

# ANIMATION WORLD

Vol. 3 Issue 9

MAGAZINE

December 1998

## Amusement Parks & Family Entertainment

*"It's Tough to be a Bug" at  
Disney's Animal Kingdom*

**"Rugrats" and "Bug's Life" Reviewed!  
Craig Bartlett's Past Life**

- **Edutainment and the Internet**
- **Plus, avant-garde master Harry Smith**

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Cover: An audience, with a special guest, enjoys "Its Tough to be a Bug," a multi-media event featuring 3D animation, special effects and Audio-AnimaTronic® characters based on *A Bug's Life*. Featured at the new Orlando theme park, Disney's Animal Kingdom, the show is screened in the 430-seat Tree of Life theater.7

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# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Heather Kenyon

**W**ow! Its an interactive future!

I can't wait to go to Disneyland in forty years. It is going to be unbelievable! Already I am a huge fan of Disneyland. The best treat for me in the past has been a two day ticket given to me for Christmas. So, to read Clark Dodsworth's article "Theme Parks in the Digital Age" is exciting not only because of his predictions of the future, but also for what is already here. I realized that the Indiana Jones ride was different every time I went through but I had no idea this could be attributed to the new digital age. Who knew we were already a part of the future?

This issue of *Animation World Magazine* bubbles with promise, the promise of cool new inventions made possible only by the advent of digital technology. As one group of developers tops another and so on and so on, we are bound to have an abundant supply of new ways to spend our off hours and extra dollars. I also think embracing the Internet in all of these plans is notable, as it fulfills the true potential of the web as a meeting place. While many think the Internet is useless because there is no way to weed out the silly, unnecessary or incorrect content; it is actually marvelous for bringing people together. Having an outlet in ones own

home to connect with people with similar interests is a treat. I recently received an e-mail in Spanish. After having it translated, I learned that this man lives in South America in an area where there are limited to no animation resources. He queried if we knew other Spanish speakers from whom he could learn more about animation and have discussions. His e-mail was so joyous at having found us. "It is nice to know I am not alone," he wrote.

We are also discussing Family Animation in this issue. Ted Pedersen & Francis Moss' "Edutainment and the Internet" proves that the Internet can be a safe place for kids to stretch their minds. The duo states in their piece that the Internet is perfect for children as, "Clearly kids today are part of a new generation — a post-television generation." Now, I really feel old and I only graduated university in 1993. With the Internet just two years old, who thought it would be a viable place for job hunting. Indeed, I hadn't even been on the Internet! I think a few of the university libraries were connected but no one had it in their dorm rooms. Here at Animation World Network e-mails flood in from students all over the world, each with their own account.

Those not on the Internet are missing a tremendous shift for



two reasons. The theme that turned up in this issue, article after article, is that the future will be interactive. Either machines or other individuals will always be there to "play." The Internet is our first foray into this interactive, available 24-hours a day world. Information is just a click away at all times and chat rooms and gaming sites also provide entertainment on demand. The other shift is a little less apparent and a little more abstract...

While many protest an individual's site is rubbish — 'Who cares what Ned Bingham in Amarillo, Texas has to say about his cat Fluffy!' — I think it is the ultimate in realizing the Modern Era. I'll explain. For European cultures and those based on them through Colonization, prior to the Enlightenment Movement (the 18th Cen-

ture philosophical movement concerned with examining previously accepted doctrines and institutions), the idea of the individual wasn't considered. In broad terms, the class and occupation that one was born into was where one stayed with no questions asked. Nobles were nobles and serfs were serfs. Only 300 years ago did the radical notions of equality, liberty, and justice for all begin to prevail (the French Revolution being the first major blow to the establishment), ushering in the Modern Age. While governments and individuals still struggle with ensuring that the above rights are

given to everyone, it is a little reassuring to know that Ned Bingham can have his own web site, reaffirming that he is important and has a right to broadcast to the world. Welcome to modernity, where everyone is allowed to have an identity, and to the Internet, where everyone has free rein to broadcast their individuality.

This issue also brought to my attention the fascinating artist Harry Smith. Giannalberto Bendazzi's review of *American Magus - Harry Smith - A Modern Alchemist* led me to Rani Singh of the Harry Smith Archives who informed me of the new book, *Think of the Self*

*Speaking: Selected Interviews of Harry Smith*. To tap into a completely different way of thinking and to connect with someone Bendazzi calls, "one of the most hidden, obscure and enigmatic figures in the entire history of animation and the avant-garde," read on about Harry Smith.

Until Next Time,  
Heather



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## Dubbing Can Be A Problem...

I have read Debra K. Chinn's "International Theatrical Dubbing: Its More Than Meets the Eye" and would like to share a few experiences with you. When dubbing is done properly, it enhances the movie experience, but when it is done wrong, it can kill a film. I am from the Czech Republic and all of the movies that come out here on video are dubbed. In the theaters, only about half of them are dubbed and most of my friends are thankful for each and every one that is not.

I remember when Harrison Ford spoke his first Czech lines in *Clear and Present Danger*. The voice was terrible and the whole theater began laughing. Moreover, the titles are sometimes translated without a true understanding of what they mean. For instance, *Hot Shots* was translated as *Shots Which Are Hot* and *Private Parts* was translated as *Private Vice*.

The dialogue almost always lacks the wit of the original. The double-headed dragon in *Quest for Camelot* originally says, "We are the reason why relatives should not marry." The dubbed version said, "We are a genetic problem." The joke is lost. The charm is lost. It is dull. I think "dull" is the word that describes dubbed versions best.

I remember most of the English lines from the *Star Wars* Trilogy. When I borrowed *Star Wars* on video, I was shocked to hear very polite dialogue with very

little, if any, wit and sometimes a totally different meaning. For example in the English version, Luke says, "I am not afraid," and Yoda answers, "You will be!" In the Czech version Yoda says, "Really?"

These are some examples of why my friends always shudder at the thought of seeing another dubbed movie. In fact, some prefer to wait for a satellite channel to show the film in English. One of my buddies, a huge cartoon fan, stopped going to theaters to see the Disney movies because he hates what Czech dubbing does to them. Although he is quite extreme, I have to admit that listening to Czech versions of Ariel's songs was very unpleasant and painful indeed.

I have done quite a bit of translating and it is not an easy job. Sometimes it takes a lot of effort to come up with the correct translation, something that really fits. It takes time. It takes effort. It takes energy. It seems to me that the folks who are doing the translating for movies here are quite lazy (or very badly paid) at best.

I hope my point of view will help you in your work, especially since the new *Star Wars* Trilogy is approaching. I hope Fox will not force them to be dubbed.

Best regards,  
Richard K. Taufman

*Editor's Note: I think Debra's article showed that some U.S. studios are placing a new emphasis on the importance of*

*proper dubbing. By setting up complete internal departments to handle the dubbing process, the studios are being more involved and stringent in their standards. I will be curious to see if you see any marked changes in the near future. Please write back after you see The Phantom Menace. I'll be interested to hear what you think about the quality.*

## American Dramas?

First, I do believe that the American animation industry has advanced in the past 10 years. We have advanced from only producing kids cartoons to producing more "adult" cartoons like *The Simpsons*.

I have noticed though that for the last ten years (1989-1998) the majority of "adult" cartoons on prime time are sitcoms like, *The Simpsons*, *South Park*, *Bob and Margaret*, etc. Why are most of the "adult" American cartoons produced sitcoms? It seems that year after year, the only thing animation producers can think to produce are animated adult sitcoms.

Have any of these American animation producers ever thought about producing something different? How about an animated drama aimed at adults? Or even an animated western aimed at adults? It seems that all the good writers are aimed at making viewers laugh instead of creating dramatic material.

You are probably saying to yourself, "The idea of dramatized



animation is silly. Nobody would buy this idea." Well, there is such animation that does exist. It is called "Anime" or Japanese animation. The Japanese produce animation in every possible genre from childrens material to R-rated material. In Japan, there are successful dramatic titles, which have shown more promise of breaking the animation mold than anything America has attempted to do.

Even if the people who are

reading this letter do not like anime, most of them have to agree that mature animation is the wave of the future in animation. Whether it is American, Japanese, French or German, hopefully, someday Americans will not look at animation as just "silly kids cartoons."

I hope I have not offended anybody, but it seems that the American animation industry has not tried any new concepts, other

than animated adult sitcoms and kids shows, in the past ten years.

Sincerely,  
Anonymous

*Editor's Note: Anonymous, you are not alone. I receive quite a bit of similar mail, especially since we ran "The Color In Mind: Corto Maltese" Let's hope someone out there is listening.*



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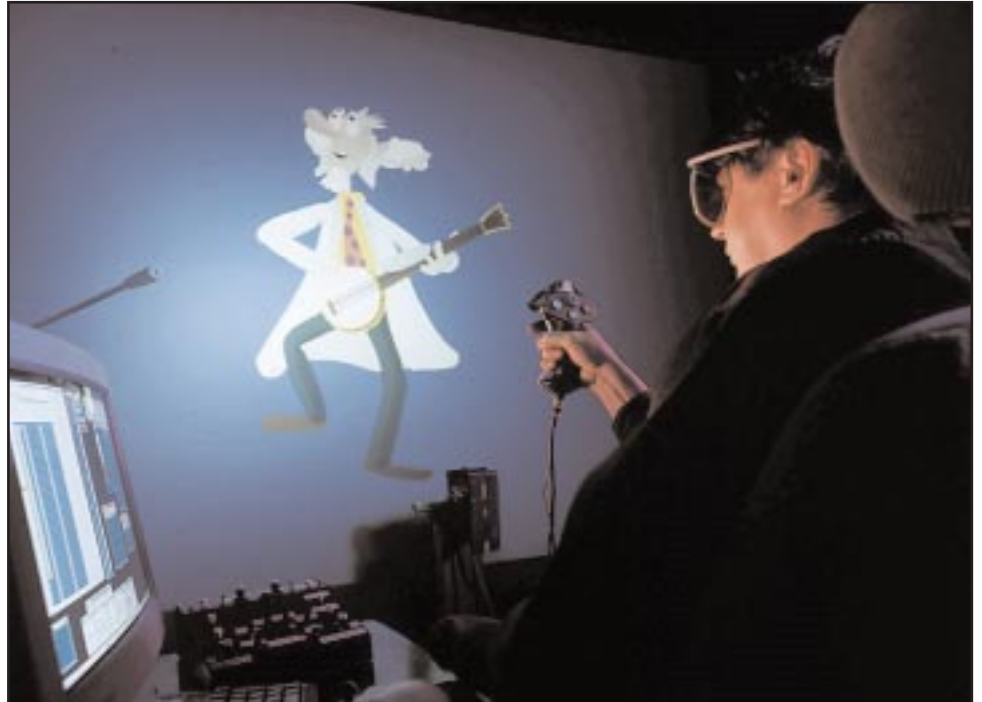
# Dig This!

## Humongous Cartoons with a Little Technology

by Amid Amidi

IMAX, a major player in the world of large-format films and theaters, is now trying to make headway in the animation world with a precedent setting new technology that truly integrates human interaction with technology. The innovative break-through in question is called SANDDE (Stereo Animation Drawing Device) — a revolutionary new large-format 3D animation system that lets animators draw and animate in space instead of on paper or a computer. The three-dimensional stereoscopic films created with SANDDE allow artists to emphasize size relationships and create actions that move toward and away from the audience creating a grand effect when viewed on IMAX 3D screens that are upwards of three stories tall.

"Animators like to draw. They do not want a keyboard, a mouse and complicated engineering manipulations to interrupt the creative flow; they just want to draw," says IMAX co-founder and developer of the SANDDE system, Roman Kroitor. That's why animation produced with this new 3D process is so unique — an animator freely manipulates a wand-like device in mid-air inside a localized magnetic field that records and translates the movement of the hand into 3D coordinates. Says Kroitor, "I thought it would be great if artists could have a direct relationship to making an animated 3D image by drawing in space



An animator uses the SANDDE wand while reviewing the real-time results on a projection system that simulates the IMAX 3D theater experience. © 1997 Imax Corporation SANDDE™ Animation.

as they have when they draw on a piece of paper." The results are then viewable in real-time on a special networked Windows NT computer workstation designed to match the viewing angles and stereo presentation of an IMAX 3D theater as closely as possible. Furthermore, the films created with this process don't have the sterilized look of modern computer animation, but rather the appearance and feel of "traditional" cel-animation, resulting in both a process and result that is vastly different from anything else out there.

The SANDDE system is complemented by GEPETTO, a supporting technology that is similar to the inbetweening process in traditional animation. GEPETTO

permits the user to create long and complex animated sequences using only a few key drawings. Not only does this enable a single animator complete control over the entire creative process, but it also allows the artist a chance to animate actions in real-time allowing instant re-takes.

The first film to hatch using the SANDDE system was the IMAX 3D animated film *Paint Misbehavin'*. The 2-minute 7-second film was initially shown in 1997 with IMAX's *The Nutcracker*, but is now being added to every new IMAX 3D print. Other films are currently in the works as well, although SANDDE is still in an active development stage.





A still from *Paint Misbehavin'*. © 1997 Imax Corporation SANDDE™ Animation.

The possibilities are certainly very intriguing with SANDDE, but with only one film under their belt, it's a little too early to predict the impact this new device will have in the filmmaking world. However, the potential is certainly

there. After using SANDDE, Academy Award-nominated animator Sylvain Chomet (director of *The Old Lady and the Pigeons*) sees the system "as being absolutely revolutionary in the way of thinking about the art of animation,"

and describes it as if, "walking around in your dreams." And who wouldn't like to do that?

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

Editor  
 Animation World Magazine  
 6525 Sunset Blvd.  
 Garden Suite 10  
 Hollywood, CA 90028 U.S.A.  
 E-mail: editor@awn.com.

*Amid Amidi is associate editor of Animation World Magazine.*

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

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# The Mouse's Wild Side: Disney's New Animal Kingdom

by Joseph Szadkowski



Photo courtesy and © 1998 Jacquie Kubin.

**W**alt Disney's desire to learn and teach is legendary at Walt Disney World, particularly in the Imagineering Department — the place where Disney magic is created. "Arnie Stuvad, our senior executive in Imagineering, worked with Walt around the time he created Disneyland in Anaheim, California," said Rick Rothschild, executive producer at Imagineering. "He talks about a time where Walt was walking through the hallways of the studio, and nobody came up and asked him any questions, and it seemed like everything was working fine and that was the moment that worried him the most."

## A Zoo, Disney Style

The newest park addition

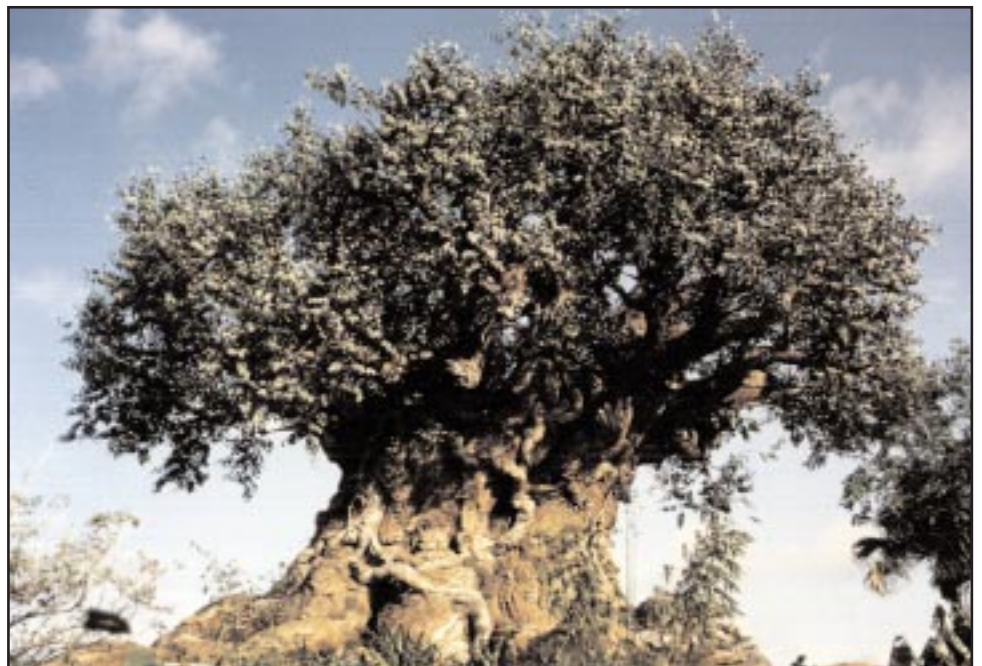
in Florida's Walt Disney World Resort is the spectacular Animal Kingdom, a 500 acre environment that comes from a collaboration between experts in different aspects of animal behavior and the creative minds of the Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI) team. A celebration of all animals, Animal Kingdom presents visitors with an environment that allows them to interact intimately with its inhabitants. Imagineers and caretakers have created a world that presents them in all their furred, feathered and colorful glory.

"This whole park is about the real animals found in Africa,

Asia and even the extinct dinosaurs," said Tom Sze, a Walt Disney World (WDW) architect. "It teaches and celebrates all these marvelous creatures from the biggest wild African elephant to the smallest stink bug."

A celebration of all animals, Animal Kingdom presents visitors with an environment that allows them to interact intimately with its inhabitants.

The park's centerpiece is the incredible Tree of Life, which Sze



The awe-inspiring Tree of Life stands 145 feet tall and begs to be inspected more closely with hundreds of bas relief etched into the body of the tree. © 1998 Disney. All Rights Reserved.



likens to being the eighth wonder of the world. "The Tree of Life is amazing. The body of the tree has 325 bas-relief that are viewable from every angle," said Sze. "As you walk around the park, it is often within your vision and you will always be finding a new crustacean, wild horse or butterfly amongst its branches and bark."

Surrounded by the parks Oasis, a collection of rocky grottos teaming with brightly plumed birds and anteaters, the architected Tree of Life hides one of Animal Kingdom's most interesting and educational features, the 3D animated story, "It's Tough to be a Bug."

### Designing Bugs Simultaneously

"We started with the notion that bugs are the largest single species of creatures; they make up more than 80% of all the things that move around the Earth," said Rothschild. "In developing the story, we realized that most people see bugs as being pests. So we got together with a team of top entomologists and asked them if they had eight minutes in which to tell a story about bugs, what would be the three most important things that could be said."

The response that the WDI team received was that without bugs, we could not exist. The entomologists wanted to see an attraction that would make human visitors, young and old, not only look at bugs as either beautiful like butterflies or amazing in what they can do, like ants, but also appreciated for their incredible contributions to the environment. In other words, without the crawling Dung Beetle that eats waste or the buzzing bee

that pollinates plants and crops, we humans would have a hard time surviving.

"Knowing the story that we wanted to tell, we were also aware of the fact that Pixar was developing the movie *A Bug's Life*, starring Flik the Ant and Hopper the Grasshopper," said Rothschild. "We thought if we could bring those characters in to tell our story, that would be great."

At that time, Pixar was in the early process of development which presented some additional challenges for the production team. "The Disney organization was getting the animatronics to work with Pixar, who was doing the animation of Flik and Hopper. Rhythm and Hues, who won an Academy Award for *Babe*, did all the other bugs and backgrounds," said Rothschild. "We needed to bring all those people together with the Disney forces to create a seamless experience for the audience member. Only at this time, Pixar was not very far in the process. In fact, they did not have one solid animation of Hopper and we needed to begin building this eight foot animated figure of him for the attraction. I think this might be the only time that the attraction for a film was built before the film was done. It made it very interesting at times," he added.

For the Disney animatronics team there were some very special problems when creating the moving figures to accent the 3D animated film. First, the animatronic characters are seen by the audience just before the film begins. "Creating the animated figure of Hopper was a big new step in terms of the fact that he is

certainly the most sophisticated figure we have done to date for a couple of reasons, one being his scale," said Rothschild. "We are talking about a grasshopper that is eight feet tall and he has to move like he does on film and in real-life."

One of Animal Kingdom's most interesting and educational features is the 3-D animated story, "It's Tough to be a Bug."

The challenge for the team is that the audience sees him one minute in the theater as an animatronic and then thirty seconds later animated on screen. The animatronic figure needed to move and walk in a manner so that the audience would believe that Hopper had moved from the stage to the screen.

Flik presented similar challenges in that the audience finds a blue hued ant in the ceiling of the theater (within the roots and sub-structure of the Tree of Life, a very appropriate place for an ant to hang out) and then five seconds later, he also walks into the film. "The whole approach to the way we developed the faces to articulate when compared against the animation films articulation was a challenge which I think we delivered well on," said Rothschild.

Another bug for the designers to work out was in placing the mechanical workings of the animatronics into the thin limbs that are characteristic of an insect, and then getting him to take his place quickly, appearing almost like magic before the audi-



ence. "Hopper has to go from not being seen to being seen in less than two seconds and it is almost a feat of magic and an extraordinary thing to watch with the lights on," said Rothschild. "To me that is a real tribute to thirty plus years of learning and a tremendous continued tenacity on the part of the guys and gals who build these figures and say, 'We may have never done this before but we think maybe we can' and then they do it!"

For the Disney animatronics team there were some very special problems when creating the moving figures to accent the 3-D animated film, *A Bug's Life*.

### These Aren't Your Father's Animatronics

Flik and Hopper are not the only animatronic creatures in the Kingdom. From the elephants, gorillas and giant butterflies found in the Rain Forest Cafe, to the dinosaurs in the DinoLand U.S.A. thrill ride Countdown to Extinction, there are numerous animals infused with electrical life.

Walking beneath the skeletal remains of a T-Rex, explorers entering DinoLand U.S.A. first stroll past a bone yard. The bone yard gives visitors the chance to dig in the dirt and uncover the replica remains of a woolly mammoth. In this area,

there are archeology lessons, lots of people to answer questions, and slides, rope bridges and fountains within which to play. "We wanted to give everybody an opportunity to enjoy and learn about dinosaurs on their own level and to celebrate them," said Ann Mamlund, show producer. "The bone yard gives visitors the ability to touch and discover cast replicas of real dinosaur bones."

Walt Disney personally directed the building of the first animatronic Disney Dinosaurs more than thirty-five years ago for the New York Worlds Fair. Then the Disney Imagineers built a meandering ride through a prehistoric world of slowly moving massive creatures. Today's Imagineers have created the fast paced, thrill ride Countdown to Extinction, a trans-dimensional journey that takes groups of twelve in a Time Rover vehicle back to the exact moment of the dinosaurs' extinction.



Countdown to Extinction in DinoLand U.S.A. takes one back to the age of dinosaurs courtesy of Disney Imagineers. © 1998 Disney. All Rights Reserved.

The wait in line is fascinating as journeyers pass through a foyer where fossil molds, as well as some of the survivors of the dinosaur age, are on display. Once in the rotunda, visitors in line are entertained with the story of the dinosaurs extinction which, they learn, most likely came about from the impact of a large asteroid. How scientists know this is by a layer of asteroid dust, called the KT boundary, that exists below the earth's surface. Actually, throughout DinoLand, observant visitors will see soft shelled turtles, lizards and beetles that are descendants of the creatures that survived the asteroids.

It is at this point that the very young children, noticeably excited, wonder if the dinosaurs they are about to encounter are scary. Countdown to Extinction contains, according to Walt Disney Imagineers, the most exciting audio-animatronic figures ever created. Throughout the experience

amazed riders come face to face with iguanodon, pterodactyl, compsognathers, alioramous and the show's big bad guy, the carnotaurus.

"We chose the carnotaurus because we know so much about him," said Mamlund. "A near complete skeleton of the carnotaurus was uncovered in Argentina, but the discovery was particularly unique in that when the dinosaur fell, his skin left an impression in the mud so we know that his hide was rough and covered in bumps and knobs."



All types of animals inhabit the grounds of Disney's Animal Kingdom. Photo courtesy and © 1998 Jacquie Kubin.

The beast in Countdown to Extinction is larger than his ancestors and his features, as with some of the other animatrons, were exaggerated. "Sometimes the ride moves very fast and the dinosaurs leap out of nowhere," said Malmund. "By exaggerating things a little we were able to insure that visitors were able to see some of the nuances with only a quick glimpse." Countdown is filled with sudden surprises, but is fun for all ages.

One young man who was frightened to get on the ride exited afterwards with a sigh of relief and happiness that he had mustered up the courage. "It was neat and I was only a little scared," said six year-old James Correira from South Dartmouth, Massachusetts. "I liked all of the dinosaurs in the ride and I learned that they are not scary at all. I also learned that they died when they were hit with an asteroid." Well, James, maybe they aren't too scary for you but I doubt many would want to meet a hungry carnotaurus in a dark alley.

### Natural Delights

Education at Animal Kingdom does not only come from man-made animatronic exhibits. For instance, some of the gentlest

learning is done while watching a real-life black rhinoceros lumber across the Kilimanjaro Safaris roadway. The Safari presents visitors with a 100-acre African Serengeti-inspired savannah, or grass land. It is here that the lions share of the Animal Kingdom inhabitants live.

Harambe Village serves as the gateway to the Safari and the Gorilla Falls Exploration Trail. Before taking the safari journey, visitors who walk down the trails will find themselves staring face to face with a family of hippos who swim gracefully before the plexiglass viewing windows.

Down another trail, children can be heard exclaiming their amazement at a family of silverback gorillas. The mother has made herself and her young baby a bedlike nest right next to the protective window. She seems to watch the mothers and children on the other side almost as intently as they watch her. In the background, a proud father rough-houses a bit with his teenage son before stopping to snack on some of the plants growing within his home. Visitors are also able to stop within what seems to be an open-aired aviary where colorful birds fly directly overhead.

It is then on to the Kiliman-

jaro Safaris, an open rover ride through grasslands filled with sable antelope, reticulated giraffes, rhinoceroses, Thompsons gazelles and other wonderful animals native to Africa. The stars of this journey though are the elephants. These graceful giants are part of the conservation story told by Kilimanjaro Safaris while visitors wait to board the vehicles and en route.

Education at Animal Kingdom does not only come from man-made animatronic exhibits.

Disney has outfitted the rovers with "two-way" radios through which the driver keeps in contact with the reserves warden. Through their conversation, riders learn that the Thompsons Gazelle is called a Tommy by natives and that the white and black rhinoceros, along with the elephant, have been killed to the point of endangerment. In fact, there are less than 5,000 black rhinos left in the wild. Adding a bit of danger to the ride, as it crosses an old bridge, the rover almost seems to slip into the river below. Beyond the curve, riders can see the African Ele-





"Festival of the Lion King" is an elaborate 28-minute stage extravaganza featuring performers in tribal robes and costumed characters from *The Lion King*. © 1998 Disney. All Rights Reserved.

phants with flapping ears and searching trunks walk, eat and play in a pond no more than thirty feet from the vehicle.

**As theme parks go, Animal Kingdom is a leopard that has changed its spots.**

As the rover continues through the grassland there is a sudden urgent call from the warden in his plane overhead. It seems that poachers have tried to capture Big Red and her calf, Little Red. The warden requests the rovers help to block off the poachers' escape. Of course, this being Disney, everything works out, the elephants are rescued and the last animal visitors see on the Safari is an animatronic Little Red in the back of a truck.

The learning continues throughout the park via fun activi-

ties and wonderfully produced stage shows such as the "Journey into Jungle Book" at DinoLand U.S.A. or the "Festival of the Lion King" in Camp Minnie-Mickey.

As theme parks go, Animal Kingdom is a leopard that has changed its spots. The Imagineers have pulled out their bags of tricks, adding in some new surprises, to allow park-goers to visit, experience and think about the world animal populations beauty, necessity and magnificence. Animal Kingdom makes for a great day that will flash back to visitors often.

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

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



**ANIMATION WORLD NETWORK**

6525 Sunset Blvd.,  
Garden Suite 10  
Hollywood, CA 90028  
Phone : 323.468.2554  
Fax : 323.464.5914  
Email : [info@awn.com](mailto:info@awn.com)

**ANIMATION WORLD**

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

**PUBLISHER**

Ron Diamond, President  
Dan Sarto, Chief Operating Officer

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Heather Kenyon

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

Amid Amidi

**CONTRIBUTORS**

- Amid Amidi
- Giannalberto Bendazzi
- Joseph K. Bevilacqua
- Clark Dodsworth
- Wendy Jackson
- Heather Kenyon
- Michael Mallory
- Katie Mason
- Mark Mayerson
- Francis Moss and Ted Pedersen
- Chuck Pirtle
- Barry Purves
- Deborah Reber
- Rani Singh
- Charles Solomon
- Joseph Szadkowski
- Glenn Vilppu

**TRANSLATION**

Italian: William Moritz  
Additional Translation: Jose Iborra

**OPERATIONS**

Annick Teninge, General Manager

**WEBMASTER**

Jeff Williams

**DESIGN/LAYOUT**

Jeff Williams / Steve Small /  
Dianne Howard

**ADVERTISING SALES**

North America : Dan Sarto  
Germany : Thomas Basgier  
UK: Alan Smith



# Bartlett's Charmed Past Life

by Joe K. Bevilacqua

Craig Bartlett's career has been like one long free-fall from a plane and he has been enjoying every minute of it. The talented creator of Nickelodeon's successful *Hey Arnold!* animated series did not start out to be an animator but the many twists and turns of his life led him there, nonetheless.

With dreams of being a fine arts painter, Bartlett studied for three years at the Museum School in Portland, Oregon. He then studied for a year in Siena, Italy. Upon returning to the States he realized he did not want to be a painter after all. He suddenly realized he was more interested in animation. "I was seeing these *Tournees of Animation*," he explains, "Whole 90-minute programs of independent shorts and they were really creative. They were like paintings that moved. I thought that would be much more fun. It was turning out that my true calling was to be a storyteller, more than a painter. That's what I loved about animation. It is where the two things come together, art and story." After some more soul searching, he enrolled in the animation program at Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington in 1981.

## Places to Start

Bartlett's first job after graduation was at Will Vinton Productions in Portland, Oregon. Bartlett says, "I spent 6 years there; two working on *The Adventures of Mark Twain* and a year on Walter Murch's *Return to Oz*, which was a Disney production. There were

some really cool claymation effects that I did in that film." Around the same time Vinton's California Raisins were at the height of their popularity, Bartlett's next Vinton assignment was doing the Noid commercials for Dominos Pizza. It was a busy time for Claymation. Vinton had never been so successful and famous. Just as Bartlett began to think he had found a permanent home, his life took another turn.

Pee Wee's Playhouse came on CBS and I really wanted to go and be a part of that. - Craig Bartlett

"*Pee Wee's Playhouse* came on CBS and I really wanted to go and be a part of that," says Bartlett. "I thought, 'That looks like the most fun show ever.' The mix they had. The different kinds of media. All kinds of animation." Bartlett put together a reel of claymation and sent it to the producers of *Pee Wee's Playhouse* who called him in because they were moving the show from New York, where *Pee Wee* had its first season, to Los Angeles. They had lost a lot of their crew and needed someone to direct the *Penny* cartoon, a featured segment of the *Pee Wee* show. So he dropped everything and said, "Yeah!"

"It's funny," he reflects. "That was really a turning point for me because I really had a great time at Wills and I loved being in Portland. It felt like home, since I am from the Northwest." But Bartlett knew that if he was really going to



Craig Bartlett. Photo © BRC Imagination Arts.

develop professionally and creatively, he had to move beyond Will Vinton. He knew he had to go to Los Angeles, where "anything is possible." So he moved to L.A. for the summer of 1987 to direct a season of *Penny*. The next year, in the spring of 1988, he and his wife moved permanently.

## A Real Change of Events

During his first year with *Pee Wee's Playhouse*, a friend introduced him to Bob Rogers, whose company is now called BRC Imagination Arts. Rogers' specialty is World's Fair exhibition films. "Well, I got there and he saw my reel," Bartlett remembers. "He knew that I had done [*Penny*] and all I had on my reel were the little *Arnold* shorts I'd made on my own animation stand in my house. Actually, at that time I had only made one *Arnold* short in the summer of 1988 when I was unemployed. I think I had just moved to L.A. permanently and I had one week's work guaranteed

when I got here. I shot a commercial and then I was just wandering around, trying to figure out what I was going to do now that I lived here." Bartlett entered that first *Arnold* short, *Arnold Escapes from Church*, in the 21st International Tournee of Animation, remembering that it was seeing the Tournees years before that had made him want to be animator in the first place.



**Arnold in the clay short, *The Arnold Waltz* (1990). Photo courtesy and © Craig Bartlett.**

"There I am in Japan for ten weeks, in the middle of winter. It was freezing. I was on the site of this insane Worlds Fair. It was particularly phantasmagorical." The theme of Expo '90 was flowers and ecology, so the pavilions were shaped like huge flower buds. Bartlett was very

impressed with this "futuristic paradise." He felt as if the Japanese were already living in the 21st century. He loved how independent they were, that they had cartoons all their own.

#### **A Few More Twists**

In the summer of 1990, when Bartlett returned to the States it would not be long before he was working again. This time for a show that was just starting up through Nickelodeon's fledgling animation division, at a studio called Klasky Csupo. The show was *Rugrats*. Paul Germain, one of the show's creators, hired him as the story editor. "This was quite a stretch," he acknowledges. "I hadn't really written for TV and wasn't really familiar with the whole script thing. But Paul helped me a lot and the two of us story edited that first season. Eventually, I directed a couple of episodes. Through him I met several other writers, who I ended up working with on other projects and eventually on *Hey Arnold!* when I got that show."

In 1992, Bob Rogers called upon Bartlett again, this time for a film for Expo '92 in Seville, Spain. The client was the Basque government. The Basque country is a small area on the northeast corner

of Spain wedged against France. Rogers, Bartlett and a crew scouted for about 10 days all over the Basque countryside. They then put together an outline and pitched it to the Basque government.

"Mind you, these pavilion projects are all short films, 7 to 14 minutes," Bartlett explains. "It's weird to see people get in a big line, and queue up and slowly get into the place. That's why they have pre-shows. It's a long wait for a seven-minute cartoon. The whole idea of these special venue films is they've got some sort of new format or some unusual presentation so people feel like they are watching more than a film. That's what Bob specializes in."

After seeing Bartlett's reel, Bob Rogers invited him to create a 70mm, IMAX size film for Expo '90 in Osaka, Japan.

After seeing Bartlett's reel, Bob Rogers invited him to create a 70mm, IMAX size film for Expo '90 in Osaka, Japan. The big pavilion show would feature a musical, technological pre-show where Toshiba robots create animation. Since Bartlett had done a lot of table top animation, Rogers wanted him first to shoot a reference film that would have small scale models of the robots and pose them through animatics. Bartlett worked on the test film for the entire summer of 1989, then all through the next year doing the production. The end result was *Robo Show*, a 7-minute animated film that was taken to Osaka, Japan and installed with the real Toshiba robots. Bartlett calls it "some kind of crazy smoke and mirrors illusion thing with the robots hooked up with our illusion film."

Bartlett's background in animation did not prepare him for such a wild shoot...

The Basque film, *Mi Pias Vasco*, was live-action and shot with an IWERKS 360-degree camera. It is one "huge fish eye" lens that is the size of "a big spaghetti bowl" that points straight down. The lens is so wide it sees 12 degrees beyond a normal camera's peripheral view, over scanning behind itself. Pointing down, it can partially see upward. Bartlett went around Spain with this camera and shot the story of a child touring his homeland and talking about his country. "This boy has got this crazy camera and he is taking it around the Basque country on a family vacation. The idea was to go to as many great locations in Spain as possible as if this kid was taking you along."

Bartlett's background in animation did not prepare him for such a wild shoot: "It was so



weird. I had to learn everything. The first thing we had to figure out was where to hide while we shot the film. So, often I was under the camera, on the ground, huddled inside the tripod. It was really fun. We quickly learned that in a 360 degree film, you concentrate on the near and far. So I would have the kid that was the star of the film close to the camera and the other people in the middle distance ten feet away. I would have things miles away. We put the camera on boats and in cars, hanging from cranes, and made it as insane as we could. I also under-cranked the camera for a lot of fast-motion stuff. It was meant to be just funny, like a kids home movie." When the film premiered in Seville, Bartlett returned to Spain for the screening at the Expo '92 pavilion.

### Stranger and Stranger...

Next, he continued his association with Bob Rogers, although he had an open invitation to return to *Rugrats*. Rogers hired Bartlett to direct a nine-camera film, similar to the CircleVision films at Disneyland. The film, named "Postcards," was sponsored by Korean Air for Expo '93 in Taejon, Korea. It took a full year from pre-production to completion and was shot in seven countries on a budget of US \$4 million. "We



Craig on location in Botswana for the filming of *Postcards* (left) and in Paris with the star of the film (right).

just went nuts," Bartlett recalls. "We traveled all over the world for a year — Korea, Paris, France, Botswana, South Africa, Grand Canyon, Canadian Rockies, Bali and Rio de Janeiro at Carnival. Completely filled up our passports." It was, however, intense and grueling work. Bartlett would hit the ground in some new country, set up and start scouting or shooting. He quickly got used to air travel and falling asleep on planes. The Taejon Festival played the summer and fall of 1993.

After that Rogers put Bartlett on his next project for the Southern Californian amusement park, Knotts Berry Farm. Another pavilion show, *Mystery Lodge* has become a permanent exhibit at Knotts. *Mystery Lodge* is based on a pavilion show Rogers had done for Expo '86 in Vancouver, Canada

called *Spirit Lodge*. The story is based on the culture of the northwest coastal Indians, the Kwakwaka'wakw who lived on the northern end of Vancouver Island in the town of Alert Bay. For the new film, Rogers went back to the same Native American advisors he had worked with before. Bartlett and Rogers went to the island in the fall of 1993 and visited with the chiefs of the tribe, took notes, attended Indian ceremonies and worked up a script for *Mystery Lodge*.

Rogers hired Bartlett to direct a nine-camera film, which was shot in seven countries on a budget of US \$4 million.



Craig and Doug Miller discussing the storyboards for *Mystery Lodge* (top) and on the set of *Mystery Lodge* with Bill Cranmer (Cultural Advisor for the film and Hereditary Chief of the Kwakwaka'wakw tribe) and Bob Rogers. Photo © BRC Imagination Arts.

The illusion of the show involves an old Indian who comes on the stage, which resembles a big house made of cedar logs. There is a fire in the middle of the room. As the old native tells his story, the smoke of the fire starts to illustrate it. Bartlett created the special effects film that appears to rise out of the smoke using BRC Imagination Arts Holavision 3D system. *Mystery Lodge* went into production in the fall of 1993 and



opened in late May on Memorial Day 1994.

In the ten years I have been in L.A. there were several moments when somebody really gave me a chance. - Craig Bartlett

### How We Know Him Now

In the meantime, in the spring of 1994, Bartlett developed a pilot with Nickelodeon called *Hey Arnold!* Bartlett says, "I think that was quite a stretch for Nickelodeon to believe this could be a series. By then I had three shorts to show them. The second film was called *The Arnold Waltz* and the third was called *Arnold Rides His Chair*. All three were for the 22nd, 23rd, 24th International Tournees of Animation. The third one was also for *Sesame Street* and it played a lot." Bartlett was also able to convince Nickelodeon of the merits of an animated Arnold by showing executives the *Arnold* comics he had drawn for *Simpson's Illustrated*. He believes it was "pretty cool of them, based on three little claymation shorts and some comics to think, 'This could be a series.' I am very glad they made that leap of faith."

"In the ten years I have been in L.A. there were several moments when somebody really gave me a chance," he notes. "I think when Klasky Csupo hired me to

be a story editor, that was taking a chance. Things that Bob told me to do, like, 'Hey, go to Spain and do a live-action film,' even though I'd never done anything like that in my life. And when I brought my films to Nickelodeon and they told me to develop the *Hey Arnold!* pilot."

A great deal of change and development happened when *Arnold* went to series. The pilot had to establish not only who Arnold was but also classmates Helga and Gerald. Bartlett sees Arnold as a sensitive kind of day-dreaming kid. His best friend Gerald helps him fill that roll while Helga is his nemesis who secretly loves him. For Bartlett, the challenge of the series was trying to figure out who the characters were and getting deeper and deeper into their personalities. "By now I think our characters have really cool layers, especially Helga. She is really complicated. The more you know her, the more you understand her and like her. I don't think she is a heavy at all." By January of 1995, the *Hey Arnold!* series was in production, placing Bartlett back in the Nickelodeon family but this time head-



Craig Bartlett hard at work on *Hey Arnold!* Photo © Nickelodeon.

ing up his own series. He has been there ever since. "I don't know how long this thing will go. I suspect it will end up having a seven or eight year run, if you can believe it. It will end up being the major job of my life." Perhaps. Or perhaps Craig Bartlett will free-fall yet again and land in yet another



Arnold, Helga, and Gerald in their current Nickelodeon incarnation, *Hey Arnold!* © Nickelodeon.

er magical place. If he does, there's little doubt he'll be ready to make the most out of it. "There was no way to know that any of the experiences that I had before would help. But I think they do. I just think that in a way — maybe in the best way — all those Worlds Fair films helped me. They made me think, 'Man if I can do this, I can do anything.'"

*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.

# Theme Parks in the Digital Age

by Clark Dodsworth

**S**omewhere in the future... What to do tonight? Well, Blade Runner II beckons. I've seen the movie four times since it came out last year, but there are other ways to enjoy it now... I'll just log in to the 3D multi-user Blade Runner Adventure sim and see if that replicant role I played last week has evolved in an interesting direction. Since they added real-time voice, a lot more women seem to be spending time in-world which makes it more realistic. Speaking of realistic,

Every bit of a park, including the landscaping and robotic fauna, should respond interestingly, engagingly, or compellingly as one walks by...

maybe I should drive down to the mall instead. The Blade Runner II site there has vehicle motion-base sims and 110-degree out-the-window displays with surround sound, not to mention better textures, more polys, and a higher frame rate than I can afford to run here at home. And I can meet some of the people I played with last week in person — maybe get something to eat with them afterwards. One of these days, though, I want to experience the Blade Runner sim world in its full glory, at the theme park in Orlando. I'm certain the guys who go in-world from there have better maneuverability and reaction

times than I do, because of the force-feedback. Plus, seeing the actual faces of everybody mapped onto their character's head in full video would be great; I could really act the role, then..."

## Let's Talk Today & Beyond

As this issue goes to 'Net, the finishing touches are being put on the largest theme park to open in North America since Disney World. Universal Studios' Islands of Adventure "expansion" to their Orlando park is larger than the entire original park. Size is the smallest detail however; the expansion uses roughly two orders of magnitude more digital infrastructure than the original, and is designed to accommodate additional interactive features and functionality in the future. This is far from just being a matter of convenience for maintenance and security however. It's about putting ubiquitous digital sensory intelligence into an entire theme park environment, indoors and outdoors.

The guiding notion is that a park should ideally be aware of everyone who enters, learn a few facts about them like age, gender, and when they last visited, and then provide a customized user experience based on those facts, plus what the person does at the park. In fact, to take themeing to its logical extreme, every bit of a park, including the landscaping and robotic fauna, should respond interestingly, engagingly, or com-



Clark Dodsworth.

pellingly as one walks by, and then respond differently to the next person or family! I call that Active Themeing, and it's coming to a thrill ride site near us soon — that is as soon as embedded computing processors and development tools evolve a bit more in power and price.

The competition for our leisure dollar is fierce.

At the same time, the information that the systems gather from our behavior will go into a database and be used for marketing programs after we go back home. The guiding notion in this context is to provide maximum opportunities for any demographically targeted consumer to access themed services and licensed-character-based product and ser-



vice offerings, in as many media as possible, in as many places as possible, 24 hours a day. The concept is an evolutionary descendent of "brand spread" in consumables, an example of which is Marlboro Lights/Menthols/100s, etc.

**The Disney Animal Kingdom is a good example of another key trend in theme parks: convergence.**

The competition for our leisure dollar is fierce. The good news is that competition drives new park attractions to innovative digitally-based heights of amazing fantasy or adrenaline-spiking experience. A recent example is the Indiana Jones Temple of Doom ride at Disneyland. One can return to the ride several times and be scared by different beasties at different moments each trip; digital equals enhanced variety or richness in the experience design. That ride, in fact, is so successful that the new Disney Animal Kingdom in Orlando has a version of the same ride technology, re-themed as a prehistoric dinosaur chase called Countdown to Extinction.

The Disney Animal Kingdom is a good example of another key trend in theme parks: convergence. The convergence of markets, media, and demographics, with the tools that make them all work together. The park even has a resemblance to good science museums, in that it enables those who are interested to find out more information about some of the animals. Just as in the software business, parks are trying to cover more areas to attract a broader user base, and Animal Kingdom provides extraordinary,

exotic, accurate African themeing, in addition to the animals (which are showcased with elements of *The Lion King*). In fact, just as Animal Kingdom can attract an older demographic than Disney Worlds kids and young families, and as the Disney Institute appeals to adults, Universal's traditional teen and 20-something demographic is about to be greatly augmented by its new offerings to the Disney World demographic. Islands of Adventure has Popeye, Dr. Seuss, and many other characters for kids.

### What's In It For Me?

So where does it get interesting for us, as designers, builders, and animators? Simple. Popeye and his associates need to come to life in as many ways as possible (see marketing goals, above). So, for example, the Star-

Bellied Sneeches need to live forever in 3D on the Universal park web site, with plenty of artificial intelligence (AI) and synthetic personalities to keep them interesting when you log in repeatedly. They need to remember your name when you come back, greet you by name — with voices, not text — and have interesting stories to relate and adventures on which to take you. Spiderman needs the same outlets; in a few years, he'll have as context the time you rode his dark ride at the park. In fact, he will know who you were with and the date. So the conversations he will strike up with you will not be inane, that is if the code is well-executed. Plus, you'll probably end up helping him take out the Bad Guys. You'll also get occasional well-timed promotional pitches back home, skewed to your demographic interests, and most



To attract the widest range of visitors, Disney's Animal Kingdom goes beyond simply being a zoo and becomes more of an experience. © Disney. All Rights Reserved.

importantly for the park, you'll end up with a stronger "relationship" with it, long term.

All this is going to take a huge amount of character and world design, and world-building, not to mention the refresh; the new locations and new adventures that have to keep filling the pipeline. In addition, its going to take a lot more polys and textures, and the hardware-accelerated home machines fast enough to run it effectively have only begun to ship in the last couple of months. Richness of experience, and sensory overload, in a care-free environment is what the theme park business is all about. This must carry over into the digital/virtual versions of those same parks, which is not easy on a 17" monitor. Building rich worlds takes more effort and results in far more lasting impressions on the customer. As Mike Backes said when he was at Rocket Science, "Create a rich environment and pepper it with rich and cunning discoveries, to invoke a lot of the same emotions movies do, like fear and hope."

**Richness of experience, and sensory overload, in a care-free environment is what the theme park business is all about...**

The ways we can do that are based on genuine advancements in the tools — like Alias/Wavefronts Artisan, and N-Dimensions SimStudio — that put more nuanced power in the hands of the individual. Those individuals will make sure that instead of an irritating, animated paper clip on screen, any user can design a custom character to



**One of the many real-time simulators at DisneyQuest is Hercules in the Underworld, a ride that pits you against the evil Hades. © Disney. All Rights Reserved.**

inhabit their central processing unit (CPU), and go along for the ride on their Pilot Pro 5. In the future, when you arrive at a theme park, the first thing that will happen after you buy your ticket and exchange identification information with the park network, is to receive a download of variable-res maps, an event database for the day, and a help function for any queries your assistant character might need to ask the licensed character, who was included in the download, representing the park. Maybe this information and application set will ride on your kid's hand-held, wireless personal digital assistant (PDA), or on a hired video badge with radio frequency (RF) capability that the park issues you. It will also have a global positioning satellite (GPS) function, by the way. This piece of the park experience that you are carrying adds to the personalization of your experience. For instance, your child will choose which favorite character comes along with you and comments on the attractions you approach.

At one time a few years

ago, the single most requested service at Disney World was a kid-tracking device for parents; its definitely going to happen, and not too long from now. The kids being tracked, however, will be much more interested in free-roaming animatronics and immersive, shared experiences that can process more than a handful of people at a time. An early version of successful interactive design in parks is the post-show experience for the Hanna-Barbera Cartoons attraction at Universal. Designed by Art & Technology in Los Angeles, its got touch-screen paint apps that are the precursors of the current hands-down winner in interactive park entertainment — DisneyQuest.

### **The Future of Real-time Simulation**

DisneyQuest is the first major production of Disney Regional Entertainment; if you haven't seen its Orlando site, you can catch much of the same attractions at the second DisneyQuest at Rush Street and Ontario in downtown Chicago, Illinois beginning next summer. Its the first well-diversified, well-integrated attempt to combine real-time simulators with story, food & beverage, merchandise, traditional arcades and other interactive attractions. Its also by far the highest density of sim rides and SGIs per square foot in the history of entertainment. Besides the fact that both the Hercules in the Underworld and Virtual Jungle Cruise rides are genuine steps forward in attraction design (for different reasons), and ignoring the significant throughput issues, DisneyQuests big contribution to our business is that it goes a long way



toward legitimizing out-of-home real-time simulator entertainment...and the world-building that goes with it.

**The single most requested service at Disney World was a kid-tracking device for parents; it's definitely going to happen, and not too long from now.**

The issue for real-time image-generator-based, networked sim attractions [out-of-home/location-based entertainment (LBEs)] is simple: cost per seat vs. image quality. Story design and 3D environments are tasks we can do well now, but haven't been able to put them into a cost-effective vehicle. Jordan Wiesman's landmark original Battletech system achieved excellent results with the hardware available at the time, but our customers today are incredibly jaded by Hollywood-style pre-rendered graphics. As 500MHz boxes become the baseline and acceleration becomes a commodity, the cost per seat problem goes away and talent in entertainment design becomes the differentiator.

A year ago, at the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) convention, there were half a dozen new interactive, motion-base simulator companies exhibiting one- and two-passenger systems, some running home games like *Descent*. The hardware is the easy part; making it a compelling enough combination with good content to attract repeat customers at a profit is the hard part. The next conference will be held in November, 1999. I'll be spend-

ing my time at the ridefilm simulator exhibits, including SimEx and Iwerks, which brings us to our final topic: the gradual replacement of 70mm ridefilms and star-projector planetarium systems by seamlessly tiled, hi-res RGB video projection, driven by big CPUs. This means more world-building and 3D product creation for you.

Both Evans & Sutherland and SGI/Goto have developed systems which have remarkably broad applications; on flat, round or curved screens, in IMAX-style theaters, shopping malls, LBEs, and on billboards. With the huge array of new and existing 2D video content, and custom 3D content creators available, owners of such systems will have tools to educate, entertain, and market to anyone who steps outside. The E&S Star Rider system, for example, will use 6 video projectors to cover seamlessly the dome at the Adler Planetarium in Chicago as of January, 1999. At 1024 lines x 1024 pixels per screen, that's enough pixels to make for a powerful 3D viewing experience. In addition, E&S realized that the



**E&S's StarRider digital theater at the Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum in Chicago is the first-of-its-kind 3D interactive show and will be presented in the first-ever domed digital theater. © 1998 Evans and Sutherland Computer Corp.**

entertainment division of a flight simulation company should be run and staffed by entertainment professionals. The talented team they brought in from Universal, Disney/Luxor, and BRC Imagination Arts (formerly, Bob Rogers Corp.) is really pushing the envelope with the first show for their new system.

The theme park industry is a lot like the animation business: we both always need better, faster tools; we both entertain and sell; and we're both convinced that the most fun thing in the world is to create an illusion that convinces the audience of the impossible. Most importantly, we're going to be seeing a lot more of each other, soon.

*Clark Dodsworth, a principal of Osage Associates, lives in San Francisco and does product development and strategic planning for high-tech entertainment companies. Recent and current projects include smart toys, ambient intelligence in the home, sim rides, and multi-user avatar environments. He co-produced the Digital Bayou at Siggraph '96 and has been involved in producing the emerging technologies venue at Siggraphs '95-'99, as well as the Electronic Theater in '99. He was also part of the team that produced the VRML '97 and '98 conferences. His book, Digital Illusion: Entertaining the Future with High Technology (Addison-Wesley), just went into its second printing. He is beginning a project to develop a high-tech infrastructure for the city of Vienna, Austria.*

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



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**W**alt Disney was a dreamer. From animated films to amusement parks he was always an innovator. Disneyland had been in his head years before he could make it happen, and when he did it would change family centered entertainment forever.

Walt, the father of two children, saw a lack of quality family entertainment in Southern California. When accompanying his daughters to amusement parks, he noted the parents' boredom and the filthy and unfriendly atmosphere. Years later he said, "I felt that something should be built, some kind of family park where parents and children could have fun together."

Many people felt Walt was bored with animation. The park, as he always referred to Disneyland as, combined his interests in furniture, railroads, and robotics. Biographer Leonard Mosley comments: "It had become the only thing in life that mattered to him, and animated cartoons — any kind of films, in fact — had totally,

# Disneyland: From Dream to Reality

by Katie Mason

if temporarily, lost their savor for him."

## Early Visions

Walt's initial inspiration came from a trip to the Chicago Railroad Fair with animator Ward Kimball in 1948. Among his earliest visions was for "Disneylandia," a traveling train show, with each car carrying a moving miniature scene. Walt's dream was that the train would run across the country and stop in small towns, where people would come and see the miniature sets, which would be coin operated. Walt even took animator Ken Anderson off the company payroll and sent him to work on this secret project, paying him out of his own pocket. However, the cost of the exhibit proved prohibitive and he realized that he would have to make it part of his larger amusement park plan.

In 1948, Walt sent a memo detailing his plan for "Mickey Mouse Park." He described Main Street, a cowboy town, and a carnival section. But, his brother Roy, who managed the studio's finances, wouldn't hear of it. The studio had a large debt to the Bank of America since none of Disney's postwar films had produced profit.

In 1951, Walt commissioned Harper Goff to draw inspirational sketches based on his dream. The original plans called for the park to be on a small plot of land across from the Burbank

studio. Soon Walt's imagination outgrew this space and he began looking elsewhere. He ordered two studies from the Stanford Research Institute, one to determine whether the venture could make money, and another to find the best possible location. After studying a myriad of factors, the Stanford Research Institute recommended a 160-acre orange grove in Anaheim, California and an investment of US\$11 million. Walt would personally study all sorts of amusements: parks, fairs, circuses, zoos, from Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen to Coney Island in New York. These trips helped him determine what appealed to the public.

I felt that something should be built, some kind of family park where parents and children could have fun together. - Walt Disney

Walt envisioned a highly pedestrian park, with model examples of public transportation — trains, boats, and eventually, a monorail — which Los Angeles lacked. Each land, Adventure-, Fantasy-, Frontier-, Tomorrow-, would have an obvious landmark, a "weenie," which stood taller than the other buildings and served to draw people further into the park. The heart-shaped park would surround a castle, a landmark visible from every side.



## Gathering the Financing

In 1952, Roy Disney allowed a budget of US\$10,000 to develop Disneyland. Walt realized that this would not be enough and borrowed against his life insurance to set up WED Enterprises, an acronym for his initials Walter Elias Disney. He would also sell his vacation home in Palm Springs in order to finance his dream. He sought out friends to invest in the venture, and they reaffirmed that his project was a good idea. By 1953, Roy Disney consented to involve Walt Disney Productions in the theme park project. With many banks unwilling to lend more money to the Disney company, Walt turned to television. The idea had come to him on a sleepless night. After Walt convinced the board of directors of his plan, they decided that Roy would head east to talk to the networks.

ABC would become 35 percent owners of the park, in exchange for a weekly one hour television show and live coverage of the opening day.

But there was still no master drawing of the proposed site, and Walt knew that this would be critical in convincing the networks. He called illustrator Herb Ryman one morning and told him of his amusement park plan. Roy was due in New York on Monday and so a drawing had to be produced immediately. Walt and Herb spent the entire weekend working on the drawing with Ryman translating Walt's words into images. The sketch was hastily copied and sent to New York with Roy.

Roy spent several months

negotiating with the major networks, CBS and NBC, but neither would commit to the theme park plan. Finally, Roy turned to the up-and-coming third network, ABC, who expressed immediate interest. Realizing what the Disney name could do for their network, ABC spent several weeks working out an agreement.

Under the terms, ABC would become 35 percent owners of the park, in exchange for a weekly one hour television show and live coverage of the opening day.

## Building the Dream

Walt worked with several architectural firms while trying to design the park, but none could put his ideas into plans. Walter Becket, architect and friend, told Walt: "No one can design Disneyland for you; you'll have to do it yourself." The Stanford team suggested that Walt would find his best help within the studio, and this proved to be true. Fortunately, Walt knew his animation staff and their hobbies well. Like he had assigned Ken Anderson to the project earlier, he assigned others to sculpt models. Walt called his designers imagineers; people with the needed combination of imagination and engineering skills to build a theme park. Imagineers were innovators and artists who refused to say what was impossible.



Walt Disney's lifelong fascination with trains eventually led him to build his own fully-functioning mini-railroad in the backyard of his own home. © Disney. All rights reserved.

With cash to finance his dream, an unceremonious ground breaking was held about a year before the park opened. Working six days a week the construction crew could not make enough progress on the park to permit a July 1955 opening. So soon, teams were working 24 hours a day in order to finish a majority of the park. Strikes by plumbers, and a shortage of asphalt, almost prevented an on-time opening.

Meanwhile, Walt was also planning and filming his first regular series on television, *Disneyland*. The show was not, however, Walt Disney's first foray into television, since there had been two Christmas specials produced before *Disneyland* premiered on October 27, 1954. The first episode related the plans for the park and overviews of upcoming shows. In addition to providing glimpses of the forthcoming park, the television show served as a vehicle indicating all that was forthcoming from the Disney empire. The show introduced "Davy Crockett" and showed the studio filming 20,000

*Leagues under the Sea* and drawing *Sleeping Beauty*.

Animator Art Scott recalls a plane trip with Walt just before the parks completion. "As we take off Walt is saying, 'I spoke to the pilot, I hope he remembers, I asked him to fly over the park. There's nothing like seeing a park from the air.' Then he went over to the window and said, 'He's doing it! He's doing it!' He pointed out all the stuff, there's this, there's that, like this little boy with his giant toy down there."

Walt explained to a reporter why he was so determined to build a park: "It's something that will never be finished, something I can keep developing and adding to. When you wrap up a picture and turn it over to Technicolor, you're through. It's gone. [The park] will get more beautiful every year. And it will get better as I find out what the public likes. I can't do that with a picture; it's finished and unchangeable before I find out whether the public likes it or not."

### Opening the Happiest Place

With construction working around the clock until opening, the park was getting ready for



**Designing Disney's Theme Parks: The Architecture of Reassurance**, edited by Karal Ann Marling, takes an in-depth look at Disneyland's evolution from one man's personal dream to a multinational enterprise. You can order this book through the AWN Store. © Flammari-on.

television. The unfinished Tomorrowland was given a banner and balloons to mask the work waiting to be done. Camera crews worked alongside construction crews who were putting finishing touches on the park. The park opened to invited guests on July 17, 1955, and 33,000 people poured into the park. The ABC television crew ushered Walt from site to site and kept a positive spin on the preview.

Off camera, chaos ruled: ladies' heels sank into still hot asphalt on Main Street; rides broke down; concessions ran out of food and drink; and a gas leak was discovered in Fantasyland closing it down.

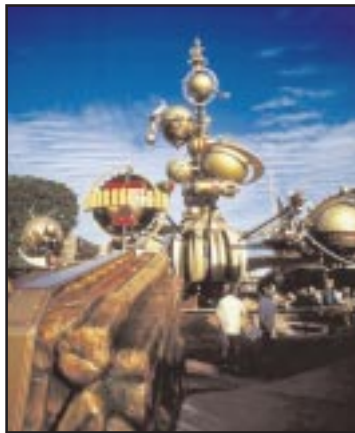
Opening day would come to be known as Black Sunday, because of all of its problems. Despite critical reviews from print media, Walt encouraged his crews to handle the problems. He held media dinners to amend relations with the press. Within a few weeks, problems had been wrinkled out and Disneyland's crowds were far exceeding estimates.

Opening day would come to be known as Black Sunday, because of all of its problems.

Walt always believed, "Disneyland will never be completed. It will continue to grow as long as there is imagination left in the world." Walt and his successors have carried out this promise with changes and additions like Mickey's Toontown and the New Tomorrowland. Walt's dream has been brought to many parts of the globe as well with Tokyo Disneyland, Disney World, and Disneyland Paris. Since Walt's vision and imagination will never die, his dream parks will live on forever as very special places, the magical reigning champions of quality theme parks.

*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.*

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



The renovation of Tomorrowland, on right, is reassurance that Walt's ideology still lives today and that Disneyland will never be fully completed.



# *Edutainment and the Internet*

by Ted Pedersen & Francis Moss

**T**his past June, the White House convened a conference in Los Angeles, California, titled: "Internet Summit: Digital Media for Children & Teens." The Summit held panels on such topics as on-line content, learning on the Internet, and marketing. Later the same month, San Francisco, California hosted "Digital Kids '98," with guest speakers including David Britt, CEO and President of the Childrens Television Workshop. Disney Online was a major sponsor of both events.

Do we need more proof that the Internet, once the province of dweebs, nerds, hackers and people without a life, is now on its way to becoming the newest "happiest place on earth?"

From only 50 web sites in 1993, the World Wide Web now has 100,000 new web pages going on-line every hour.

## **The History of the Internet...In 25 Words or Less**

(Okay, so we're kidding about the 25 words part!) In the Internets Pleistocene era — circa 1980s — only the government and large educational institutions were involved or interested in this worldwide network of linked computers. Then in 1991 an American

working in Switzerland named Tim Berners-Lee came up with a way to transmit images via the Internet, and the World Wide Web was born. The rest, as they say, is too tedious to repeat here.

Skip forward a few eras "net time," and we find ourselves remarking, "My how the baby has grown!" From only 50 web sites in 1993, the World Wide Web now has 100,000 new web pages going on-line every hour. Before 1995 or so, there were hardly any kids of which to speak of on-line. Today, there are 10 million kids surfing the web, and by the millennium, 20 million kids will be cybersurfing. Based on a recent survey, kids are now spending 11 hours a week watching television and 3.6 hours a week on-line. Interestingly, girls are slightly ahead of the boys; they are on-line an average of 3.7 hours a week, while boys use the Internet an average of 3.5 hours per week.

No one knows where its going to end, but everyone wants a piece of the action. Educators and entertainers are no exception. Schools are rushing to educate this eager new audience, and entertainment companies are rushing to...well, entertain, and hopefully, to educate as well.

## **Masters of Their Domain (Names)**

Who better to reach kids on the World Wide Web than the

companies who've been hugely successful at doing it on television? While many of the Fortune 500 companies are still struggling over how best to use this new medium, companies like Disney, Nickelodeon, and even gray, staid PBS have jumped in with both feet.

The reasoning isn't difficult to fathom. The web is where the kids are. Unlike many grownups, children have no fear of this new technology; on the contrary, they embrace it. The same kids who wore out the joysticks on their Nintendos and Playstations (and wore out their parents in the process), are now mousing and clicking, playing many of the same games on the World Wide Web. In fact, the Web is beginning to successfully compete for the audience that used to watch Saturday morning cartoons. As a result, the entertainment companies have had to adapt. They did so by creating entertainment, with a bit of edu-

Unlike many grownups, children have no fear of this new technology; on the contrary, they embrace it.

cation, on the World Wide Web.

Mixing entertainment and education is not a new concept. Television has been doing it for years in some of their Saturday

morning animated shows, like *Fat Albert* and *Captain Planet*. With the advent of cable channels, like Discovery and The Learning Channel, and new FCC educational regulations, these kind of educational-entertainment shows have multiplied. Now similar programming is blossoming on the Internet.

however. According to Disney spokesperson Rebecca Anderson, Disney.com is "the number one parenting web site on the Internet," due to "Family" (www.family.com), an on-line parenting resource with advice on nutrition, recipes and activities for families.

Disney has figured out how to provide what kids like, Anderson explains, by bringing Disney's

nick.com is as safe as grandmas house. Along with its own Nickelodeon pages featuring its signature characters and shows, there's Nick Jr. for younger kids, and Nick-At-Nite, with clips and broadcast schedules about shows running on Nickelodeon's cable channel. Nickelodeon is rapidly building a brand loyalty on the Internet to rival Disney Online.



Disney's Daily Blast page. © Disney. All Rights Reserved.

### Disney On the Web

The 800-pound gorilla of children's entertainment companies is, of course, Disney. As befits their standing in traditional entertainment — theme parks, television, film, cable channels — they are also the largest presence on the World Wide Web, with a separate entity, Disney Online, overseeing their two separate Web sites (the new buzzword is "portals"), Disney.com (www.disney.com), a free site, and a subscription-based site, Disney Blast. At the Digital Kids Conference, guest speaker Jake Weinbaum, President of Buena Vista Internet Services, said that today's kids are the Internet Generation, and they are growing up in an interactive world. They are learning, thinking, and analyzing in a non-linear way. Disney Online wants to provide content to meet their needs, offering games and activities for kids on both their free site and their subscription site.

Disney isn't just for children

classic cartoon personalities to the new medium. "Characters are our heart and soul," Anderson states. "We don't just want to recycle television shows or films, but find new ways to bring our characters to the web."



Cartoon Network's site primarily touts the network's programming, however, there is also a lot of information on how cartoons are created, as well as interactive content. © 1998 Cartoon Network.

### Nickelodeon on the Web

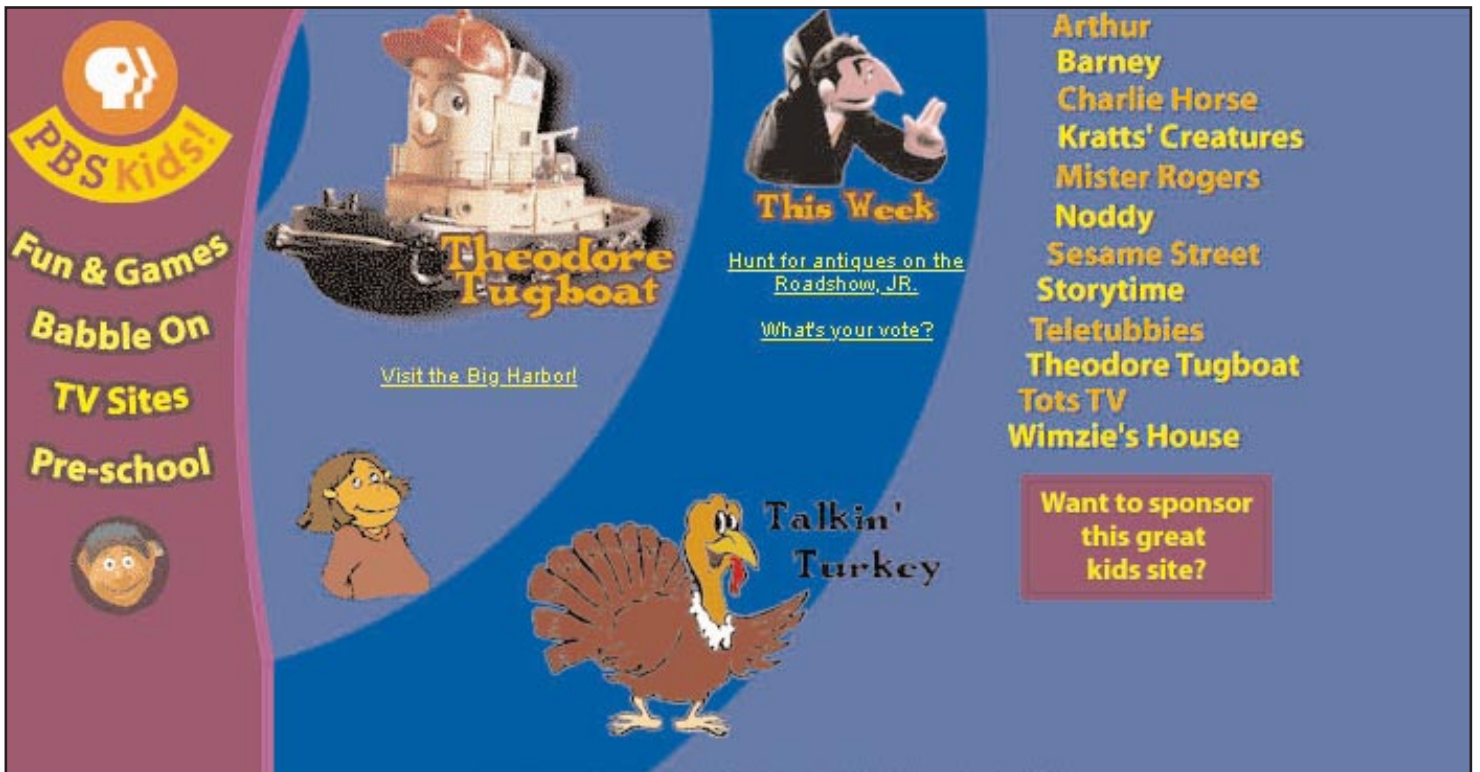
If Disney Online is the 800 pound gorilla of the 'net, Nickelodeon (www.nick.com) is the large orangutan. Although its reputation for edgier kids' shows sets it apart from even-your-grandmother-would-approve Disney, the Nickelodeon web site at

### Everybody's Doing It

Even PBS is getting into the act. Visit the kids' section (www.pbs.org/kids) of their web site and you can drop anchor in "The Big Harbor" with this newly redesigned companion site to the popular PBS children's program, *Theodore Tugboat*. Here you can download coloring pages, activity sheets, a screensaver and wallpaper, read the new story "Hank and the Hug," play an on-line memory game, and color your favorite characters with a Java coloring tool.

Turner Learning, the educational division of Turner Broadcasting (learning.turner.com), uses the Internet "to promote company programming, Cartoon Network being a good example of an overwhelming success with over 2 million page views daily. The future of the Internet is uncertain at this point, but it would be reasonable to assume that programming on-demand, games and other children-based activities will





The PBS Kids site is an interactive extension of the TV channel. © PBS.

be perfect for this type of environment."

On the other side of the pond in the U.K., Tom Calthrop, of Smudge ([www.bbc.co.uk/education/laac/story/sb2.htm](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/laac/story/sb2.htm)), creates web sites that are targeted toward learning experiences. The interactive adventures and games are featured on the BBC educational web site and typically star cartoon characters. The goal is to create a fun, entertaining, and educational experience. Their sites appeal to parents by having rich content. Calthrop believes that many parents still watch cartoons alongside their children. "We encourage parents and teachers to participate. Parents do like our sites and we think it's important that children are not left for hours in front of the computer — or TV for that matter."

When discussing whether the Internet may be used, like cable, for reruns of popular cartoon shows, Calthrop doesn't think TV reruns would be that suc-

cessful: "It's important to remember that the web is fully interactive, and until TV gets there the web provides the potential as a better learning environment." An example is Smudge's participation in the BBC's animal activity center on the web. Their goal is to get five year-olds to use computers and learn control of the mouse.

**Kids understand safety on the Internet. What they don't understand is critical thinking...**

### The Darker Side of the Web

While we have so far painted the bright side of the Internet, there is a dark side. We're not talking about the dangers of sex and violence that seem to invade most discussions of kids and the web. Indeed those dangers do exist, but they are like the back streets of any

large city — they can be avoided with a little knowledge. In the view of Dr. John Richards, Senior Vice President of Turner Learning, "The problem with the Internet is that it is a collection of information with little definition or no restrictions — this is both its strength and greatest weakness."

At the Digital Kids conference in San Francisco, Joanne Roberts, a former teacher who now creates web sites for teenagers, remarked, "There's a lot of negative press about the Internet. It's really a very valuable experience for kids, and as long as you teach them basic safe behavior outside of the house, the same rules can apply inside the house, using the Internet. Give them information about safety, but don't become paranoid."

The problem facing everyone who creates content for the web is how to police the net without creating a police state. What should worry those who worry

about the future of their kids, is the potential for non-learning on the web. Kids understand safety on the Internet. What they don't understand is critical thinking — how to analyze the information that engulfs them, how to judge what they experience on-line, how to ask the proper questions.



Spywatch is an example of an educational site that stimulates thought and learning through interactive content.

as well as consume. Scott Webb, senior vice president of Nickelodeon Media Works, has said, "I think kids are thirsty to understand how the world works, and television can do only so much of that. The Web is a medium that requires thinking and doing, and that's what kids are wired for...the Web is the perfect medium for kids."

"Parents do like our sites and we think its important that children are not left for hours in front of the computer — or TV for that matter." - Tom Calthrop

ment on what makes good content. Based on our research, the keys to good edutainment web content for children seem to be:

- Providing a "safe harbor" for kids to enter.
- Providing an opportunity to learn skills.
- Offering characters and content familiar to kids.
- Providing a way to interact with the larger community.

Clearly kids today are part of a new generation — a post-television generation. A few short years ago, kids were consumers. Today they are participants in the web experience, and they create

*Ted Pedersen and Francis Moss have collaborated on more than 100 animated TV episodes — from Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles to the current Pocket Dragons. They are also the authors of two Internet books for kids: Internet For Kids and Make Your Own Web Page! A Guide for Kids, both published by the Price Stern Sloan imprint of Penguin Putnam.*

### The Future of the Web

Everyone agrees that content is the key to success on the Internet. But there is little agree-

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# All In The Family: Rated "G" Animated Programming

by Deborah Reber



Porchlight's *Adventures from the Book of Virtues* is one of the many success stories in children's educational programming.  
© Porchlight Entertainment.

**A**s a kid, my parents were fairly strict when it came to my intake of television programming. My father laid down the law, decreeing which programs were and were not acceptable for his two young impressionable daughters to be watching. Let it be known that I rarely agreed with his decisions. Try being the only 10 year-old on the block not allowed to watch *Laverne and Shirley* because there were too many "adult" themes. And my parents had it easy in comparison. Welcome to the 1990s, where the discourse continues over what does and doesn't constitute family-friendly television programming. In today's age of countless channel possibilities, sorting through television's current offerings can be more than a

daunting task. Regulation of the television industry, an ever-growing supply of gore, horror and sexual content in programming, and the passing of new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations in 1997 mandating minimum broadcast hours of child-friendly, educational programming, brought the notion of family programming to the forefront. Networks began scrambling to find shows that fit the FCC's guidelines, often bending the definition to accommodate their own broadcast schedules.

Beyond broadcast television, there's also cable and satellite channels that have thousands of programming hours to fill — the Family Channel, the Learning Channel, PAX TV Network, the Angel Satellite Network, and so on. The market for a wholesome, completely inoffensive, utterly positive

brand of programming has blossomed. Most people would name Disney as the model for creators of family-appropriate programming, but conservative organizations like the National Institute on Media and the Family in Minneapolis, Minnesota, find that even Disney's animated fare doesn't always make the cut for programming appropriate for all ages.

Conservative organizations...find that even Disney's animated fare doesn't always make the cut of programming appropriate for all ages.

So who are the companies producing wholesome, family-friendly, all-age appropriate animated programming? And what



*Wimzie's House*. © 1997 Wimzie Production Inc. All rights reserved.

can be said for companies creating programs free of violence, strong language, sexual themes or illegal behavior, and full of quality, educational content and traditional values like honesty, courage, and responsibility?

### **Nobody Does It Better Than CINAR**

The international leader in family programming is indisputably the Montreal-based company, CINAR Animation. Founded in 1976 by husband and wife team Ronald Weinberg and Michelline Charest, CINAR aims to produce and distribute "quality, non-violent programming and educational products for the global marketplace." When they founded CINAR, Weinberg and Charest took a gamble that their company was in a perfect position to fill a gap in children's programming, for at the time there wasn't much competition. They had no way of knowing that their gamble would pay off so well. Despite today's plethora of family programming production companies in the international marketplace, CINAR is at the top of their game, and is the clear leader in the family programming industry.

**CINAR is at the top of their game, and is the clear leader in the family programming industry.**

CINAR is perhaps best known for its Emmy-award winning animated television series for preschoolers, *Arthur*, which follows the life of an 8 year-old aardvark and his group of friends. The PBS series, based on the best-selling books by Marc Brown, draws



**Zack and Plato from *Adventures from the Book of Virtues*. © Porchlight Entertainment.**

its praise from critics who appreciate the fact that the protagonist is just a "regular kid," and one with which its young audience can relate. This makes it easy for Arthur to be a role model for children as he deals with some serious issues like cheating and lying. The success of *Arthur* has spread to ancillary products tied in with the show, including toys, home videos and interactive software. CINAR's other top-rated animated programs include *The Busy World of Richard Scarry* and *The Adventures of Paddington Bear*. Their newest hit, a puppet program for preschoolers, *Wimzie's House*, won the 1997 Parents Choice Gold Award for National Television Programming.

One of the secrets behind CINAR's success is that the company hasn't limited itself to producing only television programming. CINAR has become one of the foremost international distributors of high quality children's television and film programs, reaching more than 150 countries through these ventures. Major international partners include the BBC (UK), France

2 and France 3 and Germany's RTL. CINAR is also the largest outside supplier of programming to the number one kids network in the US, Nickelodeon.

CINAR has also found great success in adding more depth to the company in recent years. A new division, CINAR Education, takes advantage of the expertise of the recently acquired educational publisher Carson-Dellosa, and HighReach Learning, a supplier of curriculum-based resources for teachers. CINAR Education will focus on supporting and promoting their original educational properties. Again, CINAR's instincts were right on with this recent expansion. Revenues for the company increased 71% from August 1997 to August 1998, and the publicly-owned company's stock continues to rise with every licensing deal they make.

### **Porchlight Entertainment Up And Coming**

CINAR presents a successful model for any young, growing company to follow, and Porchlight Entertainment is doing just that.

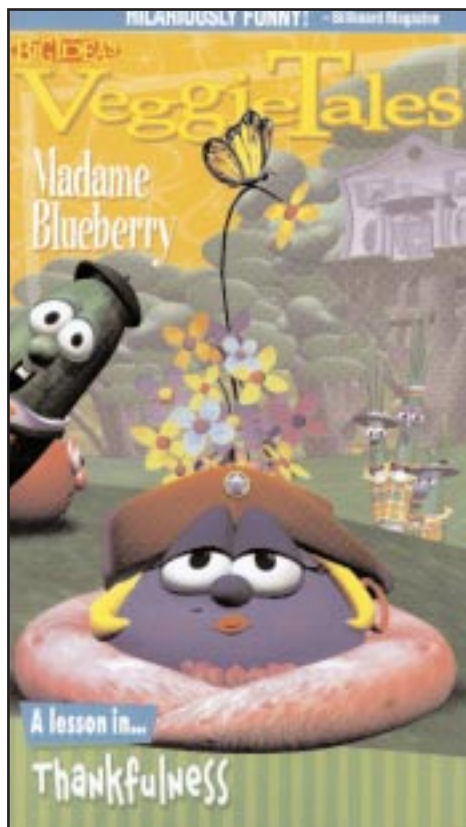


"I'm not going to fool you. It's a very tough business to enter and be successful in," says Bruce Johnson, co-founder and CEO of the Los Angeles-based family programming company.

Founded in 1995, Porchlight is perhaps best known for its highly acclaimed animated series, *Adventures from the Book of Virtues*, broadcast nationally on PBS. The show follows the adventures of Zach and Annie, 11 and 10 years-old respectively, on their visits to Plato's Peak, where friends Plato, Sock (Socrates), and Ari (Aristotle), share with them Greek myths, Asian legends and American folklore. Each episode focuses on a particular virtue; such as courage, loyalty, faith, humility, perseverance and respect.

*Adventures from the Book of Virtues* has been met with great success, and has enabled Porchlight to diversify through associations with Simon & Schuster Publishing for companion books, Digital Domain for CD-ROM and interactive products, and Turner Home Entertainment for home video distribution, to name just a few. "There is definitely an audience out there, and we've had a great response to our brand of programming. Increasingly, it is through that, that we're becoming commercially successful," said Johnson.

In *Adventures from the Book of Virtues*, and their newest animated series for preschoolers, *Jay Jay the Jet Plane* (which premiered on The Learning Channel in November 1998), Johnson seems to have reached his primary goals in creating the company. "I wanted to create high-quality, family programming that is safe, and will have both parents and kids responding positively," says



VeggieTales © Big Idea Productions, Inc.



Phil Vischer, creator of VeggieTales. Photo courtesy of Big Idea Productions, Inc.

Johnson.

Quality is certainly something not lacking in any of Porchlight's productions. *Adventures from the Book of Virtues* often gets big-name voiceover talent, and *Jay Jay the Jet Plane* is introducing a breakthrough animation technique with the help of Los Angeles-based motion capture house Modern Cartoons, which has so far brought Porchlight great response at television markets this year.

There is definitely an audience out there. — Bruce Johnson

### Big Idea Takes Big Steps

When examining family television programming, there is a growing group of suppliers in the marketplace that is making itself known — those creating non-secular or religious-based programming. Chicago-based Big Idea Productions, founded in 1993, has built-up their name by creating "values-oriented media that matches in quality the best that Hollywood has to offer."

Big Idea, whose motto is "Sunday morning values, Saturday morning fun," has found a substantial audience with its *VeggieTales* video series. In 3D computer animation, characters Bob the Tomato, Larry the Cucumber, and all their vegetable friends tell stories through song, dance, and humor in half-hour episodes. Titles include "Where's God When I'm Scared?" and "The Toy That Saved Christmas." The latter of these will be broadcast this holiday season on PAX TV Network, a new cable network launched this fall with a mandate to broadcast only family



Digital BMG Video's *Cabbage Patch Kids* series of stop-motion specials. © Original Appalachian Artworks and BMG Video.

programming.

Regarding his aspirations in creating Big Idea, founder Phil Vischer says, "I have a hard time finding television shows or videos that I want my children to watch, and that I want to watch with them. This, plus my desire to prepare my kids for life in an imperfect society, has been a constant inspiration."

National U.S. outlets such as Wal-Mart, K-Mart and Target are now selling Big Idea's "Veggie Tales" videos.

Big Idea has big goals for the future, including nothing less than elevating the company to recognition and status levels on par with Disney and the Jim Henson Company. If recent sales figures are any indication, they're well on their way. Although Vischer says he wants to focus on the viewer and improve their lives rather than the ebb and flow of

the company's stock value, the company has grown leaps and bounds due to its breakthrough into the secular marketplace, allowing Big Idea to begin to compete with some of the "big boys." National U.S. outlets such as Wal-Mart, K-Mart and Target are now selling Big Idea's "Veggie Tales" videos. In just the past year, the company has seen an increase in video sales of over 300%.

### A Growing Field

The list of companies producing family programming fare doesn't come close to stopping here. There are always the old familiars like *Barney*, broadcast on PBS. While newcomers on the preschool television market like *Blue's Clues* and *Teletubbies* have given the purple dinosaur a run for his money, *Barney* remains a profitable property. In addition to the traditionally licensed hard and soft goods that accompany any hit show, the recently released *Barney's Big Adventure: The Movie*

(released theatrically in April, on home video this past September), is generating a healthy profit, with projected revenues marked to be between \$69 and \$114 million dollars.

Cabbage Patch Kids, a craze which began a whopping 15 years ago, has stood the test of time to demonstrate the longevity and potential shelf life for well-conceived and well-directed family programming properties. A video series, distributed by BMG Video, is animated in stop-motion by Flying Films (UK), and brings the popular dolls to life with stories and songs. The best-selling video series is so popular that HBO and Showtime actually broadcast *The Cabbage Patch Film Festival* this past summer.

We have profiled a select number of companies here, but these few paint a clear picture — the world of animation has found a permanent place in the family programming community; one that will most likely grow as the number of outlets for non-G rated programming continues to expand. Plus, digital television, interactive television, and other inventions just around the bend lend themselves wonderfully to animation, making the likelihood that new family programming production companies will continue to spring up and create new and innovative animation, a great one.

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

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



# Here's A How de do Diary: September

by Barry Purves

*Editor's Note: Lumps, warts and all, for eight months Barry Purves will share his personal production diary with us for his current project with Channel 4, tentatively titled Here's A How de do. This film will take a look at three men: Gilbert, Sullivan and Richard D'Oyly Carte. D'Oyly Carte brought Gilbert and Sullivan together and formed the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, which performed Gilbert and Sullivan operas for 100 years. While the trio worked together for roughly 25 years, their relationship was strained at best. How will the production of their story go? All we can do is read along monthly and find out...*



Barry Purves.

what stiffer and tighter — well, that was the theory anyway. The odd floppiness has crept in with Gilbert, but that's me really.

The rows between the chaps have started, and I think it's clear why. Money is certainly playing a part in all

this, as it did with them in reality. Gilbert was certainly very tight about money and did not like wasting it — as the famous carpet quarrel bears out. This incident, of Carte and Sullivan buying a carpet for the Savoy, without consulting Gilbert, was a major factor in their break up — sadly, I could not weave (!) it into the film as there are not many songs about carpets.

Savoy Operas. They both set up British institutions, had a cozy repertoire of familiar characters, are comfortingly predictable, unequivocally British and don't travel too well — the big difference is where the operas had wit, rhymes and music, the films had boobs, bottoms and bodily functions!!!

All this nonsense about Viagra - honestly!

## September 2nd

I was listening to the Chieftains inspiring album, "Santiago," on the way home, and all manner of new films suggested themselves. That's the trouble with animation, it takes so long. That's films crowding my already crowded mind. Someone actually asked me last week, "Where do you get your ideas from?" That is not the problem. I have got so many ideas, most of which will never see light. I have such a thirst for knowledge and cultural experiences of every kind, and all this usually sets me off on some idea for a film. But to see even the shortest of animation films through takes so much time, that I'll never get to direct or write all the things I'd like. How many productions has Steven Pimlott

## September 1st

A productive start to the month, if not wildly creative. Sullivan is still flapping his arms about furiously. I hope there is a real distinction between the gestures of Gilbert and Sullivan. I took the fact that Sullivan is a conductor as a starting point for him — his arms flail all over the place and are quite floppy and musical. Gilbert, with his military background, is some-

This spontaneity comes from a lot of hard work, none of which is spontaneous.

There's been a series of programmes on the last few nights, celebrating the "Carry On..." films. Whilst they are at different ends of the spectrum, there are similarities between the "Carry Ons" and

(our baritone) directed in the 20 months that it has taken me to write and film a slight 15-minute animation? Maybe I'll have to have a break from animation, just to clear my head of some of the ideas buzzing around in there. But its not as if I can just walk into a

anger he has been flapping about at full speed, and hopefully, I've pushed his moves as far as I can before they fall to pieces. I've done some huge moves, but I use a trick to make sense of such huge moves.

was trying to convey, but I did not want to change Gilberts brilliant line, "This particularly rapid and unintelligible patter isn't generally heard and if it is it doesn't matter." The first half, as sung by Sullivan would be a good insult against Gilberts work, and the second half



Sullivan in action. Photo courtesy of Bare Boards Productions.

theatre company and say, "I would like to direct a play please." Its a little sad to think that I have 75 minutes of film (ignoring commercials and such) to show for my last decade of work. Not much really.

We were shooting out of sequence today, which always does my head in, but I did manage to get Sullivan to jump up onto the bed, and sit on it. Being rather short in the leg department, he looks like a grey tennis ball with two small feet stuck out from underneath. I've certainly been very bold with him today. In his

### September 3rd

A bizarre day spent with Sullivan under the sheets, thrashing about. What a strange job I do. I was working to one of the most difficult patter songs, "My eyes are fully open" from *Ruddigore*, and I could have gone really over the top with it, but I went the other way, and it seems to work. This is one of those instances where the audience will have to rely on the impression of what Sullivan is up to, rather than the exact words. There's a little conflict between the words and what I

seems to imply some sadness that Sullivans own work is not appreciated. That's quite a lot to get over in a second or two, but if the audience watch Sullivan, they'll see he is pretty fed up with the likes of *The Mikado*.

Talking of which there is a production visiting Manchester this week of *The Rocking Mikado*. This seems to be the opera that gets the most interpretations — theres been "cool," "hot," "black," "metropolitan" and many, many more. Yup, I've seen them all.



## September 4th

Another work experience chap, Paul, left us today. These people have helped us so much. Basically, they have been our crew. It has been hard work of course, as every Monday morning Jean Marc and I start a very condensed 'how to' course, but it is satisfying to watch them absorb everything and become confident. There are a lot of things I am awful at, but I think I am good at getting people fired up with passion for animation. This has happened with every person we have had with us, and that gives me some pride. I just wish certain members of our crew could have the same passion, but there we go, that's another story.

Just how engaged are the audience, or is this just animated wallpaper?

A grand total of 66 seconds this week, though we slowed down today as we were trying to organise me getting to New York next week-end. The Guggenheim are showing my films in a programme alongside puppet films of Julie Taymor and Jim Henson. Noble company indeed. Sadly, for all Karen's efforts, it's just too complicated and expensive to get there at the moment.

## September 7th

As I write this, sometime after midnight, things look a little bleak. We are battling illness and fatigue. We are tired, very tired. Not tired of the film or believe it or not, Gilbert and Sullivan, but tired from the constant battles with our

lack of the necessary, the disproportion of the workload, and things that get in the way of me filming. But it's easy to lose sight of what we have already done. There were some 70 seconds of rushes this morning. All very lively, and I stayed late alone to do a shot of Carte getting angry with G & S. This was a big moment and as I came to do a final few seconds, I suddenly thought of three alternative bits of business to show why he was angry and frustrated with the men. Sadly, I think I chose the least clear one, but it was the one that didn't put the schedule back, and allowed me to get home before midnight. These are important considerations. Still, the sequence works as a volatile piece of action. I've let a little bit of scrappy animation go through — I have to.

It's sad I'm so grumpy and angry just now, as I've had some amazing fan mail recently, and a lot of encouragement from some people. Also I must not forget my films are showing at the Guggenheim — that must say something.

What I'm dreading happening soon, as often happens at this stage of filming with the end almost in sight, is people coming out of the woodwork, offering totally unconsidered opinions about such and such a thing. I do not mind criticism at all as long as it is done bearing the whole film in mind, or if they've at least thought about it. What drives me wild is people coming along who have not been with us from the start, and saying something absurd. I've seen the devastation a naive word can cause; a seed gets planted and everything grows from there. Anyone who is familiar with the

Duke's codpiece in my *Rigoletto* knows what I'm talking about.

A review of the D'Oyly Carte's production of *The Mikado* in the Sunday papers was full of praise for Gilbert's words, saying that they still dazzle with their wit, but was very off about Sullivan, saying that the music is very thin and has no surprises. Thin his music is not, and if there are no surprises it's because the music is just, well, just right. Certainly, I'm grateful for our wonderful orchestrations, which even after hearing them for weeks still delight.

I was listening to *Carousel* on the way home, and last night, a lot of Kander and Ebb songs. How I admire those partnerships: Gilbert and Sullivan, Kander and Ebb, Rodgers and Hammerstein. I would love to have that real and last creative working relationship — what joy it must be to creatively spark off each other. The nearest I have is working with Wyn. There is a real respect and exchange of ideas and no treading on toes or egos. Davies and Purves, I wonder.

## September 8th

Whoops! How did Gilbert slip into Norma Desmond acting. He was all raised eyebrows today and twisted gestures. I've been a bit on automatic pilot — well, after the late night last night, I'd not really had time to think everything through, but there sits the camera, demanding to turn over every available minute. So insatiable. As a result there was a lot of wild gesticulation, vaguely in time to the music. It's clear that they are all upset with each other, but why? I ask myself that everyday. Here I am struggling with making every-

thing clear, and Channel Four is slightly apprehensive about the clarity, but I remember the film being described by them as no more than a set of jolly tunes to watch while you're eating dinner. It's not that!

**It's stupid that I panic about the gestures that go wrong and barely look at the ones that go right.**

I've been asked back to Sitges to give a talk at the Fantasy Film Festival. I've been several times over the years, and it's a great festival. Rather ironic that I was in Sitges just before filming, and now I'm going straight afterwards.

I'm striking up a long distance friendship with a lady called Bee — a Kiwi in Atlanta. She keeps phoning just to chat and say how much she loves the films. Wonderful! Now she does work for an animation network but work hasn't entered the equation yet. It is great having friends around the world (and yet no-one at home to go to the movies with at the weekend. Can I get anyone to come and hear Wyn conduct *Die Fledermaus*. Nein.)

### September 9th

Oh no, I've just rewritten 'The Art of Coarse Acting/Animation.' I really am being so bold with these puppets, and have thrown subtlety out of the window. It's not me being lazy, but more that I can't afford to spend time on things that won't be noticed. I'm hoping that it is the cumulative effect that will register.

The three chaps are now on the spinning bed, going hell for leather. It is a rather bizarre sequence in a rather bizarre film, but, even without camera moves, there is so much drive in these last two episodes. This is probably some of the crudest animation I've ever done, but it seems right for this. I would like, one day, to show exactly the sophistication of animation and complex choreography of which I know I'm capable. 12 seconds a day does not lend itself to much finesse — I'm dreading seeing some scenes on the big screen, if we ever get it onto the big screen. Finances are complicated there.

Our work experience chap this week, Darren, was reading the printed script and totally relishing Gilbert's words. He said that without even knowing the tune you can hear music in the words. Whether you like his words or not, that man Gilbert was quite a genius.

**We really could not have made this film without the students, as we would have otherwise literally not had a crew.**

For this scene where each of the men look as though they are walking out on each other, I'd had hats made, and a coat for D'Oyly Carte. I thought putting a hat on would easily signify someone leaving. However, when I came to the shots, they just looked silly. For hats to fit their rather large heads, things were getting out of proportion. Plus, we are now so used to seeing them bare-headed. Likewise, I've discarded Carte's

coat because it suddenly looked odd. So, sorry to the girls who made them. There haven't been many things I've not used. Everyone's work is certainly up on that screen as bold as brass. I would like to hope that the budget is all up there too.

### September 10th

A whirlwind of a day really — a lot of visitors and a lot of work. The chaps are still spinning on their bed. All a bit frantic, but it certainly livens up an already lively episode. In the afternoon Wyn and a lady from the orchestra called in. Wyn had not been since our first week, and was mighty impressed with what he saw. He said that the characters are very clear, as are the motivations. He also said that it seemed so fresh and spontaneous. That pleases me, as this spontaneity comes from a lot of hard work, none of which is spontaneous. So much animation looks over designed and planned, with everything precisely composed and plotted. I try to give an edge to my films, with heads cropped in the framing, or a hand going out of shop, or shadows happening from outside the frame. Wyn said he felt it had been filmed with several cameras. To Joy, the ambidextrous percussionist, the whole thing was a concept she could not get her head 'round. It seemed so far removed from the day in the recording studio in May. She couldn't believe how I could work it all out. Mind you, how musicians work is another world to me. Yes, I can read music, though I can't look at a page and hear a whole orchestra as Wyn can. As I read Joy's parts in the music score, it is a world of



secret squiggles.

Wyn did say that there are a few things he did not quite grasp, but that the whole mood was easily understood. This is a fault of mine. I have so much passion for my subjects. How do I put a lifetime of love for G & S into a mere 15 minutes? I can't but I do tend to cram a lot of details into the films. I do expect audiences to watch and concentrate. Today, that seems to be asking too much. It doesn't worry me when the audience doesn't get everything the first time. It would be sad to come away thinking, "Was that it?" I like to come out of a gallery, cinema or theatre with something to ponder on and puzzle over. It would be ghastly if a painting in a gallery yielded up all its mystery on first inspection. I know I'll be told that I have to make the film understandable to the lowest common denominator — I say, "Why?" This is another subject that can get me so worked up — the dumbing down of culture.

### September 11th

Only a short day in the studio, as Jean Marc was off back to Paris for a breather. We were still quite productive. The spare afternoon gave me a chance to get busy with credits, synopses, and all those other important things that I've not had time to even think about. It certainly seems odd to be sat at a desk again.

### September 14th

Apparently, our films got a wonderful reception at the Guggenheim on Saturday. Oh, to have been there.

We got the rushes of the maniacally spinning bed — this

should be quite a sequence. A complete change of tone today with G & S pleading for Carte to come back. I keep noticing some extremely melodramatic gestures creeping in. This being Victorian theatre I suppose it's allowable. A shot that I had been fretting about all night, of G & S sliding into shot on their knees, turned out amazingly well. It will come as an amusing surprise. Well, it kept us amused all day. I spoke to Clare at Channel Four who is very enthusiastic about the first three episodes, whilst still reinforcing that I must make things as understandable as possible. It reassured me to see Spielberg being interviewed last night, saying that he did not expect the audience to get all the layers of *Saving Private Ryan* at the first viewing, but hoped that things would filter through in the days afterwards. Now I'm not Spielberg and this film is hardly *Saving Private Ryan*, but hopefully, some of it will linger on. Certainly, Joy, our percussionist, has been talking about it with her orchestra ever since her visit last week.

That's it. I've reached overload.

Four weeks from now, and that may have been the last of my animation. Looking at Sullivan today, I got a brief twinge of sadness, as though I was getting ready to say "Goodbye" to a friend. Well, I am — three friends. The music in the car on the way home tonight was Bersteins *Candide*. What a masterpiece, and was there ever a song that more movingly summed up my philosophy of life than, "Make Our Gar-

den Grow." I won't quote the words as they fall to pieces without the music, but oh, how relevant is that song. I had to play it six times.

### September 15th

My mind was not too clear today as the complex chaos of post-production is starting to intrude. Post-production is my very least favourite part of all this — there is so much technological stuff I do not understand nor am too interested in. Worse still, your precious little film, that you have had the most intimate control of, is now in the hands of others. We're trying to find the most economical way to finish on video and then get back to film — once again its economics. On this film I am going to fight to get the sound right. On previous films, I've always been disappointed that the music gets lost. Here the music must stand out. I was not able to concentrate on the shooting today and some of it was a bit bland. I did a very literate and clumsy gesture of Carte wiping his eye as if a tear was there; a hideous gesture that I'm stuck with, but I redeemed myself with Sullivan and Gilbert looking very sweet as they agree to shake hands.

Little Bethany popped in today as she often does, and is still singing all the songs' words perfectly. She really loves watching this and can do all the actions. If the film is keeping a six-year-old very happy, then there's hope.

I laughed at myself tonight, that I still have the lollipop stick that I started this film with. This, to open and move the lips, and a map pin, to move the eyes, are my

sole tools. The most high tech I get is a lollipop stick and that was after I had eaten the lolly. I've never been one for gauges, as I think I've developed some form of combined muscle and visual memory that tells me where things were in the previous frame.

### September 16th

We've transformed into the "Yeoman of the Guard" sequence, which will again come as a good visual moment, especially after an episode that has been mainly filmed in close-up. The three chaps look good in their costumes, particularly D'Oyly Carte as a Yeoman. Gilbert is a little disappointing, but that's my fault really. Sadly, my schedule is such that I can't go and look at things being made. The costume is a good shape, but the colour is a little dull. Well, there isn't any colour really. I wanted him as Shadbolt, and Sullivan as Jack Point, because of the camaraderie they share in the opera, but a keeper of the keys isn't perhaps the most interesting costume I could have chosen. Anyway, the scene looks good, and I've been doing more complicated dancing, with a little cadenza that gets everyone in the studio joining in. I hope it works.

My voice at the beginning of the film, doing the narration, was not deemed good enough. Everyone was coming up with various suggestions of men, but I've gone for Daphne Oxenford — a voice that has wonderfully safe, comforting and very British storytelling connotations.

Very tired tonight.

Another screening at the Guggenheim tonight, and my loyal chums David and Michael

will be there, cheering me on.

All this nonsense about Viagra — honestly! Though, I gather from all accounts Mr. Gilbert would have been the first to have used it back then. There was something rather wrong with him in that department. From what I know, and what is clear from his writing, he loved the idea of pure and idealised love, as represented by characters such as Yum-Yum and Patience, but the thought of anything physical and predatory, as with Katisha and Ruth, was seen as both ridiculous and a little repulsive. Sullivan did not have this problem; by all accounts he was quite rampant!

### September 17th

A good morning with G & S dancing away, but then I had a little wobbly, and couldn't get going at all. I remember a very famous incident at the Royal Shakespeare Company where an actor of great repute came on stage one night, well into the run, got ready to write something with his propelling pencil, but was distracted when he saw there was no lead in the pencil. Suddenly, everything fell to pieces for him. He did not have a clue where he was or what he was meant to be doing. Psychiatrists have written many articles about this failure. I felt the same today. We had fuffed around for so long trying to find a way to lower the drawbridge in the Tower Of London, and tempers were getting heated and time was racing by. Eventually, I started, and lost what I was doing. I started again, and still had no idea what I should have been up to. Third time through I got to the end, but only just. It was quite

frightening. A mini panic attack.

We had several visitors today, all enthusing over the film. This gave me the chance to see it several times and from a distance. Looking at the acting, this is really unlike any of my other films. Some of the acting is so rough and unsubtle and I've let awful stuff get through, but it all works. It works because I am not saying this is real life, but some sort of theatrical nightmare. I'm giving the effect of what could have happened. I remember years ago when I was animating Toad, the director told me not to turn the characters' back to the camera. I rather grandly said that I could act with my back — thank you. Yesterday, I did a whole scene with Carte with his back to us, and he was acting away very clearly.

Puppets, in particular, "die" after a few frames of holding.

I wish I knew whether the audience would actually be taking in the words on this film. They can be heard very clearly but there are usually two meanings. Today G and S were performing a song from Yeomen, but the literal words, about two chums ready to tell a "tale tremendous" of "convincing detail full" and so on, also apply to the situation in the film. I've not hinted at the other meaning in the actions, but how big are the letters that I have to spell out everything. Just how engaged are the audience, or is this just animated wallpaper?



## September 18th

I gave Sullivan his heart attack today and made a bit of a mess of it. I gave him two violent spasms before he collapsed, and they were probably too violent. I pushed it too far and I'm worried that Sullivan looks a bit comical, like a pantomime Quasimodo. Still the aftermath is quite effective, and with the help of some telling grunts and groans, I can probably make it work. Its stupid that I panic about the gestures that go wrong and barely look at the ones that go right. I would have liked another go at this, but there just is not the time.

Of course, there are a few shots that I hate, but I clearly have two favourites. One is Sullivan dancing with Queen Victoria, and the other, is Carte turning his back on G and S. His body language speaks volumes, and its a satisfying composition. I must keep looking at these shots when things go wrong. We set up the final shot of Episode Four, but it really did not look as I saw it in my head, so I changed it all quite drastically. Our work experience chap this week, another Andrew, was pleased to see me improvise. Andrew, who has done some pretty encouraging animation, has been an enormous asset to us this week, as have all the various students. We really could not have made this film without them, as we would have otherwise literally not had a crew.

## September 21st

Thats it. I've reached overload. There were too many people on set today and I didn't have a clear head. Its my fault as I don't want to discourage people coming to see us, and its good to have

some fresh reactions at this stage. However, it was a bit much today, and my head was taken up with post-production issues and other things that need to be done. But I also need to finish this film. We had rushes back this morning, masses of them, and they all look good. Sullivans spasms didn't look too bad in the cold light of day, but I'll still have to find exactly the right sound to make it work.

We really could not have made this film without the students, as we would have otherwise literally not had a crew.

We went on to the shot of Sullivans limp body being laid on the floor as Carte and Gilbert look aghast. Well, that was the intention. It was nearly 14 seconds, most of it in silhouette. To make the emotion stronger I wanted to keep the characters, as still, as shocked, as possible, but as any animator will know, it is damned hard to keep a puppet still for long periods. Puppets, in particular, "die" after a few frames of holding. So I fidgeted and fidgeted, and there were rather too many empty gestures. Also what is odd about this shot is that there is no music. It will need some suitable plaintiff sound. It was a little distressing to see Sullivan sprawled on the floor. The pose I'd put him in was a little too familiar for comfort, and had painful resonances for me.

## September 22nd

Just listening to Wagners *Ring* — wow, thats an antidote to G & S, though Sullivan does often

allude to Wagner, especially in *Iolanthe*. My mind still not much clearer, as I'm having to think about the post-production, writing of a publicity blurb, who we should contact to get an article written, and a million things like this. Oh, and finishing the film. We did a series of cutaways of Carte dressed as a Beefeater. This is without doubt my favourite costume; well done Clare. Though I gather at an early stage it was a rather uncomfortable shade of salmon pink, not the deep rich red it should be. This costume looks so vibrant against all the black — but sadly, we never see it full length, and it probably only has about 8 seconds of screen time. I love costumes, but they can be both blessings and curses. They do make things difficult to work with. I've just remembered when I was part of the Manchester University Gilbert and Sullivan Society (M.U.G.S!), one year we had an end of season party en travesti. I went as Mad Margaret from *Rudwigore*. A very picture of sober decorum, in black riding ensemble, with a flash of red hair, woven with country flowers, betraying her "madness." Sadly, or happily, no evidence of this exists.

Trying to think of a catchy tag line for this film, and I keep ending up with other peoples tag lines. Oh, here come the Valkyries, racing 'round the living room, terrifying the cats. I love it that in the midst of all Wagners sometimes suspect mythology, he still found time for the Valkyries to basically call each other rude names. A bit of humour amongst four days of less than lightweight music.

Anyway, tag line — I can feel the rhythm of it, but can't

make the words Gilbert and Sullivan fit into this.

We are up and ready for the final episode, and how sad Sullivan looks in bed. Amazingly, it doesn't look absurd that he is still wearing his tail suit.

### September 23rd

Well, I've done fourteen exhausting seconds, as well as editing the Fourth Episode. Little wonder I'm sat here in something of a daze. It's been a frustrating day, as, rightly, everyone is thinking of the post-production, but there are, for me, more immediate things I need to concentrate on, like Episode Five. It's hard to get my head round the ins and outs of the complicated grading process, when I'm meant to be doing Sullivan's quiet and moving death scene. I'm not looking forward to the post-production at all. At the moment things look a little confused but will hopefully all come together over the next few days. Maybe it's my fault. Maybe I should know exactly what is going on in every single department, but hang on; I'm already doing about four people's work. Should I ever animate again, which I doubt, I have to have the framework where I can concentrate on the animation itself. Maybe I should lay down the law and say, "Do this, do that, then this," but then this already takes me away from filming.

### September 24th

36 seconds in two days is too much, but that's what I have to do. I had a long shot of the three chaps today that took me most of the afternoon, so I sent everyone out of the studio to go

and enjoy the sunshine. I was able to concentrate a bit, but I was so focused that I slipped into some other reality. I got such a shock when the phone rang. Mind you, when I got home, I was so exhausted. I definitely went into a daze. I'm numb with fatigue.

I'm still finding this sequence hard — trying to keep the puppets from acting too much is near impossible. The music is very slow and calm and sad, with some notes being held for over forty frames. As a result, it's not easy to find just the right amount of activity for the mouth: too much would not match the purity of the note, too little and it looks as if there's no sound coming out. Hopefully, it's working okay, more or less.

I am ready for this film to finish as I have so little left inside me — no, that's not true, as I love what I do, and have endless stamina for things I'm interested in. It's all the other stuff that is wearing me down. I'd like to say that at least it's financially worthwhile. Hah!

Maybe I should know exactly what is going on in every single department, but hang on; I'm already doing about four people's work.

### September 25th

Two long solo shots of Gilbert and Sullivan being retrospective. Again, I'm fighting myself to let them remain as still as possible. Sometimes I am in danger of doing something for every single note. Animating to the phrasing of

the music is more relevant in this slow piece. Still, this episode is a dramatic u-turn after the others. It is very dark and melancholic. However, I am saving a burst of energy and colour for the last few seconds.

Just two weeks to go — amazing. I looked at Sullivan today, all frail and feeble, and thought, 'How sad, I've only got a few more shots with him and then he reverts to a lump of brass, latex and cloth.' As usual, I will probably suffer some sort of post-filming depression. It's inevitable that after all this effort, I look at this small, insignificant 15-minute film, and wonder why the equation of effort and result do not balance.

What happens after this film, I do not know. I know there will be changes. There have to be. Whether there is any work, I do not know.

### September 28th

Dammit — I've just been to a movie and had a drink with a friend, and now I'm all behind with everything. How silly of me to try to have even a single night of a social life. Ironically the film, *Love is the Devil*, about the painter Francis Bacon, was about the all-consuming and somewhat destructive nature of any art. Here's to that!

I think I deserved at least three hours off tonight, as I'd managed to churn out 24 sort of okay seconds. Here we are nearly 75 seconds into this last episode and still nothing has happened. They are just sat on the bed looking reflective. One very good shot, of Sullivan, still looking very ill, but also managing to be musical at the same time. The usual problem



with Carte — I fidgeted with him too much, spelling everything out. However, in a long shot, I managed to keep them all still, but also alive. Strong poses, and a minimal amount of movement — magic.

24 seconds, but still a long way to go, though everyone else seems to think the film is over, as I'm having to make some major decisions about things already. But I'm not finished yet. Don't tie me down with the editing or timing. I need to stand back coldly at the end, and see the film as an outsider. I may want to change it. But economics and schedules dictate that I have to be pinned down now, even as I'm shooting.

Sadly, we won't have a print ready for the London Film Festival.

**Dammit — I've just been to a movie and had a drink with a friend, and now I'm all behind with everything.**

### September 29th

My mind was still full of images from the Francis Bacon film. What stunning camera work, breaking every rule of focus and composition. Never have I seen flesh look so appetising and so revolting at the same time, but then that is his work. A really great film, looking behind a popular cultural figure. Hey, that sounds familiar. I would never be so grand to even think of myself in the same breath as Bacon, but my films do try to look at a flip side of popular cultural images. Certainly this G & S film is taking something most people know, but by the end of our film they may have seen G & S

with fresh eyes. I can't ask for more than that. The Bacon film tried to make the film a living canvas as Bacon might have painted, and used this to tell his life story. Using an artists work to tell his story is hardly original and yes, I'm doing it on a small scale with my film.

I was suffering this morning from daring to snatch a few hours of a social life. There is so much preparation to do for a days shoot, and I had to stay up very late to do mine. I was tired this morning. Fortunately, the three chaps were not too demanding. Sullivan is barely moving now, but *still* Carte is fidgeting about. He's going to get a good slap from me soon.

As it gets a bit sad now, I am sorry that we could not afford to have eyes that blinked. The characters look in a constant state of surprise, and I could really do with some half-closed eye acting now. Also blinking provides such wonderful punctuation between phrases of movement, on which I could have capitalised. Mind you, if you found two black and white figures sat on the end of your bed singing in soprano voices you might well look surprised for the next fifteen minutes.

Post-production issues still getting in the way, and I even had to argue to get a mix today. The credits are going to have to be classically simple — good job. I did not want anything too adventurous.

### September 30th

Totally numb from fatigue. I think I've managed to keep today's shoot reasonably still. There was one note of Sandra's as Gilbert that went on for over 50 frames, with-

out a single wobble. It was hard for me to leave it simple, but I resisted the temptation for any business that would distract or ruin the line of the note. This episode is definitely different from the others. This is literally three men sat on a bed, watching one of them fade away, but it does work in contrast to the busier early episodes. Besides, I do finish with a burst of something.

A piece of business that I'm shooting on Friday, and has been in my head all these nineteen months without me questioning it, suddenly seems silly and illogical. In real life, Gilbert wrote a letter acknowledging some sort of respect for Sullivan's craft. Sadly, Sullivan was dead before he received it. I had Gilbert giving Sullivan the letter, only to find Sullivan had died. But why a letter when they've spent so long sitting next to each other, and holding hands, as they have today. I've found a better way to do this, but I'm leaving it a little late.

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.*

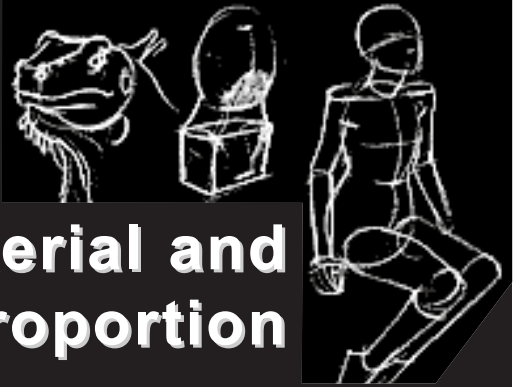
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# Vilppu Drawing

## Online:

### Introducing

# Material and Proportion



by Glenn Vilppu

This is the fourth in a series of articles on drawing for animation. In these articles I will be presenting the theory and practice of drawing as a "how to" instructional series. The lessons are based upon the *Vilppu Drawing Manual* and will in general follow the basic plan outlined in the manual. This is the same material that I base my seminars and lectures on at the American Animation Institute, UCLA, and my lectures at Disney, Warner Bros. and other major studios in the animation industry, both in the U.S. and their affiliates overseas. Each lesson will also have short Quicktime clips of me demonstrating the material discussed. If you have not seen the previous lessons starting in the June 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine*, it is recommended that you do. The lessons are progressive and expand on basic ideas. It is suggested that you start from the beginning for a better understanding of my approach.

Notice the pinch and stretch as the forms bend and twist.

In Lessons Two and Three, we developed our skills at handling spheres and boxes, manipulating them, and giving them per-

sonalities. In this lesson, we are going to combine them and at the same time introduce two new elements.

#### Part One

Start by placing a sphere over a box; they should be roughly equal in size (see Illustration No. 1).

The next step is very important. Draw Illustration No. 1 again, but this time do it as if it were covered by some form of material. Feel the form underneath. Feel where it leaves the surface of the sphere and stretches over to the edges of the box (B). Now make the material be a little tight or elastic so that it comes in at the waist (C). It is important to be able to feel the form underneath in order to draw it. Try to imagine that your pencil is on the surface of the object rather than on the paper.

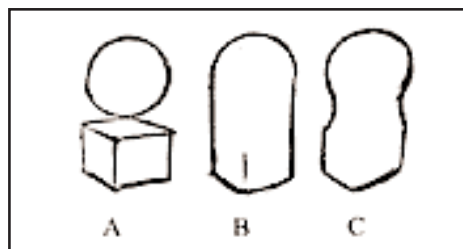
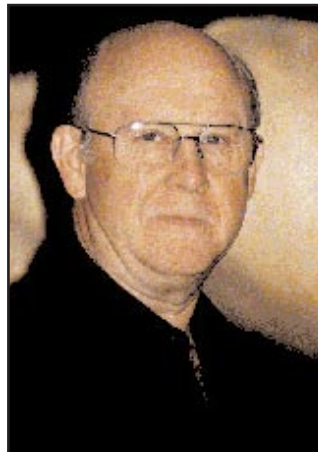


Illustration No. 1



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

Now let us start to work with these new forms in the same way we did in Lessons Two and Three, bending, twisting and giving them personality (Illustration No. 2). Notice the pinch and stretch as the forms bend and twist. Don't forget the use of overlapping forms in creating the feeling of volume.

Again, this is one of those

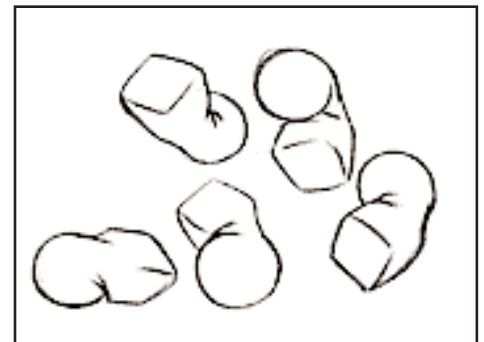


Illustration No. 2

exercises that you should spend a lot of time on; the simplicity of it looks deceptive.

#### Part Two

Now let us introduce some variety into what we are doing and at the same time open up the possibilities. In Part One, the



sphere and box were roughly the same size. Start introducing proportion into the drawing in a controlled manner. Proportion is the relationship of various elements in a drawing which includes sizes, tones, textures, quantities and differences that give expression or character to the work.

**Proportion is the relationship of various elements in a drawing...**

Proportion can be the size of the head to the body or just simply a large form to a small form. Artists have spent their whole careers trying to find ideal proportions in their work. We will look more deeply into proportion in a later lesson, but for now I want you to have fun trying different possibilities with our simple forms. Be as creative as you can be.

Remember, there are no rules, just tools.

Try stretching the distance

between the forms. You should be starting to feel a certain amount of flexibility and confidence in drawing without a model by now. In the next lesson, we will expand more on this before we start discussing drawing from a model.

Note: The on-line version of this article includes a Quicktime movie of master drawing instructor Glenn Vilppu demonstrating drawing techniques that every animator should know!

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue3.9/3.9pages/3.9vilppu.html>

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



*Glenn Vilppu teaches figure drawing at the American Animation Institute, the Masters program of the UCLA Animation Dept., Walt Disney Feature Animation and*



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

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Glenn Vilppu's drawing techniques manual and video tapes, used worldwide as course material for animation students.



# A Bug's Life: PIXAR Does It Again

*A Bug's Life.* © Disney Enterprises, Inc./Pixar Animation Studios. All Rights

film review by Charles Solomon

Comparisons between *A Bug's Life* (Disney/PIXAR) and *Antz* (DreamWorks/PDI) are inevitable, because they are the second and third computer-animated features ever made, because they were created by rival studios and because of the many similarities between the two films. Both stories are set in ant colonies, and both center on a Princess and a schlemiel who save the colony and find each other. But despite their similar premises, *Bug's Life* and *Antz* are very different films, and *Bug's Life* is brighter, broader, better animated and funnier.

**Bug's Life and Antz are very different films, and Bug's Life is brighter, broader, better animated and funnier.**

## The Gist of It

Flik (voice by Dave Foley) is a square ant in a round hill; he's always trying something new that flies in the face of tradition — and backfires. Innocent, eager and boyish, Flik often recalls Woody in *Toy Story*. But Woody was the

kingpin of Andys Room; here, the other ants look down on Flik. No one is less aware of his charms than Princess Atta (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), the insecure heiress to the throne.

non grata, Flik leaves to find help.

In a nearby bar, he mistakes a troupe of inept "circus bugs," recently sacked by P.T. Flea (John Ratzenberger), for a corps of warriors. The performers include Fran-



Hopper (Kevin Spacey) isn't all fun and games. © Disney Enterprises, Inc./Pixar Animation Studios. All Rights Reserved.

In a twist on Aesop's fable, these industrious ants have to gather food for the grasshoppers, an entomological motorcycle gang led by Hopper (Kevin Spacey). When Flik inadvertently dumps the food the ants have laboriously gathered under Atta's direction, the grasshoppers demand they amass a second offering, even though it means starvation for the colony. As insect

cis, a cranky male ladybug (Denis Leary); Heimlich (story supervisor Joe Ranft), a chubby caterpillar; the all-but-incomprehensible pillbug-acrobats Tuck and Roll (Michael McShane); Slim (David Hyde Pierce), a put-upon walking stick, and Dim (Brad Garrett), a dumb but well-intentioned rhinoceros beetle. Flik thinks he's found the colony's saviors; the circus bugs think they've found a talent





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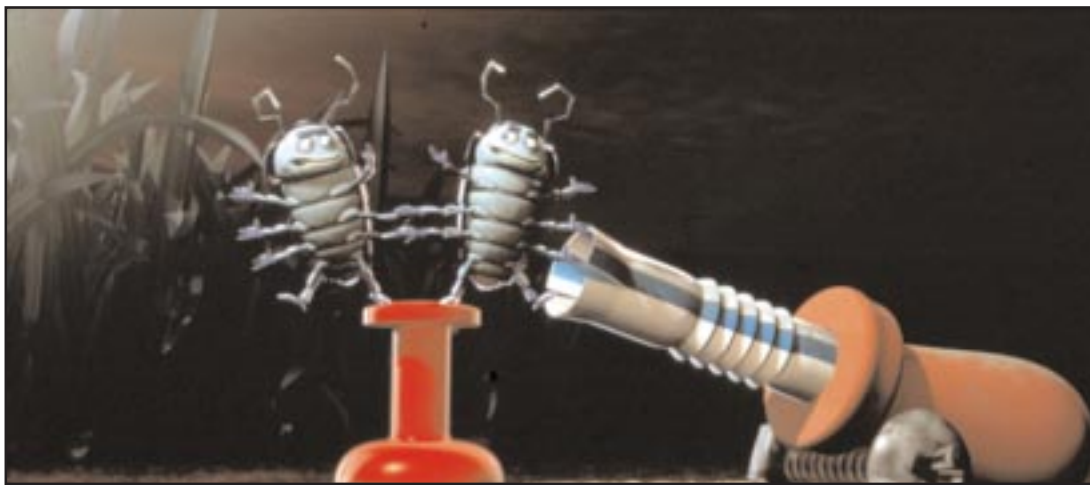
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Tuck & Roll (Michael McShane) give a little performance. © Disney Enterprises, Inc./Pixar Animation Studios. All Rights Reserved.

scout. The mountebanks grow too fond of Flik and the ant-children to abandon them when the grasshoppers' return threatens to destroy the colony. The misfits join together, rally the ants to defeat the enemy and renew their self-confidence, in the best cartoon tradition.

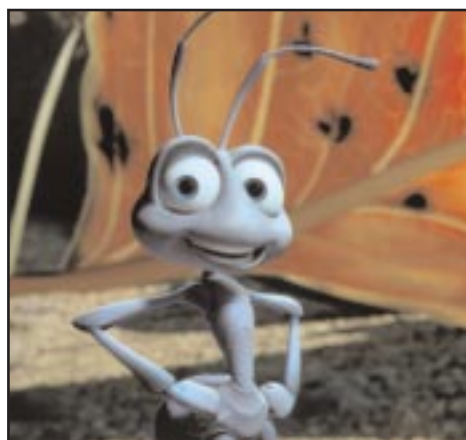
The film is intended to appeal to younger viewers than *Antz*, although adults will certainly enjoy it.

### Energy and Appeal

In contrast to the somber, earth-toned palette of *Antz*, *A Bug's Life* brims with energizing pastels. *Antz* has a greater scope that suggests an enormous, underground metropolis inhabited by uncountable hordes of ants. The smaller colony in *Bug's Life* feels more like a community, with an elementary school, scout troop, etc. The inclusion of school-age characters contributes to the sense that the film is intended to appeal to younger viewers than *Antz*, although adults will certainly enjoy it.

As the Disney artists discovered when they designed Jiminy Cricket in *Pinocchio* (1940), real insects range in appearance from unattractive to downright repulsive. The cast of *Bug's Life* has an appealing, round-eyed, cartoony look that allows the artists to animate them effectively. When Flik stumbles into an insect city, one of the characters he encounters is a caterpillar-mime, as bothersome as any human street performer. It's a minor gem of animation that showcases the talent and skill of the PIXAR crew.

*Bug's Life* makes it clear that the PIXAR artists continue to lead the field in computer character animation. Viewers can recog-



*A Bug's Life*. © Disney Enterprises, Inc./Pixar Animation Studios. All Rights

nize similar-looking ant characters apart just by the way they move. However, even in their capable hands, computer animation remains less subtle and expressive than top-quality drawn or stop-motion animation. Plus, the characters still look more like plastic toys than living organisms.

### Of Toy Story Caliber?

For all its energy and charm, *Bugs Life* is less engaging than PIXAR's first feature. *Toy Story* tapped into a fantasy every child shares — that their toys come alive when no ones around to watch. Bugs, even cute bugs, are less endearing than familiar playthings. There's no relationship in *Bug's Life* as compelling as the bond that develops between Woody and Buzz. Dot, Atta's younger sister (Hayden Panettiere), always believes in Flik, but she's a bit too self-consciously cute, like a larval Shirley Temple. At times, Dot feels like she was added to the story to hook little girls into seeing a film that might otherwise be considered a "boy" movie.

*Bug's Life* makes it clear that the PIXAR artists continue to lead the field in computer character animation.

Director John Lasseter and co-director Andrew Stanton don't rely as heavily on dialogue as *Antz* directors Eric Darnell and Tim Johnson, although the characters often talk more than they really need to. In many places, the ani-





Visually, *A Bug's Life* shows a lot more color than *Antz*.  
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mation alone is strong enough to carry the story. The rapid-fire gags, brightly colored visuals and constant movement in some scenes gets a bit overwhelming. Every syllable every character utters is accompanied by a gesture or a change of expression; sometimes it's enough for a character to stand quietly and say what he has to. The breakneck comic chase at the

end, with its swooping camera moves and MTV-style editing, goes on too long and wears out its welcome.

These minor flaws aside, *A Bug's Life* is a clever, enormously entertaining film that has "hit" written all over it. This round of the Disney vs. DreamWorks duel goes to Disney — and PIXAR — for a technical knock-out.

*Charles Solomon is an internationally respected critic and historian of animation. His most recent books include*

*The Disney That Never Was (Hyperion, 1995), Les Pionniers du Dessin Animé Américain (Dreamland, Paris, 1996), Enchanted Drawings: The History of Animation (Knopf, 1989; reprinted, Wings, 1994) and The Prince of Egypt: A*

*New Vision in Animation (Abrams, 1998). His writings on the subject have appeared in TV Guide, Rolling Stone, the Los Angeles Times, Modern Maturity, Film Comment, the Hollywood Reporter, Millimeter, the Manchester Guardian, and been reprinted in newspapers and professional journals in the United States, Canada, France, Russia, Britain, Israel, the Netherlands and Japan.*

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# Shifting to the Big Screen: The Rugrats Movie

film review by Michael Mallory

Probably everyone has experienced picking up his or her favorite product at the store, be it cola or deodorant, only to find emblazoned across the front the boast, "NEW AND IMPROVED!" Upon sampling the product, the consumer immediately detects the newness, but is never quite convinced of the improvement. Die-hard fans — and there are legions — of television's *Rugrats* might have a similar reaction to *The Rugrats Movie*, which not only sends its toddler protagonists where no babies have gone before (and lived), but also makes heavy stylistic concessions to the accepted toon feature format.

It is quite possibly the best directed and best paced animated feature since *The Little Mermaid*.

## A Different Klasky Flavor

This is not to say that *The Rugrats Movie* — the initial foray into feature animation for both Klasky Csupo and Nickelodeon Movies — is a poor film. On the contrary, under the helm of co-directors Norton Virgien and Igor Kovalyov, both veterans of the



series, it is quite possibly the best directed and best paced animated feature since *The Little Mermaid*. However, in the process of coming to the big screen a fair amount of Klasky Csupo's trademark insouciance has been bartered for attempts to yank one's heart-strings. Even the studio's distinctive visual style has given way to conventionally lush and realistic settings. Gone, for instance, are the fish-eye, dutch-angle layouts and the sketchy, free-hand style of the backgrounds. Replacing them are backgrounds that look, well, "Disneyesque," so much so that at times the scenery threatens to chew up the charac-



ters, which except for added shading and modeling retain their TV appearances. This is particularly noticeable with a progressive, real-time CG sunset that occurs towards the end of the film, which while beautifully crafted and technically impressive, seems wildly out of place in Tommy-and-Chucky Land.

Still, there's a lot to savor in *The Rugrats Movie*. The script by David N. Weiss and J. David Stem includes a level of sophistication that will keep adults interested and chuckling all the way through (although those seeking poo-poo gags will not be disappointed, either), and the songs — mostly by Mark Mothers-



baugh, with the old Chipmunks chestnut "Witch Doctor" recycled for good measure — are well integrated into the action.

### An Elaborate Tale

The complex plot begins with a parody of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, complete with John Williams' original galloping musical theme, with Tommy Pickles (voiced by E.G. Daily) leading twins Lil and Phil Deville (both Kath Soucie), and best pal Chuckie Finster (Christine Cavanaugh), on a dangerous expedition in a ruined temple, that in reality turns out to be the Pickles' kitchen. The famous Indiana Jones rolling ball (here a CGI creation that sticks out from its surroundings like the proverbial sore thumb) transforms out of the babes' imaginations into the looming, rotund belly of Tommy's pregnant mom, Didi (Melanie Chartoff).



With "help" from Angelica, however, Tommy, Chucky, Lil, Phil and Dil are instead thrust out into the world in the Reptar Wagon.

The opening serves to establish the almost brotherly relationship between Chucky and Tommy, which will be pushed to the limit as a result of the arrival of Tommy's newborn brother, Dylan (Dil for short — "Dil Pickles," get it?). Tommy's entrepreneurial dad Stu (Jack Riley), meanwhile, is trying to perfect his latest invention, a new "perfect children's toy" called the Reptar Wagon, a free-wheeling, dino-shaped kiddie

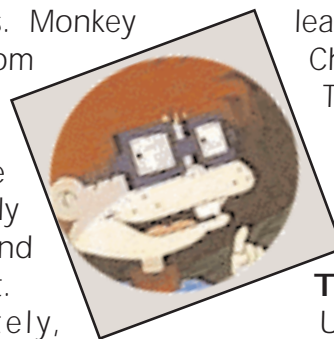
vehicle that spews real flames from its mouth.

The actual arrival of Dil in the birthing center run by quack child-care expert Dr. Lipshitz (voiced all too briefly by the splendid Tony Jay), leads to a rousing musical number in the nursery featuring a chorus of newborns, voiced by such pop, rock and soul stars as Beck, Iggy Pop, Lisa Loeb, Patti Smith and Lou Rawls.

Much to the distress of his exhausted parents and the entire neighborhood, Baby Dil turns out to be one of those kids who never stops crying. Tommy in particular is upset because, in addition to the noise, he is fraught with feelings of parental rejection, fueled, of course, by his bratty older cousin Angelica (Cheryl Chase), whose self-centered obnoxiousness has now reached *Omen*-like proportions. In an attempt to comfort Tommy, Stu bestows upon him the familial responsibility of looking out for his new brother, which the toddler takes very seriously.

While Tommy is hashing out his sibling rivalry problem, a seemingly out-of-nowhere subplot appears involving the Russian-based Banana Bros. Monkey Circus. Escaping from their cages, a pack of gonzo monkeys commandeer the train and ultimately drive it over a cliff and down into the forest.

Unfortunately, Baby Dil has encroached on the lives of all the toddlers to such a degree that they decide to rectify the situation by returning the "broken" baby to the "baby



store" for a refund. With "help" from Angelica; however, Tommy, Chucky, Lil, Phil and Dil are instead thrust out into the world in the Reptar Wagon. After a wild, destructive ride through the city, they end up in the middle of the dark, foreboding woods.

Help — if that's the word — is soon on the way from three separate parties: Angelica herself, who drafts the Pickles' mutt Spike as a bloodhound to track the babies (but only so she can recover her beloved doll, which Dil snatched before leaving); the parents, led by inept Stu and confused Grandpa Lou (Michael Bell, replacing the late David Doyle); and the media, represented by sleazy TV reporter Rex Pester, who is voiced almost unrecognizably by Tim Curry. Also involved in the manhunt are park rangers Frank (David Spade) and Margaret (the ubiquitous Whoopi Goldberg, here thoroughly wasted), and a police lieutenant voiced by comic Margaret Cho.

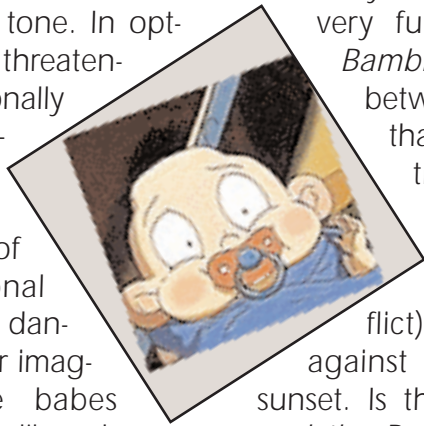
In the woods, Dil's banana baby food lures out the wild, escapee monkeys, who wreak havoc with the babies and eventually kidnap the newborn. Dil is ultimately rescued, but the task of dealing with the needs of a child even younger than they are leads Lil, Phil and even Chucky to mutiny, leaving Tommy alone in the dark, rainy, wolf-infested woods to deal with his younger brother.

### The Blundering Point

Up to this point, Virgien and Kovalyov deftly handled all the parallel story tracks, weaving them together in such a way that the focus is never lost. Here, however, the movie stumbles, not as a

result of plot confusion, but due to a sudden shift in tone. In opting for a darker, threatening, more emotionally real tone, the filmmakers lose the established baby's-eye-view of the conventional world since the dangers are no longer imaginary. Plus, the babes begin to act more like edgy adolescents. Despite the stylized character designs, the combination of realistic settings, emotionally wrenching scenes, and the disappearance of songs by the third act (a structural problem that *Anastasia* also faced) renders a literalness to the action that will trouble anyone who has a problem with children-in-jeopardy scenes.

The most startlingly grim moment is ironically also the most



Disney-ish (except for an earlier, very funny visual spoof of *Bambi*): a dramatic fight between a slaving wolf that has been stalking the babies and heroic Spike the dog (who frankly looks ridiculous in such a conflict), which is played against the aforementioned sunset. Is this *Rugrats* or *Beauty and the Beast*? What's more, the ending which quickly follows seems rushed and forced, even corny, particularly in light of the careful presentation of plot, exposition and character motivation that has preceded it.

However, the movie stumbles, not as a result of plot confusion, but due to a sudden shift in tone.

While it has much to offer, *The Rugrats Movie* ultimately suffers from trying to reshape itself into the established form that people have come to expect in an animated film, a temptation to which "Beavis and Butt-head Do America," for instance, refused to succumb.

All Rugrats images courtesy of and © 1998 Viacom International Inc. All rights reserved.

*Michael Mallory is an animation writer and author of Hanna-Barbara Cartoons, published by Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, Inc.*

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Includes a Quicktime movie of master drawing instructor Glenn Vilppu demonstrating drawing techniques that every animator should know!

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# American Magus - Harry Smith - A Modern Alchemist

book review by Giannalberto Bendazzi

It is a duty, as well as a pleasure, to report on this excellent book published by a small press penalized by a rather limited distribution. Harry Smith (1923-1991) is one of the most hidden, obscure and enigmatic figures in the entire history of animation and the avant-garde. He gave interviews extremely rarely, and his interior universe was so foreign to the world of rationality and the everyday as to render dialogue with those near him almost always impossible. Nonetheless, his genius is recognized among the oldest to have practiced in our field: it's enough to remember the abstract feature *Heaven And Earth Magic* (1950-1960), even in the non-definitive versions which are in circulation, to have a measure of his poetic power.

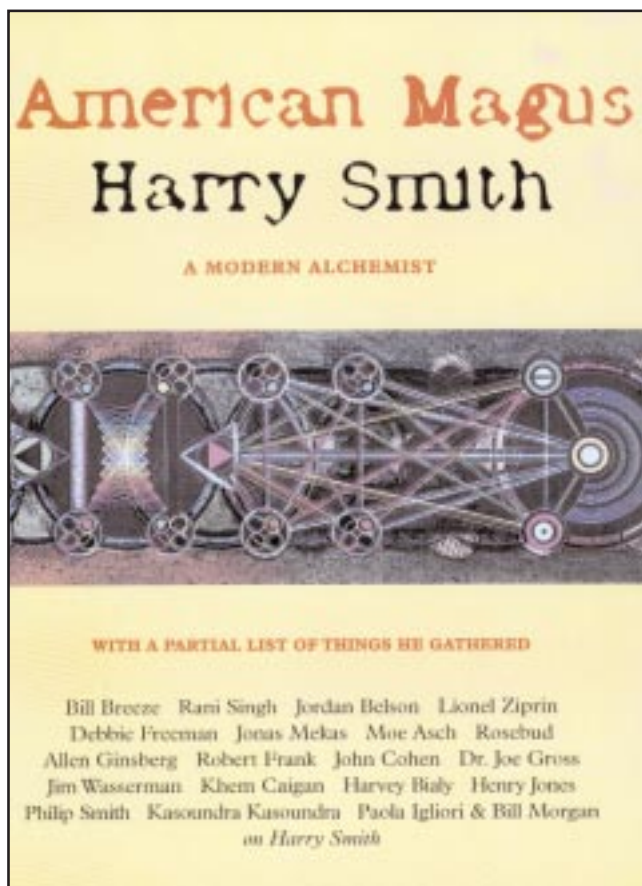
## A Little About the Man

Smith had an extraordinarily intricate and contradictory personality, dedicated to diverse disciplines. He was a painter, filmmaker, anthropologist, ethnomusicologist, occultist, alchemist, and collector of unusual objects. For instance, he assembled about 30,000 Ukrainian painted Easter eggs, with written annotations about each; filled 12 large boxes with paper airplanes which he finally donated to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington; and studied the languages, customs and religious cer-

emonies of the American Indians, and donated his collection of Indian artifacts to an ethnography museum in Sweden. In 1952, he published on Folkways Records an *Anthology Of American Folk Music*, which was the result of years of research, and, influencing musicians like Bob Dylan, was the basis of the boom in popular music in 1960s America.

Contrary to these constructive aspects however, Smith also fostered destructive tendencies. He didn't take

care of his personal grooming or health; he ceaselessly re-edited his films without ever trying to establish a best version ('My films must be seen all together or not at all,' he used to say); he deliberately destroyed a large number of paintings and films and let his artistic patrimony be dispersed and plundered. Today Rani Singh, who was his assistant from 1988 until his death, heads a Harry Smith Archives, which is devoted to preserving the salvageable and recuperating all that can be found from the works of this genuine, probably unwitting, American Sur-



realist.

## A Little About the Book

The book *American Magus* is a work in progress. The editor, Paola Iglioni is an Italian from Rome who has become a New Yorker by adoption. A student of art and an artist herself, she knew Harry Smith during the late '80s and was at his side at the moment of his death. She managed to collect some information from him and tried to understand the man and his works. As she wrote in the preface, "This book is only a scratching of the surface. It hopes to be

direct, simple traces of Harry, a live map of different points of entrance in the labyrinth. I hope it will be a pathfinder for other more in-depth works." [Think of the Self Speaking: Selected Interviews of Harry Smith, a new book, has just been released this month and is reviewed in this issue as well.]

The book opens with two essays, one by musician, computer designer and writer Bill Breeze, and another by the aforementioned Singh. They have the function of creating a minimum of order and information on the subject which the reader must then pursue through drawings, photographs, reproductions, manuscripts, interviews with curators and friends and colleagues of the artist, and documents of various kinds, ending with a list of the innumerable and chaotic objects left by the deceased. Among the interviews I would recommend that with Jordan Belson, another solitary and retiring genius of non-objective animation who evokes the period from 1946 to the early

1950s when he and Smith were coming of age in Berkeley and San Francisco; that of Jonas Mekas, New York guru of the avant-garde cinema, who was close to Harry during the early 1960s and beyond; that of Rosebud, who was the spiritual wife of a man who never showed much interest in sex; and that of the poet Allen Ginsberg.

One hopes that in the near future scholars will succeed, slowly and methodically, in putting in order, dating and numbering the rest of the works of Harry Smith, and will hopefully recover at least a portion of the lost materials. That would be good, but in any case this *American Magus* certainly preserves for us, at least in part, the anarchy, volcanic freedom, and lightning of this alien with the superior mind that never once considered the possibility of following some current trend.

*American Magus - Harry Smith - A Modern Alchemist*, edited by Paola Iglioni. New York, New York:

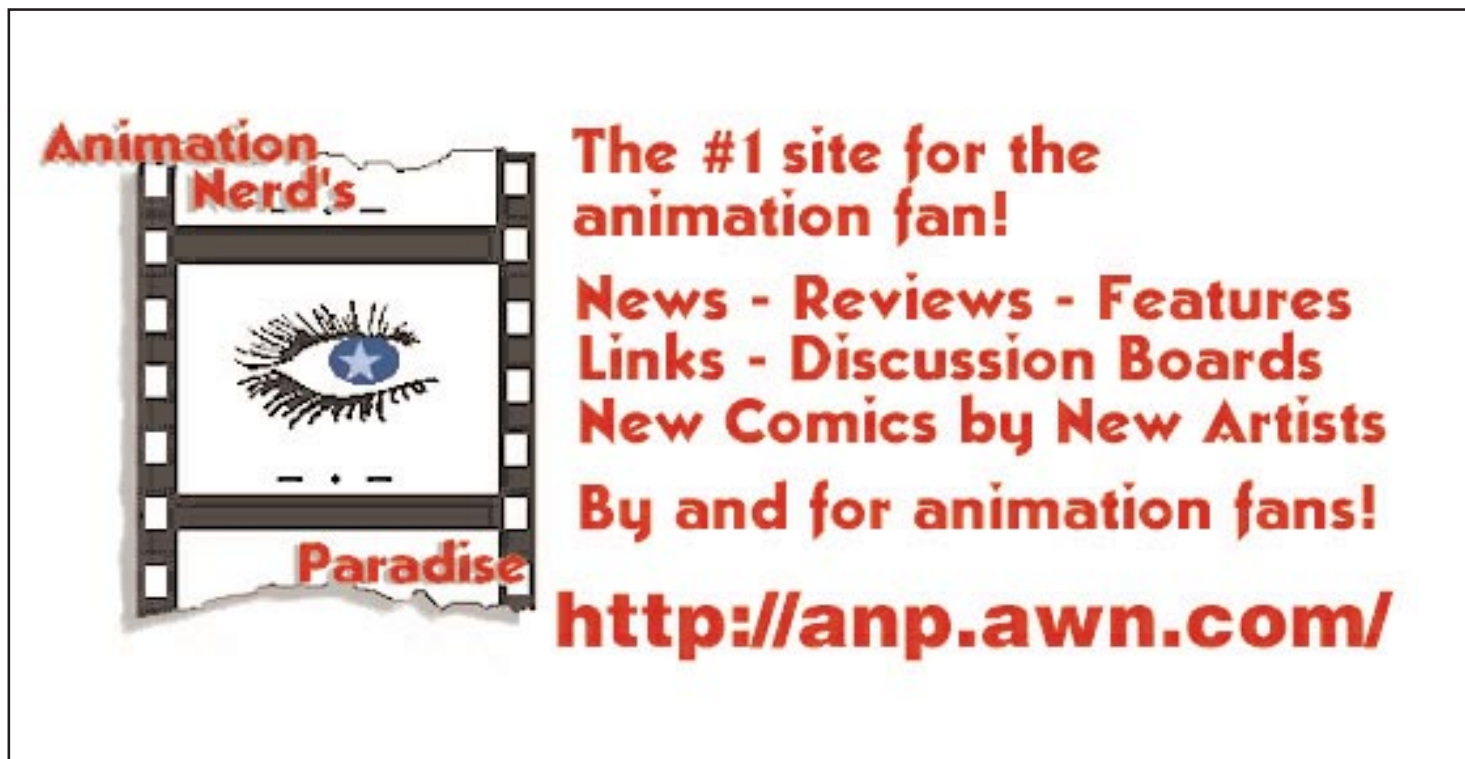
Inanout Press, 1996. 286 pages. ISBN: 0-9625119-9-4 (U.S. \$27.95 paperback). This book is now available on-line in the Animation World Store:

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

Translated from Italian by William Moritz.

*Giannalberto Bendazzi is a Milan-based film historian and critic whose history of animation, Cartoons: One Hundred Years of Cinema Animation, is published in the U.S. by Indiana University Press and in the U.K. by John Libbey. His other books on animation include Topoline e poi (1978), Due volte l'oceano (1983) and Il movimento creato (1993, with Guido Michelone).*

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# American Magus - Harry Smith - Alchimista d'Avanguardia

rassegna del libro per Giannalberto Bendazzi

**E'** un dovere, oltre che un piacere, segnalare questo eccellente libro pubblicato da una piccola casa editrice penalizzata da una distribuzione assai limitata. Harry Smith (1923-1991) è stato una delle figure più nascoste ed enigmatiche di tutta la storia dell'animazione d'autore e d'avanguardia. Le sue interviste sono state rarissime, e il suo universo interiore era così estraneo al mondo della razionalità e della quotidianità da rendere il dialogo con il prossimo quasi sempre impossibile. Eppure il suo genio è stato fra i più alti che si siano mai manifestati nel nostro settore: basta ricordare il lungometraggio non-oggettivo *Cielo ed Terra Magica* (*Heaven and Earth Magic*, 1950-1960), pur nella versione non definitiva in circolazione, per avere la misura della sua potenza poetica.

Harry Smith (1923-1991) è stato una delle figure più nascoste ed enigmatiche di tutta la storia dell'animazione d'autore e d'avanguardia.

## Qualche riferimento sull'Uomo

Smith fu una personalità straordinariamente intricata, contraddittoria e dedita a discipline diverse. Fu pittore, cineasta, antropologo, etnomusicologo,

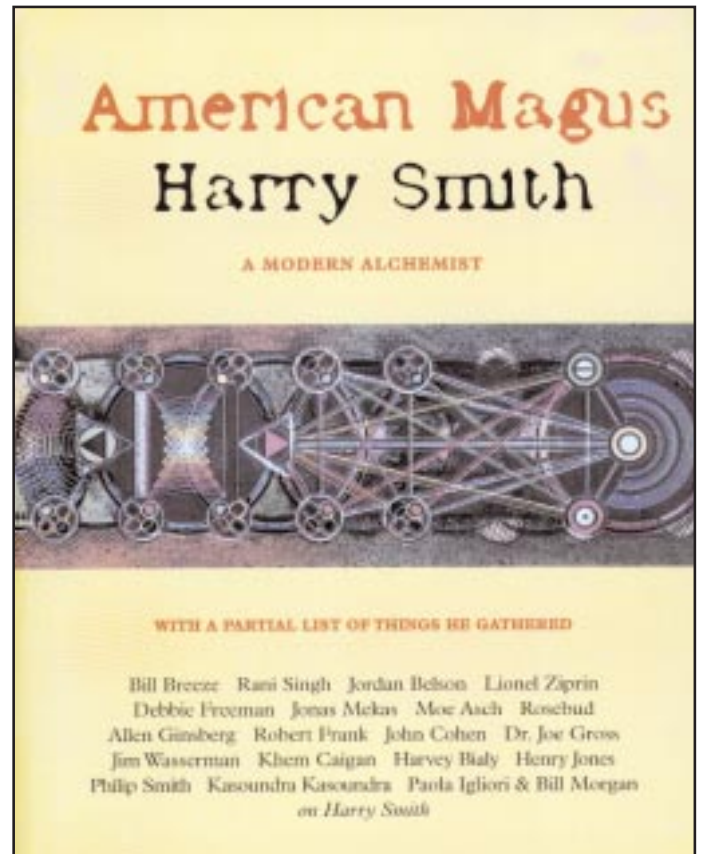
occultista, alchimista, collezionista di oggetti inconsueti. Raccolse quasi 30.000 uova di Pasqua ucraine dipinte, scrivendo note a proposito di ognuna di esse; riempi 12 scatolini di aeroplanini di carta, che alla fine dono allo Smithsonian Air and Space Museum di Washington; studio la lingua, i costumi, i riti degli indiani d'America e dono a un museo etnografico svedese la sua raccolta di oggetti da loro prodotti; nel 1952 pubblica presso la Folkway Records una *Anthology of American Folk Music* che era il risultato di anni di ricerche e che fu la base del boom della musica popolare statunitense degli anni Sessanta, influenzando anche autori come Bob Dylan.

A questi aspetti costruttivi fanno da contraltare gli aspetti distruttivi. Smith non si curò mai della sua persona e della sua salute, monto e rimonto ininterrottamente i suoi lavori cinematografici senza preoccuparsi di creare opere definitive ("I miei film vanno visti tutti insieme, o per nulla affatto," e una sua frase), distrusse deliber-

atamente un numero non piccolo di quadri e di pellicole, lascio che il suo patrimonio artistico venisse disperso o saccheggiato. Oggi Rani Singh, che fu sua assistente dal 1988 alla morte, guida gli Harry Smith Archives, con lo scopo di salvare il salvabile e di recuperare il recuperabile dell'opera di questo genuino (quanto probabilmente inconsapevole) surrealista americano.

## Qualche riferimento sul libro

Il libro *American Magus* è un 'work in progress.' La curatrice Paola Iglioni, un' italiana di Roma divenuta newyorchese d'adorazione, studiosa d'arte e artista



ella stessa, conosce Harry Smith negli ultimi anni Ottanta, riuscì a raccoglierne alcune confidenze, fu al suo fianco al momento della morte, cerco di comprendere l'uomo e l'opera. Come scriver nella prefazione, "This book is only a scratching of the surface. It hopes to be direct simple traces of Harry, a live map of different points of entrance in the labyrinth. I hope it will be a pathfinder for other more in-depth works." [Think of the Self Speaking (Pensieri in alta voce): Interviste selezionate di Harry Smith, un nuovo libro, pubblicato questo mese e venuto rasegnato in questo numero.]

**Smith fu una personalità straordinariamente intricata, contraddittoria e dedita a discipline diverse.**

Il libro è aperto da due saggi, uno di Bill Breeze, musicista, computer designer e scrittore, e uno di Rani Singh, di cui si è parlato poco sopra. Essi hanno la funzione di creare quel minimo d'ordine e d'informazione sul soggetto che sono necessari al lettore per proseguire fra disegni, fotografie, riproduzioni di manoscritti, interviste della curatrice ad amici e colleghi dell'artista, documenti di varia specie, finendo con una lista degli innumerevoli e caotici oggetti lasciati dal defunto.

Fra le interviste vanno segnalate quella con Jordan Belson, altro genio solitario e ritroso dell'animazione non-oggettiva, che rievoca il periodo della formazione sua e di Smith a Berkeley e San Francisco fra il 1946 e i primi anni Cinquanta; quella con Jonas Mekas, guru del cinema d'avanguardia newyorchese, che gli fu vicino dai primi anni Sessanta in

poi; quella con Rosebud, che fu la "moglie spirituale" di un uomo che si mostro sempre poco propenso al sesso; quella con il poeta Allen Ginsberg.

**Il libro American Magus è un 'work in progress.'**

C'è da credere che nel futuro prossimo gli eruditi riusciranno, lentamente e metodicamente, a mettere ordine, date, numeri di classificazione ai resti dell'opera di Harry Smith, e probabilmente a recuperare almeno parte del materiale perduto. Sarà un bene. Ma certamente sarà questo *American Magus* a conservare per noi, almeno in parte, l'anarchia, la vulcanica libertà, le folgorazioni di questo alieno dalla mente superiore che non contemplo mai la possibilità di seguire la corrente.

*American Magus - Harry Smith - A Modern Alchemist*, edited by Paola Iglori. New York, New York: Inanout Press, 1996. 286 pages. ISBN: 0-9625119-9-4 (U.S. \$27.95 paperback).

*Giannalberto Bendazzi e un storico e critico dei film a Milano. La sua storia dell'animazione, Cartoni: Cento anni di Cinema di Animazione, e stato pubblicato negli Stati Uniti per Indiana University Press ed negli Regni Uniti per John Libbey. I suoi altri libri sull'animazione includono: Topoline e poi (1978), Due volte l'oceano (1983) e Il movimento creato (1993, with Guido Michelone).*

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# The Flesh Made Word: Harry Smith Speaks

book review by Chuck Pirtle

**T**hink of the *Self Speaking*, edited by Rani Singh and jointly published by Darrin Daniel and Steve Cresons Cityful and Elbow Presses in Seattle, provides an in-depth look at one of the most unusual minds of the 20th century. Yet, reading this wide-ranging collection of interviews leaves one with the tantalizing feeling of having barely scratched the surface.

Reading this wide-ranging collection of interviews leaves one with the tantalizing feeling of having barely scratched the surface.

If one has seen some of Harry Smith's pioneering film work but doesn't know much about the man, this is the place to start. The book includes P. Adams Sitney's extensive 1965 interview, in which Smith discusses in detail the methods and materials that went into his *Early Abstractions*. He even tells of his earliest projections, done with photographic negatives and a flashlight lens at the age of five. Another interview with Sitney focuses on what Smith thought of as his masterpiece, the complex and difficult *Mahagonny*; and a long, hilarious, speed-fueled encounter with NYU film student A.J. Melita, who tells Smith he's only interested in talking about

*Heaven and Earth Magic*, about which he has to write a paper that's due in a few days. "You don't know what you're up against," Smith tells Melita, and over the course of the next 39 pages goes on to give him both what he wants and way more than he's bargained for.

Shorter conversations with Dawn Baude and Mary Hill focus on the occult and spiritual aspects of Smith and his films, and two informative talks with John Cohen and Gary Kenton delve into Smith's involvement with record collecting and the genesis and development of his *Anthology of American Folk Music* (re-released last year on Smithson-

Rani Singh's preface gives the reader a taste of what this obscure trickster wizard — who ought to be far better known — was like in person...

ian Folkways). Along the way, Smith touches on his youth in the Pacific Northwest, his anthropological studies, and his belief in the connection between all things.



The inimitable Harry Smith. Photo © Brian Graham, courtesy of Harry Smith Archives.

Rani Singh's preface gives the reader a taste of what this obscure trickster wizard — who ought to be far better known — was like in person, and Allen Ginsberg's introduction sets Smith's half-century of creative activity in cultural and historical context. *Think of the Self Speaking* is a revelation, and to have it is a delight.

*Think of the Self Speaking: Selected Interviews of Harry Smith*; introduction by Allen Ginsberg, edited by Rani Singh. Seattle, Washington: Elbow and Cityful Press, 1998. 156 pages. ISBN: 1-885089-06-6 (U.S. \$14.95, shipping \$2.25).

Chuck Pirtle won a Grammy Award for Best Album Notes for Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*. He studied with Smith and Allen Ginsberg at The Naropa Institute, and wrote his Ph.D. thesis on Ginsberg's *The Fall of America*.

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

**H**enry T. Sampson can boast a career as a scholar of cinema and theater, even though he was educated as a nuclear scientist, worked as a Senior Project Engineer for Aerospace Corp., and includes in his credits the patents on several inventions and numerous technical publications. He has previously published with Scarecrow Press *Blacks In Black and White: A Source Book On Black Films* (1977, new edition 1995), *Blacks In Blackface: A Source Book On Early Black Musical Shows* (1980), and *The Ghost Walks: Chronological History Of Blacks In Show Business* (1988).

Sampson is not a polemicist, but a man of the cinema and a judge of great intelligence...

#### A Probing Premise

The current *That's Enough, Folks* is based on this premise: that before 1960 it was the practice at the American studios which produced animated cartoons to depict people with dark skin as stereotypes that could be ridiculed. The author recalls in his preface: "Historically, all ethnic groups have been targets of animators' humor, including Jews, Irish, Italians, Native Americans and Asians. But for these groups, there appeared to be boundaries defined by sexuality, criminality, religion, and patriotism that constrained story content and the depiction of characters....My research revealed that for black characters, animators had few such constraints." He adds: "The cartoons in this book will demonstrate that the animation studios considered the collective sensitivities of African Americans to be insignificant." But this book is not a tract, as such a point of departure

## That's Enough Folks: Black Images In Animated Cartoons, 1900-1960

book review by Giannalberto Bendazzi

might suggest. Sampson is not a polemicist, but a man of the cinema and a judge of great intelligence, so he concludes his preface with these words: "It is an enormous public loss that many of these brilliantly conceived and produced cartoon shorts cannot be shown today because they are forever marked with the ugly and indelible stain of racism."

#### An Insightful Text

After a "Historical Overview" synthesized in five juicy pages, follows a most detailed chapter on "Black Stars of the Animated Cartoon Series," starting with Sammy Johnsin (1916-1917) created by Pat Sullivan, to more famous figures like Bosko of Hugh Harman and Rudolph Ising (1930s), Jasper of George Pal (puppet animation, 1940s), and Inki of Chuck Jones (1930s-1950s), but not neglecting numerous other caricatures (for example,

This book enriches the consciousness of American animation history, as well as the whole of United States society...

Mammy Two-Shoes, the maid in the house where Tom and Jerry live, who is usually depicted with only the lower part of her body in frame). A chapter follows on stories set in Africa, and another on stories set in the United States' Deep South. The next chapter, titled "The Animated Minstrel Show," analyzes the caricatures or direct references (even those only on the soundtrack) of African

American entertainers, musicians, and singers. The text is full of dates, summaries of films, and critiques from the period: a monumental and admirable work of research and documentation.

This book enriches the consciousness of American animation history, as well as the whole of United States society, during the first 60 years of the century. One hopes that Henry T. Sampson will not consider his work finished, but rather will next take up the remaining 40 years of the century, which is much closer, and therefore, meaningful to us. There are many films, in particular some by Ralph Bakshi, about which he should have a great deal to say.

*That's Enough Folks Black Images In Animated Cartoons, 1900-1960*, by Henry T. Sampson. Lanham, Maryland and London, U.K.: The Scarecrow Press, 1998. 249 pages. ISBN: 0-8108325-0-X (U.S. \$60.00 hardcover).

Translated from Italian by William Moritz.

*Giannalberto Bendazzi is a Milan-based film historian and critic whose history of animation, Cartoons: One Hundred Years of Cinema Animation, is published in the U.S. by Indiana University Press and in the U.K. by John Libbey. His other books on animation include Topoline e poi (1978), Due volte l'oceano (1983) and Il movimento creato (1993, with Guido Michelone).*

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



**H**enry T. Sampson ha alle spalle una carriera di studioso del cinema e dello spettacolo, benché sia per formazione un ingegnere nucleare, lavori come Senior Project Engineer dell'Aerospace Corp, e abbia al suo attivo i brevetti di alcune invenzioni e numerose pubblicazioni tecniche. Per la Scarecrow Press ha già pubblicato *Blacks in Black and White: A Source Book on black Films* (1997, nuova edizione 1995), *Blacks in Blackface: A Source Book on Early Black Musical Shows* (1980), and *The Ghost Walks: A Chronological History of Blacks in Show Business* (1988).

**Sampson non è un polemista ma un uomo di cinema e un estimatore dell'intelligenza...**

### Intelligente Premessa

Il presente *That's Enough, Folks* è basato su questa premessa: che prima del 1960 era pratica comune agli studios americani che producevano disegni animati dipingere i personaggi di pelle nera come stereotipi dei quali farsi beffe. Ricorda l'autore nella prefazione: "Historically, all ethnic groups have been the targets of animators' humor, including Jews, Irish, Italians, Native Americans, and Asians. But for these groups there appeared to be boundaries defined by sexuality, criminality, religion and patriotism that constrained story content and the depiction of characters....My research revealed that for black characters, animators had few such constraints" E aggiunge: "The cartoons in this book will demonstrate that the animation studios considered the collective sensitivities of African american to be insignificant." Ma il libro non è un pamphlet, come simili dati di partenza potrebbero far supporre.

## **That's Enough, Folks (Questo e tutto, Famiglia) - Imagine nere nelle Cartoni Animati, 1900-1960**

rassegna del libro per Giannalberto Bendazzi

Sampson non è un polemista ma un uomo di cinema e un estimatore dell'intelligenza, e conclude la sua prefazione con queste parole: "It is an enormous public loss that many of these brilliantly conceived and produced cartoon shorts cannot be shown today because they are forever marked with the ugly and indeleble stain of racism."

### Un Testo Ingenioso

A una "Historical Overview" sintetizzata in cinque succose pagine fanno seguito dettagliatissimi capitoli sulle "Black Stars of the Animated Cartoon Series," partendo da Sammy Johnsin (1916-1917) creato da Pat Sullivan, e passando per figure celebri come Bosko di Hugh Harman e Rudolph Ising (anni Trenta), Jasper di George Pal (a pupazzi animati, anni Quarante), e Inki di Chuck Jones (anni Cinquanta), ma non trascurando innumerevoli altre caratterizzazioni (per esempio Mammy Two-Shoes, la cameriera della casa abitata da Tom e Jerry e normalmente inquadrata solo nella parte inferiore del corpo).

**Il testo è fitto di date, riassunti dei film, recensioni dell'epoca: un lavoro di ricerca e di documentazione monumentale e ammirevole.**

Segue un capitolo sulle storie ambientate in Africa, uno sulle storie ambientate nel Sud degli Stati Uniti, uno intitolato "The Animated Minstrel Show" nel quale sono analizzate le caricature o i riferimenti diretti (magari solo nella colonna sonora) di entertainers,

musicisti e cantanti afroamericani.

Il testo è fitto di date, riassunti dei film, recensioni dell'epoca: un lavoro di ricerca e di documentazione monumentale e ammirevole. Un libro che arricchisce la conoscenza della storia dell'animazione americana come pure dell'intera società degli Stati Uniti nel primo sessantennio del secolo. Non resta che augurarsi che Henry T. Sampson non consideri conclusa qui la sua fatica ma si dedichi prossimamente al restante quarantennio, quello a noi più vicino. Ci sono molti film, in particolare alcuni di Ralph Bakshi, sui quali credo avrà molto da dire.

*That's Enough Folks Black Images In Animated Cartoons, 1900-1960*, by Henry T. Sampson. Lanham, Maryland and London, U.K.: The Scarecrow Press, 1998. 249 pages. ISBN: 0-8108325-0-X (U.S. \$60.00 hardcover).

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# Reading the Rabbit: Warner Bros. According to the Academics

book review by Mark Mayerson

**R**eading the Rabbit is a collection of essays regarding various aspects of Warner cartoons. Most of the authors are academics, and so this collection is marked by all the shortcomings of academic prose and the academic approach.

As there are people who are not familiar with this approach, its best that I outline it briefly. Its possible to live an informed life without ever running into words like dietetic, eponymous, metonymic, hermeneutic, hegemonic or imbrication. However, readers of this book will trip over these words regularly. This jargon is the academics way of marking territory; a way of claiming the serious high ground from people who write for general consumption.

This collection is marked by all the shortcomings of academic prose and the academic approach.

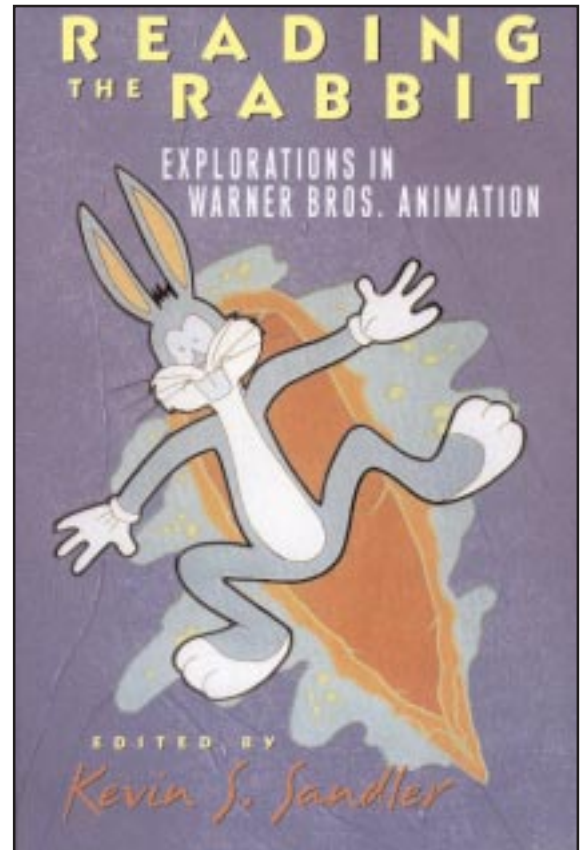
Then there are footnotes, the academic version of steroids; they bulk up the size and gravity of the authors ideas. Why simply state something when the words of great minds (written in completely different contexts) can be attached to the thoughts of the author? Who can fail to be impressed by a quote from Freud,

Kracauer, Metz, Baudrillard or their bosom companions Friedwald and Beck?

Finally, there is the polemical nature of the articles. Academic articles are not merely information, they are arguments. Because the success of the article is measured by how persuasively the author argues the point, academic authors frequently fall prey to gross generalizations and historical distortions. That is certainly the case with *Reading the Rabbit*.

## A Look Into The Content

Donald Crafton's article "The View from Termite Terrace: Caricature and Parody in Warner Bros. Animation" claims that the Warner attitude in caricaturing Hollywood stars was due to working conditions at the studio. In detailing the working conditions, Crafton quotes from "The Exposure Sheet," a Schlesinger in-house newsletter, and interviews with former Schlesinger employees Ben Shenkman and Martha Goldman Sigall. This information is the best material in the article. However, Crafton does not convince me of his thesis. I could argue that caricature in Disney cartoons like *Mother Goose Goes Hollywood* is more savage, though done at a studio that had more prestige and better working conditions. In addi-



tion, caricature and satire of Marlon Brando in *Mad Magazine* in the 1950s is also more savage than anything done by Warners, yet Harvey Kurtzman and Wally Wood were not employees of Hollywood studios and worked 3,000 miles away. The link between working conditions and Warner caricature is not as strong as Crafton implies and so his article is only half good.

Terry Lindvall and Ben Fraser write a well-balanced study of racism in Warner cartoons called "Darker Shades of Animation: African-American Images in the Warner Bros. Cartoon." Unfortunately, they hurt their case with



some stereotyping of their own and a major historical slip. They refer to Chuck Jones' Inki character as a "cute burlesque of a little cannibal hunter with a big bone in the topknot of his hair." I defy anyone to point out an example of Inki eating human flesh or even hunting humans. It didn't happen. The authors have stereotyped Inki, an African boy, as a cannibal.

Is Time-Warner stronger than the first amendment of the U.S. constitution?

Later in the article, they write, "A critical difference between Warner Bros.' hepcat portrayals of race in Clampett's cartoons and the Jim Crow cartoons of Columbia's Heckle and Jeckle was this very celebration of the hot urban music of the emerging black culture." I doubt the authors have even seen a Heckle and Jeckle cartoon. For one thing, they were distributed by Fox and not Columbia. For another, the characters were magpies and not crows. In addition, the characters are not treated as black caricatures. One speaks with a New York accent and the other is British. Nothing about their movements or behavior is stereotypically black. They are no more black caricatures than Daffy Duck. Therefore, their "critical difference" is non-existent.

### Simplifications

Gene Walz continues his excellent research into the life and work of character designer Charles Thorson. His article "Charlie Thorson and the Temporary Disneyfication of Warner Bros. Cartoons" covers Thorson's time at Warners from approximately 1938

to 1940, where Thorson contributed character designs for cartoons directed by Chuck Jones, Tex Avery, and Bugs Hardaway and Cal Dalton. Walz does a thorough job of documenting Thorson's influence on the Jones unit but the Merrie Melodies that Thorson worked on were only a part of the Warner output. Whatever Disneyfication was going on through Thorson's work was being counterbalanced by the black and white Looney Tunes of the same period. Walz's statement that, "Prior to 1940 the [Warner] studio paid homage to Disney's creations or used them in a lighthearted spirit of fun. After 1940, the animators felt free to satirize Disney characters and stories, to assume a position that was, for the most part, intellectually superior to Disney's sentimentality and artfulness," is a simplification that ignores work in the 1930s by Avery, Tashlin, Clampett and Freleng.

Whose ironic comment is it that the cover image of Bugs Bunny is one where he has been squashed flat?

Bill Mikulaks' article, "Fans versus Time Warner: Who Owns Looney Tunes?" examines legal battles between Time-Warner and fans who use the World Wide Web to post images and fiction featuring Warner characters. Unfortunately, the article veers off the track by examining work that is deemed by some to be offensive or pornographic. These works not only potentially violate copyright and trademark laws, they also potentially violate obscenity laws. This obscures the main question that needs to be examined. In a

society where culture is manufactured by corporations, is it possible for individuals to comment on their own culture in any fixed medium without violating commercial law? Is Time-Warner stronger than the first amendment of the U.S. constitution?

### It Isn't Pretty

Those interested in the history of Warner cartoons will find this volume very slight. Those interested in speculation on how Warner cartoons have affected pop culture or have been affected by it will find more of interest here, but on the whole the articles are a disappointment. Whose ironic comment is it that the cover image of Bugs Bunny is one where he has been squashed flat? One can only regret that Mike Maltese is not alive to write a Bugs Bunny cartoon where Bugs burrows into a university after making a wrong turn at Albuquerque. Now there's a confrontation between Warner cartoons and academia that would be far more enlightening.

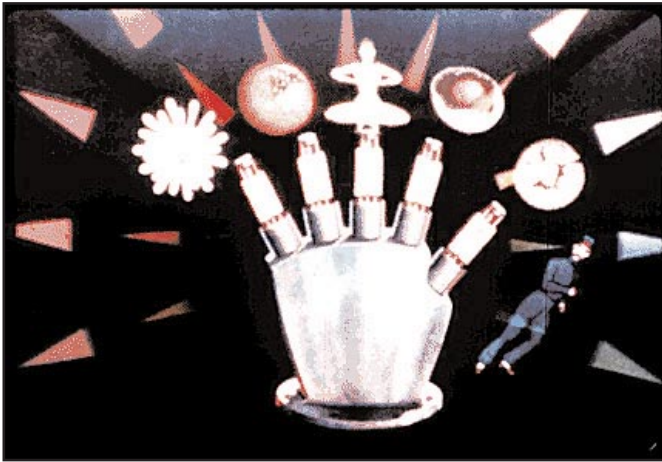
*Reading the Rabbit: Explorations in Warner Bros. Animation*, edited by Kevin S. Sandler. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1998. 288 pages. ISBN: 0-8135-2538-1 (U.S. \$19.00 paperback).

*Mark Mayerson has worked in the animation business since 1976. He is currently directing episodes of Monster By Mistake, a computer animated TV series he created.*

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

# Fragments of a Faith Forgotten: Unearthing the Harry Smith Archives

by Rani Singh



A still from Harry Smith's *Early Abstractions*, a highly respected avante garde series of animated films. Photo courtesy of Harry Smith Archives.

The Harry Smith Archives is a private, not for profit 501c3 organization dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and presentation of the works of American polymath Harry Everett Smith (1923-1991). The Harry Smith Archives is housed at Anthology Film Archives, in New York City's Lower East Side, where Smith's films have been held for many years, having been selected by film scholars for inclusion in the Archives' "Essential Cinema" collection of the major works of film art in the early 1970s.

Best known to cinephiles for his experimental films incorporating ingenious original techniques of collage animation and painting directly onto film, Smith also distinguished himself in many other fields. In addition to being one of the most original and cre-

ative of filmmakers, he was a painter, well-known musicologist, anthropologist, linguist, and magician, who during his lifetime amassed a unique myriad of collections related to all these fields.

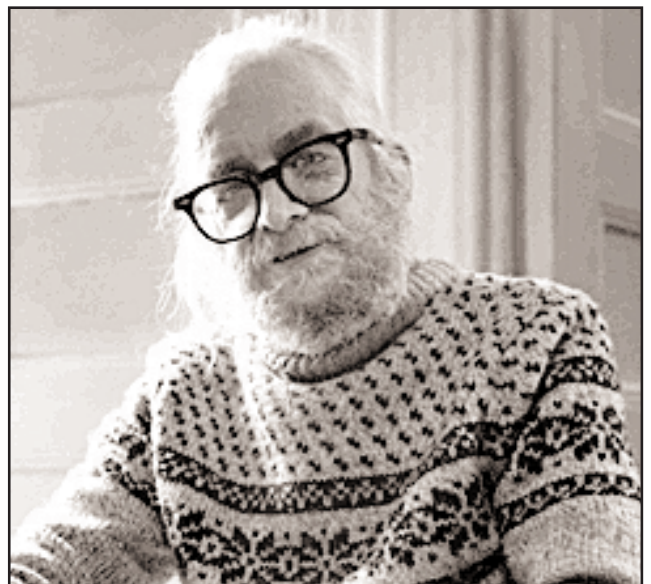
The Harry Smith collection consists of items that were in his possession at the time of his death. Archivist Bill Morgan cataloged his final belongings. The collection consists of books (mainly of an anthropological nature), records, audio recordings, tarot and playing cards, pop-up books, gourds and realia. (See *American Magus* for excerpts from Bill Morgan's interesting catalog of this collection.)

As a consequence of his bohemian lifestyle, Smith lost, sold, wantonly destroyed and traded several lifetimes worth of collections. Moving from unpaid hotel bills at the Chelsea Hotel to any number of men's rooming houses on the Bowery to Allen

Ginsberg's apartment, Smith's possessions took on a life of their own. Smith packed up and left under dark of night many times during his short 67 years, leaving behind boxes marked with a simple black-and-white sticker: "Property of Harry Smith."

As a consequence of his bohemian lifestyle, Smith lost, sold, wantonly destroyed and traded several lifetimes worth of collections.

Uncovering Smith's life and collections has been a form of urban archeology. There are many layers to be teased apart. One ref-



Harry Smith. Photo © Allen Ginsberg, courtesy of Fahey-Klein Gallery



erence leads to the next with a truly organic naturalness. A cameraman who worked with Smith in the Seventies mentions a young kid who was hanging around with Smith consulting with him about string figures, which leads to an unfinished manuscript. A call to another former associate turns up a friend who specialized in Ukrainian Easter eggs, who organized donating Smith's world-class collection of eggs to the famous Göteborg Museum in Stockholm. Another leads to a legendary Kab-

alah expert who was close friends with Smith in the Fifties and collaborated on many projects, including an al chemical "Tree of Life" print and 3-D greeting cards.

Perhaps the most rewarding work of the Archives has been focused on locating, photographing, and cataloging Smith's artwork. The bulk of these works remain in private hands, and the Archives has maintained an active accession policy. The paintings of Harry Smith are unknown master-

pieces that reveal the true genius and breadth of one of Americas most original minds. Currently there is an exhibition planned in Paris at the Jeu de Paume for Spring of 1999. This will coincide with the much-awaited premiere of the restored version of Smith's "lost" four-screen film masterpiece *Mahagonny* (ca. 1964-1979).

In addition to being one of the most original and creative of filmmakers, he was a painter, well-known musician, anthropologist, linguist, and magician...

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With the re-release in 1997 of Smith's seminal 1952 *Anthology of American Folk Music* on Smithsonian/Folkways records (which won two Grammy awards), Smith's work is beginning to come to light as we reach the millennium. The nascent Harry Smith Archives greets the new epoch with a full slate of upcoming projects.

For more information on the Harry Smith Archives, please e-mail [Rani22@earthlink.net](mailto:Rani22@earthlink.net), or call (212) 780-9224. Serious inquiries only, please. Also consult our web site at [accessible through the Animation Village](http://www.harrysmitharchives.com).

*Rani Singh is the President of the Harry Smith Archives. Producer, film researcher, archivist and editor, Singh was Smith's assistant for four years before his death.*

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## Animation World News

by Wendy Jackson & Amid Amidi

All of the news in this section of *Animation World Magazine* is published first in the *Animation Flash*, AWN's weekly e-mail newsletter. **Read it first in the Flash!** Subscribe today.

### Business

#### **Rugrats Offends Media Watchdogs.**

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an organization devoted to fighting anti-Semitism, has taken issue with the depiction of a character in Nickelodeon's *Rugrats* newspaper comic strip. The comic in question, which ran in newspapers nationwide during the week of Rosh Hashanah - "The Jewish New Year" - featured a character named Granpa Boris in a synagogue reciting The Mourners Kaddish, a holy Jewish prayer. In a public statement, the ADL stated "the use of the Mourners Kaddish in a jocular fashion demands the prayer's solemnity," and added that the character design of Granpa Boris is "reminiscent of Nazi-era depictions of Jews." Nickelodeon was quick to agree with ADL's charges, apologize, and has promised never to run the character or the specific strip in newspapers again. Herb Scannell, president of Nickelodeon, said, "Unfortunately, the creators of the strip made an error in judgment by referencing the Kaddish." While he won't be reappearing in newspapers, the short, bald and big-

nosed Granpa Boris character is also featured in the *Rugrats* television series and the upcoming animated feature film, *The Rugrats Movie*, however Nickelodeon has not been asked to change the character in its animated versions.

#### **Toon Union Final Election Results.**

The Animation Union, the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists (M.P.S.C.) and Affiliated Optical Electronic and Graphic Arts, Local 839 IATSE has completed its voting process and announced the new Executive Board of the organization. Re-elected to office were incumbents Bronwen Barry, Dave Brain, Pat Connolly-Sito, Earl Kress, Craig Littell-Herrick, Enrique May, Ann Sullivan and Stephan Zupkas. Also elected were newcomers Bob Foster, Warren Greenwood and Karen Nugent, replacing Board members Sheila Brown, Tom Ray and Dave Zaboski who did not run for reelection. Elected as Trustees (in addition to the Executive Board) were Dave Brain, Pat Connolly-Sito and Stephan Zupkas. As previously reported in the *Animation Flash* [10/13/98], the following incumbent officers were nominated without opposition

and elected by "white ballot" at a membership meeting on September 29: President Tom Sito, Vice-President George Sukara, Business Representative Steve Hulett, Recording Secretary Jeff Massie and Sergeant-At-Arms Jan Browning. All officers were elected to a three-year term, expiring November 2001 (not to annual terms, as announced in the previous *Flash*).

For more information on the M.P.S.C. union, visit *Animation World Magazine's* July 1998 issue for president Tom Sito's article, *The Hollywood Animation Union* (M.P.S.C. #839).

#### **Profits Down For SGI.**

Silicon Graphics, Inc. has reported negative first quarter results for the 1999 fiscal year. The company announced a net loss of \$44 million, or \$0.24 per share, compared with a net loss of \$56 million in the same quarter a year ago. "Reporting a loss is never satisfying, but I am very encouraged with the progress demonstrated in this quarter's results," said Richard Belluzzo, chairman and chief executive officer. Operating expenses at \$335 million were down



# THE ANIMATION FLASH

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approximately \$40 million from the previous quarter while revenues were also down at \$616 million compared with \$768 million in the same year-ago period. SGI's initial public offering of its MIPS Technologies subsidiary at \$44 million helped significantly alleviate losses for this quarter. While the losses were smaller than predicted, SGI has said that it will take some time to return to profitability. Belluzzo outlined SGI's plans for continued recovery, "One of our key strategic objectives is to impose discipline on our cost structure which has resulted in operating expenses coming down dramatically for the quarter. We've also sharpened our focus on our core businesses with the successful initial public offering of our MIPS subsidiary. And we continue to see strong performance in our origin server program. This quarter's results validate that our efforts are on target."

**Pixar Posts Profit Results.** Pixar, the company behind *Toy Story*, posted a third quarter net profit of \$2.5 million, or \$0.02 per share, down from a third quarter profit of \$5.3 million last year. The positive profits surprised financial analysts who had forecasted a third quarter loss of \$0.02 per share. The upcoming release of *A Bug's Life* is expected to help further rejuvenate Pixar's revenues.

**Cinar Wants A New Name.** Canadian company, Cinar Films Inc., recently announced that they would like to change their corporate name to CINAR Corporation (in French, Corporation Cinar). A Management Proxy Circular was sent to shareholders announcing a Special Shareholder Meeting to be held at the company head-

quarters in Montreal on December 10, 1998 to vote on the intended name change. The new name was proposed to better reflect the company's diversification into other areas of children's entertainment and education besides the film industry.

**Harvey Posts Third Quarter Loss.** The Harvey Entertainment Company (Nasdaq: HRVY) reported a net loss of \$2,006,000, or \$0.48 per share, for the third quarter of 1998 as compared to a net gain of \$2,551,000, or \$0.62 a share, for the same third quarter period in 1997. For the nine month period ending September 30, 1998, Harvey has totaled a net loss of \$4,788,000, or \$1.19 per share, as compared to a net income of \$2,551,000, or \$0.64 per share, in the comparable year-ago period. Net operating revenues were also considerably less coming in at a negative \$1,121,000 compared to revenues of \$7,126,000 in the year-ago period. The decrease in revenue is attributed to an adjustment of \$2,316,000 because of Harvey's over-estimation of predicted sales of the direct-to-video film, *Casper, A Spirited Beginning*, as well as the revenue fluctuations related to the timing and accounting treatment of merchandising licenses. Gary Gray, Chairman of the Board, commented, "During this period, we have continued to move forward on two projects, in addition to our ongoing licensing activities. We completed production of *Baby Huey's Great Easter Adventure* and have entered into a distribution agreement for this video with a major media company. We have also completed the debut issue of *Harvey, The Magazine for Kids* available on Novem-

ber 17 with an initial 200,000 copy print run." The Harvey library of characters include Casper, the Friendly Ghost, Richie Rich, Hot Stuff, Baby Huey, Little Audrey, Herman & Katnip, and numerous others.

**Nelvana Gets Puff.** Toronto-based Nelvana has acquired the worldwide development, production, distribution and merchandise licensing rights to *Puff the Magic Dragon*. Based on a classic folk song written by Peter Yarrow of the legendary folk group Peter, Paul & Mary and Lenny Lipton, Nelvana will produce an animated *Puff the Magic Dragon* feature length film, television series and special, as well as license all Puff merchandise. Production will begin on this property in late 1999 or 2000. The lyrical children's story which tells the tale of Little Jackie Piper and his dragon friend Puff has sold 50 million copies since first being published in 1963 making it the best-selling folk song in history.

**BKN Studios Established In LA.** Kids programming syndicator Bohbot Kids Network (BKN), the fourth largest US broadcast kids network scheduled to launch August 29, 1999, has acquired Los Angeles-based Epoch Ink Animation to establish BKN Studios. Epoch was established in 1995 and has since completed many projects including *Captain Simian and the Space Monkeys*, *Dot and Spot's Magical Christmas*, Pearl Jam's *Do the Evolution* music video, and the *Atomic Babies* pilot for Landmark. The first projects that will be produced by BKN Studios include the original sci-fi, action-adventure, film noir-ish, animated series *Roswell Conspiracies*,





**Stephanie Graziano, BKN Studios President of Programming, Production and Network Development. Photo courtesy of BKN Studios.**

and a network on-air image campaign featuring original BKN mascot characters. "BKN has committed a tremendous amount of money into BKN Studios and quality-wise Roswell Conspiracies is closer to the WBs action-adventure shows *Superman and Batman Adventures* than other typical shows," says Epoch founder Joe Pearson. Concurrently with the new facility, BKN has appointed veteran animation executive Stephanie Graziano as President of Programming, Production and Network Development to head the fledgling network. Graziano joins BKN from DreamWorks TV Animation where she served as Co-Head of Production since 1996. Pearson will join BKN Studios as Executive Producer/Creative Director of BKN's original animated series. Bobhot Entertainment and Media has committed \$100 million for program produc-

tion, viewer marketing, and promotion to support the networks launch. BKN's film library will consist of 1,000 episodes by launch date encompassing well-known properties like *Sonic the Hedgehog* and *The Mask*. This library will be further augmented by BKN's production and acquisition of original animated series to be produced by the new BKN Studios.

## People

**Musical Chairs.** San Francisco-based animation studio (**Colossal**) **Pictures** has signed two new directors to its roster: **Jim Matison** and **Flavio (Kampah)**. Matison, based in San Francisco, has been a freelance director for the past five years, working with SGI, Mondo Media, Protozoa, Wild Brain and Nickelodeon. He previously worked with (Colossal) starting in 1989 as a staff production artist, and went on to direct *Crazy Daisy Ed*, a stop-motion segment on *Liquid TV*, as well as several music videos and commercials. Flavio (Kampah), based in Los Angeles, is a designer who has worked in the fashion industry before joining the agency, Pittard Sullivan. He is now creative director of his own company, Visionaires. Other directors on (Colossal)'s roster are Drew Takahashi, George Evelyn, Charlie Canfield, Tom Rubalcava, Margeigh Joy, John Kricfalusi, Chuck Gammage and Lidia Pryzluska. . . .

**Loesch's New Odyssey.** Respected TV executive Margaret Loesch, who moved to the Jim Henson Company a year ago as president of its television group, has been named the president and CEO of the 30-million subscriber Odyssey cable channel. This comes after an

announcement that Hallmark and The Jim Henson Company have bought a "substantial" stake in the religious network. Loesch's new responsibilities include developing original programming from Hallmark, Henson, Odyssey and National Interfaith Cable Coalition (NICC) and integrating it with the already well-established libraries of Hallmark and Henson. While the channel won't completely abandon religious programming, Odyssey will try to seek more adult and children viewers through family-oriented programming. The network hopes to have these changes in place by April 1999. Loesch's 28-year television career includes many executive roles at Marvel, Hanna-Barbera, NBC, and most famously, her development



**Margaret Loesch is the new president and CEO of Odyssey Cable Channel.**

and founding role of the Fox Kids Network in the early '90s.

**Film Roman Names New President.** Los Angeles-based Film Roman has brought Mark Lieber on board as the new president of domestic television development and distribution. Lieber's responsi-

bilities in this newly created position include directing the development of all proprietary television product (both animation and live-action), as well as overseeing the distribution of Film Roman's proprietary series through broadcast, cable and syndication in the US. He joins Film Roman from PolyGram Television, where as senior vice-president of children's programming, his division developed and sold *Maisy* to Nickelodeon and produced and distributed *Barney's First Adventure* as a simulcast to PBS/Fox Kids Network.

### In Passing...

#### **Bob Kane, Batman Creator Passes Away.**

Last Tuesday was a dark day for the comic book world when legendary writer/artist Bob Kane, best known for creating DC Comics' *Batman*, passed away as a result of natural causes at his Los Angeles, California home. Kane, 83, created the dark hero along with many other famous supporting characters including Robin, the Boy Wonder and Cat Woman. His creations have resulted in a continuously published comic book for fifty years, a live-action TV series, four live-action feature films, two direct-to-video animated films, at least five animated *Batman* television series, and merchandising beyond words. Animation fans may also recognize his cartoon creations from the 1960s - Courageous Cat and Minute Mouse, and Cool McCool. He is survived by his wife, actress Elizabeth Sanders Kane, his daughter Deborah Majeski, his grandson Matthew Alderman, and his sister Doris Atlas. In lieu of flowers, his family asks that donations be made to agencies providing service to hungry, homeless, abused, or aban-



*Antz*. © DreamWorks LLC.

doned children, such as Feed the Children (<http://www.feedthechildren.org>), the Make A Wish Foundation (<http://www.wish.org>), the Westside Childrens Center in Santa Monica, California, or the Bay Area Youth Center in Hayward, California.

### Films

**Antz Showz Strong Legz.** After six weeks of US release, DreamWorks/PDI's computer-animated bug pic *Antz* saw a rare 20% boost in box office business over the November 6, 7, 8 week-end placing fourth. Despite losing 300 screens and new competition for the family crowd from the re-release of *The Wizard of Oz*, the film grossed \$5.56 million in 2,604 theaters bringing the films' cumulative total to \$75 million.

**MIFED Sets Focus On Animation.** The 65th Milan International Film, TV and Multimedia Market (MIFED) kicked off with a strong focus on animation, in collaboration with the European MEDIA II program. The six-day event, November 1-6, included a designated animation market and even

an "Animation Day" on November 3. Scheduled events included a seminar titled *Strategy for the New European Animation Feature Film*, and screenings of animated features such as Michel Ocelot's *Kirikou at la Sorciere* and Lanterna Magica's work-in-progress, *Lucky and Zorba/The Little Seagull and the Cat*. Heading up these animation initiatives at MIFED was Alfio Bastiancich, one of the founders of the television conference, Cartoons on the Bay. He said, "As became clear at a seminar held last June at Annecy, animation continues to be poorly represented at the three major cinema markets: MIFED, Cannes and the American Film Market. With MIFED Animation, we aim to develop this new market by offering an organization structure and services to boost and develop new business opportunities."

The November 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* focuses on animated feature films, and includes an article by Chiara Magri about Lanterna Magica and their feature film work: <http://www.awn.com/mag>



### Medialab/Cine Groupe Partner.

Paris-headquartered motion-capture animation company, Medialab and Canadian animation studio, Ciné-Groupe, a subsidiary of Lions Gate Entertainment, have agreed to a four-year co-production deal. The two companies plan to co-produce two computer-animated theatrical films and two TV series. The first project, starting production in December, will be *Pinocchio 3001*, a futuristic rendition of the classic tale. The second project, scheduled to start production in late spring 1999, is titled *Sphinx@Com*. Both properties were developed by Medialab, and will be produced simultaneously as feature films and TV series. Medialab president Girard Mital said, "The trickle-down success of films like *Antz*, as well as the growing number of digital platforms and their respective thematic channels serves to bolster the demand for similar-looking properties." The TV series Medialab is jointly-owned by Canal + and Dutch company, NOB. In July, Fox Family Worldwide, parent company to Fox Kids, Fox Family Channel and Saban, acquired a 20 percent equity stake in Ciné-Groupe.

The February 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* contains a feature article on Medialab.

### A Bug's Life Is Swarming Everywhere.

Here is a look at some of the various marketing items related to Disney/Pixar's massive advertising campaign for *A Bug's Life*. The movie web site, [www.bugslife.com](http://www.bugslife.com), launched last week complete with Shockwave and QTVR games, behind-the-scenes information on the making of the film, sweepstakes, and the ability to purchase tickets

for theaters nationwide. Walt Disney Records released *A Bug's Life* soundtrack on November 10 featuring the music of composer Randy Newman (*Cats Don't Dance*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Toy Story*). Disney Records previously released *A Bug's Life Read-Along* featuring original vocal talent from the film and *A Bug's Life Sing-Along*, a collection of bug-themed songs. *A Bug's Life and Beyond* is a 3 1/2 hour entertainment experience which runs at Hollywood's El Capitan Theatre and Entertainment Centre from November 20 - January 3. Visitors can see the movie and afterwards head over to The Bug House consisting of seven rooms of live entertainment, attractions, shows, games and events themed around the movie. As is customary with Disney-released films, a plethora of other *A Bug's Life* merchandise is already available at nationwide US retailers, like Target.

### Television

**The Simpsons Get A Star.** The longest-running prime-time animated family in television history, *The Simpsons*, will be getting their own star on the Hollywood Walk

of Fame in September 1999. Among the celebrities that will be inducted next year include Alex Trebek, Freddy Fender, Wesley Snipes, Jamie Lee Curtis, Dennis Franz, Samuel Jackson, James Woods, Bob Newhart, Jane Seymour and Reba McEntire. *Animation World Magazine* will be there to cover the ceremony.

### Fox Appeals To Boyz & Girlz.

Fox Family Channels is creating two new digital cable/satellite networks: The Boyz Channel and The Girlz Channel, offering gender-specific entertainment and educational programming for 2-14 year-old boys and girls. The full-time, ad-supported services scheduled to launch sometime in 1999 will also be available as basic analog channels. Much of the programming will come from the library that Fox Kids already owns mixed in with some original productions. In the evenings, the channels focus will target parents with programs dealing with raising and parenting children of that specific gender. Fully interactive companion web sites, [www.boyzchannel.com](http://www.boyzchannel.com); [www.girlzchannel.com](http://www.girlzchannel.com), are also in the works and will launch in early '99.



*A Bug's Life*. © Disney Enterprises, Inc./Pixar Animation Studios. All Rights Reserved.



**More Splat! Is Coming Your Way.** Red Giant Television has reached a deal with Discovery International and Teletoon to produce a third season of *Splat!*, the weekly half-hour TV series devoted to animation. This will bring the total number of episodes to 39 half hours. Red Giant is also in the process of creating a two hour, prime-time TV special celebrating animation. *Splat!* currently airs in 120 countries around the globe.

**Two New Series For Canadian Cactus.** The Canadian television and cinema production and distribution company, Coscient Group, announced that their subsidiary Cactus Animation has started production on two new animated series: *Pirate Family* and *Fantomette*. The animated comedies are a co-production with French company Elma Animation and have a total budget of \$22 million. The series, each composed of 26 half-hour episodes, have already been pre-sold by Motion International, Coscient Group's distribution subsidiary, to a number of markets. *Pirate Family* will air in fall 1999 on YTV and Radio Canada in Canada and on the French networks France 3 and Canal J, while *Fantomette* will air on Tele-Quebec and the aforementioned French networks.

**Batman Beyond and Dilbert Set For January.** The newest incarnation of the successful animated Batman franchise, *Batman Beyond*, is set for a US premiere of Saturday, January 16, 1999 at 9:30 AM on Kids WB! The show takes place in the 21st century when a mature Bruce Wayne decides its time to train a younger Caped Crusader to keep Gotham

safe. Another highly anticipated comic-turned-cartoon series, *Dilbert*, is set for a US premiere on UPN's prime time lineup Monday, January 25, 1999 at 8:00 PM (PT/ET). Produced by Columbia-Tristar, *Dilbert* is based on the popular syndicated comic strip created by Scott Adams which deals with the absurdities of the '90s workplace in the cubicle-confined office environment that rules corporate America.

**TV Tidbits:** Los Angeles-based **Rough Draft Studios** has been awarded five episodes of the animated *Baby Blues* series. Thirteen episodes of *Baby Blues* have been ordered and will air in fall '99 on the WB prime time schedule. The first eight episodes are being completed by Warner Bros. Television Animation. This recent development fuels rumors that Warner Bros. Television Animation is in the midst of cutbacks. Inside sources have said that Warners will cease production on *Hysteria!* after only 52 episodes, cutting 13 previously announced half hours. *Pinky, Elmyra, and the Brain* is also rumored to be finishing its last season without a pick up. As a result, nearly one hundred layoffs are supposedly looming on the horizon before year's end. Officially, a Warner Bros. spokesperson stated that no decision has yet been made on the fate of the two shows, which are still currently in production, and that while there would be layoffs, they are undetermined at this time. . . . . Saturday, November 21, at 8:00 PM (ET), **The Cartoon Network** aired the animated direct-to-video Batman feature released earlier this year, *Batman and Mr. Freeze: SubZero*. The film, which was directed by Boyd Kirkland and

written and produced by Kirkland and Randy Rogel, won an Annie Award in November for Outstanding Animated Home Video Production. . . . .

**Gribouille Animating Xcaliber And Micronauts.** Gribouille, a CGI production company based in Europe and North America, has begun production on two new computer-animated television series. *Xcalibur*, designed by French artist Philippe Druillet and directed by Didier Pourcel, is being produced in association with Canal +, Ellipsanime, France 2 and Cactus Animation for a targeted late 1999 delivery. *Micronauts*, based on an existing line of action-figures and Marvel comics, is being produced with Abrams/Gentile Entertainment, Kaleidoscope Media Group and Annex Entertainment, and may be ready as early as fall 1999. Gribouille is also partnering with Italian toy manufacturer Giochi Preziosi, on the production of a new *Micronauts* technology-based toy-line. Both series are green-lit for an initial 26 half-hour episodes, and will feature hyper-realistic virtual characters. Gribouille is also partnering with other companies such as Dimensional Media Associates, to bring this style of animation to different entertainment mediums.

## Commercials

**Seeing Spots: Curious Pictures'** East and West coast offices teamed up with Cartoon Network to create *Sound Hound*, a two-minute animated interstitial featuring the classic Hanna-Barbara character, Huckleberry Hound, waging a war on noise pollution. Huck is disgruntled when the noise-



A very stylized Huck in *Sound Hound*.  
Photo courtesy Curious Pictures.



The Cornerman. Photo courtesy Passion Pictures.

es of the city hinder his talent-deprived singing efforts and makes it a point to stifle every sound from birds to car horns. Director/designer Nick Hewitt utilized cut outs to create collage pieces with different textures and then completed the animation digitally. The short was written by Cartoon Networks creative director/copywriter Michael Ouweleen with Damon Ciarelli handling technical direction. . . .

. **Passion Pictures** finished eight 3-second inserts for a new Adidas campaign featuring British World featherweight boxing champion Prince ('Naz) Naseem and an overweight animated ex-boxer, the Cornerman. The spots were directed by Chris Hauge and animated by Chris Hauge, Chuck Gammage, Marco Piersma and Kevin Spruce through the Leagas Delaney agency. . . . **(Colossal) Pictures** animated the *Super Chunk*

package for Cartoon Network consisting of a 25-second show open and close and seven 10-second bumpers. The new material started airing on October 17, 1998 during the *Super Chunk* programming block which airs on Saturdays from 4:00 - 7:00 PM. Cartoon Network's design director Bee Murphy came up with the concept art for the spots which were directed at (Colossal) by

Charlie Canfield. The CG animation for the package was done in 3D Studio Max. . . . New York-based **J.J. Sedelmaier Productions** created two 15-second spots, *Liberty* and *Airport*, for Rothman's retail stores. The spots feature the "powerful, heroic, Constructivist-leaning WPA mural style imagery" of the Rothman's Man. The traditional ink-and-paint cel animated spots were based on the



*Super Chunk*. Photo courtesy (Colossal) Pictures.





**The Rothman's Man.** Photo courtesy J.J. Sedelmaier Productions.

designs of illustrator Doug Fraser and were directed by J.J. Sedelmaier. . . . The West Coast division of **Curious Pictures** (San Francisco) recently created a 30-second spot promoting the new 24-hour cable network, CBS Eye on People. The spot, directed and designed by Denis Morella, uses a variety of animation styles to show various scenes from everyday life such as a person skiing down a hill or a woman jogging with her dog. . . . Toronto-based **TOPIX/Mad Dog** produced a 30-second spot for Ford of Canada which added a twist on the classic Three Little Pigs story utilizing live-action integrated with cel animation. While the CGI work was done at TOPIX/Mad Dog, Chuck Gammage of Chuck Gammage Animation directed the 2D animation. In the ad, the pigs find refuge from the wolf in a 1999 Ford Windstar. . . . **Renegade Animation** animated *Fly the Friendly Skies*, a 30-second commercial for General Mills Trix Yogurt featuring the Trix Rabbit introducing the

snack to a couple of bored kids on a plane flight. The cel animated spot was directed by Renegades Darrell Van Citters and produced through the Saatchi and Saatchi Agency in New York. The commercials contemporary style incorporates sharp, angular features and quick fluid motion while combining black & white and color

animation with live-action elements.

## Home Video

### Fox, DIC To Animate M.L.King.

CBS/Fox, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment and DIC Entertainment are producing a direct-to-video title based on the life of Martin Luther King Jr., called *Our Friend, Martin*. The one-hour film will combine new animation with live-action archival footage of the late civil rights activist. Several celebrities are lending their voices to the production, including Whoopi Goldberg, Samuel L. Jackson, James Earl Jones, Susan Sarandon, John Travolta, Jaleel White and Oprah Winfrey. King's son Dexter King is executive producer with Phillip Jones, Andy Heyward, Mike Maliana and Robby London. Just in time to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, the video will be available January 12, 1999 for US \$14.98.

**Disney's Pride: Lion King II.** On October 27, Walt Disney Home



Photo courtesy TOPIX/Mad Dog.



Video released *The Lion King II: Simba's Pride*, a direct-to-video animated feature sequel to the 1994 blockbuster theatrical feature, *The Lion King*. Disney hopes to achieve similar success to that of the film's predecessor, which has made history as both the number one animated movie and best-selling video of all time. *Simba's Pride* stars many of the same voice talents featured in *The Lion King*, including Matthew Broderick (Simba), Nathan Lane (Timon), Robert Guillaume (Rafiki), Ernie Sabella (Pumbaa) and James Earl Jones (Mufasa), as well as new character voices: Neve Campbell (Simba's daughter, Kiara) and Suzanne Pleshette (Scar's loyal follower, Zira). The 75-minute film was produced by Walt Disney Animation Australia, under the direction of Darrell Rooney and co-director Rob LaDuca. Additional clean-up, in-betweening and ink and paint was done by Walt Disney Animation Canada and Toon City, Inc. The video is available for US \$26.99. Also, accompanying the video release is a new CD of music, *Return to Pride Rock: Songs Inspired by The Lion King II: Simba's Pride*, and a cassette, *The Lion King II: Simba's Pride Read-Along*, both from Walt Disney Records.

## Licensing

### Speed Racer Toying Around.

Speed Racer Enterprises, Inc., owners of the *Speed Racer* property, have signed a license agreement with toy maker Playing Mantis, to produce a line of action figures and vehicles based on the popular 1960s animated series. Playing Mantis, a Speed

Racer licensee since 1993, has already produced a line of die-cast Speed Racer products. The company is one of 30 licensees that will be manufacturing and distributing Speed Racer products in 1999. "Playing Mantis is a progressive company that understands the current nostalgic market power, and creative drive of Speed Racer," said Jim Rocknowski, executive vice president of Speed Racer Enterprises.

Limited-edition Speed Racer animation art is available exclusively on-line in AWW's Animation World Store. Buy it today!

### DreamWorks Debuts Prince Of Egypt Albums.

On November 17, DreamWorks released three albums based on its forthcoming animated feature film, *Prince of Egypt*. The album releases come a full month before the film's December 18 theatrical opening. *The Prince of Egypt: Music from the*

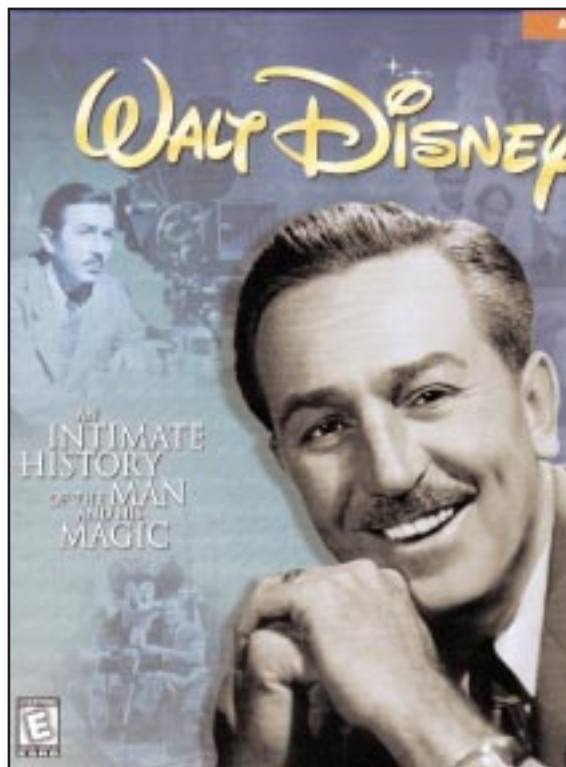
*Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* features performances by Boyz II Men, Amy Grant and the duo of Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey, singing together for the first time, as well as songs performed by actors who voice characters in the film, Ralph Fiennes, Michelle Pfeiffer and Steve Martin. *The Prince of Egypt: Nashville* features new songs "inspired" by the film, performed by the likes of Randy Travis, Reba and Wynonna. And *The Prince of Egypt: Inspirational* is a compilation of music by a variety of artists, from Jars of Clay to Fred Hammond & Radical for Christ.

Toby Bluth will review the film, *The Prince of Egypt* in an upcoming issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

## Technology

### An Interactive Look At Walt's Life.

The life of Walt Disney has been the subject of many unofficial biographies and articles with allegations accusing him of being everything from a fascist to a bigot. Now for the first time the record can be set straight with a new interactive CD-ROM narrated by Disney's first child, Diane Disney-Miller. *Walt Disney: An Intimate History of the Man and His Magic*, was produced to present an accurate account of his life and celebrate his accomplishments. The family-sanctioned multi-media biography which was four years in the making features clips from animated films, never-before-seen photos and home videos, over 100 audio segments, family mementos, and essays by Disney scholars. The Windows 95 disc, which retails for \$39.99, is



*Walt Disney: An Intimate History of the Man and His Magic.* © Disney. All Rights Reserved.

published by Disney Interactive and is now available in stores.

### Reelmotion Plug-In For 3d Studio Max.

Motional Realms, LLC has released the ReelMotion plug-in for 3D Studio MAX, a real-time, physics-based procedural animation tool. The plug-in is designed for the professional animation artist and ideal for forensics animation, animating space and aerial dogfights, cars, helicopters and other rigid-body objects. Its possible to drive or fly a vehicle through a scene interactively using a mouse or joystick via a real-time display using QuickDraw 3D (Mac) or OpenGL (Windows). ReelMotion retails for \$795 and is available for computers running MacOS, Windows 95, Windows 98 or Windows NT on both the Intel and DEC Alpha platforms. For more information visit:

<http://www.reelmotion.com>.

### Internet & Interactive

#### Bandai Opens

**AnimeVillage.Com.** Bandai's AnimeVillage.com is the first video releasing company in the US to market Japanese animation to consumers directly through the Internet. The site also features the latest animation news from Japan, articles about the films, real-time chat, games, message boards, and contests. "AnimeVillage.com plans to be THE place on the web for anime fans (otakus) and sci-fi fans as well as professional animators and people in the movie industry," says Marlon Schulman, Bandai's Vice-President of Home Entertainment. The company's initial release slate includes the *Gundam* series and *The Vision of Escaflowne*, marking the first time either of these titles have been

made available in North America in either a dubbed or sub-titled version. There are plans to expand up to 200 titles by the end of 1999 using animation from the Bandai Visual and Sunrise libraries as well as acquisitions from other companies. "Our site tries to be as close to a fansite as possible while being commercial at the same time," added Schulman, "which is something that nobody else is doing."



George Liquor and Jimmy. © Spumco.

**Spumco Web Chat In 3D!** Spumco, the studio that brought us the first web cartoon series, *The G@\*&!\$ George Liquor Show*, has teamed up with Electric Communities to present "the Internet's first 3D cartoon chat event." The chat, scheduled to kick off at 5:30 p.m. on November 6, and run through November 9, 1998, took place on the web site <http://www.cartoonsforum.com:9994>. In order to have participated, users must have had a pair of red and blue cellophane anaglyphic 3D glasses, a standard Windows or Mac PC with Internet access, and the Palace Visual Chat software from Electric Communities, available for free download from the web site [www.thepalace.com](http://www.thepalace.com). Users who managed to get into the chat experienced a 3D VRML world in which they dressed Spumco characters, played sounds and interacted with other users.

### Hotwired Launches Animation Express.

HotWired's Animation Express - (<http://www.hotwired.com/animation/>) - is a new site that showcases the latest animation from both professional and independent animators. The animation can be viewed using plug-in technologies like Quicktime 3, Shockwave's Flash 3 and Director 6. A "plug-in tester" helps visitors download the necessary plug-ins if the user doesn't already have them. Currently, the site features selections from Pixar's Oscar-winning short *Geri's Game* and highlights from Spike and Mike's 1998 Festival of Animation. The site also features an online animation store, as well as tutorials that'll guide you in the creation of your own animation projects.

### Animated Greeting Cards On

**The 'Net.** E-greetings Network (<http://www.egreetings.com>), a provider of internet-based electronic greetings has unveiled the new E-greetings Animations. The free digital greetings can be personalized and sent to anyone by e-mail. "When we started our company nearly five years ago, we saw that e-mail had the potential to become a multimedia entertainment and communications medium that could provide far more than the limited capabilities of standard text-only e-mail," says E-greetings Networks co-founder Tony Levitan. Currently, around 100 animated digital greetings, viewable with Macromedia's Shockwave plug-in, are available to view and send. The animated cards contain original artwork as well as licensed images from well-known cartoonists and films like *Austin Powers*, *Men in Black*, and *Godzilla*.



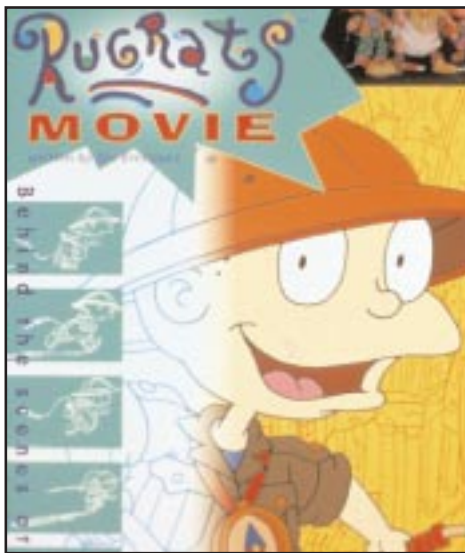


Photo courtesy Klasky Csupo Publishing.

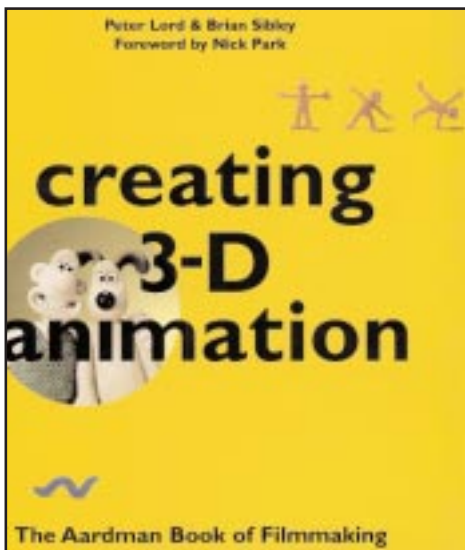


Photo courtesy Harry N. Abrams.

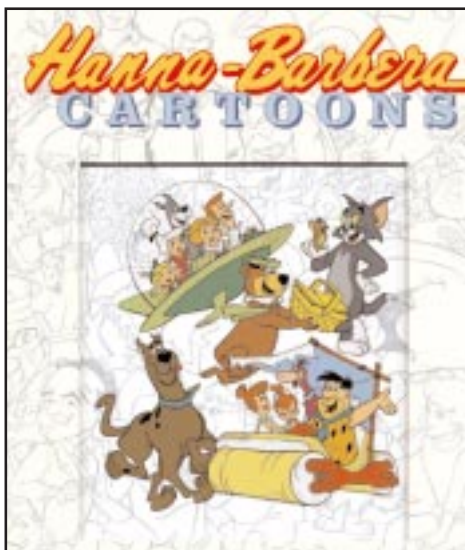


Photo courtesy Hugh Lauter Levin Associates.

## Books

**Hot Off The Presses:** A number of animation books have recently been released just in time for the holiday season. Great Plains Publications has published Gene Walz's *Cartoon Charlie: The Life and Art of Animation Pioneer Charles Thorson*, a detailed biography of the Golden Age animation artist filled with many never-before-seen illustrations. Other recently published books include Paul Dini and Chip Kidd's *Batman Animated* (Harper Prism), Jan Breslau's *The Making of the Rugrats Movie* (published by Klasky-Csupo, distributed by Simon and Schuster), Peter Lord and Brian Sibley's *Creating 3D Animation: The Aardman Book of Filmmaking* (Harry N. Abrams) published as *Cracking Animation* (Thames and Hudson) in the UK, Michael Mallory's *Hanna-Barbara Cartoons* (Hugh Lauter Levin Associates), and Les Daniels' *Superman: The Complete History* (Chronicle Books) which celebrates the 60th anniversary of DC's Man of Steel in all media including his animated incarnations.

**Upcoming Titles:** There's also a number of interesting animation books scheduled for release in the near future including *The Art of Klasky-Csupo*, *Igor Kovalyov: A Director's Notebook* (Klasky-Csupo Publishing), Michael Barrier's long-awaited authoritative book on the Golden Age of US Animation, *The Magical Art: Hollywood Animation In Its Golden Age* (Oxford University Press), and Pierre Lambert's *Mickey Mouse* (Hyperion), a glossy art book companion to Lambert's 1997 *Pinocchio* book.

Many of these books will be reviewed in upcoming issues of

*Animation World Magazine*. Read what Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas had to say about Pierre Lambert's *Pinocchio* in "An Afternoon with Ollie Johnston, Frank Thomas and Pinocchio" by Charles Solomon.

Also remember that books can be ordered through the Animation World Bookstore.

## Call for Entries

**NY Animation Festival Call For Entries.** The first annual New York Animation Festival, slated to take place in New York City during April 1999, is now accepting entries in all categories. This comprehensive festival will encompass all types of animation including film, video, and digital animation of any genre. Student and international entries are also encouraged. For entry forms or information, call (212) 982-7781 or NYAFest@yahoo.com.

**Milia Awards Interactivity Milia.** MILIA, the International Content Market for Interactive Media Conference will take place in Cannes, France, February 9-12, 1999. Entries for the fifth Milia d'Or Awards and the New Talent Pavilion are still being accepted. The event is organized by the Reed Midem Organization, the same company that puts on MIPCOM and MIP TV. For the second year, MILIA will present a conference called "Towards the Convergence of Animation and Video Games," the objective of which is to bring together publishers, producers and developers of interactive products to promote partnerships. For information about this partnership program, visit Frederique Doumics' article, "MIPCOM Meets



MILIA" in the December issue of Animation World Magazine.  
<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.9/2.9pages/2.9domicmilia.html>

For information about MILIA and its awards, visit the MILIA web site accessible through Animation World Networks Calendar of Events section.

## Awards

**Castle Crowns *Geris Game*.** The Castelli Animati (Animated Castles) International Animated Film Festival held its second edition, October 15 - 17, 1998 in Rome, Italy. The prize winners were selected by an international jury: painter Carla Accardi (Italy), cartoonist and director Oscar Grillo (Argentina), director Daniele Luchetti (Italy), cartoonist and director Sergio Staino and director Pal Toth (Hungary).  
Grand Prize and Audience Prize: *Geris Game* by Jan Pinkava

(U.S.A.).  
First Film Prize: *Sientje* by Christa Moesker (Netherlands).  
Special Jury Prize: *Everybody's Pregnant* by Debra Solomon (U.S.A.).

**ASIFA Annie Awards To Be Televised!** For the first time in the 26-year history of the Annie Awards, the show will be nationally televised. Fox Family Channel will air the presentation honoring the best of the animation industry at a yet-to-be-announced date in December. Presenters for this year's show include voice artists Nancy Cartwright (Bart Simpson) and the legendary June Foray, as well as actress T'keyah Krystal Key-maa (*Cosby*, *In Living Color*, *Waynehead*).

**Leipzig Festival Results.** Five thousand spectators attended the animation programs during the five day 41st annual Leipzig International Festival for Documentary and Animated Film which

wrapped up on October 31 in Leipzig Germany. The prize for Outstanding Film went to *Underground* by Matti Kütt (Estonia), and the Audience Prize went to *Hoelenangst* by Benjamin Quabeck (Germany). For more information about next years festival, email [dock-leipzig@t-online.de](mailto:dock-leipzig@t-online.de).

**Sitges Selects *Un Jour*.** The Sitges Fantasy Film Festival wrapped up on October 16 in Barcelona, Spain. The international jury for the *Animat* animation festival within a festival was comprised of Jerry Beck (U.S.A.), Mercedes Gaspar (Spain) and Giorgio Valentini (Italy). They selected *Un Jour* by Marie Paccou (France) as Best Film, and gave an Honorable Mention to *Glassy Ocean* by Shigeru Tamura (Japan). In the main festival, Bill Plympton's film, *More Sex & Violence*, won the Best Short Film award.

Visit the December 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine* to read *Sitges: Horror and Animation in Barcelona*, a review of last year's Sitges festival, by Bill Plympton.

**Disney And Warners Dominate The Annies.** The 26th annual Annie Awards ceremony, ASIFA-Hollywood's honoring of the best in animation, took place Friday, November 13, at the historic Alex Theatre in Glendale, California. Disney's *Mulan* finished at the top of the pack winning ten out of the thirty categories, while Warner Bros. Television Animation was honored with six Annies. The awards, hosted by comedian Jay Thomas, will be televised on the Fox Family Channel sometime in December. The complete list of winners is as follows:



*Mulan* swept the Annies taking home one-third of all the awards  
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# THE 26TH ANNUAL ANNIE AWARDS

Animated Short Subject:

***Geri's Game*, Pixar Animation Studios.**

Animated Interactive Production:

***The Curse of Monkey Island*, LucasArts Entertainment Company LLC.**

Animated Television Commercial:

***Flares/Big Pockets*, Old Navy, Spumco, Inc.**

Animated Interstitial, Promotional Production or Title Sequence:

***Late Night Black and White*, Cartoon Network, Ink Biscuits.**

Animated Daytime Television Program:

***The New Batman/Superman Adventures*, Warner Bros. Television Animation.**

Animated Primetime or Late Night Television Program:

***The Simpsons*, Gracie Films in association with 20th Century Fox Television.**

Animated Home Video Production:

***Batman & Mr. Freeze: SubZero*, Warner Bros. Animation.**

Animated Theatrical Feature:

***Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Character Animation:

**Ruben Aquino, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Effects Animation:

**David Tidgwell, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Production Design in an Animated Television

Production:

**Carlos Ramos, "ChalkZone," *Oh Yeah! Cartoons*, Nickelodeon Animation Studio.**

Production Design in an Animated Feature Production:

**Hans Bacher, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Storyboarding in an Animated Television Production:

**Barry Caldwell, "Brain Acres," *Steven Spielberg Presents Pinky & The Brain*, Warner Bros. Television Animation.**

Storyboarding in an Animated Feature Production:

**Christopher Sanders, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Writing in an Animated Television Production:

**Charles M. Howell IV, Earl Kress and John Ludin, "The Family That Poits Together Narfs Together," *Steven Spielberg Presents Pinky & The Brain*, Warner Bros. Television Animation.**

Writing in an Animated Feature Production:

**Rita Hsiao, Christopher Sanders, Philip LaZebnik, Raymond Singer, and Eugenia Bostwick-Singer, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Voice Acting by a Male Performer in an Animated Television Production:

**Maurice LaMarche, as the voice of The Brain, *Steven Spielberg Presents Pinky & The Brain*, Warner Bros. Television Animation.**



Voice Acting by a Male Performer in an Animated Feature Production:

**Hank Azaria, as the voice of Bartok, *Anastasia*, Fox Animation Studios.**

Voice Acting by a Female Performer in an Animated Television Production:

**June Foray, as the voice of Granny, *The Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries*, Warner Bros. Television Animation.**

Voice Acting by a Female Performer in an Animated Feature Production:

**Ming-Na Wen, as the voice of Mulan, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Music in an Animated Television Production:

**Alf Clausen (Music) and Ken Keeler (Lyrics), *You're Checkin' In (A Musical Tribute to the Betty Ford Center)* (Song), "The City of New York vs. Homer Simpson," *The Simpsons*, Gracie Films in association with 20th Century Fox Television.**

Music in an Animated Feature Production:

**Matthew Wilder and David Zippel (Songs), Jerry Goldsmith (Score), *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Directing in an Animated Television Production:

**Jim Reardon, "Trash of the Titans," *The Simpsons*, Film Roman, Inc. in association with 20th Century Fox Television.**

Directing in an Animated Feature Production:

**Barry Cook and Tony Bancroft, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Producing in an Animated Television Production:

**Vincent Davis, *Cow and Chicken*, Hanna-**

**Barbera Cartoons.**

Producing in an Animated Feature Production:

**Pam Coats, *Mulan*, Walt Disney Feature Animation.**

Technical Achievement in the Field of Animation:

**Digital Domain Inc., *Titanic*.**

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June Foray Award  
(Significant and Benevolent Impact):

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**Antran Manoogian**

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Winsor McCay Award  
(Lifetime Achievement) Recipients:

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**Eyvind Earle** - Known today for his fine art paintings, Earle worked for the Walt Disney Studios as background artist, color stylist and production designer for such classic films as *Lady and the Tramp* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Later he created art films of his own.

**Hayao Miyazaki** - One of the world's most influential animation filmmakers, Miyazaki is the director of many Japanese features, including *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, and *Princess Mononoke*, the highest-grossing film ever released in Japan.

**Ernie Pintoff** - A veteran animation teacher, director and producer of both theatrical shorts (including the Oscar-winning *The Critic*) and commercials, Pintoff helped to define a new look for animation in the 1950s through his work at UPA and Terrytoons.

Certificate of Merit Recipients

**Max Howard**

**B. Paul Husband**

**Media City Center**

**Jean Ann Wright**

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

\* Wednesday, October 21. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A. The Writers Guild of America's Media and Technologies Committee and Medialab presented *Rewriting the Future*, a discussion on the impact of new technologies on traditional storytelling. Harry Shearer, actor, comedian, and voice of several characters on *The Simpsons*, performed as a live virtual character created by Medialab. In addition, Francis Ford Coppola appeared in a video presentation. Admission was free and the event took place at 7:30 p.m., at the Writers Guild Theater, 135 South Doheny Drive in Beverly Hills. To RSVP call (323) 782-4620.

\* Thursday, October 22 - Sunday, October 25. Brisbane, Australia. The Brisbane Animation Festival, a biennial event, featured a new international competition. Categories included Grand Prize, Peoples Prize, Best Use of New Technology and Best Student/Debut Film. For information, contact [darren@visualeyes.net.au](mailto:darren@visualeyes.net.au).

\* Saturday, October 24. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

Animazing Gallery hosted a *Nightmare Before Christmas* party, featuring the debut of a Jack Skellington lithograph signed by Tim Burton. Animazing is located at 415 West Broadway. For information, call (212) 226-7374.

\* Saturday, October 24. New York City, New York, U.S.A. The American Museum of the Moving Image hosted a talk and demonstration by Blue Sky|VIFX about the animated effects the studio produced for the new 3D IMAX film, *T-Rex: Back to the Cretaceous*. The event began at 12 noon. As a special treat, Chris Wedge gave a sneak preview from his soon-to-be-released animated short. For information, call (718) 784-4520.

\* Saturday, October 24. Thousand Oaks, California, U.S.A. Learning Tree University offered a class, *How to Get Hired in the Animation Industry*, taught by industry recruiter Pamela Thompson, from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. For information call (805) 497-2292.

\* Sunday, October 25. Hollywood, California, U.S.A. The AFI Film Festival presented *Suspended Animation*, a 90-minute program of stop-motion and computer-animated shorts, curated by Sojourn Pictures. Films include *Geris Game*, *Bingo* and *1001 Nights*. The show took place at Manns Chinese Theater, 6925 Hollywood Blvd. For information, call (213) 520-2000.

\* Monday, October 26. San Francisco, California, U.S.A. The Ideas in Animation series continued at Minna Street Gallery with two performances at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Nik Phelps and the

Sprocket Ensemble, with guest musician Jana Herzen, performed live music to animated films by Meredith Root, Martha Colburn and Michael Rudnik. Admission was \$10.00 general, \$7.00 for students. For information and reservations call (415) 681-3189.

\* Tuesday, October 27 - Saturday, October 31. Leipzig, Germany. The 41st annual Leipzig International Festival for Documentary and Animated Film showcased a retrospective of German animation since 1945, as well as 119 animated films in other programs including a competition. For information, contact [dock-leipzig@t-online.de](mailto:dock-leipzig@t-online.de).

\* Thursday, October 29. Toronto, Canada. The fourth Toronto's Animators' Zoetrope Association (TAZA) Digital Image Festival showcased independent computer animation such as *Macca Stewth* by Momentum Animations (Australia). For information visit: [www.interlog.com/~dolish/taza.htm](http://www.interlog.com/~dolish/taza.htm).

\* Thursday, October 29 - Saturday, October 31. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. Los Angeles-based art gallery and book store, Storyopolis hosted *English Soup*, a performance featuring six actors and a cast of hand-made puppets, devised and directed by Edward Gorey, to kick off *Dramatis Artifacti*, a one-month exhibition of original art work and ephemera by the artist. Gorey, a notorious recluse, was not present at the Storyopolis event, however, it was a rare opportunity for a close-up look at the artists work. Reservations were by non-refundable pre-payment only. Tickets



were \$15. each. Call (310) 358-2500.

The January 1998 issue of *Animation World Magazine* includes an interview with Storyopolis' Fonda Snyder.

\* Sunday, November 1 - Friday, November 6. Milan, Italy.

The 65th Milan International Film, TV and Multimedia Market (MIFED) offered a focus on animation, including an Animation Day on November 3. Scheduled events included a seminar titled *Strategy for the New European Animation Feature Film*. For information visit [www.fmd.it/mifed](http://www.fmd.it/mifed).

\* Tuesday, November 3. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

As part of the School of Visual Arts' annual Digital Salon, the MFA department presented an hour and a half of free animation screenings at 12:30 p.m. Films included *How Come You Never Call*, *Notturmo con Pissa* and *Tequila Rescue*. For information call (212) 592-2010.

\* Tuesday, November 3. Glendale, California, U.S.A.

ASIFA-Hollywood's third annual lecture series continued with a very special event: Walt Disney Animation master animator Andreas Deja spoke on the subject of character animation. Deja, born in Poland and raised in Germany, started working at Disney at the age of 20 (he was turned away when he applied at age 10!). He is responsible for bringing such characters to life as Gurki (*The Black Cauldron*), Roger Rabbit (*Who Framed Roger Rabbit*), King Triton (*The Little Mermaid*), Jafar (*Aladdin*), Gaston (*Beauty and the Beast*), Hercules (*Hercules*), Scar (*The Lion King*)

and even Mickey Mouse (*Runaway Brain*). The event took place at 7:00 p.m. at Glendale Community College Auditorium, 1500 North Verdugo Road in Glendale, California. For further information, call ASIFA-Hollywood: (818) 842-8330 or Glendale Community College: (818) 240-1000, ext. 5158.

\* Tuesday, November 3. Vancouver, Canada.

VanArts presented *Before and After Independence: 40 Years of Estonian Animation*, a retrospective put together for the Ottawa International Animation Festival, which was touring North America. The show took place at the Pacific Cinemateque, 1131 Howe Street, at 7:30 p.m. The show was made possible by the Ottawa International Animation Festival and the Canadian Consulate in Estonia.

\* Thursday, November 5 - Friday, November 13. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

The Anthology Film Archives presented selected screenings from the *First Light* series. Films from Jordan Belson, James Whitney, Norman McLaren, and Oskar Fischinger, among others, were shown. There were also discussions from scholars and filmmakers following a number of the programs. For info, contact the Anthology Film Archives at (212) 505-5181.

\* Friday, November 6. New York City, New York.

The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) hosted a retrospective of animation by animator, educator, historian and author John Canemaker. The screening took place in the Titus 2 Theatre at 6:00 p.m. and Canemaker was present. Featured films included *Break the*

*Silence: Kids Speak Out Against Abuse*, *John Lennon Sketchbook* and Canemaker's new personal film, *Bridgehampton*. For information call MOMA at (212) 708-9400.

\* Friday, November 6 - Saturday, November 14. Siena, Italy.

The third Siena International Short Film Festival and Market boasted an international competition dedicated solely to animated films. For information call (39) 6-4745585.

\* Saturday, November 7 - Monday, November 9. West Hollywood, California, U.S.A.

*1001 Nights*, a film from Japanese artist Yoshitaka Amano and director Mike Smith, was screened at the Laemmle Sunset 5. Show times were 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on November 7 & 8 and 12:00 PM and 12:30 PM on November 9. For info, call (323) 848 - 3500.

\* Monday, November 9 - Wednesday, November 11. New York City, New York, U.S.A.

The second New York Shorts International Film Festival featured six competition categories: animation, comedy, documentary, drama, experimental and student. For information visit [www.shortcuts.org](http://www.shortcuts.org).

\* Monday, November 9 - Saturday, November 28. New York City, New York.

The School of Visual Arts (SVA) presented the sixth annual New York Digital Salon, an international juried showcased of computer-generated artwork. Computer animation screenings were shown at the SVA Amphitheatre and the exhibit took place in the Schools Visual Arts Museum, both located

at 209 East 23rd Street, where a reception took place on November 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. For information and to view work on-line, visit [www.sva.edu/salon](http://www.sva.edu/salon).

\* Tuesday, November 10 - Sunday, November 15. Espinho, Portugal. The 22nd Cinanima International Animated Film Festival took place. For detailed information contact [cinanima@mail.telepac.pt](mailto:cinanima@mail.telepac.pt), or for general information about the festival, visit [www.awn.com/cinanima](http://www.awn.com/cinanima).

\* Friday, November 13 - Sunday, November 15. Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, Australia. The 1998 Stanley Awards and Cartoonists' Conference, hosted by the Australian Black and White Artists' Club, took place at the Novotel Opal Cove resort and Pacific Bay resort. The annual event featured the presentation of the Stanley Awards, the Australian "Academy Awards for cartooning," in 10 categories. The two day conference following examined topics including comic strip syndication, marketing, and using computer technology to advance yourself in today's marketplace. Attendees from the US could arranged for a reasonable tour package from Jim Russell by calling at (61) 2.9522 7013 or by emailing him at [jpottsy@ozemail.com.au](mailto:jpottsy@ozemail.com.au). For general information regarding the event, call Jenny Hughes at (61) 2.9649 6857 or email Steve Panozzo at: [nozint@ozemail.com.au](mailto:nozint@ozemail.com.au).

\* Friday, November 13. Glendale, California, U.S.A. The 26th Annual Annie Awards, a yearly awards ceremony honoring the best in animation was held this year at the Alex Theater located at

216 N. Brand Blvd. The event was hosted by the Los Angeles chapter of the International Animated Film Society, ASIFA-Hollywood. A champagne reception started at 5:00 PM with the awards ceremony following at 7:00 PM. For more information, call ASIFA-Hollywood at (818) 842-8330 and see the accompanying news article in the Awards category.

\* Friday, November 13 - Sunday, November 22. Flagstaff, Arizona, U.S.A. The WorldFest Film and Video Festival, an event which focuses on independent works which have not yet been picked up for distribution, featured eight animation categories this year. For information, contact Worldfest at tel (713) 965-9955, fax (713) 965-9960 or email at [worldfest@aol.com](mailto:worldfest@aol.com).

\* Saturday, November 14. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. E.G. Daily (the voice of Tommy Pickles on *Rugrats* and *Babe the Pig*) did a reading during the *Babe: Pig in the City Craft and Story Hour* at Storyopolis. The children's event, which included craft making, started at 11:30 AM. To RSVP, call (310) 358-2512.

\* Saturday, November 14. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. Keyframe '98 was a screening of computer-generated films by USC animation students and a number of guest artists. *Plug*, a computer animated/live-action film about a futuristic society where people live their entire lives plugged into virtual reality machines, was also screened. The event took place at the University of Southern California (USC) in the Norris Theater at 7:00 PM and was free to the public. For more information, call

(213) 740-3986.

\* Tuesday, November 17 - Thursday, November 19. London, U.K. The fifth London Effects & Animation Festival (LEAF) took place during the Digital Media World Convention at the Wembley Conference Center in London. For more information, call Julie Marshall at (44) 01 81 994 7354 or email to [leaf@atlas.co.uk](mailto:leaf@atlas.co.uk).

\* Tuesday, November 17 - Thursday, November 19. Encino, California, U.S.A.

*Bunny*, a new computer-animated short film written and directed by Blue Sky|VIFX founder Chris Wedge, with music by Tom Waits, was screened for three days at Laemmle's Town Center 5 for Academy Award qualification. The film uses a new computer application called Radiosity that mimics the most subtle properties of natural light. Show times were 11:15 and 11:30 AM daily. For further information, contact (818) 981-9811.

\* Tuesday, November 17 - Thursday, November 19. Beverly Hills, California, U.S.A.

*Gilbert and Sullivan-The Very Models*, a film by Barry Purves (*Rigoletto*, *Achilles*) was screened at Laemmle's Music Hall for Academy Award qualification. Show times were 3:30 and 4:10 PM daily. For more info, contact (310) 274-6869.

You can read Barry's complete production diary, chronicling the making of "Gilbert and Sullivan-The Very Models" starting in the June issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

\* Wednesday, November 18 - Sun-



day, November 22. Holland. The 7th Holland Animation Film Festival, organized by the Holland Film Festival Foundation, was held in Utrecht, Netherlands. To find out more about the festival, visit their web site or email to [haff@knoware.nl](mailto:haff@knoware.nl).

\* Thursday, November 19 - Saturday, November 21. Hollywood, California, U.S.A. Short Pictures International Film Festival (SPIFF) was originally created to highlight short films, animation, music videos and documentaries created by Sony Pictures Imageworks employees, however this year the program was opened up to all filmmakers. Visit <http://www.spiffest.com> to find out more about the event.

\* Friday, November 20 - Sunday, November 22. Perugia, Italy. Although there was no competition section this year at the Cartoombria 4th International Animation Film Festival, the artistic committee of Cartoombria '98 put together a number of retrospectives, exhibits, workshops, screenings, premieres and artist tributes. To find out more about the festival visit <http://www.awn.com/cartoombria/>.

\* Saturday, November 21. New York City, New York, U.S.A. The Animazing Gallery hosted a book signing with four animation authors - John Canemaker (*Tex Avery, Before the Animation Begins*), John Culhane (*Fantasia*), John Grant (*The Encyclopedia of Walt Disney Characters*), and Stefan Kanfer (*Serious Business*). The authors shared anecdotes and their experiences about the history of animation during the event which took place from 1:00 to

3:00 PM. To find out more about the event, contact Louis Albert Steidl or Nick Leone at (212) 226-7374.

\* Monday, November 23 - Wednesday, November 25. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. *MORE*, the first fully-animated stop-motion film to be created for exhibition in the 70/15p (giant screen) format, was screened for three days at The California Science Center's IMAX Theater, in Exposition Park, adjacent to the USC campus. The six-minute short, directed by Cal Arts instructor and commercial director Mark Osborne, was shown in front of regular screenings of *Everest*, the live-action giant-screen feature. For information about *MORE* call (323) 255-6119.

\* Monday, November 23 - Wednesday, November 25. Santa Monica, California, U.S.A. *TIGHTROPE*, Digital Domains first in-house production, was premiered at the Laemmles Monica Theatre for Academy qualification. The five minute, CG-animated short was written and directed by Daniel Robichaud. For more infor-

mation, call (310)477-5581.

\* Tuesday, November 24 - Saturday, November 28. Mendrisio, Switzerland.

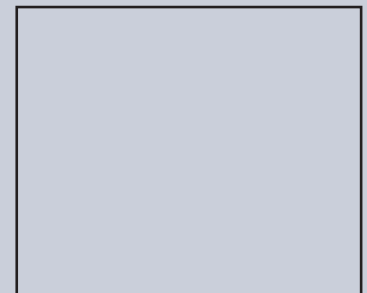
The Mendrisio Swiss International Animated Film Festival included a short, feature and animated pilot competition, as well as student films, 3D computer animation, retrospectives, exhibitions, conferences and more. For information call (41) 91 646 16 54.

**Storyopolis Gets Animated With Batman.** On Saturday, November 14, the Los Angeles-based art gallery and book store, Storyopolis, presented a special book signing celebrating the publication of *Batman Animated*, a book with rare artwork, a detailed episode guide, and interviews with the creators and voice actors behind *Batman: The Animated Series*. Batman artists/writers Paul Dini, Chip Kidd, Eric Radomski, and Bruce Timm were on hand to greet fans and sign copies of the book. This free event began at 4:00 PM. For future events call (310) 358 - 2500 or to order a signed edition, call (310) 358-2512.

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# DESERT ISLAND SERIES

## On A Desert Island With. . . Animated Feature Directors

compiled by Amid Amidi

**T**his month, we caught up with the directors of three of this season's biggest animated features, and asked each of them what films they would want to have with them if stranded on a desert island. Eric Darnell, co-director of DreamWorks/Pacific Data Images' successful *ANTZ*, has been with PDI since 1991 directing the award-winning short, *Gas Planet*. He also assisted with computer animation research and development for DreamWorks' upcoming feature, *The Prince of Egypt*. Kevin Altieri is the director/writer/producer of the highly-anticipated upcoming direct-to-video feature *Gen13: The Movie*. He was also the director of Pearl Jams' *Do the Evolution* video, a director on *Batman: The Animated Series* and an Eisner award-winning comic artist. Norton Virgien is co-director of the hit feature, *The Rugrats Movie*, as well as having worked on many seasons of the *Rugrats* television series. He was previously a commercial director in New York, produced the animation sequence for the live-action feature *Nine to Five* (1980) and worked on the animated feature *Little Nemo: Adventures in Slumberland*.

### Eric Darnell's Top Ten

- 1. O. Henry's Full House** (Henry Hathaway, Howard Hawks, 1952) — This is a collection of O. Henry short stories put to film. I actually haven't seen this movie since I was a kid, but *The Last Leaf* and *The Ransom of Red Chief* have stuck with me over the years. Every time I try to retell *The Last Leaf* to anybody I break down and cry like a baby. I've looked around for this film, but it doesn't seem to be available on video. I recently read some of the short stories the film covers and remember liking the movie better than I like the text. I wonder how I'd respond to the film today. It might be really sappy?
- 2. Odd Man Out** (1947) — This is one of my favorite Carol Reed films. I'd also love to bring *The Third Man* but I feel partially covered by Welles' *The Trial*.
- 3. Orphée (aka Orpheus)** (1949) — It was hard to pick between this and Jean Cocteau's version of *Beauty and the Beast*. I love the very simple and elegant effects. Bringing this movie will also give me the chance to learn how to say phrases like, "The bird sings with its fingers" in French.
- 4. A Short Film Collection** — I'm cheating here, but why should short films get the shaft? I'd build my own collection with works from Tex Avery, Stan Brakhage, Bruce Conner, Maya Deren, Jules Engel, Oskar Fischinger, Chuck Jones, George Kuchar, Len Lye, Norman McLaren, Harry Smith and others.
- 5. Solyaris (aka Solaris)** (1972) — I'll probably kick myself for bringing any film by Andrei Tarkovsky, but what the heck. This one is based on a science fiction story by Lem. I haven't seen it for about 20 years. It was supposed to be out on DVD by now, but I haven't found it.
- 6. Strangers on a Train** (1951) — I don't know why I'm bringing this Hitchcock film! I've seen it a million times, but it is hard to beat. Alfred is particularly ruthless here.
- 7. Le Procès (aka The Trial)** (1963) — I suppose it's not very original, but Orson Welles is one of my favorite filmmakers. It's one of the few films Welles made that didn't get butchered by others. I wish I could bring all of his movies. It's worth bringing this one just for the scene in the Advocate's bedroom.





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## *Eric Darnell's Top Ten (cont.)*

**8. *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs*** (1997) — I've not seen this recent film by the Canadian filmmaker Guy Maddin, but I saw a short film by him on one of the *Short Cinema Journal* DVDs that blew me away. I then tracked down a video copy of Maddin's *Tales From Gimly Hospital* which is extremely bizarre, but has several truly inspired moments. I wonder what *Twilight* is like? I'll risk it.

**9. *Woodstock*** (Michael Wadleigh, 1970) — This way I can have some music.

**10. *2001: A Space Odyssey*** (Stanley Kubrick, 1968) — I'll put this one on in the background while I work on my raft.

## *Kevin Altieri's Top Ten*

**1. *Foreign Correspondent*** (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940).

**2. *Scaramouche*** (George Sidney II, 1952).

**3. *A Bridge Too Far*** (Richard Attenborough, 1977).

**4. *A Clockwork Orange*** (Stanley Kubrick, 1971).

**5. *Shichinin no samurai*** (Seven Samurai) by Akira Kurosawa (1954).

**6. *Kumokiri nizaemon*** (Hideo Gosha, 1978).

**7. and 8.** Hayao Miyazaki's *The Castle of Cagliostro* (1979) and *Laputa: Castle in the Sky* (1986).

**9. *Blood on Satan's Claw*** (Piers Haggard, 1971).

**10. and 11.** Richard Lester's *The Three Musketeers* (1973) and *The Four Musketeers* (1974).

**12. *The War of the Worlds*** (Byron Haskin, 1953).

**13. *Bride of Frankenstein*** (James Whale, 1935).

**14. *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*** (Nathan Juran, 1958).

**15. *Henry V*** (Laurence Olivier, 1944).

**16. *Great Expectations*** (David Lean, 1946).

**17. and 18.** George Stevens' *Shane* (1953) and *Gunga Din* (1939).

**19. *The War Lord*** (Franklin J. Schaffner, 1965).

**20. *The Vikings*** (Richard Fleischer, 1958).

## *Norton Virgien's Top Ten*

**1. *Fantasia*** (Disney, 1940) — Such grand ambition.

**2. *Allegro Non Troppo*** by Bruno Bozzetto (1976) — *Fantasia* alternative.

**3. *Dumbo*** (Disney, 1941) — Its simple, sweet and nearly perfect.

**4. *The Castle of Cagliostro*** by Hayao Miyazaki (1979) — We all learned from this one.

**5. *Ralph Bakshi's Heavy Traffic*** (1973) — Certainly not Disney.

**6. *Yellow Submarine*** (TVC, 1968) — Also not Disney.

**7. *The Secret of NIMH*** by Don Bluth (1982) — The challenge that re-awoke Disney.

**8. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*** by Robert Zemeckis (1988) — Brilliant concept, brilliantly executed.

**9. *Toy Story*** (Disney/Pixar, 1995) — Simply brilliant.

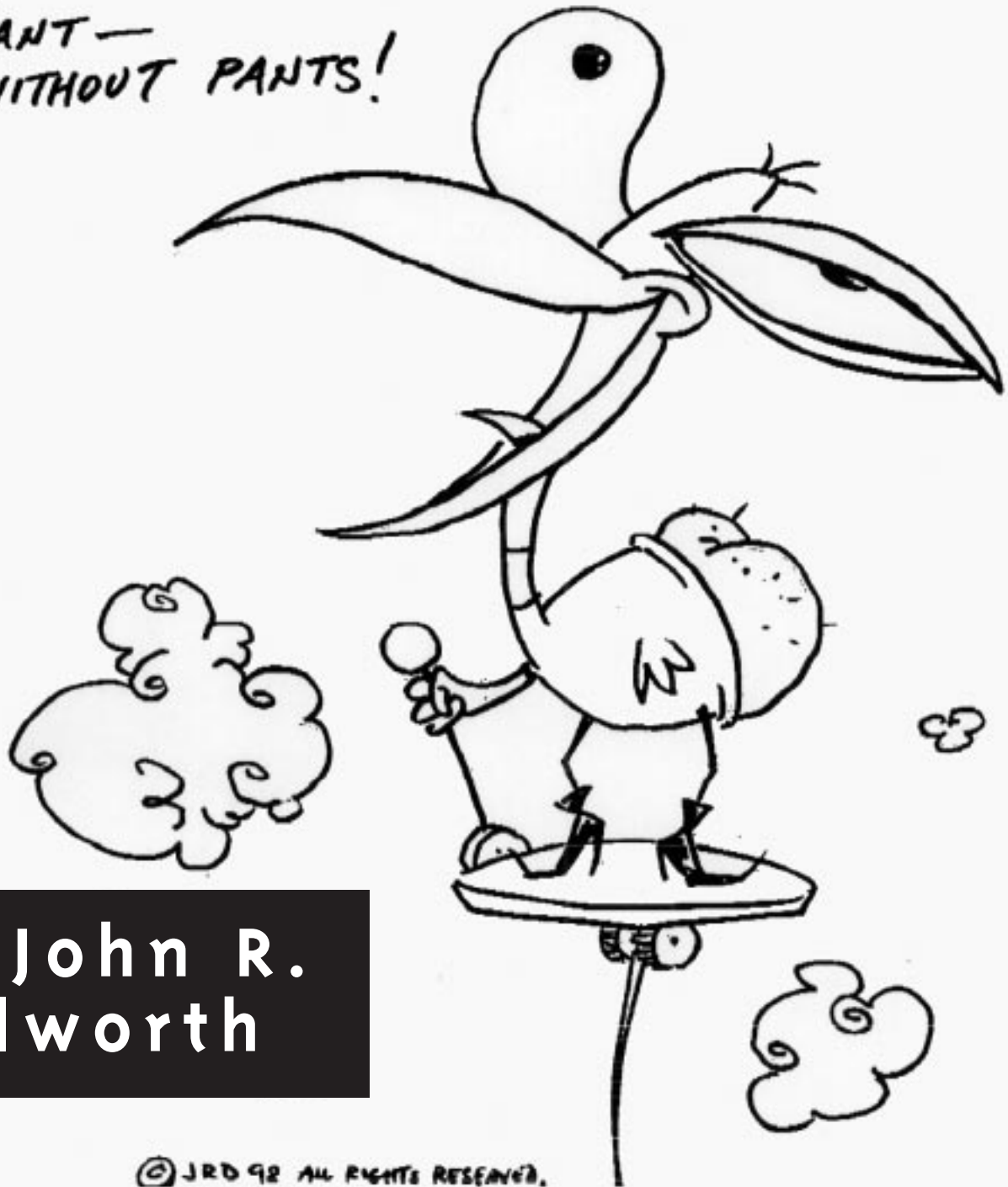
**10. *The Rugrats Movie*** (Viacom, 1998) — Of course.

*Amid Amidi is associate editor of Animation World Magazine.*



# The Dirty Birdy

THE DIRDY BIRDY'S FAMILY RIDE  
OF THE FUTURE: GO AS HIGH AS YOU  
WANT —  
WITHOUT PANTS!



by John R.  
Dilworth

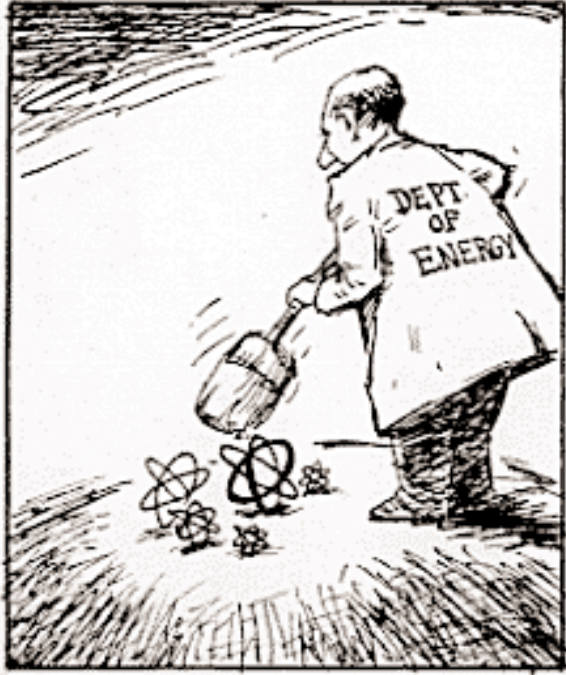
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# Plympt-gags



by Bill Plympton

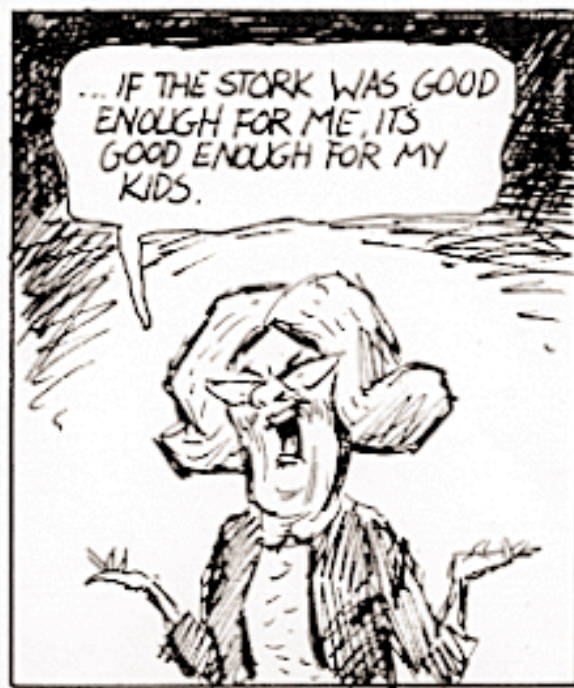
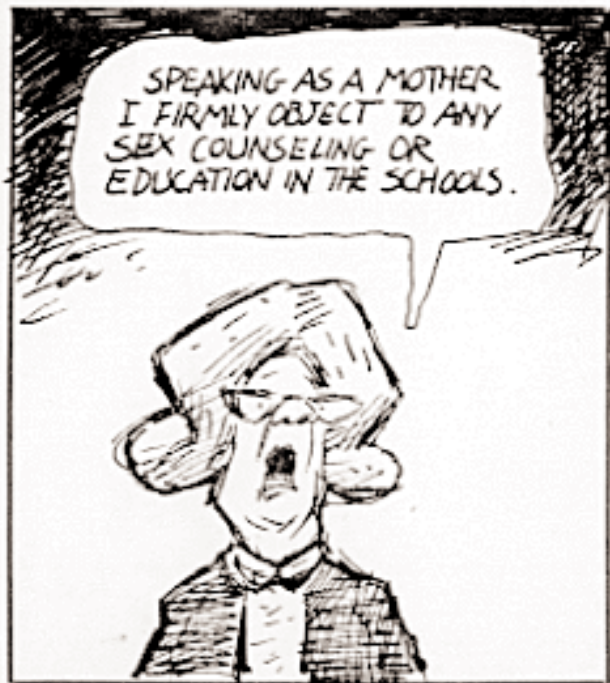
# Plympt-gags



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# The Year in Review - The Year to Come January 1999

**F**or January, *Animation World Magazine* will take a look at the most important events and trends of 1998 and discuss how these events will influence the year to come. Evan Backes will talk about the busy, quickly evolving world of feature films and Michael Swanigan will take on the highs and lows of television. The trends of the animated television commercial realm will be related by Chuck McBride, while Eric Huelsman will report on the state of both the artistic and business sides of computer generated animation. Irene Kotlarz will recount the history of animation festivals and ASIFA, and how this relationship is changing for a new age. The status of independent filmmakers will be described by oTTo Alder. Pamela Thompson will highlight the area of education and Zahra Dowlatabadi will present an in-depth study of the current and projected job market. J.B. Kaufman will discuss the status of film preservation as we approach the millennium and our precious history continues to turn to dust. We will also survey industry leaders for their opinion on the most important events of 1998 and ask them to look into their crystal balls and predict 1999. In addition, *Animation World Magazine* will poll prominent filmmakers and artists about what their favorite moments of animation released in 1998 were. Included in the issue will be 1998 news milestones, top quotes and more.

Toby Bluth will review the long awaited DreamWorks spectacular, *Prince of Egypt*. Event reviews will include the London Effects and Animation Festival by George Cairns, and the Holland Animation Film Festival by Paul and Menno de Nooijer. Mitch Butler will relate the making of *The Smell of Horror*, a film that made quite a stir at SIGGRAPH '98. Barry Purves will conclude his production diary of the times and tribulations of making *Gilbert and Sullivan — The Very Models* for Channel 4.

## Animation World Magazine Upcoming Calendar

<b>Year in Review and Future</b>	<b>January 1999</b>
<b>Motion-Capture and Stop-Motion</b>	<b>February 1999</b>
<b>Production Technology</b>	<b>March 1999</b>
<b>Music and Sound</b>	<b>April 1999</b>