

### May 31st

I know of nothing as exciting as working with singers and an orchestra. Music is so important in my work and today has been quite thrilling. Four hours to

record our 15-minute soundtrack may sound a lot, but it is certainly not. A lot of decisions have to be made so quickly, but Wyn and I were firing on every cylinder and more. The singers gave me so much character, and what a joy to see them in action, as good as performing their roles. The orchestra produced amazing colors. The orchestrations are a cross between Kurt Weill, Kander and Ebb, and the RSC's Nicholas Nickleby - very energetic and rich. The horn and the banjo will be the stars, though I think Gilbert loathed the banjo, judging from putting 'banjo serenaders' on Ko-Ko's Little List in *The Mikado* (though actually this term has crept in over the years, taking over from something very racially dubious indeed). We've only done a rough mix, but we are all excited at the soundtrack. A lot of work from Wyn and I and a great deal of other people have produced something satisfyingly substantial, accessible, and true to G and S. It's funny to think Wyn and I sat round his piano nearly a year ago, wondering where do we begin!

Read Barry's previous diary in last month's issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

*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](mailto:editor@awn.com).



# ASIFA's Next Step: A Continuation of the History of ASIFA's Patronage of Festivals

by Michel Ocelot

## June 1998:

Following lengthy discussions through all kinds of correspondence, the ASIFA Board of Directors held working meetings in Zagreb and reached the following decisions:

After 20 years of varying degrees of success, ASIFA has now decided to replace the system of Festival PATRONAGE. The new structure, tentatively called PARTNERSHIP, is open to any worthwhile festival, including non-specialized ones.

Partnership introduces regular input from the filmmakers themselves via forms they are invited to fill out at a festival's close. These opinions, together with additional information supplied by festival directors, will form the basis of new RATINGS for festivals.

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**After 20 years of varying degrees of success, ASIFA has now decided to replace the system of Festival PATRONAGE.**

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Festival regulations will not lose their use, but they will instead serve more as GUIDELINES, which are less restrictive than the old regulations and more adaptable to the particular needs of both filmmakers and festivals.

The official recognition letters will remain one of the instruments of ASIFA when they prove useful to festivals.

The ASIFA Board of Directors will endeavor to establish and

publish the texts defining these new arrangements by September, 1998.

## A Word on the Ottawa Festival

In June 1997, ASIFA was informed that the Ottawa director, staff



and advisory board had decided to maintain their relationship with ASIFA for the next festival and requested the approval of their regulations. Since they were the standard approved ASIFA recommended rules, patronage was readily granted.

In April 1998, there was a change of mind. The Ottawa director officially informed me he was not satisfied with ASIFA and that his festival was withdrawing from being an ASIFA-sanctioned festival. In a separate personal message he stressed that he had no intention of going public and was not going to issue press releases or announcements on the Ottawa web site.

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**Festival regulations will not lose their use, but they will instead serve more as GUIDELINES...**

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In my previous article, ASIFA And Festivals: A Changing Relationship (June 1998 issue), I refrained from naming Ottawa, even if I spoke of festivals not feeling the need to request ASIFA patronage anymore. A little later, Ottawa issued press releases on its withdrawal

from ASIFA sanctioned festivals, and its director, in a personal letter to me, strongly reproached me for my discretion on the matter. Adapting to this, I will now make these changes public.

Ottawa '98 is not an officially ASIFA-sanctioned festival. The festival must be reminded that patronage was never imposed on festivals in any way.

Instead it was to be requested each time by the concerned festival organizers from the ASIFA Secretary General. There is no such thing as 'ASIFA International.'

There is just one ASIFA, with built-in internationalism. As far as I know, ASIFA members will go on helping with the Canadian festival as before, seeing things in perspective.

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**There is no such thing as 'ASIFA International.' There is just one ASIFA, with built-in internationalism.**

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One last note: In a recent *ASIFA News* issue somebody added Ottawa to the list of ASIFA-patronized festivals, thinking it was an oversight. I apologize. Such things happen. The Annecy festival, to which we unquestionably expressed our disapproval on the way they conducted their annualization, printed on the first mailing of their rules and regulations that they were under ASIFA patronage, a message that was sent to 26,500 addresses.

*Michel Ocelot is president of the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA).*

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

# Vilppu Drawing Online: Spherical Forms

by Glenn Vilppu

This is the second in a series of articles on drawing for animation. In these articles I will be presenting the theory and practice of drawing as a "how to" instructional series. The lessons are based upon the *Vilppu Drawing Manual* and will in general follow the basic plan outlined



A Glenn Vilppu. All drawings in this article are by and © Glenn Vilppu.

## Lesson 2: Spherical Forms

Now that you've "mapped out" the action of the pose, the next step in the process is to define your figure in 3-D space. Learning to see your subject in terms of simple shapes and forms along with values is one of the basic elements in learn-

ing to draw. I refer to this ability to see and use basic forms as visual tools. These visual tools, like any tool, help you to accomplish certain tasks. Without the right tools, doing anything becomes much

more difficult. This course is designed, step by step, to give you those tools and basic skills in using them. However, the design of a course does not guarantee that you will learn those skills auto-

matically. You have to put in the time and effort to do the learning. To do anything successfully you must apply three basic elements: first, you must have a plan of attack or approach; second, you need the knowledge to put that plan into affect, and third, you must have the tenacity to carry it through to completion.

*"First, you must*

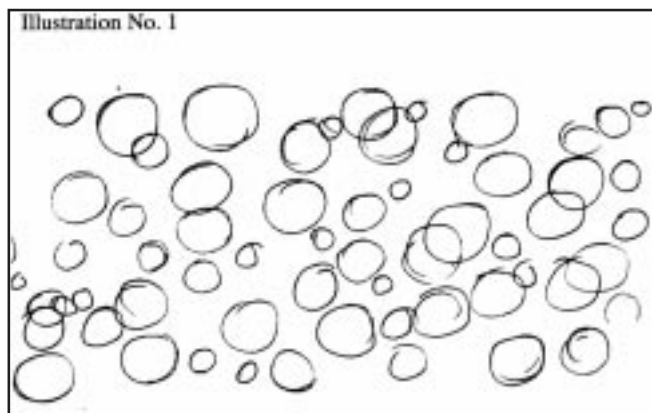
*have a plan of attack or approach; second, you need the knowledge to put that plan into affect; and third, you must have the tenacity to carry it through to completion."*

**You have to put in the time and effort to do the learning.**

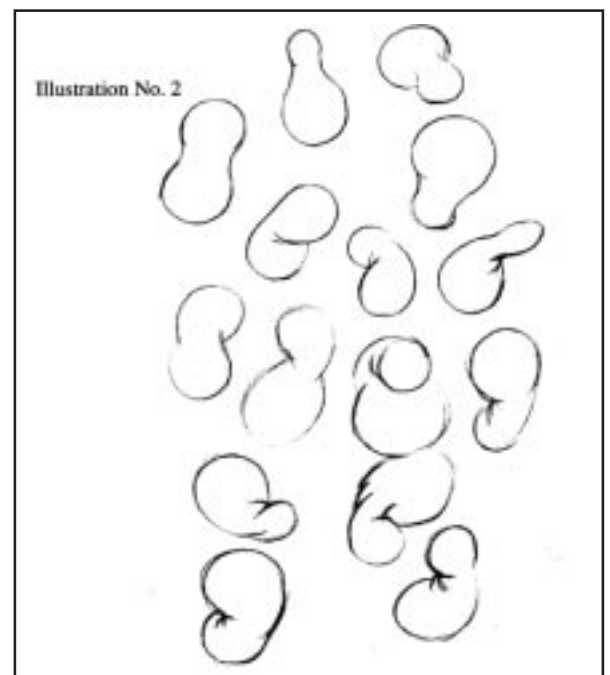
These first lessons are the most critical and are the most deceptively simple in appearance. Through experience, I have found them to be the most difficult for the student because of this apparent simplicity. Everything depends on your putting the time and effort into these initial lessons. Lesson one was a good example of what seems to be simple but is something that in reality is only truly mastered after a lifetime of effort.

## Let's Get Drawing!

Start by drawing a series of



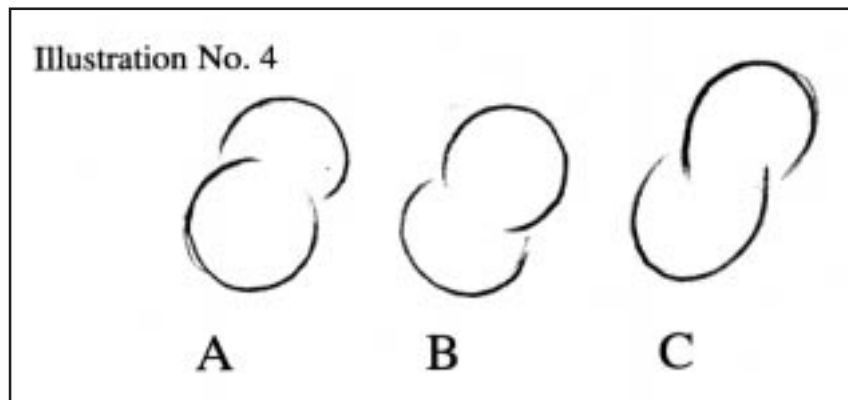
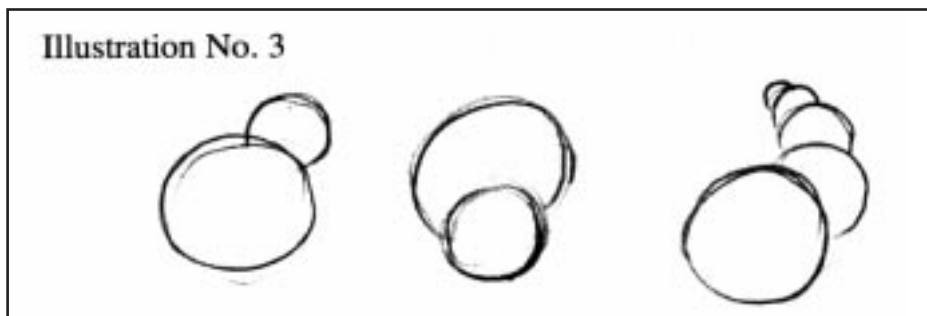
mation industry both in the U.S. and in their affiliates overseas. Each lesson will also have short Quicktime clips of me demonstrating the material discussed. If you have not seen the previous lesson in the June 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*, it is recommended that you do. The lessons are progressive and expand on basic ideas. It is suggested that you start from the beginning for a better understanding of my approach.



spheres on your paper: first, singularly, and then, in pairs, overlapping and changing in size in relation to each other (See Illustration No. 1). Combining two spheres as one complete form but still having, clearly, two parts gives the form a sense of life (See Illustration No. 2).

Have your form walk, bend over, be curious, meet other forms like it, and create relationships. In short, bring it to life.

Through all this, you must maintain the sense of volume. What is a sense of volume? The use of the term "volume" in drawing generally means three dimensional. Having a "sense of volume" in a drawing is to give it this three dimensional quality. There are many different ways of creating this three dimensionality that we



experience as volume in a drawing. Illustrations No. 1 & 3 demonstrate overlapping, the most basic way to create a sense of form existing in space. Illustration No. 2 also uses overlapping but in this case the forms are connected and the overlapping does not completely separate the parts. In Illustration No. 4 "A," "B," and "C," you can see how important it becomes to decide carefully which lines overlap. In Illustration 4: "A," the forms go away from us; in "B," they come forward; and in "C," they

create a twist. Still, just making forms overlap in itself will not ensure that the drawing will exhibit this sense of form.

The most elemental skill is the ability to sense these

basic volumes on the flat paper as if they were actually existing, being created by you as you move your pencil over and around their surfaces and through the magic space of the paper. Some people have a natural affinity for doing this and others have to work hard and

long to achieve it.

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**The most elemental skill is the ability to sense these basic volumes on the flat paper as if they were actually existing.**

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### Keep Practicing...

Drawing should be an everyday part of what you do. Look at other artists of the past and see where you can find applications of these lessons. The drawings on this page and the following are examples of ways that you can use spherical forms. The important thing is that you practice drawing them. Don't feel pressured into feeling that you have to do fancy detailed drawings. Being loose and feeling the roundness is the important thing at this stage of your development. Create characters out of your imagination, draw familiar things around you, applying the various lessons to what you draw. Copying or drawing from other artists is an accepted traditional approach to learning in conjunction with drawing from

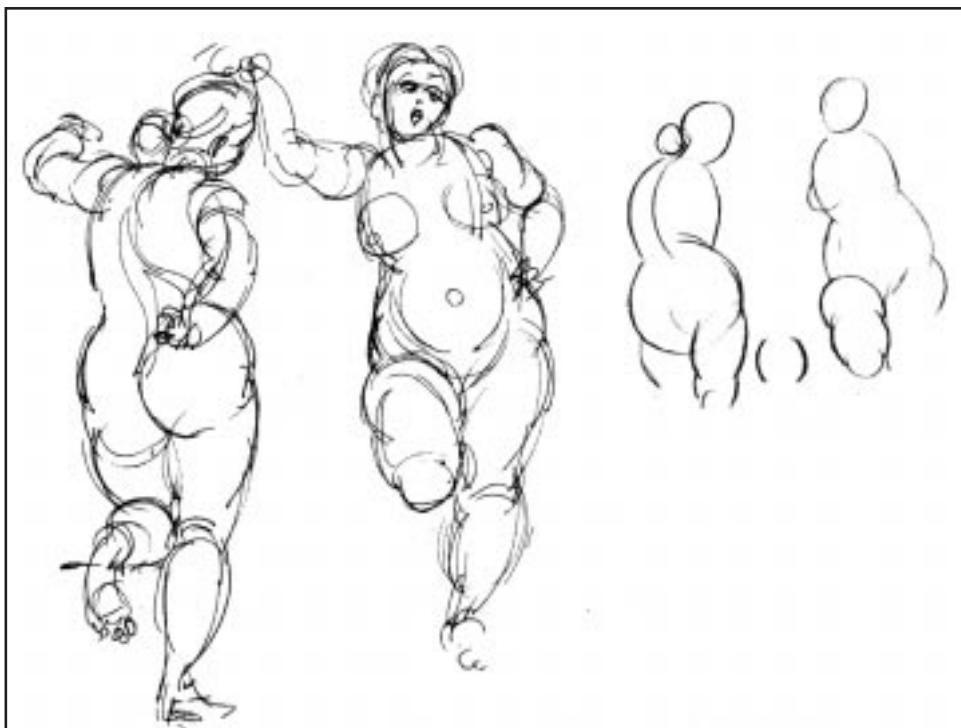




Note: The on-line version of this article includes three Quick-time movies of master drawing instructor Glenn Vilppu demonstrating drawing techniques that every animator should know!  
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5villpu.html>

**These first lessons are the most critical and are the most deceptively simple in appearance.**

Glenn Vilppu first wrote for *Animation World Magazine* in the June 1997 issue, "Never Underestimate the Power of Life Drawing." His drawing manuals and video tapes may now be purchased in the Animation World Store.



*Glenn Vilppu teaches figure drawing at the American Animation Institute, the Masters program of the UCLA Animation Dept., Walt Disney Feature Animation and Warner Bros. Feature Animation, and is being sent to teach artists at Disney TV studios in Japan, Canada and the Philippines. Vilppu has also worked in the animation industry for 18 years as a layout, storyboard and presentation artist. His drawing manual and video tapes are being used worldwide as course materials for animation students.*

observation and creating from your imagination.

Each lesson will build upon the previous one, so spend the time on each one and don't rush to the next until you feel comfortable with the current one. Don't

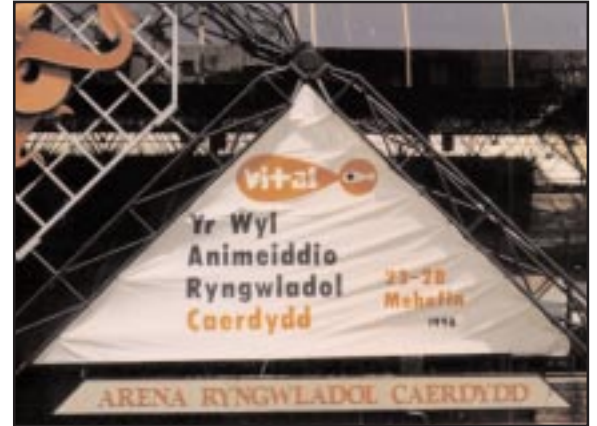
hesitate to go back to the previous lesson. Each individual is different and there is no set length of time that it should take to acquire the material in these lessons. Most importantly, have fun with your drawing!

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# CARDIFF: A DIFFICULT YEAR TO BE ANY FESTIVAL

by Heather Kenyon

Jane Williams had a difficult line to tread while leading this year's Vital! International Animation Festival in Cardiff from June 22-28, 1998, but in my opinion, she did a pretty good job. Balancing the expectations of old and new attendees, those wanting a small, art festival "like the old days" and those wanting a festival like two years ago, is a hard task and it's tough to find a middle ground in a year when the big industry sponsors are not recruiting. Especially when every other country on the map is holding a festival this year. There is no denying she had a challenging job.



ing the expectations of old and new attendees, those wanting a small, art festival "like the old days" and those wanting a festival like two years ago, is a hard task and it's tough to find a middle ground in a year when the big industry sponsors are not recruiting. Especially when every other country on the map is holding a festival this year. There is no denying she had a challenging job.

**It is a must to note that one of the reasons why Cardiff was a successful event was because of these seminars.**

## A Chance to Meet the Buyers

The previous Cardiff International Animation Festival took place during the big studio recruiting craze of 1996 when desperation for talent was running high. As a result, big companies with massive booths moved in and took over. Grumbling complaints from the old-timers were heard, but never before had the likes of Disney and Warner Bros. participated so heavily. Well, 1998 is a very different year with the anima-

tion industry beginning to come back to this stratosphere. As a result the large name players were either not present or very low-key, with evidently lower budgets and aspirations. Meanwhile, Cardiff is a festival of students, who are hungry for more advanced training and jobs. The festival organizers, however, did a great job of bridging this gap by creating "Commissioning Brunches" and "Careers and Crumpets," a new feature that fit everyone's needs. For an hour and a half, sponsoring companies hosted a presentation in a large room and served either lunch or tea. Companies like Granada Animation, Cartoon Network, Passion Pictures, Aardman Animations and Nickelodeon could reach the people that were most interested in them without dedicating numerous staff members to a costly booth for the entire week. Plus, students and producers could meet the key personnel of these companies and hear exactly what they wanted when looking for new projects, while getting some great snacks in the process! While some experienced players scoffed

at remarks like, "We are seeking good projects, presented well," most found the sessions very helpful and frantically scribbled notes. These sessions were packed. "We only planned to have 50 but ended up with 150!" was heard by almost every organizing group. The success of these events really set the tone at Cardiff. Cardiff's niche is one of educational panels and discussions, which is suiting since the festival boasts wall-to-wall students, with most industry professionals dodging between Cardiff and London.

"Commissioning Brunches" and "Careers and Crumpets," were held at the Cardiff International Arena (CIA), home to almost all of the panels, presentations and discussion groups, as well as the Expo. The Expo was sparse and both attendees and participants seemed disappointed. The floor could be covered in a matter of minutes. Exhibitors did say, that while they were disappointed by the small amount of traffic, they did know they were targeting strictly animation people. Some of the standout exhibitors were: BBC Worldwide, Cartoon, Nick-

elodeon, Granada Animation, and a host of puppet and armature creators including John Wright Modelmaking, The Puppet Factory and Elm Road Film Productions. All of the booths this year were very modest and small. Indeed, some were virtually unmanned for the entire festival. Did anyone see anybody at the BBC booth? All I saw was a loop of those creepy Teletubbies. Sony Imageworks had a small booth at the Expo and a room upstairs where Barry Weiss, Vice President of Animation, interviewed possible hires for their new feature *Stuart Little*, which stars an intrepid white mouse.

### Panels and Training Were Key

The Vitals, Vital(it)y and Digital Dimensions were three separately focused groupings of panel discussions and training seminars. All, again, were a tremendous success as they highlighted hands-on learning and discussion. Digital Dimensions was organized by Carl Franklin, the technology correspondent for the U.K.'s *Sunday Business*, and focused on animation using computers and new media techniques. From "Starting Out in Computer Animation" to a "Softimage Masterclass," I don't think there was a miss among these presentations. One especially fascinating demonstration was given by Jackie Cockle and Paul Couvela from Hot Animation who stop-motion animated characters from *Brambly Hedge* right before the audience's eyes.

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**With so many screenings in two locations it was difficult to choose.**

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Vital(it)y centered on artists telling their real-life tales of launching into producing new media. From CD-Roms to the Internet,

each workshop focused on a different technical aspect of the tools used in new media production. Frankly, they needed a larger room for these seminars. A tiny, little cubby hole in the CIA did not do these sessions justice. By the end of the week some were regulars only attending these classes, and the room

was in great disarray with tables and chairs strewn in an uneven semi-circle around the speaker's podium. This was a well-used room!

The Vitals were another set of panel discussions that boasted such sponsors as Aardman Animations, the BBC Bristol Animation Unit and the U.K.'s Channel Four. These discussions focused more on matters of business and training. The festival held a series of ambitious script writing seminars and discussions. One, sponsored by The BBC Bristol Animation Unit, was especially effective as writers had BBC editors perform script surgery on their scripts. It was refreshing, and unusual, to see an animation festival dedicate so much time to screenwriting. Cartoon UK sponsored a series of four lectures focused on legal rights, production budgeting and the current market place. Channel Four's Independents' Forum was party to many a lively debate on the state of the industry.

A bevy of volunteers from the local schools and universities,



Left to right: Animator Kevin Baldwin of Bob Godfrey Films, Heather Kenyon, James Hickey of TerraGlyph Productions and Deborah Fallows of Nelvana. Photo © AWN.

under the festival staff's watchful eye, kept the seminars and registration areas in smooth working order. Sessions started on time and ended on time as a tight ship was kept and downright order reigned. It is a must to note that one of the reasons why Cardiff was a successful event was because of these seminars. While students play a key role at Cardiff and these are the types of events they need and enjoy, there really was something for everyone. It was great to see industry professionals in the middle of the student sea, learning right along side of them.

### Screenings for Everyone

Another key location was of course St. David's Hall, home of the screenings, some of the aforementioned workshops and panels, and smoke! Now, I know that living in Los Angeles, with all of our anti-smoking laws makes me more sensitive, but even natives were complaining about the air quality by the final night! In spite of the cloud, the lounge on the top floor was the meeting and

greeting place to be. In fact, I think a lot of people stayed in the lobby chatting with friends and gathering around resident legend Bob Godfrey, rather than rushing into the screenings. A lot of the screenings at the Hall during the day were rather sparsely attended, but the evening programs were quite full. Screenings took place at St. David's Hall and the Angel Hotel, located directly across from Cardiff Castle, which was the coolest, funkiest location by far. With so many screenings in two locations it was difficult to choose.

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**"An Evening with Nickelodeon and Klasky Csupo" was highly anticipated as they were the largest U.S. studio conglomerate present.**

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In some programs it seemed that a lot of the films were not new and many had been seen before by those regular on the festival circuit. Students enjoyed the programs but were split between the screenings and the lectures. However, the "Special Presentations" and thematic programs brought back old favorites and cleverly packaged them with new and difficult-to-find pieces to create some delightful programs. "Handbags & Hairdos; The Animators Guide to Camp, Queer and Kitsch" was such a program featuring gay and lesbian works. The absolute highlight for some was the festival salute to Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin. When one brave soul tentatively asked, "May I touch Bagpuss?" a roar went up from the crowd as everyone had been wondering the same. Soon a line wrapped around the St. David's Hall stage as everyone wanted to get just a little bit closer to their childhood memory.

The opening night's film was *The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot*. I am sure this seemed like quite the treat when it was first obtained by the festival. I wonder how they feel about it now...Bill Plympton's *I Married A Strange Person* was, of course, packed with fans. Plympton was present and his usual easy going self despite what must have been close to two days of sleep deprivation due to traveling. *Perfect Blue*, by director Satoshi Kon, is a groundbreaking animated psychological thriller and puzzled everyone who stayed to view it at 10:00 p.m. on Saturday night. "That did my head in," was the general consensus but no one said they didn't enjoy it.

Guests of the festival, like Cuppa Coffee Animation, Magnus Carlsson and Georges Lacroix, all presented special programs. Georges Lacroix showed a history of Fantôme's work and, after a few financially shaky months, happily presented their new productions. "An Evening with Nickelodeon and Klasky Csupo" was highly anticipated as they were the largest U.S. studio conglomerate

present. Unfortunately, a clash of cultures happened as the audience wanted to see more of the giant's productions and hear less speeches. Many a disgruntled audience member left complaining of American arrogance!

Clare Wilford's "British Programmes" were a treat, highlighting the best of the great nations work. From adult programs to crowd-pleasers to the new work of independents, it was all covered. The range in some programs was a bit shocking as one never knew what was going to appear next. For instance, in the "Premiere Selection - World and U.K. Premieres" the audience was treated to the touching and emotionally stirring *Silence*, by Orly Yadin and Sylvie Bringas. This film was the best that I saw at the festival and relates the story of a little girl who was able to survive the Holocaust with the help of her grandmother and by being silent. Finally, 50 years later, Tara, our heroine, breaks her silence and tells her story. This triumph was in the same program as two short episodes of Darren Walsh's *Angry*



The Expo featured modest booths in an intimate setting. Photo by Heather Kenyon. © AWN.

*Kid* which proves that boys will always be boys and get funding for their gross, pointless films.

The Angel Hotel was an oasis of interesting viewing where almost every screening was well attended. I could have stayed there all week with screenings of work by William Kentridge, Jerzy Kucia, the East German DEFA Studio, Marv Newland's favorite films, and crowd pleasing shows like *Rex the Runt*. In the CIA and Angel Hotel, the organizers were smart to underestimate rather than overestimate the number of people that would be attending each event. As a result I only remember full rooms which leaves a lively, healthy impression.

### A Good Time For All

Despite the almost continual rain and clouds, the festival goers had a great time. I heard several times, "We didn't get back until 5:30 a.m.!" However, as far as professionals went, the festival really didn't get going until Thursday and by Saturday afternoon most people were beginning their trek back to London. Based on my experience with Los Angeles' World Animation Celebration, placing this event in London would not help attendance. Folks in L.A. tended to keep getting distracted by work during WAC and some were never able to venture out of the office for even an afternoon. The cost of passes and the lack of day passes were cited by some as being the reason for not attending.

Everyone had fun at the various pubs and restaurants located in central Cardiff, but the festival was almost devoid of large parties, another victim of the recruiting hiatus. The closing night party was the traditional day-glo paint



The Channel Four Independents Forum. Left to right: Tom Bertino, Candy Guard, Carl Franklin, Clare Wilford and Lucy Murphy. Photo by Gerben Schermer. © AWN.

bash thrown by Nickelodeon and Klasky Csupo. While still the only evening party of the event, the main room was too hot, loud and smoky to be able to speak to anyone and didn't have the vitality (sorry, I couldn't resist) that the same party had at Cardiff and WAC two years ago. Still the students I saw were dancing the night away and seemed quite pleased.

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### Despite the almost continual rain and clouds, the festival goers had a great time.

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All in all, as I climbed onto the train to Manchester for a delightful day visiting Barry Purves, Cosgrove Hall and Mackinnon and Saunders, I thought it had been a productive festival. While the contacts were not chock-a-block and every film was not new, I felt that I really got to spend time with and speak to the people I met, and not just hurriedly exchange business cards. (Sometimes though since the professionals were only jetting in for a

day or two, one really had to grab them when one saw them.) Perhaps this is the benefit of having so many animation festivals in a year. Not everyone was there—some were too busy working, some didn't want to make the trip, others were just tired of festivals—but frankly, it can be overwhelming and frustrating to not be able to see everyone who is present. I think Cardiff, in the face of Annecy's announcement to go annual in the year of Zagreb, Ottawa and Hiroshima, came out okay. No, the world didn't show up, but there were still plenty of people to meet and things to see and learn anyway, in this important world animation community.

Good job Jane. We'll see what another two years brings us.

*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](mailto:editor@awn.com).



# Zagreb '98: Better Than Ever!

by Gunnar Strøm

In the 1980s, Zagreb was the definite meeting place for the animation world, alternating every second year with Annecy. The 1992 festival was held while the war was still looming. Since then, every festival has been bigger and better than the last, and with this 13th World Festival of Animated Films, the Zagreb festival is back where it belongs.

## The Films of Course

As usual the film selection in Zagreb reflected the entire range of world animation with a main focus on artistic film. Films from more than 30 countries were screened in the three main programs of the festival: the official competition, the student competition and "Animania," five panorama programs partially chosen by



Visitors gathered in the entrance hall as the festival began. Photo courtesy of the Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films.

the selection committee, with one program being chosen by the festival. The selection in Zagreb has a tradition for being more open toward experimental films than Annecy, and this year's festival was no exception. Detelina Grigorovakreck (Bulgaria/Germany), John R. Dilworth (U.S.) and Vedran Mihletic (Croatia) chose both a demanding, inspiring and entertaining program.

The weakest part of the selection was the advertising films. The winning film *Special Selections: Campbell's Soup* by Aleksandra Korejwo (U.S., Poland) is an excellent commercial, but my impression of the commercials in competition was that many of the best animated commercials from the last two years had not been entered. The

commercials felt a bit misplaced because they were run in the middle of the competition programs. I also find the competition programs in Zagreb a bit too long, even though the festival wisely has an intermission in the middle. Maybe the problem is that they start a bit late, at 9 p.m., and therefore, do not finish before 11:30 p.m. A great many of the directors in competition were present in Zagreb and I was greatly impressed by the list of guests; 130 international professionals from nearly 30 countries made this year's festival a real international event. Major animation names like Andrej Krjanovsky (Russia), Gianalberto Bendazzi (Italy), Joan Gratz (USA) and Nouredin Zarrinkelk (Iran) illustrate this international scene. This year's jury was Natalia Chernyshova (Ukraine), Sayoko Kinoshita (Japan), Peter Dougherty (U.K.), Raoul Servais (Belgium) and Milan Blazekovic (Croatia).

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**The selection in Zagreb has a tradition for being more open toward experimental films than Annecy, and this year's festival was no exception.**

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## Special Screenings and Highlights

A special focus this year was put on Italian animation. Bruno Bozzetto was awarded the very prestigious "Life Achievement Award." Other retrospectives presented the films of Renzo Kinoshita, Vadim Kurchewski and Zlatko



The festival directors Margit Antauer and Josko Marusic and their crew. Photo courtesy of the Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films.



**Bruno Bozzetto receiving the Life Achievement Award from the Croatian filmmaker Pavao Stalter. Photo courtesy of the Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films.**

Grgic. For the first time a retrospective of Austrian animation (1920-1970) was presented by Thomas Renolder who has done an impressive amount of research on the films. Renolder also presented a short program of films under the title, "Cain and Abel," which showcased films that promote tolerance, acceptance and peace.

**Personally, I thought some of the most interesting films were missing on the prize winners list.**

British experimental animator Clive Walley won a prize at Zagreb '96 that granted him the opportunity to present an exhibition of paintings at this year's festival. So, the Welsh multi-plane animator replaced his film camera with a still camera. The resulting images had been scanned into a computer, blown up and transferred to paper in a most effective way. On the wall, these images gave a most impressive look, and accompanied by his films on video, made a striking example of

fine art made by an animator. The connections between the fine art and images from the film *Divertemento No.2* were especially striking.

A lot of student films were presented in Zagreb this year. In addition to those in the main competition, the festival decided to have an extra student competition because of the

high number of interesting entries in this category. The student films were awarded by a separate jury consisting of 101 young people from Zagreb chosen by the radio station 101, and were screened in the main theater in the Lisinsky Hall in a very proper and formal way. This was a very successful addition to the festival and I do hope it will be continued next time. The main prize in the student competition went to Dennis Sister-son from the Southampton Insti-

tute in Great Britain for *Advice for Hamsters*. Best Student Film in the main competition was *One Eye* by Liana Dognini from the UK's National Film and Television School. This film also got a special mention from the youth jury.

**Zagreb has always been among the friendliest of the international animation events, and this year was no exception.**

### The Standouts

As for the prizes, the big winners this year were the Russian animators. Moscow's SHAR School studio was already awarded by the Selection Committee Best Producer among those entering films for the festival. Grand Prix went to Alexander Petrov for *The Mermaid* and "The Zlatko Grgic Prize" for Best First Film was shared by *The Major's Nose* by Mikhail Lisovoj and *Pink Doll* by Valentin Olshvang. The first film is a new version of the Gogol short story, and the second is a striking fantasy of a little girl who gets a very expensive and threatening doll from her



**Cheers! The Zagreb '98 International Jury, left to right: Sayoko Kinoshita (Japan), Raoul Servais (Belgium), Natalia Chernishova (Ukraine), Peter Dougherty (U.K.), and Milan Blazekovic (Croatia). Photo courtesy of the Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films.**



Filmmakers from all over the world enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of the festival picnic. Photo courtesy of the Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films.

mother's lover.

As usual the British animators were well-represented on the prize list. Category prizes went to *Flatworld* by Daniel Greaves (15-30 minutes) and *The Albatross* by Paul Bush (6-15 minutes). *Flatworld* also won the Public Prize. The category prize for the shortest films went to the charming *Sientje* by Christa Moesker (The Netherlands). The film depicts a little girl who is really upset after a quarrel with her parents.

**I highly recommend this animation event, even though I hope it will not grow too much.**

Personally, I thought some of the most interesting films were missing on the prize winners list. The opening film of the festival, Andrej Krjanovskys *The Long Journey*, is a really fascinating documentary based on the drawings of Federico Fellini. The script is written by Fellini's scriptwriter Tonino Guerra who also performs the voice-over and acts in the film. The film resembles Krjanovskys earlier films on the Estonian painter Soostar. The British/Swedish film

*Silence* by Orly Yadin and Sylvie Bringas was another favorite of mine. The strong story about little Tana that survived the Holocaust but kept her story to herself for 50 years, made a very strong impression on the audience. The narration is read by Tana

herself, and the film stands out as an animated film that has a strong message to tell without being didactic. I would also have liked to see Phil Mulloys *The Wind of Changes* on the list of prize winners. To me, with this film Mulloy has brought more depth to his filmic universe than in his earlier films.

### Another Draw: The People and Town

However the strong films in competition were not the only impressive aspects of this year's Zagreb festival. Zagreb has always been among the friendliest of the international animation events, and this year was no exception. The biannual picnic was as successful as ever. If you don't make new friends at the Zagreb picnic, you should have stayed home. The Italians sponsored the opening party, and at the excellent farewell party Nicole Salomon and Monique Renault, together with ASIFA President Michel Ocelot, said a speech and offered cake to all the festival organizers. It's a wonderful peculiarity of the Zagreb festival that the festival staff are so

integrated with the guests. Not only is the staff everywhere and always willing to help, but they also become participants of the festival. For those who took the time to visit Zagreb and not just watch films, it stood out as a very beautiful town. A few years ago Zagreb celebrated its 900th anniversary and a lot of money and energy were put into making the city attractive. Zagreb really is stunning, especially the old town. Plus, the city is full of life. More than 30,000 students make sure that there are a lot of people on the streets. Furthermore, the atmosphere is truly friendly. This serves as the perfect environment for the excellent Zagreb animation festival. I highly recommend this animation event, even though I hope it will not grow too much. This year's festival was a perfect size and made us all feel a part of the same happening.

Thank you very much Josco and Buba. We will be back in 2000.

*Gunnar Strøm is associate professor at Volda College in Norway, where he is head of the animation department. He has published a number of books on animation and music videos. He is also president of ASIFA Norway, and a board member and former secretary general of ASIFA International.*

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# Singapore Animation Fiesta '98

by Mark Langer

I settled back into my seat on the flight to Singapore, happily anticipating the second Animation Fiesta. The previous Fiesta was the first international animation festival to be held in South East Asia. Singapore is a movie town, and the event had been a success, with enthusiastic audiences. But with the dramatic downturn in Asian



Jubilee Hall. Photo by Mark Langer.

economies, would this year match up to the high expectations created by the last festival?

The Singapore economy might be languishing, but you'd never know it from attending Fiesta '98. Most shows were com-

pletely sold out, with the restored turn-of-the-century Jubilee Hall venue in the historic Raffles Hotel filled to the rafters with locals and animation professionals from around the world. As many as five programs a day were presented at this three-day event, although only a few of the highlights will be discussed here.

## Screenings and Lectures

The Animation Fiesta is distinguished from most animation festivals in its policy of accompanying almost all screenings with lectures, giving programs more substance and context than the norm. The festival began on Friday, June 19 with a program of Warner

Bros. animation presented by Kathleen Helpie-Shipley, senior vice president of Warner Bros. Classic Animation. Helpie-Shipley talked about the impact of television, video, CD-Rom, cable, theme parks, etc. on Warner Bros. animation since the films were first broadcast on television,

accompanied by examples of Warner animation from early theatrical cartoons to recent commercials and other productions. Helpie-Shipley ended her presentation with samples of other animation divisions' work, such as the Feature Animation and the Television Animation divisions.

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**As many as five programs a day were presented at this three day event...**

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*Kampung Boy*. Image courtesy of Matinee Entertainment.

Later that day, a new animated series, *Kampung Boy* was shown. *Kampung Boy* is based on the work of Dato' Mohd Nor Khalid, who is better known as Lat. For over 30 years, Lat's comic books and cartoons have been wildly popular in Malaysia, Singapore and elsewhere in South East Asia. I began to catch on to the fact that this might not be a completely Malaysian project when I

noticed producer Frank Saperstein and animator John R. Dilworths names in the end credits. *Kampung Boy* is a co-production using talent from several countries, including the United States, which has had some effect on the series. One audience member wondered why the Malay family depicted in *Kampung Boy* seemed so much like *The Simpsons*. According to Saperstein, distribution in the U.S. market is encountering difficulty for reasons of culture as objections have been made to the use of traditional Malay costume and locales. This is unfortunate, as *Kampung Boy* easily rivals anything shown on American television and would be a welcome alternative to most TV fare.

**The Animation Fiesta is distinguished from most animation festivals in its policy of accompanying almost all screenings with lectures...**

Cultural problems were the subject of comments made in a later session on Asian animation by Ram Mohan, the "father of Indian animation." Mohan's career goes back to the late 1950s with the Cartoon Film Unit, Government of India Film Division, where he received training from Disney animator Clair H. Weeks. Mohan's major interest in animation is as a tool for social development. His films done for international agencies, often in co-production with other countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Philippines, deal with

such topics as the value and dignity of women. Mohan was also co-director (with Roichi Sasaki) of the Indo-Japanese feature film *Ramayana - The Legend Of Rama*. In his talk, Mohan acknowledged that animation is one of the most competitive industries in the world, but cautioned Asian filmmakers about forsaking their cultural roots in the rush to international markets. He called for the establishment of indigenous animation industries taking advantage of "rich cultural traditions with many stories to tell" and referred to his *Ramayana* as an example of how Asian countries can cooperate with one another in this respect. Mohan's talk was followed by samples of animation from Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and South Korea, showing the diversity of production done in the region.

**Day Two Dawns**

The next day began with director Kunihiro Ikuhara presenting a program of his work on *Sailor Moon* and *La Fillette Revolutionnaire, Utena*. Ikuhara gave an overview of Japanese animation



**Ram Mohan. Photo by Mark Langer.**

history, starting with the beginning of animated television series and the shift from imitating what he called the "Disney style" to the manga style of expression. According to Ikuhara, manga has created a unique animation culture in Japan, with its own expressive traditions. This was demonstrated during a Japanese/American co-production about ten years ago, where there was a difference over a shot lasting about five seconds. The Japanese staff wanted the

only movement to be the characters' mouth, while the Americans wanted physical gestures. Ikuhara claims that American animation is always intent on generating greater audience appeal and thus, creates characters in constant motion, accenting the fantastic and differentiating animation from live-action cine-



**Left to right: Frank Saperstein, Kathleen Helppie-Shipley and Karen Goulekas at the Singapore Animation Fiesta. Photo by Mark Langer.**



The author, Mark Langer, on the left, with Jean-Michel Blottiere. Photo courtesy of Mark Langer.

ma. The Japanese are influenced by manga, where a character is shown in a still image while the reader reads the dialogue. Ikuhara then went on to discuss his work on *Sailor Moon* and *Utena*, which differs from traditional "girl series" in that fighting, rather than romance, is the central premise. Ikuhara also outlined the importance of merchandising to Japanese animated series, where story lines are devised to introduce new products, such as the best-selling *Sailor Moon* pendants, modeled after those in the series used by the characters to transform themselves. The high demand for such series has created a shortage of properly trained workers in some job skill areas, such as the use of digital technology, as over sixty locally produced animated series are screened in Japan each week.

Next, I introduced a program of recent animation from Canada, ranging from films and ads from Dynamight Cartoons and Cuppa Coffee Animation, to high-end computer generated productions from Mainframe Entertainment, Nelvana and Alias/Wavefront. This was followed by a discussion of local Singapore animation, and then a presentation by Karen Goulekas, former Digital Domain employee

who most recently supervised Visual Effects for *Godzilla*. Goulekas, tanned and rested from a month-long vacation in Thailand after finishing *Godzilla*, spoke of the difficulties resulting from coordinating the efforts of different production teams (animation, CG and

effects, lighting and rendering, compositing) and using incompatible software programs to create the effects on the film. The highlight of her presentation was a detailed account of the Brooklyn Bridge sequence, which Goulekas characterized as "the sequence where we pushed the envelope." The goal of the special effects animator, said Goulekas, "is to seamlessly mix models, live-action and CG." What lies in the future of computer animation? Said Goulekas, somewhat tongue in cheek, "Photo-real humans—you'll scare the shit out of all the actors!"

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**The high demand for such series has created a shortage of properly trained workers...as over sixty locally produced animated series are screened in Japan each week.**

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### Our Final Day

The final day of the festival began with a combined program by Jayne Pilling, who discussed European avant-garde in terms of how the films differ from mainstream animation, and Jean-Michel Blottiere, the director of *Imagina*, who presented the most recent winners from this European computer graphics and animation

festival and spoke about current developments in computer animation internationally. Ricky Orellana, of the Mowelfund Film Institute, presented a fascinating look at Philippine animation, revealing an active independent scene in a country better known as an inexpensive labour outsource for American television production. The final presentation was by David Flack, vice president of Creative Services of MTV Asia, who showed highlights of international production from MTV's local Singapore service.

These presentations were punctuated with other screenings throughout the Fiesta. The most notable was a hysterically funny program done for the U.K.'s Channel 4 called *Gogs*, depicting the imbecilic antics of a Stone Age family in stop-motion clay.

As at the last Fiesta, extraordinary hospitality was shown by the organizing staff (including Wahidah Jalil, Ben Cowell and Ernest Paul) to guests, with frequent breaks for tea at the Empire Room, receptions, and an intimate atmosphere that encouraged schmoozing. This, combined with the wonderful Singapore audiences who stayed to talk with guests after each screening, has made the Fiesta a favorite among festivals, and well worth the effort to attend.

*Mark Langer teaches film at Carleton University in Ottawa Canada. He is a frequent contributor to scholarly journals and a programmer of animation retrospectives.*

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# Members of the Fastest Growing Industry Meet Up in the Big Apple: The Return of the Licensing Show!

by Deborah Reber

## Licensing, the Fastest Growing Industry

Neither smarmy humidity and taxi cab strikes, nor the tourist-ridden streets of midtown could keep the members of the licensing industry from descending on New York City for three short days last month. This year, nearly 400 exhibitors took out real estate in Gotham's mammoth Jacob K. Javits Convention Center to promote their properties and licensing/merchandising programs for the upcoming year. The 18th annual Licensing International, held from June 9-11, is the only global event of its kind.

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### The 18th annual Licensing International...is the only global event of its kind.

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The licensing industry is growing at an incredible rate, now producing \$25.6 million worth of sales every hour, 12 hours a day, 365 days a year! No wonder nearly 15,000 people flocked to the Licensing Show to get in on some of the action. Charles Riotto, the executive director of the events sponsoring organization LIMA, explains the appeal: "The Licensing Show presents more than 4,000 properties from around the world, so there is no better place to find the perfect match between licensor, manufacturer, and retailer. A hot property has the potential to cross all cate-



Nickelodeon's booth attracted crowds with displays of *Blue's Clues* and its new cartoon, *CatDog*. Photo courtesy of Freeman Public Relations.

gories, but what makes it magic is when the right partnership puts it all together. That's what this show is all about." According to LIMA, this year's show marked an overall increase in attendance and exhibitor participation over last year.

Entertainment is the most lucrative of all the licensing categories (others include sports, and arts and design), cashing in at over \$20 billion a year in retail sales. Animation and children's properties make up a large part of this category, with classic properties like "Looney Tunes" and *Sesame Street* recently joined by newcomers like *South Park*, *Blue's Clues* and *Rugrats*.

### On the Animation Front

While this was not a huge year for licensing news in the ani-

mation industry (that is, at least news that was broken during the event), a number of animation studios were in attendance, including Cinar Films, Cochran Animation, DIC Entertainment, Funimation Productions, The Jim Henson Company, Nelvana, and Saban. Also sporting their typically large display booths were the Cartoon Network, Warner Bros., CTW, Nickelodeon and Scholastic.

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### The licensing industry is...now producing \$25.6 million worth of sales every hour, 12 hours a day, 365 days a year!

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Nickelodeon was present in full-force hyping the Fall 1998 release of their first animated feature *The Rugrats Movie*. A new character, Baby 'Dil' will be introduced in the film, which is produced by the award-winning ani-



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Youth Programming Screenings  
3-4 October 1996 - Hotel Martinez, Cannes, France



International Film & Programme Market  
for TV, Video, Cable & Satellite  
5-9 October 1996  
Palais des Festivals, Cannes, France



International Film & Programme Market  
for TV, Video, Cable, Satellite, Licensing & Merchandising  
10-12 December 1996  
Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre

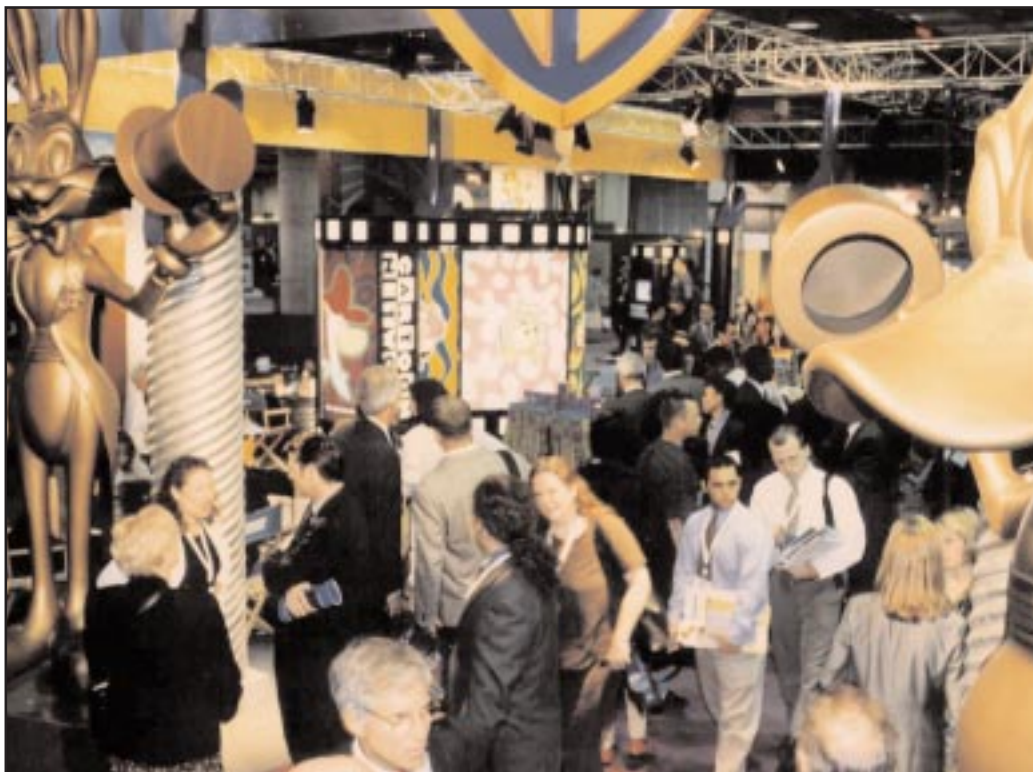


Documentary Programme Screenings  
5-10 April 1999 - Hotel Martinez, Cannes, France



International Television Programme Market  
11-16 April 1999 - Palais des Festivals, Cannes, France





**Warner Bros. Consumer Products is the Licensing Show's largest exhibitor. Photo courtesy of Freeman Public Relations.**

mation studio Klasky Csupo, and is a Paramount Pictures presentation in association with Nickelodeon Movies. Nickelodeon's Emmy-nominated pre-school show, *Blue's Clues*, is teaming up with Sears in a groundbreaking partnership to create a line of *Blue's Clues* apparel, which will include clothes that theme-in with the interactive nature of the show. Beginning January 1999, all 833 of Sears full-line stores will feature *Blue's Clues* boutiques.

**Entertainment is the most lucrative...cashing in at over \$20 billion a year in retail sales.**

Saban Entertainment announced the launching of a unique relationship between Fox Kids Network/Fox Family Channel and Discovery Zone (DZ) activity centers for children and families. Properties from the Fox stations will be featured at 203 Discovery Zone centers throughout North

America, and among other tie-ins, will bring Fox animated favorites like *Life With Louie*, *Bobby's World*, and *Ninja Turtles* into the DZ's sports-themed environment.

The Jim Henson Company and Mattel made news with the announcement of their partnering to create licensed products for Henson's Emmy-nominated TV series *Bear in the Big Blue House*. Mattel will be creating plush and molded toys for infants and preschoolers, along with games and puzzles based on the series. Look for these products available in stores by the end of 1998.

### Seminars & Awards

As part of the Licensing Show's commitment to being more than a trade show, nearly a dozen seminars were also held over the course of the week, covering such topics as licensing basics, women's sports, how to get media coverage, the Internet, and how to "grab" kids' attention.

The licensing industry's most prestigious awards were handed out at the Show's opening gala event, held at the nearby Marriot Marquis Hotel. Animated properties took home several major awards. Warner Bros. Consumer Products International's Looney Tunes once again took the award for International License of the Year. Licensing Agency of the Year went to Nickelodeon, with their most popular property *Rugrats* taking home the License of the Year award. Other winners included: Hard Goods Licensee of the Year - Hasbro (for *Star Wars* Action Figures and Accessories), Soft Goods Licensee of the Year - Happy Kids (for *Rugrats* Children's Apparel and Separates),

Licensed Brand Extension of the Year - Binney & Smith's Crayola Paints by Benjamin Moore, Promotion of the Year - MGM for *James Bond: Tomorrow Never Dies*, and International Licensing Agency of the Year - Copel/Lesani.

The annual Licensing Show is sponsored by LIMA (International Licensing Industry Merchandisers Association), a New York based non-profit organization promoting the industry. Next year's event will be held in New York City, June 8-10, 1999.

*Deborah Reber manages Ancillary Projects for Nickelodeon's Blue's Clues and is a freelance writer based in New York.*

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# Azimuth : Get Those Red/Green Glasses—3D Has Made It To Tape!

by Judith Cockman

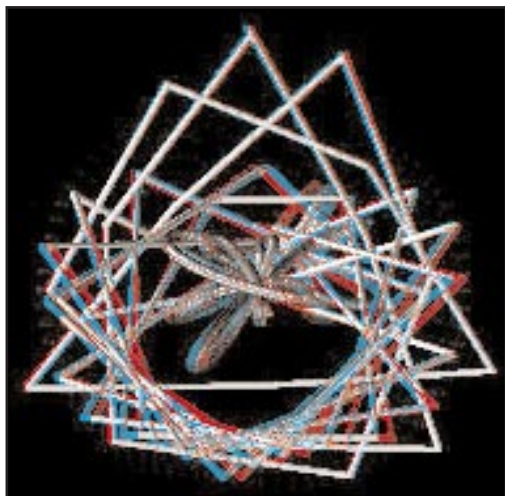
How does a woman, designing the structure of knitted fabric, parlay her expertise into an award-winning computer-generated anaglyph 3-D animation? By obsessive trial and error with self-taught computer skills and Lloyd Burchill's program "KNOT."

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**Elkin developed a system of number overlay patterns through years of experimentation with stitching.**

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Staceyjoy Elkin bought herself a Mac to "write papers on" when she went back to college three years ago to get a degree in Forensic science. Like a kid in a candy store getting sidelined from buying the groceries, she got caught up in playing with the 'Net. A year of neglected homework later, she dropped out of college and began her pursuit of computer animation and web



*Azimuth.* © Staceyjoy Elkin.

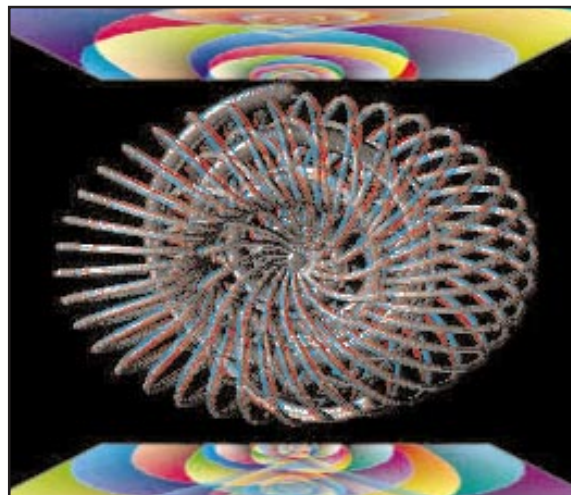
design/graphics.

One of the rewards of her labor is *Azimuth*, ostensibly the first anaglyph, computer-generated animation to make it to tape. In other words, the first computer-generated animation that has a 3-D effect when the audience is wearing those funky 10¢ red/green glasses. It took Elkin months just to figure out how to put the computer animation to tape in a high-resolution form without destroying the 3-D effect.

## Knitting Patterns Conceive Computer Animation

Elkin developed a system of number overlay patterns through years of experimentation with stitching. "It involved a pattern of, say, 4-6-8-2-8-6-4, which could describe the number of stitches doing different things, and one or more number sequences such as 3-5-3-5-1-1-1, which could be the color or texture changes laid over the stitch going on," she says. "Repeated over and over, a very unique pattern emerges. Variations on this theme are endless."

This technique was translated to the KNOT program and *Azimuth* is the result. Lloyd Burchill's KNOT creates graphics using parametric equations (a mathematical way of describing a shape in space). According to Elkin, it interpolates one shape



*Azimuth.* © Staceyjoy Elkin.

to another mathematically, with great precision and artistry, creating a fascinating blend of the ephemeral and the pragmatic. One of her joys working with Burchill's system was the "sideways journey" it afforded her to understand another person's way of thinking through his creation.

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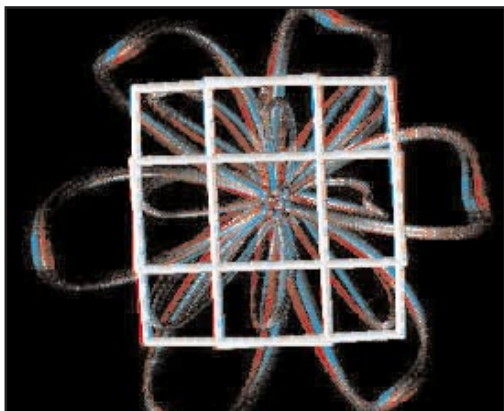
**She produced the piece in her "computer room/closet on 10th Street, Lower East Side of Manhattan."**

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Elkin contends Burchill's innovative programming allowed her to express the things she sees in her head, which had been impossible to describe or express in any other way. She is in awe of his work.

## Elkin Goes A Step Further

But KNOT has its limits as to how long an animation can be. Using her number overlay system, Elkin built *Azimuth* with about 40



*Azimuth.* © Staceyjoy Elkin.

separate animations, with matching beginning and ending key frames specially timed to give the illusion of one mostly continuous morph. This gave her the ability to extend the piece indefinitely. The result is a mesmerizing interplay of circular configurations. Half the fun of watching the animation is wearing the goofy red/blue glasses and grabbing at the images as they reach out to you.

She produced the piece in her "computer room/closet on 10th Street, Lower East Side of Manhattan." Costs for the project came to about U.S. \$150 which covered zip discs to store source footage. Rather than relying on grants or loans, Elkin paid her way with freelance web design/coding jobs while she made the animation.



*Azimuth.* © Staceyjoy Elkin.

## Musical Collaboration

She met musician Mark Hofschneider at her current job as a web producer and, impressed with each others' work, they collaborated on *Azimuth*. She showed him her raw footage, and he set the feel and mood of the music to her work. She then edited her footage to his music.

Hofschneider is a musician formally trained in classical guitar, piano, voice percussion, cello and music composition. He received a bachelors degree in music therapy and worked in the field for five years. Three years ago he started working in new media, mainly doing CD-Rom scoring, production and web development.

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### Her future goal is to create an animation that makes people nauseous.

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Although the MIDI allows a musician to compose and produce his or her work affordably in the home, it tends to create a very middle-of-the-road effect which I tend to find atonal, lacking in a tonal center, rather than musical. The sounds are flat, without pitch, as if the musician were slightly off pitch of the pure sound we long to hear. The result always strikes me as sounding exactly like the last MIDI effort of the last abstract animation piece I saw somewhere too many times before and *Azimuth* does not escape this unfortunate result.

### Elkin's Remarkable Diligence

This creative team, however, is to be commended for

their diligence and enthusiasm. *Azimuth* may not be breaking any sound barriers in creative expression, but it is a great accomplishment of the interplay between the aesthetic and the mathematical.

*Azimuth* is slightly over two minutes long. It was screened at The Kitchen in New York City last September, as well as San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego and London as part of the DFILM Digital Film Festival. Bart Cheever, former producer of the Low Res Festival (now producer of DFILM), provided the glasses. *Azimuth* recently won third place in the animation category of the Parson School of Design International New Media Festival.

The duo's newest collaboration *Le Monade* is a full-color abstract animation.

Watch out for Staceyjoy Elkin. Her future goal is to create an animation that makes people nauseous. Brilliant...a carnival ride for couch potatoes. With her determination and focus I have no doubt she'll accomplish it.

Note: The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie of *Azimuth* by Staceyjoy Elkin. <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.5/3.5pages/3.5cockman.html>

*Judith Cockman, a Canadian currently living in Los Angeles, is a playwright, award-winning documentary writer, actor and journalist. She has written about animation for The Toronto Star, Kid-screen Magazine and SPLAT!, a behind-the-scenes-type television series about the world of animation.*

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

# The Animated Film Collector's Guide : David Kilmer's Odyssey

book review by Emru Townsend

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awnstore/books/](http://www.awn.com/awnstore/books/)

Probably the worst thing a collector can experience is a sense of futility. Specifically, the sense of futility that comes from trying to locate a videotape with that one funky three-minute short seen at an animation festival. A tattered photocopy of the festival's program in hand, the dazed collector shuffles from store to store and catalog to catalog, trying to find the one tape or laserdisc with the sought-after masterpiece. Eventually, the poor soul collapses in a sobbing heap, unable to read one more minuscule title listing.

## David Kilmer's *The Animated Film Collector's Guide* aims to be the collector's bible...

"It's impossible!" he later cries to no one in particular in a seedy, disreputable bar, nearly spilling his fifth strong drink. "How can I find one hundred and eighty seconds out of this multitude of video releases?" The bartender nods sagely. He's seen it all before. Animation collectors are a sad, despondent lot. He later sends the wretch home in a cab with an EP copy of *Minnie the Moocher* as consolation.

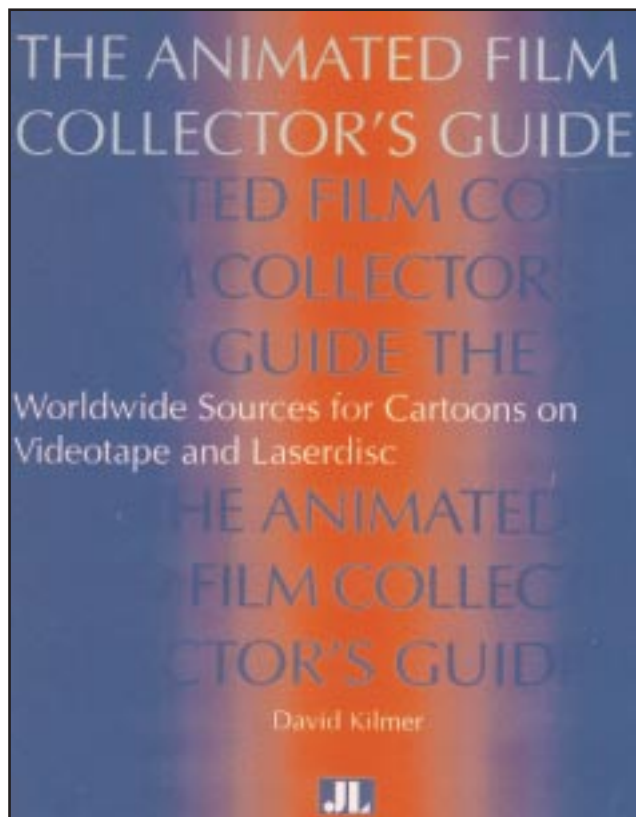
## Does This Sound Familiar?

Sure it does, even if the

details differ. Even if you're not looking for that elusive short, finding a favorite movie can be an ordeal. Not many major video chains carry, say, *The Plague Dogs*, and almost none have staff who can tell you the name of "that neat dancing film by Erica Russell." (If you do have such a store, tell me and I'll move there.)

David Kilmer's *The Animated Film Collector's Guide* aims to be the collector's bible, replacing our dog-eared Whole Toon catalogs as reference material. Actually, it means to go one better, as illustrated by its subtitle: *Worldwide Sources for Cartoons on Videotape and Laserdisc*. Not only will we be able to find out if a particular short or movie is available, we'll be able to find out where to get it!

Since the main object of this book is to find animated shorts, the backbone is its fourth chapter, "Compilations of Shorts." Listed there are more than 650 compilations, each with entries such as, "Brothers Quay, The Vol. 1 FRF 102 (VHS NTSC); VOY 1074L (NTSC LD) EXP." This code indicates the catalog numbers, available video formats, and distributor ("EXP" in this case stands for Expanded Entertainment), where such information is avail-



able. But how to get to this list? That's what the second and third chapters ("Films by Title" and "Films by Author, Character or Studio") are for. Both of these chapters present the same information, just indexed differently. The films are listed with the year of release, the director, the studio, and a list of the compilations in which they can be found.

## Finding the Film

Overall, it's a pretty good system, though the second and third chapters could use a slight reworking; both of them are organized in four columns, with the films' titles in the first column, the year of release in the second, the

studio and director in the third, and the compilation reference in the fourth. That's fine for the "Films by Title" chapter, but in the "Films by Author, Character or Studio" chapter, it means your reference column is second from the right, rather than where you'd expect it to be, on the left. I had to keep glancing at the page heading to be sure I was in the right chapter. It's not a fatal flaw, but it gets in the way of easy reference.

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**Reference books like these are overwhelming for the same reason they're useful: there's an enormous body of information contained in them.**

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Finding feature-length animation is easier: they're listed in the second and third chapters, among the shorts. Instead of giving a reference to one of the listed compilations, the available video formats and catalog numbers are listed. Most of the time, anyway. My first spot check, Nelvanas *Rock & Rule*, led me to the "Compilations of Shorts" chapter, where it was listed... under "Rock & Rule." However, of my dozen spot checks, this was the only quirk.

### **Additions to the Second Edition**

The book also has other references for the animation collector, such as sources for out-of-print titles, other animation books, ASIFAs different chapters, and so on. Kilmer also encourages readers to send him any additional information they may have for inclusion in the next edition. Of course, a book like this invites future editions; more animation is released on video every day. But there are some omissions in *The Animated Film Collector's Guide*, which really should be dealt with.

Kilmer admits as much in the first few pages. He mentions that with two exceptions, TV animation is not covered in the book, which will probably be rectified in the next edition. Given the enormous amount of TV animation released on video these days, this is an essential addition; it will probably also be a task as monumental as this book. He also says that anime has been excluded since there are already books devoted to anime videos. My first reaction was that anime was being ghettoized. (It's often considered a separate entity from the rest of animation, something I've long been tired of seeing.) But when I put the question to him, he mentioned that one reason for both omissions is simply space. If this edition is successful, a larger revision will be issued, including more TV animation, anime, and even some commercials.

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**Kilmer revealed that he envisions another purpose for the book: to encourage independent animators to self-distribute their films.**

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Finally, I do hope that the book gets a better editor. Awkward phrases that never should have made it past the proofs are lurking throughout the book, and little glitches abound. For instance, on page 185, Kilmer asks readers who know of sources for Pioneer's 'Animation Animation' series to write to "the address below," which is followed by four inches of empty space. Some animators also have their names misspelled, and a few shorts are incorrectly categorized (*Two Stupid Dogs* is listed as a World Premiere Toon, though the show predates the World Premiere Toons by about two years). If Kilmer's look-

ing for fact and spelling checkers, I'll happily apply for the job; it seems as if I have to qualify my comments on every other animation book I review because of mistakes in the text. Reference books like these are overwhelming for the same reason they're useful: there's an enormous body of information contained in them. Yet people insist on taking these projects on alone. Please, guys, get a co-author or two! Still, Kilmer has made an impressive commitment in creating this first volume of its kind. Incidentally, during our brief dialogue, Kilmer revealed that he envisions another purpose for the book: to encourage independent animators to self-distribute their films. It's an interesting premise, one which I'd like to see develop further over time. In the meantime, I'll keep *The Animated Film Collector's Guide* on my reference shelf, and keep my eyes peeled for the second edition.

*The Animated Film Collector's Guide : Worldwide Sources for Cartoons on Videotape and Laserdisc*, by David Kilmer, Sydney, Australia: John Libbey & Company Ltd. (U.S. distributor Indiana University Press), 1997. 212 pages. ISBN: 1-86462-002-1 (U.S. \$32.50 paperback).

*Emru Townsend is a freelance writer who won't stop talking about cinema, animation and computers. He is also the founder and former editor of FPS, a magazine about animation.*

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

# THE OSAMU TEZUKA MANGA MUSEUM: A CULTURAL MONUMENT

by Jackie Leger

If you're traveling in Japan and want to pay tribute to one of Japan's pioneers of manga, the Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum should be the first place on your list. Located in the small town of Takarazuka in the Kansai region you can take the local train at Osaka Umeda station, change at Amagasaki and get off at the end of the line. Walk down Flower Avenue past the souvenir shops and quaint restaurants until you come to a silver futuristic building, resembling an astro-lab. The dome will remind you of a space movie and the faces of Atom Boy, Leo, Princess Knight and Phoenix, etched on the titanium walls, will tell you that this is the place, the memorial to the legacy of Osamu Tezuka.

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**Throughout his long career, he drew nearly 150,000 pages of comics which filled some 500 different titled works.**

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The Manga memorial prides itself on being one of the most popular attractions in Japan, claiming thousands of visitors per month. With its charming theme park as a backdrop, the museum is somewhat akin to the Disney Empire on a smaller and less commercial scale. None the less, even after his death, Tezuka remains one of Japan's most important cultural heroes and his cartoon characters have captured Japanese hearts since the 1940s.

## Tezuka's Legacy

Tezuka began his career as a cartoonist in 1947. An avid storyteller interested in western literature, his modernized version of *Treasure Island* placed him on the literary map with book sales around 400,000 copies. Throughout his long career, he drew nearly 150,000 pages of comics which filled some 500 different titled works. The museum has a remarkable archive of material and the main exhibition hall houses the permanent collection which includes drawings, photographs, notebooks and volumes of comic strips.

Born in 1928, Tezuka's childhood in the environs of Takarazuka brought him close to nature, a theme he often used in his stories. One of the wonders of the museum exhibition are the notebooks of finely detailed insect studies. Another attraction are his portraits, in particular actors from the Takarazuka theater review which marked his taste for theatrical lighting and design. His first cartoon strip, *Diary of Ma-chan* (1946) appeared regularly in a children's newspaper *Shokokumin Shimbun* and launched his career as a commercial artist.



A skylight inside the museum displays Tezuka's family of animated characters. Image courtesy of the Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum.

Although Tezuka studied medicine at Osaka University, he became one of Japan's rising literati with his first forays into cartoons. His early stories were sophisticated adaptations of world literature or staunch social comments on universal problems. His long narratives, complex plots and cinematic style, often reminiscent of German or French movies he saw as a child, paved the way to a new and innovative manga style. Also, Tezuka was not interested in the American happy ending syndrome. His works contain grief, anger and hate, thus giving him a reputation as being a "philosopher of manga." The early Tezuka comics were linked to his impressions of World War II, the devastation of Japan during this time and post-war development. Naturally,

they bore a heavy overtone. With time, he changed his views toward more humorous, religious and theoretical subjects. Whatever the subject matter however, he was never a lighthearted figure.

**Yes, Tezuka created an animation empire, with thousands of memorable characters, yet he managed to remain independent, a free-spirited businessman—a rare achievement.**

By far one of his most popular comic book works, the *Jungle Emperor* has transformed itself from a serialized comic strip in 1950 to the first Japanese television animation in 1966 to a box office success as a theatrical feature in 1997. This story of three generations of white lions remains a symbol for Tezuka's focus on humanism and his campaign to preserve nature. His crossover from comics to animation made him one of Japan's foremost directors. His second comic *Astro Boy* gained him international success. After its serialization as a comic, it

was soon a television special popular in the United States in the 1960s. In 1962, Tezuka launched Mushi Productions Ltd. from a small Tokyo office filled with aspiring animators and artists. These were the golden years of Japanese Manga.

However, Tezuka should not be considered solely a manga artist as his experimental animation shows. This lesser known and eclectic side of Tezuka won him many awards with films such as: *A Street Corner Tale*, a short work which used colorful, angled figures; *Jumping*, which won the 1984 Zagreb International Film Festival; *Broken Down Film*, a scratched out ode to American pioneers, which won the Hiroshima Animation Festival; and his last work, *Legend of the Forest* in 1988, which was applauded at Zagreb again. In 1964, Tezuka met Disney at the New York Worlds Fair, and although the two creators have often been paralleled, Tezuka remained more low keyed and



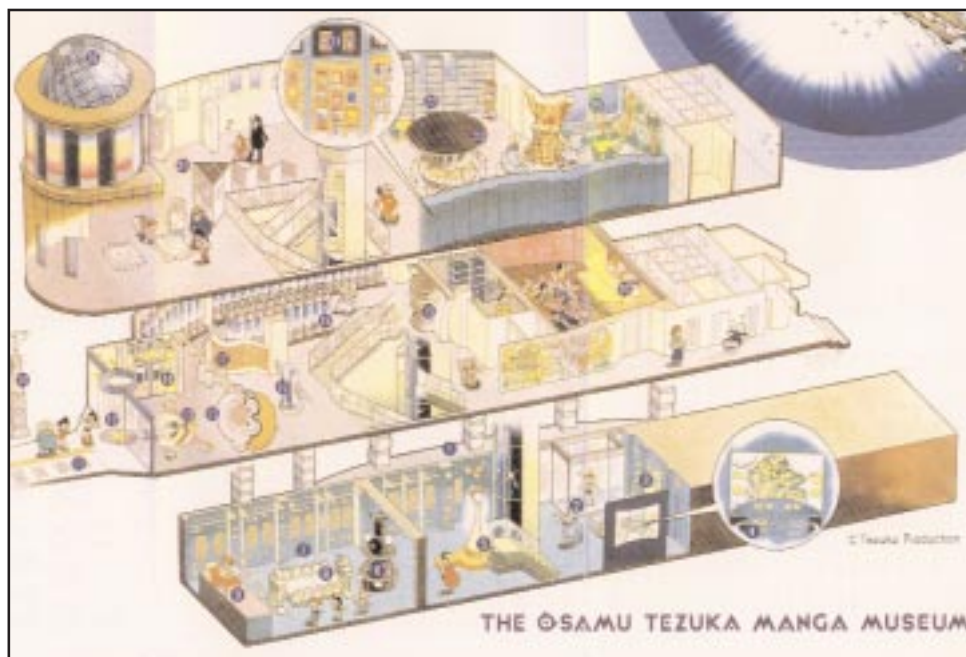
Osamu Tezuka. Image courtesy of the Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum.

close to his role as a master cartoonist than his counterpart. Yes, Tezuka created an animation empire, with thousands of memorable characters, yet he managed to remain independent, a free-spirited businessman—a rare achievement.

While walking through the three floors of the Tezuka Manga Museum, one can only be impressed by his dedication to the art of the cartoon.

### What Is the Museum Like?

Its like visiting the foyer of Princess Knight. Its like meeting Atom Boy for the first time and its like discovering what Japanese manga is all about. The first floor is a historical view of Tezuka's life and early work. All arranged on stage-like science fiction panels, the books and memorabilia are a trip down memory lane. An NHK documentary at the rear of the room interviews key figures in Japanese animation and a small screening room shows an animated film of Tezuka's life every 20 minutes. A ride up the elevator to the second floor brings you to a small gallery for rotating exhibitions which include not only Tezuka's legacy but also that of new artists and old



The floor plan of the 14,000 square foot Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum. Image courtesy of the Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum.



Two fliers from recent exhibits at the museum: *Jungle Emperor* and *Doraemon*. Image courtesy of the Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum.

colleagues, such as Fujiko Fujio the creator of the legendary *Doraemon*. A Jungle Emperor cafe lets you sit and read books from the impressive library with hundreds of volumes. The green jungle tables and chairs leave a wonderland kind of setting. The video console in the center of the main hall is the most popular stop in town. The waiting line is long, for this is a chance to watch rare Tezuka videos which give an overview of Tezuka's productions...don't expect to find a seat! The Tezuka Museum is truly a living museum. Adults and children come for hours to watch tapes, read books and play.

The gift shop is the next

stop where Tezuka marketing is at its finest with everything from pens and pins to T-shirts and towels. Post cards are a popular favorite, as are the complete collection of video tapes. From here, take the elevator to the basement and be prepared to experience the craft of animation first hand.

**The museum is more than a success, it's a national archive and one not to be missed.**

The basement studio, complete with a life-size model of the artist at work, is a great educational experience. The talking Tezuka puppet introduces his profession and then along clean, long light

tables, visitors can make their own four-cel production. Visitors take a seat at the animation light tables and the charming assistant passes out pencils, three-hole-punched paper and animation pegs. Then with their own imaginations and the directions on the console, they can make their own films. Once finished, the assistant then manipulates the cels, expanding them in video time, and projects them on a television monitor. Surely, this has been the start of many a career. The idea behind this memorial was to be a place where people would interact with each other through comics and animation emphasizing education. The museum is more than a success, its a national archive and one not to be missed.

Watching the 1980 epic animation *Phoenix 2772*, released in theaters in 1980 by the Toho movie company, one can only think of this incredible bird changing the lives of many, to be a representation of Tezuka's own spirit. He saw a need in the Japanese society for vehicles of imagination and change and he created many of them.

The Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum is open daily except Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For information and directions, contact the museum by phone (81) 0797-81-2970 or fax (81) 0797-81-3660.

*Jackie Leger is a Santa Monica, California-based writer specializing in independent animation.*

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



by Wendy Jackson

## Business

**Fox Invests In Ciné-Groupe.** Fox Family Worldwide, parent company to Fox Kids, Fox Family Channel and Saban, has acquired a 20 percent equity stake in Montreal-based animation studio, Ciné-Groupe, a subsidiary of Lions Gate Entertainment (LGE: TSE). Ciné-Groupe employs 250 people producing animated TV series such as *Princess Sissi*, *Kit & Kaboodle* and *Bad Dog* for Fox and other international clients. The studio is currently animating *Heavy Metal F.A.K.K. 2*, sequel to the animated feature, *Heavy Metal*, for Columbia TriStar.

**Learning Co. Adds Broderbund To Fund.** Cambridge, Massachusetts-based The Learning Company, Inc. (NYSE: TLC) and Novato, California-based Broderbund Software, Inc. (NASDAQ: BROD) have reached a definitive merger agreement. The aggregate \$420 million deal will combine the two interactive software publishers by September 1998, expect analysts. Broderbund publishes games based on animated properties such as *Arthur*, *Carmen Sandiego* and *Rugrats* and books such as *The Cat in the Hat*. The Learning Company recently signed a deal with DIC Entertainment to adapt their interactive animated character *Reader Rabbit* for animated TV series.

**Wild Brain Harvests Plantation.** San Francisco-based

animation company Wild Brain, Inc. has acquired the boutique computer animation studio, Imagination Plantation. The deal brings CG production capabilities in-house at Wild Brain, which has been contracting work out to neighboring Imagination Plantation on projects such as *FernGully 2* and various commercials. Noah Hurwitz, founder and president of three year-old Imagination Plantation has relinquished his interest in the company to pursue other interests. The two other partners and lead CG animators Nicholas Weigel and Ben Fischler will join Wild Brain's full-time staff of 65 people, but they won't have to move far; The two companies have shared studio space since 1996.

**Animeland Trial Postponed.** The trial of Tibor Clerdouet, Yvan West Laurence and Cedric Littardi—all former editors of *AnimeLand* magazine, accused of publishing material deemed offensive to children—has been postponed until February 16. Originally scheduled to take place on June 23 in the High Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) in Paris, the trial questions the viability of animation as a form of entertainment for adults. "This leaves us time to assemble testimonies from important people around the world," said Cedric Littardi, one of the men on trial who is seeking letters of support from people in the animation community, and material which supports the defense that a market for adult

animation does exist. Mr. Littardi may be contacted by e-mail at kaze@planete.net.

Mr. Littardi has also written an article about the case, featured in the July 1998 Adult Animation & Comics issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

## People

**Musical Chairs.** Rich Cronin has finally settled in to his position as president and CEO of **Fox Kids Network** and **Fox Family Channel**. He was president of Nick at Nite's TV Land until October 1997, when he signed the new contract with Fox while still under contract with Nick. Nickelodeon took legal action to prevent Cronin from starting with Fox until his original Nick contract expired on June 30. Fox Family Channel will re-launch on August 15 . . . . **Roland Poindexter** has been promoted from director to vice president of



Roland Poindexter. Photo courtesy of Fox.

development at **Fox Kids Network**. His previous positions include development roles at Nelvana and ABC. . . . At **Fox Broadcasting Co.**, **Leslie Kolins-Small** has been promoted to vice president of alternative programming. She will continue to supervise development of alternative programming such as *Family Guy*, *Futurama*, *The PJs* and *MAD TV*. Before joining Fox as director of alternative and late night programming in 1995, Kolins-Small was a senior producer at MTV Networks. . . . **Will Vinton Studios** has named **Richard Durkin** vice president and executive producer in charge of the Portland, Oregon-based company's New York office. Durkin has been the studio's East coast independent sales representative for seven years, and is also president and owner of Ice Tea Productions, a talent management and recruitment agency for animation and live-action commercial directors. . . . Animation director **Bill Kroyer** has joined **Rhythm & Hues**, with whom he has been working on a freelance basis since January of this year directing spots for Kerns, Intel, Nicor and Coca-Cola. Now on staff at the studio, Kroyer will be involved in both the



Richard Durkin. Photo courtesy of Will Vinton Studios.

commercial and feature film areas, with his next projects being spots for Huggies and Disney Cruise Lines. Until recently, he was under contract with Warner Bros. Feature Animation. He is currently in development on a live action/computer animation feature for Warner Bros. Studios. . . . **Sony Signatures**, the consumer products division of Sony Pictures Entertainment, has hired **Grace Ressler** as senior manager of publishing. She was previously manager of film and television publishing at Warner Bros. Worldwide Publishing. . . . Husband-and-wife writing team Jon Cooksey and Ali Marie Matheson have signed a one-year television development deal with **The Disney Channel**. Their writing credits include *Rugrats*, as well as live-action shows *Moonlighting* and *Outer Limits*. . . . **Debra Streiker-Fine** has been named president of the Interactive Media division of Venice, California-based visual effects company **Digital Domain**. She was previously president and CEO of Cloud 9 Media, a company she founded in 1994 that is in the process of being sold. Previously, Streiker-Fine was head of marketing at Disney Interactive. . . . Visual effects supervisor **Jon Dykstra** has signed on with **Sony Pictures Imageworks** to work on effects for Columbia Pictures' live-action/animation feature, *Stuart Little*. He will work with director Rob Minkoff (co-director of *The Lion King*). Dykstra's previous credits include *Star Wars*, *Batman Forever*, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, and *Batman and Robin*. . . . *Pocahontas* producer **James Pente-cost** has extended his contract with **Walt Disney Feature Animation** for another three years.

He is currently working with Disney on a prequel to the 1988 animation/live-action feature, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* with producers Frank Marshall and Kathleen Kennedy. The exclusive deal also gives Disney a first-look at Pente-costs live-action, TV, book and stage projects. . . . **Joan Voegel-sang** has been named chief operating officer at Montreal-based animation software company, **Toon Boom Technologies**. She was previously at Qsound Labs. . . . Actors **Mel Gibson** (*Braveheart*), **Julia Sawahla** (*Absolutely Fabulous*) and **Miranda Richardson** (*Damage*) are heading the voice



Actors Mel Gibson and Julia Sawahla with the puppets of Rocky and Ginger the characters they will voice in Aardman Animations' first full-length animated feature, *Chicken Run*. Photo by Rob McEwan. © DreamWorks LLC.

cast of Aardman Animations' first full-length animated feature, *Chicken Run*. Gibson will play the part of an all-American rooster named Rocky and Sawahla will play his British chicken mate, Ginger. Richardson is Mrs. Tweedy, the sinister proprietor of the chicken farm from which Ginger and Rocky are trying to escape. *Chicken Run* will be released by DreamWorks and Pathe in 1999 or 2000. . . . **Alias/Wavefront** has named **Warren Pratt, Ph.D.**, president of the company. An executive of

parent company Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI) for the past seven years, Pratt replaces Penny Wilson who is leaving Alias/Wavefront to pursue other interests. . . . **Tom Ruzicka**, senior vice president of domestic production at **Walt Disney Television Animation**, resigned at the end of July. He began working at Disney 14 years ago as a production supervisor and was one of the staff members involved in the formation of the TV Animation division. Ruzicka hasn't announced his next move, but he plans to explore either new technologies, "as they relate to new distribution methods like the Internet," or to "leave the executive ranks and get back into producing," he said. . . . **Gustavo Basalo** has been promoted to managing director of International Network Development for Hearst Entertainment and Syndication Group. For the past 15 months, he has been general manager of the Spanish all-animation network, The Locomotion Channel, a partnership with Hearst and Cisneros Group. Locomotion employees are currently reporting to Carlos Cisneros while an executive search is conducted to fill Basalo's position. . . . **David Zuckerman** has been hired as an executive producer for the new Fox series, *Family Guy*. He was previously an executive producer on Fox's *King of the Hill*. . . . **Suzanne French** has been named vice president of Toronto, Canada-based **Alliance Animation**. She was previously in charge of creative development and business management for YTV and Treehouse TV co-productions. . . . Los Angeles area effects house **Dream Quest Images** has hired **Dean Wright** as director of production. He has been a staff visual effects producer at Digital Domain for the past two years. . .



Commercial director Mike Bade. Photo courtesy of Curious Pictures.

. **Curious Pictures** in New York has signed designer/director **Mike Bade** to its roster. He is a co-founder of Amster Yard, and was previously an art director with Margeotes, Fertitta and Weiss, where he worked with Curious on the memorable retro-animated ad campaign for Cappio beverages. . . . **Brad Larson** has joined Boston-based **Fablevision Animation Studios** to work on interactive media for children. He was previously an educational programmer and interactive exhibit designer at the Boston Children's Museum. . . . **Jean Ann Wright** has been hired as event coordinator at **ASIFA-Hollywood**, the Los Angeles chapter of the international animated film society, ASIFA. She was previously employed at CBS, and is also co-chair of the Women In Animation Writers Group. . . . **Jan Nagel** has joined North Hollywood, California-based ink, paint and compositing service **Virtual Magic Animation** as director of business development and marketing. For the past six years she has been director of marketing and communications at Calico Entertainment, and was previously director of public relations and advertising for Dream Quest Images. . . . **Laura Hark-**

**com** has exited her post as director of creative affairs at **Warner Bros. Feature Animation**. She was the remaining half of the development division after Doug Wood left for Universal in November. . . . Los Angeles-based **The Story Companies** have signed **Kathy Aronstam** for representation in Chicago and the Midwest, and added live-action/animation director **Trip Gruver** (previously with Cognito Films) to its roster. . . . Santa Maria, California-based **Computer Café** hired computer graphics artist **Brett Paton**. He was previously at Dynamic Animation Systems, a studio servicing military contractors, in Burke, Virginia. . . . New York City-based **Tape House Digital** hired graphic designer and Flame artist **Sophia Pavlatos**. She previously held the same position at Click 3X. . . . A group of Canadians have joined forces to form a new animation/effects/paint studio called **Mercury Filmworks**, based in Vancouver. The founding partners are **Blair Peters** and **Chris Bartleman** from Studio B Productions, and **Clint Eland** and **Reg Eland** of Eland Effects Group.

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### In Passing...

**Dusan Vukotic**, animator, director, artist and former head of the animation unit of Duga Film, known as the Zagreb Animation Studio, passed away in July at the age of 71. He was one of the founding members of the famous Zagreb "school of animation" in the former Yugoslavia, where he directed films such as *The Playful Robot* (1956), *Concerto for Sub-Machine Gun* (1959) and *Substitute/Ersatz* (1961) which won the Oscar for Best Animated Short Film. Another of his films, *The Game* was nomi-



**Small Soldiers.** Image courtesy of and © DreamWorks LLC and Universal Pictures.

nated for an Academy Award in 1964. Marija Dail, a former colleague remembers him as “a great leader,” a “silver streak in Yugoslavian animation from the very beginning.” Adam Snyder of Rembrandt Films, distributor of the Zagreb film library, said Vukotic “was still full of ideas for new animated films.”

## Films

**Small Soldiers Big On Effects.** On July 10, DreamWorks Pictures and Universal Pictures opened their live-action feature film *Small Soldiers*, which features computer animated visual effects by Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) and animation by Stan Winston Studio. Depicting toy action figures which take over a small town, the film posed a unique challenge to visual effects artists. Director Joe Dante said, “The puppets are very stiff, and CGI is much more fluid. The trick was to make the puppets look more fluid and the CGI more stiff, which, oddly enough, is quite tough.” Visual effects supervisor Stefen Fangmeier agreed, “We had to resist the temptation to make our CG characters more dynamic—to have them perform actions that toys could never do.” Steve Lee, one of the 20 staff ani-

maters on the 80-member team at ILM, said that although much of ILM’s work was cleaning up the puppet shots, the “fun” part was the full character animation they created for the soldiers’ facial expressions and action shots such as running and jumping. Lee, who worked in traditional animation before joining ILM two years ago, said animating *Small Soldiers* was akin to working in stop-motion animation, and even like playing with action figures. The film required 136 CGI models, the most ever created for a production in ILM’s history.

## IMAX To Turn 2-D Into 3-D.

Imax Corp., a Toronto, Canada-based company specializing in large format and stereoscopic film technology, is testing a system to convert existing 2-D animated films into 3-D versions for exhibition in Imax cinemas. A spokesperson for Imax confirmed reports that the company is negotiating with several undisclosed Hollywood studios to use this technology for releases as soon as 1999. In order to be converted, the 2-D film would have to exist in digital format, which presents no problem, as most animated features are digitally-produced these days (Disney Feature Animation hasn’t inked real cels since *The Little Mermaid*). Imax is also getting into animation with its SANDDE (Stereo Animation Drawing Device) technology which allows animators to draw 3-D images in freehand space. SANDDE

was used to create an animated short called *The Imax Nutcracker*, which has been screening at selected Imax theaters since late 1997. Imax chairman and co-CEO Brad Weschler said, “With the rapid growth of the Imax 3-D theater network, we also feel that soon we should have enough distribution clout to establish new characters and to launch ancillary market sales off Imax 3-D animation.” In a separately-funded venture, Russian animator Alexander Petrov is working in Montreal on a 20-minute animated film in Imax format, through Pascal Blais Productions, which is expected to be completed by the end of 1998.

## DreamWorks Ups The Ante.

DreamWorks has decided to release its computer animated feature, *Antz* six months earlier than its previously announced debut set for March 1999. This bold move will place the PDI-produced film in U.S. theaters on October 2, 1998, a full seven weeks before the November 20 release of Disney/Pixar’s entomological CGI animated feature *A Bug’s Life*. While the media has been depicting the turn of events as a high-stakes



**Antz.** © DreamWorks LLC.

competition—DreamWorks vs. Disney, Pixar vs. PDI, Jeffrey Katzenberg vs. rival Disney executives—people involved in the production of both films are expressing a desire for each other to succeed, and coexist. “We are all trying to keep this from turning into a battle of the movies,” said Carl Rosendahl, PDI’s founder and chairman, “It’s not about that.” He added that the two films are “radically different,” with “different stories and different characters, and are aimed at different audiences.” He said that DreamWorks’ decision to move *Antz* to October is a result of the film being ready, and that many of the shots are already completely rendered. He admits there will be a push to complete production, but the studio’s staff of 260 people will not be expanded, nor will work be farmed out, as Warner Bros. did to meet its holiday release date for *Space Jam* in 1996. PDI’s second CGI feature for DreamWorks, *Shrek* is currently in pre-production and development, and will get a head start on production shortly after the release of *Antz*. DreamWorks’ first, now second-to-be-released animated feature, *Prince of Egypt*, produced in their Los Angeles facility, is slated for a December 18 debut.

**Mulan Makes \$100 Mil.** In exactly one month, Disney’s animated feature film *Mulan* has grossed over \$100 million in ticket sales at United States movie theaters. Between its June 19 release date and the box office closing on July 19, *Mulan* has grossed approximately \$101 million, according to figures published in the Hollywood Reporter [7/20/98]. The success of *Mulan* has bolstered the hopes of Disney’s colleagues in the feature animation business, who are fac-

ing stiff competition in the next few years, with animated feature releases coming from DreamWorks, Disney/Pixar, Warner Bros., Fox and others. The international success of *Mulan* will soon unfold; the film has recently opened in parts of Latin America, and will open in Japan in September, the U.K. in October and the rest of Europe before the end of the year. Remarkably, Disney has not yet determined a release date for China, the country from which the *Mulan* story originates. A company spokesperson said they hope to open the film in China before the end of the year.

**Miramax Marking Mononoke For ‘99.** The long-awaited U.S. theatrical release of Hayao Miyazaki’s animated feature film, *Princess Mononoke* has been scheduled for summer 1999. Miramax will release the film with a dubbed English voice track featuring actors Gillian Anderson, Claire Danes and Minnie Driver. The film earned its spot as the all-time highest grossing film in Japan, bringing in over \$150 million at the domestic box office in 1997. The film also won the Japanese equivalent of the “Best Picture Oscar.” Insiders have said that Miramax, a Disney company, is holding the release of the film until ‘99 so as not to interfere with the current run of the animated feature *Mulan*. Buena Vista Home Entertainment has a deal with Tokuma Shoten to distribute eight of Miyazaki’s animated films in the U.S. on video. The first will be *Kiki’s Delivery Service* on September 1 and the second will be *Castle in the Sky* in 1999.

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## Television

**TV Tidbits.** NBC will air the ani-

imated series *Stressed Eric* in their Wednesday night prime time lineup starting on August 12. This is the first time NBC has aired a regular prime time animated series since *The Famous Adventures of Mr. Magoo* aired on Saturday nights during the 1965/65 TV season. *Stressed Eric*, a co-production of Absolutely Productions, the BBC and Klasky Csupo, stars a British main character with a strong accent, so NBC will re-dub the track with an American voice actor to make the dialogue more comprehensible to its American viewers. . . . **Film Roman** has been contracted by Twentieth Century Fox Television to produce 13 episodes of the new animated series *Family Guy*, created by Seth MacFarlane and slated to air on Fox prime time in 1999. Film Roman also produces *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* for Fox. . . . By the end of 1998, **Nickelodeon** will launch two 24-hour feeds of its kids cable channel in Asia: on DirecTV in Japan and on Asian Cable Communications in the Philippines. . . . **Cartoon Network** has ordered an additional 13 episodes of the *Johnny Bravo* series from Hanna-Barbera. The new shows will air in 1999. . . . **Matinee Entertainment** and producer Frank Saperstein have completed 13 episodes of the animated series *Kampung Boy* based on the comic by the Malaysian artist who goes by the name of “Lat.” The show was recently screened at the Singapore Animation Fiesta and is slated to air in October on the ASTRO satellite network in Malaysia. U.S. and international sales are still pending. . . . Stop-motion animator **Corky Quakenbush** is gearing up to produce more spoof shorts for another season of *Mad TV* on Fox.

He recently completed two series pilots; one for Fox and another for HBO. . . . Klasky Csupo's new animated series, *The Wild Thornberys* will be included in **Nickelodeon's** new *Nick-O-Zone* prime time line-up starting August 31, along with returning series *Hey Arnold!* and *Kablam!* A tie-in promotion with Burger King will feature toys based on Nick shows, such as figurines from *Action League Now!*. . . . Nickelodeon debuted its new series of animated shorts, *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!* on July 19 at 12:00 noon, starting with *Chalkzone* by Larry Huber and Bill Burnett, *What is Funny?* by Bill Burnett and Vince Waller and *Jelly's Day* by Greg Emison and Bill Burnett. . . . **Fox Family Channel**, launching on August 15, has added the Nelvana/Medialab series *Donkey Kong Country* to its weekend line-up, *The Weekend Chill*. Fox Family Channel has also purchased a package of CGI program interstitials called *Bob and Scott* from French network TF1. . . . **HBO** has purchased broadcast rights to three animated series by Canadian production company CINAR: *The Adventures of Paddington Bear*, *The Country*

*Mouse and the City Mouse Adventures* and *The Little Lulu Show*. CINAR is partnering Paris-based Alphanim (a company founded by Christian Davin last year) to co-produce a new animated series called *Mona the Vampire*, based on books by Sonia Holleyman. The half-hour show will air on YTV in Canada, France 3 and Canal J in France, and Animation Services in Hong Kong. . . . Starting this fall, a west coast feed of Disney's new all-animation network **Toon Disney** will be available to cable affiliates, on the Galaxy 7 and Transponder 17 systems. This means that west coast viewers in pacific and mountain time zones will see programming at its scheduled time rather than three hours later than east coast viewers. . . . Canada's all-animation network, **Teletoon** is airing a weekend series called *Frame by Frame* featuring animation from the National Film board of Canada (NFBC). This month's highlights include the animated shorts, *The Cat Came Back*, *The Big Snit*, *The Balgonie Birdman* and others. Canadian NFBC fans also caught the NFBC special, *The Art of the Animator*, profiling Co Hoedeman, Jacques Drouin and others, on July 31 on the Saskatchewan Communications Network (SCN). . . .



*Donkey Kong Country* will air on Fox Family Channel in the U.S. Image courtesy of Medialab.

**Nick And Cosby Animating Little Bill.** Nickelodeon is teaming up with Bill Cosby to produce a new animated series for preschoolers called *Little Bill*, based on Cosby's books of the same name published by Scholastic. The show, which investigates life through the eyes of a five-year-old boy on a quest to

understand the world, will air on Nick Jr. starting in January 1999. It will be produced in Nickelodeon's digital studio in New York, launched for production on another pre-school animated series, *Blue's Clues*. Cosby will executive produce, Robert Scull (*Rocko's Modern Life*, *Kablam!*) will produce and direct and Fracaswell Hyman will write the series. Bill Cosby is also working on an animated feature with MGM.

**Start Your Noggins!** U.S. cable broadcaster EchoStar Communications Corporation has agreed to launch Noggin, the first 24-hour educational network for kids. The Nickelodeon/Children's Television Workshop joint venture will be available in January 1999 on EchoStar's DISH Network. The announcement, representing Noggin's first DBS distribution agreement since its inception two months ago, was made today by Nicole Browning, executive vice president of Affiliate Sales & Marketing for MTV Networks.

**VH1 Tooning In.** Yet another cable network is launching into animation. VH1, a Viacom-owned sister company to MTV and Nickelodeon which focuses on music programming, has announced a development slate that includes two animated series. *The Agent* is being developed in conjunction with Lorne Michaels' (producer of *Saturday Night Live*) company Broadway Video, as a weekly half-hour show following the life and times of a music agent and his clients. As the series is only in development stage at this time, a production company has not been chosen, but it is possible that J.J. Sedelmaier Productions could be involved because of their track

record of producing the *TV Funhouse* animated segments for *Saturday Night Live*. The second series in development is called *Animal Tracks*. Playing on analogies of animal personalities, the show is about a record company with a snake for a president, a bat for an A&R guy, and a "cute chick" for an office manager. Get it? VH1 senior vice president of Programming & Production Jeff Gaspin said, "Our new development slate combines the same passion for music that marked our best programs with a wider variety of traditional television genres."



(Colossal) Pictures' two new Coca-Cola commercials, *Delivery Truck* and *Happy Fizz*. Images courtesy of (Colossal) Pictures.

## Commercials

**Spotlight.** San Francisco-based (Colossal) Pictures has completed two new 30-second animated commercials for Coca-Cola. *Delivery Truck*, directed by George Evelyn, is a sequel to last year's *Factory* spot featuring 1920s-style black & white characters (animated by Chuck Gammage Animation). The new addition is a CGI delivery truck (animated by Little Fluffy Clouds) powered by a mouse on a treadmill inside the engine, drinking—what else?—Coke. The second spot, *Happy Fizz* is another retro-styled spot fashioned after Japanese "kiddie-manga" comics, directed by Charlie Canfield and designed by Margeigh Joy. . . . San Francisco-based Radium created 3-D logo animation for Walgreens, highlighting the drug store's new "Touch Tone Prefills" prescription service. Digital artist Debora Santosa used Softimage to

model and animate the rotating pill in the spot. Radium recently opened a satellite office in Santa Monica, California. It will be headed by Dana Townsend. . . . London-based Passion Pictures' CG and effects team created an animated spot featuring the character *Tom Total* for Colgate Total toothpaste. Directors Chris Knott and David Sigrist and animators Chris Ratcliffe and Chris Hemming used Newtek's Lightwave 3D software to bring the character to life, crawling out of a toothpaste tube. The spot is airing in Europe. . . . New York-based J.J. Sedelmaier Productions created a black & white "film noir" cartoon to open the New York Art Directors Club 77th Annual Awards show. It was based on the drawings of comic artists Adrian Tomine (*Optic Nerve*) who designed the program for the event. . . . New York-based

Charlex created its first feature film title sequence, for Bruno de Almeida's comedy, *On the Run*. Inspired by the title design of Saul

Bass, Charlex director Alex Weil and designer Heath Ivan Hewett employed a "bricolage" (brick layering) animation technique and used Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and Flame to achieve a flat, cut-out look. . . . New York-based Tape House Digital created CGI visual effects of a huge gold disc flying over Manhattan—a take-off of *Independence Day*—for a 30-second spot for the Goodwill Games. The director of CGI was Floyd Gillis and the CGI animator was Kevin Gillen. . . . North Hollywood-based Film Roman animated three 30-second spots for SeaWorld, featuring an animated version of the park's killer whale mascot, Shamu. The spots are described as animated "vignettes" rather than commercials, because although the air time is purchased (on Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon and Discovery Kids), the



Charlex's feature film title sequence for *On the Run*, inspired by legendary designer Saul Bass. Image courtesy of Charlex.

spots are designed more like movie trailers or mini-episodes of a program, called *Shamu and Crew*. Busch Entertainment Corp. president Chris Shea said, "Although they are branded with the Sea-World logo, these segments are pure entertainment." . . . Montréal, Canada-based **Pascal Blais Productions** created two commercials for Oscar Mayer Foods' Lunchables. Both spots are clay and puppet-animated and directed by Richard C. Zimmerman. . . . San Francisco-based **Wild Brain** created a series of 2-D animated commercials for The Willy Wonka Candy Factory, which will air on U.S. kids programming through the summer. The spots directed by Phil Robinson bring viewers on a wild ride through the Wonka candy factory, complete with Oompa Loompas. 3-D backgrounds were created by Imagination Plantation using Alias Power Animator. . . . Toronto-based **Topix** created two 30-second spots for Honeycomb cereal which combine computer animated character animation and morphing with live-action footage. The director of animation was Livio Passera, and the character animators were Sean Montgomery, Richard Rosenman and Andrea Leo. . . . Boston-based **Loconte Goldman Design** created a package of ads for Hearst-Argyle Television, combining live-action film with 3-D animation and 2-D typography, using the Henry system. The 2-D animator was Erica Nieges and 3-D animator was Randy Cates. . . . New York-based **Curious Pictures** created four 15-second spots combining live-action with animated graphics for Barnes & Noble's Internet book store. Director Mike Bade and designer/composer David Kelley used After Effects soft-

ware to combine the elements. . . .Burbank, California-based **Renegade Animation** created the animation for a 30-second spot for Bull's Eye BBQ Sauce and Foote, Cone & Belding, in which a red bull on the bottle label comes to life through 2-D cel animation, directed by Darrell VanCitters. Live-action was produced by Morton Jankel Zander in Los Angeles. . . . Palo Alto, California-based **Pacific Data Images** (PDI) created a singing, dancing Statue of Liberty for the New York, New York Las Vegas Hotel & Casino. Animation director Richard Chuang and animators Konrad Dunton, Peter Plevritis, Krzysztof Rostek and Adam Valdez used PDI's proprietary computer-animation system to create the character animation. . . . New York-based **J.J. Sedelmaier Productions** created two 15-second commercials for Connecticut's Peoples Bank. Both spots were designed by Keith Bendis and animated with watercolor paintings. . . . New York-based **Curious Pictures** and designer/director Steward Lee created a cel animation sequence for a commercial for R.W. Baird Investment Banking and Financial Services. The spot brings the viewer through a maze which zooms out to become a thumbprint. . . . San Francisco-based **(Colossal) Pictures** produced two animated commercials for Old Navy, with director John Kricfalusi and Spumco. The spots introduce a new line of jeans for kids with a retro-50s style. The spots were animated by Chuck Gammage Animation, and ink & paint was done by Chapowl and Galaxy World. . . . **(Colossal) Pictures** also created a series of 11 animated station IDs for Nickelodeon, using a variety of tech-



Renegade Animation's Bull's Eye BBQ Sauce commercial. Image courtesy of Renegade.

niques. *Candy* (stop-motion) was directed by Lucy Blackwell and Jim Matison; *Cootie-Catcher* (live-action/animation) by Lucy Blackwell; *Doodle Guy* (cel animation) by Laurie Keller and Tom Rubalcava; *Cut-out Dolls* (live-action/animation) by George Evelyn and Michael Bartalos; *Flipbook* (live-action/animation) by George Evelyn, Tom Rubalcava and Lucy Blackwell; *Puppet Legs* (stop-motion) by Jim Matison and Lisa Davidson and *Socks* (stop-motion) by Jim Matison. Four additional spots were created solely with live-action. . . . London-based **Passion Pictures** and stop-motion animation director Paul Berry (*The Sandman*) completed a 30-second spot for Dairy Lea Triangles. The puppets for this spot were created by Mackinnon and Saunders. . . . Palo Alto, California-based **PDI** created a computer-animated spot for Circle K Convenience Stores. It features a couple of thirsty lizards that refresh themselves with drinks from the store. The spot director was Larry Bafia. . . . New York-based **The Ink Tank** created an animated PBS-sponsorship spot for Chef Boyardee, which will air before the *Barney and Friends* show. The spot director was Joey Ahlbum. . . . The New York branch of **Blue Sky|VIFX** created a 30-second computer animated commercial





Passion Pictures' Dairylea commercial. Image courtesy of Passion Pictures.

for Tennants Lager called *Reincarnated*. Directed by John Payson (*Joe's Apartment*), the spot depicts a human which comes back to earth in the form of an insect. . . .

## Video

**Mickey Classics.** On July 14, Walt Disney Home Video released *The Spirit of Mickey*, a compilation of select animated shorts featuring Mickey Mouse. The 83-minute video contains the shorts *Steamboat Willie* (1928), *The Band Concert* (1935), *Thru the Mirror* (1936), *Lend a Paw* (1941), *Orphan's Picnic* (1936), *The Worm Turns* (1937), *Mickey's Trailer* (1938), *Mickey's Surprise Party* (1939), *Mr. Mouse Takes a Trip*



The animated short, *Mickey's Trailer* (1938) is included on the new Disney home video title *The Spirit of Mickey*. © Walt Disney Enterprises. All Rights Reserved.

(1940), *Canine Caddy* (1941) and *Mickey and the Seal* (1948). Two of the shorts—*Orphan's Picnic* and *Mickey's Surprise Party*—have never been released on video before. *The Spirit of Mickey* will be available in U.S. retail stores for \$22.99 (SRP). Mickey Mouse will be resurrected on television in 1999 with the debut of *Mouseworks*, a new animated series from Walt Disney Television Animation.

**Schoolhouse Rock: Money Rock** was released by Buena Vista Home Entertainment July 21. The 30-minute video is the fifth installment in the 25th Anniversary Collection of re-issues of the *Schoolhouse Rock* interstitial spots conceived by David B. McCall, which have educated kids since the '70s with animated music videos. Other titles are *America Rock*, *Grammar Rock*, *Science Rock* and *Multiplication Rock*. Each is available for \$14.99 (SRP).

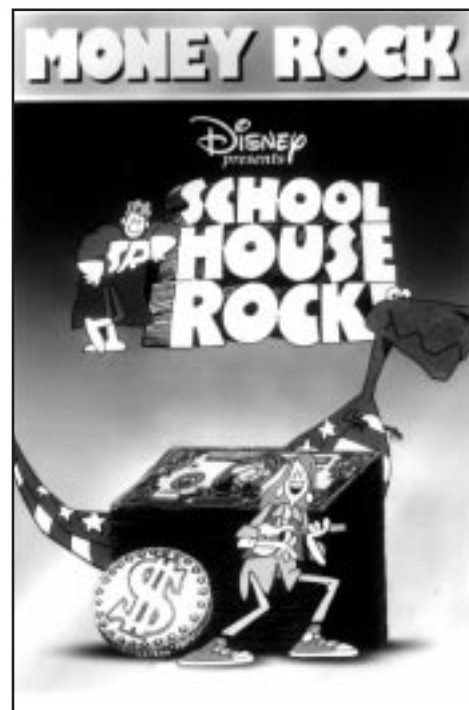
### **American Tail To Be Told Again.**

Universal Studios Home Video will lift a six-year moratorium and relaunch its *American Tail* franchise by rereleasing the first two titles and producing a third, new title for the video market. *An American Tail* (1986) and *Fievel Goes West* (1991) will be rereleased on video on August 11 for \$19.98 each. *An American Tail III: The Treasure of Manhattan Island* will be released later this year. Sound Source Interactive will release an *American Tail* CD-Rom game as well.

## Publications

**New Indy Comic Zine.** *Indy Magazine* has ceased printing its publication and launched a new monthly Internet magazine about alternative and independent comic books, at [www.indy-world.com](http://www.indy-world.com). The premiere on-line issue features interviews with *Dexter's Laboratory* creator Genndy Tartakovsky and comic artists Brian Biggs, Ed Brubaker, Peter Bagge and Chris Ware. The magazines editors are Jeff Mason and Chris Waldron. Mason said many factors led to the decision to publish strictly on-line, a key reason being "that we reach more people on the Web than we ever did in our five years of print."

**Animated Life**, a new bi-monthly print magazine from Vizion Publishing, will launch its premiere issue in August, in time for the San Diego Comic-Con. The first issue will include an actual cel featuring



*Schoolhouse Rock: Money Rock*. © Walt Disney Enterprises. All Rights Reserved.

the cast of characters from the upcoming *Marvel Superhero* block on UPN. Subsequent issues will feature additional collectibles such as lithographs, stamps and trading cards. The magazine is the creation of publishing consultant Josh Hvizdos, editor Todd Hoffer and Joe Cesaro, president of animation art distributor Sunday Funnies, Inc. For information, visit [www.animatedlife.com](http://www.animatedlife.com).

Stay "toonied" for AWN's Newsstand, where you will be able to subscribe to *Animated Life* and other publications.

<http://www.awn.com>

## Education

### Trees For Life Branching Out.

The non-profit organization Trees for Life has recently moved into a new building in Wichita, Kansas. The organization, which helps people in impoverished places around the world utilize trees for nourishment, uses animated films to educate people. Animators Frédéric Back and Becky Wible have visited Trees for Life's headquarters to give animation workshops to their staff and supervise production of educational animated films. Trees for Life is now looking for "animation missionaries" to volunteer to teach animation in developing areas, such as Allahabad, India, where a video studio is currently being built. Donations of animation supplies, as well as volunteers are also welcome. For information, visit [www.treesforlife.org](http://www.treesforlife.org) or call (316) 945-6929.

*Animation World Magazine's* March 1997 issue features an article by Heather Kenyon about Trees for Life [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue.1.12/articles/kenyon1.12.html>].

### DHIMA & AIA Form Alliance.

Two Los Angeles-area animation training programs, DH Institute of Media Arts (DHIMA) and Associates in Art (AIA), have joined forces to create Associates in Art Westside, a new 11-week program starting in October 1998. AIA Westside classes such as figure drawing, storyboarding, layout, background and character design will be held at DHIMAs facilities in Santa Monica. For information on the program, call (310) 899-9377.

### Ken O'Connor Scholarship Fund Update.

In follow up to the obituary of legendary Disney layout artist Kendall O'Connor, we are pleased to announce that the Kendall O'Connor Animation Scholarship Fund has already received more than \$3,000 in donations. The address to which donations may be sent, which was not established at the time of that publication, is:

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

Additional information about the fund can be obtained by calling Mary Alice O'Connor at (213) 849-1728.

## Music

### Rhino Toots Best Of Anime CD.

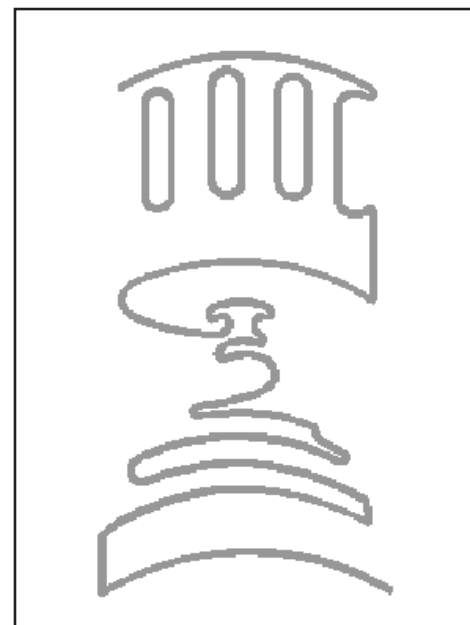
Rhino Records is compiling music from several Japanese animated films and TV series for a CD called *The Best of Anime*, which will be released September 1, 1998. Among the 16 tracks on the album, four are sung in English—theme songs from the TV series

*Astro Boy*, *Speed Racer*, *Gigantor* and *Sailor Moon*. Additional tracks are in Japanese—from animated series such as *Urusei Yatsura*, *Cat Girl Nuku Nuku* and *Cutey Honey*. The liner notes were written by animation historian Fred Patten, and are accompanied by a miniature animation cel inside the CD jewel case package.

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## Call For Entries

**Annie Awards.** ASIFA-Hollywood, the Los Angeles chapter of the International Animated Film Society ASIFA, will hold its 26th annual Annie Awards on Friday, November 13, 1998 at the Alex Theater in Glendale, California. Submissions of animated TV shows, feature films, short subjects and commercials will be judged in 26 categories, including an expansion of voice acting awards to include separate awards for male and female performers. The entry deadline is August 8. For information and entry forms call (818) 842-8330.



The Annie Awards logo. © ASIFA-Hollywood.

**Taza Digital Fest.** The fourth annual Toronto Animators' Zoetrope Association (TAZA) Digital Image Festival will take place on October 29, 1998. Entries of independent computer animation are being accepted until August 27. For details and entry forms visit <http://www.interlog.com/~dolish/taza.htm>

**Is Your Technology Oscar Material?** The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has issued a call for information about scientific and technical achievements that could be considered for Academy Awards. Last year's Scientific and Technical Award honorees included animation technology developments by PDI, Pixar, Alias/Wavefront and Softimage, among others. Awards administration director Richard Miller said submissions "don't have to have been invented during the current year. Achievements are considered only if they have proved their exceptional merit through successful use." The deadline for submissions is August 17. For an application packet, contact [scitech@oscars.org](mailto:scitech@oscars.org) or call (310) 247-3000, ext. 129.

**Cinequest**, an international film festival based in "the heart of the Silicon Valley," San Jose, California will take place January 28 - February 3, 1999. Entries of short films (including animation) are being accepted until October 2, 1998. The fee is \$25 per film. Cinequest is also seeking entries for its traveling theatrical program, *Liquid Cinema*. For entry forms and information, call (408) 995-5033 or visit [www.cinequest.org](http://www.cinequest.org).

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## Events

**A Bug's Life Goes To The Malls.**

Walt Disney Pictures and Pixar Animation Studios launched a U.S. "mall tour" on Friday, July 10, to promote their animated feature *A Bug's Life*. The film won't be released until November 20, but from now until November 15, malls across America will play host to a themed exhibit which includes two live stage shows, a behind-the-scenes look at computer animation, interactive games and activities.

The tour launch in Pleasanton, California also featured appearances by Pixar personalities John Lasseter, Steve Jobs, Walt Disney Motion Pictures Group chairman Richard Cook and Phyllis Diller, the voice of "the Queen" in the film. Additional stops on the tour are as follows: San Diego (7/17-19), Tucson (7/24-26), Seattle (7/31-8/2), Oklahoma City (8/7-9), Denver (8/14-16), Colorado Springs (8/18-19), St. Louis (8/21-23), Chicago (8/28-30), Detroit (9/4-7), Indianapolis (9-11-13), Pittsburgh (9/15-16), Cincinnati (9/18-20), Cleveland (9/25-27), New York City (10/2-4), Philadelphia (10/9-11), Washington, D.C. (10/16-18), Atlanta (10/23-25), Miami (10/30-11/1), Tampa (11/6-8), Dallas (11/13-15).

**Ottawa Breaks ASIFA Ties.** The Ottawa International Animation Festival (OIAF) has announced that it is dissolving its 22-year relationship with the international animation association, ASIFA International. Festival director Chris Robinson commented, "Over the course of the past few years it has become increasingly apparent that ASIFA International has had diffi-



**A Bug's Life Mall Tour Sponsored by Chevy Venture. Photo by Nels Israelson. © Disney Enterprises/Pixar Animation Studio. All Rights Reserved.**

culty responding to the changing needs of the animation community and specifically those of international animation festivals...their overall lack of support has led me to believe it is in the best interest of the OIAF to withdraw itself as an ASIFA-sanctioned event." He added, however, that although the OIAF is withdrawing from its ASIFA-sanctioned status (a recognition bestowed on only a handful of festivals each year), it will continue to honor the privileges usually given to ASIFA members at such festivals, such as reduced ticket prices, but not accommodation for delegate ASIFA board members.

There are two sides to every story! The June 1998 issue and this issue of *Animation World Magazine* feature essays by ASIFA International president Michel Ocelot explaining ASIFAs sponsorship of festivals.

## 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](mailto:editor@awn.com), at least eight days in advance.

\* Thursday, June 25 - Monday, July 6. London, England, U.K. The Royal College of Art hosted its annual animation shows/open house, each day from 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. weekdays, and until 6 p.m. on weekends. The invitation-only gala screening took place on Monday, June 29 in Lecture Theatre One on the RCA campus. For specific screening times call 0171-590-4512 or visit [www.rca.ac.uk](http://www.rca.ac.uk).

\* Thursday, June 25 - Saturday, June 27. Wales, U.K. The University of Wales College Newport Animation Department hosted screenings of graduate animation films; on Thursday at the chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff (coinciding with the animation festival) and all three days at the college campus. An additional show was screen at the Columbia TriStar/Sony building in London on July 3. For information, contact [epatri01@newport.ac.uk](mailto:epatri01@newport.ac.uk).

\* Friday, June 26 - Sunday, June 28. Toronto, Canada. The Canadian Anime Expo, or CNAime, held its first event at the Metro Toronto Convention Center, in conjunction with the fourth annual Canadian National Comic Book Expo. Both events were organized by Hobby Star Marketing. For information, visit [www.hobbystar.com/cnanime](http://www.hobbystar.com/cnanime).

\* Saturday, June 27 and Sunday,

June 28. London, England, U.K. The British Film Institutes National Film Theatre continued its kids programming series, Junior NFT with two screenings of *Anastasia* (1997), both at 4:00 p.m. Call 0171-928-3232.

\* Monday, June 29. San Francisco, California, U.S.A. The Ideas in Animation series continued at Minna Street Gallery with two performances at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Nik Phelps and his Sprocket Ensemble and their special guest, Wild Brain animator Dan McHale performed live music to Dans animated film *Sex Pudding* as well as films by Scott Kravitz, Shirley Smith, Stacy Rozanski and Cheryl Cruz. Admission is \$10.00 general, \$7.00 for students. For information and reservations call (415) 681-3189.

\* Tuesday, June 30. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences hosted the sixth annual Marc Davis Lecture on Animation. The program, titled "Disney's Unseen Treasures," was hosted by Disney's manager of library restorations Scott MacQueen, and includes rare behind-the-scenes footage, pencil tests and animation shorts made between 1930 and 1950. Many items have never been seen by a Los Angeles audience. The show starts at 8 p.m. For information call (310) 247-3000. The event is open to the public; tickets are \$2.

\* Wednesday, July 1. Hollywood, California, U.S.A. The Hollywood Bowl hosted the Los Angeles premiere of the Bugs Bunny Film Festival, featuring classic Warner Bros. cartoons accompanied by the L.A. Philharmonic.

\* Friday, July 3 - Sunday, July 5. Anaheim, California, U.S.A. The Society for the Promotion of Japanese Animation hosted the Anime Expo at Anaheim Hilton and Towers. For information, visit [www.anime-expo.org](http://www.anime-expo.org)

\* Friday, July 3. London, England, U.K. The University of Wales College Newport Animation Department hosted screenings of graduate animation films at the Columbia TriStar/Sony building on July 3. For information, contact [epatri01@newport.ac.uk](mailto:epatri01@newport.ac.uk).

\* Thursday, July 16 - Sunday, September 20. New York City, New York, U.S.A. The New Museum of Contemporary Art at 583 Broadway hosted "Urban Encounters," an exhibit of social activism in art, including some comic artists mentioned in Samantha Bergers article "NYC Wonder Women" in the July 1998 issue of *AWM*. For information on the exhibit call (212) 219-1355.

\* Friday, July 17 - Sunday, July 19. Denver, Colorado, U.S.A. The second Nan Desu Kon anime convention took place at the Stapleton Plaza Hotel and Fitness Center. Scheduled companies and guests included IronCat Comics, Panther Comics, and Mr. Scott Frazier. For information visit <http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Garden/8493/Nandesukon.html>

\* Sunday, July 19 - Tuesday, July 21. Laguna Niguel, California, U.S.A. Spotlight, a conference on digital media, took place at the Ritz-Carlton in Dana Point. Scheduled participants included Rob Glaser of

RealNetworks, Doug Glen of Mat-tel and Barry Diller of USA Net-works. For information visit [www.spotlight.com](http://www.spotlight.com).

\*Sunday, July 19 - Friday, July 24. Orlando, Florida, U.S.A. SIGGRAPH, the conference on computer graphics and interactive techniques, held its 25th annual edition. The July issue of *Animation World Magazine* featured a spotlight on films in this year's Computer Animation Festival and Electronic Theater programs. AWN will publish the SIGGRAPH '98 Special Report on August 11. Stay tuned to the *Animation Flash* for details.

\* Thursday, July 23 - Sunday, July 26. Glendale, California, U.S.A. The Bugs Bunny Film Festival continued its North American tour with a four-day engagement in Los Angeles-adjacent Glendale's historic Alex Theatre, July 23-26. A VIP reception was held on both July 23 and 24, featuring appearances from the surviving original

members of Warner Bros.' Termite Terrace animation studio, including Chuck Jones and Maurice Noble. For information call (800) 302-3398.

\* Saturday, July 25. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. Storyopolis launched a three-week exhibition of art work from films by independent animator Faith Hubley. The opening reception was at 5:00 p.m. and was introduced by actor Robin Williams, a friend and fan of Hubley. In addition, Ms. Hubley shared her autobiographical film, *My Universe Inside Out* (1996), and a panel discussion about Hubley's life and work featured UCLA professor Dan McLaughlin, USC professor Christine Panushka, animation historian Charles Solomon, Cartoon Network executive Linda Simensky and Pyramid Media (distributor of Hubley's films) president Randy Wright. The event was open to the public (\$10 per person). Call (310) 358-2512.



Who knew that Robin Williams was a fan of Faith Hubley? Storyopolis did when they hosted an exhibition of artwork from her abstract films. Photo courtesy of Storyopolis. © Faith Hubley.

\* Saturday, July 25. Berkeley, California, U.S.A. Nik Phelps and the Sprocket Ensemble performed live music to animated films at the Pyramid Ale Brewery, following a screening of the feature film *Annie Hall*. For information call (415) 681-3189

\* Monday, July 27. San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

The Ideas in Animation series continued at Minna Street Gallery with two performances at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Nik Phelps and the Sprocket Ensemble, with guest cellist Piki Chapell performed live music to animated films by Scott Kravitz, Michael Rudnick, Mark Walsh and Tim Sutter. Admission is \$10.00 general, \$7.00 for students. For information call (415) 681-3189.

\* Monday, July 27 - Friday, July 31. London, England, U.K. The British Animation Training Scheme, in association with the Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI) in London, offered a one-week course, "Introduction to the Animation Industry." The course is aimed at people aged 16 and older who are serious about making a career in animation. The cost was U.K. £125. For information about future programs, call (0171) 815-1376.

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## Awards

**Mermaid Floats Zagreb.** The Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films celebrated its 13th edition and 25th year, June 17-21 in Zagreb, Croatia. The grand prize went to Russian animator Alexander Petrov for his film, *The Mermaid*. Additional winners are as follows:

Best First Film: This category was a tie between *The Mayor's Nose* by Mikhail Lisovoj (Russia) and *Pink Doll* by Valentin Olshvang (Russia).

Best Film, Category A (30 sec. - 6 min.): *Sientje* by Christa Moesker (Netherlands).

Best Film, Category B (6 min. - 15 min.): *The Albatross* by Paul Bush

(U.K.).

Best Film, Category C (15 min. - 30 min.): *Flatworld* by Daniel Greaves (U.K.).

Best Student Film: *One Eye* by Lianna Dognini (U.K.).

Special Recognitions:

Commercial Film: *Campbell's Soup: Special Selections* by Aleksandra Korewjo/Acme (Poland/U.S.).

Childrens Film: *Dinner for Two* by Janet Perlman (Canada).

Abstract Film: *Linear Dreams* by Richard Reeves (Canada).

Design: This category was a tie between *How Wings Are Attached to the Backs of Angels* by Craig Welch (Canada) and *Bluebird's Last Wife* by Aleksander Bubnov (Ukraine).

The locally-voted "101 Vote for 1" Prize for Best Student Film: *Advice for Hamsters* by Dennis Sisterson (U.K.).

The locally-voted "101 Vote for 1" Student Jury prize: *One Day* by Marie Paccou (France).

Kodak-sponsored Prize for Best Student Film Originally Shot on Film: *Monday Again* by Mina Mileva (Bulgaria).



*Campbell's Soup: Special Selections*. Image courtesy of Acme Filmworks.

Filmworks Public Prize: *Flatworld* by Daniel Greaves (U.K.).

Award of the Jury of the Arteria Gallery: *Linear Dreams* by Richard Reeves (Canada).

**Extreme Ghostbusters Has A Dream.** The Western Law Center for Disability Rights, a non-profit organization that provides legal assistance to people with disabilities, has selected Columbia TriStar's animated TV series *Extreme Ghostbusters* as the recipient of its second annual Disability Rights in Entertainment, Arts and Media (DREAM) Award. The show was selected for its "positive and exciting" portrayal of a wheelchair-using character named Garrett. The award will be presented at a fund-raiser gala on October 20, 1998. For information call (213) 736-1437.

**Oscar Rules Out TV Series As Shorts.** The Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences have voted to

change the rules for eligibility of short films for Oscars. Rule 1, which states "films which receive their first public exhibition in any form other than commercial theatrical exhibition are not eligible for Academy Awards in any category" has been amended to also prohibit any "unaired episode of an established TV series or an unsold TV series pilot" in the Academy's Short Film competition. In

the past, films made for television, such as *The Chicken From Outer Space* (John R. Dilworth/Hanna-Barbera, nominated in 1996), qualified if they were screened theatrically before airing on television. With increased production of animated short subjects for television, the Academy is trying to



*Extreme Ghostbusters*. © Columbia TriStar Television.



Locomotion won several silver and bronze awards at Promax, for its animated bumper spots. Image courtesy of Locomotion.

make sure that its awards—for the motion picture industry—don't end up being given to the television industry. Academy president Robert Rehme said, "This is an experiment of sorts. We don't expect it to have much of an impact on the eligibility pool, but if its helpful to a picture or two we'll try it."

**Promax**, the association of promotion and marketing professionals recently held its annual convention in Toronto, closing with the Gold Medallion Awards show on June 20. Top winners in animation categories are as follows:

\* Promotional Animation, Gold Awards:

*Americast Promotional ids* (Disney Televentures).

*Branding Animation* (Friedland Jacobs Communications).

*Week In Week Out* (BBC Wales).

*Skydiver* (MTV Australia).

*The Connors* (WPWR-TV).

*Holiday ids* (CHEK-TV).

\* Non-Promotional Animation, Gold Awards:

*Forging a Nation* (Caplan Wilkie - The Television Company).

*Shermie* (Cartoon Network).

*British Fashion Awards* (Channel 5).

**T.R.A.N.S.I.T. Tops Bradford.**

The Bradford Animation Festival took place in England at the beginning of June. The awards are as follows:

Professional Adult Award: *T.R.A.N.S.I.T.* by Piet Kroon.

Non-Professional Adult Award: *Little Princess' Birthday* by Jim Lefevre.

Experimental Award: *Fleeting* by Justin Eade.

Digital Award: *Through the Square Window* by Owen Lodge and Matt Moate.

Under 16s Award: Barvas Primary School, Lewis Isle, Scotland, for their animation *Mairi Macleod & the Metagama*.

Royal Mail Sponsor Prize: *Little Princess' Birthday* by Jim Lefevre.

All winners received a piece of original artwork from previous animations, such as the TV series *Beastly Behaviour* and Barry Purves' short film, *Achilles*.

**ITS Monitors CGI.** The International Teleproduction Society (ITS) presented its International Monitor Awards on July 11 in Los Angeles. Out of 20 categories, three recognized computer animation achievements.

Local Commercials, 3-D Computer Animation: Carls Jr. *Ants* by POP Animation.

Opens, Closes & Titles, 3-D Computer Animation: *SIGGRAPH Electronic Theater Opening 1997* by Sony Pictures Imageworks.

National Commercials, 3-D Computer Animation: Rayovac Batteries *Fierce Creature* by Blue Sky/VIFX.

**Todd McFarlane Named Top Entrepreneur.**

Todd McFarlane, creator of the comic book and animated series *Spawn*, has been named the Ernst & Young 1998 Arizona Entrepreneur of the Year in the Communications and Entertainment category. He was inducted into the "Entrepreneur of the Year Institute" during a recent conference in Palm Springs, California. The award was established in 1986 to "honor outstanding entrepreneurs whose ingenuity, hard work and perseverance have created and sustained successful, growing business ventures." Todd McFarlane certainly fits the bill; his comic books have sold more than 120 million copies in 120 countries in 15 languages, he has produced several films and he also runs a toy company.



# DESERT ISLAND SERIES

compiled by Wendy Jackson

## On A Desert Island With....Asian Animators

This month, we asked two people related to this issue's theme of animation in Asia what films they would want to have with them if stranded on a desert island. Ram Mohan is president of RM-USL Animation in India. Frank Saperstein is producer and creative director of the Malaysian animated series, *Kampung Boy*, featured on the cover of this issue.

### Ram Mohan's Top Ten:

1. *Bambi* (Disney).
2. *The Man Who Planted Trees* by Frédéric Back.
3. *Labyrinth* by Jan Lenica.
4. *Pas de Deux* by Norman McLaren.
5. *Jungle Book* (Disney).
6. *The Yellow Submarine* (TVC).
7. The animated sequences from Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (MGM, animation directed by Gerald Scarfe).
8. *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (Disney).
9. *Night of the Galaxy Express* by Hayao Miyazaki.
10. All of *The Simpsons* shows I can get...Is that cheating?

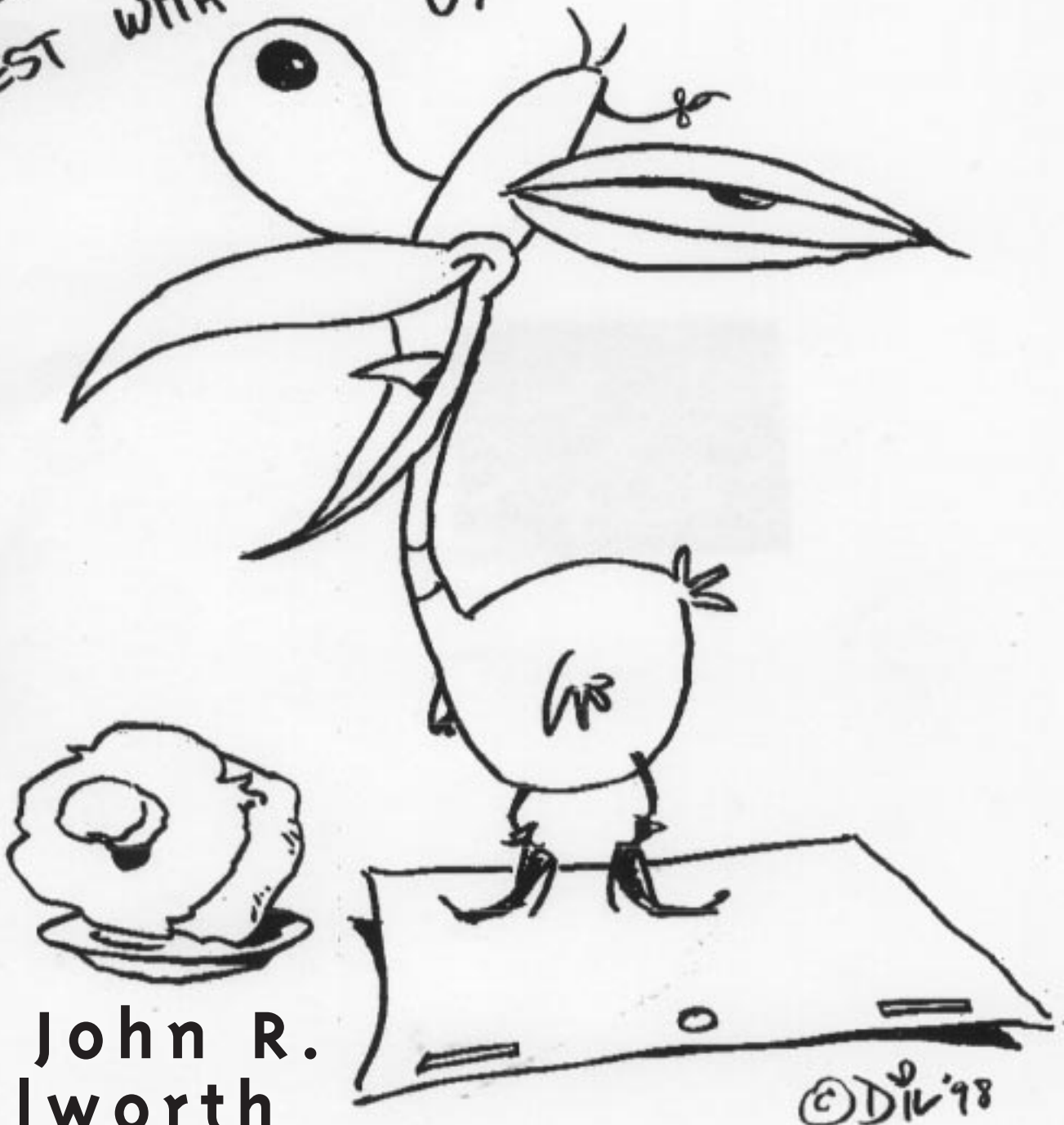
### Frank Saperstein's Favorites:

1. Nine "Looney Tunes" (Warner Bros).
2. *Bambi* (Disney).



# The Dirty Birdy

THE DIRTY BIRDY  
DOES ASIAN ANIMATION  
BEST WITH A BIT OF  
OX-BONE



by John R.  
Dilworth

# Television and Post Production, September 1998

Our big Television issue comes out in September. Michael Lyons is going inside Disney Television Animation to discover how they turn their features into television shows. Craig Miller is going to discuss the Animation Writers Caucus, part of the Writers Guild of America, while Lesli Rynyk will explain a waste management program that may become mandatory for you! Bijan Tehrani is going to describe his time producing television in Iran, while Russell Bekins is going on location with *Corto Maltese*. Of course, no television issue is final without a "Whats New on Fall TV" so Joe Bevilacqua is going to give us the rundown.

Tips on how to use CGI in post-production in order to save money will be relayed by Bill Fleming and we will also take a look at languaging shows. How do they make all those characters speak in other tongues? We will find out. Of course, Barry Purves will continue his production diary and we will also hear from the Museum of Television and Radio in New York City. Event reviews will include Comic Con by Pete Nicholls. Finally, William Moritz will write on Richard Reeves' *Linear Dreams* and Bärbel Neubauer's *Moonlight*. Bärbel will also discuss *Roots*, another of her fascinating films.

## Animation World Magazine 1998 -1999 Calendar

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Indepedent Filmmakers	(October)
Feature Films	(November)
Family Animation	(December)
The Year in Review, The Year in the Future	(January)

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