

ANIMATION

WORLD

Vol. 6 No. 11

MAGAZINE

February 2002

Gaming's

New Frontiers



Plus:

Finding the School for You

Tezuka's **Metropolis**

An Interview With Richard Williams

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Cover: *Star Wars: Rogue Leader, Rogue Squadron II. Star Wars® Rogue Squadron® II: Rogue Leader™.*

Barbara Perry is known in the world of show biz as a star of Broadway and the West End, where she appeared opposite such legends as Eddie Foy Jr. and England's George Formby. She has also graced stages throughout the world as an actress, dancer and singer. On television she has co-starred with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Danny Thomas and other luminaries. But Ms. Perry also has, as Mrs. Art Babbitt, a long involvement with the corner of show biz called animation.

I talked with Barbara on a patio outside a bookstore in Beverly Hills.

* * *

William Z. Ryan: Did you notice how we both gravitated to the same section in the bookstore?

Barbara Perry Babbitt: Well, I always look for new books on animation to see if Bones gets his proper credit.

WZR: "Bones," of course, being the name Bill Tytla gave your late husband, the great animator Art Babbitt. Any luck on the shelves?

BPB: Disney's has three new books out and he's mentioned in two of them. Quoted in one.

WZR: What was the quote?

BPB: It's something they say he told a reporter once. Actually it was first said in response to a telephone call from [artist] Paul Julian's daughter, who was teaching animation in Berkeley at the time. Her students were very impressed with *Fantasia*. Times being what they were — the early Seventies — her

Nine And A Half Questions...

Barbara Perry Babbitt

by Will Ryan



Barbara Perry Babbitt.

students wanted her to ask Bones if he was on drugs when he worked on *Fantasia*.

WZR: And of course Art's famous response was — ?

BPB: "Yes! I was on drugs: Pepto-Bismol and Ex-Lax!"

WZR: Yet despite that revelation, Art managed to marry three beautiful and talented women over the course of his life. Did you find him to be particularly fascinated by Terpsichore?

BPB: Yes, he loved dance. That's why two of his wives, Marge and myself, were dancers.

WZR: Of course you're both still dancing. I seem to recall you stopping the show a year or so ago at the International Tap Dance Festival in Vienna.

BPB: Yes. Then I came home and did a pratfall while tap dancing in Keds. I ended up on crutches for months.

WZR: And I was honored to be

present at one of those performances. I won't say which.

BPB: That's awfully discreet of you.

WZR: Discretion is my middle name. But I spell it with a zed.

BPB: This might be a boring interview if you're too discreet.

WZR: All right then, Pickles: Are you still in touch with Art's first wife, Marge Champion?

BPB: Not really. But I did go backstage to say hello to her last year when she was on Broadway in *Follies*. She was charming and as pretty as ever. She introduced me to everyone with, "This is Barbara Perry. We share a husband."

WZR: That's kind of a shocking thing for the rotoscope model of Pinocchio's Blue Fairy to say.

BPB: But she was also filmed for the "Dance of the Hours" sequence in *Fantasia*.

WZR: I suppose the line is less outrageous emanating from a tutu-ed hippo.

BPB: A supposition universally shared.

WZR: Isn't Marge, like yourself, a second generation Los Angeles dancer?

BPB: Yes. My mother ran Perry's Rehearsal Hall, the dance studio on Highland Avenue, and Marge's father was Ernest Belcher, who ran his own studio. He was a very famous ballet teacher and dancer here in Los Angeles and a friend of Pavlova's.

WZR: You were raised in the World of Dance, and now you seem to live in an Animation Neighborhood.

BPB: I do. The Outpost has become quite a show business neighborhood. As for animators, let's see... Walter Williams and his wife lived next door until recently.

WZR: ...He of "Mr. Bill" fame. In the house once occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Martyn Green.

BPB: ... He of Gilbert and Sullivan fame. Then down the street is Alex Toth...

WZR: ... The much-admired comic book artist turned animation designer. There was a new collection of his work in the bookstore.

BPB: And up the way is Ernie Pintoff...

WZR: ...The Oscar-winning animator. And we just saw a couple of books by him on the shelves.

BPB: And for many years Don Selders, the very fine assistant animator, was a neighbor. He used to say to us, "I'd rather be a great assistant animator than a bad animator."

WZR: And what about inside your house?

BPB: Oh, that's right. The spare bedroom has hosted several people from the world of animation over the years, most recently Aleksandra Korejwo, the marvelous animator from Poland. And come to think of it, you helped house-sit while I was in Vienna

two years ago.

WZR: Which is how I got to know about your neighbors.

BPB: Really? And all this time I thought Discretion was your middle name!

WZR: Really? With a zed?!



Barbara Perry Babbitt usually buys animation books which discuss Art Babbitt to collect for his daughters, Karen, Michelle and Laurel, who are very proud of their illustrious parent.

Barbara's one-woman show, Passionate Ladies, garnered her two L. A. Drama Critics Circle Awards and two Dramalogue Awards before heading to Broadway. Barbara played Jim Carrey's dingy aunt on The Duck Factory, the only network TV sitcom about an animation studio.

Will Ryan is active in animation as a producer, writer, actor and composer. He would like to recommend that, in order to learn more about Art Babbitt, you visit your local library. Or bookstore.

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

New Games for New Consoles: Ten Winners

by Jacquie Kubin

Batman, Daffy Duck, Peter Pan and their pop culture brethren have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I first met these folks in the pages of comic books or in movies, or on Saturday morning cartoons. The newer generations still have the old fashioned ways to meet these stars but new icons have emerged in the form of video game superstars.

And that is truly the point of all this. Lots of people play video games these days and many, like myself play to become immersed in new levels of animation and mind blowing action.

The graphics horsepower behind the new console systems — Microsoft's Xbox, Nintendo's GameCube and Sony's Playstation 2 — have given me, and plenty of other pop culturists reason to pick up the controller and spend some time in a world of pixels.

Here are 10 current titles (priced at \$49.99) from the 3 hottest systems that need to be added to any gamer's core library.

Batman Vengeance

DC Comics' Batman may be one of the most diversely interpreted pop culture characters of our time. And unfortunately, up until now, I have been left less than enthused by the stories and oversimplified four-color animation of past Bat-video games.



Batman sports the coolest cape in town in *Batman Vengeance*. Batman and all related characters are trademarks of and © DC Comics. © 2002 Ubisoft Entertainment.

Batman Vengeance (Rated Teen; Ages 13+; By Ubi Soft for Playstation 2) brings fans a game based on the old cartoon series *The New Adventures of Batman*. Keeping the game parallel to the cartoon, it features the same voice actors battling it out in a very familiar Gotham City, while the tighted one is drawn in an overly muscular, square chinned, glowing eye sort of way. The environments are extremely dark, befitting the grittier side of Gotham City. *Batman Vengeance* also reincarnates my favorite Bat-villain, the Clown Prince of Crime, the Joker. An added bonus is the video cinematics that serve to motivate players to get to the next level.

My favorite aspect of this game may be the ultra-mobile three-dimensional Batman that in addition to some very cool Bat-

gadgets, such as the Bat-communicator, Bat-grapple, Bat-launcher, Bat-cuffs and Flash Bombs, has more than 500 animated movements creating realistic flight and fight. And the pièce de resistance, for this Bat-fan, is the crime fighter's really cool, new multi-functional cape with its very own artificial intelligence. I mean, how cool is that!

Technically, the game is fluid and fun to play. Players will find success in pounding those villains using a button mashing or more controlled fighting technique. It is not easy to get through all 19 levels, set within five huge and vastly different episodes, where players will find a myriad of Gotham City criminals, like Mr. Freeze, Harley Quinn and Poison Ivy to name a few. Batman not only flies around courtesy of his cool new cape, he also has the Batmobile and the Batplane at his disposal.

Jak & Daxter: The Precursor Legacy

I like games that are pretty to look at and just fun, putting *Jak & Daxter: The Precursor Legacy* for Playstation 2 (Rated Everybody; Animated Violence; By Naughty Dog) near the top of my game play pile.

Bright yellow hair and ears to make Spock jealous, Jak and sidekick Daxter set off to explore ancient ruins that are, of course, located on a forbidden and foreboding island. It is on the island that Daxter is transformed into a weasel, known as an Otsel, after being knocked into a vat of Dark Eco, which is very nasty stuff indeed.

The game takes Jak and Daxter on a free-roaming 3D adventure to find the one person

that can transform Dexter back. More than 100 power cells are hidden throughout the game's gorgeous and lush graphically rich environments. There are tons of strong character designs, anime inspired animation and a fun plot that makes you want to help Dexter return to his original elfin form. Super surprise-ending makes getting there only half the fun!

Luigi's Mansion

A lot of gamers have grown up never knowing a world without the little mustachioed paisano. Now Luigi, younger brother of the Mario Brothers, has his own title, *Luigi's Mansion* (Rated E; By Nintendo for GameCube). The only problem is that this block and mortar castle is filled with ghosts and Luigi's only tools are his imagination, courage, a flashlight and a special ghost-sucking vacuum.

The mansion environment, and the GameCube's horsepower, allows for lots of spectacular graphics peppered with spectral images of see-through ghosts, mirrored images and special "ghostly" effects — like Luigi's rigged out Hoover that not only inhales ghosts, but also the dust on the chairs and the mist from the freezer.

As to be expected, there are lots of silly, slapstick shenanigans and while this game will not keep the hard-core gamer glued to the controller, the GameCube offers some interesting play control. And even though it might not be the most difficult game to play, I found it a fun, mindless diversion that is as easy to play as it is to put down and then return to.

Maximo: Ghosts to Glory

Great cartoony graphics

and huge environments make *Maximo* (Rated T; Violence Ages 13+; By Capcom for Playstation 2) a fun game, but it is tough to play. *Maximo* tips its cap to the 2D platform genre such as *Ghouls n Ghosts* as its hero returns to his homeland only to find that more than 5,000 square miles of terrain are loaded with roaming hordes of undead that cavort from the Boneyard to Castle Maximo's Dungeon of Despair.

With levels in between having names like Voodoo Village, Captain Cadaver the Pirate and Lord Gutterscum the Demon lets players know that this is a great hack-n-slash game that has lots of ghosts, goblins and skeletons just waiting to be decimated — before Maximo loses all his armor. Success is only achieved once the four wise Sorceresses have been found and Princess Sophia is freed from the evil Achille.

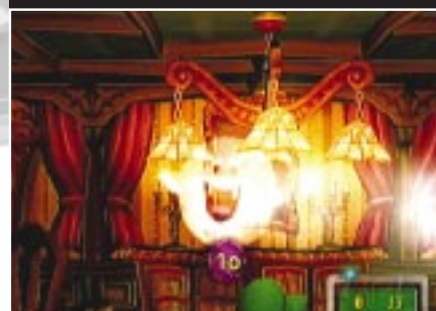
This game, which is easy to play but hard to master, offers hours of thumb-numbing play. My personal suggestion is that even if you never buy a strategy guide, you just might want to this time!

Star Wars: Rogue Leader, Rogue Squadron II

I saw the first *Star Wars: A New Hope* film in 1977 so I am thrilled that this particular universe has found extended life in the video game realm as we wait for the continuing sequels. I am equally happy with GameCube's *Star Wars: Rogue Leader* *Rogue Squadron II* (Rated T; By LucasArts). Out of all the *Star Wars* video game incarnations, Capcom hits the nail on the head with high polygon counts that make you feel as though you have jumped into the cockpit of your very own X-Wing!



Jak and Daxter roam lush islands on their adventure. *Jak & Daxter: The Precursor Legacy* is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. Created and developed by Naughty Dog, Inc. © 2001 Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc.



Little brother is all grown up with adventures of his own in *Luigi's Mansion*. © 2001 Nintendo of America.



Maximo challenges even the most experienced gamers. *Maximo* is a trademark of Capcom, Co., Ltd.

Of course, R2D2 is sitting shotgun as you find extreme adventure on eleven different and exciting missions taking young Jedi's through thirteen challenging levels.

I loved being able to pilot to familiar places such as Hoth, the Cloud City and of course, the ominous Death Star. Plus, I found the controls easy to manipulate. A game highlight for me was the

marvelous soundtrack. Composer John Williams keeps the memories alive with a robust score that evokes memories of all that has been and will be *Star Wars*.

Rez

The name *Rez* (Rated E; Mild Violence; By Sega for Playstation 2) does not do justice to this great game. A fast moving, wire-frame adventure designed by Tetsuya Mizuguchi (*Space Channel 5* and *Sega Rally*), the story takes you deep into a mega-computer that has been developed to handle the massive amounts of information being generated during the present information age. At the center of this world comprised of circuits and undefined space is Eden, a mega form of artificial intelligence. Being this highly evolved intelligent being, Eden gets smart and takes off into the computer's mainframe, leaving the player to take control of the whole network while searching feverishly for Eden.

The game's most base description would be a shooter as it requires players to battle through the computer's firewall, which was designed to keep intruders out, in order to gain control. The game has a flowing artistic nuance that will be familiar to fans of *Tron* and that is enhanced by a techno music soundtrack. A cool auditory additive to game play is the way explosions and blasts become part of the soundtrack, keeping the game replay fresh.

Halo Combat Evolved

I must admit I am not that fond of combat games. I don't know if it's because I am a girl, or just not into a lot of violent game play, but I do admit to enjoying *Halo Combat Evolved* for Xbox

(Rated Mature; Blood, Gore and Violence; Ages 17+; By Bungie and Microsoft).

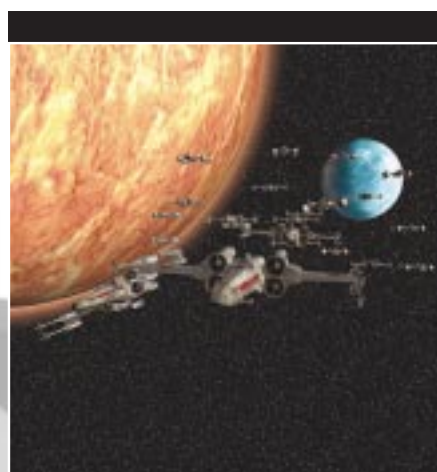
Halo combines vehicular combat in an action-shooter game that puts the player deep into the muck of it on a hostile alien world within a marvelous melding of game play, graphics and sound. Players must first escape to their ship, the Pillar of Autumn, before it is destroyed by the Covenant alien race. The goal is to find the secret to the planet of Halo — a powerful artifact that will shift the balance of power — before the Covenant does.

While the first person shooting aspect left me waned, I loved the vehicular combat. A lot of this game's power comes from its artificial intelligence component that allows fighters — good and bad guys alike — to utilize the environment to their advantage. I also loved the way a buddy would follow me into a vehicle, like a jeep, to man the turret.

Also, this game is for Xbox which means attention to details that only Mr. Gates' creation allows. Shine a light at a window and it shines back. Look into glass or a mirror and see a perfect reflection. Walk past a field and watch the grass move. Leave your footprint in the sand.

Genma Onimusha

Chaos surrounds the hillside castle of the noble Princess Uki, who has been captured and now fears for her life. Responding to the Princess's call for help is one swordsman, Samanouske, who vows to find the Princess and defeat a legion of demon warriors. With an epic story line filled with drama, love, courage and magic, *Genma Onimusha* (Rated M; By



The franchise stays alive in *Star Wars: Rogue Leader, Rogue Squadron II. Star Wars* ® *Rogue Squadron* ® *II: Rogue Leader*™.



Searching for Eden in *Rez*.
Courtesy of Sega of America.



Halo Combat Evolved: The game even a pacifist would love to play.
© Microsoft Corp.

Capcom for Xbox) is an action-packed adventure game, which may have been tailor made for this gamer.

Originally created for the Playstation 2, this Xbox version takes full advantage of the system's powers. The game presents a lot of new elements — a new group



In this classic story, the valiant swordsman must rescue the kidnapped princess in *Genma Onimusha*. *Genma Onimusha* is a trademark of Capcom, Co., Ltd.



Ultra-cool *Max Payne* is not for the weak at heart. *Max Payne* and the *Max Payne* logo are trademarks of Remedy Entertainment, Ltd. and 3D Realms Entertainment, Inc. © 2001 Gathering of Developers, Inc. All rights reserved.



Can hip-hop be evergreen? Enter *Parappa the Rapper 2*. *Parappa the Rapper* is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. © 2002 Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. © R.G./I.P/SCP/CX-SVW. All rights reserved.

of levels, new armor that can only be achieved on the Xbox version, new secrets and objectives, and the ability to collect bonus Flourites, all enhanced by overall

sharper characters, environments and lighting. In addition to all that, this game is simply hard with strong enemies ready to stop you from collecting the soul points you need.

Max Payne

Technically there is a lot about *Max Payne* (Rated M; Blood and Violence; By Rockstar Games for Xbox) to like. Its film-noir ambience, New York underground location, photo-realistic visuals and movie-quality effects for instance.

Max Payne is that unique third-person shooter video game, in the same realm of James Bond *Goldeneye*, that actually has a story line. Max, who is being framed for murder, is driven by revenge in a fight to uncover the truth in a seedy world awash with murder and corruption.

However, beyond the story, the music, the seedy film-noir genre that is so aptly reproduced, what makes playing *Max Payne* ultra-cool is the two-fisted gun-play and variety of weaponry — from shotgun pistols to Molotov cocktails.

What makes all this even better is the ability to slow down the action — literally being able to shoot, dive and roll in slow motion à la *The Matrix*. Among the game's pretty cool graphics are some very twisted elements that make me shy away from this game — like a tightrope of blood, the bleeding rain and I found the screaming of Max's dead wife and child rather unsettling. Definitely not for the young.

Parappa the Rapper 2

Melding rap and video gaming into a new realm of gaming, the social music genre, *Parappa the Rapper* started a new

rage in 1997 helping couch bound gamers become expert rappers with his first self-titled release. The little orange beanie-wearing pooch has returned in *Parappa the Rapper 2* for Playstation 2 (Rated E; Comic Mischief; By Sony). The game's objective continues to be to bust-a-rhyme and get the party started, while using your best rapping skills to stop the Evil Noodle Syndicate plot of world domination.

This second version includes a variety of new music tracks and a "Simon-Says" inspired game-play mechanic making dancing and rapping that much more fun.

Parappa stays at the top of my list for its light-hearted approach, simple, fun graphics, bright colors and a hopping soundtrack all making *Parappa the Rapper* an evergreen hit for this gamer.

Jacquie Kubin, a Washington, D.C.-based freelance journalist, enjoys writing about the electronic entertainment and edutainment mediums, including the Internet. She is a frequent contributor to the Washington Times and Krause Publication magazines. She has won the 1998 Certificate of Award granted by the Metropolitan Area Mass Media Committee of the American Association of the University Women.

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

The New Console War

by John Edgar Park



Battle of the consoles: PlayStation2 vs. GameCube vs. Xbox.

First there was Atari 2600 vs. Intellivision. Later it was SuperNES vs. Sega Genesis. Next came Nintendo64 vs. PlayStation. And now we have the three way battle of Playstation2 vs. GameCube vs. Xbox. You've seen all the ads and heard all the hype — so how are things really shaping up in this latest war of the video game consoles?

The first thing to understand about console wars is this: Hardware loses money; software makes money. Just like Gillette practically gives away razors so that consumers will buy the replacement blades, console manufacturers are in the business of getting hardware into your homes in order to sell high profit games.

Any of the modern consoles is a marvel of technical specifications, which may lead you to wonder — how come this sophisticated little computer costs only \$200 - \$300? Well the truth is, the

console manufacturers sell them at a loss. Some estimate that it costs around \$350 for Microsoft to build an Xbox, which retails for \$299.

However, games are another matter. While Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft each have a different take on licensing, the basic mechanism is the same for all three: If a third-party publisher wants to sell a game for, say, Nintendo GameCube, they must pay a royalty and other fees to Nintendo. Since Nintendo controls the software duplication plants, all GameCube compatible software generates income for Nintendo. The profit margins and royalty systems of games are the spoils of the console wars.

And what a war it is. According to a recent NPD Group report, in 2001, consoles, peripherals and games accounted for \$9.4 billion in sales. This is a 43% increase over year 2000 sales. To put this into perspective, movie

box office ticket sales for 2001 were around \$8.4 billion.

Sony PlayStation2

The Specs:

CPU: 294Mhz 128-bit PlayStation2 CPU w/ FPU Co-processor
System RAM: 32MB Direct RDRAM
Graphics: 148Mhz Graphics Synthesizer
Graphics RAM: 4MB
Media: CD-ROM, DVD-ROM

Launched in 2000, a year-long advantage has clearly helped the PS2 stay ahead of the competition. Game developers have had time to get to know the system. Second generation titles like *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *Herdy Gerdy* and *Devil May Cry* look as good or better than the first generation titles available on the newer GameCube and Xbox hardware.

Regardless of hardware stats like polygon fill rates and multi-texturing — pretty much all current games look great — it's the



The second generation does it better in *Herdy Gerdy* for the PlayStation2. © Eidos Interactive.



A shot from the habit forming *Luigi's Mansion*. © 2001 Nintendo of America.

gameplay that matters. And there are many more PS2 games with great gameplay than the other consoles combined. This is made evident when you look at what people are buying. Among the top ten selling video game titles in 2001 are these five PS2 games: *Grand Theft Auto III*, *Madden NFL 2002*, *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec* and *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3*. These sales aren't attributable to huge advertising budgets (though that helps) but rather to expertly designed gameplay.

One other feather in Sony's cap: the \$299 PS2 doubles as a DVD player without any additional hardware. While many people already own a standalone player, this capability is a major plus for some buyers. Sony sold 6.6 million PS2s in North America in 2001.

Nintendo GameCube

The Specs:

CPU: 485Mhz IBM PowerPC "Gekko"

System RAM: 40MB

Graphics: 162Mhz ATI/Nintendo "Flipper"

Graphics RAM: 16MB

Media: 3-inch 1.5GB proprietary DVD

Launched on November 18, 2001 this is the purest gaming machine of the bunch. Priced at \$199 and lacking DVD movie playback capability, the GameCube is marketed as a games-only machine. It packs great hardware, but more importantly, one of Nintendo's greatest strengths has always been its in-house game development teams. Titles like *Mario*, *Zelda* and *Pokemon* are always huge sellers. Neither Sony nor Microsoft (who rely more heavily on out-of-house developers) can boast these kinds of character-based, must-have titles.

While previous Nintendo consoles have been targeted to a young audience, the GameCube is breaking this mold.

While previous Nintendo consoles have been targeted to a young audience, the GameCube is breaking this mold. With titles like *Star Wars: Rogue Leader*, *Madden NFL 2002* and *SSX Tricky*, Nintendo has taken aim at the

older players that make up Sony and Microsoft's core audiences. They also continue to cater to the younger set with cute, addictive titles like *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, *Super Monkey Ball* and *Luigi's Mansion*. This strategy is paying off: Nintendo sold 1.2 million GameCubes in the United States during 2001.

Microsoft Xbox

The Specs:

CPU: 733Mhz Intel

System RAM: 64MB DDR

Graphics: 233Mhz Nvidia XGPU

Graphics RAM: shared with system RAM

Media: DVD-ROM, CD-ROM

OK, no one wants Microsoft to take over yet another aspect of our daily lives. And the Xbox is admittedly one ugly piece of hardware. And the controllers seem to have been designed by Norse giants with enormous hands. But the truth is, the Xbox is a really great game console.

For one thing, you get a lot of hardware for your \$299. Like the PS2, the Xbox can double as a DVD movie player (although you must invest in a \$20 DVD playback

kit first). Unlike the competition, the Xbox comes with a hard drive (for game saves and storing music) and an ethernet card for playing online games.

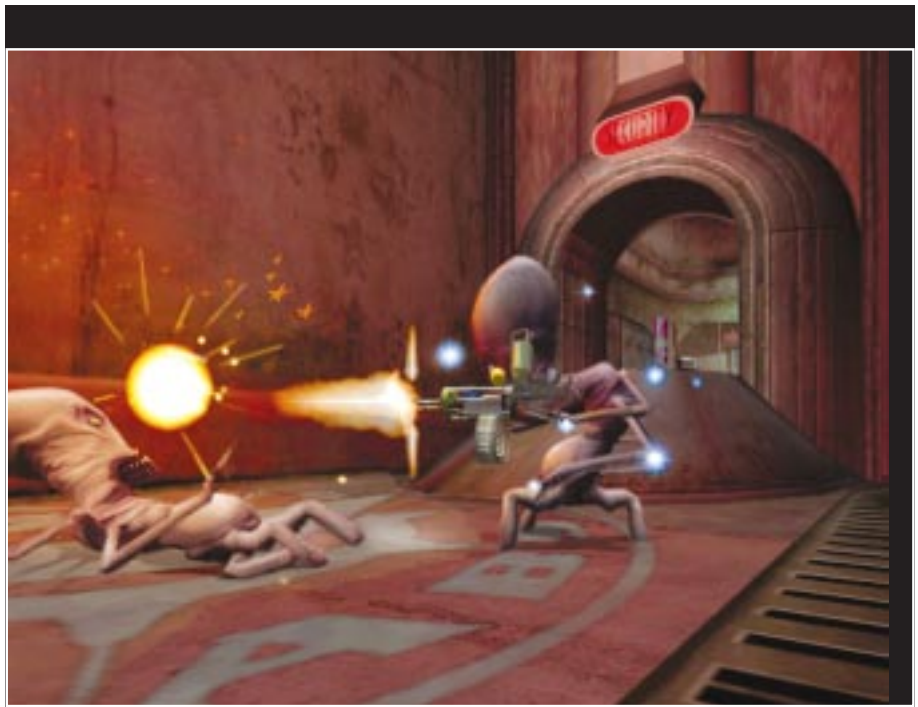
There had been concern that the Xbox would not attract the big developers needed to create first-class titles.

Essentially a stripped-down gaming PC built around a lean version of Windows 2000 and an Nvidia graphic card, the Xbox is said to be fairly easy to develop for. Game developers with experience coding DirectX (the underlying code in most PC games) are able to make the switch to Xbox without the steep learning curve of most new consoles. Look for quick ports of PC titles like *Unreal Championship* and *Commandos 2*.

Two notable titles available at launch were *Munch's Oddysee* and *Halo*. *Munch* continues the terrific *Abe's Oddworld* series and adds some very compelling A.I. As far as *Halo* goes, if you ever doubted that you'd want to play a first-person shooter on a console, just grab a friend and an extra controller and try out the co-operative mode. Plainly put — it rocks!

From a sales perspective, Sony is in the lead.

There had been concern that the Xbox would not attract



Journey with Munch's Oddysee. © Oddworld Inhabitants 2002.

the big developers needed to create first-class titles. Without good software, nobody will buy the hardware. But with 1.5 million consoles sold in North America during 2001, they seem to be doing well so far.

The Future

From a sales perspective, Sony is in the lead. This is largely due to their huge library of titles (close to 2000 of them if you consider the backward compatibility with original PlayStation games) and yearlong head start. Nintendo and Microsoft have roughly equal sales numbers right now, so it's anybody's guess where things will go. Historically, the market has never supported more than two major players. Remember what the PSX and N64 did to the Sega Saturn?

If Internet gaming does finally catch on in the console world, like it has on the PC, things could get interesting. Xbox is online-capable out of the box. PS2

and GameCube are both readying add-on modems and ethernet cards, but will people buy them in large enough numbers to matter? It also remains to be seen if gamers will be willing to pay additional monthly fees to hook up with others online.

What else can we expect in this console war? Things change so quickly it's hard to tell — in fact, there are rumors that Sony is already hard at work building the PlayStation 3!

John Edgar Park is a 3D animator, instructor and writer based in Los Angeles. He received his B.A. in Drama from the University of Virginia.

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An Interview With Richard Williams

by Dean Kalman Lennert



Richard Williams with his long-awaited text. All photographs by Jacob Sutton.

Master animator. Teacher. Three time Academy-Award winner. These are just a few titles and honors associated with director Richard Williams. Now, with the publication of his new book, *The Animator's Survival Kit*, he can add the title of author to that list. I recently had the chance to speak with

Richard Williams about the book, his most recent animation masterclass and his opinions on the latest animation technology.

Before I begin, however, I would like to thank the members of ASIFA-East and the folks at Blue Sky Studios for contributing some wonderful questions to this interview.

Dean Lennert: *I understand that you had a masterclass in Hong Kong last year?*

Richard Williams: *Yeah, and it went really well. I was very apprehensive because, I thought, with the cultural differences, will my so-called humor work? And the answer is yes.*

DL: *Was the class predominantly traditional animators or computer?*

RW: *There were 150 students and only two were 2D animators. One fellow used to work for me over here in England.*

DL: *I'm surprised that there weren't more traditional animators from the studios that do series work for the U.S.*

RW: *No. It wasn't that kind of thing. It was the government backing the development of animation in Hong Kong. And, of course, it's all on computer. So, they've got the equipment and they've got marvelous ideas but, they're missing pieces of information. So, I was the missing link between the classical knowledge and the modern technology. They were very happy, saying that it was exactly what they wanted to get. It was very informal. A very enjoyable experience.*

DL: *At that point how many masterclasses have you taught?*

RW: *Hong Kong was number twenty. Well, we're trying to give them up you see. That's one of the reasons for doing the book.*

DL: *Oh, really?*

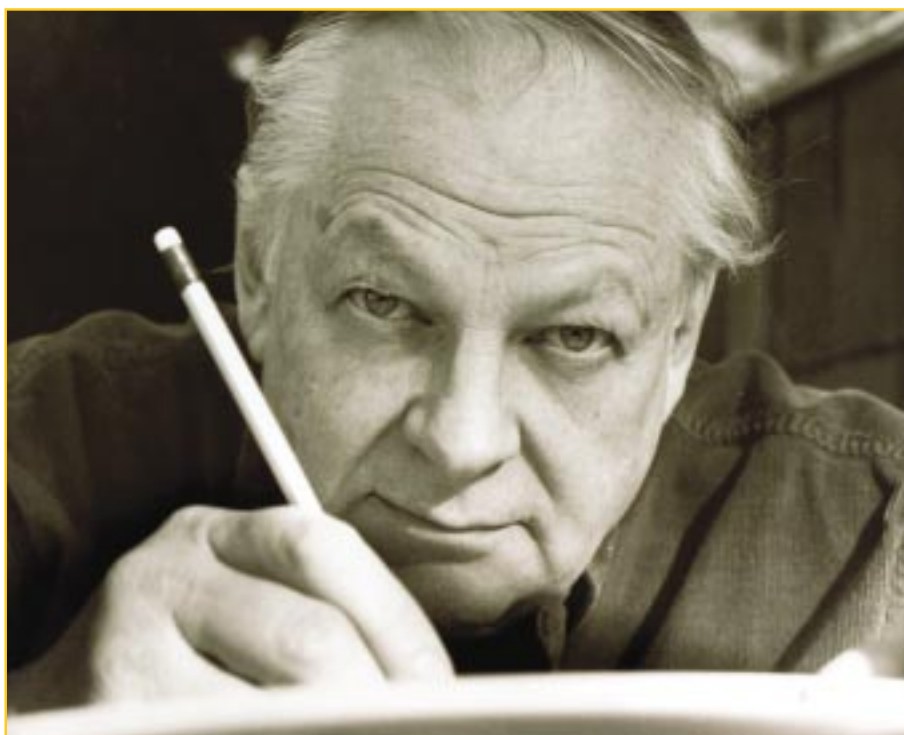
RW: *I don't want to make a career*

of this thing. We started the masterclass because I didn't want to go back into the animation industry as such and wanted to do my own work. As this is the information age and I've got all this information, Mo [Richard's wife, documentary filmmaker Imogen Sutton] said, "Well, why don't you teach for awhile?"

DL: How has it been making the transition from being a student of animation masters like Milt Kahl, Ken Harris and Art Babbitt to teaching the next generation of animators?

RW: Well, none of my teachers, except for Art Babbitt, were actually teachers. Ken Harris would sometimes have a burst of eloquence but he'd usually have to show you on the drawing board. And with Milt, he just kept saying, "Well. You know. You know." I'd say, "No. I don't know." And then, finally, out would come the answer and I'd remember it. I have total recall of anything I'm interested in and no recall of anything I'm not interested in. *(laughs)* I can recall practically every conversation I ever had with Milt Kahl about animation so, it was easy. What was hard was to boil it all down so it's simple. I mean, it is simple really. All the information from the different guys nearly always comes out to the same thing. But, to get it down into a really simple phrase or drawing that covers it, is the hard part.

DL: Do you ever find yourself saying, "Oh, I wish I could ask Milt this," or "I wish I could run this by Ken or Art?"



RW: No, truthfully. I never even think, "Now, how would Milt approach this?" I just think, "How would I approach this?" When I do my own work I don't think about it that way. The whole idea is to already have the knowledge absorbed into your bloodstream, and then it's automatic. A concert violinist doesn't think of the scales when he's playing. If he did, he'd crash.

DL: Has the content or format of the masterclass evolved over time?

RW: Yes. I think that it's much less spontaneous but I can get more information in now. As I keep doing it I get to be like a nightclub comic or an actor and I can tell when I'm not being clear enough and when they are getting it right away. The whole thing is to be clear, isn't it? There's a lot of show business in it. I think that the answer is that I'm much better at it now and I don't have to sweat as much before I do it because I've

done it so many times. And because of that, I'm able to get more in.

DL: I've heard that you have some 35 volumes of notes you made from your mentors and teachers?

RW: Yeah.

DL: And that you boiled these down into ten volumes of what you considered to be the most important information?

RW: That's right. Ten volumes of a hundred pages each, which I did for Alex [Richard's son] years ago when he got a job in Germany as an animator. And then that's boiled down into three hundred pages which I used for the classes. Then when I did the book I've sort of expanded it out. Not more information but, more examples of the same information. I didn't just use the three volumes. I went back through everything *(laughs)*,

which took forever.

DL: Did you find it a little more liberating working in book format than to have to cram everything into a three day masterclass?

RW: No. I actually found it much harder. Because I had to get everything absolutely right. In the class you might gloss over something without noticing, because of the shortage of time. Well, in the book it's got to be absolutely bombproof. So, I worked very hard to make sure everything is absolutely clear. It just took forever, three and a half years. I thought that it would take a year. I'm like a terrier, ya know. I just won't let go of the bone until it's done. And I think it's done. I'm happy with it. I'm very pleased that Faber [the book's publisher] allowed me to do it my way. I said to Mo at the end of it, "Well this time I can't blame anybody. This is 352 pages of stuff and if there is anything wrong with it it's my fault." (laughs) That's it. Nobody screwed with it.

DL: Did you run across any stumbling blocks when putting the book together?

RW: No. I just found that I had an awful lot of material and yet it all had to get in. What was it Shakespeare says? "More matter with less words." So, that was the hard part just to keep making it clear and getting it all in. I think I managed to keep it full of air and light. It's easy to look at, easy to read.

DL: Does the information in the book follow the structure of the masterclass?

RW: Yes. You could say that the masterclasses were rehearsals for the book. Although we didn't know it at the time.

"You could say that the masterclasses were rehearsals for the book."

DL: It has been observed that you bring a lot of energy and enthusiasm to your teaching style. How does this translate to the printed page?

RW: When we were checking the proofs, Mo picked up a whole bunch of them and was reading them on the train, she said that my voice was so strong that, to her surprise, it was a page-turner. And I said, "What? During all that technical stuff? That can't be." I looked at it a couple of days ago, I have enough distance from it now, and I think, in ways, it's funnier than the class. Whatever it is I have to offer is definitely in there.

"I hated school. I just hated school."

DL: Are there any recommended exercises in the book?

RW: No. Ya' know I hated school. I just hated school. Anything to do with the professorial, I've tried to get that out of there. I've put in my experience; here's the principle, this is how it works and this is how to use it. Use it your way. It's everything I've absorbed over the years. My experience and what I found to be true and what I found wasn't.

DL: Do you include many of your anecdotes?

RW: There's enough in there to give a feel for the background to all this knowledge.

DL: Are there any plans to have this book translated into other languages?

RW: I guess so but my hand written text is really part of the drawings. It's a mountain of art work and most of the text is embedded into the drawings like an artists' notebook. Also it's conversational not didactic.

DL: What are some of your non-animation related inspirations?

RW: Bix Beiderbecke [jazz cornetist, pianist and composer 1903-1931]. I'm crazy about a lot of music but Bix is my favorite artist in any medium. Ever! Two notes of Beiderbecke and I'm off. He just kills me. And in movies Kurosawa is by far my most favorite. He's the master as far as I'm concerned. When I first saw *Rashomon* I was 16, and I thought, "Oh! I see, movies are art! Or at least this man's movies are art." (laughs)

DL: You play the cornet, correct?

RW: The cornet and flugelhorn.

DL: What type of music do you like to play?

RW: I'm a kind of New York-Dixielander ... whatever you call it. 1940's Dixieland, swing and mainstream. I used to play with Max Kaminsky, the great trumpeter in New York. He was my teacher and friend and he gave me on the job training.

DL: How often do you get out to play?

RW: At the moment I play three times a week. And I practice all the time. I had to cut the playing down a bit while doing the book.

DL: Do you find that there is a difference in expressing yourself through music vs. animation?

RW: Only in that it's immediate. You play and there's the sound. It flies into the air and it's gone. You can't play it back and you can't fix it. I think of animation as drawn music. It's very similar; the timing is similar — the passion, the contrast, how you join things together interestingly.

DL: Do you have a preference of one over the other?

RW: Oh, I think I'd rather draw. Music takes me a lot of time and I feel it can sabotage my other work if I'm not careful. So, I think that it is drawing and playing, in that order.

DL: When you started in the industry what was your vision for the future of animation?

RW: Why I never had any, Dean. Never. And I still don't. I just think that it's such an amazing medium that, cripes, I wonder what I could do with it? Like the thing I'm on now. I've been thinking about it since I was 15. I was at that time giving up my earlier ambition to animate in favour of painting but I wondered if I became an animator would I ever be good enough to animate this idea here? So, now I am seeing if I am good enough. *(laughs)* We don't know yet.

DL: Would you have any interest in utilizing a computer or directing computer animators?

RW: I think if I was younger, yes definitely. I am doing it indirectly, I guess, since nearly every time we have a masterclass it's a higher percentage of computer guys. There's usually about 20% average of 2D now. In the beginning it was 80% 2D animators.

DL: What effect do you see these new tools having on the quality of the work?

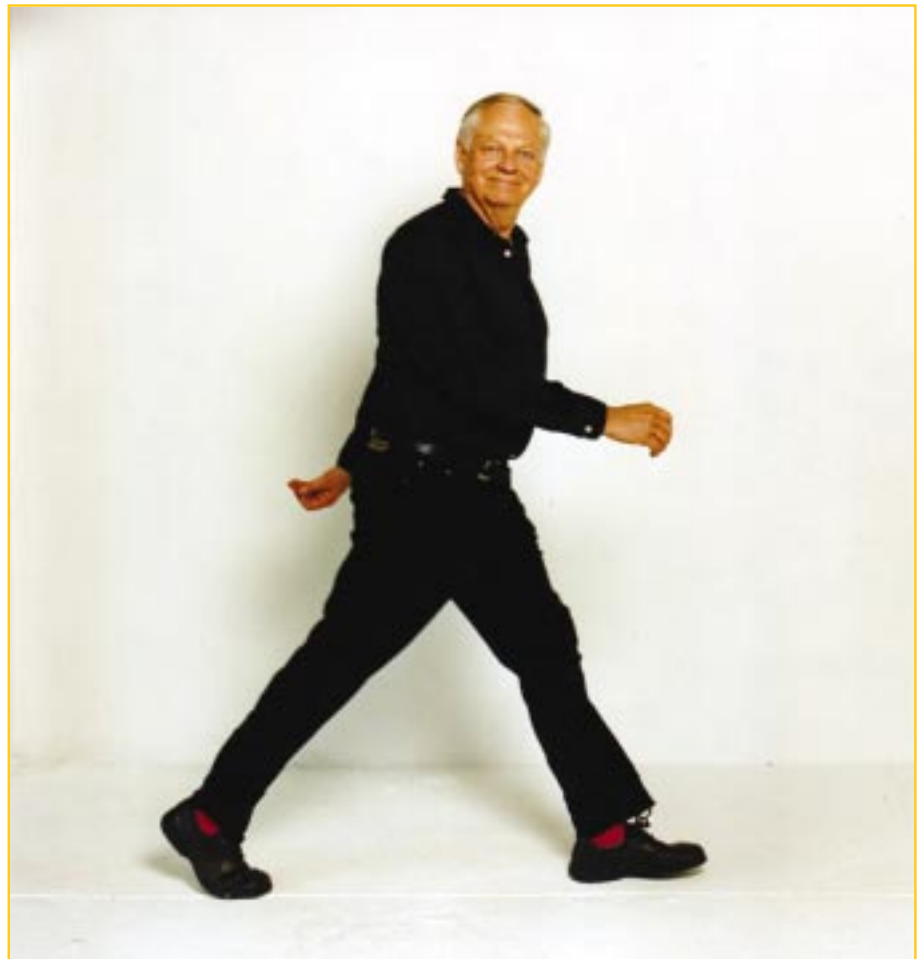
RW: Oh, I think it's great! The computer guys are getting better and better at aping reality. That's marvelous that they can do it *but*, how much better it would be if you invent what *can't* be. I mean when was the last time you saw a really funny walk in animation like they did in the 1930s? Where the action itself was funny

or fascinating? I think that's the place to go; step backwards and invent with modern technology.

DL: Do you feel that with having the unlimited un-do option a computer offers a benefit or detriment to the mastery of the art form?

RW: Oh, benefit, benefit! But, everything in life is a double-edged sword isn't it? It seems to me that every time they invent a new thing they gain this terrific new thing and they also lose a little bit of something else. I certainly don't think that every new innovation is a step forward particularly. It's just a step different.

DL: Could you place the following aspects of animated film production in the order of most important to least important: voice talent,



animation, story, production design.

RW: Production design is the least important. I would put animation first but, only just ahead of story. I think that stories are pretty easy to come by and most stories these days are just formulas. I think what you remember, or at least I remember in a movie, is the characters. If I think of *Seven Samurai* I don't think of the story I think of the seven different samurai. As Disney said to Frank Thomas, "Get the entertainment right." Then getting good voices is absolutely vital. Take *The Lion King* as a good example. The voices are marvelous and all utterly separate from each other in tone. With voices it's very important that they contrast each other. Laurel and Hardy; utterly, utterly different voices. Abbott and Costello. We have to separate the personalities into big and little, fat and thin, upper-class, lower-class. You've got to have contrast. Yeah, production design is way down the line. I think that's just giving it an interesting look. Although the whole thing should be organic, shouldn't it? Whenever I have an idea it's all of a piece. I couldn't separate it out.

DL: With the success of *Shrek* this summer over some traditionally animated films, what are your thoughts about the future of 2D animation?

RW: I think it should go graphic. I think it's a shame when the 2D tries to look like 3D because it can't. It shouldn't try to follow the fashion for this burgeoning, expanding computer thing, which is wonderful of itself. The 2D should go do what it does best. The Sistine ceiling is pretty impres-

sive but, you can take a drawing of Michelangelo's and it is, in a way, more impressive than the painting in that you see his direct thinking. There's something good about an old master's preparatory drawing, before he does the painting. And the great stuff, say, Degas' last paintings. You know, those big chalk things of the women in the tub? He couldn't see very well at that point and they were rough as hell. They're the best things he ever did! And I think we should go that way. I think, because the computer thing can take over all the polished areas so beautifully, we 2D artists should just go back to a hand-crafted approach. Obvious drawings that walk and talk.

Dean Kalman Lennert is an animator/lecturer working in New York. His latest work can be seen in Twentieth Century Fox's Ice Age coming to theaters March 15, 2002.

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The Animator's Survival Kit: The Most Valuable How To Animate Book You Will Ever Want To Own

book review by Karl Cohen

In the late 1990s Richard Williams, winner of three Oscars, was traveling around the globe presenting his master classes to sold out audiences. Now, for a fraction of what it cost to attend his seminars, you get as much information as he presented in-person. While you don't get the excitement of having him there drawing and talking to you, his handsome book is filled with hundreds of illustrations (more than he drew in the classes) and a text far superior to the hastily scribbled notes of people who attend his classes.

This book, *The Animator's Survival Kit*, should be a "must have" for every animator, from struggling student to seasoned professional. Animators improve their skills as they go through life and there are valuable lessons in the book for all. When I attended Williams' seminar I was hearing well-known animators from ILM, Pixar and other studios saying they were learning more than they expected and it was simplifying their understanding of the process. One person went home after the first session and drew for an hour. The next day he was telling people he not only was inspired by the first class, his drawing ability had actually improved.

Colleagues got excited and wanted to buy copies when they

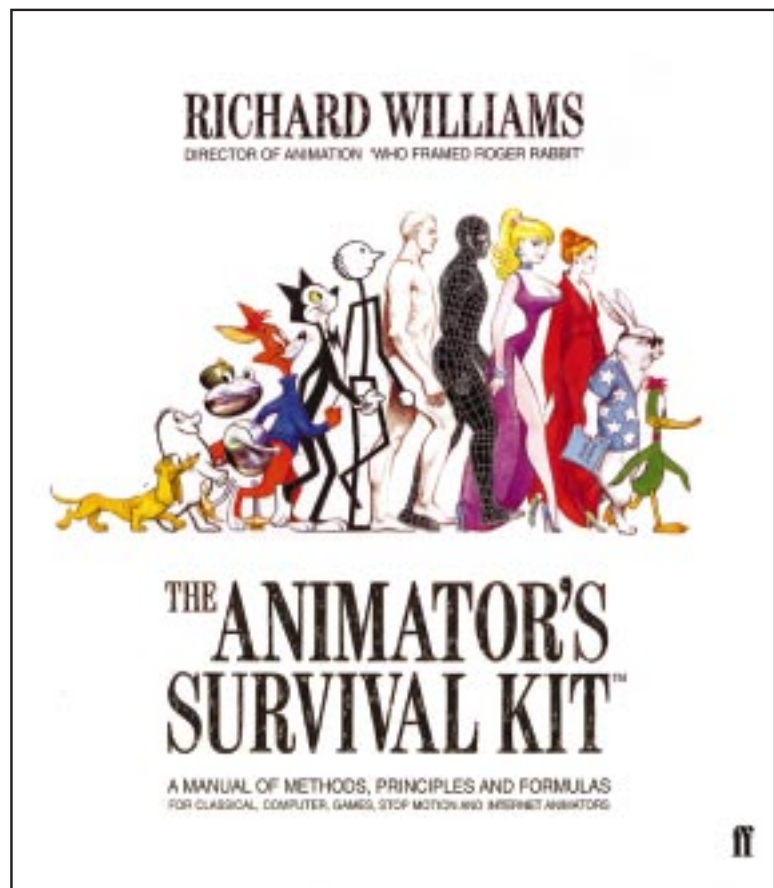
heard I had a copy of the book. Two animation teachers came to my house because they needed to see it before telling their school libraries and stores to order copies.

Background

In the opening pages of the book the author tells how he was running a successful studio in London when he saw *The Jungle Book* (1967). At that time he was-

n't a big Disney fan and he didn't have great expectations about liking the film. He writes he was "astonished" with the animation and, "I realized I didn't even know how it was done — let alone ever be able to do it myself. I went back to my studio in shock."

In the years that followed he continually sought after knowledge. "I had to know everything about the medium and master all aspects of it. Cap in hand, I made



yearly visits to Milt (Kahl), and Frank Thomas, Ollie Johnston and Ken Anderson at Disney." When he had the chance he hired other Hollywood greats, including Ken Harris, Art Babbitt, Bill Tytla, Grim Natwick, to work and lecture at his studios in London and Los Angeles.

When Williams ran studios, his work was known for excellence and perfection. His best known credit was animation director on *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* When he retired in the 1990s he began to share his knowledge in master classes. Slowly he refined his teaching skills and materials to the point that he felt comfortable putting it all down on paper. This book should provide present and future generations of animators the working methods and drawing techniques that will enable the art of animation to grow and prosper.

The Book

Williams' book may seem deceptively simple at first because the focus is developing useful work habits that allow you to produce the best possible movements. He doesn't have chapters on character design, costumes, set design, budgets, and other important ingredients of an animated film. Most of the 352 pages are about drawing human and animal movements. You probably know most of the topics he covers: key drawings, extremes, breakdowns, timing, spacing, walks, runs, jumps, skips, flexibility, weight, anticipation, takes, dialogue, acting, animal action, directing, voice recording and many, many more. What may surprise you are his comments about each topic.

His first lesson is a valuable piece of advice — unplug! That's

right, turn off your stereo or radio when you work and concentrate. The largest drawing in the book shows Milt Kahl at work at his drawing table and young Williams asking, "Milt, do you ever listen to classical music while you're working?" Turn the page and you find a giant two page illustration of Milt roaring, "Of all the s-s-s-stupid god damned questions..." On the final page Milt tells a very small Williams cowering in the corner, "I'm not smart enough to think of more than one thing at a time!" The author says he took the advice and, "My animation improved right away."

Williams has written and illustrated a brilliant volume and I suspect it will become as highly regarded as Frank and Ollie's *The Illusion of Life*.

The book is about work methods. Williams' says, "There are no rules — only methods... I really do think that — apart from your talent, brain and skill — fifty percent of the excellence in your work comes from your working method: the way you think about it, and the way you go about it."

Some of the wisdom in this book is attributed to the men who were Williams' masters. There are wonderful moments that give glimpses into their work ethics, like Ken Harris telling him, "Come on, now, you can have fun doing the drawings later, but the important

part first — time it all out." In his discussion of the use of ones and twos he tells us, "Art Babbitt used to nag at me for using ones, 'That's too realistic — one of the things about animation is that it's *not* like life!' But I would often add ones to Art's work when he wasn't looking and it came out better — and he liked it better."

A great deal of the book is spent on walks because, as Ken Harris put it, "A walk is the first thing to learn. Learn walks of all kinds, 'cause walks are about the toughest things to do right." He tells how Art Babbitt taught him to study people from behind and, "Follow them along and ask yourself: Are they old? Young? What's their financial position? State of health? Are they strict? Permissive? Depressed? Hopeful? Sad? Happy? Drunk? Then run around to see the front and check." I think Babbitt's questions give a good idea at how complex and expressive walks can be. Williams really covers the subtle nuances of body movements to give you the best education he can.

Related to walks and runs are sections on dancing, the movement of athletes and other activities. There are discussions about head movements and expressive uses of arms and hands. His discussion of flexibility in the face includes some of the most amusing drawings in the book.

The book doesn't cover how to animate robots, spiders, crabs, car crashes, explosions and a lot of other non-human things. It doesn't tell how the Japanese make female eyes sexy or how Harman-Ising made their animals so awfully cute. And there is no reason why it has to cover any of these things.

My only negative criticism are two minor points in his brief encapsulation of animation history. He paints a vivid picture of several key events, but at least one date is off by a year and he makes a questionable statement about *The Yellow Submarine* (1967).

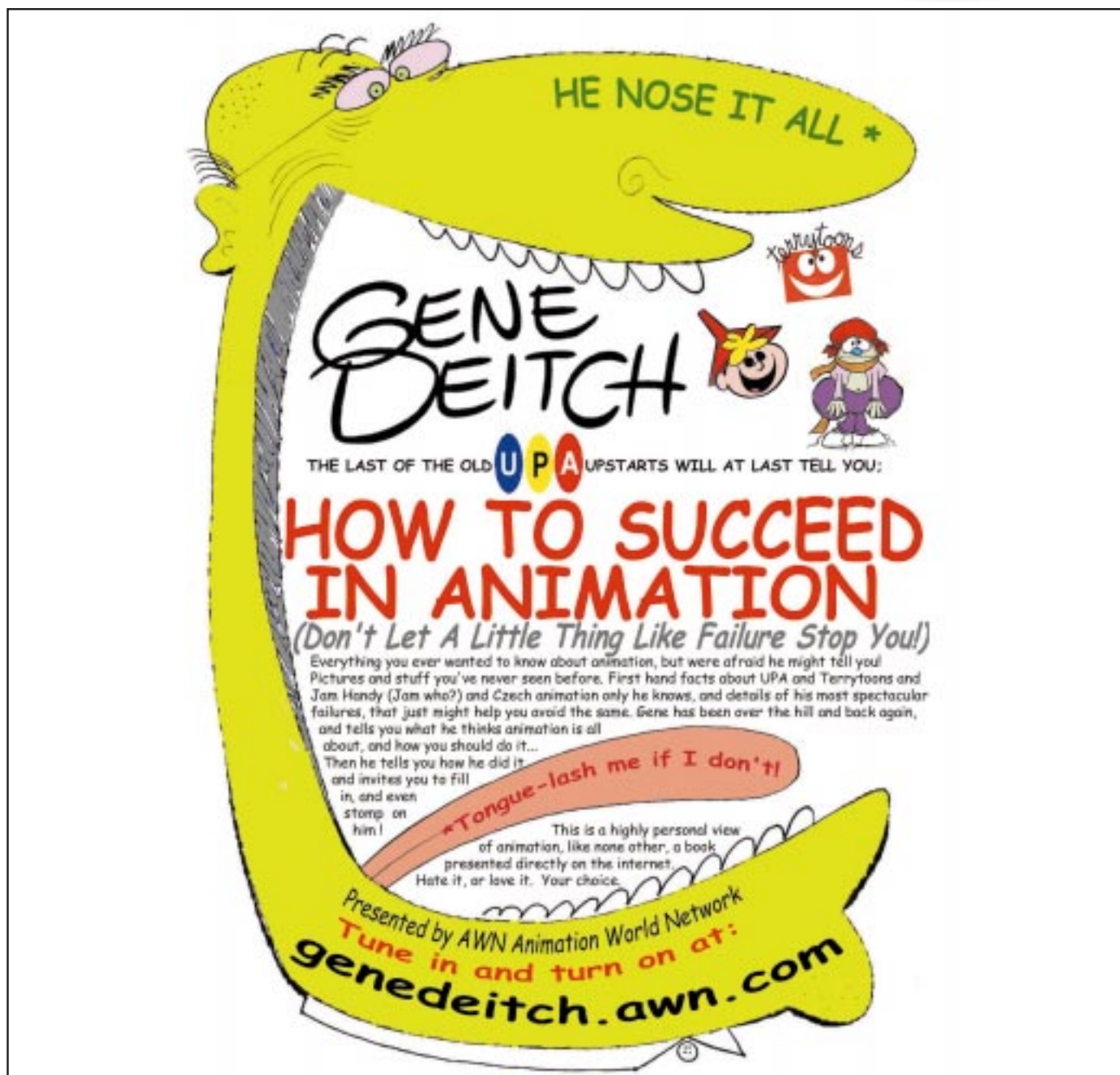
Williams has written and illustrated a brilliant volume and I suspect it will become as highly regarded as Frank and Ollie's *The Illusion of Life*. I suspect it may

be several decades before anyone tries to improve upon this work.

The Animator's Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods, Principles and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games, Stop Motion and Internet Animators by Richard Williams. London, U.K.: Faber and Faber, Limited, 2001. 352 pages. ISBN: 0-571-21268-9 (hardback US\$50) and 0-571-20228-4 (paperback US\$30).

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

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Vampires, Lice and a Dose of History: Juan Padrón and Cuban Animation

by John A. Lent

Cuba's premier animator Juan Padrón was near the end of a tour he was giving a couple of us at the animation facilities of Instituto Cubano del Arte y Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC). "And here are our two cameras," he said, "This one is from 1928." Almost off-handedly he explained it was recovered from an American plane that crashed in Cuba.

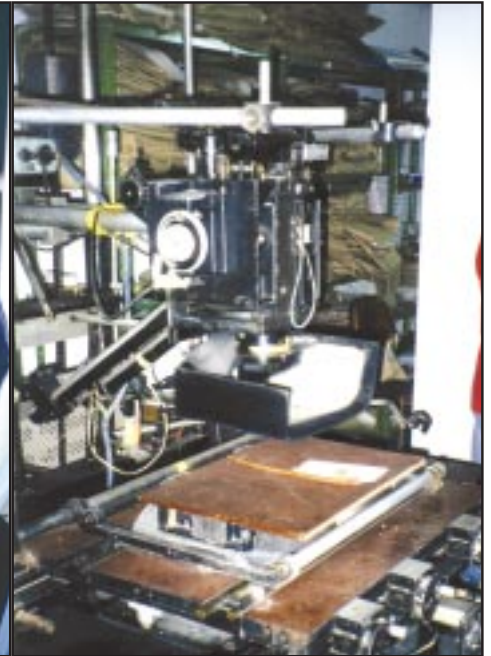
Forced Ingenuity

That the 1928 camera is still used attests to the Cuban's ability to cope under very difficult situations — to make do through ingenious improvisation with whatever is at hand. This skill has been sharpened during the more than 40-year embargo imposed by the United States, heightened since 1990 when the collapse of the Soviet Union and its bloc further stranded Cuba economically. The latter economic crisis is called *Período Especial*.

"Most of these are museum pieces," Padrón proudly stated, but "Cuba is one of the best places to repair cameras. Many parts of the 1928 camera were created here." Pointing to the second camera, obtained from Mexico in 1995-96 in exchange for producing some of that country's films, the affable animator said, "Usually



Juan Padrón, one of Cuba's top talents.
© John A. Lent.



Thumbing their nose at imperialism: The rebuilt 1928 camera that is still used today.
© John A. Lent.

it takes an engineer to reassemble a camera like this, but Cubans love doing this — putting difficult stuff together to defeat imperialism."

Padrón elaborated on the Cuban's resourcefulness: "For example, we go to Panama, rent a stereotype, bring it here, see how it works, take it back and then make our own. We have to live this way; that's why you see 1940s' and 1950s' American cars running everywhere."

A Long History

Animation, like all aspects

of Cuban culture and the arts, had a low priority in the financially-strapped Cuba of the 1990s, resulting in the virtual dismantling of the television animation department (ICRT Cartoon Aniha) and the drying up of much of the state money allocated to ICAIC. Actually, Cuba had four studios simultaneously at an earlier time, the other two being those of the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Education.

Before the Revolution in 1959, there were still other studios, for animation in Cuba goes back to at least 1937, when

Manuel Alonso, with help from Nico Lürsen and Lucio Carranza, converted his comic strip, "Napoleón, el Faraón de los Sinsabores," into a two-minute, 35 mm, black and white cartoon. Others such as Leopoldo Roseñada and Lucio Fontanillas also spent their savings doing animated shorts.

In the 1940s, Luis Castillo Barzaga produced *Coctel Musical* (1946) and *El Jibaro y el Cerdito* (1947), while César Cruz Barrios established the animation firm, Productora Nacional de Películas de Santiago de Cuba. From Cruz Barrios' studio came three experimental short films (*Restituto el Detective*, *El Gato con Botas*, and *El Tesoro de Todos*) and *El Hijo de la Ciencia* (1947), the first animated cartoon entirely produced in Cuba. But, all of these projects were doomed because of low fees paid by distributors who used cartoons as movie theater fillers.

After Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, animation settled mainly in ICRT's animation department and in ICAIC. ICRT's animation department was the largest with 120 staff members in the early 1970s. Between 1970 and 1990, about 900 separate titles were produced, varying from 40 seconds to an hour. Half of these were in black and white and, according to David Jaime Veitia, who has been with ICRT animation for decades, these were shelved when color television was introduced in 1977-78. Topics often included children's songs, good manners, military and other patriotic aspects, literature, science, and history, a popular example of the latter being *Papobo*, a story done with puppets of an African slave child in Cuba during colonial times.



At work at the ICAIC. © John A. Lent.

**"Usually it takes an engineer to reassemble a camera like this, but Cubans love doing this — putting difficult stuff together to defeat imperialism."
— Juan Padrón**

The End of an Era?

Veitia said that before Fidel's Revolution, United States animation promoting a "North American way of life of neocolonialism, of the U.S. being superior to Latin Americans, blacks and Indians" was prevalent in Cuba. After the Revolution, animators worked within the Revolution, providing songs for Cuban children, showing sites of the island nation, and borrowing from Cuban literature. Veitia said previously, for children to understand José Martí's literary works, they had to be about eight years old, but animation made the pieces understandable to four and five-year olds. "In the 1970s, Cuban children had a chance to see themselves on television, with their songs, habits, ideologies, language," he said; "From 1970-90, we were able to produce a nation-

al product and praise Cuban values." Luis Castillo, who started in animation in 1945 and was director of ICAIC Animación at one time, felt the animation helped form an entire generation of children.

Much of the animation was tied to the Revolution's ideology and goals. For example, the popular puppet cartoon *Esceptíco* (*Skepticals*) poked fun at those skeptical about Cuba's ability to have a successful harvest early in the Revolution. Puppets were often used, stemming from a special puppet department established in 1969.

According to Padrón, during Período Especial, television stopped doing animation and, "The good ones came to ICAIC; it broke the tradition of TV animation." Although a skeletal staff of 30 is kept on, they have little to do, except for an isolated project from time to time.

Veitia said the problems today are: "Costs are very high, and we have no budget to operate animation. Also we used cinematographic technology and this has been replaced by computers and video. Cuban television needs \$30,000 for new equipment, but does not have it." He and Castillo fear that what they fought for from the 1970s to 1990s — to create cartoons with Cuban educational and entertaining content to replace those of North America — was for naught. Veitia explained, "The North American cartoons are back, and they will affect children of this generation."

Diverse Talent and Product

ICAIC was started within three months of the triumph of the Revolution, and from its origins was directed to fighting ignorance

and underdevelopment and exploiting the country's rich culture. Animation production started before the first year ended, the first short being *La Prensa Seria* (1960) by Jesús de Armas. Others followed in the next few years — works by de Armas, Modesto García, Harry Reade and others, often experimental with an adult audience in mind.

In 1972, ICAIC, following the conclusions of the Primer Congreso de Educación y Cultura the previous year, paid closer attention to children, dividing them into two age groups — 2-7 and 8-14 year-olds. For the first group, realistic works with a simpler cinematographic language were called for, resulting in *El Pájaro Prieto* (1976) and *El Cocuyo Ciego* (1979) by Tulio Raggi and *Feucha* (1978) by Mario Rivas. The older group was to have cartoons with a more articulate structure, more dependent upon words.

A young comic strip and gag cartoon artist, Juan Padrón, provided fare for these youngsters with his already popular character Elpidio Valdés, which first appeared in the weekly magazine *Pionero*, August 8, 1970. Elpidio Valdés revisits Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain with historical precision and with what former ICAIC Animación director (1970-84) Manolo Perez calls Cuban-style humor.

The first of these were the shorts *Una Aventura de Elpidio Valdés* and *Elpidio Valdés Contra el Tren Militar* (1974). By the mid-1970s, Padrón as a director was responsible for a number of titles, including the first feature length animated film *Elpidio Valdés* (1979), and its sequels, *Elpidio Valdés Contra Dólar y Cañón*



The comic book *Aventuras de Elpidio Valdés* published in 1985.
© Estudios de Animación ICAIC.



Photocopy of the feature animation film *Elpidio Valdés Contra Dólar y Cañón* (*Elpidio Valdés Against Dollars and Cannons*). © Estudios de Animación ICAIC.



The poster for the short film *Elpidio Valdés Contra la Policía de Nueva York* (Elpidio Valdés Against the New York Police).
© Estudios de Animación ICAIC.

(1983) and *Elpidio Valdés Contra el Águila y el León* (1996).

Padrón had just turned sixteen in 1963 when he was offered a job on the prestigious periodical *Mella*. There, in the company of some of Cuba's great cartoonists, he drew cartoons for "El Hueco" (The Hole) page, until he was drafted into the military, where he did a series for *Mella* on military life, "Reclutas SMO" (Military Recruits). Padrón drew for an assortment of newspapers and magazines, such as *E1 Sable*, *La Chicarra*, *Pionero*, *Dedeté*, and all four periodicals of the newly-established Ediciones en Colores publishing house (1965-68). Among his works on the latter were the strips "Las Aventuras de Kashibashi" (a kid-faced samurai) and "Barzum," an extraterrestrial. He became known as a cartoonist of black humor with his series *Verdugo* (Hangman) and *Vampiros* (Vampires); his animal series *Piojos* (Lice) and *Zoo-ilógico*

Examples of Juan Padrón's *Dedeté* cartoons, created during the 1970s.
© Estudios de Animación ICAIC.





From *Filminuto* #1, the first short film of the *Filminuto* series, which is comprised of 53 films of several vignettes each. © Estudios de Animación ICAIC.



Photocopy of *¡Vampiros en La Habana!* (*Vampires in Havana!*), a short film made in 1985. © Estudios de Animación ICAIC.

(*Zoologica*) also gained him recognition. He quit doing print cartoons in 1989, concentrating all his efforts on animation.

Besides the *Elpidio* series, Padrón's animation credits are extensive, encompassing more than 70 works, such as the six-part television series *Más se Perdió la Guerra* (*More Was Lost in the War*), *Filminuto* (more than 50 sets of six or seven vignettes since 1980), and *Quinoscopio*, a series named for his friend, Argentine cartoonist Quino.

Padrón's Precision

In 2001, he was adding the finishing touches to a new version of *Vampiros*, 82 minutes in length set in World War II Cuba. As Padrón described it: "Everything is in this film, U.S. bombers, Hemingway, Batista's car, a Russian spy who comes to Cuba in an Italian submarine, Nazis, Mussolini, a mad scientist, Hitler. In one sequence, Mussolini says he knows a Cuban song and begins to sing it. Hitler joins in as the Cubans watch nervously. They too start to sing. It's crazy."

Padrón proudly shows how models were made of everything — Batista's car, a quay where the Nazis landed and the submarine. "We talked to the Italian Navy through the Internet to see how the sub should look," he said. The same attention to minutiae characterizes all of Padrón's work; if he had not chosen to become a cartoonist/ animator, he could have functioned equally well as a researcher.

In a February 14, 2000 interview, he talked about what goes into making a *Vampiros* or an *Elpidio Valdés* story: "I gather old photos of the city, lot of information from *Life* and other maga-

zines of the 1940s. I have a personal file on the Independence War. Sometimes I have to get other people to track down research for me. *Elpidio* is humorous. But, I did a lot of work in having the military costumes, guns, etc. correct so it all would teach history accurately. That's the dialectic part. I hired a water colorist to get the backgrounds right. I read on topics like the proper way to lead a gun. I read books by people who fought on both the Spanish and Cuban sides — their memoirs. These were old 1920s' books. They talked about being hungry, about the body lice they had; it was good to have an idea of the big picture of what it was like then. At the same time, I was making sure the audience could have fun."

On another occasion, while serving together on the jury of the international cartoon biennial in San Antonio de los Baños (April 1, 2001), he gave me a gesture-filled mini-lecture on the resistance activities of people in this town during the Independence War: "People cut up the metal grilles over their windows and used the pieces as bullets. They cut holes inside the row houses so they could go a whole block without going outside where the Spaniards were." He reiterated he reads a lot of history, especially diaries, as his character is history-based.

Obviously Padrón is a hands-on director; in fact, his hands are on everything. By his own admission, he is heavily involved in the work: "I do 90 percent of the layout; sometimes I do voices, but most voices are by Frank Gonzalez and Manuel Marin. Sometimes I even make accompanying sound effects for the films. I do a bit of everything. I



Juan Padrón with cartoonist Manuel and the model of Batista's car. © John A. Lent.

have a crew now at ICAIC. A storyboard is created and the crew and I look at it to find the weak spots. The ideas for the stories are mine. With *Elpidio*, some people suggest we include explosives, flashing lights, special effects. I tell them 'No, that is not my style.' The same with color; my lines are black and white."

"I can't have Elpidio shouting 'Long live Fidel!'" - Juan Padrón

Padrón keeps contemporary Revolution ideology out of *Elpidio Valdés* because the setting is not appropriate. "I can't have Elpidio shouting 'Long live Fidel!' 'Long live Cuba!' is the ideology of *Elpidio*," he said. The Independence War period is important to be animated, Padrón explained, because it was the "first time we could be called Cubans." Children identify with the character; they want to be Elpidio Valdés when they play games remini-

scent of cowboys and Indians. Padrón said his next big project is to fashion a story of Elpidio Valdés undercover, running from Spanish spies. It will involve other colonies and Elpidio will go to the Philippines and Puerto Rico before returning to Cuba.

A Growing Future

Padrón has seen ICAIC Animación weather the bad times of the 1990s, changing from a state-financed enterprise to one that has depended in large part on foreign contracts with Canada, Mexico and France, but mostly with Spain. Spain is ICAIC's most frequent client for the obvious reason that the two countries share a common language and similar cultures. Padrón said, "We can communicate quickly. The Spanish prefer to come here and pay more than they would in Asia or Turkey because of this. But, as we do this work for Spanish television, we can't do enough Cuban films." In 2001, 70 percent of ICAIC's animation production was for overseas clients, the other 30 percent for domestic cartoons. Actually the fig-

ures Padrón provided gives a much lower percentage to local work: 130-140 minutes yearly for Spanish animation, 30-40 minutes for Cuban. One year, only 12 minutes of Cuban animation was made. The overall production average is 160 minutes annually, which includes the one local feature-length animation ICAIC produces every four or five years.

In the next couple years, the proportion should be reversed, according to Padrón, as ICAIC Animación moves into a larger building, increases its staff from 75 to 100 and then 200 after 2002, and adds a second course to its training scheme. Very few trained animators is one of the problems Padrón pinpointed, stating the need for a school to teach the subject. Another is the shortage of good stories which, Padrón said, results from writers preferring



Juan Padrón at work today.
© John A. Lent.

to write for radio, television or comic strips.

For the time being, ICAIC scrounges for whatever money it can get, by producing other coun-

tries' animation or offering location shooting possibilities. As Padrón said, "If the Italian filmmakers want a tropical scene with black people and coconut trees, ICAIC provides it."

Dr. John A. Lent is founding editor of the International Journal of Comic Art. He has authored or edited 55 books, a number of which have dealt with comic art.

His most recent book is Animation in Asia and the Pacific (2001, John Libbey). This article is based on interviews conducted in Cuba in 1991, 1998, 2000, 2001, with Juan Padrón, Luis Castillo, David Jaime Veitia, Manolo Perez and others.

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

ANIMATION WORLD

• MAGAZINE •

Bonus HTML Features

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

Notes from the Underground Part 1 — Animation: Prozac or Kyosaku?

Jean Dethoux begins a series of articles that will explore animation as (commercial) entertainment and animation as an art form. In this first installment Jean discusses how we should approach "the real" as the unknown, and not take it for granted. The online version of this article contains links to movie trailers and other essays: http://mag.awn.com/index.php3?ltype=all&sort=date&article_no=1296

Fresh from the Festivals: February 2002's Film Reviews

Jon Hofferma reviews five short films fresh from the festival circuit: 2+2 by Benita Raphan and Clayton Hemmert, Stefan Gronsky's *The Box*, *Jedné noci v jednom meste* (*One Night in One Town*) by Jan Balej, *Token Life* by David Donar and Victoria Livingstone's *Window*. The online version includes QuickTime movie clips at: http://mag.awn.com/index.php3?ltype=pageone&article_no=1293

A Retro-future Metropolis

by Fred Patten

Every so often a landmark film appears which advances the state of the art of animated features. These usually project a modernistic or futuristic mood. It is unusual when one is equally successful as a tribute to the past. *Metropolis* (formally Osamu Tezuka's *Metropolis*, to distinguish it from the classic Fritz Lang 1927 feature) superbly straddles both the past and the future. It blends the soft, "cartoony" art style of the late 1930s American theatrical short cartoons (Disney, Fleischer, Harmon & Ising) with the latest in computer graphics to tell a drama reminiscent of the sci-fi adventures of the 1920s and '30s; Lang's *Metropolis* and other such mid-'30s serials as *The Phantom Empire* and *Undersea Kingdom* also did this.

The Re-Creation of Metropolis

Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989), Japan's "God of Comics" (Manga no Kamisama), is widely credited as the major creative influence on that nation's post-World War II comic book industry in the late 1940s and 1950s, and its animation industry in the late '50s and 1960s. He was known at the time as "the Walt Disney of Japan" (a title which has since passed to Hayao Miyazaki). One of his earliest TV animation staff was Rintaro (Shigeyuki Hayashi). In one of



Metropolis' comments on such sensitive themes as class struggle and the definition of humanity. All images © 2002 TriStar Pictures. All rights reserved.

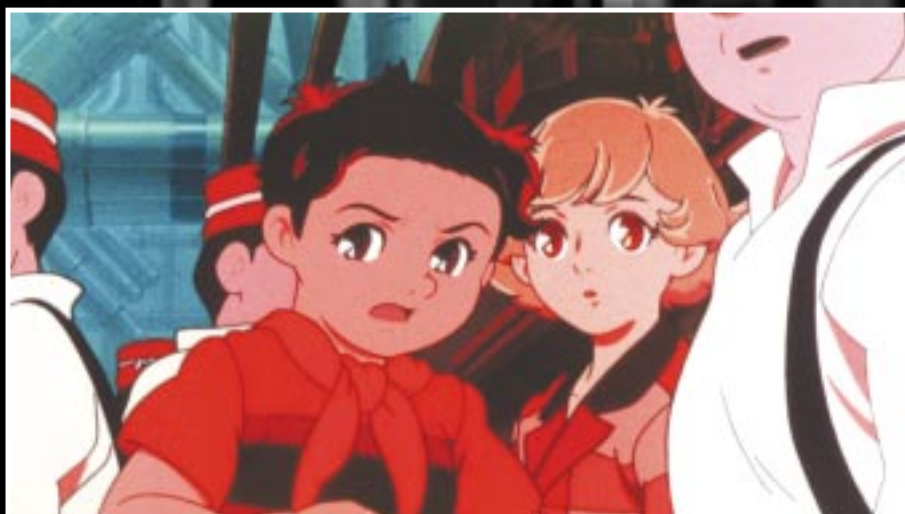
Metropolis ... superbly straddles both the past and the future.

Tezuka's last communications to American anime fans in the mid-1980s, he urged them to seek out the manga of Katsuhiro Otomo, a new writer-artist who was winning his first awards (*Domu*, *Akira*). Osamu Tezuka's *Metropolis*, directed by Rintaro from a screenplay by Otomo (as part of the "Metropolis Committee," the credited producers — five years in production at the Madhouse studio), is their tribute to Tezuka.

At the same time, it is their opportunity to have fun, just as Tezuka did when he drew his *Metropolis* cartoon novel in the

late 1940s. Tezuka's first cartoons were published while he was still a student, just after World War II ended. They caught the public's attention because of Tezuka's flamboyant use of cinematic effects (close-ups, tracking shots, unusual camera angles) and dramas (e.g., Westerns, modern crime thrillers, etc. influenced by the movies imported into Japan by the Allied Occupation) while most other Japanese cartoonists were still drawing traditional Japanese themes. One of Tezuka's first influential works was a cartoon-art adaptation of *Crime and*

Punishment. Tezuka always admitted that his *Metropolis* (155 pages, published on September 15, 1949) was much less serious. In fact, he had not yet seen Lang's movie when he produced his version, inspired by the reviews and plot synopses of it and a picture of its movie poster showing the robot woman. His was more a generic synthesis of old sci-fi movies and adventure serials, with a Mad Scientist named Dr. Charles Laughton (after the actor who had played Dr. Moreau in the 1933 *Island of Lost Souls*, not the scientist Rotwang in Lang's *Metropolis*), a master criminal plotting to conquer the world with his army of robots (compare Tezuka's Duke Red with Eduardo Ciannelli in the 1940 *Mysterious Dr. Satan*), a tough Private Investigator, and a couple of adventurous young kids, one of whom is unwittingly the lost human-looking robot girl Michi (the equivalent of Maria in Lang's movie). When her robotic nature overcomes her innocence and she turns destructive, her climactic battle against the police atop a skyscraper is reminiscent of *King Kong*. Tezuka's rambling cartoon novel even contains obvious art references from the Disney-pro-



Kenichi, nephew and assistant to investigator Shunsaku Ban, is a new arrival to Metropolis, and Tima's guide.

duced Mickey Mouse newspaper adventure strip of the '30s drawn by Floyd Gottfredson.

The first five minutes of the new *Metropolis* are worth the price of admission alone...

Looking at the 1949 *Metropolis* today, it is easy to see why Tezuka tended to dismiss most of his earliest work before the

1950s (although his robot girl Michi was clearly a prototype for his Tetsuwan Atom/Astro Boy created a few years later, indicating that Astro Boy owes as much to Lang's Maria as to Collodi's Pinocchio). Otomo and Rintaro have wisely completely revamped Tezuka's youthful light parody of 1930s sci-fi movie themes story into a tighter and more dramatic story, which is a much better tribute to Tezuka's whole career. It also works better as a tribute to Lang's original concept, since it restores the cinematic visual emphasis of a towering futuristic city that is mostly Art Deco in design (or 1890s to 1910s for the slums), and the plot emphasis of a class struggle between labor and a capitalistic elite (represented by their new robot working class). But they (and character designer Yasuhiro Nakura) have retained Tezuka's early art style from the 1949 manga rather than using his more familiar and sophisticated style from his later works such as *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion*.

Stunning...

The first five minutes of the new *Metropolis* are worth the



A glimpse of the Art Decofuturistic city design of Tezuka's *Metropolis*.

price of admission alone for the visual spectacle. It opens with a pseudo-1930s black-&-white newsreel of financial magnate Duke Red proclaiming the completion of his towering office building, the Ziggurat, which will confirm the status of Metropolis as the greatest nation in the world. The screen suddenly expands to a color CGI panorama of an inaugural celebration with thousands cheering in the streets, searchlights, fireworks, the sky aswarp with zeppelins crowded with sightseers. The camera swoops dizzily upward, downward, and outward from the immense skyscraper, including a brief look out from an elite glass-walled restaurant on an upper floor of the Ziggurat.

The scene continues long enough to introduce the main plot elements. Duke Red is sharing the speakers' stand with Metropolis' President Boon. When reporters ask Duke Red if he is considering going into politics, he pledges his complete support to Boon's administration; but their glances and body language reveal that neither trusts the other. Conversation between a man and a boy in the crowd establish that they are strangers to Metropolis who have just arrived. Shunsaku Ban is an investigator from Japan with his young nephew Kenichi as his assistant. They are tracking a scientist guilty of illegal research in robotics. Shots are heard, and a group of men in similar clothing are seen shooting at a figure who turns out to be a robot disguised as a human. Ban and Kenichi overhear conversation that reveals that the men are in the uniform of the Marduks, a militant anti-robot political party that everyone knows amounts to a private



Tima, a robot, searches for her moral identity and place in society.



Rock tries to eliminate Tima to gain the affection of his foster father Duke Red, the Ziggurat's creator.

army controlled by Duke Red; and that anti-robot prejudice has been growing stronger as more humans are becoming unemployed due to being replaced by them by the city's ruling capitalist elite.

The 1949 manga plot was mostly a straightforward confrontation between Ban and Duke Red, while the robot girl who believes that she is human searches for her parents. In the more complex movie plot, Duke Red has brought Dr. Laughton (no first name) to Metropolis to create a new-generation Artificial Intelligence to control the super-com-

puter, which is secretly built into the Ziggurat. Duke Red insists that this A.I. be made in the form of a robot duplicate of his dead daughter, Tima (instead of Michi). Due to plot machinations, Tima is lost, activated without any instructions, and discovered by Kenichi who believes that she is a traumatized human with amnesia. She does not merely have adventures as Michi did; Tima is also on a quest for identity. Is she a robot, or does her human-level Artificial Intelligence make her human in a moral sense? Many of the wonders of Metropolis are seen through the eyes of Tima.

A Clever Collection of Past and Future

The action in this 107-minute feature seldom slows down, but it is almost incidental to the vast city in which it takes place. This *Metropolis* with its newest and most imposing Ziggurat may derive from Fritz Lang's updating of the Tower of Babel, but it is easy to assume that the directors also studied such movies as *Blade Runner* and *The Fifth Element* to make sure that their ultimate future city would not be inferior to any others. Settings shift from the palatial offices of the elite to a gaudy entertainment district to squalid slums to ominous scientific laboratories (in different art styles; compare Dr. Laughton's lab, modeled upon those in 1930s *Frankenstein* movies, to the more-obviously CGI mechanistic lab atop the Ziggurat at the climax) to huge underground sewers. The CGI is used masterfully to create the sensation of a teeming population. There are numerous scenes of crowded streets with dozens if not hundreds of characters seeming to move individually. But my favorite is a city square on a wintry morning after a failed anti-robot uprising. There is almost nobody in sight; just the empty square with the scuffed snow covered in what looks like thousands of footprints.

Many scenes and shots are designed to make individual characters appear insignificant in comparison to the city. This supports the continual struggle by several characters to refuse to let the city dominate them. An ongoing question is whether the robots should be considered as part of the city or as individuals. Tima is not the only one that seems self-aware. Pero, a junky robot contemptuously given

Many scenes and shots are designed to make individual characters appear insignificant in comparison to the city.

by the *Metropolis* police to Ban as a local guide, looks as comical as the robots in the 1930s movie serials, but his intelligent dialogue and wise advice give him a tragic dignity.

One of the key elements in establishing the mood of the 1930s and '40s is the jazz music. The original score is by Toshiyuki Honda, one of Japan's leading jazz performers since the 1970s. Honda composed a 1920s Dixieland-style score for the movie, performed by a group named the "Metropolitan Rhythm Kings" that, according to the publicity, included director Rintaro on the bass clarinet. There are also a few

vintage American numbers, most notably *St. James Infirmary* and *I Can't Stop Loving You*, which are surprisingly effective.

Metropolis was released in Japan on May 26, 2001. It premiered in America at the Hollywood Egyptian Theater on August 17th, and was supposed to be released by TriStar Pictures on November 9th. But due to the post-September 11th sensibilities about movies showing the destruction of giant buildings, the release was postponed until January 25, 2002. It deserves to be a contender for the new Academy Awards category for Best Animated Feature.

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

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

Due to the post-September 11th sensibilities about movies showing the destruction of giant buildings, the release was postponed...

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History In The Round

by Martin “Dr. Toon” Goodman

When I first began my research into animation history, there were relatively few sources of information available. A scattering of books and a smattering of fanzines served as the font of knowledge for the field. Unless one was willing to call or write individual animators or directors (by standard telephone or snail-mail, for my younger readers), one had to make do with the meager research done by others. This research often turned out to be compilations of who directed what film or short, and perhaps a line or two about the artisans that worked on it. Occasional comments and anecdotes from a few talented individuals provided a dim insight into the making of a film or the inspirations that lay behind it. Frequently, the same quotes seemed to circulate from one book to another like some truncated dissemination of gospel. O, happy the lot of those who take up the charge today; the amount of information available on the topic of animation is staggering, and the sources more plentiful than ever. One of the best sources available, which did not even exist until a scant few years ago, comes to us from an unexpected domain: The world of home entertainment.

Enter the Disc...

Sometime during 1994, some ten years after the music CD gained widespread acceptance in



This special Toy Story DVD set offers loads of extras.

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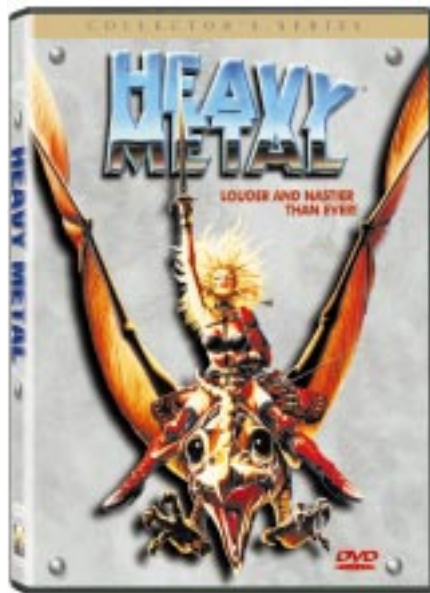
America, a Hollywood *ad hoc* committee met to discuss the creation of standards for putting movies into a radically new format. The Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) was about to come into reality; engineers at Phillips, Sony, Toshiba and Matsushita were all making contributions to the finished product. The result was a single-layer disc 4.75 inches in diameter, but oh, what that tiny disc could do! That single DVD could hold the equivalent informa-

tion stored on 3,400 floppy discs (or 5,300,000 pages of text). One hundred and thirty-five minutes of video plus nine hours of music could be embedded in its micro-pits, all waiting to be released by the scan of an infra-red laser. The thin, digital donut became available in Japan in 1996, and was introduced in seven U.S. cities the following year. By 1997, DVDs were available across the country. The first film transferred to DVD was not an animated feature (it

was, in fact, *A Hard Day's Night*), but it was not long before toons were dancing in the laser beams as well.

DVDs are, of course, popular for their amazingly sharp pictures, flexible formats (such as letterbox or widescreen), and theater-quality sound, courtesy of 5.1 channel Dolby Digital. Older animated features transferred to DVD can be startling in their appearance, as if the film stock had been dipped in some digital Fountain of Youth that restored its lustrous colors and crisp details to breathless perfection. The enhanced soundtracks and vibrant appearance of animated features, new or old, are a great gift to animation fans, but in some cases the extra features come close to eclipsing them; this is where the old order changeth and a new way of reporting, recording and collecting animation history begins. An increasing number of DVDs now tell the entire history of a film from inception to release; many DVDs embellish this history, for example, with soundtracks that include running commentary by the creators, writers and directors, if that is what the listener chooses to hear. If one would rather enjoy the film (in up to 32 languages) without extraneous comments, there are typically interviews included on the menu anyway.

A typical example: Disney's *Toy Story: The Ultimate Toy Box*. In addition to the two DVDs that contain the features (both of which contain added material), there is a third supplemental disc containing an additional nineteen features. Among them are treats that are of specific note to the animation historian: Story Development, Abandoned Concepts, Original Treatments, Story-



You are privvy to the rough cut version of Heavy Metal on this DVD.
© 1999 layout and design Columbia TriStar Home Video. All rights reserved.

board Pitch, and *The History of Toy Story* and *Toy Story 2*. Disney, once resistant to even the idea of putting its films on DVD (and then only doing so without extras), is emerging as one of the most prodigious distributors of added features per DVD. Disney is not alone in this regard, however. Purchasing Columbia TriStar's *Heavy Metal* gives one access to many of the same features plus the option to view the entire film in rough cut. Other DVDs feature complete production histories, and yet others take historians to another level entirely. The release of *Beany and Cecil: The Special Edition* (2000) is an unbelievable tour of Bob Clampett's non-Warners career including unsold projects, "lost" interviews and kinescopes of his puppetry. Since Clampett was reputedly an obsessive packrat, the amount of historical information available on one disc is stupendous indeed. *TOON Magazine* reviewer Thomas Reed called this artifact "the most compelling reason for you to buy a

DVD player" and for diehard animation fans, this is likely true. Jerry Beck (a prominent historian in his own right) noted that this DVD "deserves an award for all its treasures and presentation."

Extra, Extra, Extra

The above descriptions are not intended to promote any individual DVD; they simply serve to highlight where animation history may be headed in the future. Added features (an item carried over from laserdiscs) are already replacing one form of historical record: animation fanzines, magazines and periodicals. Although these publications have never been numerous, there are fewer of them than ever in 2001. Recent attempts such as *Animation Planet* and *AnimeFantastique* have come and gone, and those left standing claim neither wide circulation nor considerable profits. There are many possible reasons for the demise of the animation fanzine, such as competition from non-animation magazines (such as *Starlog*) that also carry features about animation, the proliferation of animation-related Websites and a tough publishing market. That discussion is beyond the scope of our subject; the fact is, DVDs are doing a great deal of the work that these print publications used to do.

Case in point: The premier issue of *AnimeFantastique* contained an eleven-page feature article on DreamWorks' production *The Prince of Egypt*. The three co-directors, Simon Wells, Steve Hicks and Brenda Chapman, are interviewed. Additional features include a look at special effects, a profile of songwriter Stephen Schwartz, and a piece on direction and production design under



The Collector's Edition of *A Bug's Life* offers an in-depth look at the animation process for students of the art form.
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Darek Gogol. The Signature Collection Edition of the DVD has most of this and more, including a commentary by the directors on one version of the soundtrack. In buying the DVD, one can gain as many insights into the film as a dozen print articles could provide, simply due to wider access to the cast and crew and the amount of storage available for these extra features.

Paper Don't Fret

The DVD cannot, and will not, replace print history entirely. For one thing, not all animation will find its way to DVD. As many fans have lamented, the preponderance of Harveytoons, Terrytoons and Paramount/Famous shorts have yet to find their way to VHS. Many of the leading lights of American animation's past are no longer available to lend their thoughts to the DVDs that may someday feature their reconstructed works. We can only guess at what *The Making of "Mr. Bug Goes to Town"* might have looked like, and we will certainly

never have a running commentary by Dave Fleischer as the movie rolls along. Unless an older studio (such as Disney) has massive, all-inclusive archives, even brief documentaries and snippets of the cast and crew at work are unlikely to add much to a DVD's features. Also, DVDs are non-interpretive artifacts; they are rather pragmatic in their presentation and so there are no opportunities for external critique or historical revisionism — the very concepts that make film history an exciting, vital subject. Perhaps this is simply because DVDs, as noted earlier, do belong to the world of home entertainment. The historian is not likely to encounter critical or analytic material within the disc's micropits.

This leads to my next point: The history offered on animation DVDs can be voluminous but by no means all-inclusive. I have yet to see the DVD which offers added features such as "Production Nightmares," "Personality Conflicts, Squabbles and Resignations," "Obscenity-

Laden Budget Meetings" and "Behind-The-Scenes Marketing and Tie-In Negotiations." In other words, the history we get from DVDs is likely to be sanitized, rather like a hi-tech version of *The Reluctant Dragon* (made while the Disney studio was gripped by a rancorous strike) since no production is without its problems. There are features on some DVDs that highlight deleted scenes, but we are far more likely to see what was done successfully than see the painful mistakes and failures along the way. I, for one, believe that these conflicts, difficulties and pitfalls are an inherent part of a film's history and a direct influence on its final form.

It must also be noted that some DVDs fare better than others where added features are concerned. Some, such as the recent release of *Fritz The Cat*, offer virtually nothing; a pity, since the mercurial Mr. Bakshi and many among his crew are still alive to tell the tale. Other DVDs feature endless trailers, sing-alongs that will please no one above the age of four, and

interactive games that are scant competition for Xbox. March of 2000 saw a slew of angry customers besiege Disney following the release of *Tarzan* on DVD: The Mouse made it impossible to skip through previews that were basically shills for other Disney features (and the Disney Website). Only after four minutes of promotional material were viewers finally allowed to control their menus. According to an article by Greg Sandoval of CNET News (3/2/2000), "A Disney executive, who asked to remain anonymous, acknowledged that the film didn't include a menu option for the ads and that the company has received complaints about it. However, the executive defended the ads as a benefit to consumers." (This, it will be recalled, is the same company that released *Toy Story: The Ultimate Toy Box*, one of the

most comprehensive historical documents on the making of an animated film; *tant mieux, tant pis*).

The DVD, then, may not be a perfect tool for historians, but it is an awesome one nonetheless. A budding animation writer currently in college has countless methods of research available to him or her that the seminal animation historians of the late 1960s did not. The Digital Versatile Disc has, perhaps unwittingly, become one of them. Many children may watch these added features and decide to become animators or voice artists but if we are fortunate, there is a young Thucydides out there tonight watching the Collector's Edition of *A Bug's Life*. He swears to himself that someday he'll visit that studio, meet those people and find answers to questions that remain after watching

how the film was created. Perhaps even as I write he is thinking up those unique inquiries that children frequently floor us with, elated by the fantasy of talking with John Lasseter himself as rows of animators puzzle out fractals in the background and voice actors arrive for another session of recording.

And he will feel perfectly at home. After all, he has been there before, without leaving the comforts of his own living room.

Martin "Dr. Toon" Goodman is a longtime student and fan of animation. He lives in Anderson, Indiana.

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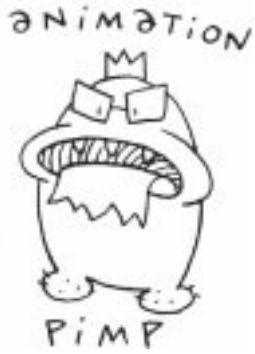


Illustration by Andreas Hykade.
Courtesy of Chris Robinson.

Greetings from St. Helena

by Chris Robinson

"Every festival organization should have the freedom to choose their options, philosophy and ideas which make the festival different and SPECIAL, exactly what festival visitors, filmmakers, buffs and fans are looking for! How uninteresting if every festival was looking for Annecy or Zagreb. It would not be worthwhile neither to participate nor to visit."

— ASIFA Board of Directors:
Comments on the Toronto '84
Animation Festival

Yeah... sure... for the most part... the opinions of the Pimp are also those of the Ottawa Animation Festival's Artistic Director. I don't apologize for that. Although not many folks think I should, one rapacious crankbag blasted me (as festival director) in a (Pimp) comment space last summer because... umm... not sure why actually... I guess it was because her friends' films weren't being accepted into Ottawa competitions anymore and she felt that, as the Napoleon of festival directors, it was my intention to deprive her friends (whomever THEY are) of a screen in Ottawa theatres. I was flush with pride. At long last someone who sees the

layers of empathy dripping from the pores of my flesh, a peasant who recognizes the power and sway of a GREAT festival director. Hurfugginrah! They actually believe that I have spent day and night carefully examining each of these so-called artists' films, while conducting extensive background checks into each so-called artists' psychological, academic, criminal and sexual history. Once I had carefully narrowed down the list of so-called artists, I then set out to find a feckless Selection Committee who would unconsciously succumb to my dastardly demands... or die. Failing that, I had Plan B: seduce them with liquor, opium, goat photos and whores. Once the committee was 'convinced,' these so-called artists would NEVER EVER see the light of the screens in MY kingdom!

Alas, tis a dream, a wonderful dream, but nevertheless merely a candy-coated imagining from the lands of pillows. In truth I am little more than a self-loathing, barely educated, poorly organized procrastinator whose idea of empathy, generosity and socializing routinely involves proper palm placement during self-loving to ensure maximum effect.

Ok enough. To the point:

November was the 1st anniversary of the Pimp column. I was gonna try and form some thoughts about the selection process in Ottawa so that we could have it in print and move on to more important tasks like examining why the live-action artists are such fashionable arses... BUT then the world went nuts (more so)... there was that whole Gulliani thing then the Bush thing then the stolen lumber truck baseball contraction then Mario's sore hip then Patrick Roy pulled out then my doctor called and said my cholesterol was high then this girl called and said something about Daddy grade 10 mother was a cheerleader loose sperm then there was the Italian crisis as I walked by the forum ruins and wondered why Italian animation SUCKS then my brother called, he rarely calls, then Richard said the SD reader fired him which is like Gretzky being cut then I went to a GBV concert and couldn't hear for 2 days then I listened to Far East Suite continuously for one week and hell the next thing ya know it was xmas and I had shopping to do, decorations to hang, cookies to bake then came the new year and my annual enema. Soooooooooooooooooo (whew!) finally... in the month of love and sui-

cide, when I suffer from neither, I found a moment to articulate a few thoughts about festivals and specifically competition film selection for those of you who care. If that's not you, might I suggest this dandy nostalgic piece by one Richard Meltzer.

Every year people bitch about the film selection; that's part of the game. I LOVE it when a 'rejected' entrant sends angry emails demanding to know what moron obviously missed the point of their film. I like that energy. You spend SO MUCH time with this child. You believed in it enough to make it. You SHOULD be passionate about it. What irks me is the ignorance of the process. "How could this film get in and not mine!" "Everyone at my school thinks it's THE best film ever." "How can *Cybersix* get in and not *Father and Daughter*?" Stuff like that.

It's hard to get your film into Ottawa. There are 6 competition programmes generally running no longer than 80 minutes each. That's 480 minutes of film. We receive more than 1300 entries. Fewer than 100 are accepted. Annecy, as a comparison, receives the same number of entries, but offers at least twice the competition space. As such me, my momma, her sister, her sister's cousin's uncle's neighbour's friend's brother's daughter's stepfather's ex-wife's dog with a blocked bladder has a decent chance of being screened.

Tick-tocking aside, folks forget about the categorization of entries. Entries are judged within their categories (eg. kid's film, TV series, independent film, graduate film, commercial, etc...), so when you see *Cybersix* or *Celebrity Deathmatch* in competition and not the latest Plympton or Quay

epic, it is NOT because the committee felt that *Cybersix* is a better film. Some ask, especially the folks from the old part of the world, why categories? Why not just judge everything on the same level? Well...films are not produced in the same conditions or with the same intentions (ya ok...I know that's a rather problematic argument in the end too — Why accept 'crappy' TV animation? Is it fair to have Iranian animators competing against NFB toonsters? — But a line must be drawn — get it? Heh heh heh).

Until this year a committee of International animation professionals selected competition films for the Ottawa fest. From the beginning of my tyrannical reign I contemplated slicing the committee. We (hell...I) finally decided to do it in 2000. There were a variety of reasons: 1) It costs us almost \$10,000 (CDN) to bring four people to Ottawa in the summer to deliberate and then back again in the fall for the festival. 2) selection by committee sucks. Invariably, because it's such a small community, the same faces begin showing up on different committees and juries (just take a look at Cinanima 2001 as a great example). 3) While peer assessment is a nice dream invariably these animators don't have the opportunity to attend festivals to keep up with contemporary animation. So what happens when people aren't keeping up with the new stuff? They tend to make comfortable and familiar decisions. We all do that...but if you're not watering the nuggin...you're taste buds are gonna stagnate. Hence...(and I say this as a first hand witness) committees often pick films because of WHO made them or WHAT prizes they won rather than the actual quality

of the work. 4) Furthermore, there is rarely any detailed debate. More often than not, a simple 'democratic' vote ends all discussion: "next film, please." The result: animation festivals start to look the same.

Now...this is less a criticism of the people than the system. These four people spend 10 days in a room watching 1300 films. That is an insane task to ask anyone (increasingly we found it difficult to even find people who wanted to do it). Often they are watching 100 films a day. They become cranky, hungry, tired and slowly begin to get on each other's nerves. Their patience diminishes, the vision blurs and their mental process tires.

In short...it's an unfair experience for the committee member, festival, filmmaker and audience.

Our solution, and it is by no means perfect, was to have selection done in house under my supervision. It usually involves at least three of the festival organizers. As Artistic Director, I have the final say and naturally my decisions effect and influence the look and tone of the event. I make no apologies for that. A museum or gallery has a curator, why not a festival? In truth, there is nothing radical about this system. It is common practice at live-action festivals as it is with many newer animation festivals (Holland, Fantoche, Anima Mundi; Stuttgart has a combination).

There are a few critics of this system who throw out that tired line about democratic process. That's just an excuse for avoiding responsibilities (see 'democratic vote' above); an emergency exit that eliminates the need for thoughtful, impassioned discussion and provides a handy

hand washing for those who really don't have opinions; besides, since when is democracy in the best interests of the people?

With our in-house system I have the advantage of knowing virtually all the contemporary films out there (not that THAT necessitates TASTE). Without the restrictions of a committee we take at least a month to observe the films leaving plenty of time for discussion and repeat screenings. Yes, I have final say, but I take the opinions of my colleagues seriously and rely on them to stop me if I'm perhaps being too lustful toward, let's say, an Estonian animation film. Besides the process demands more than one judge.

We also have the ability to reconsider a rejected film or two if there is room. Why not? Why this formal OPERATIC procedure that sings: ALL IS FINAL!!! ? I ain't afraid

to say it: We make mistakes, especially with the limbo entries. See...there are films that are VERY GOOD and VERY BAD. That's usually fairly easy to sort out...but that big pile in the middle is essentially left to a crapshoot. All sorts of important but also trivial influences sway selection of those films: Maybe they had to piss when they saw your film? Maybe the coffee was brewing. Maybe it was just before lunch after a long morning. Maybe they cut it off too early. Bottom line: Any festival that tells you that the system of selection is some pure, objective process of GODS is, as my friend Ronnie said, "Shitting in your mouth and calling it a sundae."

Now you know. Oh and hey...how'd you like Meltzer?

Hottie Animator of the Month

Jayne Pilling. Jayne should

be knighted or damed (as in Dame Pilling) for the endless hours of life she has given to animation.

Last Month's Secret Message Was: 4'33.

The winner was David Dymont of Toronto, Ontario. Dave wins an extra large industrial roll of bubble wrap.

Chris Robinson is a writer, festival director, programmer, junky and has been called the John Woo of diplomacy. His hobbies include horseback riding, pudpulling, canoeing and goat thumping.

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



Notes from the Underground Part 1 — Animation: Prozac or Kyosaku?

by Jean Detheux



"This is not a spoon?" Photo: Bruno Calvo.

Having recently seen *Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain* (*Amélie*) in its original French version, with subtitles in English, I was very curious to see what a trailer made for English-speaking North Americans would look, sound and "feel" like.

I found the North American English trailer on the Apple site, downloaded it, and was immediately appalled as soon as it began playing on my Mac! "*Oh no, there they go again!*" was my first immediate reaction.

As I was beginning to collect material for a series of articles on "animation as (commercial) entertainment and animation as an art form," it was immediately

obvious to me that this recent murdering of *Amélie* had something to contribute to my chosen topic. So when I said: "*Oh no, there they go again!*" I meant some things I will want to come back to and explore in this series of six articles, articles presented at the rate of one every second month.

A word or two about where I am coming from: I have been a painter for almost forty years, and only fairly recently came to animation when forced to drop natural media and embark on a working journey strictly confined to digital tools (due to sudden severe allergies to paint and other fumes). Animation, in the habitual sense, never was, nor is,

much of a concern for me, but animation as the introduction of the element of "time" (and music) in the painting process is now a fascination, growing bigger every day.

Not being married to story telling and character animation, in fact being often bored by it (with great remarkable exceptions, examples of which will be given later), I have looked at traditional animation with very little admiration and interest.

It seems to me as if most of the traditional narrative animation is endlessly repeating itself. With minor variations, the form seems to have been set a long time ago (Disney?) and is not ready to be changed, at least not for as long as the control of what is acceptable (and supported) remains in the usual hands.

In fact, there even seems to exist more than "just" pressure from the top down to remain within and surrender to the usual form. There is also a lot of self-imposed pressure on the part of the animators themselves.

Taking part in a panel discussion (teachers' symposium) at the last SAFO, I caught myself saying that "most people seem to want to do exactly the same work the major studios are doing, only with less money."

I still stand by that remark, and I think it points to something very basic that is behind the poor state of animation — especially as an art form — today.

Why do I posit that "habitual animation" today is far from being Art?

Let's look at a few things: for many centuries, our best artists ("best" as in Rembrandt, Vermeer, Velasquez, Chardin, Corot, Pissarro, Cézanne, Monet,

Marquet, Braque, Morandi, Giacometti, de Kooning, Pollock, Kline, Guston, Rothko and many more) have worked very hard trying to get (and show) glimpses of "the real" as it can be experienced prior to the setting in of the filtering effects of societal norms and models.

In other words, artists have tried very hard to connect with what they saw before knowing what it was they were looking at, and in trying to do so, they had to work very hard against the established ways of seeing and rendering "the real."

Yet, the very thing those artists had (have) to work hard to free themselves of is at the core of what art schools have been (and still are) teaching!

Let's look at figure drawing for a start, especially figure drawing as taught in the art schools that cater to the needs of the animation departments, the needs of the animation industry (though I doubt there are any significant differences between the animation and "regular" fine arts departments in this respect).

For Rembrandt, Giacometti and scores of other artists who, like them, were concerned with "the real," looking at a figure with brush in hand would inevitably initiate a confrontation with the (an) unknown.

The more they looked, the more they painted, the less they "knew."

Yet, far from being a failure, this experience of an inevitably-and-constantly-increasing unknown was indeed a success, and very much the point of their submitting willingly to an often painful experience.

Camus said it best when he claimed that *"the failure shall be*



"Everybody knows what a head looks like!" All original artwork. © Jean Detheux.



"Everybody knows what a head looks like!"



"Everybody knows what a head looks like!"

the measure of success."

So, from an "Art" point of view, figure drawing could/should be a privileged entry point into this experience of "the real," into one's own "unknown."

It may be so in schools of the caliber of the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture (it definitely was when I worked there; remarkable artists were teaching in that school, working with equally remarkable students), but it most certainly is not the case in most of the figure drawing classes that are taught elsewhere, tailored to serve character animation today or not.

The last thing "we" want in that field are any traces of doubt and ambiguity. The figure is to be considered a known entity and the students have to be proficient in the established ways of manipulating and rendering it.

The figure has to remain within the boundaries established by habitual clichés. One is not allowed to "fail" when trying to capture the appearance of the figure, therefore one is forced to cater to the innuendoes and expectations of the societal models (see below: "A head? A head? Everybody knows what a head looks like!").

Face it, if what I say is true, figure drawing as taught most everywhere is a training in conformism, quite far from being the access to personal vision many may think they are getting into!

Surely, there's got to be more to it than that?

In the late Thirties, Alberto Giacometti was a highly regarded member of André Breton's surrealist group. As he was having problems with the making of a head (a sculpture), he hired a model, a model he planned on keeping for



"Nothing was like I imagined."



"Nothing was like I imagined."



"Nothing was like I imagined."

about a week, a time he felt would be more than sufficient for him to master the head once again and go on with his own compositions.

However, the more he looked at the model, the more he worked on his sculptures and drawings, the more mysterious the whole thing became. *"Nothing was like I imagined,"* he said.

At about the same time, Breton came to visit Giacometti's studio and was very annoyed at seeing him working once again *"from the visible."* When Alberto tried to explain to him why he was working again so diligently *"from nature,"* Breton went into a fury, shouting: *"A head? A head? Everybody knows what a head looks like!"*

Giacometti's *"Nothing was like I imagined,"* is a real key here, and I assert that the point of all Art (to which animation has a lot to contribute) is to give both the artist and the viewer(s) a glimpse of the difference between the world we take for granted (as we *"imagine"* and expect it to be), and the world as uniquely experienced by each one of us bereft of those expectations.

"Art is what makes me see" is possibly one of the most meaningful things ever said about that.

It seems to me that to most animators, animation students, animation teachers and animation professionals alike, a head is (supposed to be) a known entity, and *"the eye works just like a camera and we all see the same thing!"* (This is actually a direct quote from a former director of a relatively well-known Canadian art school. I have heard very much the same things uttered in U.S. art schools.)

This taking *"the real"* for granted is a rampant disease in art



"Things are not what they appear to be, nor are they otherwise."



"Things are not what they appear to be, nor are they otherwise."



"Things are not what they appear to be, nor are they otherwise."

schools as a whole, not just in the departments that cater to the animation industry.

Come to think of it, it is a rampant disease in our society as well!

Who would dare today to go into an art school and say point-blank: *"Can you please help me, I just want to try to paint things as I really see them?"*

I can hear the laughter all over the school grounds if someone were to be so "naive."

Yet, this was the avowed aim of Giacometti's work, of his life. I am convinced he shared that exploration of the visible with his "spiritual grandfather" Cézanne (he actually said so himself) and with so many other artists we admire so much today (but possibly for the wrong reasons).

We admire them because we wrongly think they have invented/manufactured a style, while all they have done (actually much harder than the mere fabrication of "style") is to connect with — and make visible — their pre-verbal perception, their courageous connection with "the real," made visible through their hard work, to themselves, and to us.

"The mature Cézanne had no designs on the field of vision except to uncover the designs he saw in it. It is this suspension of will power that gives him admission to the undifferentiated world which precedes knowledge, to Eden as it was before Adam conferred separating names on each form of vegetal and mineral growth." (Yale Review, Spring 1980, by Ronald Hayman)

Connecting with our own unknown seems to be so ever present in the better artwork, yet it is almost totally absent in animation today, absent even though it

could be a source of a much-needed renewal in a field where repetitiveness has become endemic: *"Part of the reason the animation industry is in trouble is that people [audiences] are just being given the same old things all the time."* (Steve Brown from Greg Singer's AWN article "Dream Is Destiny: Waking Life.")

Or read these words from Chris Robinson's article on Pierre Hébert: *"Animation, and specifically independent or 'auteur' animation, which is often the feeding ground for any and all new trends in commercial animation, is at a dead end. Stylistic and narrative innovations certainly continue, but all within the same abiding walls; walls that have been pushed as far as they will bend."*

These walls are indeed what we will be looking at in the next articles, I can already say that "going back to the visible" as Giacometti did is to me a necessary step if we are to see through/beyond them.

"I want to paint things as I really see them" can trigger laughter, or it can trigger something much worse, even more insidious, more dangerous: the student who wants to paint *what he sees* will then be told *how things look* and even *how to draw "them" accordingly*.

And most people will not see the difference. Hell, they won't even suspect there is a difference, a difference so huge, it is the proverbial one between heaven and hell!

There seem to be two major options here: either one believes "the real" is a known, quantifiable and finite entity and it then is common to render it according to societal models ("photo-realism"), or, as is more

often the case with "artists," to "improve upon its assumed-to-be-known appearance by manufacturing a style." (*"What can I do with/to that?"* which inevitably leads to "manufactured styles.")

Or, one can acknowledge the elusiveness of "the real" and, attempting to connect with it without editing out that elusiveness (*"to cater to the appearing as it appears,"* as Husserl would have it), to uncover an inherent style which is as personal to oneself as is the color of one's eyes.

This inherent style is the intrinsic "flavor" of one's continuous and inevitable failure to succeed at capturing reality.

"What is it?" or better yet, *"Who am I?"*

Art is too often misused in order to put a Band-Aid on the gaping hole we so tenaciously try not to see (but is it Art then?), yet Art can (needs) be that which we do when we try to look honestly at that hole, without any distraction, in order *"to cater to the appearing as it appears."*

It is to me very important to realize that all that we do is conditioned by our basic world view (*Weltanschauung*), and that for most of us, our world view is almost totally constituted and maintained by our reliance on our societal models.

Animation (like any visual art) is highly dependent on the world view of its creators, and if they do not see that "the real" is indeed a mystery, they will therefore, intentionally or not, continue to spread the gospel of the *"fallacy of misplaced concreteness."*

A "good" example of that is this amazing faith in 3D animation, this completely naive belief that it best approaches "the real as we know it." (*"The eye works like a*

camera and we all see the same thing.”)

Despite the fact that our primary connection with “the real” is first and foremost subjective, we surrender that to the false gods of “objectivity” and marvel at the “success” of anal-retentive renderings of monkeys “one hair at a time.”

I posit that it is high time we try to change the way we deal with the (our) visible and see (!) if we can, finally, introduce/allow in our work more of what our better painters and philosophers have been telling us for a very long time already: “Things are not what they appear to be, nor are they otherwise!”

As far as creating images is concerned, it looks to me as if most animators today are still buying the official “vision” of the 19th Century Salon painters, “The eye

works just like a camera, and we all see the same thing.”

Surely, there’s got to be more to “it” than that!?

Animation (Art): Prozac, or Kyosaku?

We’ll continue to look at this in more detail in a couple of months, trying to see what I meant when I said, upon witnessing the murder of Amélie Poulain: “Oh no, there they go again!”

(A Kyosaku is a small flat stick used in Zen meditation to help practitioners deepen their practice. By hitting the meditator on a certain spot on the shoulders, it can reinvigorate, re-center the sitter, and often be a great source of renewed motivation and energy. And Prozac? I guess it could be considered to be, along with TV, commercial animation, sex, booze and dope, an important part of the cement of our “civilization.”)

Note: The online version of this article contains links to movie trailers and other essays. It is available at:

http://mag.awn.com/index.php3?type=pageone&article_no=1296

Jean Detheux is an artist who, after several decades of dedicated work with natural media, had to switch to digital art due to sudden severe allergies to paint fumes. He is now working on ways to create digital 2D animations that are a continuation of his natural media work. He has been teaching art in Canada and the U.S., and has works in many public and private galleries.

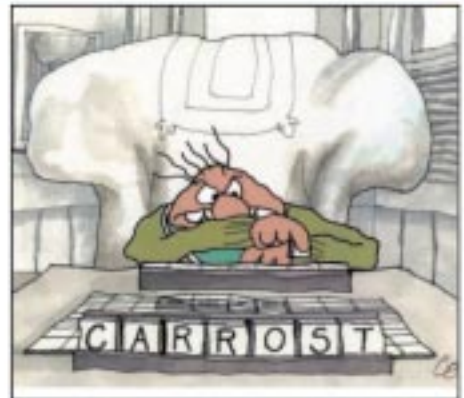
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Find the Right School for You

by Dan Sarto

The proliferation of animation and special/digital effects on television, in movies, computer games and at amusement parks has sparked tremendous interest in all types of animation-related education and training. AWN receives, on average, 50 emails every month, from readers all over the world, asking the same basic question — “I really want to work in animation. Where should I go to school?” I tell each one the same thing: “An animator’s most important trait is his or her ability to be resourceful and self-sufficient. Now, go bother someone else.”

While I’ve never actually responded to any reader like that, I have told many that there is no simple answer to their question and only after considerable effort and fact finding can they arrive at an answer that has any real meaning. The process of finding the right school usually raises many more questions than answers. AWN’s Animation School Database and free, downloadable Animation School Directory should help point one in the right direction to get those answers in a timely, organized fashion.

Finding the right school is hard work. Grab your phone, a glass of your favorite beverage, sit down at your computer, roll up your sleeves and consider some of these recommendations:

1. Determine your interests and future goals.

What do you really want to do with yourself? What type of



animation are you interested in? What style, what technique? Do you want to work for a large studio, or do you want to develop the next great computer game? Sit down with some people whose opinion you trust and, as best as you can, figure out what you’re really interested in and where you want to be five, ten and twenty years down the road.

2. Are you looking for “training” or “an education?”

While this may sound funny at first, the distinction is important. Many excellent schools offer specific training programs in

numerous areas, such as 3D animation with Alias|Wavefront’s Maya software package, or digital illustration with Adobe Photoshop. Training courses cover specific subjects, teaching students how to do “X,Y,Z.” If you want to learn how to do computer compositing or to create Web page animated graphics, you find a training program and go learn how to do it. Training programs are usually much shorter in length, ranging from a few days to many months. However, if you are interested in a more immersive, theoretical, as well as practical, understanding of animation and related fields of

study, a longer, more in-depth program is what you are looking for. These programs are usually from one to four years, with a course of study covering a wide range of subjects, including, in the case of many universities, core courses not even associated with your major.

3. Get your hands dirty.

Nothing can take the place of your own hard work in finding the animation school that is best for you. Many schools listed in our Directory have specific animation programs, or animation courses within a fine arts department. Many have computer graphics programs within the computer sciences departments. There are schools that specialize in nothing but comprehensive instruction on specific software packages such as SoftImage, Maya or 3D Studio MAX. Some schools listed are major universities with undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Others are schools that teach programs that range from one week to one year in duration. There are as many educational philosophies as there are schools. You need to dig to find the answers for which you're looking. Important things to do include:

A. Check out AWN's on-line Animation School Database

A visit to AWN's on-line Animation School Database can provide you ever faster access and more detailed information than the Directory. Each participating school edits their own profile on AWN, so the information stays current and accurate. You can easily follow live email and Web links to over 400 schools in 38 countries, providing you a con-

venient starting point for your on-line research. The on-line database can be found at: <http://schools.awn.com>

B. Talk to the schools

Call the admissions department. Have them send you a school catalog. Talk to department heads about their programs. Visit Websites. Gather as much factual information about the schools as possible. What are their admission requirements? What equipment do they have? What does tuition cost? Find out everything you can about the schools in which you are interested.

C. Talk to alumni

Seek out people who have gone through the programs you are considering. What is their opinion about the school and the education they received? How much did their education help prepare them for their current career? If they had the decision to make again, would they choose to attend that school again?

Equally important is to talk to the school's Career Placement department. What job recruitment resources are available for students and alumni? How successful is the school at assisting its graduates in finding work?

D. Talk to people in the industry

Seek out the opinions of people in the industry. Post your questions in discussion groups such as the AWN Discussion Forums, and various animation Usenet news groups such as rec.arts.animation.

Read as many magazine articles and books as you can find related to your areas of interest. Attend a local animation-related event, such as a film festival and talk to the participants. Our online Calendar of Events has a huge list of events taking place all over the world. Ask questions. Be persistent. Call various production studios and find out what types of educational backgrounds their employees have.

Our hope is that AWN's Animation School Database and Directory will assist you in your efforts to research the animation programs that best meet your needs. While no means complete, the Animation School Directory should provide a springboard for your investigation and assessment of animation schools.

Dan Sarto is co-founder and co-publisher of Animation World Network and an all-around great guy. Everyone says so.

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



Sketching on Location: Atmosphere

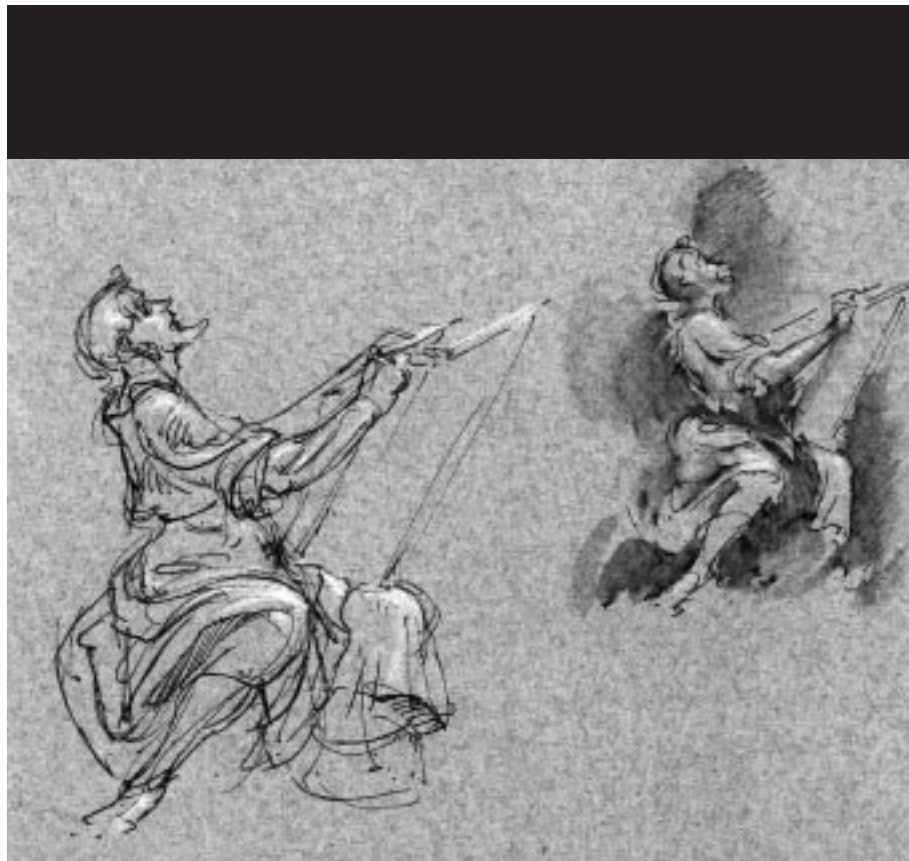
by Glenn Vilppu

This is the eleventh in a series of bi-monthly articles about sketching on location. The articles are based on my *Sketching on Location Manual*. The manual was developed as a series of lessons that I use on my guided sketching tours of Europe and as material in my regular drawing classes. As such the lessons can be part of a regular course or used by individual students as a practical learning guide. If you have not seen the previous lessons starting in the June 2000 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. If you really want to start at the beginning open with the lessons based on the *Vilppu Drawing Manual*.

In the last lesson we discussed "Three Dimensional Figures." The main purpose was the use of tone to create the illusion of 3D form, this was one of the cornerstones of the Renaissance and a useful tool in expression and as a strong picture making tool.

Adding the Unseen

Atmosphere, the air around us, is one of the more difficult concepts to understand. Even though the air that we breathe and are surrounded with is transparent,



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

we still need to use it as an element that can be manipulated and made to serve our purposes. The transparent wash is my preferred medium to work with.

The simplest tool I have found to use while sketching is the fountain pen, with brush and water. I have even used coffee and wine on occasion for a wash.

The fountain pen is my

favorite because the ink used will bleed when water is applied to it. When using pens with waterproof ink, an extra color wash is needed, and traditional watercolor, or sometimes even coffee as I mentioned, will work.

Many of the drawings in the previous chapter were done with just my pen, brush and clear water.

The first method we are looking at is the application of wash to separate forms. Look at the diagrams and examples; notice that the wash is not restricted to the form but is a general tone which comes in between and separates the forms. This is probably the most difficult hurdle for many students to overcome; that is, there is difficulty putting tones or lines where they don't see them. Combining this technique with the use of tone discussed in the previous lesson is a very effective way of working.





In the second approach we will use the tone as a compositional element to enhance the action of the figures. This approach can be combined with the previous one. Take your cue from the action of the figure itself. The tone is used to amplify the basic action of the figure and clarify the direction of the movements. It also can work as a complement to the action. Look at the examples on the next page to see which approach was used in each drawing.





In these landscapes and some of the other illustrations, the atmosphere is depicted as a fog separating forms. The white of the paper represents the air between the elements.



In this drawing using ballpoint pen, the line is used in the same way as the wash going between and around forms.



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 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 has been 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.



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

How Passionate Are You?

Pamela Kleibrink Thompson

February is the month of Valentine's Day — a time to lavish attention on your loved ones and rekindle the flames of passion. Are you still in love with your work?

This is the perfect time to check up on your relationship with animation. How passionate are you?

Commit or Quit

Are you truly committed, is it just a flirtation or is it time to end it? It takes a lot of work to build and maintain a healthy relationship with animation. If you're not willing to put in the time and effort, quit now. Pursuing a career in animation demands a lot of patience, persistence, determination and time. There are many easier ways to make a living. But if you truly feel you can't live without it, commit yourself unconditionally.

Best Kept Secrets

Immerse yourself in the techniques and history of animation. Learn from the masters. Don't have a personal mentor? You can also learn from books like *The Illusion of Life* by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston, attending seminars and festivals, and studying great films frame by frame.

Keep Romance Alive

Is the passion waning?



Pamela Kleibrink Thompson

Maybe it's time to learn a few new tricks. Improve your skills, master new software. The more versatile you are, the more employable you are. Keep up to date on the latest trends and new companies by reading the trades, taking classes and networking.

Never Marry for Money

If you're in the business because you thought you could make a bundle, what happens when the jobs are hard to find and the money gets tight? Marriages for money don't last. Success comes to those who love what they do.

Bare Your Soul

Keep your portfolio up to date and ready to show at any time. Update your demo reel and resume every six months. If you

are looking for work, be sure others know it. Share your joy of animation with others — especially young children. Talk to them about how to make cartoons.

After "I Do"

"I do animation" is temporary, "I am an animator" is permanent. While you work on your job, work on your career as well. When thinking about what job to take, consider what you can learn as well as what you might earn. Recognize that you never stop learning and try to find jobs where you can grow as an animator.

Renew Your Vows

If you are committed, but are feeling burned out, reconnect with the feelings that got you involved in the first place — take a course, teach a class, mentor a newcomer or make your own film (it's easier than ever with Flash and computers). Get in touch with those feelings and keep that love alive.

Pamela Kleibrink Thompson is a career coach and recruiter who speaks at colleges and universities about animation, art and visual effects careers. Her goal is to make a new goal list before the end of January.

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INTERNATIONAL TV CARTOONS COMPETITION

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- Best Programme of the Year
- Best Series for Infants
- Best Series for Children
- Best Series for Young Adults & Adults
- Best Series for All Audiences
- Best Tv Movie
- Best Pilot
- Best Short-film
- Best Web Programme



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TV Review:

Aaagh! It's The Mr. Hell Show!

by Jerry Beck



A marriage made in Hades: Mr. Hell and television.
All images © 2001 Peafur Productions/Sextant Entertainment.

“The dictionary says that ANIMATION is the coming together of two words: ‘Animus,’ the Latin for life force, and ‘Masturbation,’ the Latin for trouser gymnastics.”

So says the red horned host of *The Mr. Hell Show!* — the latest animated series aimed at grown ups — and the first seriously funny one since *South Park*. Like *South Park*, Mr. Hell aims to shock us with outrageous humor. And I was shocked — at how witty the show actually is.

On the surface the program looks pretty cheap. The series features drawn animation, manipulated on the computer, in a limited style not unlike the Squigglevision masterpiece *Dr.*

Katz. Disguised as a sophomoric, low budget cartoon in terribly bad taste, *Mr. Hell* contains a non-stop barrage of jokes that actually work. This might be the closest thing to what Tex Avery would have done with today's tools, minuscule budgets and a modern sensibility.

Mr. Hell is the devilish host for the half hour — the show is made up of various animated skits which allow the writers to take the show in many satiric directions. The particular episode screened for review was themed around the subject of animation itself — and Mr. Hell takes us back through the origins of the field, showing us how it began.

They cut to a fish crawling

out of the primordial pool, gasping for air, who then pulls out a cell phone and shouts a series order: “I want 200 episodes — and make ‘em in China cause it’s cheap.” Clearly the first animation executive!

This was preceded by a brief *Little Mermaid* spoof, where our lovely Ariel keeps losing her clam-shell bra — and her crab companion, scratching himself, complains of having “humans.” Mr. Hell walks us through a portrait gallery of animation pioneers — Chuck, Tex and Walt (whose image is a giant copyright symbol!).

The highlight of the show is the survey of the career of “Kokey The Cat,” who went from silent films in the 1920s to cigarette commercials in the 1950s, while battling his own drug habit — before becoming a born again Christian in the hippie-dippy days of the late 1960s.

Other cartoon segments, including “Serge, The Seal of Death,” “The Photo Copy Of Dorian Gray’s Ass” and “Champion, The Wonder Snail,” are the closest to capturing the satirical spirit of Harvey Kurtzman’s *Mad* comics that I’ve ever seen in animated form.

The computer generated movements (I still like my cartoons to have a human touch) took some getting used to, but the art direction and humor won me over. Kudos to directors Paul Boyd and John “Moose” Pagan, producer J. Falconer, and executive producers David Friedman and Alan Gilbey, for creating a comedy show that delivers both verbally and visually, proudly and expertly walking the fine line between low brow gags and smart satanic satire.

Aaagh! It's The Mr. Hell Show is a Sextant/Peafur Production for the BBC. A United Kingdom/Canada co-production. It will debut in the U.S. on Showtime on March 3, 2002 at 10:30 pm.

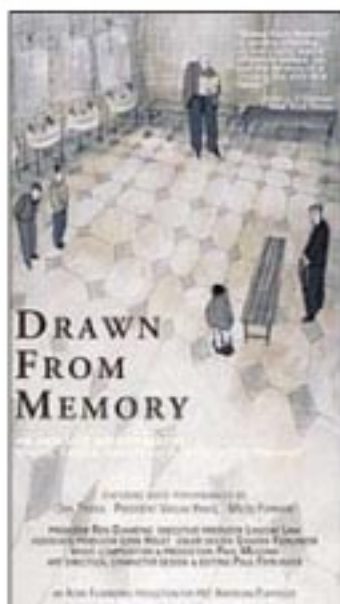
Jerry Beck is an animation producer and cartoon historian who is simultaneously developing a show with MTV Animation and writing a book for Harry N. Abrams Publishers. He also has a cool Website at www.cartoonresearch.com.

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The devilish host celebrates in *Mr. Hell*.

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--Carrie Rickey
The Philadelphia Inquirer



<http://www.awn.com/awnstore/acme/drawn.html>

Fresh from the Festivals:

February 2002's Film Reviews

by John Hofferma

Within the world of animation, most experimentation occurs within short format productions, whether they be high budgeted commercials, low budgeted independent shorts, or something in between. The growing number of short film festivals around the world attest to the vitality of these works, but there are few other venues for exhibition of them or even written reviews. As a result, distribution tends to be difficult and irregular. On a regular basis, *Animation World Magazine* will highlight some of the most interesting with short descriptive overviews.

This Month:

2+2 (2002), 11 min., directed by Benita Raphan and Clayton Hemmert, USA. Info: Benita Raphan, 101 W. 12th St., New York, NY 10011. Tel: 212-691-2877. Email: braphan@aol.com.

The Box (2000), 4.5 min., directed by Stefan Gronsky, USA.. Info: Stefan Gronsky, 7343 Waldo Lane, El Cerrito, CA 94530. Tel: 510-528-8452. Email: stfn@mac.com.

Jedné noci v jednom meste (One Night in One Town) (2000), 29 min., directed by Jan Balej, Czech Republic.. Info: Jan Balej, Na Václavce 48, Praha 5, 150 00

Czech Republic. Tel/Fax: 420-2-22221620. Email: vladimir.kroupa@worldonline.cz.

Token Life (2002), 4.5 min., directed by David Donar, USA. Info: Donar Productions, 7393 Sharp Rd., Swartz Creek, MI 48473. Tel: 810-610-8775. Email: ddonar@hotmail.com.

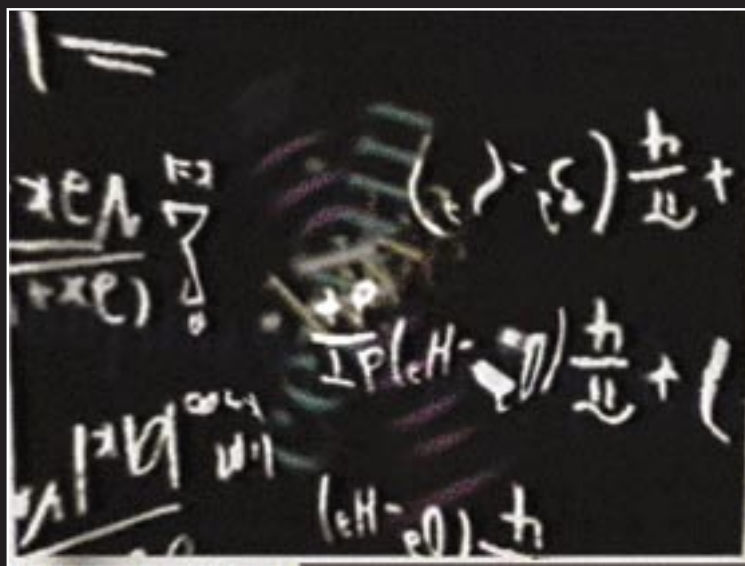
Window (2000), 10 min., directed by Victoria Livingstone, USA.. Info: victoria_livingstone@hotmail.com.

2+2

This experimental documentary by Benita Raphan and Clayton Hemmert reviews the life and work of John Nash, the bril-

liant, schizophrenic mathematician who is also the subject of the feature film, *A Beautiful Mind*. *2+2* is a dense, multi-layered piece that presents a sometimes overwhelming amount of information on schizophrenia, game theory and other challenging subjects related to Nash. A dizzying array of abstract and representational images, fragments of text, and mathematical formulae are combined with an equally sophisticated soundscape of music, effects and voices (including those of academic experts) to create an impressionistic portrait of a complicated man. Ultimately I don't think it quite works — the purposely elliptical presentation obfuscates more than it illuminates, and the disjunction between image and voiceover sometimes seems more random than meaningful. But it's an ambitious and thoughtful effort that pushes the boundaries and forces the viewer to do some work, which makes for a rewarding experience.

A graduate of the Royal College of Art in London, Benita Raphan is an award-winning film-



© Benita Raphan.

maker and designer who until recently worked as an Inferno artist at Quiet Man in New York. Her diverse influences include the Brothers Quay, Chris Marker, Ingmar Bergman and Andrei Tarkovsky. Clayton Hemmert is an award-winning editor who has worked on documentaries for public television. This is his first directorial effort. Raphan notes that working on *2+2* with so many talented collaborators, including sound designer Marshall Grupp and composer Pierre Foldes, was a great experience.

2+2, which was created using *Inferno*, *After Effects*, *Pro Tools* and an *Avid*, screened at Sundance and the SXSW Festival, and has been shown on HBO.

The Box

Set on an ornate platform adrift somewhere in the cosmos (the parquet floor against the background of stars is a particularly nice touch), this computer-animated film chronicles the brief relationship between a meteoric jack-in-the-box and a . . . well, purple blob. Director Stefan Gronsky does a nice job of investing the shapeless protagonist with recognizably human reactions and emotions, and the interaction between thing and machine is potentially interesting. Unfortunately, though, the story doesn't really go anywhere and — while pleasant to watch for awhile — the piece is more an exercise than a finished film.

Stefan Gronsky, a recent graduate of UC Berkeley in computer science, is a self-taught filmmaker who has been making films since he was eight. For this independent production he used *PixelPutty* and *Photorealistic Renderman* for modeling and animation, as well as *Photoshop*,

After Effects and several scripting programs. The sound was created using *Deck II* and *SoundEdit 16*. Gronsky's influences include (not surprisingly) Pixar, Tim Burton and Tim Hittle.

One Night in One Town

This collection of three marginally related short stories, directed by Czech filmmaker Jan Balej, features the kind of dark visuals and equally dark sensibility one tends to associate with Eastern European productions. Following the surreal adventures of several inhabitants of a quaint (if that's the right word) Czech town, Balej uses stop-motion and an assortment of exquisitely crafted handmade puppets to relate tales of a very special

ear, a timeless restaurant, and a ghostly visitor who answers the prayers of a couple of sodden sybarites. While the human qualities and distinct personalities of this assemblage of grotesques shine through, the characters' motivations and other particulars of the narrative are often murky. However it's hard to know if this problem stems more from cultural references that don't translate, the difficulty of communicating overly personal meanings, or simply an underdeveloped story structure.

Jan Balej is one of the founders of *Hafan Film Praha*, a production studio specializing in puppet animation established in 1990. His other works include



© Stefan Gronsky.



© Hafan Film Prague 2000.

Tom Thumb's Adventures, *Ali Baba*, and the TV series, *How Life Goes by Hippopotamus*. *One Night in One Town* was undertaken as a personal project, with support from the State Fund for the Development and Support of Czech Cinematography. It won awards for Best Video at Anima Mundi in 2001 and Best International Animation at the FAN Festival, and has also screened at Cinanima and the Ajijic Festival International de Cine, among others.

Token Life

David Donar's descent into a degraded world of coin-operated conveniences and entertainments — slot machines, parking meters, peep shows — has great style and atmosphere. The retro, noirish look works extremely well with the seedy subject matter, although his environment and inanimate objects come off a little better than his characters. A shifting funk/jazz/loungy score by Eddie Sams is a good fit, adding to the sense of dislocation and desperation. The payoff in this bleak moral tale isn't all one might have hoped, but there are many nice moments and the minimalist storyline suits the work's duration and modest goals.

A graduate of Eastern Michigan University, where he studied painting and printmaking, David Donar drew political cartoons before getting involved in animation. His first film, *Big, Dumb, Fat, Stupid, Baby* (1995), toured in Spike and Mike's Sick and Twisted Animation Festival, and *Espresso Depresso* and *Open Mic Fright* were both shown on MTV's *Cartoon Sushi* in 1998. Other films include the very funny *Snowpea and Tofu* (1998), *La Morte E Bella*



© David Donar.

© Victoria Livingston.

(1999) and a number of cartoons produced for the Internet. *Token Life*, a 2D computer animation, is a personal project, the design of which was influenced by the paintings of Edward Hopper and Richard Estes.

Window

Like *Token Life*, this moody black-and-white stop-motion by Victoria Livingstone is also heavily atmospheric and nicely stylized, evoking a grey world of deadening routine and alienation. While

some details of the film's created world are confusing (Depression-era iconography seems misplaced in a film about the drudgery of work), Livingstone — aided by Leon Rosen's exceptional, expressively dissonant score — succeeds admirably in conveying the psychological predicament of her central character, who can't quite break free of his circumscribed existence. There's nothing new or profound here, although the gap between our dreams and the quiet desperation of our lives is always a subject worth exploring. Yet, especially considering the film's ten-minute length, *Window* doesn't offer enough, either visually or conceptually, to sustain its consideration of one man's search for meaning.

Victoria Livingstone, currently a senior lead animator on

Star Wars Episode II, is a graduate of San Francisco State who has been at ILM since 1995. Her influences include animators Alexander Alexieff & Claire Parker and Jan Svankmajer, as well as Jean Cocteau, Alfred Hitchcock and Rod Serling.

Window began as a student project in 1996, but wasn't finished until four years later. All of the effects, Livingstone notes, were done the "old-fashioned" way using in-camera techniques. The film won the Golden Spire Award at the 2000 San Francisco International Film Festival and was also shown at Mill Valley, Slamdance, the Calgary International Film Festival, and many other venues.

Note: You can view QuickTime clips from each film by visiting the

online version of this article at:
http://mag.awn.com/index.php3?ltype=pageone&article_no=1293

Jon Hofferma is an independent filmmaker, writer and graphic designer, as well as the creator of the Classical Composers Poster (www.carissimi.com). He has a B.A. in Philosophy & Religion and an M.F.A. from UCLA's School of Film & Television. Appropriately enough, he is currently working on a documentary about the nature of religious experience.

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THE ANIMATION FLASH

Weekly Email Newsletter

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This is an outstanding addition to our studies of animation in general and Disney animation in particular. John Canemaker has given us a lively and fascinating account of the famous nine old men of the golden age of Disney animation. There are many books about Disney and few of them are of any worth — most are glossy coffee-table accounts of particular films, hagiographic to the point of risibility (for example, note the number of self-congratulatory comments in the recent book about the lamentable *Fantasia /2000*). Some are inaccurate, some critically enclosed in their own arcane academic jargon. John Canemaker's studies — this is his third major work on Disney art — are meticulous and scholarly but without the gobbledy-gook of academe, and they are enlivened with his own spirited, idiosyncratic and racy style. To put it simply, he is a good read. Although I have some criticism about the pictures in the new book, in general I prefer this layout and design to Canemaker's previous work on the story artists, *Paper Dreams* (NY: Hyperion, 1999), which has wonderful reproductions, but is a little unwieldy to handle and perhaps not as tightly structured as his new study. Here, his attention is fully focused on the lives and work of nine remarkable artists, who struggled, fought and sweated for their master Walt Disney, whose charismatic, curmudgeonly presence inhabits every page.

The Mechanics

May I get my one criticism of this fine book out of the way as soon as possible; Canemaker's previous books have been supremely well illustrated — as a practicing

Walt Disney's Nine Old Men & The Art Of Animation

book review by Robin Allan



artist and animator himself he has provided (with the collaboration of his designers) outstanding reproductions from many sources. My cavil over the pictures for the new book is not so much that they vary in quality as reproductions, but that they have not been captioned fully enough. I realize that additional information on the page would take up excessive space,

but it would have been valuable for us to know what originated as a still, a frame blow-up, or a cel mounted on an original production background vs. one mounted on a post-production background, very different from the original background. One illustration is reversed (p20), one appears to be made up of cels from different scenes (p284) and others are

clearly cels laid over post-production backgrounds (pp217, 246 and 249). There is also inconsistency of colour and tone on the same page (see p220 with what appear to be three frame blow-ups). I would also have liked to see a brief mention, perhaps at the end of the book, of picture credits, for not all the illustrations come from the Disney Company's sources.

John Canemaker's studies are meticulous and scholarly...

Having said that, the author's remarkable research has given us a dazzling display not only of the nine old men's creative output, but also fascinating photographs of themselves at many stages of their lives, and photographs of their colleagues, families and friends. The men come to life through both text and pictures, and the illustrations are closely linked to textual reference, so that we can see what the author is writing about. I also like very much the film frames running in sequence down the page; these little pictures flicker to life in our mind's eye as our gaze travels down the page. This device is used again and again to astonishing effect, the animator's art springing to life; it is a splendid accompaniment.

John Canemaker is our primary Disney historian; he has studied the work of the studio for years and has interviewed many of the artists who worked there. He is supremely qualified to write this definitive account of the nine old men, and he draws on reserves of knowledge about

many other aspects of the Disney organization. Thus, while we learn about the history and background of these nine great animators, we also learn about their mentors and influences. The first talents at Disney included men like Ham Luske, Norman Ferguson and Freddy Moore, all of whom figure in these pages, though Canemaker keeps his sights firmly on the nine men themselves. We are introduced to them warts and all; these are real fellows with their ambitions and weaknesses revealed. They may be supreme artists but they are human like the rest of us. They are ambitious, ruthless, caring and vulnerable by turns and as we follow their adventures through the golden age and beyond, we see the subtle shifts of power waged between them, and how Walt Disney was able to balance their talents in his relentless pursuit for excellence.

What Awaits You...

The gentle Les Clark, teamster and loyal servant, animated the beautiful delicacy of the dew-drop fairies in "The Nutcracker Suite" from *Fantasia*. He also animated complicated scenes in *Snow White*, and his talent is contrasted with the energetic and broad strokes of Woolie Reitherman, who brought Monstro the whale to life, as well as Timothy Mouse and the battle of the dinosaurs in the "Rite of Spring" section from *Fantasia*. We learn of a diffident vulnerability in this bluff self-confident man who served as a pilot in the Second World War. He returned to Disney to animate one of the few gripping moments of *Sleeping Beauty* and then became a director. In turn his talent is contrasted with

the quiet authority of Eric Larson, that most patient and courteous of teachers, inspiring many of the younger animators who today gladly acknowledge their debt to him. Figaro the kitten, trying to open the window in *Pinocchio*, the incorrigible Peg, she of the swaying hips and come-hither eyes in the dog-pound from *Lady and the Tramp* are two of the characters brought to life by this artist, who suffered greatly in later life not only through the death of his beloved wife, but also through changes occurring at the Disney studio. John Canemaker charts the painful story of Larson's later years with detached but sympathetic clarity.

They may be supreme artists but they are human like the rest of us

Larson's story is followed by chapters on the talents of Ward Kimball and Milt Kahl, the one a sprightly imp of a man whose insecure childhood caused him to develop a carapace of self-centred showmanship, the other a driven loner, who, also with an insecure background, grew a shell of egocentricity which made him an uncomfortable companion. Kimball's frantic clowning has given us some of the zaniest and most exuberant characters in Disney films from the singing crows in *Dumbo* to Panchito and his colleagues Donald Duck and Jose Carioca singing the title song from *The Three Caballeros*. John Canemaker is fascinating on Kimball and Kahl though I cannot share his enthusiasm for Kahl's ani-

mation of the Disney heroes and heroines; however, Kahl's superlative draughtsmanship and feeling for character is evident in his delineation of Shere Khan in *The Jungle Book* and Madame Medusa in *The Rescuers*.

Canemaker is equally interesting on the work of Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston, those indestructible veterans of the business who have given us the Bible of animation in their great study *Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life* (NY: Abbeville, 1981). Here again Canemaker points to highlights in the animating careers of these men, and half the fun of his book lies in our pleasure in agreeing with — or opposing — his aesthetic judgements over the famous characters that these nine old men have brought to life. While I wholeheartedly agree about the warmth and tenderness with which Thomas invests the Bella Notte scene from *Lady and the Tramp*, I find mawkish the squirrel scenes from *The Sword in the Stone*. There is a delicate line to be drawn between deeply felt and truthful delineation (Dumbo and his mother in the song "Baby Mine" or Rufus the cat and the little orphan Penny from *The Rescuers*) and over-emotional scenes played for effect (the "Twitterpated" scenes from *Bambi* for example), and I am afraid that I find the Smee/Hook scenes from *Peter Pan* heavily overweighted.

Canemaker's book concludes with chapters on the gifted, modest John Lounsbery and the Renaissance man Marc Davis, so recently lost to us (he died in 2000). Lounsbery put into his animation a swashbuckling exuberance and vividness in almost everything he touched, from the vaudeville act of the Fox and Cat

from *Pinocchio*, to the exuberant Ben Ali who woos Hyacinth Hippo so gallantly in the "Dance of the Hours" from *Fantasia*. Then there is his Italian duo — Tony and Joe who sing to Lady and Tramp under the stars and washing lines, and another pair, the baduns Horace and Jasper so ineptly assisting Cruella DeVil in *101 Dalmatians*. Thomas and Johnston are quoted in this book (p257) as declaring that Lounsbery's drawings "were simple and loose and full of energy. They had volume and that elusive quality of life."

This is a remarkable tribute to remarkable men...

Marc Davis is perhaps the most versatile of all the nine old men — he was a brilliant story artist (his uncredited scenes from *Victory Through Air Power* attest to this talent), animator of two unforgettable characters, Maleficent from *Sleeping Beauty* and Cruella DeVil from *101 Dalmatians*, as well as designing three dimensional characters for the rides at Disneyland. He also painted brilliantly. His is a prodigious achievement and it seems appropriate that Canemaker should conclude his book with a study of this Renaissance man, though all nine men are memorable and will be remembered (thanks to this book), for as long as the characters that they invested with such life survive in the Disney films that are their and our legacy. This is a remarkable tribute to remarkable men by a remarkable writer, and one of the few great books on the golden age of

Disney.

Walt Disney's Nine Old Men & The Art Of Animation by John Canemaker. New York, New York: Disney Editions, 2001. 310 pages. ISBN: 0-7868-6496-6 (hardback US\$60).

Robin Allan is a writer and art historian based in Derbyshire, England. He has written extensively on Disney and has lectured on the subject in Britain, Europe, Canada and the United States. His book, Walt Disney and Europe, will be published this year by John Libbey.

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