

ANIMATION

WORLD

Vol. 3 Issue 6

MAGAZINE

September 1998

TELEVISION & POST-PRODUCTION

CORTO MALTESE COMES TO TV

WHAT'S NEW ON THE TUBE?

DISNEY TELEVISION AND ARCHIVES

INTERNATIONAL DUBBING

ANIMATION
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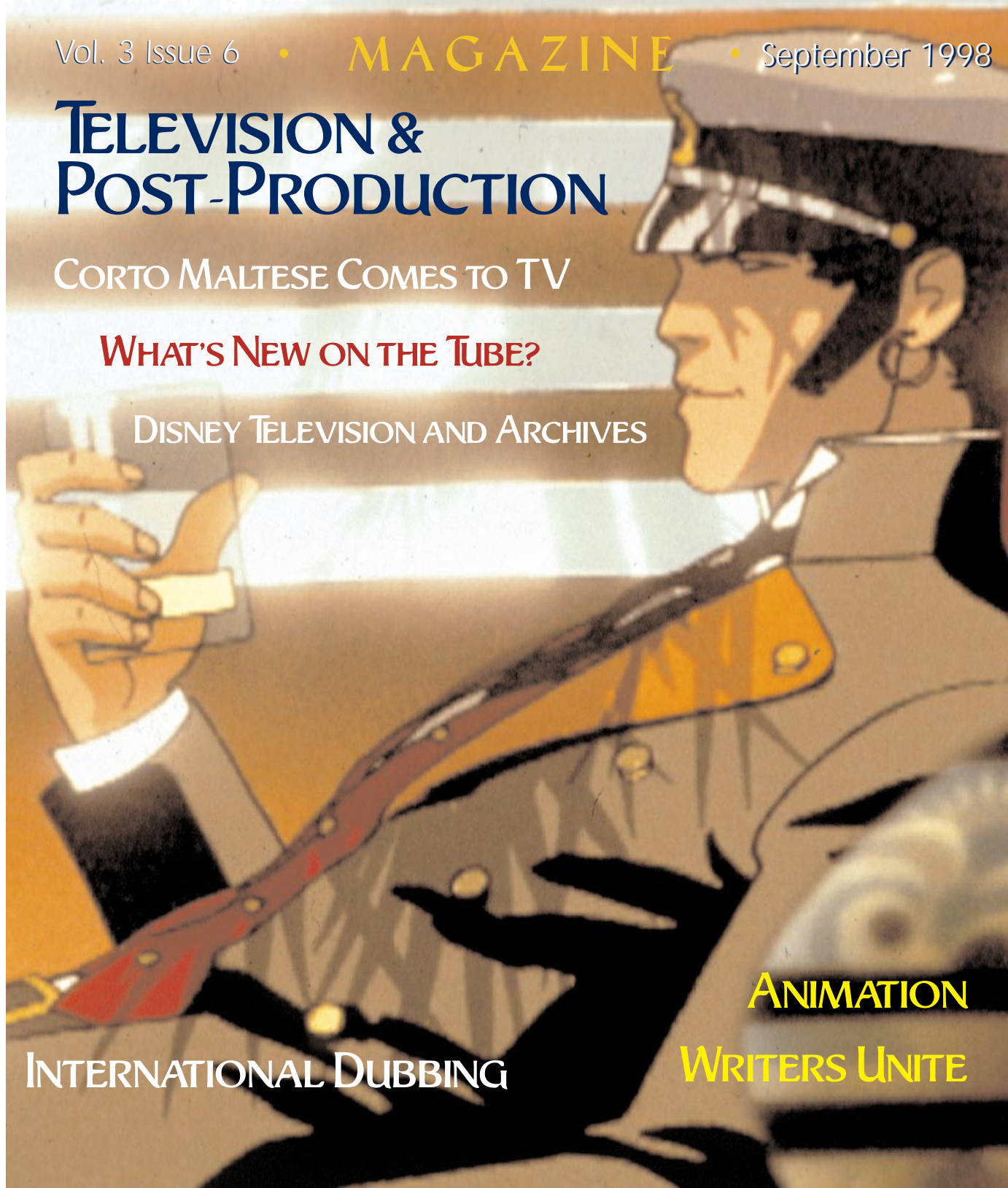


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Cover: *Corto Maltese* will come to television for the first time as an animated series. Learn more in Russell Bekins' article, "The Color In Mind: Corto Maltese." © Ellipse Program/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Heather Kenyon

Expanding television...

Well, the fall season is upon us once again. The most notable mark this year is the expansion of animation into prime-time. While *The Flintstones* started the world of prime-time animation, no one has revived it, and profited from it, like Fox. Ready to expand its current success, Fox is adding three prime-time shows this year: *Futurama*, *Family Guy* and *The PJs* are all being introduced mid-season. That's quite an influx! However, there is more. The success of shows like *The Simpsons*, which is a tremendously popular phenomenon whether we are talking live-action or animation, and *King of the Hill*, have inspired others to take part in the game. Comedy Central was one of the first to take the plunge with *Dr. Katz* and *South Park*. Their risks have proven profitable. *South Park* has been a huge victory for them, grabbing the networks highest ratings to date. Now, *Bob and Margaret* promises to be another, albeit less crude, hit. Furthermore, with almost simultaneous Canadian, U.K. and U.S. distribution *Bob and Margaret* could be an international success early in its airing career. Now even NBC, a major U.S. network, is getting involved by airing the U.K.'s *Stressed Eric*. What is interesting to note is that instead of *Bob and Margaret* and *Stressed Eric* being spawned in the U.S. and then distributed globally, these are co-production deals that are bringing these shows to multiple, international outlets at once.

We have long heard of the booming animation field and we

have long feared the inevitable recession. First the expansion was in features, then it was in home video, now it is in prime-time animation. We have been saved from heavy recessions and have experienced growth due to new outlets continually opening up. Prime-time could be our next savior and even offer another chance to expand. Here's hoping these new prime-time shows are everything they are cracked up to be and that the audience responds in kind!

This is also the second season of FCC-friendly programming in the U.S. Despite all the panic and suspicion that children were going to turn away from the tube in droves, Disney and ABC have proven that pro-social programming can be popular—and the ratings agree. Children haven't turned off. In fact, good shows are just plain good shows and if the stories and characters are engaging, children will watch and, hey, maybe even learn something.

The Writers Guild of America's Animation Writers Caucus also deserves congratulating this month as they have struck a deal with Fox's prime-time schedule to represent the networks animation writers, offering them a new round of benefits. Long under the artists' MPSC banner, this signing delineates a shift as explained by Craig Miller in his article "Better For All Concerned: The Writers Guild of America's Animation Writers



Caucus." There is an ongoing struggle between artists and writers that is unique to animation and that has been heightened in the last few years. Some shows are heavily writer-based, causing storyboard artists to feel very put-out indeed. Still, other shows let the

artists have their way...and sometime these shows wander without a sturdy foundation. With the influx of live-action personnel into animation this misunderstanding has only grown. Live-action folks often want to see the final script! Not understanding that in animation a final storyboard is more close to the actual final show than any script. Naturally, in a healthy situation it is a blending of writing and 'boarding that makes a successful product and each production needs to find its own middle ground.

Kudos also go to the Walt Disney Company for avidly preserving their history. There is no doubt that when we consider animation we have to discuss Disney. I'd like to thank them for seriously archiving their history and artwork. These materials are a tremendous resource, not only to Disney historians, but all animation scholars. To learn more about their collections, please read Katie Mason's "Inside Disney: The Archives and Animation Research Library."

Until next time,
Heather

The Animated Film Collector's Guide Clarification

In his review of my book, *The Animated Film Collector's Guide* (Townsend 3.5) Emru Townsend states that it "aims to be the collector's bible, replacing our dog-eared *Whole Toon* catalogs as reference material." The *Whole Toon* catalog was still defunct when I began writing, but it was never my intention to replace it with my book. *The Animated Film Collector's Guide* should be regarded as a supplement to, not a replacement of, *Whole Toon*.

I wrote my guide as a companion to Giannalberto Bendazzi's *Cartoons* and Leonard Maltin's *Of Mice and Magic*. After reading these books, I wanted to see the films described by Bendazzi and Maltin, but had a hard time locating them because, while a surprisingly large number are available on video, many are hidden away in compilations. Other titles are available only from obscure sources such as foreign, independent, and educational distributors, the filmmakers themselves, or are out-of-print. Most of the films available from these sources are not listed by *Whole Toon*., but comprise about half of the information in my book. The other half will lead you to *Whole Toon*., the best single place to buy animation on video.

Sincerely,
David Kilmer

Two More Additions

There are two additional books that can be recommended in terms of Jerry Beck's June article "The Essential Animation Reference Library" (Beck 3.3) While they probably don't have the produc-

tion values of what Mr. Beck has listed, I think both these books would be helpful. One is *How to Draw Animation Storyboards* by Bob Singer, published by Comic Art Publications. While the production on this book, admittedly, is poor, the information it provides to the novice is very educational. It includes chapters on staging and planning storyboards for psychological effect and continuity to the script. It also contains storyboards by Singer, Moebius, Floro Dery, Will Meugniot and Alex Toth.

And speaking of Alex Toth...*Alex Toth: By Design* written by Alex Toth and Darrell McNeil, published by Gold Medal Publications, is an excellent visual history of Toth's career in animation including models of characters and props from many Hanna-Barbera series including *Space Ghost*, *Jonny Quest*, *Sealab 2020*, *The Three Musketeers* and *Super Friends*. Also included is a storyboard sequence from *Super Friends*. The massive amount of work Toth did in the field can be enlightening and intimidating at the same time. I hope you don't mind my referring to these additional books, but these should definitely be in the essential animation library.

Sincerely,
Neil Hansen

Kudos on Asian Issue

I found the article "China-The Awakening Giant: Animation And Broadcasting In The Mainland" (Vallas 3.5) by Milt Vallas very informative and enjoyable as it reminded me of many experiences and hardships I have gone through in the past and continue to go through today. I have been working in China since 1990 and

still return to China on a regular basis to conduct business for animation. I am thrilled every time I return to cities like Shanghai.

I want to thank you for finally publishing some serious pieces on animation production in Asia. There is a great deal of work and hard effort that is done over here and most of the Western public has no idea that the animation they are watching is produced in Asia. China is quickly becoming a powerhouse in this industry and will continue to grow. Later this month Beijing will host their animation convention where outside industries and local producers will get together and compare notes on the ever-expanding business of animation in China. I will be there.

Again, thanks for the article Milt!

Best Regards,
Rick Allen

Mulan Retort

In response to Andy Kleins review of *Mulan* (Klein 3.3):

Eddie Murphy was pretty darn funny in *Mulan*. If you ask me, he made that movie. To say he was not as funny as James Woods in *Hercules* is, well, pretty lame.

Mulan has more heart to it than *Hercules*. The fact that Mushu confesses to *Mulan* in her time of desperation was a great turning point for the character and gave a little more dimension than would be afforded otherwise. Mushu was a great lead-in for the audience and a mirror for *Mulan*.

Sincerely,
Olun Riley

Dig This!

Using computers to simulate cut-out animation techniques on *South Park* and *Blue's Clues*.

by Wendy Jackson

In this age of technology, many "old-fashioned" animation techniques have been abandoned for computer-generated imagery. However, a new trend is emerging, one which uses the computer as a tool to achieve the look of old-fashioned techniques while taking advantage of the ease of production that technology offers.

Case in point: *South Park* and *Blue's Clues*. "What could these two radically different shows—one for adults and one for pre-schoolers—have in common?," you may ask. The answer is that they both use computer animation software to create a look that many uninformed viewers assume is the product of painstaking cut-out animation. What most people don't know is that quite a bit of technology is at work to achieve that "home-grown" look, shadows, textures and all.



South Park. © Comedy Central.

generated characters are animated. Even the texture of construction paper is applied in the computer, and that "no-platen" shadow look is achieved by separating the characters parts with a small layer of space as would occur in real cut-out animation, which is, in case you were wondering, the technique Trey Parker and Matt Stone used to create *The Spirit of Christmas*, the animated short that spawned the Comedy Central series. Monica Mitchell, a production manager on *South Park*, pointed out that it would have been nearly impossible to produce the show with construction paper. "Time and flexibility are the bottom line," she said, noting that changes to the show are often made the day before broadcast.

Blue's Clues

At Nickelodeon's digital studio in New York, animators on *Blue's Clues* are using Macintosh computers running Photoshop and Adobe After Effects software to combine animated sets and characters with a live-action host.

Even storyboards are created in Quark, so that they can be revised after various stages of the shows extensive kid-testing process. While live-action is being shot on video (against a green-screen, color-key background), artists create props and characters out of clay and simple materials, then photograph them with a digital camera. The images are then cleaned-up and dressed-up, a process series co-creator and designer Traci Paige-Johnson calls making the images "yummy," then imported to After Effects where they are animated and composited with the live-action footage. Series co-creator and executive producer Todd Kessler said that

Both *Blue's Clues* and *South Park* creators use the computer as a very sophisticated camera...

Time and flexibility are the bottom line. - Monica Mitchell

South Park

At a production studio hidden away in Marina Del Rey, California, animators and technical directors on the *South Park* TV show and feature film use high-end equipment: Silicon Graphics workstations running Alias|Wavefront's PowerAnimator software to create a virtual plane—in 3D space—on which "flat" computer-

when the show was being developed, the technology decisions came out of the needs of the content. "The whole idea behind going 'low-tech' and animating on desktop computers was to spend as little as possible on equipment, so that we could spend the largest portion of our budget on creative talent." Nickelodeon recently started production on a new series called *Little Bill* which will employ the *Blue's Clues* process.

Both *Blue's Clues* and *South Park* creators use the computer as a very sophisticated cam-

era which enables the production process to be broken down into stages that can be handled by different teams of people: storyboards, design and layout, lip-sync, and animation. Both shows use relatively small production teams—ranging from 15 to 30 people per episode, compared to the huge staffs, both in-house and overseas, needed to produce a typical 2D or cel-animated series. We can expect to see more of this kind of computer use in animation, blurring the line between CGI and traditional animation, and breaking through once-prohibitive cost and time barriers.

When *Blue's Clues* was being developed, the technology decisions came out of the needs of the content

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, prod-



Blue's Clues. © Nickelodeon.

ucts or works-in-progress today. You dig?

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Tooning in the 1998 Fall Season

by Joseph K. Bevilacqua

One year after the United States federal government began enforcing its requirements for television stations to air three hours per week of educational programming, only a handful of cartoon shows can actually claim they are meeting the mandate. The best is *Science Court*, which is now transforming into "Squigglevision." However, there are plenty of high quality shows. Stalwarts such as *The Simpsons*, *Rugrats* and *Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist* have been joined by equally well-written shows such as *King of the Hill*, *Daria* and *Bob and Margaret*. CBS is filling their animated Saturday morning lineup with shows based on children's books and Nickelodeon's first ever half-hour animated series *The Wild Thornberrys* will debut as part of the network's new prime-time block for kids, the Nickel-O-Zone.

Fox is adding three prime-time animated shows to its mid-season, early 1999 schedule.

More cartoon shows than ever before will soon be gracing your TV screens. The 1998 fall season features animation of nearly every conceivable genre from subtle to broad comedy, from experimental shorts to derivative action-adventure half-hours. The only style that seems to be still missing is serious drama. But why complain? The so-called "animation boom" of the early 1990s has finally arrived eight years after it was

reported to have occurred. Here are the highlights of what we can expect!

Network

CBS

Last season, CBS switched to news and live-action "FCC-friendly" shows. Their ratings went into the basement. This season they are taking their cue from ratings leader ABC's Saturday morning line-up by creating an animation block of 30-minute shows aimed at young viewers and produced entirely by Canada's Nelvana Limited. All but one show is based on popular children's books. As you will see as you read on, Nelvana is responsible for more TV animation than any other company today. CBS's new Saturday morning season premieres Saturday, October 3 at 8:00 a.m. (ET), 7:00 a.m. (PT).

Flying Rhino Junior High is based on the books written and illustrated by Ray Nelson and Douglas Kelly and revolves around the antics of Earl P. Sidebottom (a.k.a. The Phantom of the Auditorium). *Birdz* is an original comic adventure series about a family of birds, which centers around their mischievous ten-year-old Eddie Storkowitz. *Franklin* is a turtle learning how he fits into the world and how the world fits him. It is based on books by Paulette Bour-



Birdz. © Nelvana Limited. All Rights Reserved.

geois and Brenda Clark. *Anatole*, based on the book series by Eve Titus, centers on a dignified mouse who's a loving husband and father to six charming children. *Dumb Bunnies* is based on Dav Pilkey's Scholastic books and centers on a family of lovable, fun loving, and extremely naïve bunnies. *Mythic Warriors: Guardians Of The Legend* is from the paperback series, "Myth Men," by Laura Geringer, illustrated by Peter Bolinger and published by Scholastic. It is about a modernized Mt. Olympus where Perseus is a master kickboxer and Iole dons a punk haircut.

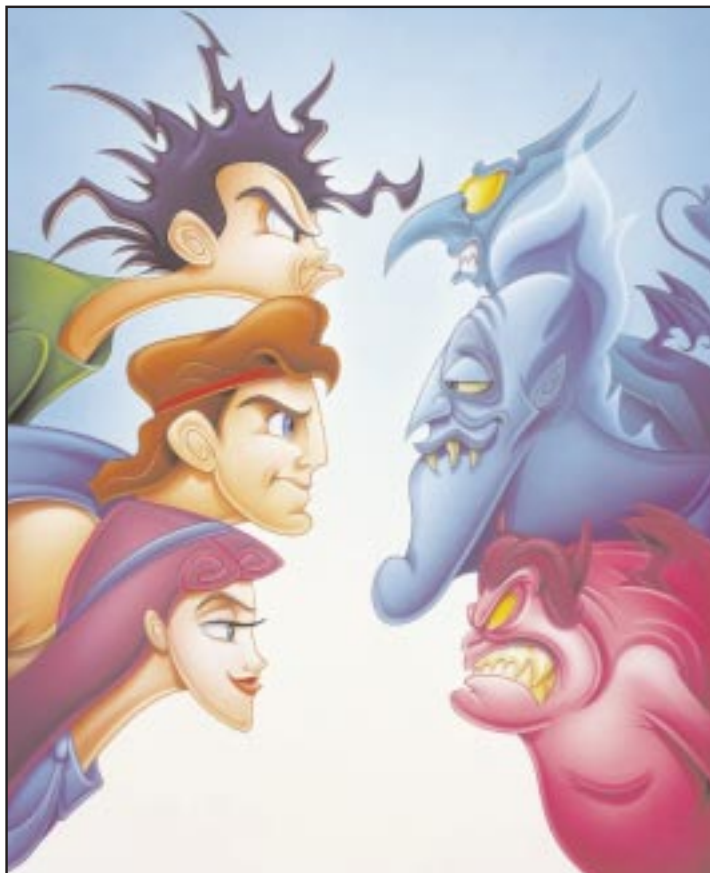
ABC

Disney's ratings powerhouse "One Saturday Morning" block premieres September 12 at

8:00 a.m. (ET), 7:00 a.m. (PT). The schedule starts off with their highest profile show, *Disney's Hercules*, an outgrowth of Disney's 1997 animated feature film, which chronicled the lifelong exploits of the mythical hero. The series expands upon the Greek demigod's feats during his formative, hero-in-training, "high school" years. The voice cast includes the films' Tate Donovan, James Woods, French Stewart, Sandra Bernhard, and Diedrich Bader, along with an amazing roster of guest stars including Jason Alexander, Jennifer Aniston, Lou Gossett Jr., Merv Griffin, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Harvey Korman, Bob Keeshan (Captain Kangaroo), Lisa Kudrow, Heather Locklear, Wayne Newton, David Hyde Pierce, Charles Nelson Reilly, Carl Reiner, William Shatner and Betty White. Fifty-two episodes will also premiere in syndication, Monday-Friday, beginning August 31. (Check local listings.)

What name value the great director of *Schindler's List* and *Saving Private Ryan* brings to children's cartoon shows is a mystery.

"Squigglevision," referring to the trademark animation style of creator and executive producer Tom Snyder, will take the wit and appeal of *Science Court* and expand upon it by adding math and vocabulary elements to the series. With the help of two new



Disney's Hercules. © The Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

animated characters, Fizz and Martina, viewers will now be guided through the half-hour program from the Squigglevision TV studio. If the show is as well-written and funny as *Science Court* this show should be a winner.

Disney's Doug, *Recess*, *Pepper Ann*, and *101 Dalmatians: The Series* all return with 13 new episodes each. *Disney's Doug* will also be seen in syndication Monday through Friday beginning August 31. (Check local listings.) Reruns of *The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh* will continue for the new season as well. Some of the vintage shorts on *The Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show* include *Homeless Hare*, *Ain't She Tweet*, *Bunny Hugged*, and *Trick or Tweet*. *Schoolhouse Rock*, the Emmy Award-winning, three-minute, animated vignettes,

rounds out ABC's children's programming lineup.

FOX

Kim Basinger, Alec Baldwin, Jerry Springer, Regis Philbin, Kathie Lee Gifford, Ed McMahon, Mark Hamill, George Carlin, Martin Mull, Fred Willard, the musical group the Moody Blues and sports casters John Madden and Pat Summerall are among the guest voices on the 10th season of *The Simpsons*. The season premiere is scheduled for Sunday, September 20 at 8:00 p.m.. Fox moved *King of the Hill* to Tuesday nights in July hoping to use it to anchor the evening.

Since the end of last season Fox has been ending each show with a "The Hills are moving to Hollywood" teaser. Some fans thinking it is real have been outraged. Will the Hills really move to Hollywood or is it just a publicity stunt? I'm not telling. Both *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* are some of the best written and acted animation on TV today.

Fox is adding three prime-time animated shows to its mid-season, early 1999 schedule. The first of these is *The Simpsons'* creator Matt Groening's *Futurama*, which has been picked up for 13 episodes. The comedy series will be produced by Twentieth Century Fox in association with Groening's Curiosity Company. Groening will be executive producer. Rough Draft Animation, a studio based in Los Angeles and Korea, which

does *Simpsons* production work has been selected as the sole production company.

Nickelodeon's first ever half-hour animated series *The Wild Thornberrys* will debut as part of the network's new prime-time block for kids the Nickel-O-Zone.

Newcomer Seth MacFarlane's *Family Guy*, is a surprise entry into the marketplace. While *Futurama* and *The PJs* were planned and in production, *Family Guy* is a relatively unplanned pilot by MacFarlane, a 24-year-old graduate of Rhode Island School of Design who was recently discovered by Fox executives. MacFarlane's student film first brought him to Hanna-Barbera's attention where he made *Larry and Steve*, a What A Cartoon! short for Cartoon Network in 1995. Then what was started as a short for *MAD TV* blossomed into a 13-episode, prime-time pick-up. David Zuckerman has been hired as an executive

producer along with MacFarlane. Zuckerman was previously an executive producer on *King of the Hill*. Roy Smith, formerly of Saban, and Peter Shin, formerly of Klasky Csupo, will be co-animation producers, and John Bush, formerly of Hyperion, will be line producer.

Another new show is *The PJs* (time TBA) with Eddie Murphy as the voice of the super of the Projects (the PJs.) The show is a satirical look at urban family values in a big-city housing project that will attempt to skewer "cultural stereotypes, sacred cows and notions of political correctness." *The PJs* is the first prime-time series to be created in "foamation"—the technique used by Will Vinton Studios (California Raisins, Nissan commercials). Murphy is producing the series, with Ron Howard and Brian Grazer as executive producers. Let's hope all three of these new series live up to Fox's tradition of prime-time success.

Fox Kids Network, which runs weekday afternoons and Saturday mornings on Fox, has a

vamped-up 1998-99 schedule which includes eight new animated series starting in the fall. New to the Fox Kids Saturday morning lineup will be *Mr. Potato Head* (Film Roman/Chiodo Bros.) which combines computer generated imagery (CGI), puppetry and live-action production technology; *Godzilla: The Series* (Columbia TriStar) which picks up where the blockbuster movie ended; *Woody Woodpecker* (a new remake from Universal), *Mad Jack* (Saban), *Silver Surfer* (Saban) and *Captain America* (Saban). New to weekday afternoons will be *Scholastic's The Magic School Bus* (Scholastic/Nelvana), *Spy Dogs* (Saban) and *Oggy and the Cockroaches* (Gaumont) which will be combined with *Space Goofs* (also Gaumont) as *The Space Goofs and Oggy Show*. Current shows being renewed for 1998-99 include *Steven Spielberg Presents Toonsylvania* (DreamWorks), *Life With Louie* (Hyperion), *Spider-Man* (Saban), *Ned's Newt* (Nelvana) and *Sam & Max* (Nelvana).



The PJs. © Touchstone.

NBC

Testing out this prime-time fad, NBC began airing the animated 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 has re-dubbed the track with an American voice actor (Hank Azaria) to make the dialogue more comprehensible to its American viewers.

Kids' WB!

"Batman, Batman, everywhere!" This should be Kids WB's new slogan. First there is *The New Batman/Superman Adventures* which will air Saturdays from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. and Monday through Friday from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.. The Caped Crusader will be featured in all new adventures for the Saturday morning show but will rotate repeats of *Batman: The Animated Series* and *The Adventures of Batman & Robin* for the weekday version. The characters in the new *Batman* have a distinct look in order to differentiate the show from the series' two previous incarnations in an attempt to make it clear that each of these three series is set in a different time frame. The *Superman* half of the show follows the legendary "man of steel" in all-new episodes set in present-day Metropolis.

Rugrats...was the highest-rated children's program on television for the 1997-1998 season.

But hold on to your batbelts! There's even more "caped confusion" with an entirely separate *Batman* series set in the early part of the 21st century. *Batman Beyond* is an all-new futuristic chapter in the world-renowned legend of Batman. The new millennium has dawned and Gotham City has embraced the future, becoming an enormous megapolis etched in neon with sleek futuristic vehicles and behemoth

people movers. It's a city molded by corporate master plans, corporate wealth, and occasionally, corporate greed. In an environment such as this, corruption lurks just below the surface of order, waiting for the opportunity to break through and get a toehold from which to flourish.



Mr. Potato Head. © 1998 Hasbro, Inc.

Monday through Friday at 3:30 p.m. and Saturday mornings at 11:00 a.m., WB presents *Warner Bros.' Histeria!* which presents historical subject matter in an amusing way while trying to fulfill the FCC educational programming requirement. Crazy characters such as Father Time, Big Fat Baby, Loud Kid, Mr. Smartypants, and Lydia Karaoke visit with such figures from the past as Joan of Arc, William Shakespeare, or Abraham Lincoln. *Brats of The Lost Nebula* is a new sci-fi adventure series from The Jim Henson Company and combines puppetry and computer-generated imagery supposedly in a way never before done for television. It's yet another show about good versus evil, as if there weren't enough of those on the air already. *Brats* will air Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.

Columbia TriStar's "aliens

live among us" comic adventure *Men In Black: The Series* (based on the hit movie) begins its second season, airing Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. Warner Bros. classic characters, Sylvester and Tweety, return for all-new escapades of *The Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries* (Saturdays at 11:00 a.m.).

Just as Disney is compelled to slap its moniker on nearly every cartoon show it owns, so does Steven Spielberg. What name value the great director of *Schindler's List* and *Saving Private Ryan* brings to children's cartoon shows is a mystery. Some "Steven Spielberg Presents..." shows have come and gone (*Freakazoid*, for example) but *Steven Spielberg*

Presents Animaniacs continues to air Monday through Friday at 7:30 a.m. and *Steven Spielberg Presents Pinky & The Brain*, Monday through Friday at 3:00 p.m. Now WB adds *Steven Spielberg Presents Pinky, Elmyra & The Brain* (Saturdays at 10:30 a.m.). After ACME labs is destroyed Pinky and The Brain seek refuge in a pet store where they are bought by the overzealous pet-lover Elmyra, of *Steven Spielberg Presents Tiny Toon Adventures* fame. It's kind of sad that the perfect duo formula of *Pinky and the Brain* will be spoiled by this loud-mouthed, rehashed character.

The WB Network (prime-time) will also try out a pilot based on the syndicated comic strip *Baby Blues* during the '98 holiday season, testing it out for a possible series.

PBS

After taking home an Emmy Award for Outstanding Childrens Animated Program, *Arthur* kicks off the series' third season on PBS, with 15 new programs and 50 encore broadcasts of favorite episodes from previous seasons. The daily, animated half-hour programs are based on Marc Brown's popular childrens books about an aardvark. *Arthur* is brought to public television by WGBH Boston and CINAR Films and will premiere Monday, November 16, 1998.

Bob and Margaret is a brilliant-ly subtle and funny show. The middle-class story lines transcend any country's border.

Cable

Cartoon Network

Ed, Edd n' Eddy premieres November 16 at 8:00 p.m. The half-hour series tells the story of three best friends who band together to tackle life's most daunting challenge—puberty. *Ed, Edd n' Eddy* was created by Danny Antonucci, creator of *Lupo the Butcher* and director of a.k.a. CARTOON inc., located in Vancouver, Canada. *The Powerpuff Girls*, premiering November 18 at 8:00 p.m., is based on animator Craig McCracken's two original cartoon shorts produced for Cartoon Network and Hanna-Barbera's World Premiere Toons project. The series is produced by the same animation team behind *Dexter's Laboratory*.



Ed, Edd n' Eddy. © Cartoon Network.

Space Ghost Coast to Coast kicked off its fifth season on Friday, August 7 at 11:30 p.m. (EST/PST). Some of the guests interviewed for this season include supermodels Tyra Banks and Rebecca Romijn, actor/director Ben Stiller, directors Jim Jarmusch and Kevin Smith, comedian Garrett Morris and a lot more.

Dexter's Laboratory, Gendy Tartakovsky's story of a boy genius who creates fantastic inventions in his beloved laboratory will air new episodes Monday through Friday at 7:30 p.m. beginning August 31. *Dexter's Laboratory* was Cartoon Networks highest-rated series of both 1996 and 1997. Twenty-six new episodes of *Cow and Chicken*, from veteran animator David Feiss, will follow the further misadventures of the surreal pair of siblings. *Cow and Chicken* airs Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. starting September 1. The new season of *Johnny Bravo* will be broadcast on Mondays and Fridays beginning August 31.

Toon Disney

Beginning this fall, a west coast U.S. feed of Toon Disney will

be made available to cable affiliates in both the Pacific and Mountain time zones. Currently available in more than six million homes, Toon Disney's fall programming slate will include seven additional series. *101 Dalmatians*, *Quack Pack*, *Mighty Ducks*, *Gargoyles*, *The Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog* and *Hello Kitty and Friends* will join the Toon Disney schedule in September while *Care Bears* will be added in October.

Disney Channel

Disney Channel makes its first foray into completely computer-generated animation with its new series for young children, *Rolie Polie Olie*, debuting October 4. Renowned children's book author and illustrator William Joyce created this 13-episode weekly series, produced by Nelvana Limited. Joyce was recently named one of the 100 people to watch in the next millennium by *Newsweek* magazine. *Rolie Polie Olie* follows the touching, tumultuous and sometimes hilarious world of Olie, a simple robotic "everyboy" who lives in a magical, mechanical world.

Nickelodeon

Nickelodeon's first ever half-hour animated series *The Wild Thornberrys* will debut as part of the network's new prime-time block for kids the Nickel-O-Zone. From *Rugrats* creators Klasky Csupo, the series follows the adventures of girl hero Eliza and her quirky family who travel the world from Africa to the Amazon in search of exotic, endangered

and mysterious animals to star in their nature documentaries. The show will air Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT) starting September 1.

Catdog, which chronicles the comical misadventures of a unique creature with two heads, one body and no trace of a tail, will premiere on Monday, October 5 at 5:00 p.m. (ET/PT). A guest appearance by country singing legend Randy Travis and Helga's admission of her undying love for Arnold, kick-off the third season of *Hey Arnold!* airing Mondays and Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT) beginning August 31. *Kablaml!*, the alternative animation anthology series, returns for a third season with a new segment and three specials. The new episodes debut on Friday, September 4, at 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT). One of the new segments this season, *JetCat!*, is based on Jay Stephens' Dark Horse comic book trilogy *Land of Neil*, which was recently nominated for an Eisner award, the comic book industry's highest honor. The three specials are *Life with Loopy Birthday Galabration* on October 23, a Valentine's Day special with The Off-Beats in February 1999 and a special with Henry & June in March 1999.

Punctuating the new season of *Rugrats* episodes is the addition of a new Pickle to the fold. The *Rugrats*' lives change forever in an episode entitled "The Family Tree," which premieres Monday, September 21 at 8:00 p.m. (ET/PT). The episode will repeat on Saturday, September 26 at 8:00 p.m. in SNICK and Sunday, September 27 at 10 a.m.. "The Family Tree" is the cliffhanger episode to *The Rugrats Movie* which will be released Thanksgiving 1998. *Rugrats*, created by

Arlene Klasky, Gabor Csupo and Paul Germain, was the highest-rated children's program on television for the 1997-1998 season.

The Angry Beavers kick-off all new episodes with an "Angry Beavers Halloween" special airing on Monday, October 26 (Time TBA). *Angry Beavers* will also premiere with new episodes in SNICK (Saturday nights) throughout November. Steve Burns and the gang return for all new episodes of *Nick Jr.'s, Blue's Clues* beginning Monday, October 12 at 9:30 a.m. (ET/PT) as well.

Launched in July 1998, *Oh Yeah! Cartoons* (Sundays at noon - ET/PT) is a unique cartoon laboratory that introduces three new characters every week. Created by Fred Seibert, the series is meant as a place where new animation talent and seasoned veterans can create something new and exciting. Similar in concept to his 'What A Cartoon!/World Premiere Toons' series on Cartoon Network, "Oh Yeah!" is aimed at younger children. The result is a series less annoyingly loud and "in your face." Most of the shorts are subtle and well executed. Some, such as *Max & His Special Problem*, are brilliant. The idea of trying out "one shot" cartoon shorts before committing to a series was inspired by the old Warner Bros days. Like the early Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies, *Oh Yeah!* has more misses than hits, but if Nickelodeon can commit to the show for the long haul and let these animators develop their craft, they may just have a hit on their hands.

Little Bear is based on the children's books by Else Holmelund Minarik with illustrations by Maurice Sendak. *Little Bear* tells the story of a young cub

taking his first steps of independence, always under the gentle guidance of his caring mother. The 30-minute series airs four times per week on Nickelodeon. *Rupert* first appeared in Britain in the pages of Express Newspapers, over 75 years ago. The white bear, known by his red sweater and yellow checkered trousers and scarf, has generations of fans and is loved by children everywhere for his values of courage, kindness, honesty and loyalty. The 30-minute series airs four times per week on Nickelodeon.

It is hard to believe that such charming and well-written shows as *Daria* and *King of the Hill* would have started life as spin-offs of something as awful as *Beavis and Butt-head*...

Fox Family Channel

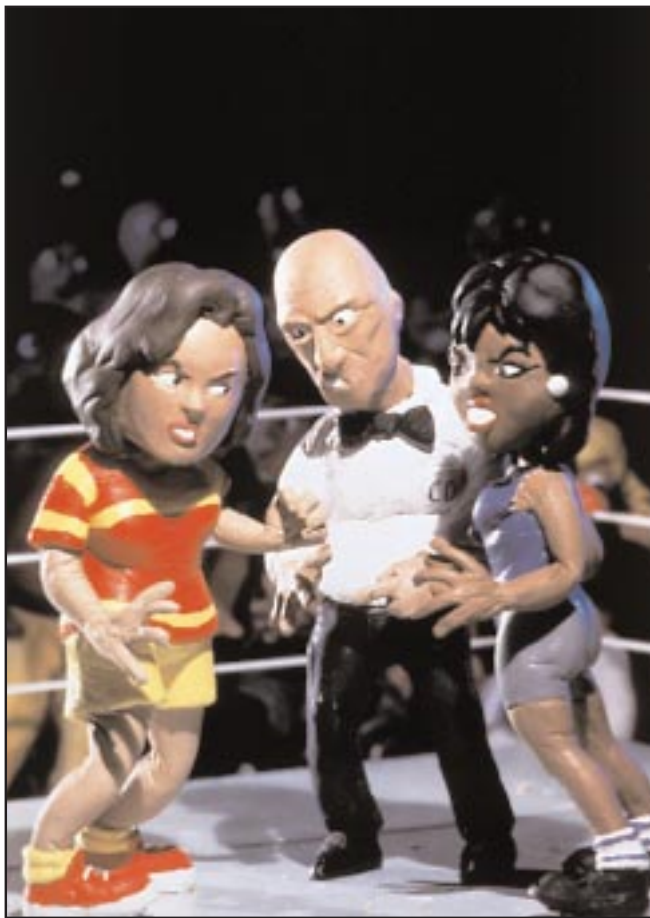
News Corp./Saban co-venture Fox Kids Worldwide has very animated plans for its newly-acquired cable network, The Fox Family Channel which launched on August 15 with a kids' daytime schedule that includes 50% original, first-run programming. Following the lead of competitors success with program packaging, Fox Family Channel will debut with a slate of four themed, "branded" daytime blocks. "Morning Scramble" for kids of all ages, will include the animated series *Wowser* (Saban), *Bit the Cupid* (Saban), *Little Mouse on the Prairie* (Saban), *Eek!Stravaganza* (Nelvana), *All Dogs Go to Heaven* (MGM Animation) and the live-action series *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* (Don't miss those great animated "Penny" sequences!). The second block, "The Captain's Treasure House," is aimed at pre-schoolers

with animated shows like *The Magic Adventures of Mumfie* (Britt Allcroft Productions) and *Tabaluga* (EM-TV). "Tic Tac Toons," an all-animation block, will feature *Bobby's World* (Film Roman), *Saban's Oliver Twist* (Saban), *Heathcliff* (Saban), *The Real Ghostbusters* (Columbia TriStar), and *Classic Harvey Toons* (Harvey Entertainment). The last kids block of the day before family-oriented prime-time programming starts is "The Basement," which will premiere the animated series *Bad Dog* (Saban), *Monster Farm* (Saban), *Water Melon* (Saban) and *Badaboom* (in development at Saban), a compilation of outrageous animation.

A recent addition is *Donkey Kong Country*, a real-time, 30-minute animated series based on the successful Nintendo game, premieres on the revamped cable channel, Sunday, August 16. Medialab puppeteers worked with 3-D animation motion-capture technology to create *Donkey Kong Country's* unique look. Donkey Kong is an easy-going, peace loving ape who has a big heart but a small brain—a bit of a boob-in-the-woods. Fox Family Channel also has a lot of new shows in development, so expect additions to their program throughout the season.

HBO

Pippi Longstocking is the story of the rambunctious nine-year-old with the active imagina-



Celebrity Deathmatch. © MTV.

tion and pigtails that defy gravity based on the cult classic childrens books and movies from Sweden. *Pippi Longstocking* premiered Saturday, July 4 and airs Saturday and Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. HBO is also expected to launch a 25-part animated series called *A Little Curious* in January 1999. Produced by Curious Pictures, the show will feature mixed-media, CG, cel and stop-motion animation.

Comedy Central

Bob and Margaret is based on the 1995 Academy Award winning short film *Bob's Birthday*, created by husband and wife team David Fine and Alison Snowden. The show focuses on the ordinary lives of a middle class dentist and his foot-doctor wife. Although

some might be challenged by the British dialect, *Bob and Margaret* is a brilliantly subtle and funny show. The middle-class story lines transcend any country's border. The series premiered June 22, 1998. Only 13 shows have been produced so far but they will be stretched out, with frequent repeats, for the entire season.

Bob and Margaret is paired with the CableACE Award-winning series *Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist*, now in its fifth season, to form a Monday night programming block. *Bob and Margaret* airs Mondays at 10:00-10:30 p.m., Saturdays at 6:00-6:30 p.m. and 2:30-3:00 a.m., and Sundays at 12:30-1:00 a.m. (ET/PT). *Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist* airs Mondays at 10:00-10:30 p.m., Saturdays at 3:00-3:30 a.m., Sundays at 12:30-1:00 p.m. and Monday through Friday at 8:00-8:30 a.m. and 1:30-2:00 p.m. (ET/PT).

Syndication leader Bohbot Kids Network's weekday schedule features a mix of old and new shows...

It's the return of a "fecal icon" and more, as six new episodes of *South Park* began August 19. Episode topics include: an independent film festival comes to South Park; Kenny contracts chicken pox; the kids build rival clubhouses; Mr. Garrison takes his class to the new planetarium; South Park citizens begin spontaneously combusting; and the annual rodeo pulls into town. This

series offers the worst that television can spoon out. It is nasty and badly produced. The creators have confused mean-spiritedness and sarcasm for genuine humor, and the acting is amateurish and nearly inarticulate. However, it remains amazingly popular. *South Park* airs Wednesdays at 10:00-10:30 p.m. and 1:00-1:30 a.m., Saturdays at 10:00-10:30 p.m. and 2:00-2:30 a.m., and Sundays at 12:00-12:30 a.m. (ET/PT).

MTV: Music Television

MTV will continue mixing new and old episodes of *Celebrity Deathmatch*, Eric Fogel's outrageously violent claymation series where clay figure renderings of today's biggest stars are pitted against each other in a ring. Although the show is meant to comment satirically on the icons of contemporary culture and the

claymation is fun to watch, it is difficult to recommend any television that, show after show, constantly bombards the viewer with the idea that conflicts should be solved through aggression and violence. *Celebrity Deathmatch* airs weeknights at 7:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. (ET/PT).

It is hard to believe that such charming and well-written shows as *Daria* and *King of the Hill* would have started life as spin-offs of something as awful as *Beavis and Butt-head*, but it is true. *Daria* chronicles the experiences of 16-year-old Daria Morgendorffer, who lives in a new town, Lawndale, with her stressed-out, career-fixated parents and her relentlessly cute and popular younger sister. MTV will continue to air repeats of *Daria* and plans new episodes soon. It airs Monday nights at 10:30 p.m. (ET/PT). *Cartoon Sushi*,



Rolie Polie Olie.
© 1997 Nelvana Limited.

the showcase for acquired animated shorts from the U.S. and abroad, as well as pilots created in MTV's own New York-based animation studio, airs Thursdays, 10:30 p.m. (ET/PT).

Syndicated

There are several syndicated shows returning with new episodes including 3-D computer generated *Beast Wars* (premieres the week of September 14) from Claster Television and Sachs Family Entertainment's *Zorro* (premieres the weekend of Sep-

tember 19). New traditionally-animated syndicated shows include Claster Television's *The Lionhearts* (premieres the weekend of September 19), which revolves around the domestic life of Leo the Lion and his lion family and Sachs Family Entertainment's *Monkey Magic* (also premieres the weekend of September 19), which is based on one of the most beloved Chinese classic masterpieces.

Another new show from Mainframe Entertainment (*Beast Wars*) is *War Planet* which is being syndicated by The Summit Media Group. With a budget of \$18 million for 13 new episodes this innovative CGI series looks like a hit and a success with the toy manufacturers as well. Summit is also bringing to U.S. syndication *Robocop Alpha Commando*, *The New Adventures of Voltron: Defender of the Universe*, and Japan's popular *Pokémon*.

Syndication leader Bohbot Kids Networks weekday schedule features a mix of old and new shows: *Jumanji*, based on the Robin Williams movie; *Extreme Dinosaurs*, about annoyingly hip dinosaurs; *Mummies Alive!* where the spirit of an ancient Egyptian resides in an ordinary 12 year-old boy; *Pocket Dragon Adventures*, "where wizards, magic and mischief abound;" *Action Man*, centering on an international top secret agent; *Captain Simian & The Space Monkeys* with super intelligent monkeys battling the evil NEBULA for a second season; *Extreme Ghostbusters*, the second season of yet another *Ghostbusters* rip-off; *Street Sharks* featuring four brothers who have been mutated into half-shark, half-human creatures; *Highlander - The Animated Series*, based on the

original *Highlander* movie; *Mighty Max*, the curious 11-year-old boy who has been chosen to rescue the world; *The Mask - The Animated Series* based on the Jim Carrey movie; and *Adventures Of Sonic The Hedgehog*, featuring that hip, irreverent and impetuous creature.

Sundays from 8:00-10:00 a.m., Bohbot Kids Network presents: *Princess Gwenevere And The Jewel Riders* which returns for a third season; *Double Dragon*, featuring masked twin super heroes who defend Metro City; *Ultraforce*, a futuristic, science-fiction series; and *Skysurfer Strike Force*, another action cartoon that returns for a third season.

The Future

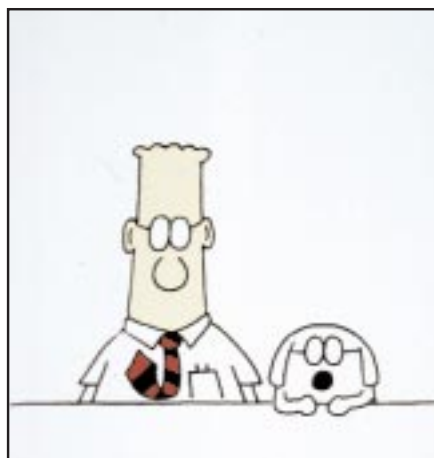
For the first time in 40 years, Mickey Mouse will be animated in new cartoons by Walt Disney Television Animation in a show called *Mouse Works*. The show will package new cartoons featuring Mickey, Donald Duck, Daisy, Goofy and Pluto, into 13, weekly 22-minute episodes scheduled for release in early 1999. In the development of the show, Roy Disney, currently vice chairman of the board of the Walt Disney Company, has been working closely with Disney TV's L.A.-based senior vice president Barry Blumberg and executive producers Roberts Gannaway and Tony Craig. As in the early Mickey Mouse "Silly Symphony" cartoons, music is established as the driving force to provide reference for character motion and movements. At present Disney has not decided which of its many outlets will air this new show.

Last year, the "What a Cartoon!" anthology on Cartoon Network promised two cartoons by John Kricfalusi, creator of *Ren & Stimpy*, starring Ranger Smith of

Jellystone Park. Yogi and Boo Boo are also coming along for the ride. At press time Spumco is still producing these cartoons for broadcast later this year. If they turn out as good as the storyboards I've seen, it will be worth the wait.

Dilbert, the corporate everyman and cartoon hero of the workplace, makes his television series debut in the animated prime-time comedy *Dilbert*. (January 1999). The television series is based on the comic strip created by Scott Adams that makes it seem funny and okay for the corporate world to keep the little guy down. Voices for the series include: Daniel Stern, Chris Elliott, Kathy Griffin, Gordon Hunt, Larry Miller and Jackie Hoffman.

The WB Network has ordered 13 episodes of *The Downtowners*, an animated series developed by Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein for Castle Rock Television. It is slated to air as a prime-time show in fall 1999. The show is described by WB as "the first prime-time animated comedy to focus on the lives of twentysomethings and teens." It will star four roommates living in a downtown loft in a fictional big city, and their



Coming soon: *Dilbert*. © UPN. All Rights Reserved.

assortment of colorful friends and neighbors. This is the first animated series to be developed by Castle Rock Television unit, whose live-action credits include *Seinfeld*.

Bill Cosby will team up with Nickelodeon to produce an animated preschool series called *Little Bill*, based on a book series authored by Cosby. *Little Bill* will premiere in the fall of 1999 on Nick Jr. Cosbys series will investigate life through the eyes of a five-year-old boy who is on a quest to understand the world.

As part of a multi-year deal, *Fat Dog Mendoza* will be the first of two original series co-produced by Sunbow Entertainment and Cartoon Network Europe for air in 1999. The series is described as a hilarious blend of the bizarre and familiar but at press time, no further details were available about the show.

Joseph K. Bevilacqua, a protege of Daws Butler (the voice of Yogi Bear), is a veteran radio comedy writer, producer, actor, as well as cartoonist. His programs have aired on public radio stations nationwide since 1980 and have been honored by The Museum of Television and Radio as part of their "Contemporary Radio Humor" exhibits. He is currently developing animation scripts with his wife and creative partner, Lorie B. Kellogg. Their comedy can be heard in RealAudio and seen in comic strips on their web site, "Joe & Lorie's Comedy-O-Rama."

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

Disney's Little Big Screen: Turning Animated Features Into TV Series

by Mike Lyons

The *Further Adventures of Dumbo?*
Fantasia Frolics?

Bambi: the Series? If television had been around in the Forties, would these titles have been a reality? Difficult to tell how far Walt Disney would have gone, but today's popular Disney animated features go on to live forever—not only in the memory of generations who will enjoy them for years to come, but also any child up early enough on Saturday mornings.

As the studios' animated features become increasingly popular, audiences clamor for more. To answer the call quickly and efficiently, Disney has taken to adapting some of their more recent animated films to a format once foreign to the Mouse House: television. Hits such as *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin*, *The Lion King* and even the classic *101 Dalmatians* have spawned TV siblings. With their characters and stories so entrenched in the mainstream, creating new weekly situations is the first and usually most daunting task.

A New Genre

Roy Price, director of development and current programming for Walt Disney Television Animation (WDTVA), used this analogy: "It's sort of like if you wanted to take the theme of a



This fall, WDTVA will debut *Hercules*, an animated series on ABC's Saturday morning line-up. © The Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

symphony and transport it into a rock and roll song. You could do it, as they showed in *A Whiter Shade of Pale*, but you have to be aware that the demands of the medium, or the genre, are a little different. If you just tried to play the symphony for minutes at a time, it won't be satisfactory. It won't please the symphony lover or the rock and roll aficionado. So, you have to be more sensitive to what works in the shorter time frame and the different demands of the medium."

The feature-to-series trend has also opened up a controversy...

Disney has indeed met these demands, as Television Animation has become a strong arm of the company since its inception over a decade ago with shows like *Adventures of the Gummi Bears*

and *The Wuzzles*. One of the people there for the flash point was Tad Stones, an animator who began his career at Disney in feature animation in 1974. Later he moved to television and went on to serve as executive producer of the series *Aladdin*, as well as director of the film's two lucrative direct-to-video sequels.

He stated that adapting a popular feature for the small screen comes with

inevitable hurdles. "No matter what you do, no matter how much you spend and put into it, you're not going to be spending as much as a feature film," admitted Stones. "Everybody understands that this is a TV series, but they still compare it directly to the feature films. So, basically we're getting something done on a television production schedule, albeit a lush one, compared to something that was four years in the making and is lavished with computer effects and digital ink and paint. That hurts us too, because it's daunting when someone overseas is drawing something 'off-model.' We give them notes and we try to refine something, but there's only so much that we can do."

Adapting for the Tube

These limitations, however, have not stopped Disney from

experimenting and taking some chances with its characters. Case in point is *Timon and Pumbaa*, a series based on the comic sidekicks from Disney's behemoth of animated blockbusters, *The Lion King*. Instead of re-creating the lush, lyrical mood of the film week after week, supervising producers Tony Craig and Roberts Gannaway decided to shape *Timon and Pumbaa* in a more Tex Avery-ish vein. "What we tried to do, to keep it fresh, was expand on their personalities as a comedy team," noted Gannaway, "in the tradition of good comedy teams like Bob Hope and Bing Crosby or Martin and Lewis. The other thing that we did to try and keep it interesting was to not have them locked into the Serengeti, but allow them to travel the world and meet different kinds of animals."

Gannaway and Craig have also translated one of Disney's most beloved films, *101 Dalmatians* (which recently got a new 'leash' on life thanks to a popular live-action remake), for the small screen. "The animated feature and the live-action film are really about the human characters," noted Gannaway. "The objective of the TV series was to make a show about the puppies' individual personalities. This isn't really explored in the movie beyond a 'tagging' of the different types."

In addition, the producers have given the new Dalmatians its own highly stylized look, different from that of the original film and have even tackled what many would have thought verboten: Disney's most popular screen villain, Cruella DeVil. "We needed to expand her so that she



Timon and Pumbaa. © The Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

would become more of a greedy character," said Gannaway. "It's been daunting, because she is such a great villain."

This fall, WDTVA will again place their own distinct stamp on a new series, when *Hercules*, Disney's loopy feature from last year, makes its way to ABC's Saturday morning line-up, as a weekly animated series.

"What we've done in *Hercules* is what we've always tried to do in every series which is keep

the tone," said Stones, who will also be serving as executive producer for the new show. "We look at the feature film and we say, 'What do people like?'"

No one under the Disney umbrella is safe from the lure of television...

The answer to this was the originals irreverence and the producers of *Hercules*, the series, found that the best way to capture this was through what they call a "mid-quel." That is, the events that take place on the show, take place not before or after those of the film, but at a point within the story. So, instead of taking the safe route and relaying Herc's exploits as a strong-man here among mortal earthlings, the series will focus on the character during his teenage years, allowing the show to tackle issues of romance, teen angst and a main character still struggling to find his place in the world. As Stones noted, "By ignoring continuity and trying to stay true to the elements of humor and adventure in the film, we came up with a much stronger series that really stands on its own."

Most of the original voice cast from the film will return, including a real surprise: James Woods in his blisteringly bad role of Hades. With Woods signed on, the producers suddenly found that there was a flood of recognizable names who wanted to be part of the show. "Every episode was cast as if it was a feature film," says Stones of this unexpected luxury. The new show will boast over 150 celebrity voices including: *Seinfeld's* Jason



Roberts Gannaway and Tony Craig (seated). © The Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.



Mouse Works. © The Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

Alexander as Poseidon, Mike (Man-nix) Connors as the hard-boiled cop, Chipacles, Regis Philbin as the voice of Typhoon and game show host Wink Martindale, somewhat typecast as Sphinx Martindale. In addition, a majority of the show's 65 episodes will also feature songs.

Working With Other Divisions

When films such as *Hercules* make the leap to the small screen, the producers usually get little else but the blessing of the artists and filmmakers from the original film. "They don't worry about a series when they're doing movies," noted Stones. "They're worried about the movie and that's it." In fact, the proliferation of animated features into series has inspired some good nature ribbing at the studio. As Stones remembered, "When [directors] Ron Clements and John Musker were developing *Hercules*, they said, 'Hey Tad, we're doing a pilot for a series.'"

The feature-to-series trend has also opened up a controversy, however, as many animation purists now believe that Disney is "cheapening" its own product. "To

me, I don't think it's a taste thing," admitted Stones. "I don't see how a spin-off of any kind takes away from the original. When Disney did 'Dance of the Hours' [in *Fantasia*] people complained because they couldn't listen to that piece of music without seeing dancing hippos. Maybe they did ruin that music, but then so did Alan Sherman, when he did 'Hello Mudda, Hello Fadda.'"

All you're concerned with is, 'Am I putting a good story on the screen?' - Tad Stones

"I think the good thing is that it extends the life of the characters," said Gannaway. "It keeps the characters out there for the audience to enjoy." Gannaway and his partner, Tony Craig, have recently been entrusted with Disney's first big screen star, Mickey Mouse. The 'Big Cheese' will come to television this fall in his first animated series, *Mouse Works*, proving that no one under the Disney umbrella is safe from the lure of television.

The show has been produced under the guidance of

Walt's nephew, vice chairman of the board, Roy E. Disney, who has been keeping a careful eye on the classic characters, now also known as company icons. "He's looking at all the scripts and all the storyboards," noted Gannaway. "Roy is watch-dogging the show and this relaxes a lot of other executives."

It's actually very fitting that Disney's biggest hero of the big screen would make his way to the small screen in such a top-notch manner. After all, it was Walt himself, who in the 1950s, pioneered the idea of quality family television with such shows as *Disneyland*, *Zorro* and *The Mickey Mouse Club*.

Like those classic shows, the features-to-series evolve on their own, becoming creative and entertaining variations on an original theme, not just cogs in a corporate machine. "Everyone always says, 'Oh, you guys also have to worry about the merchandising and the dolls and everything.' You don't. All you're concerned with is, 'Am I putting a good story on the screen?'" noted Stones, adding, "You're really just focused on your project, you're not thinking, 'Is this going to be a good Disneyland ride?'"

Mike Lyons is a Long Island-based freelance writer, who has written over 100 articles on film and animation. His work has appeared in Cinefantastique, Animato! and The Disney Magazine.

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

The Color In Mind: Corto Maltese

by Russell Bekins

It was a job to be approached with both trepidation and glee: the feature animation adaptation of the "classic" and often confusing graphic novel *The Ballad Of The Salt Sea* by the legendary Hugo Pratt. With a cult following to please on one hand, and a television audience on the other, how would they strike a balance between the popular, and fidelity to the original? They sacked the first group of writers. Then a funny thing happened: they began studying the story and graphics...

Is a French production team breaking all the rules while adapting the graphic novels of Hugo Pratt?

All Hail the Master

First appearing in 1967, *The Ballad Of The Salt Sea* is a graphic novel about the adventures of a rakish and ethically challenged adventurer, Corto Maltese, a "gentleman of fortune" in an era no longer accommodating to such roles. A member of a band of pirates nominally allied with the Germans in the South Pacific in 1913, Corto becomes interested in the welfare of two kidnapped British children. As the shifting interests of governments at war half a world away begin to make themselves known at their well-hidden pirate base, he must find a way to keep the children safe and



A background from the animated *Corto Maltese*. © Ellipse Programme/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.

himself alive.

Lets be up-front about it: its a weird, arcane, and complicated work, like a Joseph Conrad novel in graphic form.

Can such subtleties be brought to life in a faithful adaptation of this odd graphic novel?

For precisely that reason, the author of the serial, Hugo Pratt, has become a cult figure unto himself. Going with his father to Ethiopia in 1937, during the Italian attempt to establish a colony there, he was enrolled in the Italian police force. During the war years, he was captured by the SS as a spy, escaped, and went over to the Allies. Pratt's graphic novels are sometimes seen as extensions of his adventurous life. They are unusual for their intellectual underpinning, often confusing plots, historical figures, complicated characters, and carefully researched, exotic locations. Heir to the Belgian School of graphic novelists, his full-color painted images are a beauty to behold. They have earned him a die-hard following in Italy and France, with

over five million copies sold.

Ellipse, a production wing of the French broadcaster Canal Plus, hopes to turn the Corto Maltese books into a series of six

TV movies, beginning with the *Ballad Of The Salt Sea*. Still to come are: *Under The Sign Of Capricorn*, *Corto Maltese In Siberia*, *The Gilded House Of Samarkand*, and *The Celts*. Additionally, there will be a series of short episodes based on some of the other Corto Maltese adventures. Italian TV station RAI and the Animation Band in Milan, Italy will be co-producing some of the segments. Its a fitting match for the Italian author and artist who spent most of his working life in France. Scripting on *The Ballad Of The Salt Sea* has been going on for a year, and they are now in the storyboard stage, with the first film expected out in the fall of 1999. It hasn't been easy, though.

To Europeans weaned on the adventure-driven comic book series, a film adaptation is the pop equivalent of doing Shakespeare in London—it had better be good. Conventional wisdom says that pleasing the cult and pleasing the public at large might be two different tasks, however, the films must sustain the larger audience for the duration of the ambitious project.

Give the Children What They Want?

Producer Sophie Glass' credentials have brought her a unique insight. When working for Alia, she produced an animation series based on the classic children's books *Les Malheurs De Sophie* by the Contesse de Segur. "It was a very psychological series about a girl who has trouble being a child." The adaptation of this classic material led her to shun condescending to children. "Children love being sad," she points out, though is quick to add that no one really knows what kids want.

Let's be up-front about it: it's a weird, arcane, and complicated work...

Pascal Morelli agrees, and points to the adaptation of the popular French comic *Asterix* as a model for everything that could go wrong. Despite the untranslated Latin quotes, sophisticated social satire and plays on words, "The adapters felt the need to reduce *Asterix* to a level he had never sunk to: that of a four-year-old child... The adapters took *Asterix* for the *Smurfs*. We must remember that for decades, it was claimed that comic books, and animated films, could only tell simple stories."

With this in mind, they set out to aim the project for teens and adults.

What's a Camel?

"What's a camel?" asked executive producer of the project, Robert Rea, with a self-effacing smile. "It's a horse designed by executive producers."

When director Pascal

Morelli first approached Pratt about doing an animation film based on *Corto Maltese*, this joke epitomized his dilemma. Hugo Pratt was infamous for rejecting offers to adapt his work to film or any other media. Rea approached him with the idea of an "artist-driven" animation series with Pascal Morelli directing, and found the writer-artist surprisingly open. "He was aware that there had to be changes in the story itself," Rea recalls.

Morelli was then working in Los Angeles as a storyboard artist and advisor to director Phillip Kauffman. The faxes hummed back and forth between Morelli and Pratt. Unfortunately, Pratt died in 1995, before Morelli ever had a chance to meet him in person. Morelli, though sad about the fact, is in a way relieved. "Who knows," he grimaced, "I might have been thinking that he had been saying this, but when I met him he might say, 'That's not what I meant.'" This ambivalence would later prove ironic.

For Morelli, whose animation background was largely in the United States (*Calamity Jane* for Warner Bros. TV, *Vor-Tech* for Universal, and *Gadget Boy* for DIC), it was a homecoming project. He had discovered the *Corto Maltese* series when growing up in France. "When I was a kid, a lot of things happened in the novels that I didn't get," Morelli admitted. "At first I had a hard time reading them, but then it became magic. It

was R-rated. Everybody was good and bad at the same time, like Clint Eastwood in a Sergio Leone movie."



One of the many faces of Corto Maltese. © Ellipse Programme/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.

The Text

But can such subtleties be brought to life in a faithful adaptation of this odd graphic novel? From the American viewpoint, it seems an impossible task. It just doesn't follow the formula.

In Pratt's story, Corto Maltese is first met tied to a raft in the South Pacific. He is picked up by Rasputin, a fellow pirate whom Pratt seems to have dredged from a frozen river in Moscow where he almost met his end. Their friendship is based on threatening to kill each other, and a mysterious tie to "The Monk," whom we later come to know as the leader of their pirate band. We quickly discover that Corto is complicit in a number of crimes, including piracy, kidnapping, and even the murder of a ship's crew. He is passive, laconic, and frequently, seems unconcerned for how things turn out. This is our hero?

In Hollywood, it would be *de rigeur* to make Corto active, atone for his sins, and be the star.

That's another problem. In the Hollywood version, Corto *must* be central to the action, but Corto is frequently gone, or not the key character in many scenes of the epic (he is wounded and out of action for a good deal of the "second act"). Much of the tale rotates around a young British brother and sister, kidnapped by Rasputin to be ransomed to their family. As the action comes to a close, events center on the girl and her relationship with the British admiral who comes to her rescue. The dialogue and action focus on the kangaroo court trial of a "noble" German submarine captain who has been privateering across the Pacific. Sound complicated? It is. Its barely linear storytelling. Concern over these, and other thorny issues of story development, led the first draft of the script to come in more John Wayne than Sergio Leone. All slam-bam action and adventure, it seemed like a simple-minded adaptation of *Terry And The Pirates*. Clearly, another approach was needed. They had a camel on their hands.

"If you want an action-adventure story why use Hugo Pratt?" Morelli shrugs. "These char-



Corto in close-up. © Ellipse Programme/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.



Corto in shadow. © Ellipse Programme/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.

acters are not built to be super heroes."

The Significance of Absence

The team spent six months studying the story and the "testo fungi," the subtext. "The story is about two things," Morelli continued. "The growth of two teens, and the turn of the century. Its about adventurers who used to live freely, but can't any more. The Monk and his gang steal and thats it. But the world is changing around them. That's why I like *The Wild Bunch*. Its about the end of the world for adventurers."

"Its a very original way to tell stories," Glass insisted. "It looks lazy and elliptic, but its not so lazy as it seems. There are deep things going on underneath." It is bringing out this "testo fungi," or subtext, that is their job. Interpolating between the frames of Pratt's book lies in the looks and glances, the range of expressions that fill in what is not said. "Corto's silences are revealing," Morelli said, gesturing, "and even his absence is significant."

The central relationship between Corto Maltese and the young teen girl (whom some critics say is the central character of

the story) has been made "stronger" in Morelli's words. Though there's only one scene where she attempts to seduce Corto, there is an undercurrent of romance. "She starts out cute, but she's turning from a girl into a woman. We're going to look at how she moves."

This study included discovering new elements in the artwork itself and the setting. "He did not simply use the background of the picture to indicate locations, but made it a narrative element," Morelli continued. Things are confusing for a reason. "Its as if you were in Yugoslavia during the war. Things readily apparent from the outside are not when you're in the middle of it."

It's as if you were in Yugoslavia during the war. Things readily apparent from the outside are not when you're in the middle of it. - Pascal Morelli

Morelli acknowledged that there are flaws in the material. "When Platt wrote the story, he didn't always know where he was going," he shrugged. One example of this is the artwork of Corto Maltese himself. He looks different at the start of the story than at the end, as if the character evolved in the author's mind as the story unfolded. This meant a challenge for the artists. "They had to choose which Corto to use," Glass revealed.

They also confronted a central character with more than one flaw. "Corto is about what is doable at any given time," Rea asserted, underlining the theme of situational ethics and the Sergio Leone movie. He changes from

pirate to gentleman in the course of the story. His friendship with R a s p u t i n embraces both love and hate; he is openly contradictory. He's not a hero in the ordinary sense of the adventure genre. Don't expect to see a wisecracking, Bruce Willis type in the lead, Rea warned. "It's more irony than humor."

That sounds suspiciously French to the Hollywood ear.

Change for Less

Glass cast out among her animation writing friends and chose veterans Thierry Thomas to oversee the writing, and Jean Pêceaux for the text. "Thomas was a friend of Pratt's and deeply passionate about the images he had drawn. Pêceaux knew the story by heart," he said. In a typical session, Pêceaux would propose to cut a scene, and Thomas would argue that the image was too important to be cut. Thomas would then propose eliminating a portion of the text, and Pêceaux would defend it as being vital to the flow of the narrative. "They ended up being completely faithful to Pratt," Glass smiles.

Well, not quite. They wound up dumping an action scene where the pirates shell and sink a Japanese navy boat threatening their hideout as just plain too confusing. You see, the Japanese were allied with the British at the time and the pirates are allied with the Germans, and...you get the idea.

But dropping an action scene?? Unheard of.

But that suits Morelli just



Another background from the animated *Corto Maltese*. © Ellipse Programme/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.

fine. "You have to keep a balance between the elements, you don't change too much to get less."

The Significance of Corto

There are a number of important reasons to follow this production carefully. The first is that it represents a return to Europe of an important animation director, and a hope that the vast exodus of European talent to the States will reverse itself. The second is that this looks like years of work for cartoonists, animators, storyboard artists, and so on. The third is that it represents a grand experiment in marketing to teens, who are staying away from simplistic animation features in droves.

Corto is about what is do-able at any given time.

- Robert Rea

"Our market research indicates that there is a real interest in these (adventure) themes from age ten and up," Rea clarified. If they are successful in this approach, they will show the way for other animation producers in the burgeoning adult-cum-teen market in Europe.

Hollywood might just have to listen.

Most of all, this production is a test of how to satisfy the hard-core fans of a graphic novel series

while making it accessible to the public at large. How do you do it?

"I don't know," sighed Morelli. "In one of the trial episodes we've done, fans of the

book thought we had copied the art from the book exactly. They looked at the page and discovered that it was all beige, because Pratt was concerned that people be able to read the text. The task is really to find the color that everyone had in mind."

Note: The on-line version of this review includes a Quicktime movie of *Corto Maltese*:

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6bekinscorto.html>

Russell Bekins is a disgruntled expatriate of the film industry, now living in Bologna, Italy. Serving his apprenticeship as story and multimedia analyst for Creative Artists Agency, he went on to be a creative executive for Tidewater Entertainment at Disney Studios, where he achieved his level of incompetence in studio politics. He is now working on theme park attractions and consulting on multi-media projects, as well as struggling with the subjunctive tense in Italian.

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Giuseppe Laganà and Animation in Italy: Rebuilding an Industry

by Russell Bekins

Giuseppe Laganà began his career at the Italian state-owned Cartoon Film; the studio that produced the animated shorts for the immortally weird Italian television comedy variety series *Carosello*. He worked with such industry legends as Harry Hess and Jimmy Teru Murakami. Later, he was a background artist for Bruno Bozzetto on *Allegro Non Troppo*, the classic surrealist Italian answer to *Fantasia*.



Giuseppe Laganà.
Sketch by Russell Bekins.

At his Milan-based company, Animation Band, the studio's thirty-odd employees are enthusiastic about Laganà's leadership.

"From about 1980 to 1994, there was a huge crisis in Italian Animation," he lamented, "a blackout." He survived by doing titles for television, videos, industrials and educational films.

A New Beginning

At his Milan-based company, Animation Band, the studio's thirty-odd employees are enthusiastic about Laganà's leadership. "He's been an assistant, a background artist, illustrator, and director," waxed background artist Giorgio Campioni. "He's done everything, so when he offers a piece of advice, you know that

he's coming at it from experience."

Since 1995, when he produced and directed 26 six-minute episodes of *Laura's Sky*—a fantasy series about the mysteries of the universe from the perspective of a girl and her cat—Laganà

and his Animation Band have been going full tilt. They have also completed another animation series based on the Italian comic strip *Lupo Alberto*, which might be best described as a cross between *Bloom County* and *Road Runner*.

Such intensive production has led the company away from more chaotic, illustrator-based production methods. "It was always a struggle," recalled production director Diego Lo Piccolo. "We were simply tilting at windmills." In order to keep up with the demands of the new series, they had to adopt industry standards

in terms of scripting, storyboarding and animation. "It was a change from this, to this," illustrat-

Executive producer Robert Rea, confronted with the need to choose an Italian production partner, shrugs that the decision was no contest.

ed Lupicolo, flipping his hand over to expose the palm—the Italian equivalent of 'from day to night.'

A Growing Future

The hard work and methodology is paying off. Animation Band has been selected to do



Lupo Alberto. © 1998 Silver/McK.



Corto Maltese. © Ellipse Programme/Imedia/ConG. All Rights Reserved.

an important portion of the production on the upcoming *Corto Maltese* series, along with Ellipse in France. Executive producer Robert Rea, confronted with the need to choose an Italian production partner (a stipulation of Italian television network RAI), shrugged that the decision was no contest.

"They were simply the most reliable studio."

We [Europeans] have a long way to go to overcome the advantages you have in the American market," Laganà asserted. "A single language, for example." For Animation Band, the "new" methods and developing a core of writers who know animation have been key.

For Animation Band, the "new" methods and developing a core of writers who know animation have been key.

"For a lot of years, we were continually losing talent to America," Laganà lamented, "now that an industry is developing, it appears that people are returning."

Russell Bekins is a disgruntled expatriate of the film industry, now living in Bologna, Italy. Serving his apprenticeship as story and multimedia analyst for Creative Artists Agency, he went on to be a creative executive for Tidewater Entertainment at Disney Studios, where he achieved his level of incompetence in studio politics. He is now working on theme park attractions and consulting on multi-media projects, as well as struggling with the subjunctive tense in Italian.

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Bonus HTML Features

Every on-line (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/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6cover.html>

- **The Color In Mind: Corto Maltese**

Includes a Quicktime movie of the animated series, *Corto Maltese*, which is featured on the cover of this issue.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6bekinscorto.html>

- **International Theatrical Dubbing: It's More Than Meets the Eye**

Contains four Quicktime movies of the title character in the Fox animated feature film *Anastasia* singing songs from the film in English, Portuguese, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Russian, Turkish, Polish and Greek.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6chinndubbing.html>

- **The Film Strip Tells All**

Includes Quicktime movies of *Linear Dreams* by Richard Reeves and *Moonlight* by Bärbel Neubauer.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6moritzfilms.html>

- **Roots: An Experiment in Images and Music**

Includes a Quicktime movie of *Roots* by Bärbel Neubauer, and a link to the AWN Vault featuring the author's filmography.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6neubauerroots.html>

Better For All Concerned: The Writers Guild of America's Animation Writers Caucus

by Craig Miller

The Animation Writers Caucus was founded in May, 1994. The purpose of the Caucus is to assist Animation Writers and help them to better the circumstances under which they work. By providing shared information, health benefits, educational and networking opportunities, and a code of ethics, the WGA Animation Writers Caucus makes the field of animation better for all concerned.

So reads the introductory paragraph to the "Directory of Animation Writers" published annually by the Writers Guild of America (WGA). Clear and concise, it gives an idea of what's behind the Animation Writers Caucus (AWC), but it doesn't really go to its heart.

The WGA is a labor union, "a collective bargaining agent," whose main purpose is to protect the financial and professional lives of writers, even writers who don't normally come under the Guild's charter. The organization is concerned about them and the conditions under which they work, too. Whether or not an animation script was ever written under a Guild contract, the WGA wanted to work to aid animation writers.

The Birth of the Caucus

In 1994, Brian Walton, executive director of the WGA, gathered together a group of animation writers and asked what the Guild could do to help writers improve things. A few meetings were held and, from that, the WGA formed a new department,



the Department of Industry Alliances, which was specifically mandated to look into organizing and improving conditions for writers working in Animation, Interactive and other "new media," and Reality Programming.

The WGA is a labor union, "a collective bargaining agent," whose main purpose is to protect the financial and professional lives of writers...

In May of 1994, the first formal meeting of the Animation Writers Caucus was held. Open to anyone who has written at least one half-hour of produced animation, the Caucus started with 42 members. Today, the Caucus numbers around 300. However, the first four years of the organization's existence have been spent doing more than just collecting members. The Caucus has accomplished a lot.

Among the most important things that the Caucus has done happened in the last year. Animation is now being written under

the aegis of a Writers Guild of America contract! The first show done under a Guild contract was the show my partner and I created, *Pocket Dragon Adventures*, which debuts worldwide in September. Over 30 animation writers worked on the show and received Guild benefits and protections. News of that contract opened the floodgate and dozens of inquiries have since come in. Recent developments include a series of made-for-video Garfield movies which have been done under Guild contract and a new prime-time animated series, *The PJs*, to air on the Fox Network, which is being written with full Guild protections for its writers. And, in a major deal signed in August between the WGA and Fox, four more prime-time animated shows will be produced under Guild contracts: *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill*, *Futurama* and *Family Guy*.

Benefits Abound

Other achievements the Animation Writers Caucus has accomplished include giving a voice to the wants and needs of animation writers. Long a part of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Union (MPSC), Local 839 of IATSE, writers make up less than 10% of that union's membership. The rest of the members are artists. So focused on art and artists is the MPSC that, to this day, MPSC does not have a formal job classification for writers, instead they are included with storyboard artists under the rubric of Story Persons.

As signified by the quote at the start of this article, the Writers Guild publishes an annual Directory of Animation Writers which it distributes free of charge to animation studios, networks, agents, production companies, and others. This listing of writers, their credits, and their agents or other contact information, makes it easy for those seeking animation writers to find the writer who would best fit a project and aides writers in finding work. AWC sponsors an ongoing series of panels and seminars on various aspects of the animation industry. Some, such as the recent panel of industry executives and the upcoming agents panel, are for members only and are held at the Writers Guild Building in Los Angeles. Others take place at

industry events such as NATPE, the World Animation Celebration or the San Diego Comic-Con. These events serve to keep members informed of changes and trends in the industry, as well as to keep people aware of the involvement of writers in the animation process.

Networking is always important, and AWC events allow for animation writers to meet and get to know other writers and executives in the industry—always important in getting jobs or figuring out who to hire—and for shar-

ing information. Bosses in all industries tell employees not to talk, not to let anyone else know what one is making or benefits one is receiving. That's because they don't want people to know what to ask for. Sports stars have learned better. Their contracts make the papers and the next guy now knows what's possible. The



Pocket Dragon Adventures, which debuts worldwide this month, is the first show done under a Guild contract. © 1998 BKN Kids Network and Real Musgrave.

same is true in the entertainment industry. Knowing what deals have been made gives an advantage to members and their agents. Having opportunities to learn this information makes all the difference. While the above sounds dry, it's a very social atmosphere. Fun, and sometimes even food, reigns. Laughter is a hallmark of AWC gatherings.

An additional important advance is health coverage. Much animation work is still non-union, and even when writers work at MPSC houses, not all animation

writers achieve sufficient hours to qualify for that union's medical plan. However, two different health plans are available through the WGA. A low-cost yet high quality self-pay plan is available to AWC members, and their families, who haven't yet written under a Writers Guild contract. For those writers who have, they and their families may be eligible for the no-cost WGA Health Plan.

Additionally, members of the Animation Writers Caucus receive all Guild publications and mailings, and can join the Guild's Film Society and attend all open Guild events.

To further indicate its strong and ongoing support of animation writing, the Guild has just approved a new award.

This award honors a writer for their entire career, for the work itself and/or the writer's contribution to the field of animation. The first WGA Animation Award will be presented at the AWC's annual meeting in October 1998.

Writers and Unions

Fun, information and awards are all good things, but animation is a business, and animation writers, like animation artists, work in it. The support and protection of a strong union is important to the quality of life for

people working in the industry. The Writers Guild of America dates back to 1921, when it was founded as the Screen Writers Guild. Over the years, radio writers and television writers became included in the membership until 1954, when the Writers Guild of America was formally established as a Collective Bargaining Agent, a union representing writers in the entertainment industry.

Long a part of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Union (MPSC), writers make up less than 10% of that union's membership.

But animation writing was not included in the WGAs charter. Why? Well, because in the earliest days of animation, few if any formal scripts were written. Concepts may have been written out but the actual writing of the feature or short was done in storyboards. It wasn't until the 1970s, when the half-hour television cartoons started holding sway, that real scripts were employed on a regular basis. But because writing was traditionally done by storyboard artists and the "gag men" and "story men" working with them, animation writers remained included in the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists union.

Today, few cartoons and features are written in this older

fashion. For example, Disney's feature films have formal scripts. These scripts are boarded and reworked at the storyboard level, with sequences changed, added, or deleted. Then new scripts are written, including these alterations, and the process repeats again and again.

Even though scripts now exist as the primary form, animation writers have continued to be included in the MPSC. Why is that a problem for writers? Why should they want to be represented by the WGA? Because 90% or more of the members of the MPSC are artists. Their problems and needs are different from those of writers. One hundred percent of the Writers Guild of America membership are writers. Animation writing is very much like writing for live-action. The scripts look much the same. The keys to storytelling, be it adventure or comedy, hard or soft,

more visually-oriented. There's no question that animation writers have more in common with the members of the WGA than they do with the rest of the membership of the MPSC.

The Writers Guild of America dates back to 1921, when it was founded as the Screen Writers Guild.

Among other things, most animation artists—be they animators, in-betweeners, storyboard artists, or ink-and-paint artists—work on overall employment contracts, paid by week, on an ongoing basis. While some animation writers are on staff, most are freelancers, working on individual scripts. They get paid by the assignment, not the week. When it comes to contract negotiation, especially against such hard bar-

gainers as the Association of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), which represents Disney and Warner Bros. among others, it's hard to get the 90+% of the membership of MPSC who aren't writers to hold out for contract demands that apply only to writers.

Fighting for Unique Rights

There are many ways of abusing workers or not giving them the respect they are due. The WGA would like to see a number of abuses that have been common in the animation industry changed or stamped out. One such is the



An Animation Writers Caucus booth at the World Animation Celebration. Pictured, left to right, are AWC members Brooks Wachtel, Francis Moss and Richard Mueller. Photo courtesy of the WGA.

live-action or animated, are the same. The only significant difference is that animation writing is

abuses that have been common in the animation industry changed or stamped out. One such is the

Cattle Call process of hiring writers. A studio beginning production on a television series would let the word out to all writers about a meeting. Dozens and dozens would attend, hoping for a chance to work. The show's producer or story editor would talk about the show, Series Bibles would be passed out, and everyone dismissed; sent home to write a page or more for each of three, four, five or more story ideas/premises they came up with for the show. Literally hundreds of story ideas would come in, sometimes for as few as six or twelve open assignments, with the writers not knowing how futile their attempts at work were.

There's no question that animation writers have more in common with the members of the WGA than they do with the rest of the membership of the MPSC.

Another issue is screen credit. A writer's task is important to any film or television program. There's a saying that, to build a great building, you need a strong foundation. Everything starts with the script. If it's bad, the best animation in the world won't save it. Plus, without a script, there's nothing to animate. Writers deserve to receive credit for their work. In television, in particular, this was frequently a problem. Some shows used to run "gang credits" at the end of each episode. Every episode had the same set of names so one didn't really know who wrote the episode one just saw. Furthermore, if someone was



AWC sponsors an ongoing series of panels and seminars on various aspects of the animation industry. Shown here is Craig Miller, left, with fellow panelist and AWC member Gordon Bressack at the 1998 Animation Opportunities Expo. Photo courtesy of the WGA.

hired late in the season, that writer's name never appeared on any episodes.

Still another abuse is unlimited rewrites. Studios would tell a writer to rework premises, outlines, and scripts again and again. Both the MPSC and WGA rules state that a script fee obligates the writer to deliver up to two drafts of a script if requested by the studio. Some studios were notorious for asking for four or more drafts of everything, but they wouldn't pay extra for this extra required work. The problem was exacerbated by the MPSC contract, although certainly not deliberately. MPSC's minimum rate for a half-hour television script is thousands of dollars below the going rate. The contract stipulates that, for the minimum payment, a writer will deliver two drafts of a script. Payment over scale—the amount above the contractual minimum—applies to rewrites at the rate of \$750 per draft. So if the going rate is \$2,000 over scale—and it is—then all script fees include the right for the studio to ask for two or more extra drafts before they even begin to think about paying for the extra work.

The WGA's Animation Writers Caucus is not really about getting writers out of one union and into another. It's an eventual goal of many Caucus members but it isn't the only thing the group is about. While money is an important issue, it's far from the central issue.

The AWC is about making a difference. That sounds trite but it's also true. Every writer—everyone in any job—has the right to be treated with respect. No one should be taken advantage

of. No one should be made to do work without being fairly compensated. The WGA wants to see the abuses of writers that have long been standard in the industry eliminated. The Animation Writers Caucus is the instrument to that goal.

Visit the WGA Animation Writers Caucus web site in AWN's Animation Village:

<http://www.awn.com/wga-awc>

Craig Miller is chairman of the WGA's Animation Writers Caucus.

Miller has been an animation writer for over a decade. Along with his partner, Marv Wolfman, he created the series Pocket Dragon Adventures and served as executive producer, story editor and, of course, wrote many episodes of the series.

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Waste Management in Animation

by Lesli Rynyk

When we watch an animated feature or Saturday morning cartoon, we watch in awe of the art, to escape reality, or to be entertained. If we stop to think about the effort put into the creation of animated pieces, we usually think about the amount of people involved in the production or the amount of hours it took to create. Rarely, is the amount of waste generated over the course of the production considered.

In March of 1994, the Province of Ontario passed Ontario Regulation 347 in the Waste Management Act.

Legislation

In March of 1994, the Province of Ontario passed Ontario Regulation 347 in the Waste Management Act (the equivalent to an Assembly Bill, such as Assembly Bill 939 for the State of California). This regulation, a guiding device of the act, requires all organizations in the Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) sectors to perform a waste audit every five years. In addition, they must possess and follow a waste management plan to reduce wastes. This regulation does not exclude the motion picture industry: live-action or animated. The Ministry of Environment and Energy (MOEE)

reserves the right to enter a business and ask for their last audit results, read their management plan, and inspect their property to ensure the plan is being carried out as documented. Penalties for failure to comply with Regulation 347 can be as extensive as jail time and a fine. The goal of this regulation is to have a 50% reduction in waste by the year 2000 and 80% by the year 2003 (MOEE, 1998). The problem lies in that the film industry in Ontario, a growing business for the province, does not understand that this law governs them.

Canuck Creations Incorporated Animation, a specialized section of the industry, is expanding rapidly. Sheridan Collage, located just outside of Toronto, is one of the largest animation schools in the world. Walt Disney Studios has a large production studio in the Toronto area as well. In addition, there are numerous small production companies in Ontario which collaborate with the major studios to produce some of today's ani-

imated features and television. One such company is Canuck Creations located in downtown Toronto. Its President, Alan Kennedy, founded Canuck Creations Incorporated in 1993. Since then, Canuck Creations has been involved in such productions as *Space Jam* (1996) for Warner Bros., *Anastasia* (1997) for Fox Animation, and the recently released, *Quest for Camelot* (1998), again, for Warner Bros. However, the one item that really makes this production company unique is that they possess a waste management plan tailored to their business.

Problems Encountered

Canuck Creations was approached in February of 1997 to participate in a study of animation waste generation. It included participation in a waste audit and the creation of a waste management plan. They were, in fact, the only company out of 48 contacted in North America to agree to the project. For the most part, companies refused to respond to the messages left on their machines regarding the project. However, there were a few interesting excuses used to avoid participation:

- They are not a production company (despite being listed under 'Production')
- They only have an office in Toronto.
- They only produce commercials.
- They only produce documentaries.



© Canuck Creations.



Canuck Creations is located in a converted warehouse-style space in Toronto. Photo courtesy of Canuck Creations.

- They are too busy at the moment to be concerned with this.
- They are not in production at the moment.
- They do not have enough staff to warrant a management plan.
- They are not interested in having a management plan.
- They are too small of a company.
- They are possibly interested and will call back (i.e. don't call us, we'll call you).
- The production assistant just takes the waste to the landfill and dumps it.

Judging by the influx of environmentally-based story lines coming to both the big and small screens, it appears that it is impor-

tant to be involved in a project that promotes environmental awareness. However, when it comes to being part of the reality of carrying out the message, the preference is to escape into the imaginary world that has been created in hopes the problem will go away. However, it is not going to go away until everyone accepts responsibility for their actions and chooses to make it go away. Canuck Creations took the first step by choosing to participate.

Problems were not restricted to the film industry. Many environmental organizations possessed only basic information on waste management, did not understand the scope of the project, or would not return phone calls. The information available today is limited not only in quantity but in quality as well. Much of the information about waste management veered in the direction of landfill processes. In addition, the information available was extremely out of date. As for resources about waste management and the film industry together, it simply does not exist. Nevertheless, there is an Animation Waste Management Plan.

An Environmental Audit

An animation company can

be very similar to a regular office as there are large amounts of paper and other stationary being used, however fluctuations in production can vary. This gives an animation company oscillating rates of waste production. Also, smaller companies tend to have their services contracted by larger studios that supply them with the materials needed for the project to maintain uniformity. This changes the composition of their waste with each job.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy reserves the right to enter a business and ask for their last audit results...Penalties for failure to comply can be as extensive as jail time...

Due to the uniqueness of the business, a regular waste audit, consisting of a detailed investigation of the actual wastes produced by a business during a period of a week or month, was not appropriate. One week or one month would not portray an accurate account of the wastes produced over the course of a year. In addition, depending on the type of projects the company is involved in, each year may also be different. Therefore an environmental audit was conducted. This consists of walking through the studio space, asking questions to the staff, and assessing the purchasing records of the company. In Canuck Creations' case, their purchasing records covered a period of one and a half years.

Over the course of the year, visits to the studio were carried out every two to four months to update visual data, the purchasing records were broken down into numerical data, and additional information was sought from

other sources in attempts to piece a management plan together. Despite the fact that there are very limited resources for this type of project at the moment, the bulk of the information needed was in the audit. Canuck Creations is a paper-based business with paper accounting for almost 30% of their supplies. However, it was found that by changing purchasing habits, they could cut their continuously purchased supply numbers in half and curb costs by 26%. For example, the purchase of 66 rolls of scotch tape with plastic dispensers costs Canadian \$143.44, which is more than 66 rolls of scotch tape without plastic dispensers at \$131.62, plus the cost of investing in a couple of communal permanent dispensers at \$4.98 each. This total comes to \$141.58. It may only be a couple of dollars but it is the elimination of plastic dispensers that cannot be recycled that is important. Through reducing the need for scotch tape all together, the costs and wastes will be reduced. In addition, the use of multipurpose tape can eliminate the need for various types of tape, and/or buying tape in bulk prevents excess packaging. Both ideas reduce costs and wastes.

It was found that by changing purchasing habits, they could cut their continuously purchased supply numbers in half and curb costs by 26%.

The Management Plan

Once the wastes were identified and alternatives were found, it was only a matter of organizing a plan. The easiest way



Canuck Creations' clean-up and photocopy area. Paper accounts for almost 30% of the studio's supply costs. Photo courtesy of Canuck Creations.

to construct a management plan is to divide the business and wastes into sections. For Canuck Creations, their plan was divided into four areas: Reception, Animation, Computer/Video, and Kitchenette/Lounge. Then the wastes are grouped by means of tactics to eliminate them. Are they going to be recycled, reused, or reduced? In addition, how does the company plan on carrying out each of these points? It is important for each company to identify their goals in their plan as well. They provide guidance as to how and when the plan should be carried out. Usually management plans have the same goal as the provin-

cial/state legislation. However, goals should be reasonable. For Canuck Creations Incorporated, 50% waste reduction by the year 2000 is an achievable goal.

Changing Our Ways

There are many ways to change our habits without compromising the quality of creativity. In fact, creativity in finding new paths to change can enhance the quality of our work. Imagination is the key to this business and to improving the environment. This can be done with simple acts such as: eliminating note-pads and post-it notes, and using scrap paper and/or white boards instead; changing to mechanical pencils where applicable, and refillable pens (please note that biodegradable pens only degrade out in direct sunlight, not in landfills); doing as much work on the computer as possible before printing; getting a fax/modem and an Internet account to communicate via the modem (most magazines are on-line as well); investing in personalized coffee mugs instead of Styrofoam cups; purchasing sugar in bulk instead of single packets; and utilizing a reusable coffee filter. Buy products that can be reused many times or for a multitude of things. They may cost more now, but they will save more than money in the future. Another solution is to send old art supplies to schools for kids to create their own masterpieces. Children do not care if paintbrushes are not perfect, or if the colors are not the right shade. Trees *are* purple in their world. Non-profit organizations are another sector often looking for donations, which will also guarantee a tax write-off.

More ambitious moves include: leasing equipment such as computers, photocopiers, printers, etc. since old equipment can be returned to the dealer; insisting that art suppliers take back packaging or eliminate it all together; requesting larger companies take back unused supplies at the end of projects; choosing glass and aluminum containers over plastic since plastic is a petroleum-based product and different grades/types make recycling difficult; investing in a composter for food scraps as the soil produced is rich in nutrients that gardens thrive on; inquiring about organic/vegetable-based inks for printers and photocopiers; finding a company that is willing to refill cartridges for printers and photocopiers; and choosing graphite over lead for pencils.

For Canuck Creations Incorporated, 50% waste reduction by the year 2000 is an achievable goal.

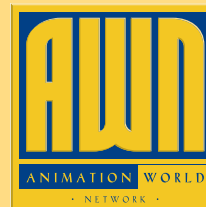
The Future

Often, many of our purchasing decisions are made for today's convenience, without considering the inconvenience it will make tomorrow. Animation is a business that prides itself on the detail of the final product. The same detailed care should go into the decisions regarding the products used to create that final show. It is important to read labels, ask questions, and demand changes. We have to be careful with how we treat the environment as it will come back and haunt us and our children later. We are as much a part of it as it is of us.

Canuck Creations took a bold step forward through the development of their waste management plan. However, there is a long road ahead and they are only one company. The concept of waste management plans in the film industry is a relatively new idea but a needed one. This project has proved that both fields, environment and film, can be difficult to work with, and amalgamating the two is even harder. Yet, in the long run it is worth it and cost-effective. The local Ministry/Department of the Environment can provide more information on waste management planning and legislation. Furthermore, the Earth Communications Office (ECO) is a non-profit organization that promotes environmental awareness through the media. They are always interested in projects that take environmental action in the film industry. We can make a world of difference both on and off the screen. We just have to be willing to take that first step.

Lesli Rynyk recently graduated from the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada earning her Bachelor of Environmental Studies (BES). This project was part of her Senior Honours Thesis combining her interests in media arts and the environment.

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International Theatrical Dubbing: It's More Than Meets the Eye

by Debra K. Chinn

International Theatrical Dubbing has recently been the focus of many major studio "players" here in Los Angeles. With the growing interest in feature films worldwide, American studios are realizing how to capture yet another revenue market and greater box office share by dubbing their feature films into foreign languages.

A well-managed dubbing process ensures that the integrity of the original version is preserved, creating higher standards in the international environment. This not only makes a positive impact on the U.S. films' international release, but also assists in increasing the value of the product by "branding" recognition and cultivating a reputation which is synonymous with quality. In order to achieve a high level of quality, it is necessary to implement a dubbing

without dubbings mandatory voice testing and casting. Voice-over work also includes limited editing, meaning there is minimal synchronization and minimal on-screen or off-screen dialogue checks.

In order to achieve a high level of quality, it is necessary to implement a dubbing process which includes many components.

What Does it Take?

Once the dubbing studio in the international territory receives a Voice Test Kit ("VTK") from the U.S. studio, the voice testing process begins. The VTK contains items such as: dialogue lists, character profiles and synopses,

all of the characters in a film. In some cases, if the film involves a well-known actor, the local territory may have a voice talent already cast for that celebrity. In animation, some studios contract certain actors to play their trademarked characters. No other voice actors can then portray that character in the defined territory.

As soon as the cast is in place and approved by the U.S. studio, the dubbing studio will schedule the work sessions. A script is sent to the dubbing studio even if it is not final, so that the dubbing facility can begin to translate and adapt U.S. slang and terminology to the native tongue. This is not easy! Imagine taking out all of the street talk in a U.S. rap song, re-interpreting it and then translating it into Italian to the rhythm of the music. Once the



Twentieth Century Fox dubbed the animated feature *Anastasia* into 28 languages.

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process which includes many components.

True dubbing "re-creates" all aspects of the original version of the film into a foreign language. It should not be confused with "voice-over work," which has limited parameters. For instance, voice-over work suggests merely reading dialogue from a script

voice casting recommendations, edited voice testing tapes with edited voice samples for each character, and when needed, storyboards, model sheets and size comparison charts, as well as cast lists of the original version's actors with profiles on each of them. The dubbing studio is responsible for auditioning and casting talent for

dubbing studio receives dubbing materials, recording begins. Dubbing materials include: a betacam SP with designated track configurations, a finalized script, a viewing cassette of the final picture, vocal playbacks which are guide tracks to help singers perform vocales, and finally, a 35mm picture and 35mm sound track ele-

ments for the facility to use to perform final mixing. The overall dubbing process of recording, editing and mixing takes approximately six to eight weeks.

True dubbing “re-creates” all aspects of the original version of the film into a foreign language.

Before dubbing takes place however the U.S. studios need to do a little homework in order to make the process complete. Clearly separating music and effects tracks from dialogue tracks is imperative. The music and effects, or M&E, track needs to be clean, in other words, not contain any sounds that may need to be dubbed. For instance, if a song is playing in a scene's background and the singing is in English, we need to think if this needs to be on the M&E track, meaning it will stay, or if it should be on the dialogue track and replaced with a native language. Nothing is worse than marrying a dubbed dialogue track back to the M&E only to hear English! It can also be very costly and time consuming if the original version needs to be re-mixed, and the dubbed version re-done.

The U.S. studio also needs to provide textless titles for the film as well. Each title card needs to be shot blank, without any writing on it, and provided to the dubbing facility. This way, the facility can write the credits in the native language and superimpose them over the blank title cards. Otherwise, the titles would be too confusing to read with both English and the territory's language battling for attention. Another consideration that goes all the way back to the pre-production artists is lim-



FilmLines, the dubbing studio in Russia. Photo courtesy of David Shufutinsky/FilmLines.

iting the amount of signage in the cartoons or animated features. Signs on buildings, placards that people hold and food cartons, are all hot spots for trouble. If drawn into the final cartoon, they cannot be replaced and just remind viewers in other countries that the product was not originally made for them.

Young children in non-English speaking countries are usually limited in their English skills so dubbing has always had a presence in the animation realm.

Dubbing: A Modern Day Must

Dubbing animated features is now becoming the mainstream for major U.S. studios. Some studios have been dubbing animated product for the last 30 years, but have been limited to home video and television releases. The poten-

tial for large audiences for animated feature film product promises widespread attendance and thus, dubbing is becoming a must. Young children in non-English speaking countries are usually limited in their English skills so dubbing has always had a presence in the animation realm. As the world grows smaller, dinner and a movie have become a common family event all over the world. As a result, American movie studios are finding a greater opportunity to increase audience size due to the attendance by both child and parents. Return visits to the theater are also now becoming commonplace because in animation, there is always a hero, heroine and villain, as well as many other funny, colorful characters which children can relate to and want to see...over, and over and over again!

Live-action features such as *Titanic* and *Armageddon* are new

to the dubbing world but are now making their own production and financial niche within the international dubbing circles. International theatrical distribution groups in many countries are now actively participating in assisting major studios with the distribution of both subtitled and dubbed films. Dubbing, rather than subtitling, makes films more appealing to a broader audience, and if marketed correctly, can help turn a pretty penny of profit for the U.S. studio.

Dubbing is often referred to as "foreign post-production" due to its similarities with the domestic post-production process. Dubbing not only involves voice testing and casting of international talent, recording, editing, and mixing, but also, ultimately, shooting an optical soundtrack negative and manufacturing a check print for distribution in the respective dubbing country or territory. Though this foreign post-production process increases the costs of

international distribution, it ensures more "value-added" advantages when a film actually goes out for marketing in a territory. Countries such as France, Italy, Germany and Spain are prime territories for dubbing feature films, not only due to their respective market share in the international distribution community, but also due to the recognition and presence that the internal companies working with U.S. film industry counterparts gain.

In assisting 20th Century Fox with dubbing their first animated feature, *Anastasia* into 28 languages, I had the opportunity to travel to Russia...

Expanding the Need to Dub

In assisting 20th Century Fox with dubbing their first animated feature, *Anastasia* into 28 languages, I had the opportunity

to travel to Russia to help direct the Russian language dub version. Once the voice tests were submitted by a local dubbing studio in Moscow, reviewed and approved by Fox, the dubbing process began in the middle of December on the coldest day in 150 years! In the -41° Celsius, very old, but substantially equipped, dubbing studio, I remember sitting next to the director, finishing up a McDonald's cheeseburger, and working on the direction of the character, Rasputin. Suddenly, I thought, 'Is this one of life's unspoken ironies or what?' I was sitting in a film studio which was originally built and used for propaganda for Lenin. It was Lenin's uprising that caused the downfall of the Romanovs.

In some countries, like Russia, 90% of the feature films, television and home video product are dubbed due to the fact that less than 20% of the population speaks and understands English. Due to the recent social and polit-



A sound engineer using a computer to match tracks at FilmLines, the dubbing studio in Russia. Photo courtesy of David Shufutinsky/FilmLines.

ical events which have occurred in Russia and many of the other C.I.S. territories [the Commonwealth of Independent States, or C.I.S., is the new determination for the Eastern European countries that used to be part of the Soviet Block], these areas are now embracing the "ways of the West," which includes everything from dubbed DVD product to dubbed film features and "sing-along" toys and books.

Once we had to record voice actors in a room that was home to not only the recording studio, but also the accounting department!

Another reason why dubbing is becoming a greater necessity is due to the fact that a new breed of international filmmaker is making a mark in their own countries by emulating, and thereby competing with, the work of many American films and filmmakers.

Being culturally aware is a

must in dubbing. A good dub is based on accurate translation and creative and efficient adaptation, in addition to a good director, sound engineer and mixer. A good facility with newer equipment helps too. Once we had to record voice actors in a room that was home to not only the recording studio, but also the accounting department! Without a wall to separate the two departments, recording had to stop each time accounting wanted to send a fax or received a phone call.

Theatrical dubbing is no longer seeing a "dubbed" movie with amusing lip synchronization and very awkward and compromised voice acting. Its an art, as is creating an original filmed feature version. Lets take it a step further. We produce the entire film all over again, in another language, and ensure that the voices match the original talent, the performances match the characters, and most importantly, if Eddie Murphy in *Dr. Dolittle* says, "I'm so cool," we need to make sure that the audiences from China to the Czech

Republic know, he means he's proud of himself—not freezing of cold.

Note: The on-line version of this article contains four Quicktime movie clips of the title character in the Fox animated feature film *Anastasia* singing songs from the film in English, Portuguese, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Russian, Turkish, Polish and Greek. <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6chinndubbing.html>

Debra K. Chinn is director of Fox International Theatrical Dubbing at 20th Century Fox Film Corporation and handles all international live-action and animation theatrical releases.

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3D MEETS REALITY!

by Bill Fleming

Today, stop-motion effects in classic films like *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* have been replaced with 3D composites. Merging 3D and reality is one of the most challenging aspects of digital effects. I'm sure you've seen this art at its perfection in films

Alien: Resurrection where the 3D aliens are self-luminous when crawling through the dark corridors of the spaceship. They are brightly lit, yet the environment around them is dark. As a result, it completely destroys the believability of the shot.



Blue Sky|VFX created the creature visual effects for *Alien: Resurrection*.
© 1997 Twentieth Century Fox.

such as *Dragon Heart*, *Men in Black* and *Starship Troopers*. In these films the compositing was exceptional. The creatures seemed to be one with the environment. Of course, these are the few films where the composites were a success. The sad fact is that only 1 out of 25 films will do the composites correctly. More often than not the composited characters are over-lit and with the wrong light color—making them stand out like a beacon. One painful example of this problem can be seen in the film

problem is that light is never white! In fact, it's anything but white. You see, the color of light varies depending on the heat of the light, which is rated in Kelvins. For example: sunlight during mid-day has a blue hue to it because it's a very hot light, about 16,000 Kelvins. On the other hand, a candle flame is cool with a Kelvin rating of 3,500, so it has a red hue to it. The closest thing we have to white light would be fluorescent light, which is slightly green in color.

Lighting is the most important aspect of compositing.

Now you're wondering why we don't see these colors in the world around us. Well, we actually do but our eyes compensate for the color shifting of light through a process known as chromatic adaptation. Basically, our eyes attempt to convert all light to white. They are usually very accurate, though there is a 5% margin of error, meaning we will see some evidence of the actual light color in the environment around us. To test this, just look at any object in the far distance, such as mountains, during a sunny day and you'll see a slight blue hue to the colors.

Keeping this in mind, you'll need to determine the actual color of light in the live-action scene so you can properly light your characters so they become part of the

Mastering Composite Lighting

OK, so what's the secret to doing a perfect composite? Well, it's actually not terribly difficult as long as you know the main points of concern when compositing. Let's take a look at the most critical points to consider when compositing 3D effects with live-action.

Light Color

It would seem that a bright white light is most frequently used when doing composite work. The

scene. Of course, direct light color is only one part of the formula. There is another light to consider: indirect (reflected) light.

Indirect light is easy to simulate through the use of point lights in the scene.

Indirect Light Color

In reality, light is reflected off the objects in the environment. This is known as radiosity. This light, as it is reflected off the surface of an object, will take on the color of the surface. Basically, when light is reflected off a surface it will assume the color traits of the surface and the light source combined. The strength in color will lean toward the surface colors. If you have a red wall in a room, the light reflecting off it will be slightly red—not much, but about 5% red. Therefore, if you are compositing a 3D character into that room, you'll need to add the reddish hue to the reflected light sources for the character to blend into the environment properly.

Light color was one of the major faults in the composite work in *Alien Resurrection*. The aliens were in a gray metal passageway,

yet the lights illuminating them were white. The actual color of the light should have been gray. Of course, there was another problem with the light: the intensity.

Light Intensity

Light intensity plays a major role in compositing 3D effects into live-action. As 3D artists we have the tendency to light all of our images directly. The problem is that in reality there are very few direct light sources. For example: outside there is only one direct light source, the sun. All other light is typically reflected, which means it's diffused. Reflected light has far less saturation than direct light.

In the case of the alien creature, the model should have been lit entirely with indirect light so it blended into the passageway. There were no direct lights in the passage. All of the lights were reflected off the metal walls or filtered through the protective covers of the lights. The direct lights heated up the character far too much to blend with the environment around it. Indirect light is easy to simulate through the use of point lights in the scene. A point light is omni-directional so it simu-

lates the volume of indirect light very well. Simply place point lights around the character to simulate the indirect light. Be sure to apply some of the reflected object color to the lights to ensure the effect is accurate.

That does it for the most critical points to consider when compositing 3D and live-action. Now, let's take a look at how the actual compositing process is handled.

Compositing 3D Effects with Live-Action

For the purpose of this discussion, we'll take a look at a single cel of an animation in production at Komodo Studio. The goal of the project is to composite a goblin into video of an actual forest. In addition to the character composite, there are several items added to the scene to turn the forest into a goblin forest. Let's take a look at the steps in creating 3D composites with live-action.

Step 1: Creating the Foreground Models

When doing composite work you are often required to place a character behind an existing object in the scene. This sounds complicated but its actual-



Figure 1.1 Importing the live-action shot into the 3D modeler. © Bill Fleming.

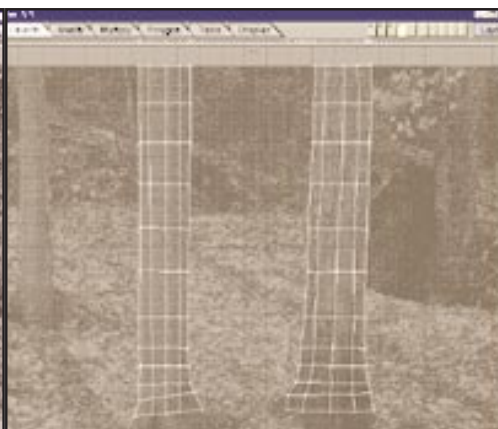


Figure 1.2 Creating the foreground objects. © Bill Fleming.

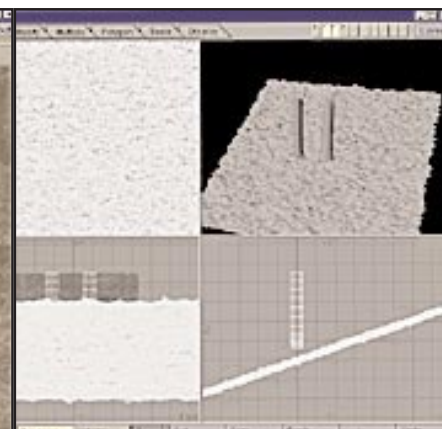


Figure 1.3 Creating the ground plane. © Bill Fleming.

ly very simple. The first thing you need to do is import a frame from the live-action into your modeling program as shown in Figure 1.1

Then you create the objects in the scene that will be in the foreground. In the case of this animation its the two trees in the middle of the image. Using the image as a template, build a basic mesh that takes on the form of the trees. When completed, you'd have something like the image in Figure 1.2.

Of course, for our character to blend into the scene we need a ground plane so it appears as if he's standing on the leaves. Since the leaves are rather chaotic, we need a chaotic ground plane or the surface will be too flat underneath the goblin's feet. To do this, I created an uncomplicated plane with about 100 polygons. Then I jittered the polygons and subdivided them to make a bumpy surface. This process was repeated several times to produce the jagged, yet organic, ground plane shown in Figure 1.3.

Now, when the goblin model is placed on the ground, it will actually sink into the leaves.

You'll also notice the ground plane was rotated to match the perspective of the image. We could have kept the plane parallel but then we would have needed to rotate the camera in the render and that would



Figure 1.4 Positioning the models for the composite image. © Bill Fleming.

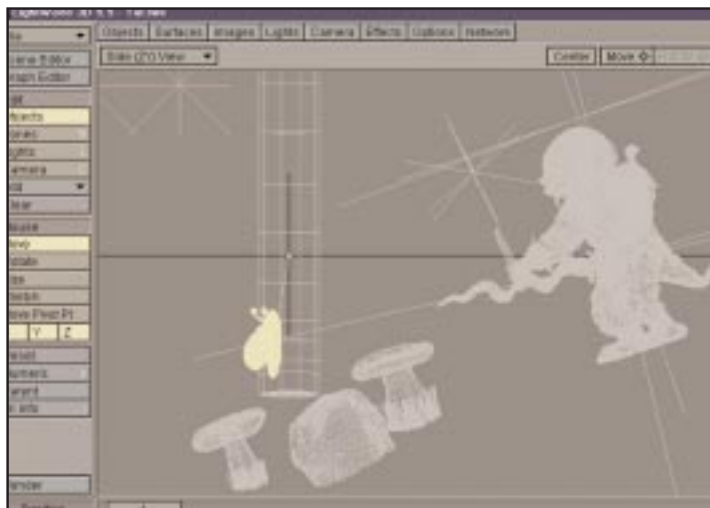


Figure 1.5 Proper rotation of the models for shadow casting. © Bill Fleming.

cause the trees to be out of proportion with the image.

All right, now we're ready to look at Step #2.

For the purpose of this discussion, we'll take a look at a single cel of an animation in production at Komodo Studio.

Step 2: Staging and Surfacing the Scene

The key to an effective composite is to match the surfac-

ing of the source image. This is done through the use of a projection map. A projection map is basically nothing more than the source image projected onto the models from the front. The difference between a projection map and a normal image map is that a projection map covers the whole scene. Basically, the image is projected over the entire scene, so anything with the surface using the projection map will reflect the scene. This is a great tool for compositing.

You need to load the source image into the background of the scene as a template. Then load the models and position them over the elements in the background image as shown in Figure 1.4.

You can see that I've also added the goblin model and the mushrooms and rock, which are part of the scene's

transformation into a goblin world. Figure 1.5 shows how the models are all rotated to be parallel to the ground plane so the shadows drop properly.

Once the models are in place, you need to apply the projection map of the background image to the tree and ground models. Now the last step in the process is the lighting, which we now know to be the most crucial.

Step 3: Lighting the Elements

Like we discussed earlier, lighting is the most important



Figure 1.6 The final composite. © Bill Fleming.



1.7 The original source image before the composite effect.
© Bill Fleming

aspect of compositing. In the case of this scene, we need to place a light above and behind the objects to simulate the sun in the source image. It will take a bit of testing but you want to position the light so the shadows cast by the new elements match the source image.

The next step is to apply the indirect light to the scene so the new elements blend properly. Once again, this takes a bit of experimentation but it's well worth the results. What I did was place five lights in the scene. The first was a direct light to re-create the sunlight behind the models. The second was a direct light in the upper left to add volume light. The shadows were turned off on the light so there wouldn't be conflicting shadows in the scene. The third was a direct light in the upper right for the same purpose. An additional point light, with no shadows, was added near the middle of the trees to light them up. Finally, a light was added to the character to pull him off the background. You will almost always need character lights so

they don't overshadow themselves—particularly when they are back-lit.

The results of the compositing effort are shown in Figure 1.6. As you can see, both the goblin and the new elements are convincingly blended with the live-action shot. We can now see that our little goblin friend Grumpy is tracking a snail who is destined to become soup for dinner.

As you can see, both the goblin and the new elements are convincingly blended with the live-action shot.

Pulling It Together

While compositing 3D effects with live-action can be a bit of work, it's really not terribly difficult as long as you pay close attention to the lighting in the shot and take the time to add the elements that make the composite really convincing. The ground plane that simulated the leaves was very effective at drawing the 3D objects into the scene. Nothing is

more artificial than a straight seam between objects. The jagged ground plane literally wrapped the leaves around the composited objects. Grumpy's feet are nearly buried in them.

Put a little attention to detail into your composites and you'll soon be showing those Hollywood "big guys" how it is done!

Bill Fleming is president of Komodo Studio, a 3D studio specializing in photorealism. He is the author of many 3D books, including the 3D Photorealism Toolkit, published by John Wiley & Sons. He also serves as editor in chief of Serious 3D magazine, a 3D magazine featuring nothing but intermediate/advanced tutorials for artists interested in taking their 3D graphics to the next level.

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Here's A How de do Diary: June

by Barry Purves

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



Barry Purves

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...

June 1st - June 5th

Weeks do not come more traumatic than this one. After hearing *The Last Post* played by a young bugler, as my father's coffin was lowered into the ground, I have nothing left.

I did come into work on

Each department, rightly, assumes theirs is the most important department, but in practice, it can't work like that.

the Friday, and wished I hadn't. At the moment the film looks very wobbly, with people not thinking clearly and a lot of mistakes being made—well, not mistakes so much as not being in top gear.

The pressure really is on, and people aren't thinking clearly, myself included. There is so much to think about. Each department, rightly, assumes theirs is the most important department, but in practice, it can't work like that. I'm afraid people will just have to

wait their turn.

What I need now, is another holiday. I would love to be able to walk into the studio and just start filming. I don't want to know that the lens does not fit the camera. Nor do I want to know that every title we have suggested has been rejected—at this late stage, this is ridiculous.

June 8th

We moved into the new studio today. All very exciting. It was empty at nine and full of the detritus of filming by six. A real transformation. To see all that equipment constantly amazes me—so much stuff for such a small film.

The people in the neighboring studios and offices thought the idea of a film going on was all very glamorous, and offered their services! When I told them it was animation, they all said, "Oh, like Wallace and Gromit." Oh well, at least they know Gilbert and Sullivan.

The week ahead is daunting. How can we get ready in time? Of course, there is no chance of a rehearsal for me. I get

the puppets and I start.

Jean-Marc, the cameraman, arrived from Paris. I don't think the language will be a problem. Our passion for work will get us through; though, of course, Gilbert and Sullivan is a little of an unknown quantity.

I suppose animation is expensive—full stop!

June 9th

The place is now looking like a functional studio, and I'm not even allowing the lack of a camera or puppets to put me off. They will be here in time. We've still so much to do, but most of the sets and props have arrived and are sitting patiently, giving the appearance of something about to happen.

I'm finally getting the barsheets for the first episode (again, cutting it close). I realized how complex this film is—can we do it? There will only be four of us actually involved in the shooting (Jean-Marc—the cameraman, Mark—the production manager, Karen—my P.A. and myself), with the occasional work experience person.

We have a tough four months ahead. Actors always camp it up, talking about facing Everest every performance. I do understand.

Had a great chat to Michael Curry, who was responsible for most of the animation in the Broadway *Lion King*. We are ten-

tatively involved in a project. How I would love to work with him, but this is not the ideal project.

I was alarmed at my bank balance. Surely the director shouldn't have to be overdrawn. The cash flow is very wrong here.

Sadly, yet another very close tragedy hits our family. Enough is enough. As I was receiving condolence phone calls, so I am making them. A ghastly situation.

Actors always camp it up, talking about facing Everest every performance. I do understand.

June 10th

Well, we have a camera and I've seen it turning over, so that's exciting. Plus, a few lights have been pointed at D'oyly Carte's head, and it shines wonderfully. No complete puppets yet, but I saw a painted D'oyly Carte, minus his hands. He does look as if he has been troubled with sleepless nights. A loose strand of hair makes an enormous difference.

Now we are getting near, it is clear we are seriously understaffed and under-financed. The constant answer of, "We can't afford it, Barry," is frustrating. To get so near a huge film but to have to scrimp on everything is difficult. Mind you, this is a relatively large budget. I suppose animation is expensive—full stop!

I'm a little worried about the organization of this film. Its happening in an organic way. I could do with a bit more solid planning.

What's this World Cup thing...and what were those bizarre bumble bees doing?

June 11th

Carte arrived and looks splendid! He's currently asleep in bed and that's the last rest he'll have for four months. I have to send him back before the big day as there's a slight fault with his complex mouth. All the various levers for the lip movements also cause the teeth to move and I don't fancy Carte hitting a high C with quivering lips and teeth.

A few tantrums and moods on the set today, reflecting the Victorians (though I still don't know who's playing which role). It's understandable I suppose as we all have had so much to think about this week, setting up a working studio and sometimes communication gets forgotten.

Karen's little Bethany came in singing, "to fit the bit of a wit of a chit and that's the long and the short of it" - "chit" though gets changed into something else. Help!!! I'm corrupting a minor.

June 12th

Twenty-two years ago I wrote a final thesis at Manchester University entitled, "Gilbert and Sullivan in Performance." Now here I am, only 300 yards from the same university building, making a film about Gilbert and Sullivan. It's ironic that I've been round the world and end up where I started.

My cousin Judy's funeral this morning was quite disturbing, but like my father's last week, everyone talked about all the good she achieved and how that lives on. I suppose this is what my film is about. The men may have gone but the joy and love of life in their music and words live on. It's a good way to be remembered. When I go I will really not leave any descendants, so I have to hope my small, rather insignificant

films become some sort of memorial.

The puppets finally arrived tonight and they are splendid—but I'll have to be so careful to keep them clean. Their white bits are dazzling. Also the lighting on the head is going to make them very rich and opulent. I know people associate animation with brightness and color. Not in my films!!! I love shadow and rich texture. It is looking good, but we still do not have all our necessary equipment. Why not? Our starting date has been etched in stone for four months.

June 14th

Jean-Marc and I worked all day in the studio, and Mark was in the office. We are nearly there and it looks ravishing. Jean-Marc and I are very excited, but of course, I've got final night nerves. We would have to start with such a complex long shot! I'll be happy if we get started tomorrow.

But have I thought of everything?

Please let this go well!

It was that day when I realized that for better or worse, I can never make the film that is in my head.

June 15th

A bunch of "Good luck on your first day" flowers from Sue, (the director I trained up), got the day off to a good start. Very kind of her. She understands how important today is.

With one turning up the pressure a bit, we managed to start at 1:30. We had a false start unfortunately. Having to do all the camera moves, light transition and

so on manually, really tests the concentration and coordination. That takes all my mind—not much left for animation. However, we got 16.5 seconds done of this 33-second shot. It's hard to see what it was like as the video image is so dark; a working light would be another thing to forget. Nor was the video able to play back the music (a bit like asking a ballerina to imagine the orchestra as she dances), so...all in all, it was a strain, but I think D'Oyly Carte was thrashing about on the bed all right. A bit too much thrashing perhaps.

Whilst all this is going on the financial saga behind the scenes continues to be an embarrassment.



June 16th

Too knackered to write much, after a truly epic day. G and S are now here and look wonderful, though I've found them difficult. I've found everything difficult. It was that day when I realized that for better or worse, I can never make the film that is in my head. Schedules, budgets, lack of equipment all see to that, but ultimately, it is my fault. I really am not the accomplished animator I am in my imagination. So much compromise: you don't always get what you want, but you can get what you need.

June 17th

A wasted morning trying to

track down the only Steenbeck in Manchester—there's a sign of the times. Anyway, the rushes looked great, though we were unable to see them with the music. I think the story comes across! The ani-

or let Jean-Marc tinker with the lighting, but the director in me is continually having to crack on at an alarming speed. It is a shame to have to make a race out of this—I must not let that be the important

The tableaux scene from Episode One: *HMS Pinafore* with Gilbert, Sullivan and D'Oyly Carte dressed as characters from the Opera. Image courtesy of Barry Purves.

mation sadly is somewhat rough. It's clear I'm being spread a little thin. It does have energy though.

I've still not settled into the puppets yet—there's been no rehearsal time at all.

Such pressure.

It's clear I'm being spread a little thin.

June 18th

There is such a conflict having to wear both a director's hat and an animator's hat. I want to take my time over the animation,

issue. I feel that I have failed today as we have only done eight seconds with all three puppets singing and dancing. Under any circumstance that is pretty good going. I am distinctly hampered by not being able to animate to the music and singing. I have barsheets, but I need the shot to build up with the music, as I do it. Some of the animation was distinctly underpowered, when I tried to synch it up with a tape recorder. All this is so primitive. Poor Jean-Marc is suffering without an assistant; just someone to tidy up the miles of cables and glue everything down would save

so much time. However, in spite of everything, we have 44 seconds of film this week, and it charges along. Carte started to sing today in a soprano voice—will the audience accept that, especially as he is singing tenor in a minute? Hopefully, once people work out what is happening, they'll come along for the ride.

What a big world outside...

June 19th

A bit of a downer today—too much doubt. I've spent all these years trying to develop and be sophisticated. Sadly, the mechanics of animation get in the way. Perhaps that is part of animation: surmounting the technical side and getting some expression out of lumps of brass and cloth.

I had to mark some exam papers for the University, as if I had free time. One lady said that film was the medium most free of constriction. From where I'm standing, I could not agree less.

I'm sure that even *Citizen Kane* did not quite match Welles' vision.

June 22nd

The trauma of yesterday still lingered a bit this morning and I was a little tetchy. Amanda, my sister, and I had cleared Ma and Pa's house, and packed away generations of memories into a small van. We then had the sad task of clearing all the flowers off the grave and replanting it. What a sight we looked. Leaving the house was shutting an enormous emotional door.

I feel that I have failed today as we have only done eight seconds with all three puppets singing and dancing.

Understandably, I was less than sparkly this morning, but the three puppets got into their stride, and were quite jolly. I was a little impatient with Jean-Marc for taking so long to re-light in between shots, but he's not wasting time. It's time, of which we are so short. I was not able to stop shooting to go to see the rushes. I can't wait to see it all cut together. We now have turned a minute.

Clare Kitson called and the saga of the titles continues - "Beyond the Pinafore," "Modified Rapture," and "Cultivated; Celebrated; Underrated" are the favorites now. They don't exactly trip off the tongue.

A fax from Pixar, asking if I'd be interested in some teaching there. Yes, sirree!!! That's quite a thrill to be asked. I can feel myself getting nearer and nearer to computers.

Read Barry's previous monthly diaries in *Animation World Magazine*, starting with the June, 1998 issue.

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.

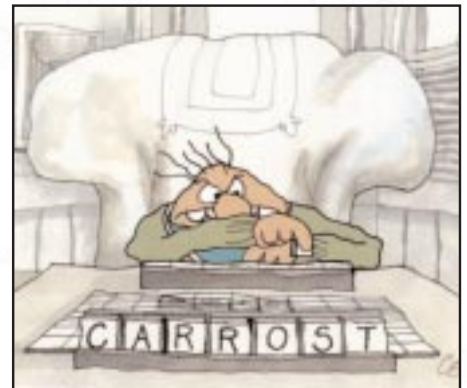
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Roots: An Experiment in Images and Music

by Bärbel Neubauer

Editor's Note: Roots is a metamorphoses of color and form which is painted, drawn and stamped directly on blank film and corresponds to rhythm and music. The main symbols of the film are the sun and sun wheels. The film has been included in numerous festivals and won "Best Abstract Film" at Zagreb in 1996. Bärbel Neubauer now describes her creative process when producing her animated works of art.



Roots. © Bärbel Neubauer

ing colors, black ink, and OH pen markers, as well as tiny stencils with stamp color, which I make myself from rubber.

When I started to make this film, I had some of the main images in my mind. I started by

painting without having a concrete plan. I had composed some elements of the music on the computer so there was a rough structure. From there, both music and images were then developed in unison.

Both music and images then developed from there in unison.

When I started to make this film I had some of the main images in my mind.

"For the jury this is a universal work of art. If you go with the music, the images also work. The film is a very free improvisation of image and music. It causes associations and has the ideal length. What was first: the music or the film? It is good to hear, that both developed in parallel." - Filmbewertungsstelle Wiesbaden, 1996

Tools and Preparing

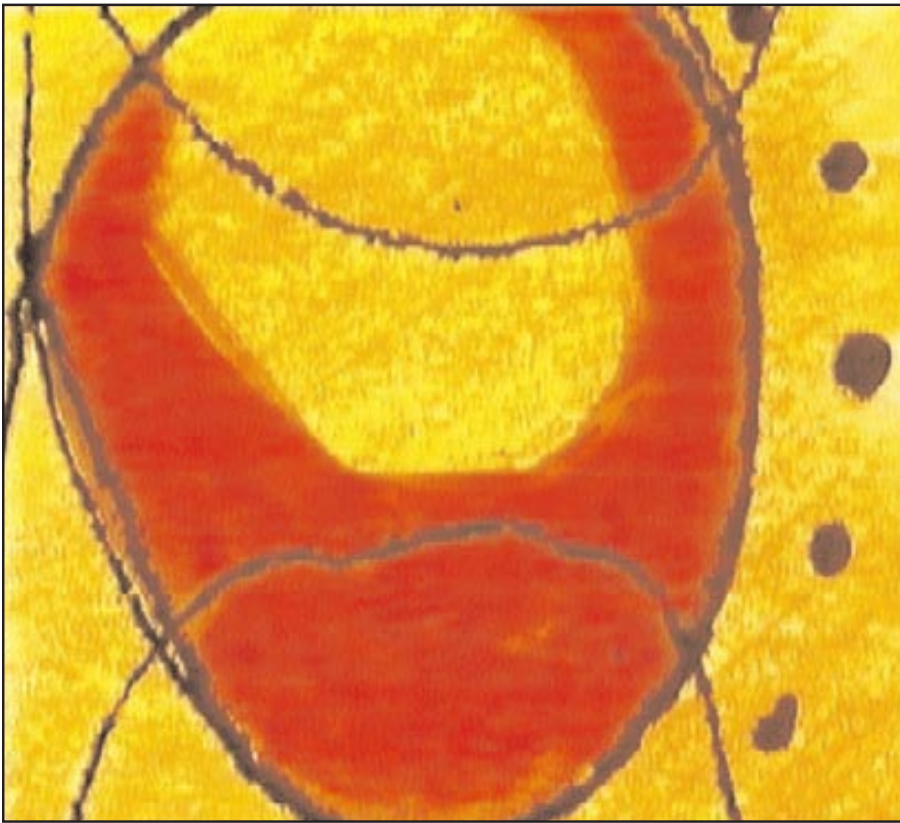
Roots is just one of my films that I create by painting and stamping ink directly on blank film. For *Roots*, I used photo-retouch-

The Production

Using this technique of painting on blank film I can work as I go along: every image leads to the next, every sequence to the next. The colors and forms go to the sound; the music to the



Roots. © Bärbel Neubauer.



Roots. © Bärbel Neubauer.

images. If I have enough time to work constantly on a film, it will take about three to four months to paint a four-minute film. So, if it is an abstract film, there is enough

time to concentrate, in a meditative way, on the subject, feelings and associations.

It is always an experiment, because during this time I realize what I am looking for. There exists no repetition of another film. The experiment takes place with the material and the movement. Images and colors are the same as numbers and keys of music. Because of this connection between images and music, I have truly enjoyed the technique of making hand-crafted films over the last



Roots. © Bärbel Neubauer.

few years. Knowing much more about film than music in 1990, the images helped me to learn about the sounds.

The experiment takes place with the material and the movement.

My Meaning

While painting *Roots* I concentrated on the sun. I chose the title because the sun is the root of life, movement and vitality. Also the graphic look of the word - the two "o's" being two suns - fitted into my associations. Most of the film is designed in bright and warm colors, like daylight. At the beginning of the last third, however, there is a (soft) break, and darker passages introduce the final sequence of metamorphoses. I painted the film as it developed. There are no cuts, and every image is used only one time.

Note: The on-line version of this review includes a Quicktime movie of *Roots* by Bärbel Neubauer: <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6neubauer-roots.html>

Visit the AWN Vault for distribution information on *Roots* and Bärbel Neubauer's complete filmography: <http://www.awn.com>.

Bärbel Neubauer is an independent filmmaker based in München, Germany.

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Comic-Con: Where Comics Are King



by Pete Nicholls

In a city not so far away...

The biggest comic book industry convention in the country brought industry professionals, as well as fans, from all over the world to San Diego to check out the latest and greatest. All of the comics industry's biggest names were at Comic-Con International in San Diego held from August 13-16, 1998. Marvel, DC and slews of others were all there publicizing their own projects and scoping out their competition. More than 600 exhibitors made up of not just comic companies, but also toy and T-shirt companies and smaller collectible shops, filled the massive, futuristic convention center. One related industry, however, was somewhat lacking in presence and that was animation.

This year there were comparatively few exhibitors representing the animation industry...

Then and Now

In past years, various animation studios and networks have used Comic-Con International as a marketing tool. Two years ago, Cartoon Network set up a large, cube-shaped, walk-in booth complete with interior ramps that led attendees past walls covered with mounted television sets and character and prop designs. The

designs were from one of the Cartoon Network's latest shows, *Jonny Quest*. The television sets ran episodes from another one of the network's new programs, *Dexter's Laboratory*. This was the Cartoon Network's way of really getting attention from fans and competition alike.

This year there were comparatively few exhibitors representing the animation industry that actually set up booths where one could leisurely stop by, ask questions and learn more. HBO Animation was there, along with Hash Inc., Animevillage.com and a few others. Hash was showcasing their new, and quite impressive, 3-D animation software *Animation:Master* with a live demo on a PC. Animevillage.com had a rather large, walk-in booth that, although not as big or elaborate as Cartoon Network's "Quest Cube," was quite grand nonetheless. There were also exhibitors like DC and Bongo Comics that are

somewhat involved with animation, but nonetheless, did not really emphasize their involvement in producing it. Sure, DC's huge video wall presented animation, but that has been their token gimmick for the past few years.

Sure, DC's huge video wall presented animation, but that has been their token gimmick for the past few years.

A Real Reason to Go

On the other hand, there were many animation screenings and panel discussions in the conference rooms upstairs. On Friday, *Mulan's* George Takei and director Tony Bancroft answered questions about the movie in an informative panel discussion. Later in the weekend, there were also discussions regarding animation, like: how and why blockbuster movies end up as cartoons on TV, how the character of Superman is reinterpreted for each type of media he is produced in, and how to create cartoons that appeal to both adults and children.

There were a few screenings featuring previews of the new *Voltron*, *Speed Racer 2000*, *War Planets*, Fox Kids' Fall line-up, and Bill Plympton's movie, *I Married a Strange Person*. Also featured was a popular voice-over actors workshop. On Satur-



The San Diego Convention Center was the hub of comic activity. Photo courtesy of the San Diego Convention Center.



The bustling showroom floor at Comic-Con '98. Photo courtesy of Pete Nicholls.

day, Cartoon Network screened a reel of cartoons produced by the network that have never made it to broadcast. This was a big hit with fans and was one of the events that made the panel discussions and screenings really worthwhile. Professional storyboard artist Ira Sherak explained that he enjoys the panel discussions more than the exhibition hall, stating that without the panel discussions and screenings, Comic-Con International would be "just a big toy convention."



Costumed characters were everywhere!
Photo courtesy of Pete Nicholls.

Platinum Studios' chairman, Scott Rosenberg, who was the main thrust behind the creation of the successful film and cartoon series *Men In Black*, has been traveling to San Diego for Comic-Con for 23 years. He says that as a professional and a fan it's a trip he enjoys making, citing that it's a good place to get a feel for everything that's going on in the industry. His associate and Platinum Studios' vice president of production, Gregory Noveck, explained that it's a great place to talk to the people that are creating future media and to "see what's going on inside their heads."

On the other hand, there were many animation screenings and panel discussions in the conference rooms upstairs.

But in the End...

The convention organizers are aware of animation's draw. They used images of Bart Simpson on their banners advertising the convention in downtown San Diego. It seems, however, that the animation industry doesn't quite realize how many more fans and professionals would attend the convention if animation was bet-

ter represented. Independent comic artist and first time Comic-Con attendee, Stew Noack felt that, "It would be a plus if there were more animation."

In previous years, it seemed as though the convention was getting smaller, and a bit less successful in bringing fans and professionals together. Perhaps this is partly the comic industry's fault, but this year the convention triumphantly showed off the new and hopeful within the comic book industry. The animation industry, however, in many ways, left itself out in the cold

This is Pete Nicholls' fifth consecutive trip to Comic-Con International. He has been collecting comic books and watching cartoons since the early Seventies. Since then, he has written cartoons for Hanna-Barbera and has an animated kids series in development at Wild Brain Studios.

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

Anima Mundi: The Audience is Key

by Edmundo Barreiros

Imagine a festival with no empty seats...

This is the most predominant characteristic of Anima Mundi, the only animation festival in Latin America. In its sixth edition, it couldn't be any other way. The audience participation was even better than in previous years. Plus, for the first time, all of the exhibits were also taken to São Paulo, the largest city in Brazil. The events' burgeoning success was noted by the growing international interest which was noticeable in the movie and video presentations. "This year we have more and better films, and the spontaneous participation has increased due to the growing prestige of the festival. With each festival more people are getting in touch with us, willing to participate," said Brazilian animator Marcos Magalhães, Cannes award winner and one of the directors of Anima Mundi.

Everyone Participates

More than 20,000 people passed through two of the most important cultural centers in downtown Rio de Janeiro, either to watch films and videos or to participate in one of the many ongoing workshops, which introduce the public to basic animation techniques. "One of the best things in this festival is its setting. In the same space there are many art forms: animation, fine arts and theater. For me, who likes to bring other forms of art into animation,

it sounds perfect," said New Zealand-born animator Erica Russel, one of 1998's guests of honor.

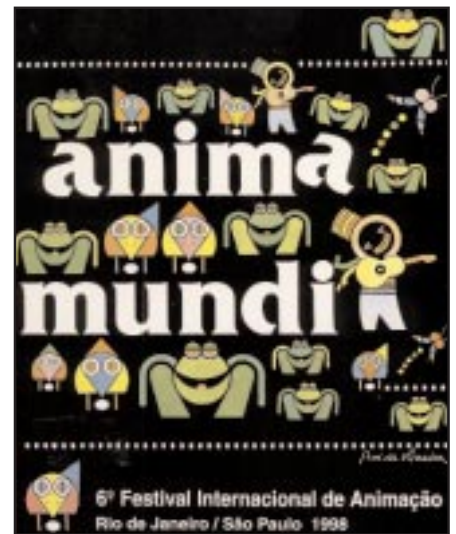
Hours before the day's tickets start to be sold, long lines form at the doors of the two cultural centers.

The amount of people attending screenings is really one of the highlights of this festival. "It's enthusiastic," agreed American animator Marv Newland, another guest of honor at this year's Anima Mundi. Hours before the days tickets start to be sold, long lines form at the doors of the two cultural centers. Most of the attending public are teenagers, who hang around the festival all day long, watching every film they can and joining in the open workshops.

From what I've seen, there seems to be a great future for animation in Brazil. - Ray Aragon

A Bright Brazilian Future

The success of these workshops is so great that this year a special one, dedicated exclusively to children under eight, was created. The result was a fantastic, entertaining and educational experience that will be repeated next year. However, there were activities dedicated to a more specialized audience as well. Each year artists come to Brazil to share



their experiences in special courses held for aspiring animators. This year's guest was Ray Aragon, who gave lectures on animation design. "Everybody is interested and participates. From what I've seen, there seems to be a great future for animation in Brazil," he said.

The results of Anima Mundi's five previous years of exhibits and workshops have started to appear at this year's festival. Many Brazilian films and a special video exhibit of local artists' productions have shown that the quality of work, in commercial animation, by young independent artists, and by Brazilians employed at some of the world's most important animation studios, will soon arrive. "A couple of the Brazilian films in this special exhibit are very good," said Erica Russel, who is interested in discovering more about Brazilian animation and other aspects of the country's culture. The growth of local production was recognized with the cre-

ation of a special prize for films made in Brazil. The audience in Rio and São Paulo was responsible for choosing one single title to win this new award. The winner was the lyrical *O Espantalho* (*Scarecrow*), by Alê Abreu, a beautiful love story between a girl and a scarecrow.

I know festivals from all over the world, but the ambiance of this one is great. - Georges Lacroix

A Lot of Local Color

The local sights and quality of professionals at Anima Mundi had been experienced before by Georges Lacroix, Frances 3D animation pioneer. This year marked his third trip to Brazil; each visit was to give lectures and workshops at festivals and large communications companies. His first visit to Anima Mundi in Rio left Lacroix with very good impressions of the event. "I know festivals from all over the world, but the ambiance of this one is great," he observed.

The charms of Rio de Janeiro are also one of the events special attractions. The festival



New this year was the workshop for children ages two to eight. Photo courtesy of Anima Mundi.

takes place in the district called the Cultural Corridor, a group of streets downtown with well preserved architecture of the XVII to XIX centuries. Beaches, of course, are also a reason to make animators from all over the world accept an invitation to travel way down South to Anima Mundi—especially if the artist is a surfer, like Marv Newland. "I was going to bring down my longboard, but the organization has rented one for me and I will use it on my first free day to ride some waves at a beach called Prainha, an ecological reserve," he said in the Animated Chat after his lecture and presentation of his films, making for one of the best moments at the festival, and surely its funniest night.

After two weeks of living and breathing animation, the public in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo

had to say good-bye to the festival until August 1999. Before that though, they chose the winners of Anima Mundi 1998. In a move different from other festivals, the winners are not chosen by a jury, but rather by the audience. This democratic solution honored the U.S. short *Geri's Game* by Jan Pinkava, and *Una Nit*, by Spaniard Jordi Moragues, as the best productions in film and computer graphics, both in Rio and São Paulo. The Best Film for Children prize, however, was different in the two cities. Rio chose German *Es Wird Regen Geben* (*Looks Like Rain*), by Benedikt Niemann, and São Paulo chose the Canadian *Duel*, by Pavel Koutsky. All four were masterpieces that have left strong impressions in the minds of Brazilian animation fans. These memories will last until next year, when the two cities will again, host Anima Mundi; an event that has become an important part in the cultural life of the two most important Brazilian cities.



Edmundo Barreiros is a journalist born and based in Rio de Janeiro. He writes about animation,

comics and pop music for major newspapers and magazines in Brazil. He has been the text editor of the Anima Mundi catalogue since 1997. Most importantly, he looks much better in person than in the funny portraits he sends to Animation World Magazine.

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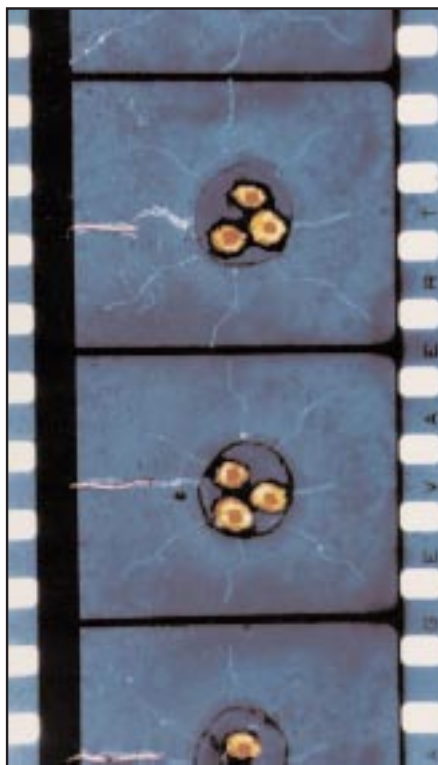


The Best Brazilian Film award winner, *O Espantalho* (*The Scarecrow*), by Alê Abreu. Photo courtesy of Anima

The Film Strip Tells All

by William Moritz

Len Lye and Norman McLaren made such an impression with their abstract films painted and scratched directly onto film that when some other cameraless film begins to screen at a festival one often hears several disgruntled voices saying, "McLaren and Lye already did this"—as if nothing new could be done with the technique. Drawing or scratching directly onto film strips is just a technical means, and nobody would think of saying, "Painting on cels? That's already been done, so I won't watch this new film..." Several people like, the Italian brothers Arnaldo Ginna and Bruno Corra, the German Hans Stollenberg and the Belgian Henri Storck, painted abstractions on film before Lye and McLaren, but these films do not survive for us to see or judge. Films like Lye's *Colour Box* and *Free Radicals* or McLaren and Evelyn Lambart's *Begone Dull Care* are superb masterpieces that one can see over and over, and remember fondly. Plus, the tradition of direct abstract film continues: the great Basque painter Jose Antonio Sistiaga made a feature-length direct abstract film, *Ere Erera Baleibu Icik Subua Aruaren*, released in 1970, while Lye and McLaren were still alive. Believe it or not, all 75 minutes of it are fascinating, with a cumulative satisfaction. Sistiaga's 1989 7-minute *Impressions In The High Atmosphere* is a breathtaking masterpiece. A central circle, stable except for its fluctuating enamel-



Linear Dreams. © Richard Reeves.

like textures, is surrounded by restless, swirling currents. His 1991 14-minute *Nocturne* is again a deeply moving, and very beautiful, film.

**McLaren didn't do everything
that can be done with the
direct film...**

Two Additions to the Tradition

Two younger filmmakers have also devoted themselves to making abstract films directly on the filmstrip: Richard Reeves in Canada and Bärbel Neubauer in Austria and Germany. Their fine

work demands special attention both for its excellent craftsmanship and its beauty. Richard Reeves had made five short works before the current *Linear Dreams*. The last of these, the 1994 one-minute *Zig Zag*, shows not only the fine sense of rhythm and design necessary for the composition of visual music, but also a nice sense of wit: an abstract figure is buffeted back and forth between the geometric swings.

Richard Reeves' Evocative Imagery

Linear Dreams, at seven minutes, has an epic sweep. It begins with a pulsating sound like a heartbeat and images of a throbbing red circle with nervous, scratched lines touching it from the sides, as if they were electric or nervous impulses that were feeding it vital energy. In rhythmic bursts we see a rich variety of textures and mandala-like circular configurations turning in counterpoint to linear formations. Occasionally, we catch almost subliminal glimpses of strange creatures, perhaps the totem animals of a shaman's visions. Toward the end, the abstract mandalas begin to yield to images of mountains, single at first, then moving across a long range of peaks, again suggesting a shaman's flight. However, the "energy" mandala reappears at the very end for a neat closure.

The sound, also hand-drawn by Reeves, consists of very

beautiful visual images ranging from simple conglomerations of circles and triangles to elaborate structures like peacock feathers, snake skin, or spotted hides of exotic animals. Occasionally these drawn sounds were processed through regular electronic sound equipment to give them an echo or reverberation, which works very well with the fast-paced, evocative imagery.

Reeves worked for three years on *Linear Dreams*, from 1994 until early 1997, using a variety of techniques, including scratching, painting in layers, and airbrushing. All the work was well worth it. The film is fine, and, like good pieces of music, bears seeing often, numerous times, as each viewing yields new surprises and fresh perceptions.



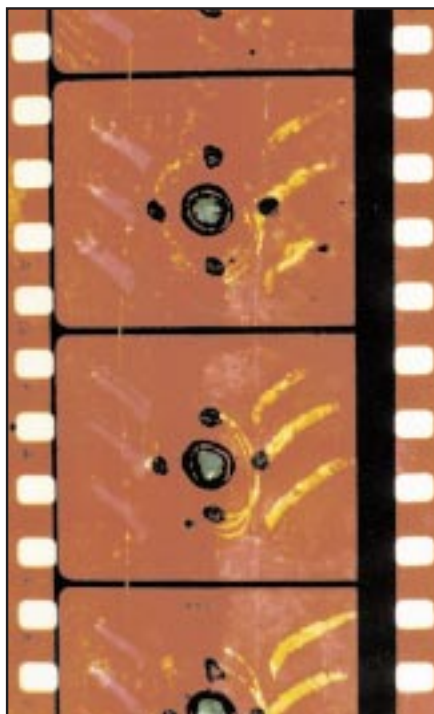
Richard Reeves working on *Linear Dreams*.
Photo courtesy of Darlene Amendt.

Bärbel's Lovely Abstractions

Bärbel Neubauer made some 20 representational short films in the 1980s. Her lovely 1993 *Saturday Afternoon* evokes the mood of a pleasant holiday by largely abstract images, with occasional glimpses of a staircase, a window, or other objects woven into the abstract textures as transformations, so that a cluster of dots fly away as birds.

The 1994 *Algorithms* is wholly abstract, and the animation exceptionally fine, with lush textures, sometimes like leaf patterns or butterfly wings, sometimes plain, sometimes with colors, but almost always layered, with complex figures and motions on more than one level at the same time. In one sequence, a three-dimensional triangle (drawn with thickness) rotates complete turns while other elements and background textures all perform

movements and changes of their own—an astonishing accomplishment for imagery drawn and painted directly on film. The sense



Linear Dreams. © Richard Reeves.

of color, by the way, is also exquisite, with an excellent balance of delicate shades and robust hues on the various forms and background textures.

The 1996 *Roots* continues in the same vein as *Algorithms* but the complexity of layering is miraculously even more intricate. A variety of figures—circles with spokes, stars, clusters of lines, floral motifs—move at the same time (up to 20 figures at once) in intersecting trajectories, passing behind and in front of each other. At one moment a ball with a reflection on it turns completely around while the complicated movement continues behind it.

For all of these abstract direct films, Neubauer composes and performs her own music: something unique in the annals of absolute film (except, perhaps for some of the middle Jordan Belson films). She combines a mixture of rhythmic elements that she can prerecord on electronic samples with live performance on clarinet and other instruments. These compositions have a very personal sound, casual and relaxed, and well-fitted to the mood profile of

Reeves worked for three years on *Linear Dreams*...using a variety of techniques, including scratching, painting in layers, and airbrushing.

the visual imagery.

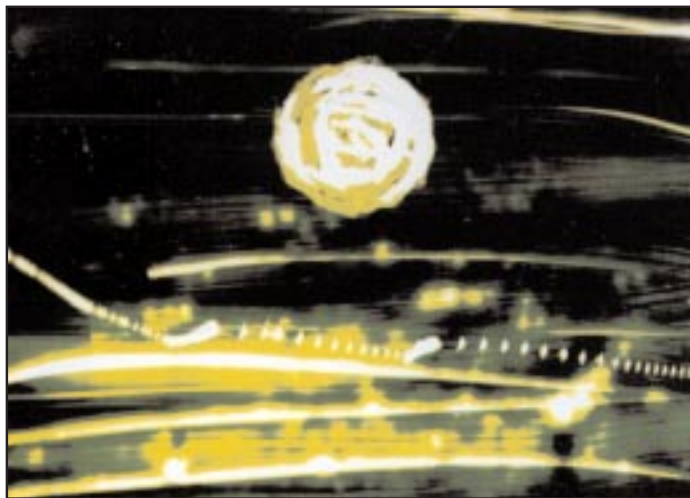
Moonlight and Craft

Neubauer's latest work, *Moonlight*, has taken a new technical tack: it is scratched into black film stock rather than painted on clear film stock. One is reminded immediately of Len Lye, who

made a similar change from early painted films to the late black-and-white scratched masterpieces such as *Free Radicals*. I am happy to report that the analogy holds parallel in that *Moonlight* has that same magical quality that *Free Radicals* does, although it is fundamentally quite different and wholly original. Stan Brakhage said that his film *Mothlight* showed the world as a moth might see it, but I always felt

Neubauer's *Moonlight*...does have some authentic flavor of how a night creature might see its world.

it was a little bit more frenetic than the moths I knew. Neubauer's *Moonlight*, however, does have some authentic flavor of how a night creature might see its world.



Moonlight. © Bärbel Neubauer.

Scratched into black emulsion, so that little edges of green and gold remain around some things, we seem to move through grasses and leaves, see stars, and the reflection of the moon mirrored in a pool of water. Intricate beaded strands, as if dewdrops clung to a spider web, move past little blossoms and branches. A nocturne to reckon with.

One of the other miracles of *Moonlight* in particular, and all Neubauer's abstract films: she does

not use any editing. All of the effects, the layerings and the precision movements, are rendered directly onto the same filmstrip, frame by frame, with no chance for mistakes. This is a world away from McLaren who, at the National Film Board of Canada, could animate in short pieces of film, painting in black on clear leader, then have the scenes colored by optical printing and edited so that only the good parts were used. Not that McLaren

Fortunately, we have new brilliant artists like Reeves and Neubauer to carry on in fresh territory

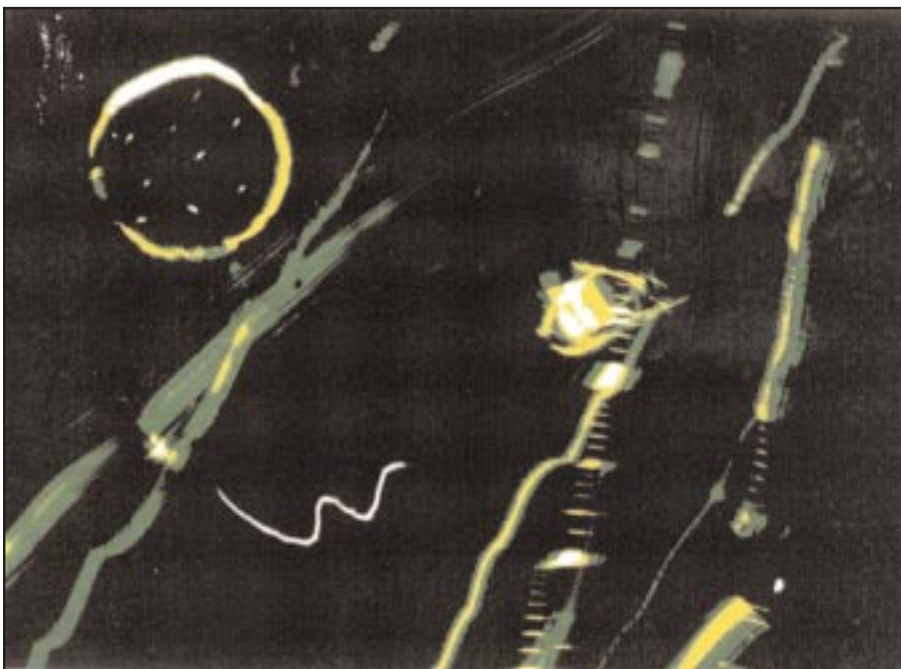
wasn't an excellent artist who couldn't do very precise work—quite the opposite. However, he didn't do everything that can be done with the direct film, and fortunately, we have new brilliant artists like Reeves and Neubauer to carry on in fresh territory.

Note: The on-line version of this review includes Quicktime movies of *Linear Dreams* by Richard Reeves and *Moonlight* by Bärbel Neubauer:

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.6/3.6pages/3.6moritzfilms.html>.

William Moritz teaches film and animation history at the California Institute of the Arts.

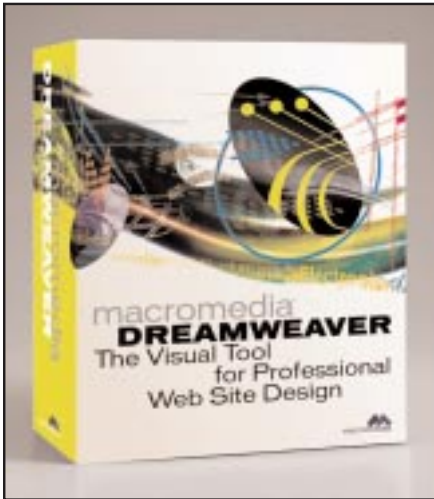
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Moonlight. © Bärbel Neubauer.

Dreamweaver is Pretty Darn Dreamy

by Dan Sarto



© Macromedia.

I haven't used every single new web authoring tool on the market, and chances are I never will. I'm much too busy cheating at *Duke Nukem*. So, I honestly can't say that Macromedia's Dreamweaver version 1.2 is better than every other such program on the market. What I can say is that since I began using this product, I am hard pressed to find a reason why I would ever need or want to switch to another web page development program.

The graphical user interface displays the right amount of information without being cumbersome, unwieldy or confusing.

The program boasts a comprehensive array of features that let both novices and experts alike

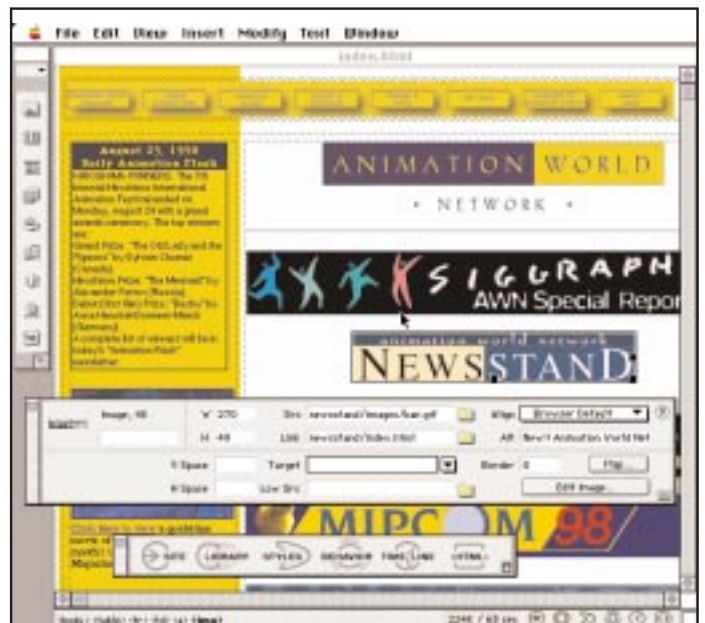
design and create professional looking web pages. The graphical user interface displays the right amount of information without being cumbersome, unwieldy or confusing. The window and palette layout is tight and functional without making me dizzy. No more tennis elbow moving everything around before I can actually use the program to do something. How novel.

Quickly Getting to Work

Several things about the program immediately impressed me. First, I was able to edit some pretty sophisticated pages in minutes, without glancing at the manual, clicking the help button, or calling our webmaster on the intercom. Creating several new pages, in this case some commerce catalog prototypes, was equally as easy. New tables can be inserted on the page quite easily, their placement, width, border size and other attributes configured from the Property Inspector palette in a snap. I popped on some

graphic images and corresponding URL links just as quickly.

I'm the type of developer that would rather reformat old floppies than spend hours poring through documentation. When I get stuck, I go straight to the index, and work my way backwards through the manuals to find the reference materials I need. Dreamweaver's documentation is clearly written, and the on-line help is indeed helpful. The Macromedia web site is dedicated to support the Dreamweaver user and the developer community has proven extremely useful. For example, poring over several real-life code examples helped me understand some of the more advanced program features involving rollovers, where the user can



A screen shot of the AWN home page being operated on with Dreamweaver.

program different "behaviors" to occur when a mouse passes over a certain section of the page.

Is it any wonder that third party technical "how-to" manuals now outsell low-fat cookbooks?

Technical Support

It never ceases to amaze me how many software companies leave their users high and dry after purchase, providing web sites containing pitifully outdated and incomplete FAQs and expensive "incident" packages as the sole means of technical support. Is it any wonder that third-party technical "how-to" manuals now outsell low-fat cookbooks? Product purchase is only the beginning. If I'm going to invest hundreds of man hours and thousands of dollars of developer time in such a tool, the software developer should be as serious about the product as I am, especially web page design tools.

The browser battles with their Java tug-of-war, standards changes within the HTML and DHTML specifications, compounded by the varied and buggy versions of browsers that populate the bazillions of PCs around the world, make web site development a complex and often difficult task. Macromedia's Dreamweaver program is built and promoted as a professional tool that anyone can use, and their support site is ample evidence of their commitment to the developer base. I see no reason to doubt Macromedia's intention and capability to develop and upgrade Dreamweaver as the realities of development for the web shift in the near future.

Something for Everybody

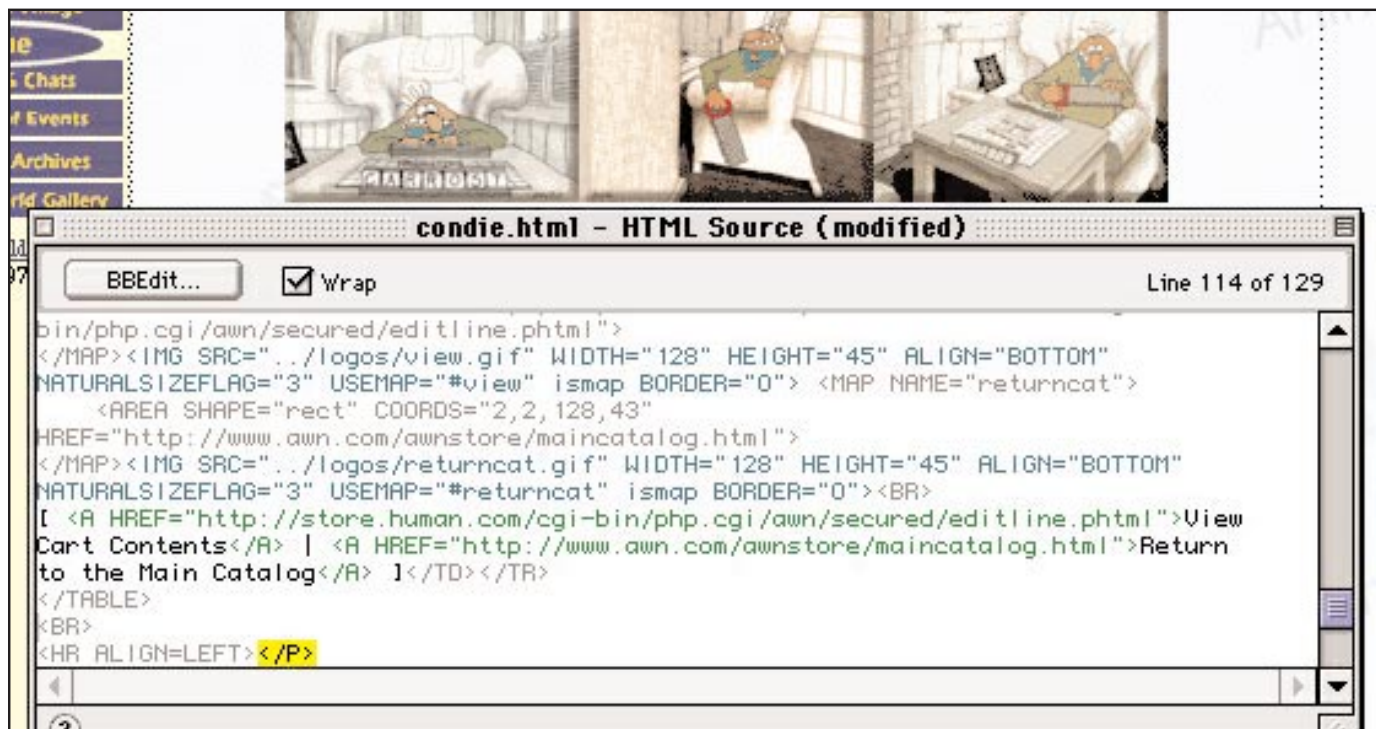
The second thing that really impressed me about the program was that, with one mouse click, I could open Dreamweaver's HTML Inspector, a raw html editing window where I could edit the code side by side with the Dreamweaver Document Window WYSIWYG graphic editing screen. Despite the fact that by playing with html code, I consistently destroy more perfectly good web pages than I ever create, I am not deterred from my quest to edit the code directly. Programming instincts die hard. I like to see what's under the hood. Okay, I just like to futz with html code and see what all those letters in brackets really do. While not a full-fledged

html editing engine, Dreamweaver's HTML Inspector allows me to futz all I want, and a single click back on the main screen interprets my raw code edits in real time within the Document Window display. For more sophisticated raw html code editing, the program comes bundled with BBEdit for Macintosh users, and Allaire's HomeSite for Windows users.

The programs sophisticated web design capabilities should not confuse or intimidate the more novice user. One doesn't trip over the more advanced features to get started creating simple pages. The Document Window displays the page much as it would look in a browser - a simple menu choice



Dreamweaver's interactive help pages.



Dreamweaver's HTML Inspector.

goes one step further and displays the page in any or all of the browsers installed on the computer. The Property Inspector, a floating tool palette, lets one very easily change font size, color, image source, alignment, link a URL, etc.

Conversely, advanced users, or users wishing to make the jump to the latest, state-of-the-art web design concepts and techniques, should find Dreamweaver stuffed with capabilities many of us hacks may never use.

Web sites Big and Small

Chief among these capabilities are: support for Dynamic HTML (DHTML), and timeline-based animation and object behavior management, behavior support for such actions as image swapping, pop-up boxes, mouse actions, and sounds, the ability to build pages in support of different versions of both Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer, conversion of DHTML enabled

pages back to 3.0 version browser non-DHTML enabled page code, and importing and editing of existing pages without mangling the code structure (referred to as

The program's sophisticated web design capabilities should not confuse or intimidate the more novice user.

Roundtrip HTML).

For those managing or planning larger sites, Dreamweaver provides a library for commonly-used page components. From code snippets to entire page templates, edits made within the Dreamweaver Library will update any page that includes those library components. For anyone who has ever mis-spent the prime of their youth replacing navigation bars and banner graphics on every page within a web site, this library function is worth its weight in Cheetos and

Diet Coke.

Dreamweaver stands out among the new generation of web authoring tools for a number of reasons. Its support for timeline based animation and the style sheets of DHTML give serious developers tremendous control over the look and performance of their web pages. Powerful page editing features gives one the best of both the WYSIWG and HTML code editing worlds. Plus, its intuitive and quite easy to use. Put these features all together, and you get a program thats pretty hard to beat.

Dan Sarto is an accomplished "hack" technologist and co-publisher of AWN.

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Fireworks: Does it Have a Special Spark?

by Ged Bauer

For a long time a suite of programs has dominated the graphics world; Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator and Quark Xpress. Then there are programs like FreeHand, Pagemaker, and Corel Draw which definitely deserve an honorable mention in the must have category for graphics. But really, graphics are graphics, whether its for a letterhead, logo, magazine ad, or World Wide Web page, right? Wrong. According to the brains at Macromedia, you no longer need an expensive suite of programs to fill all your image editing, drawing, and layout needs. Well, color me skeptical because the software industry is filled with a lot of programs that make promises that they do not keep. If I had a nickel for every program that claimed to be the "all-in-one-be-all-end-all" application, I'd be rich. Let me introduce to you Macromedia Fireworks, the "Premier Production Tool for Creating Web Graphics."

If I had a nickel for every program that claimed to be the "all-in-one-be-all-end-all" application, I'd be rich.

Jumping In

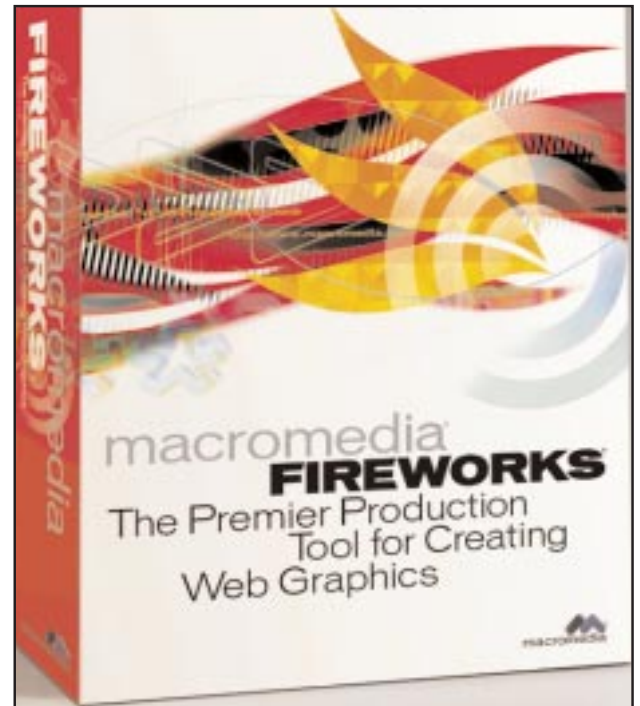
The first thing I look for in a new program, is how quickly I can jump in and start producing great works of art—or at least a new banner ad. Its probably the most overlooked aspect of a new appli-

cation. Companies can hype all they want, but if you need to spend too much time trying to get the thing to work, any advantage the new program offers quickly loses value.

Despite all my cynicism, Fireworks passes this test with flying colors. The manual with the most necessary information is paper thin. The interface and tools are a literal morph of Illustrator, Quark Xpress and Photoshop. One draws with the same kind of tools that are found in Illustrator. The same methods and tools for layout in Quark are present and Photoshop layer apply modes are included in Fireworks as well. It even goes so far as to use a lot of the same terminology in the menus and commands found in the common applications. A clear, and successful, effort was made to assure that artists familiar with popular graphic programs would feel at home from the minute they opened Fireworks.

Smoothing Out the Hops, Skips and Jumps

That said, its time to move on to the inner workings of the program. Does Fireworks deliver



© Macromedia.

on its promises? Is it a web graphics workhorse? Will it steal a market share away from the reigning champions? The answers are yes, yes, and quite possibly. The fact is that Fireworks is a powerful program. You can create complex, vector-based objects and text, export it as a JPEG, GIF, Animated GIF, or even a Java-scripted

A pleasant surprise was Fireworks compatibility with other graphics programs.

rollover. Normally, you would draw that in Illustrator, maybe a little work in Quark, and rasterize the image in Photoshop. From there a cryptic export into a JPEG or GIF. Which format do you use? You have to rely on experience



The tools palette in Fireworks is no different from other graphics programs.

and gut instinct, and sometimes you'll have to do it again. For some animation, you'll have to move to a specialized GIF animation program. If you want a Java-scripted rollover button, you will have to find either someone to do it for you, learn how write Java yourself, or "borrow" the code from a generous web site. During that hop, skip, jump, and back flip, you are likely to lose color accuracy, sharpness, lots of time, and your mind.

The same scenario in Fireworks goes a lot smoother to say the least. You do not need to switch programs to adjust the position of an element, or to change the point size of text. Its all adjustable in Fireworks, and it stays that way. Its always possible to edit each element in your com-

position, which is nice because everybody changes their mind. Instead of guessing during the export like you would in Photoshop, Fireworks gives you an accurate display, *and* lets you compare between JPEG and GIF file formats, even at varying qualities.

Making the GIF animations and Java rollovers takes merely one step in Fireworks: just make your multiple frames of animation (if you are doing a Java rollover you make your "Up," "Over," "Down," and "onClick" versions of the button), and export as you wish. Fireworks will generate any code (even Java) necessary for an exported graphic. All you have to do is ask.

Although Fireworks delivers on a lot of promises, you still need the nuances and pure power that a variety of programs can provide you.

More Extras

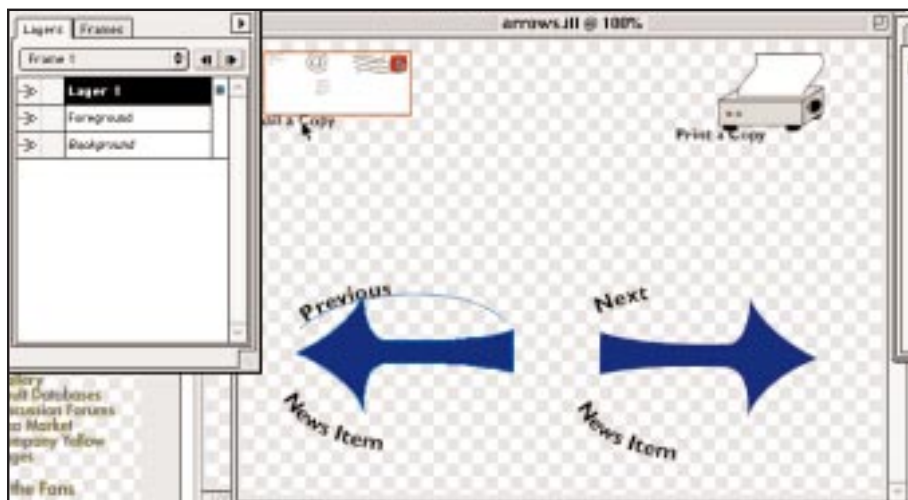
A pleasant surprise was Fireworks compatibility with other graphics programs. Its possible to import Photoshop (and still keep the layers separate), GIF, JPEG,

TIFF, BMP, ASCII (Text) Illustrator, CorelDRAW, and FreeHand documents. An even bigger surprise was the fact that vector-based drawings, from Illustrator, FreeHand, and CorelDRAW, were fully editable when imported into Fireworks. The only major drawback with importing and exporting, and Fireworks in general, is that it does not seem that one can export a vector-based file from Fireworks, to use later in another program. Meaning that if you draw a complex and time-consuming composition in Fireworks, you will have to redo it in Illustrator or FreeHand if, for example, you want to use it for any printed work. Maybe this could be an addition for the next version.

With all the great things that Fireworks can do, should you throw your present army of graphic programs out the door? No. Although Fireworks delivers on a lot of promises, you still need the nuances and pure power that a variety of programs can provide you. You need the vast array of Photoshop filters and the printing and layout capabilities of Illustrator and Quark. To wrap things up, I am definitely sold on Fireworks. It saves time, effort, and a lot of guess work that is necessary when jumping from program to program and back again. It is a welcome addition to any web designers toolbox, especially mine.

Ged Bauer is the former webmaster of Animation World Network.

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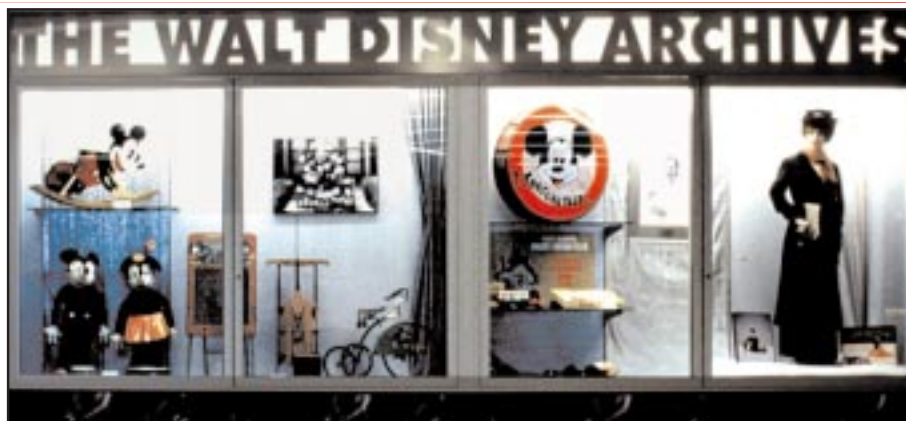


An Adobe Illustrator document opened in Fireworks can still be edited as if it was created in Fireworks.

Inside Disney: The Archives and Animation Research Library

by Katie Mason

Walt's business card. Maquette models from *Beauty and the Beast*. A Mickey Mouse children's book in Bulgarian. Background art from *101 Dalmatians*. Boxes of memos from Roy Disney. These are a few of the treasures of Disney history which the company has saved in The Archives and The Animation Research Library.



© Disney. All Rights Reserved.

If you think of all the companies in this country, not many others reuse their past as much as Disney does. - Dave Smith

The Walt Disney Archives was created in 1970 and is a collection of books, periodicals, corporate correspondence, and other items from the history of the company. Founder Dave Smith states the purpose of the archive is "to collect and preserve all the history of Disney and make it available to the people who need it. It is pri-

marily for company use but serious students and writers doing research on Disney subjects can make an appointment to use the collection as well."

The Animation Research Library emerged from the Animation Department's morgue in the late 1980s. It houses art from all of Disney's 36 animated features and numerous short subjects. It caters to artists in Disney's Feature Animation division and is not open to the public.

An Interview with Dave Smith of The Disney Archives

Katie Mason: You founded the Archives in 1970. What moved you to do this?

Dave Smith: I had been working as a librarian at UCLA for five years, and I'd done a little work with Disney. On my own, I'd prepared a Disney bibliography, listing Disney films, television shows, books and things like that. I got to know people at the Disney Company while I was doing that. When they decided to do something about preserving their own history, I was in the right place at the right time. I wrote a proposal for them, saying they might want to set up an archive and they hired me to come and do it. We started from an empty office, but we've got a lot of stuff today.



Dave Smith and the Walt Disney Archives. Photo courtesy of the Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

KM: What was the company's interest in creating an archive?

DS: We were starting to lose some key old-timers here in this company. Walt Disney died in 1966, Roy Disney died in 1971, and up until that time if you'd had a question about the early days of the company, you could go and talk to the person that worked on *Snow White* or *Steamboat Willie* for example.

If you think of all the companies in this country, not many others reuse their past as much as Disney does. So many things that Disney did years and years ago are still important in the company's projects today. A good example is *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, a film we made back in 1937. We put it on video cassette and I think it's the second largest selling video cassette ever.

But, of course, we can use that film in so many other ways. We can do books, records, educational materials, computer software, an attraction at Disneyland, run it on the Disney Channel, put an illustration on our Disney cruise ship. There's so many new different ways we can use these projects than we did so many years ago. When you're delving into your company's past so much, you need a department that's put together the information that you need to have access to—that's why the archives were set up.

Mainly, the artwork here is geared to help the upcoming artist to learn how animation was done in the past and for inspiration and ideas. - Vivian Procopio

KM: How do you go about preserving animation history when so much is being done on computers?



Floor-to-ceiling boxes in one of the vaults at the Animation Research Library. Photo by Katie Mason.

DS: The question that we're asking [here at the Archives] is how are we preserving the business correspondence of executives when they're doing it on e-mail. You learn so much about a company through the correspondence of its executives. If they're doing a lot of their work on e-mail or over the telephone, which seems to be a lot more common today, it's going to be a lot harder to document. When people come along 20 years from now [it will be harder] to know what was going on in 1998.

KM: Do they have all of Walt's correspondence?

DS: We have all of that. That was, thank goodness, maintained by his secretaries and it's well arranged by year and then alpha-

betical by each year. It must be a couple hundred boxes of correspondence. We have Roy Disney's correspondence too and various correspondence of other executive officers of the company through the years. I'm sure some day we'll get Michael Eisner's correspondence.

A Discussion with Lella Smith, Doug Engalla, and Vivian Procopio of the Animation Research Library (ARL)

KM: Why did the Animation Research Library start?

Lella Smith: The company was looking for a vehicle whereby any division of Disney could come in and get images for their projects whether it be Art Classics, Walt Disney Imagineering, or Disney Cruise Lines. They come to the ARL and that image can be provided to them as reference.

It is easily the largest animation library in the world and a pretty valuable asset to the company. Not only because of its value, but because [the material is] used and re-used.

Vivian Procopio: Mainly, the artwork here is geared to help the upcoming artist to learn how animation was done in the past and for inspiration and ideas. Other projects include the books that are published on animation. [Authors] usually come here for reference to put in their books.

Doug Engalla: Walt Disney Art Classics tend to turn to the animation art to stay as faithful to the original as possible. It's such a sophisticated audience out there, they will still step through a video and look and see how close it is.

It's a very savvy audience.

LS: Plus, the Disney company likes the product to be on-model. It's our hope that they will come to us and get the actual image and the result will really look like *Mulan*.

VP: As precise to the character—design, color, and all the different elements—as possible.

LS: Even TV animation, if they have a spin-off, wants to make certain that the characters are true to the original film, so they come here.

Walt Disney Art Classics tend to turn to the animation art to stay as faithful to the original as possible. - Doug Engalla

KM: So an animator could go back and study exactly how the prince kissed Snow White and model their newer animation on that?

LS: Yes. It's here for the animators to use. We're actually under Feature Animation so we have a real love and dedication to them. They'll come here and they'll flip drawings. It's really interesting to watch because even artists who feel that they are really, really advanced in animation will come and look at a Milt Kahl or a Marc Davis and say, "Whoa. I gotta go practice drawing again."

DE: Recently, we had background and layout artists from a current project look at art from *Lady and the Tramp*. Subject-wise it doesn't look like it relates at all to what they're doing, but technique-wise



Each box in the Animation Research Library contains carefully numbered pieces of artwork. Photo by Katie Mason.

it was very helpful for them.

LS: One thing they were trying to do was evening scenes, which are really hard to do, so Doug pulled several of the night scenes.

KM: How is the art preserved?

LS: We had a whole line of materials developed for animation. There are all kinds of archival companies that focus on supplies for museum collections, but we had very different needs, different sizes. We

found a polyethylene that goes between the layers of the cels so that the paint doesn't stick. We have a sleeve that we can slip the paper backgrounds into because the backgrounds are often just a long piece of paper and if you touch them you can not only get oil on them but it damages the paper. We also developed a cel mat holder that would allow the weight to be around the edges of the cardboard folder so that you could hold it and not press the cels on top of each other.

There's a lot more known about the damage of rubber bands and paper clips and staples and we're doing our damndest to get all that out. So we've been working hard to find ways to protect the art better.

KM: How do you go about preserving animation art in an era of digital ink and paint and computer animation?

LS: We are getting more of the collection digitally and that's a chal-



Rows of maquette models from *Beauty and the Beast*. Photo by Katie Mason.

lenge for us because we have to continue to learn as we go. But we're able to work very closely with CAPS [Computer Animation and Production System which unites Scene Planning, Scanning, Color Model, Ink and Paint, and Compositing]. Some of the images may simply be stored on-line and we'll pull from those. Now we can look into the Fame system, which tells where everything is moving and how many layers were on top of a background. It's not as straightforward as it was before because you'd go and pull a cel and put in over a background and you'd have a cel set-up. But we're working very closely with the technology division. Since the color is created on the computer, we find ourselves working more with the computer folks.

The exciting thing for us is we're trying to keep up with technology. - Lella Smith

DE: Luckily though, we're still very traditionally-based as far as animation is concerned. There will always be a desire, even in the digital age, to see the foundation. Even if currently we're unable to provide a color image for somebody on the outside, we still have character designs and pre-production art that is very important to any feature project.

LS: But the exciting thing for us is we're trying to keep up with technology. Technology is not necessarily a bad thing for us. Where previously we were only able to provide a color copy, now we can scan the art and give a digital file in any format people need so they can go right to press, and that's a

good thing. Researchers can make an appointment at the Disney Archives only by calling (818) 560-5424.

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

Katie Mason was an editorial assistant at Animation World Magazine. A longtime animation reader and fan, she watches cartoons each Saturday morning and is currently studying toward her university degree.

CAREER CONNECTIONS

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NEWS

by Wendy Jackson



The PJs is one of Fox's many prime-time animated shows which will now have writers contracted through the Writers Guild of America. © Touchstone.

Business

Writers Make Prime-Time Pact With Fox.

The Writers Guild of America has forged an agreement with Twentieth Century Fox to cover writers working on prime-time animated shows *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill*, *Futurama* and *Family Guy*. This is of great significance for animation writers and WGAs Animation Writers Caucus, because it gives animation writers on these shows the same benefits as their live-action counterparts, such as mandatory payment for re-writes and access to the WGA health insurance plan. WGAs acting executive director Brian Walton said, "It is our hope that this far-sighted agreement will lay the framework for similar contracts in this genre." The negotiating team for the deal included Larry Doyle and Dan Greaney (*The Simpsons*), Alan Cohen and Jim Dau-

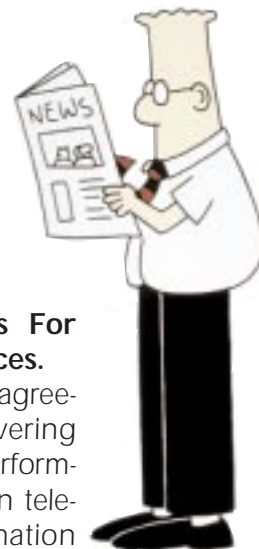
terive (*King of the Hill*), Chris Sheridan (*Family Guy*) and Pat Verrone (*Futurama*), as well as WGA staff Paul Nawrocki, Jane Nefeldt, Susan Gerakaris, Christine Albrecht-Buehler and Kay Schaber. In a separate agreement signed with Imagine Television in May, the guild also established a contract for writers on another Fox prime-time animated series, *The PJs*.

This issue of *Animation World Magazine* includes an article about the WGAs Animation Writers Caucus, by founding member Craig Miller.



Anne Sweeney has been named president of Disney/ABC Cable Networks. Photo courtesy of the Walt Disney Company.

Even Dilbert reads the news... Image © UPN. All Rights Reserved.



SAG Speaks For Cartoon Voices.

A tentative agreement covering voice-over performers working in television animation has been reached between The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and negotiators representing approximately 60 animation producers, including Disney, Warner Bros. and DreamWorks. The terms of the tentative agreement have been approved by SAG's negotiating committee, but was not be released publicly until they were approved by guild members. To facilitate this, a special meeting for SAG member television animation performers was held on Wednesday, August 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Universal City, California.

People

Musical Chairs. Anne Sweeney has been named president of Disney/ABC Cable Networks, filling a position left vacant when Geraldine Laybourne left in June to form her own media company. Since 1996, Sweeney has been president of the Disney

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Fred Seibert
Executive Producer/Creator of "Oh Yeah! Cartoons!"
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“It has really proved itself as a one-stop resource for international animation news, information and commentary.”

Jerry Beck
Animation Historian

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Channel, a title she will retain with the promotion, which will add several programming outlets under her wing: Lifetime, A&E, The History Channel and E! Entertainment Television, as well as ABC's Saturday morning line-up. Prior to Disney, Sweeney was at FX for three years and at Nickelodeon for 12. . .

. . . **Film Roman** has hired **Mitchell Solomon** as president of its new feature film division, which is currently developing live-action films. He was previously senior vice president of production at **Filmcolony**. . . . **Fox Kids Network** has hired **Patricia LaVigne** as vice president of on-air promotions. She was previously with the ad agency Pittard Sullivan's European office in Munich but will now be based in Los Angeles. . . . London-based multi-media and animation studio **Pepper's Ghost Productions** has hired **Alan Marques** as head of digital production. He was previously at The Magic Camera Company. . . . Los Angeles-based **Sony Pictures Imageworks (SPI)** has hired animation director **Henry Anderson** to work on the feature film *Stuart Little*. Anderson was most recently at Blue Sky/VIFX in New York. SPI has also hired **George Joblove** as vice president of technology, a newly-created position. He was previously technology director at R/GA Digital in New York. . . . **Everland Entertainment**, distributors of the *Veggie Tales* animated home video series, has hired **Rick Forsythe** as executive director. He was previously with Rainfall Educational Toys, Chariot Media and Family Christian Stores. . . . **DreamWorks** has cast several movie stars to play the voices of characters in its animated feature *Shrek*. **Mike Myers** will play the title character, a monster who was



Denis Morella, creative director of Curious Pictures, San Francisco. Photo courtesy of Curious Pictures.

originally going to be voiced by the late comedian Chris Farley. The film will also feature voices by **Cameron Diaz**, **Eddie Murphy**, **John Lithgow** and **Linda Hunt**. *Shrek*, slated for release in 2000, is currently in pre-production at PDI in Palo Alto, California. . . . **Robert Rehme** has been re-elected president of the **Academy Of Motion Picture Arts And Sciences (A.M.P.A.S.)** for a second consecutive one-year term. He was also president for one term in 1992-93. The A.M.P.A.S. Board of Governors was also recently elected. **William C. Littlejohn** has been re-elected to the short films and animation branch, which is also represented by Carl Bell and June Foray, whose three-year terms are staggered to renew in 1999 and 2000. . . . The board of directors of **The Writers Guild Of America (WGA) West** voted last week to terminate the contract of its executive director **Brian Walton**, who has held the position for 13 years. This issue of *Animation World Magazine* includes an article about WGAs Animation Writers Caucus. . . . Blue Sky/VIFX's president **Richard Hollander** has

been named an industry advisor for the American Museum of the Moving Image in New York. The company will also participate in two upcoming presentations at the museum: "T-Rex: Back to the Cretaceous" and "Behind the Screen.". . . London-based **Cartoon Network U.K.** has promoted **Brett Foraker** to the newly-created position of creative director, a role in which he will oversee production of on-air promos. . . . San Francisco-based **Curious Pictures** has promoted **Denis Morella** to the newly-created position of creative director of the West Coast office. He joined Curious in September, 1996 after serving as a director at (Colossal) Pictures. Curious also promoted **Holly Edwards** from to senior producer. She joined Curious in January, 1997. . . . Composer **Carter Burwell** will write the theme song for the animated series *Dilbert* which will premiere on UPN in January. . . . **Tim Hill**, creator of Nickelodeon's *Action League Now!* (part of the *Kablam!* series) will direct the live-action/puppet feature film, *Muppets in Space* for the Jim Henson Company and Columbia Pictures. This will be a first-time feature film directing job for Hill. . . . North Hollywood-based **Film Roman** has hired several new recruits to work on the animated series, *Family Guy*. **Roy Smith** (formerly of Saban) and **Peter Shin** (formerly of Klasky Csupo) will be co-animation producers, and **John Bush** (formerly of Hyperion) will be line producer. . . . **David Silverman** has joined **Pixar Animation Studio** to direct animated features. After Silverman exited his post at DreamWorks Feature Animation several months ago, there was widespread speculation about where he would be

headed next. Before joining DreamWorks, he was a key creative on *The Simpsons*, and worked with Matt Groening to develop the show. Pixar has not yet announced on which film Silverman will be working. . . .

Children's Television Workshop (CTW)

has named **Alice Cahn** group president, television, film and video, filling a position vacated in May by former vice president of production Marjorie Kalins. Cahn is no stranger to CTW; she was previously director of children's programming for PBS, which airs several TV series produced by CTW. . . .

The Jim Henson Company hired **Susan Frank** as executive vice president of corporate marketing worldwide. She was previously executive vice president of worldwide marketing and promotions for the **Fox Children's Network**, where she worked with Margaret Loesch, now president of Jim Henson Television. . . .

Warner Bros. Online has hired **Harry Medved** as director of public relations. He previously held a similar position at InterActive Agency. . . . The late Roy O. Disney (d. 1971), brother and business partner of Walt Disney and father of current Walt Disney Company chairman Roy E. Disney, has been honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The memorial was dedicated on July 27 in front of the Disney-owned El Capitan Theater on Hollywood Boulevard. Down the street, Walt Disney's star was one of the original 1500 installed in the Walk of Fame in the 1960s. . . .

So long, Los Angeles, Bonjour Paris! **David Stainton** has been promoted to the position of senior vice president of creative affairs for **Walt**

Disney Feature Animation. In the new role, Stainton will relocate from Los Angeles to guide production in WDFAs Paris studio, focusing mainly on the production of the animated feature film, *Tarzan*. Stainton joined Disney in 1989 and was most recently vice presi-



Mike Judge, superstar. Photo courtesy of MTV.

dent of creative affairs. . . . **Elie Dekel** has been named executive vice president of **Fox Family Worldwide's** new consumer products division, which will oversee the company's home video, promotions and licensing & merchandising activities. Dekel, who joined Saban Entertainment (now part of Fox family) in 1990, was promoted from the position of executive vice president of marketing & advertising for Fox Family Worldwide. . . .

Dream Quest Images, the feature film visual effects division of the Walt Disney Company, has hired **V. Scott Jones** as vice president finance/chief financial officer. Most recently, he was a freelance financial consultant, subsequent to serving as CFO and corporate treasurer at American Cybercast Corporation. He has also held finance management positions at ABC and The Walt Disney Company. . . . **Mike Judge**, creator of *Beavis & Butt-head* (MTV) and co-creator of *King of*

the Hill (Fox), has signed a four-year contract with **Fox Television**, in which he will develop live-action and animated series for the network. He will also retain his position as executive producer of *King of the Hill* and will continue to voice its characters, Hank Hill and Boomhauer. *Daily Variety* (8/4/98) estimates the new deal is worth U.S. \$16 million. . . .

Actor **Hank Azaria** (Apu and Moe on *The Simpsons* and Bartok in *Anastasia*) will be the voice of Eric Feeble in the American dub of the animated TV series *Stressed Eric* for NBC. Although the original soundtrack is in English, NBC dubbed a new voice track over the main characters' British accent to make the dialogue more comprehensi-

ble to American viewers. A co-production of Absolutely Productions, the BBC and Klasky Csupo, the show will premiere on NBC on August 12 at 9:30 p.m. . . . Actor **Michael J. Fox** has signed with Columbia Pictures to play the voice of the lead character—a computer animated mouse—in the live-action/computer animation feature film, *Stuart Little*. Additional characters will be voiced by actors **Gene Wilder**, **Bruno Kirby** and **Jennifer Tilly**. The film, being directed by Rob Minkoff, will feature visual effects by Sony Pictures Imageworks and will be released in late 1999. The film, being directed by Rob Minkoff, will feature visual effects by Sony Pictures Imageworks and will be released in late 1999...

Manhattan Transfer has hired CG artist **Grant Adam** to work in its visual effects department. He previously ran his own company, Uncommon Characters, in Victoria, Australia. . . . Animator/illustra-



Grant Adam, a CG artist at Manhattan Transfer. Photo courtesy of Manhattan Transfer.

tor **Rob Zammarchi**, artist **Matt Duchame** and graphic designer **Karen Kutka** have joined the staff of Boston-based **Fablevision Studios**. . . . New York-based **Brian Diecks Design** has hired designer **Amanda Hayes** and assistant producer **Marcia Finn**. . . . Atlanta-based **Crawford Communications** has acquired the company Taylor McCormick Graphics, and hired its founding owners **Robert Taylor** and **Michael McCormick** as director of computer graphics and CG animation director, respectively, for Crawford's 3-D animation and digital effects division. . . .

Karl Cohen Recovering. Karl Cohen, president of ASIFA-San Francisco, animation historian and author of *Forbidden Animation: Censored Cartoons and Blacklisted Animators* is recovering from a stroke suffered late last month. He has canceled his engagements to speak at the Society for Animation Studies Conference, the NuArt Cinema in Los Angeles and the Ottawa Animation Festival. How-

ever, some of these upcoming events will still take place as scheduled, but with Cohen's colleagues filling in for screenings of films highlighted in Cohen's book, *Forbidden Animation*. Get-well wishes for Karl may be sent to AWN, where they will be forwarded directly to him at a hospital in San Francisco. Please send clearly marked cards and letters by mail to:

Karl Cohen
c/o AWN
6525 Sunset Blvd. Garden Suite 10
Hollywood, CA 90028 U.S.A.
No e-mail messages, please.

Films

Antz To Premiere In Toronto.

The Toronto International Film Festival will host the world premiere of DreamWorks SKG and PDI's computer-animated feature film *Antz* at their closing night gala on September 19. The film will officially open in theaters (U.S. and Canada) on October 2. *Antz* will also be screened at the Ottawa International Animation Festival on opening night, September 29.

The Happy Princess

Toon In Development.

Scottish Television and Sirlol Productions are developing a 30-minute animated cartoon for children about the life of the late Diana, Princess of Wales. Word of the animated project—based on the book *The Happy Princess* by Nicholas Allen—is upsetting some U.K. groups, including the Church

of England. *The Hollywood Reporter* [7/28-8/3/98] said "the show reportedly depicts Diana's battles with eating disorders and puts blame on Prince Charles for her misery with royal life, though no mention is made of the Paris car crash that ended her life last year. Instead, the story ends with Diana skipping with children in heaven." Should they change the name of this project to "The Unhappy Princess?" A Scottish Television spokesperson confirmed that the series is in development, and that it has been pitched to several broadcasters and co-production partners (including DIC Entertainment), but stressed that "it's too early to tell" what the fate of the project will be.

South Park Feature In Production.

Comedy Central has green lit production of an animated feature film based on the TV series *South Park*, created by Trey Parker and Matt Stone. The target release for the still untitled film is March 1999,



Antz. © DreamWorks LLC.

to coincide with "Spring Break." The film will be produced in Venice, California by a separate production team than the TV



Rene Laloux's classic *Fantastic Planet* will be re-released theatrically this year. Photo courtesy of CQN Releasing.

series. Like the series, the film will be produced on SGI computers using Alias PowerAnimator and Maya software.

Fantastic Planet In Rotation. Rene Laloux's animated feature film, *Fantastic Planet* (1973) is being theatrically re-released in the U.S. by Cinequanon Pictures in honor of its 25th anniversary. The bizarre, Bosch-esque science-fiction film is described as a "jolting futuristic story of a rebellion by oppressed humanoids against a race of gigantic androids on a distant planet." Not the typical animated feature fare to which American audiences are accustomed! The film was co-produced in France and Czechoslovakia and co-written and designed by Rene Laloux and graphic artist Roland Topor. It was the first animated feature to win an award at Cannes (Special Jury Prize), and has inspired many other filmmakers. A new 35mm print of the film has been created from the original English dubbed version first released in the U.S. in 1974 by Roger Corman. It will be accompa-

nied by Laloux and Topor's animated short, *Les Escargots*, (1965). The films' relaunch will premiere at Los Angeles' NuArt Theater, October 9-15, then on to New York and other cities in November. Since its original release, *Fantastic Planet* has only been released on laserdisc and on unauthorized bootleg video tapes, which used badly duped prints that were edited to omit key sequences. Thus, this theatrical return of *Fantastic Planet* showcases the film in its complete form, as it was envisioned by Laloux, who currently resides in France. After the theatrical run, Cinequanon plans to release an official, higher-quality video in 1999.

Rene Laloux's book, *Drawings That Move—One Hundred Years of Animated Films* was reviewed by Giannalberto Bendazzi in the April 1996 issue of *Animation World Magazine*:

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.1/articles/laloux.html>.

Television

The WB Is Set To Go Downtown. The WB Network has ordered 13 episodes of *The Downtowners*, an animated series

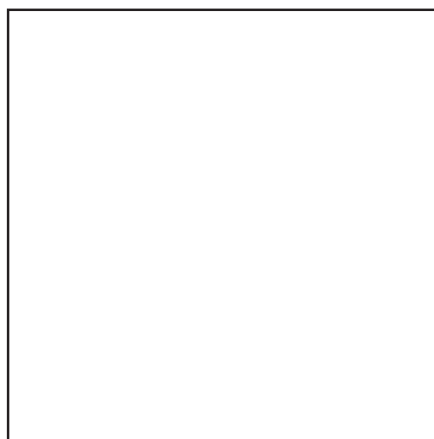


The Downtowners. © 1998 The WB Network.

developed by Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein for Castle Rock Television. It is slated to air as a prime time show in fall 1999. The show is described by WB as "the first prime time animated comedy to focus on the lives of twentysomethings and teens." It will star four roommates living in a downtown loft in a fictional big city, and their assortment of colorful friends and neighbors. This is the first animated series to be developed by Castle Rock's Television unit, whose live-action credits include *Seinfeld*. The WB Network will also try out a pilot based on the syndicated comic strip *Baby Blues* during the '98 holiday season.

TV Tidbits. Curious Pictures is working on a 25-part animated series called *A Little Curious* for **HBO**. It will feature mixed-media, CG, cel and stop-motion animation, and is slated to debut in January 1999. . . . **Twentieth TV**, Twentieth Century Fox's syndication arm, has had tremendous success pre-selling the animated series *King of the Hill* for U.S. syndication starting in fall 2001. The shows planned 100 episodes will air as reruns on stations covering over 90% of U.S. households. So, while Fox may be taking a ratings risk by separating *King of the Hill* from *The Simpsons* (it is moving to Tuesday nights this fall), they have secured an audience for the reruns of the show three years from now! . . . FUNimation's Japanese animated series *Dragon Ball Z* has been sold in syndication to **Cartoon Network**, which will air the show five days a week start-

ing in September. In a separate deal, Irwin Toy has just signed on as the master toy licensee for *Dragon Ball Z*. The company plans to produce a full line of action figures, vehicles and playsets. *Dragon Ball Z* started in Japan over ten years ago and has been airing internationally in Europe, but was only first introduced to American viewers in 1995. . . .



The Simpsons: ratings rulers for July. © Fox.

Research, AWN will now publish the Nielsen ratings for animated programs on a monthly basis in the *Animation Flash*. The ratings included herein are only for U.S. national network television. However, AWN is interested in publishing additional ratings from cable television and ratings systems outside the U.S. To contribute information, please contact us at editor@awn.com.

The following list of animated network programs is

July Nielsen Ratings.By special arrangement with Nielsen Media

Rating/Program (Network, Day, Time)		Rating/Program (Network, Day, Time)	
5.1	<i>The Simpsons</i> (Fox, Sunday, 8:00 p.m.)	1.5	<i>Men in Black</i> (WB, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)
4.9	<i>King of the Hill</i> (Fox, Sunday, 8:30 p.m.)	1.5	<i>New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.)
2.1	<i>Invasion America</i> (WB, Tuesday, 9:00 p.m.)	1.5	<i>Spider-Man Special</i> (Fox, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)
1.9	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/04, 9:30 a.m.)	1.5	<i>Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries</i> (WB, Saturday, 11:30 a.m.)
1.9	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/11, 10:00 a.m.)	1.5	<i>Toonsylvania Special</i> (Fox, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.)
1.8	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/11, 9:30 a.m.)	1.4	<i>Pinky and the Brain</i> (WB, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.)
1.8	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/18, 9:30 a.m.)	1.4	<i>Sam and Max</i> (Fox, Saturday, 11:30 a.m.)
1.8	<i>New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 12:00 p.m.)	1.3	<i>Animaniacs July 4 Special</i> (WB, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)
1.7	<i>Animaniacs July 4 Special</i> (WB, Saturday, 11:00 a.m.)	1.3	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/04, 8:30 a.m.)
1.7	<i>Batman/Superman</i> (WB, Saturday, 10:00 a.m.)	1.3	<i>Science Court Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 11:00 a.m.)
1.7	<i>Spider-Man</i> (Fox, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.)	1.2	<i>Batman/Superman</i> (WB, Monday-Friday, 4:30 p.m.)
1.7	<i>Toonsylvania Special</i> (Fox, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.)	1.2	<i>Disney's 101 Dalmatians Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 1:00 p.m.)
1.6	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/04, 9:00 a.m.)	1.2	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> (ABC, Saturday, 8:30 a.m.)
1.6	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/18, 9:00 a.m.)	1.2	<i>Science Court</i> (ABC, Saturday, 12:30 p.m.)
1.6	<i>New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 11:00 a.m.)	1.1	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/18, 8:30 a.m.)
1.6	<i>Spider-Man</i> (Fox, Monday-Friday, 3:30 p.m.)	1.1	<i>Disney's Jungle Cubs Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 2:30 p.m.)
1.6	<i>Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries</i> (WB, Saturday, 11:30 a.m.)	1.1	<i>Life With Louie</i> (Fox, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.)
1.6	<i>Toonsylvania</i> (Fox, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.)	1.1	<i>Science Court Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 12:35 p.m.)
1.6	<i>Toonsylvania</i> (Fox, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.)	1.0	<i>Bobby's World</i> (Fox, Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Animaniacs</i> (WB, Saturday, 11:00 a.m.)	1.0	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/04, 8:00 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Animaniacs July 4 Special</i> (WB, Saturday, 10:00 a.m.)	1.0	<i>Incredible Hulk</i> (UPN, Sunday, 9:30 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Batman/Superman</i> (WB, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.)	1.0	<i>Ned's Newt</i> (Fox, Saturday, 8:00 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/11, 9:00 a.m.)	1.0	<i>Superman</i> (WB, Sunday, 8:30 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Disney's Jungle Cubs</i> (ABC, Saturday, 11:30 a.m.)	0.9	<i>Disney's Saturday Morning Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 7/18, 8:00 a.m.)
1.5	<i>Disney's Jungle Cubs Special</i> (ABC, Saturday, 10:30 a.m.)	0.9	<i>Ned's Newt Special</i> (Fox, Saturday, 8:00 a.m.)
		0.9	<i>Pinky and the Brain</i> (WB, Mon.-Fri., 4:00 p.m.)

Note: Programming with *Disney's Saturday Morning* block changes weekly, which explains the multiple listings of this program (dates are included for clarification).



Raimund Krumme's *Kick in the Shins* spot for Bank Atlantic. Image courtesy of Acme Filmworks.

ranked by Household Ratings. A Rating is the percent of households that tuned into the program. This percentage can provide us with the number of households that tuned into the program on average during the month. The universe estimate for the 1997-98 television season in 98 million TV homes. Each rating point represents one percent of that universe, or 980,000 TV homes. Translation: *The Simpsons*, with an average 5.1 rating for the month of July, was viewed in an almost 5 million (5.1 x 980,000) households. The below ranking is an average for the month of July 1998.

Commercials

Spotlight. Hollywood-based **Acme Filmworks** produced four 15-second commercials for BankAtlantic, directed by Raimund Krumme (*Passage*). The spots use Krumme's signature black & white line art to depict a bank customer literally battling with obstacles faced when dealing with the corporate banking machine. . . . Lon-

don-based **aka Pizazz** created three 30-second animated spots for travel agency Lunn Poly/Thomson. They were animated by Mic Graves, Robin Shaw and Joris van Hulzen, using the Animo system, and will air in the U.K. . . . San Francisco-based **Curious Pic-**

tures and New Zealand-based **Flea Circus Films** director John Robertson co-produced six seconds of character animation for a spot for office-supply manufacturer Manco, Inc. It depicts the company's character, Manco T. Duck interacting with a live-action scene. . . . New York-based **Pixel Liberation Front** created 3-D computer animation for the opening sequence of an advertisement for a new Acclaim Entertainment video game called *Forsaken*. . . . San Francisco-based **Radium** created 3-D animation and visual effects for a spot introducing an energy food bar called Boost. . . . New York-based studio **Quiet Man** created visual effects for a 30-second Duracell ad entitled *Anthem*. The effects were generated with a Flame system by effects artist Johnnie Semerad under spot director Joe Pytka. . . . Boston-based **Fablevision Studios** creat-

ed thirteen animated bumpers for *Zoom*, the new (remake) live-action kids series being produced by WGBH. . . . Boston-based **Viewpoint Studios** and Seattle-based **Heck Yes!** collaborated on visual effects and 3-D animation for a Discovery Channel network promotion for "Shark Week." In the sequence, a shark's fin is seen swimming out of the ocean, onto the shore, through town, into a viewer's living room and right through the television set. Animator Perry Harovas used Alias|Wavefront's Maya to create the shark's fin. . . .

Video



Pocahontas in her natural state, above, and below, Pocahontas "transformed into a proper English lady" in *Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World*.
© Walt Disney Enterprises. All Rights Reserved.

Pocahontas II In A Store Near You. On August 25, Walt Disney Home Video released *Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World*, the direct-to-video sequel to Disney's 33rd theatrical animated feature film, *Pocahontas*. The film was produced at Walt Disney Animation Canada and Walt Disney Animation Japan, and directed by Bradley Raymond and Tom Ellery. Additional animation was done by Spaff Animation in Burbank, California. The voice cast features Jean Stapleton, Billy Zane, David Ogden Stiers and Linda Hunt. *Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World* runs 72 minutes, and is being offered for U.S. \$26.99 (SRP).

Black Cauldron Bubbles Up. Walt Disney Home Video released Disney's 25th animated feature, *The Black Cauldron* (1985) on video for the first time on August 4. The 80-minute film was co-directed by Ted Berman and Richard Rich, during a period of minimal success for Disney's animated features. It is the second Disney feature to be filmed in 70mm format, after *Sleeping Beauty*. The video is priced at \$26.99 (SRP).

Harvey To Turn Out 12 Pics In 3 Years. Harvey Entertainment has launched a new business plan which intends to produce 12 direct-to-video products over the next three years, commencing in 1999. The company has two animated videos coming out before then; *Casper Meets Wendy* and *Richie Rich's Christmas Wish* will debut this fall. Additional Harvey characters which can be exploited include Baby Huey, Little Audrey and Hot Stuff. Many of these char-

acters will be featured in *Classic Harvey Toons*, an animated series comprised of Harvey's library cartoons, on the new Fox Family channel launching this month.

Publications

Hot Of The Presses. Several new animation-related books have recently become available. Rutgers University Press has published *Reading the Rabbit: Explorations in Warner Bros. Animation*, a compendium of essays by Linda Simensky, Gene Walz, Michael Frierson, Donald Crafton and others, edited by Kevin S. Sandler. W.W. Norton & Company has published a revised edition of Michael O'Rourke's *Principles of Three-Dimensional Computer Animation*. Additional books which are scheduled to be released in the near future are a how-to animation book by Aardman Animations, Maureen Furniss' *Art in Motion: Animation Aesthetics* (John Libbey & Company), Paul Wells' *Understanding Animation* (Routledge) and Gene Walz's *Cartoon Charlie: The Life and Art of Animation Pioneer Charles Thorson* (Great Plains Publishing). [Gene Walz's article about Charles Thorson can be found in the September 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine*: <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.6/2.6pages/2.6walzthorson.html>]

Many of these books will be reviewed in *Animation World Magazine*. Stay tuned to the *Animation Flash* for information. Support AWN! Buy books in the Animation World Store, in association with Amazon [<http://www.awn.com/awnstore/books>].

Harvey Starts Publishing. The Harvey Entertainment Company,

owners of the cartoon characters Casper the Friendly Ghost, Richie Rich, Baby Huey, Little Audrey, Lotta, Hot Stuff and Wendy the Good Little Witch, have announced plans to launch a new children's publication in November. The monthly, glossy print magazine will be called *Harvey, the Magazine for Kids* and will cost U.S. \$2.95 per issue. Harvey Entertainment has hired Matty Simmons (of *National Lampoon* and *Weight Watchers* magazines) as publisher and Julie Lynch, former editor of *Heavy Metal* magazine as editor.

Music

Rhino Playing Space Ghost & Scooby. Rhino Records, whose catalog already contains more than 40 animation-related albums, will release two new music collections of interest to animation fans. In August, Rhino debuted *Space Ghost Surf and Turf*, a sequel to the *Musical BBQ* album featuring songs by the Cartoon Network animated talk show stars. In September, Rhino will deliver *Scooby Doo's Snack Tracks: The Ultimate Collection* featuring many never-before-released songs from the Hanna-Barbera series. However, Rhino's second "Simpsons" album, *Go Simpsonic With the Simpsons*, originally slated for a September 1 release, has been indefinitely postponed for unspecified reasons.

Go behind the scenes of *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* in Heather Kenyon's July 1998 cover story [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.4/3.4pages/3.4kenyon.html>].

Internet & Interactive

Quick Bytes. HotWired is starting a web site devoted to showcasing professional and independent web animation that can stand

alone as entertainment. Creators will be paid an honorarium for selected works. E-mail submissions should be sent to animations-submissions@hotwired.com. . . . Cartoon Network has launched its web site at www.cartoonnetwork.com. It features a series of original web animation shorts called "Web Premiere Toons," an encyclopedia of cartoon information called "Department of Cartoons," and a publication called *Saturday Morning Magazine*, as well as character home pages and games. The site was developed by Cartoon Network Online (headed by creative director Sam Register) in conjunction with New York-based design company, Funny Garbage. . . . Clickable Magic has launched a new web cartoon called *The Hackit and Hairball Show* at:

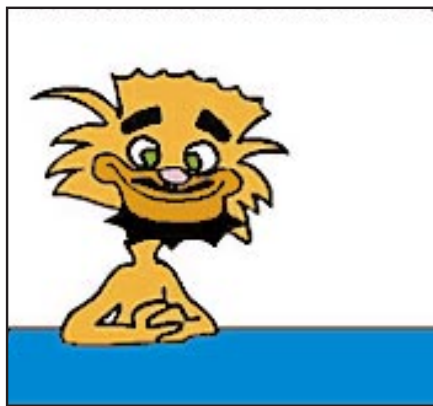
www.clickablemagic.com/hnh.html. The animated "talk show" stars a cat named Hackit and a sidekick named Hairball. . . .

Education

Craig Scholarship Gets Matching Donor.

An anonymous donor has agreed to sponsor a "matching challenge" to Women In Animation's Phyllis Craig Scholarship Fund, established in remembrance of the late animation color artist Phyllis Craig. The target date for a candidate to receive the first scholarship is the year 2000. Any donation made to the fund within the next month will be automatically doubled. Donations are tax deductible. Send your check to: Women In Animation Inc. Phyllis Craig Scholarship Fund P.O. Box 17706, Encino, CA 91416 U.S.A.

Please mark the check clearly with the note "Matching Funds Challenge."



The Hackit and Hairball Show.
© 1998 Zoom Cartoons LLC and Clickable Magic Inc.

Animation World Magazine published an extensive tribute to Phyllis Craig in the July 1998 issue [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.4/awn2.4pages/2.4tribute-craig.html>].

Beware! Employment Scam.

A man going by the name of John Constantine Golfis is being investigated for a scam which has tricked nearly half a million dollars out of more than 50 unsuspecting people and private corporations. Through his company Reel Images, LLC, Golfis has been contacting job-seeking professionals in the computer graphics and animation industry, and offering them an opportunity to work for him out of their homes—on the condition that they buy a computer from him. Prospective employees have invested with the promise that Golfis will pay for half of the computer, and upgrade it, for the duration of their

"employment." On the flip side, Golfis has also obtained money from investors interested in animation projects which were developed by these prospective employees. These crimes are being investigated by the FBI, the FCC and the IRS, as well as several local police departments. "However," said David Scheid, "the investigators are not doing enough." Scheid, a recent graduate of Technology Development Center (TDC) in Ventura, California gave Golfis \$5,000 for a computer which he never received, acting on a five-page employment agreement he had with Reel Images. Golfis was recently working out of an office in Encino, California but is now believed to be out of the state. One of TDC's computer animation instructors, Steve Nelle, said, "It's a shame that someone would take advantage of young upstarts, who are so eager to work in the industry."

Anyone who has information about Golfis should write to P.O. Box 965, Simi Valley, CA, 93062, U.S.A.



A caricature of Phyllis Craig by Mitch Schauer, used in an actual episode of Film Roman's *Garfield and Friends*.

R&H Scholarship Awarded.

Los Angeles-based effects studio, Rhythm & Hues has announced the winners of its third annual Computer Graphics Scholarship. The scholarship is intended to encourage and reward excellence among young artists in the area of computer graphics. Normally Rhythm & Hues grants three digital cinematography, one modeling and one character animation award which are divided between

the student and his educational institution. This year Rhythm & Hues awarded grants to David E. Smith and the California Institute of the Arts in the fields of both computer character animation and digital cinematography. This marks the first time that there has been a double award winner. Erik Winquist and the Ringling School of Art and Design received the only grants in the digital cinematography category. There was no winner in the computer modeling category this year. The scholarship is open to all students enrolled full-time in an accredited undergraduate or graduate degree program within six months of the entry deadline. The deadline for the 1999 scholarship is June 1, 1999. For information on how to apply, visit www.rhythm.com.

Animation Program Opens In Ottawa. Ottawa, Canada, home to the longest-running animation festival in North America, will now also be home to a new animation training facility. The Ottawa School of Art is launching a new Animation Certificate program, designed for students who want to create a portfolio appropriate for application to training programs such as Algonquin, Capilano or Sheridan colleges. Enrollment will be limited to 20 students who will be selected through a screening process. The application deadline for this year's program is August 28. For information visit: <http://eaosa.ottawa.com>.



MOMI Animators Scheme Deadline. The deadline to submit applications for the annual Channel 4/Museum of the Moving Image Animators Scheme was August 22. Open to U.K.-resident recent graduates of animation programs, the scheme awards several animators with a three-month residency in the museum studio and a budget to work on an animated film. For information, call: (44) 0171 815-1376.

Animation World Magazine's October 1997 issue features an in-depth article about London's Museum of the Moving Image, including detailed information about the Animators Scheme [<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.7/2.7pages/2.7burrowsmomi.html>].

Call for Entries

"Queer" Animation Wanted. The 12th annual New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental

Film/Video Festival will take place November 18-22, 1998 in New York City. Organizers are looking for hand-crafted animated films or videos involving "sexualities which transgress the heterosexual norm, either via the sensibility of the maker or the subject matter or both." For information and applications, contact Shawn Atkins at inktank@interport.net or (212) 921-0081. Or, send VHS preview tapes directly to: MIX Festival, 11 John Street, Suite 408, New York, NY 10038 U.S.A. Attention: Shawn Atkins/Animation Program.

SPIFF'S Second Run. The second Short Pictures International Film Festival (SPIFF) will take place November 19-21 in Hollywood, California. The festival was originally created by Joy A. Kennelly to highlight short films, animation, music videos, and documentaries created by Sony Pictures Image-works (SPI) employees. The program has been expanded to feature works under 15 minutes in length by all filmmakers. The entry deadline is October 1, and the fee is \$55. All proceeds from SPIFF will go to children's charities. For information and entry forms, visit www.spiffest.com.

Leipzig. The 41st International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Films is scheduled to take place October 27-November 1, 1998 in Leipzig, Germany. Several prizes are awarded for animation, including cash prizes (last year's winners were Mikhail Aldashin, Daniel Greaves, Walentin Olschwang, Alexander

Petrov and Craig Welch). Entries should be sent on VHS video cassette by September 5 to Dokfestival Leipzig, Elsterstr. 22-24, 04109 Leipzig, Germany. For information, visit www.mdr.de/dokfestival or e-mail dok-leipzig@t-online.de

Ideas in Animation, a monthly, San Francisco-based performance series that pairs animated films with live music by the Sprocket Ensemble, is seeking submissions. New, completed films and works-in-progress, both non-commercial and commercial, from 2 to 20 minutes in length will be considered. Honoraria will be paid for all works shown. For information, contact Nik or Nancy Phelps at (415) 681-3189 or send films directly to Ideas in Animation, 2066 30th Ave. San Francisco, CA 94116-1148.

Second Shorts Film Fest. The Shorts International Film Festival is now accepting entries for its second edition, to be held November 9-11, 1998 at Sony Theatres Lincoln Square in New York City. The annual festival will feature six competition categories: Animation, Comedy, Documentary, Drama, Experimental and Student. Last years animation winner was Michael Sporn's *Champagne*. The entry deadline is September 15. Films must be under 40 minutes. For information and entry forms, visit www.shortcuts.org or call (212) 228-4085.

Events

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 newsletter which

is distributed by e-mail. Subscribe now! Are there animation events going on in your area? Share your regional event news with the international readers of the *Animation Flash*! Please send announcements to editor@awn.com, at least eight days in advance.

* July 31-August 9, 1998. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The annual animation festival, Anima Mundi took place. Programs included retrospectives of work by Marv Newland, Erica Russell, Georges Lacroix/Fantôme, layout artist Ray Aragon and Tratoria Di Frame, an animation studio from Sao Paulo. The festival also featured animation workshops using the Video Lunchbox system. For information visit www.animamundi.com.br/

Anima Mundi is reviewed in this issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

* Thursday, August 6 - Sunday, August 16. Orange, California, U.S.A.

Chapman University hosted the tenth annual Society for Animation Studies conference. Events included tours of USC and Warner Bros. archives, a screening of films highlighted in Karl Cohens book, *Forbidden Animation* and childrens animation workshops at the Orange County Museum of Art. On the 13th-15th, there were presentations of papers by scholars such as Ton Crone, Michael Frier-son, Tom Klein, Mark Langer, John A. Lent, Richard J. Leskosky, Gene Walz and others.

For information, visit the SAS web site in Animation World Network [<http://www.awn.com> /sas]

Animation World Magazine will review the 1998 SAS Conference in an upcoming issue.

<http://www.awn.com/mag>

* Wednesday, August 5 - Monday, August 10. Hollywood, California, U.S.A.

The second annual Hollywood Film Festival included three animated films in competition: *Return of the Sun Devil* by Steven Ayrom-looi, *Boing* by Jeff Daly and *Max and His Special Problem* by Dave Wasson. Screenings took place on the Paramount Studios lot. Tickets were \$8.00. For information visit <http://hollywoodawards.com/indexmain.html> or call (310) 288-1882

* Tuesday, August 11. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

At 7:30 p.m., UCLA Film and Television Archives Ninth Festival of Preservation featured a program of films from the Animation Preservation Project, in association with ASIFA-Hollywood. The program featured 18 films by the likes of Max and Dave Fleischer, Walter Lantz, Ub Iwerks, Tex Avery, George Pal, Hugh Harman, Rudy Ising, Dick Heumer, Tony Sarg, Shamus Culhane, Art Davis, Michael Lah and Sid Marcus, that have recently been restored by the archive. The show also included rare footage of the 1947 Screen Cartoonists Guild strike at Terrytoons Studio. The screening took place in the James Bridges Theater on the UCLA campus. Admission was \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for seniors and students. For a complete list of films, visit www.cinema.ucla.edu/festival/default.html.

Animation World Magazine's April 1998 issue includes an in-depth article about the UCLA Film and

Television Archive:

[<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/3.1/3.1pages/3.1ucla.html>]. In addition, the November 1997 issue features an article about ASIFA-Hollywood :

http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/2.8/2.8pages/2.8crane_asifa.html

* Tuesday, August 11. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation Los Angeles hosted a mixer at Lumpy Gravy, the restaurant/gallery co-owned by Gabor Csupo of Klasky Csupo. The event launched a series of fundraising animation mixers that will take place on the second Tuesday of every month. The event will always feature the original "napkin cartoon" drink special: draw a cartoon on a napkin, get a discount! Lumpy Gravy is located at 7311 Beverly Blvd. For information call (323) 934-9400.

* Tuesday, August 11 - Wednesday, August 12. San Diego, California, U.S.A.

The Pro/Con convention, an event for comics industry professionals, took place at the Hyatt Hotel, and the Comic Book Expo, a trade show open only to industry professionals, took place at the San Diego Convention Center, preceding the public event, Comic-Con (see below). For information visit www.comic-con.org.

* Thursday, August 13 - Sunday, August 16. San Diego, California, U.S.A.

The 29th International Comic-Con took place at the San Diego Convention Center. This massive event was, as always, open to the public and featured hundreds of exhibiting companies and comic book sellers, screenings, workshops and panel discussions such as the

WGA Animation Writers Caucus' "Summer Blockbuster to Saturday Morning" on Saturday at 11:00 a.m. Concurrently, the Comic Arts Conference, an academic event focused on comic studies, took place in the convention center. Presentation topics included "Comics as Therapy" and "War Comics as Literature and Propaganda." For information on all that is Comic-Con, visit www.comic-con.com or call (619) 544-9555.

* Friday, August 14 - Wednesday, August 19. Beijing, China.

AnimWorld '98, the first International Animation Art, Technology & Production Fair took place at the Beijing Exhibition Center. Focused around the theme "For Tomorrow," the event featured exhibiting companies, screenings and workshops. For information, contact the China Great Wall Exhibition Company by phone (86) 10 68748902 or fax (86) 10 68748900.

This event will be reviewed by Paul Marcot in an upcoming issue of *Animation World Magazine*. Meanwhile, for a view of animation in China, read Milt Vallas' article, "China: The Awakening Giant" in the August 1998 issue :

[<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue/3.5/3.5pages/3.5vallas.html>].

* Friday, August 14. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences hosted "Battle of the Apes," a double-feature screening of the first film version of *King Kong* (1933), with stop-motion animation by Willis O'Brien, and the original *Mighty Joe Young* (1949), with stop-motion effects by Willis O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen. Tickets

were \$5 for the general public, \$3 for Academy members. The doors at 8949 Wilshire Blvd. opened at 6:30 p.m. For information call (310) 247-3600.

* Friday, August 14 - Saturday, August 15, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

At the Directors Guild of America headquarters on Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood, the U.S. tour of the ResFest launched with a screening of digital films. The program included such digitally-animated delights as *The Smell of Horror* by Mitch Butler and *Roadhead* by Tommy Pallotta. Tickets were \$8.00 each. For details, including dates of future shows in San Francisco and New York, visit www.resfest.com

* Saturday, August 15. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation's Computer Animation Group meets on the third Saturday of every month at Rhythm & Hues Studios, 5404 Jandy Place in the Marina del Rey area. This is a pot-luck lunch (12:00 noon) with great networking opportunities. Admission is free to WIA L.A. members and new joining members, \$10 for non-members. Call (310) 448-7500.

* Sunday, August 16. Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

Pacific Film Archives hosted the premiere public screening of Wild Brains first original short film, *A Dog Cartoon*, directed by Dave Thomas. It was accompanied by Timothy Hittles Academy-Award nominated animated short *Canhead* and the live-action documentary *The Mole People*, a behind-the-scenes documentary of the San Francisco animation

world by Bay Area filmmakers Matt Boersma and Shari Rubin. All filmmakers were present. The show began at 3:00 p.m. at the Berkeley Art Museum Pacific Film Archive, 2625 Durant Avenue in Berkeley. For information call (510) 642-3035.

* Tuesday, August 18. Venice, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation Los Angeles sponsored a motion-capture demonstration and tour of the House of Moves studio in Venice. The event started at 7:00 p.m. and was free. For information call (310) 399-2485.

* Tuesday, August 18 - Sunday, August 23. Burbank, California, U.S.A.

ASIFA-Hollywood and Media City Center presented Anifest '98, a week-long, FREE animation festival. Scheduled events included evening presentations by producer Fred Seibert with *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!*, animator John Kricfalusi with "Toons Too Hot for TV" including *The Goddam George Liquor Show*, director Genndy Tartakovsky with *Dexter's Laboratory*, and stop-motion animator Corky Quakenbush who gave away props from his outrageous *MAD* TV shorts in a "Space Bass Garage Sale Giveaway." Daytime events included presentations by voice actors Nancy Cartwright (Bart Simpson) and Lucille Bliss, composer Ron Jones, animation guru Tom Sito, Disney animators on *Mulan*, as well as many other artists from Disney, Warner Bros., DreamWorks and Film Roman. For a complete schedule of events, contact ASIFA-Hollywood at (818) 842-8330 or asifa@earthlink.net.

* Sunday, August 16 - Sunday,

August 30. Edinburgh, Scotland, U.K.

The Edinburgh International Film Festival showcased features, shorts, animation and documentaries. For information contact submissions@edfilmfest.org.uk.

* Wednesday, Aug 19. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A.

The Hollywood Radio and TV Society (HRTS) hosted the fourth annual Newsmaker Luncheon at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Heads of children's programming were present from networks including ABC, Cartoon Network, CBS, the Disney Channel, Fox Kids, NBC, Nickelodeon, PBS, Showtime, UPN and the WB, to showcase their fall line-ups. This event was sold out, however for information about future HRTS events, visit www.hrts-iba.org

* Wednesday, Aug 19. Universal City, California, U.S.A.

The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) hosted a special meeting for its members who are television animation performers to review a tentative agreement with animation producers such as Disney, Warner Bros. and DreamWorks, covering voice-over performers working in television animation. The meeting, open only to SAG members, took place at 6:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Universal Hotel.

* Wednesday, Aug 19. Harrison, New York, U.S.A.

The Association of Independent Video Filmmakers toured the facility of Blue Sky|VIFX as part of their August meeting. The tour of the computer animation company was open only to the AIVF membership, and included a presentation about the company, a walk through the facility and a mixer

with Blue Sky|VIFX CEO David Brown and producer Michael Feder. Any professional industry organization wishing to schedule a similar tour of the location should contact brooks@blueskystudios.com

* Thursday, August 20. Sherman Oaks, California, U.S.A.

Women In Animation's Writers Group met at Warner Bros. TV Animation, 15303 Ventura Blvd. The month's topics were "New Development/Properties, Marketing & Merchandising and Standard/Practices," with speakers including Christopher Keenan of Warner Bros. Admission was \$10 for WIA L.A. members, \$20 for non-members, RSVP required. Call (818) 623-0020.

* Thursday, August 20 - Monday, August 24. Hiroshima, Japan.

The 7th biennial Hiroshima International Animation Festival is one of the leading animation festivals. AWN publisher Ron Diamond was present, and writer Gigi Hu will be reviewing the event for our October issue. For information visit www.urban.ne.jp/home/hiroanim/

* Friday, August 21. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A.

Galerie Morpheus, located at 9250 Wilshire Blvd., hosted the opening reception for an exhibition of art work by Christophe Vacher, a background artist at Walt Disney Feature Animation. The exhibit will be on display through mid-September. Call (310) 859-2557.

* Saturday, August 22 - Sunday, August 23. Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S.A.

The Classic Video Game Show and

Computer Exhibition took place at the Holiday Inn Boardwalk Hotel & Casino. Participants celebrated the joys of Atari and other "vintage" gaming systems. For information visit www.atarihq.com/atari98.

* Saturday, August 22 - Sunday, August 23. Toronto, Canada.

Anime North, an annual anime convention run by fans, took place. The program included an anime art and model show, panel discussions, gaming tournaments, and special events like "Anime Jeopardy" and "Anime Name-That-Tune." For information contact dfs@interlog.com or visit

<http://home.ipoline.com/~vegi-ta/an>

* Sunday, August 23. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A.

Well, its sort of animation...Dove Brothers hosted an auction of marionettes, artwork, memorabilia and puppets from 50 years of Sid & Marty Krofft productions such as *H.R. Pufnstuf*. The event started at 3:00 p.m. in the Beverly Hilton Hotel, 9876 Wilshire Blvd. For a catalog, contact (800) 319-2759 or visit www.dovebrothers.com.

Attention *Animation Flash* readers! Are there animation events going on in your area? Share your regional event news with the international animation community! Please send announcements to editor@awn.com, at least eight days in advance.

Awards

Gemini Noms. The Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television has announced the nominees for its annual Gemini Awards. The "Best Animated Program or Series"



Foot Soldiers by Curious Pictures, directed by Paul Berry.
Image courtesy of Curious Pictures.

nominees are: *Arthur* (Cinar Films), *Ned's Newt* (Nelvana), *Reboot* (Mainframe Entertainment/Alliance), *Sam and Max* (Nelvana) and *Stickin' Around* (Nelvana/YTV). Nelvana's *Franklin* is also nominated in the "Best Pre-School Program or Series" category, along with several live-action shows. Note: Companies listed for each production indicate the CANADIAN producer or co-producer attached to the show. Winners will be announced in October and subsequently included in the *Animation Flash*.

AICP Honors Animation. The Association of Independent Commercial Producers recently presented their annual awards at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. The animation category equally honored three productions. They are:

Reebok: *Foot Soldiers* by Curious Pictures, directed by Paul Berry.
Culligan's Water Softener: *Stone Family* by The End, directed by Shaun Sewter.

Reebok: *Pods* by Le Village, directed by Marc Caro.

A compilation of the winning AICP commercials is now touring the world with shows scheduled for U.S. cities as well as Russia, Poland, China, Japan and the Czech Republic. For show dates & locations, visit: www.aicp.com.

Emmy Noms. The nominees for the 1998 Primetime Emmy Awards were announced on July 23 by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (A.T.A.S.). The 1998 Primetime Emmy Awards will be split into two presentations: a ceremony in Pasadena on August 29 and a telecast on September 13 in Los Angeles' Shrine Auditorium. Animation-related winning shows will be named in the subsequent *Animation Flash* newsletter. The category for "Outstanding Animated Program (For programming one hour or less)" includes four nominations:

Cow And Chicken - "Free Inside, Journey To The Center Of Cow,

I.R. Pixie Faerie" (Hanna-Barbera/Cartoon Network).

Dexter's Laboratory - "Dyno-might & Lab-retto" (Hanna-Barbera/Cartoon Network).

King Of The Hill - "Texas City Twister" (Film Roman/Fox).

The Simpsons - "Trash Of The Titans" (Film Roman/Fox).

South Park - "Big Gay Als Big Gay Boat Ride" (Comedy Central).

In addition to this award, A.T.A.S.' Animation Peer Group votes on individual achievement juried awards. They selected Hank Azaria as "Outstanding Voice-Over Performance" for his role as "Apu" on *The Simpsons* (Fox) and for the "Outstanding Individual Achievement in Animation" category, production designer Eric Radomski was selected for his work on *Spawn* (HBO).

There has been some recent controversy about the A.T.A.S. animation peer group because Walt Disney TV and TV Animation president Charles Hirschhorn recently applied for a position in this peer group—which would give him the right to vote for the best animated program Emmy. In a turn of events detailed in *Daily Variety* (8/10/98), ATAS reportedly rejected Hirschhorn's application, and subsequently, Disney "threatened to yank a \$12,000 ad from *Emmy* magazine, which is published by ATAS." After some polling and scuffling, ATAS then decided to give Hirschhorn the voting position, and Disney reinstated the magazine ad. The resulting opinion of some industry executives, including members of the peer group, is that Hirschhorn "bought" his vote. The complete list of peer group requirements is available on the web site, www.emmys.org.

Anima Mundi Winners. The Anima Mundi festival has had its full run in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, Brazil. This is a festival at which the audience is the jury. In each city, the audience selects different films, but this year's selections were surprisingly similar.

Rio de Janeiro selected:

Best Film: *Gerí's Game* by Jan Pinkava, U.S.A.

Second Best Film: *Flat World* by Daniel Greaves, U.K.

Best Film for Children: *Es Wird Regen Geben* by Benedikt Niemann, Germany.

Best Computer Animation: *Una Nit* by Jordi Moragues, Spain.

Sao Paulo selected:

Best Film: *Gerí's Game* by Jan Pinkava, U.S.A.

Second Best Film: *Flat World* by Daniel Greaves, U.K.

Best Children Film: *Duel* by Pavel Koutsky, Canada.

Best Computer Animation: *Una Nit* by Jordi Moragues, Spain.

The "Best Brazilian Animation" prize is voted on by both audiences. The winner is *O Espantalho* by Ale Abreu, Brazil.

Don't miss our review of Anima Mundi in this issue!

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

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DESERT ISLAND SERIES

On A Desert Island With. . . . TV Toon Talents

compiled by Wendy Jackson and Russell Bekins

This month, we asked three people related to this issue's theme of television animation what films they would want to have with them if stranded on a desert island. Pascal Morelli is director of the new animated series *Corto Maltese*, featured on the cover of this issue. Tony Craig and Roberts Gannaway are both executive producers at Walt Disney Television Animation, where they work on animated series such as *101 Dalmatians*, *MouseWorks* and *Timon & Pumbaa*.

Bobs Gannaway's Favorites:

1. *Feed The Kitty* (Warner Bros.).
2. *Charlie Brown's Christmas* (Bill Melendez Productions).
3. *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Disney).
4. *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (MGM).
5. *Scaredy Cat* (Warner Bros.).
6. *Magical Maestro* (MGM).
7. *Mechanical Monsters* (Fleischer).
8. *Dumbo* (Disney).
9. *Cats Don't Dance* (Turner). [Incidentally, Roberts was a writer on this film.]
10. *Toy Story* (Disney/Pixar).

Added Roberts, "Plus, any Buster Keaton. He's more animated than most of today's cartoons."

Tony Craig's Top Ten:

1. Any Good Times Entertainment animated video knock off.
2. *Fat Albert's Halloween Special* (Fimation).
3. *Pinocchio & The Emperor of the Night* (Fimation).
4. *The Tiny Clowns of Happytown*. [Editor's note: We can't find anything on this one...perhaps Tony dreamed this one up!]
5. *Cool Cat* (Warner Bros.).
6. *Swan Princess II: Escape From Castle Mountain* (Rich Animation).
7. The title sequence from *Gremlins 2*, directed by Chuck Jones (Warner Bros./Amblin).
8. *Rubik, The Amazing Cube*, the hour-long special (1983 TV series, producer unknown).
9. Gene Deitch's *Popeye* extravaganza.
10. *Vegas Vacation*. (It wasn't animated, but by God it was hilarious!)

Pascal Morelli's People Picks:

For his stay on a desert island, Pascal decided that he didn't just want to watch animated movies, he wanted to be shipwrecked with five animation creators. One presumes that it would be handy to have an animation studio tucked away somewhere on the sandy waste, but what they might come up with is anyone's guess. Here is his list of fellow castaways:

1. Bob Clampett "because he's the best of his kind."
 2. Hayao Miyazaki for *The Castle Cagliostro*. "It's fun, enjoyable; it's the best of Japanese, and it shows his potential."
 3. John Kricfalusi, the creator of *Ren and Stimpy*, "for obvious reasons."
 4. Joe Horn for his work on *Stevie and Zoia*. "It shows that everything can be done for no money; it's great poor man's animation."
 5. Peter Chung for *Aeon Flux* "because it's totally the opposite of Joe Horn."
- "It's a shame there's no women on the list," muttered Morelli.

Independent Filmmakers, October 1998

This month we are going around the world as we look at independent filmmakers. Rada Sesic is going to discuss the animation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Andrea Martignoni will take a look at current Italian independent filmmakers. Philippe Moins is profiling South African animator William Kentridge. Plus, Marie Beardmore will examine the current market for independents. On the Commercials side of the issue, Karen Raugust is going to take a look at the popular animated frogs and wise-cracking lizards of Anheuser-Busch's successful advertising campaign for "Bud-weis-er" beer. We are also going to hear from directors who explain why they enjoy being both independent filmmakers and commercial directors.

Barry Purves will grace us with yet another production diary and Glenn Vilppu will shed a little more light on life drawing. The 7th Hiroshima International Animation Festival and the Beijing Expo, along with the Society for Animation Studies' recent pow-wow, will all be reviewed. In addition, Jerry Beck will review Dave Wasson's new *Oh Yeah! Cartoons!* short, *Max and His Special Problem*.

Animation World Magazine 1998 Calendar

Independent Filmmakers	(October)
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Licensing and Merchandising	(November)
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Family Animation	(December)
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