

WINTER 2019

ISSUE NO. 8

KEYFRAME

THE ANIMATION GUILD
QUARTERLY

FROZEN II
CAPTURING
THE CREATIVE
SPIRIT

FROZEN II / GOLDEN AWARDS

WINTER 2019





BEST ANIMATED FEATURE FILM

Produced By **BRADFORD LEWIS** p.g.a. | **BONNIE ARNOLD** p.g.a.

Written And Directed By **DEAN DEBLOIS**

**“AN ANIMATED
ACTION PHENOM
WITH MOONSTRUCK PASSION
IN ITS HEART AND A SPIRIT
THAT SOARS.”**

PETER TRAVERS, ROLLING STONE

**“AS EMOTIONALLY
MOVING AS IT IS
BEAUTIFULLY MADE.
THE ANIMATION IS
UNBELIEVABLY STUNNING.
THE FILM FEELS TIMELESS.”**

KATIE WALSH, TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE



 DREAMWORKS

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR

DRAGON

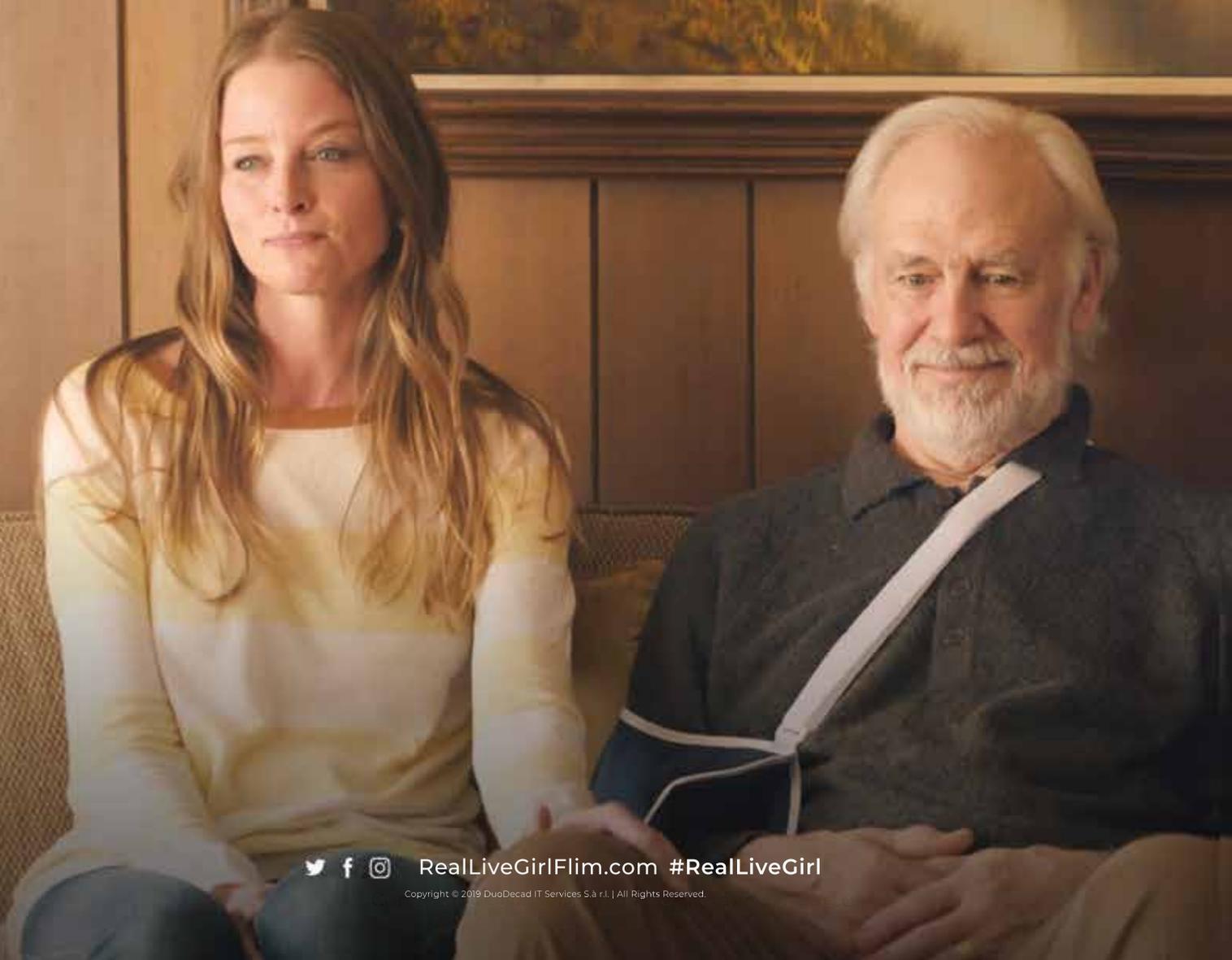
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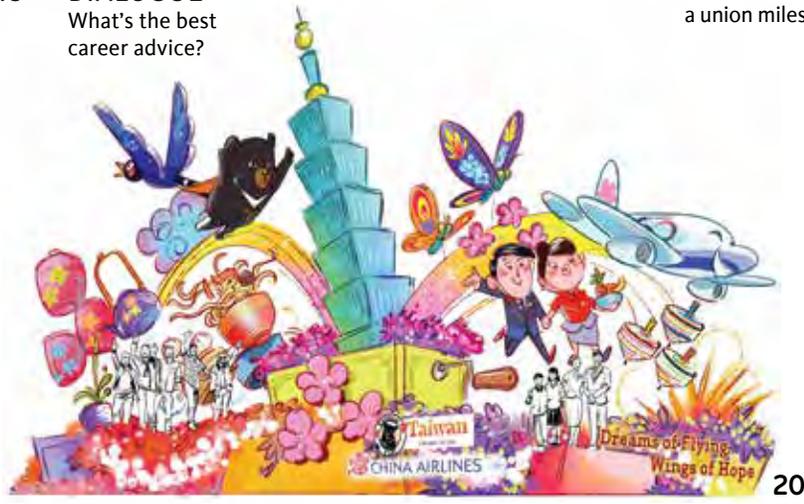
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- 29 2019 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE
Look around you—your officemate might craft jewelry or your supervisor might be a master woodworker. The fact is we are surrounded by talent and that spark of creation often leads to an amazing product—from leather goods to crochet coasters, pithy pins to handmade preserves. What better way to celebrate the holidays than by finding unique gifts while supporting your fellow TAG members!
- 38 THE SPIRIT OF CREATION
This fall we revisit the beloved group of characters from *Frozen*—Elsa, Anna, Kristoff and Olaf. But as the story takes us away from Arendelle and into an enchanted forest, we are introduced to a few new (and technologically-challenging) characters that sweep us into a new adventure of mythical proportions.
- 46 THE GOLDEN AGE
Fifty-years in the craft is a significant milestone, one which has been honored over the years at the Golden Awards. This year, we pay tribute to another 28 Animation Guild members—and their devotion to this wonderful and unique craft that has brought joy to generations.

ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS



THE END OF THE YEAR IS A NATURAL TIME FOR REFLECTION ON THE CYCLES THAT SURROUND US. WE REVIEW THE MONTHS PAST AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE YEAR AHEAD.

Here at The Animation Guild, we have just wrapped up our triennial elections, and in December, our current Executive Board will complete their term of service and the new Executive Board's three-year term will begin.

That sounds really dry on the surface, doesn't it? But wow, what a journey it has been over these past three years, and the next three look to be no less profound.

We are all here in this difficult, challenging, gorgeous, wonderful industry chasing our individual American Dreams. Maybe yours is to own a home and have financial security; or to get a good education and pursue your ideal career goals; or to have a family and give your kids a better life; or simply be able to take a vacation; and when you're all done, retire with dignity; or all of the above.

The story has been if we work hard in a good job and play by the rules, we all share in the gains produced by our collective productivity. If instead, the global corporations that employ us keep all the earnings only for shareholders and CEO's, the social contract breaks.

Pushing back against this injustice takes an enormous amount of time, effort, energy, and heart. Our exiting board knows this challenge intimately, and on behalf of the membership, I thank them all for their dedicated service to the craft.

Our new board will take the oath of office and pledge their word of honor to be worthy of the trust reposed in them. They will join our Committee Chairs and Delegates in leading the charge in the upcoming contract cycle.

And they are not alone. Here you are, an engaged Guild member; I tell you that you have more power than you know. When we stand together we are a formidable force.

As we step forward into the new year and the next go around the sun, I invite you to expand your presence and increase your participation in your union. Then at the end of this cycle, you'll look back and know that you were part of the rising tide that lifts all boats.

On my side, my time as President draws to a close and I pass on the gavel and the pen into good hands. Being the President of The Animation Guild has been an incredible and humbling honor. I look forward to continuing my service to the membership as a Trustee over the next three years.

I wish you a healthy and joyous holiday season and the happiest of New Years.

In Solidarity,
K.C. Johnson | President

ON THE COVER

FROM LEFT: Becky Bresee, Sylvia Lee, Jennifer Lee, Brittney Lee, Amy Pfaffinger and Joyce Tong.
Photo by Martin Cohen.



**“A complete delight.
Tops the first film in laughs, heart
and gorgeous animation.”**

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*“A hand drawn MASTERPIECE and new Christmas CLASSIC.
A visual tour de force that could well usher in
a new era of animation storytelling.”*

Jerry Beek, ANIMATION SCOOP



*“GORGEOUSLY ANIMATED and a movie
that warms the heart just when we need it the most.
THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT.”*

Pete Hammond, DEADLINE



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KEYFRAME

Editor-in-Chief	Alexandra Drosu
Art Director	Jenn Logan/Studio Fuse, Inc.
Photographers	Tim Sullens, David Yeh, Martin Cohen
Contributing Writers	Karen Briner, Kim Fay, Whitney Friedlander, Even Henson, Kevin Hopps, Paula Spence
Editorial Assistants	Rusteen Honardoost, Marie Story
Publishing Committee	K.C. Johnson, Jeanette Moreno King, Jason MacLeod, Jason Mayer, Paula Spence, Dave Thomas
Executive Board	K.C. Johnson (PRESIDENT), Jason MacLeod (BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE), Jeanette Moreno King (VICE-PRESIDENT), Paula Spence (RECORDING SECRETARY), Robert St. Pierre (SERGEANT-AT-ARMS), David Chlystek (TRUSTEE), J.J. Conway, Brandon Jarratt, Steve Kaplan (TRUSTEE), Spencer Knapp, Ray Leong, Ashley Long, Jason Mayer, Larry Smith, Candice Stephenson, Dave Thomas (TRUSTEE)
Advertising	IngleDodd Media (310) 207-4410 tag@ingledodd.com
Editorial Offices	1105 N. Hollywood Way Burbank, CA 91505 (818) 845-7500



We welcome editorial submissions; please contact us at editor@tag839.org or alexi.drosu@tag839.org.

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the
animation
guild

Representing animation artists,
writers and technicians since 1952.



CELEBRATIONS & SALUTATIONS



THIS ISSUE MARKS THE EIGHTH INSTALLMENT OF *KEYFRAME* AND WE ARE CELEBRATING WITH TWO ACCOLADES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR COMMUNICATIONS

ASSOCIATION—A FIRST PLACE WIN IN THE BEST FEATURE STORY CATEGORY AND A SECOND PLACE WIN IN THE BEST CARTOON CATEGORY FOR ONE OF KRIS MUKAI'S INFORMATIVE COMICS.

We are in good company—other unions celebrated included publications from the California Federation of Teachers, the American Postal Workers Union, United Food and Commercial Workers, and SAG. These unions now know who we are, strengthening our bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood across the United States. Our efforts to elevate the profile of our craft and celebrate the artists, technicians, and writers who work within it, are finally starting to pay off. And, in this issue, 70 TAG members were featured—that's an all-time record!

In the 2019 Holiday Gift Guide (p. 29), you'll meet 21 artists who are turning their after hours passions into unique crafts for sale at our Holiday Market on December 6. You'll also get to know 21 TAG members who were honored with a Golden Award for dedicating 50 years to the craft (p. 46). While thirteen artists, technicians and writers share the creative solutions they implemented while working on *Frozen II* (p. 38). Many of these individuals often get overlooked in the mainstream media, which tends to focus on those at the top without fully acknowledging the contributions of thousands of Animation Guild members. In *Keyframe*, we get to change that narrative and applaud our diverse talent.

None of this, however, would have happened without the vision of Business Representative Jason MacLeod or the support of the Executive Board or the commitment of the Publishing Committee. As many of these individuals step aside from leadership positions, we salute their dedication, perseverance and enthusiasm.

Happy Holidays!

Alexandra

Alexandra Drosu
editor@tag839.org

ABOVE, FROM LEFT: Alexandra Drosu, Recording Secretary Paula Spence, Business Rep Jason MacLeod, President K.C. Johnson and Vice President Jeanette Moreno King posing after the Golden Awards banquet.

CONTRIBUTORS



KAREN BRINER (*Hand Drawn Ham*) is the author of two middle-grade children's novels and is busy working on a

third involving time travel, while also ghostwriting a biography. Her work as a scriptwriter includes the animated South African television series *Magic Cellar* that aired on HBO.



MARTIN COHEN (Cover Photograph) has been working as a freelance photographer in Los Angeles since

1988. His photographs have been shown in galleries in Amsterdam, New York and Los Angeles, and appeared in *Vanity Fair*, *Harper's Bazaar* and more. Originally from Amsterdam, where he attended the Dutch Film Academy, he has lived in the USA for over twenty years.



LA based photographer **TIM SULLENS** has one wife, two daughters and six cameras. Over the years, he has captured images

of musicians and performers, political rallies and weddings. In this issue, he snapped the crafts in the Holiday Gift Guide and the honorees at the Golden Awards.



You might recognize **RUSTEEN HONARDOOST** (Hope Floats) from the TAG office but after hours he contributes to

Keyframe, competes in Killer Queen weekly at Free Play and is writing a cartoon pilot.



**“A FRESH PERSPECTIVE AND
PLENTY OF MAGIC.**

The animation and production design are stunning. Breathtakingly beautiful sequences. The startlingly profound and moving message we’re left with is a universal one: If we care for nature and animals with compassion and understanding, there’s a larger, unseen magic that just might reveal itself to you and through you.”

Katie Walsh, Los Angeles Times

**BEST ANIMATED
FEATURE FILM**

Produced By
Suzanne Buirgy p.g.a.

Producer
Peilin Chou

Written & Directed By
Jill Culton



DREAMWORKS

ABOMINABLE

PEARL

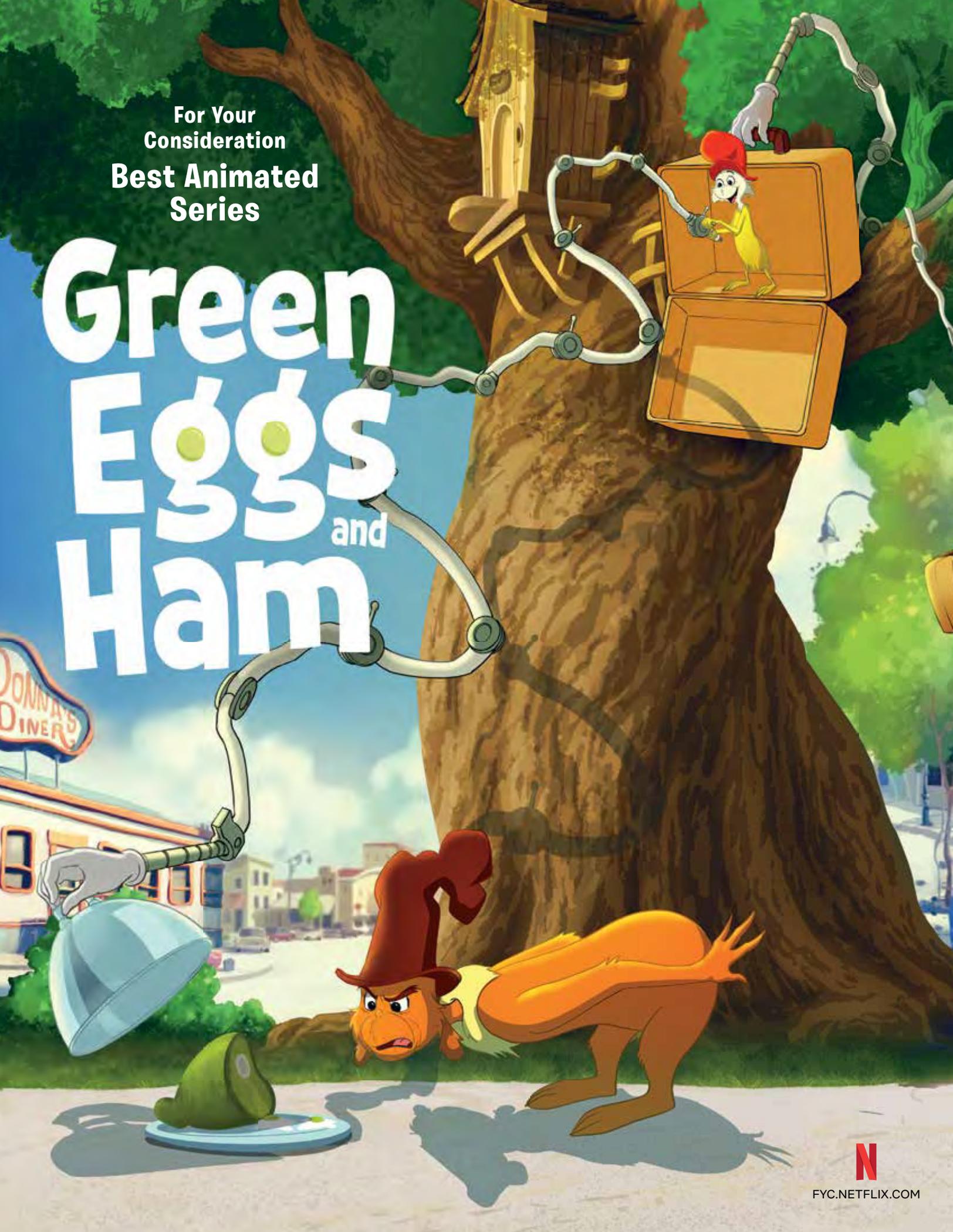
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WHAT'S THE BEST CAREER ADVICE YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?



If you want a long career and you want to grow as an artist, be on time, work hard, have a good attitude, always try to work with people that know more than you and surround yourself with people that make your job easier. —**Randy Myers, Animation Director, *Tom and Jerry***



Back when I was a student and worried about landing my first job, my advisor shared her recipe for a successful applicant: a friendly demeanor paired with a memorable first impression. I've applied this simple recipe during interviews, pitches, and networking events over the years. More often than not, I've found it to hold true. —**Kristin Donner, Visual Development Artist**



Learn about the jobs of the people you work with. It's good for networking, gives you a deeper appreciation of your peers, helps you understand how all the creative pieces fit together, and can lead to other job options in the future. —**George Yang, Storyboard Artist, *Bob's Burgers***



My first job in animation was as an inbetweener for the wonderful animator Corny Cole. The job—a courtroom litigation film animating a football player breaking his neck on the field. Corny's advice: "Wear as many hats as you can in this business; you'll be a better filmmaker, and you'll be employed."—**Sherie Pollack, Animation Director, *Invader Zim***



I worked for Ray Patterson at Hanna-Barbera in the 1980's. He was a great animator and director. In those days when the world was "pre-digital" we would direct shows by slugging the storyboard. That meant directing the show at the board stage. He would always say to me as I would leave his office: "Keep smiling!" Those words have stayed with me all these years and when I think of Ray I always hear him saying them. I guess those are the best words of advice that I can recall given to me. —**Robert Alvarez, Supervising Animation Director, *Infinity Train***

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

WHAT EXACTLY DO TIMING DIRECTORS DO? AND WHAT IS AN EXPOSURE SHEET? WE TALKED WITH THREE INDUSTRY PROS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE JOB.



RAY KOSARIN
TIMING DIRECTOR,
FAMILY GUY

Kosarin, a fairly new transplant to the West Coast spent much of his career working in New York as a traditional character animator and learning the trade from industry veterans. He worked as a director on *Beavis and Butt-Head* and a supervisor director on *Daria*, then began using digital tools to animate for *Sesame Street* and HBO before making the move to LA.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOB?

Timers come onto the show after the storyboarding, dialog record, and animatic, and prepare the X-sheets with detailed animation instructions for overseas animators. Every action on the screen gets spelled out frame-by-frame—all the characters' and props' movements, all the cuts, camera moves, expressions, eye movements, and so on. We work closely with the directors and make sure to learn and satisfy their intentions as fully as possible. And we work intimately with the dialogue track—listening for every inflection in each voice. The aim is to make each character's performance as good as possible, so that the voice and action come together onscreen as one complete performance.

HOW DOES YOUR WORK INFLUENCE WHAT WE SEE ON THE SCREEN?

At the most basic level, we make sure every important visual at any moment is seen and understood. We have to be conscious where we think the viewer's eye is—and how and when to lead the eye to the part of the frame where something important is about to happen. On another level, we have

to absorb the energy of a character's mood, the phrasing of a line, or the delivery of a joke, and shape the animation timing to hit its marks at the best possible instant. If a gag hits two frames too early, we might miss it; too late, it's not as funny. A lot of the time, humor plays out on an unconscious level—some jokes are funnier if the camera comes to a stop slightly before the character, which almost flirts a little with the audience and lets them feel superior to the characters. Other jokes hit funnier if the camera arrives a frame or two late—like the audience got taken by surprise.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF THE JOB?

My favorite moments are when there's a great dialogue track—an interesting performance from the voice actor inspires you. The energy on each syllable—where an inhale hits, where you feel the voice lighten or breath creep into it—might mean one frame more or less for the character to hit a pose, or whether they accelerate into it, whether the eyes delay or anticipate an action, and so on.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES?

The hardest scenes are those where there's a large crowd. Plotting the actions of every character and making sure they work together—with the other characters, with the position of a moving camera, or so that the gravity and weight of characters jumping or props falling is timed believably—takes a long time. And these usually aren't the scenes where you get the satisfaction of really nice acting moments. It's heavy lifting.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD TIMING DIRECTOR?

It's valuable if you have experience as a character animator—when you are asking the animators to do something a certain way,

you'll want to be sure it follows the principles of animation that matter for the scene, that it will look cartoon-believable, and that it's reasonable. Drawing ability definitely helps—we often add breakdown poses between board poses to help a tricky action be more interesting. If you're doing action-adventure, you'll want a sense of anatomy, gravity, and weight to make scenes believable. If you're doing comedy, you'll certainly want a sense of humor and a love of comic timing.



KIMSON ALBERT
TIMING DIRECTOR,
VICTOR & VALENTINO,
STEVEN UNIVERSE: THE MOVIE

Kimson started out on *Beavis and Butt-Head*. After a decade-long detour to composing for animation, he returned to the craft working as an animation director on *The Venture Bros*. In 2016, he moved to LA to work as the supervising animation director on *OK K.O.!*

DESCRIBE YOUR JOB

Each show is nuanced differently and the workload that we do varies depending on the type of materials we get. Basically, we're really only needed if there's a studio pipeline that uses exposure sheets. It's really the liaison between the overseas studio and pre-production here. In some productions, every single pose is drawn and mapped out, and in that case, you're really just timing out those poses and you're not adding anything of your own to it. In other cases, they'll give you a storyboard pose that is representing way more than

what's been given to you, and you can plus the action. We're kind of like these weird wizards who speak a certain language.

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE ON AN X-SHEET WHEN YOU'RE WORKING ON IT.

An exposure sheet marries the soundtrack and the running frame count of the picture. You're basically tracking at what frame an action is happening, and so each sheet is 80 frames—[just over] three seconds. You're going to see a lip assignment, you're going to see the animation action, and you're going to see the camera moves and FX all on one sheet so the studio is able to look at the design pack, the storyboard and exposure sheets and they'll get all the information they need to draw and generate the final image. If the storyboards are not as jazzy as you'd like, sometimes you plus it to give it more life.

WHAT DOES YOUR TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE?

First, I get my coffee! Depending on the day and how much footage I have, I try to give myself a kind of a daily quota I want to accomplish. To launch an episode, we do a design breakdown, and all the department heads go through the episode and call out what they need. Once that happens, I get the final board and the final animatic. Personally, I do the lip sync first, assigning lip positions to the phonetics that are on the sheets. Not everybody does that, but I [like to] get familiar with the sections that I'm working on. Then I'll go back and just do action, so that I'm really concentrating on the action of the characters based on the storyboard.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE JOB?

When you can sneak in certain little things that punctuate a joke or a gag. I do enjoy

bringing to life the original vision that the creators have. I'm also one of the few positions that is able to see pre-production and post-production. When the footage comes back, I get to sit in on the retakes, see what I gave [the Korean studio] and see how they interpreted it. Then I can get better at communicating with them. I can get better at my craft.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES?

You're kind of working in a vacuum until you see the footage, and that process, especially when I first started, was really weird—to wait three or four months to see what you did. Oftentimes, that's the first hurdle that you have to get over because you've already done four episodes before you get the first show back. You're well into thinking that something was working. You have to adjust.



JULI MURPHY
TIMING
SUPERVISOR,
PARADISE PD

Murphy started her career at Colossal

in San Francisco, working on commercials before moving to LA in 1990 to work on the first season of *Rugrats*, where she learned sheet timing. Currently, she's working on *Paradise PD*, which is being animated in Harmony at the Bento Box Atlanta studio.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOB?

Working in Harmony is new and different! My only exposure to the program before was a few months on *Bob's Burgers* several years ago. We are evolving a new method to communicate with the American animators who luckily speak English but do not work with traditional X-sheets. The line producer pitched the job to me as, "We're not sure yet how we're going to do this," so of course I said, yes, immediately.

WALK US THROUGH A TYPICAL DAY.

Every day is different! I am usually working on three episodes simultaneously and helping the retake department sort through take 1's on a fourth episode. I have two experienced timing directors working with

me, Phil Cummings and Swinton Scott. Generally, we split the shows between the three of us.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF THE JOB?

Harmony gives you the ability to draw right into the animatic, add poses, change timing, and play the new version back immediately. It's a total rush—instant animation gratification and a far cry from waiting overnight for film to be processed at the lab. The other best part: We have a great, hardworking and super friendly group. Many of them are new to me, and most are younger workers.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES?

The tug of war between higher quality and meeting deadlines. It's an eternal struggle. Ultimately, we all have to compromise by doing the best we can in the time allotted.

HOW DOES YOUR WORK INFLUENCE WHAT WE SEE ON THE SCREEN?

If we were building a house, timing would be drawing blueprints for the animators to bang the nails. It's partially artistic, partially technical. We tell the animators when actions happen, how many frames every motion is for all character, FX, or camera moves. We add many thumbnails to the timing, either in X-sheets or a Harmony file,

breakdown poses, extra expressions or hook up poses the board artist didn't have time to put in. Timing is a critical part of animation otherwise you have a big, beautiful, comic book. Bad timing can screw up a great board and good timing can add subtlety to a weak one. Timing makes a joke work better, or a character dance on the beat of the music.

HOW HAS YOUR JOB CHANGED SINCE YOU STARTED USING HARMONY?

The biggest change is not using paper and pencil for timing sheets. My pencil sharpener at Disney broke a couple years ago, and there were no replacements left in the studio! Everything is sent digitally around the office and to the animation studio. "Shipping a show" takes just a few minutes to zip the files, and press send. Another difference is learning what information is most helpful for the Harmony animators, and what we might be spending time on that is now unnecessary. For instance, I used to focus a lot on the lip assignment because if it's wrong, it can be an expensive retake. But as the mouths are very easy to change in Harmony, I can focus on drawing more poses into the animatic. Workflow is similar: After the animatic is locked, the track is read and lip assigned, then we have a few weeks for timing. When I'm done, I just post the file to the studio server.



FROM HOT TUBS TO HEROES

ONE CHARACTER DESIGNER'S TRULY, UNUSUAL CAREER JOURNEY



Kathryn Hudson still shakes her head in amazement: "I never thought I would get all the opportunities that

I've been afforded." Hailing from a small town (population 150), Hudson's journey from the Mississippi Delta to Los Angeles is anything but straightforward.

Hudson showed an interest in art as a young girl but doodled on her own since her school didn't offer an art program. Fortunately, her mother found an art teacher in Jackson, Mississippi (about

60 miles away) teaching figure drawing to adults; she wrote a doctor's note to excuse Hudson from school every Wednesday and then the two headed to the DMV. At the ripe age of 14, Hudson got her hardship driver's license and started commuting to art classes weekly.

By the time she was 16, she had amassed enough work for a portfolio and applied to the painting programs at both Ringling School and the Memphis College of Art but reality set in when she couldn't afford the tuition.

"God works in mysterious ways," says Hudson. "My art teacher, Bob Pennebaker,

was approached by a small college [Belhaven University] in Mississippi to chair the art department and he said, 'I'm going to take this girl with me.'" Hudson has more than a full scholarship to thank Pennebaker for, she also met her future husband in his art class.

After graduating with a BA in Art, Hudson grew concerned about the prospect of having a 9-to-5 job doing what she loved. She decided to apply to grad school and was accepted into the Illustration program at SCAD. Only this time, she would be personally responsible for the tuition and she figured if she was going to go

into debt, she may as well go study in France as well.

“It changed my life because that’s where I discovered artists that still influence me today,” she says. She was inspired by Viennese artist Egon Schiele, she visited Marguerite Sauvage’s studio and found herself crying in front of Bernini’s works in Italy. She soaked up the environment, but she wasn’t a great networker, preferring to retire to her quiet dorm. After graduation she was left with few options for work. She and her husband returned to Mississippi—“That was not a good idea,” she adds.

Hudson got a temporary job selling cellphones but ended up working there for four years. “I think everybody should work

in retail at one point in their life. It teaches you so many valuable lessons—you’ve got to deal with assholes, you’ve got to deal with bosses, you’ve got to deal with crazy customers and nice ones. It’s public facing... that helped me grow a lot,” she says.

Though the experience helped shape Hudson’s customer service skills, she still dreamed of pursuing art. Her husband, a retail store manager, said, “There’s a Walmart everywhere, what do you want to do?” The couple headed to the travel section at Barnes and Noble and chose their next destination—Atlanta. They didn’t know anyone in the city; Hudson got a job selling hot tubs and they both started taking figure drawing classes from Brian Stelfreeze.

It was in that class that Hudson’s future would be determined. One of the students there was illustrator Tommy Arnold, who encouraged her to get in touch with Floyd County Productions. The timing was perfect—someone on *Archer* was going on maternity leave and they needed an artist to fill in. “I’d never taken a test before and I didn’t know anything about animation,” she says. She logged onto Lynda.com and taught herself to use Photoshop and Illustrator. “The day I opened Illustrator, I started crying,” she laughs. She muddled her way through the test and, according to the production, was “terrible at the puppets.” Fortunately, the test had also included some character design, which they liked. Against all odds, she got the job.

“I had never heard of *Archer*, I had to Google it,” she says. Two weeks into the job, the production had to lay off staff—miraculously she survived the cuts. As she grew in confidence working in animation, she began to explore other artistic vehicles. Her sister made her open Instagram and Twitter accounts, she attended her first “Con” and decided to sell her own creations. She needed to raise money to fund a range of enamel pins and started a Kickstarter campaign. She couldn’t imagine how far news of her campaign would reach.

“I was bobbing around and somebody sends me a friend request on Facebook—it’s Lauren Faust!” she remembers. Faust sent Hudson a note, admiring her work and asking if she might be available to work freelance on her new show, *DC Super Hero Girls*, as a character designer. When Faust asked, “Do you live in LA?” Hudson didn’t flinch; she and her husband packed up their house and she was on the Warner Bros. lot two weeks later. “I think they felt so guilty that I moved across the country, they just kept me,” she laughs. “Life experience is really valuable. Every little thing leads to something else!”

LEFT: A whimsical illustration for Hudson’s sister’s hair salon is inspired by the shape language of the ‘60s. BELOW: Playing around with the DC women.



HOPE FLOATS

“You’re hitting the audience with music and dancing and bright colors and fantastic shapes,” he says. “Making their experience really fun, and that’s the whole point of it.”

BELOW: Ramirez in front of the *How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World* float; Designs for Honda **(NEAR)** and China Airlines **(OPPOSITE)**



STORY ARTIST JOHN RAMIREZ TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO ASTONISHING THE CROWDS AT THE TOURNAMENT OF ROSES PARADE

Every year hundreds of thousands of people line up along Colorado Boulevard to watch the Rose Parade, and it’s up to designers like John Ramirez (a story artist on the film *Tarzan* and more recently on *Elena of Avalor*) to astonish them with immaculately crafted parade floats that have been heralding the New Year since 1890.

“The audience only has a few seconds to see [whatever story you have to tell] before they move on to the next float,” says Ramirez, who uses his experience at Disney and Warner Bros. as inspiration. “I find it a lot like storyboarding,” he says. “You’re trying to create a scene that they can understand right away.”

Each float becomes a frame to tell a complete story visually, including characters, costumes, and even dance choreography. “You’re hitting the audience with music and dancing and bright colors and fantastic shapes,” he says. “Making their experience really fun, and that’s the whole point of it.”

The year’s worth of work building a float begins in February when the organizers announce the theme, which this year is “The Power of Hope.” At this point, Ramirez is free to sketch out anything and everything that comes to mind. Working within the



constraints of the theme isn't a problem for him though. In fact, he says, "I find that limitations in art make the art better."

With his preliminary sketches completed, Ramirez meets with his client to pitch them his concepts. Each float is sponsored by corporations who might come into the room with their own ideas for a float or with nothing at all, and Ramirez collaborates with them to find the story they want to tell.

Drawing from his experience in animation, this series of notes and revisions is an integral part of the creative process, and sometimes the relationship between them can grow over the years like it has with China Airlines, for whom Ramirez has designed multiple floats for. After all this time, they've developed an effective shorthand that turns the client-artist relationship into a true partnership.

It's in summer when building the floats turns into a relay race. Ramirez hands off his designs to a 3D modeler who translates them into a computer model, which in turn is fed to a robotic sculptor that carves out the design in foam with expert precision. Carpenters assemble the pieces onto the float's monstrous metal chassis while welders assemble the steel pieces together.

The float doesn't take its full shape until a few days before the parade when the florists come in and coat it with fresh flowers. Flowers, it turns out, are the real star of the show. Until this point, the float is monochromatic plastic, styrofoam, and steel. Afterwards, it's a dizzying mix of every color nature can produce. Collaborating with the florists is delicate work, whether they're trying to create a sense of peaceful tranquility or fluid motion.

"Their office is like a mad scientist's laboratory," he says when explaining

how the florists are able to match natural materials like dried nuts, fruits, and flowers to the colors in Ramirez's designs. Artificial materials are prohibited, which means 100 percent of what you're seeing on each parade float comes out of the florist's lab. Most colors are created with dried flower petals and fruits, but the centerpiece of a float often requires a special ingredient. When creating a float for Netflix's *The Little Prince*, for example, whole flower heads were used to create a giant planet because they added an extra layer of texture and depth to the planet's craters that was essential to the story.

After all this work is done, the big day comes with all the pomp and circumstance the Rose Parade is famous for, but don't go looking for Ramirez. "I'm happy to be at home watching it from TV," he says with a hearty laugh.

—Rusteen Honardoost

KEEPING WORKERS SAFE

THE IATSE REPORTING APP ALLOWS YOU TO REPORT HARASSMENT ON THE JOB **By Ashley Long**

If you experience an incident of sexual harassment in the workplace, the typical first step encouraged is to report it to your immediate supervisor or to the HR department. However, in the real world we've all probably worked at least one place where supervisors turned a blind eye, HR felt compromised, or—often in the case of smaller shops—HR just plain didn't exist. So where do you go to get help when there's nobody in-house on your side?

IATSE has an app for that—and a hotline too! The IATSE Safety Info Reporting App was designed primarily for reporting physical safety hazards on live action sets (such as unsafe electrical cables, vehicle safety issues, etc.) but also allows one to report harassment on a job. You can call the hotline or use the drop down menu in the app and select “harassment” as your topic.

I spoke with one of IATSE's Safety Hotline first responders who shared what you can expect.

The IATSE Safety Hotline can be reached by dialing toll free 844-IA-AWARE. You can leave a message or speak with a live, trained representative.

The IATSE Safety Info App is available for iPhone and Android. To learn more about the features and be linked to downloads, visit medium.com/@IATSE/iatse-safety-app-now-available-eeg7017f76fa

WHEN A PERSON CALLS IN OR USES THE ONLINE FORM, WHERE DOES IT GO?

The individuals on the other end of the app have First Responder trauma training. They are there to listen and collect as much information about the situation as you would like to share. They will use gentle, fact gathering questions to best understand what has happened, and what you would like to see done about it.

CAN REPORTS BE MADE ANONYMOUSLY?

Of course. IATSE understands that victims of harassment often wish to keep details private or may be fearful of retaliation. However, anonymous reports are difficult to pursue. The more information you can provide, the greater the possibility IATSE and your Local can step in and help keep workers safe. If you are not ready to attach your name to a report, leave the name field anonymous but provide a contact number where a responder can reach you. Being able to ask follow up questions can be very important for an investigating team. Providing the name of the studio where the incident took place, and details like the specific production or harasser's name—if you are willing to name them—can help IATSE set to action. Your name and contact information will never be given out if you would like them withheld. Confidentiality is of the highest priority.

WHO WILL BE NOTIFIED OF MY REPORT? ARE YOU GOING TO CONTACT MY BOSS?

The course of action depends entirely on your wishes and comfort level. Some people call the hotline because they just want someone to listen, but ultimately do not wish for the incident to be pursued. Others report so that IATSE can look into the issue, and set the gears in motion to make the studio aware they have a problem that needs to be looked at. The response team does NOT contact your immediate supervisor or the harassing party. With your permission, a logical first step is for IATSE to reach out to your Guild and have someone at the office follow up with you, to work in tandem toward your desired result.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM MY GUILD?

Every situation will be different, and again this all depends on the reporting party's comfort level, desired action, and willingness to provide information. Member services are part of a Local's responsibility. If you want your studio to investigate the incident, one way to start might be to have the Guild send your studio or production a letter, notifying them that there has been a report. Knowing that the greater body of IATSE is on the case may be what it takes for a production to take the matter seriously and examine the conduct of their crew. The IATSE Constitution also allows for an individual to be charged with “Conduct Unbecoming of a Member”. This is similar to the course Local 839 took with the Savino case, wherein the charge was “Disloyalty to Another Member”. If you feel you have experienced something where such charges would be appropriate, please reach out to IATSE via this reporting app or hotline and start the discussion with a responder and a Guild representative.

WHAT IF THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT I EXPERIENCED DID NOT TAKE PLACE IN THE ACTUAL OFFICE BUT AT AN AFTER-WORK EVENT?

If it involves a co-worker, these incidents are still very relevant to report. Your employer is legally obligated to provide a safe working environment, and if you don't feel safe around a co-worker because of something that happened off hours, that is still a matter that should be addressed.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HARASSMENT OR TRAUMA?

Yes! IATSE reached out to the Actor's Fund and they generously agreed to partner with us to pair victims with the resources they need. The Actor's Fund can connect you with a counselor in their network who is trained to listen and help you process what you are going through. And don't forget the fantastic mental health benefits available through Optum, which is part of our MPI benefit package. Their information is on your insurance card and helpful phone reps can get you connected with a provider in your area.



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION
BEST ANIMATED SERIES



FYC.NETFLIX.COM

HAND DRAWN HAM

THE NEW *GREEN EGGS AND HAM* SHOW TRANSFORMS 50 WORDS INTO AN EPIC JOURNEY

When Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, beloved author of iconic children’s books first set out to write *Green Eggs and Ham*, he did so on a dare from his editor—write a book using a vocabulary of only 50 words to tell a story. Not only did Dr. Seuss win the bet, but the book was a great success and went on to instill a love of reading in kids around the world.

One of those kids was Jared Stern, creator and showrunner of Netflix’s recently released *Green Eggs and Ham* series, who faced a similar but quite opposite challenge: Take a brilliantly simple book and stretch it out to fill 13 episodes of animation—an exciting yet daunting task. Stern had childhood memories of the book’s bright orange cover and that it had appealed to him because it was subversive, whimsical, weird and fun. “The biggest challenge was how to expand something that is so perfectly simple, while retaining the soul of what made it great in the first place,” he says.

When he revisited the book it occurred to him that it’s both an odd couple story—essentially about a grumpy guy who’s closed off not only to green eggs and ham but to everything in life, and a silly guy who is open to trying things—and it’s also a road trip defined by places where Guy Am I refuses to eat the eponymous dish—not in a car, train, boat, or



OPPOSITE: The iconic character, Sam I Am. BELOW: A scene storyboarded by John Anderson.



0093-9 298

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0118-9 299

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0096-6 300

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0095-5 301

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0096-6 302

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0095-5 303

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0043-7 304

SAM
I knew you'd come back! I saw
you get into that cab--



0097-7 305

GUY: Believe me, I tried.



0417-2 306

SAM: And you still couldn't do
it!

anywhere. The series deals with contemporary concerns, but, he says, “in many ways they are the same concerns Dr. Seuss had when he was writing his books.” In that respect there wasn’t much they needed to do to make it fresh because they were dealing with issues, such as prejudice, that are still relevant today.

Stern had worked on animated features and found the iterative nature of filmmaking to be incredibly valuable. He tried to bring some of that into their process and believes what they

ended up with was a hybrid between feature and TV in both the quality of the animation and the style of the storytelling. While four years sounds like a long time for an animated TV show, he points out that for a feature that would be normal.

The storytelling took time because they used the feature animation model, going from script to storyboard artists, encouraging them to contribute new ideas. “So it’s like a second writer’s room except they can draw better than us and they’re amazing visual

storytellers,” he adds. They would go into editorial from there and do scratch voices to see what was working. After getting notes, it was back to rewriting and more storyboards and only after that would they record the actors. This process was repeated twice for each episode.

Another way Stern wanted to pay homage to Dr. Seuss was by using rhyme. “I’m a big hip hop fan—I don’t know if that’s why it was something that came naturally to me—or maybe because I read so much Dr. Seuss,”



LEFT: Reem Ali-Adeeb at work. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Guy I Am, Sam I Am and the eponymous ham; the oxicycle, one of prop designer Ali-Adeeb's favorite creations; Guy I Am's invention; Bad guy McWinkle and his side kick; overprotective Michellee with daughter EB.

says writer Vanessa McGee, who crafted the rhythmic dialogue. To prepare, she also read the author's biography, which discussed the theory behind his rhyming scheme. McGee says that Dr. Seuss is an icon for a reason—his rhymes look deceptively simple, yet there's "something inimitable about it...an essence that you're never going to quite get." She was deeply conscious of dealing with something that people hold dear and having to handle that with care while still having fun. She loved the freedom of writing for animation, where you can make characters do absolutely anything, even fly, a stark contrast to live action where, "if you dare write a scene that's exterior night, they'll be so angry with you!"

Reem Ali-Adeeb worked as the Lead Props Designer on the series. Born in Syria, Ali-Adeeb only discovered Dr. Seuss as an adult and was "blown away by how simple yet incredibly fascinating his writing was." Her biggest challenge was to "hit the style" of Dr. Seuss and it took a while to find out exactly how to introduce the old favorite in a new way. When she designed a vehicle or a prop, she'd look at the '60s aesthetic and then tried to incorporate Dr. Seuss shapes,

like the s-curve line that is so prominent in his work.

Ali-Adeeb loved the vision of art director Pascal Campion, who wanted the world to be imbued with a sense of realism so that, "it didn't seem as if everything is made of marshmallows and pillows." She explains that this approach adds dramatic tension, allowing the viewer to be afraid that the character might actually get hurt. Her favorite prop was the oxicycle, a bike with eight wheels, and she loved working on Guy's strange inventions—like the anti-umbrella—which has water coming from inside, as well as thinking up different ways to serve green eggs and ham for each episode—from smoothies to breakfast burritos.

Storyboard artist John Anderson was not really interested in going back to television but when he saw the scale of this production, he jumped at the chance. The process was very much like a feature, which gave the show a cinematic feel. "The fun thing about 2D and hand drawn is that you can really stretch it and move it," he says. Working on it was thrilling because sets weren't built in a CG environment and so weren't locked down. "There was so much freedom," and "every shot

was new and exciting because every shot was drawn." Stern adds, "There's something beautiful about hand drawn animation that we missed and hasn't really been done for a broad family audience in this way for a while." The nostalgia it evokes felt like the right fit for Seuss's illustration style.

Anderson also found it exciting that the series is essentially one long epic story—the characters didn't reset at the end of each episode as is common in television. Because they develop and grow emotionally as the story progresses, he had to be constantly aware of where they were emotionally in the story. There was freedom for the actors too, if they did something fun or made a sound, then it came back to board and was reworked.

Stern is quick to credit the 300 talented people who poured their creative energy into the making of the series. The showrunner recalls pitching the series to Geisel's widow, Audrey, who was in her nineties. He sat in Dr. Seuss's office filled with the author's personal belongings, with a view overlooking the Pacific and a "single, perfect Dr. Seussian tree." It was pretty intimidating but when Stern was done, Mrs. Geisel said: "I wondered how anyone was going to do anything with that one, you know, it's pretty simple. But you pulled it off." It was as close as he would ever get to the author who died in 1991, whom Stern believes would approve of what he has done. He hopes he'd say something like, "You didn't screw it up that bad." And perhaps he'd say it quite eloquently, in rhyme.

—Karen Briner





BEST ANIMATED SHORT

Written & Directed by **ANDREW EREKSON**
Produced by **JEFF HERMANN**



MAR O O N E D



2019 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

We know that TAG members are the most talented in the industry so it shouldn't surprise you that they also create spectacular crafts, jewelry and treats. All those featured in the following pages will be selling their wares at the Holiday Market on December 6th. And what better way to celebrate the holidays than by getting gorgeous and unique gifts for those on your list while also supporting your fellow union members!



REUSE, RECYCLE, WEAR

Storyboard artist **Anissa Espinosa** stumbled across the craft of paper beads when she was looking to take a break from drawing. Crafting colorful, tangible necklaces turned out to be both fun and meditative. She incorporates recycled, handmade, and vintage materials into her pieces that range in price from \$25–\$45. You can find her on Instagram, @paperghostco.



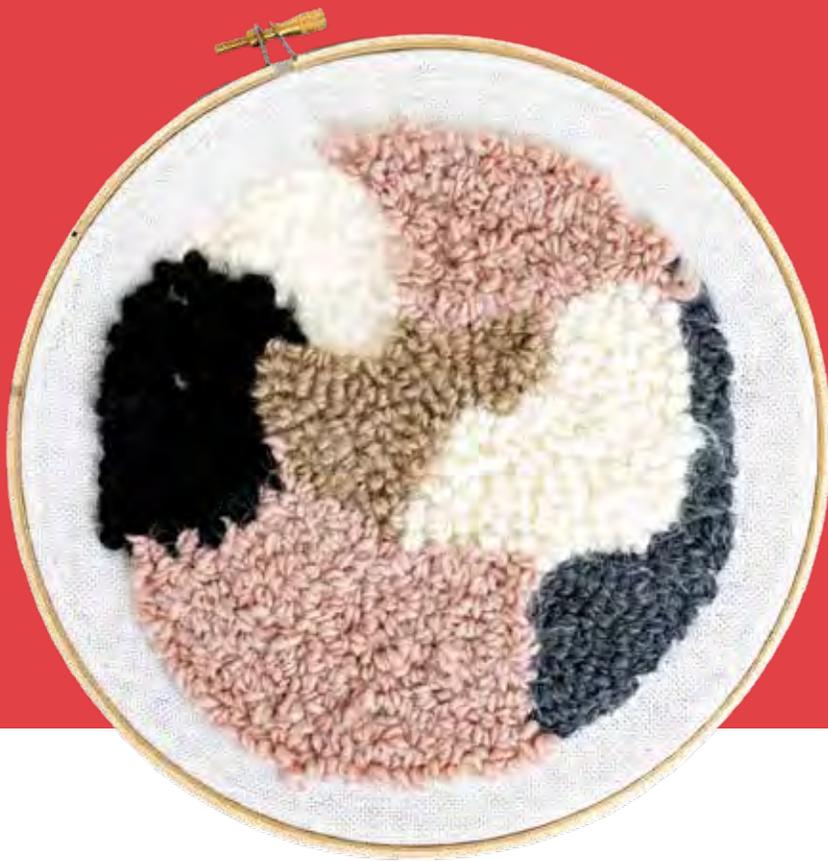
STEW & BREW

When asked how he got into roasting coffee, screenwriter **Jonathan Stewart**, who most recently co-wrote *Angry Birds 2*, has a story to tell that involves a monk and a moment of enlightenment when he learned that coffee becomes stale within two weeks of being roasted. Since roasting his first batch of beans, he hasn't looked back. Now, you can treat the coffee-lover in your life to a 12oz Java Stew bag of single origin beans (\$20), all ethically and sustainably sourced and never ground prior to shipping to maintain maximum freshness. javastew.com

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Wear your weirdness not on your sleeve, but on your lapel! **Miranda Dressler**, a freelance character designer, enjoys making wearable art such as patches and enamel pins that make fun statements and serve as conversation starters. Inspired by cult movies, animals, food and music, she's delighted when people get excited to find that something obscure has been made into a pin. Items range from \$8–\$12 and can be found at mirandadressler.com.





A YEN FOR YARN

Erica Smith only recently started exploring needle punching, a technique she employs in her colorful bags and wall hangings. The background designer, who works at Bento Box, creates abstract and graphic designs out of yarn. These adorn her versatile bags which hold anything from art supplies to cosmetics, or framed wall hangings. Prices range from **\$20–\$50**. Want to commission a piece? Contact her at smith.n.ERICA@gmail.com



WELL PRESERVED

Michele Graybeal developed a taste for the culinary arts on a visit to Germany when she was just six years old. Inspired by her father's love of marmalade, she set herself the task of creating the most flavorful preserves. When she's not working as color and lighting lead on Disney TV Animation's *Monsters At Work*, she's cooking up small batches of citrus marmalades and preserves using natural pectin and fresh ingredients. Pick up a jar for **\$10** at hearthandlarder.com.



PRIMITIVELY FUNKY

Fancy a funky T-shirt or canvas bag with an original block-print design? Look no further than **Phil Cummings'** collection that is inspired by pre-Columbian, Celtic, and African designs. The animation timer for Bento Box's *Paradise PD* fell in love with block-printing when he was seven and often includes Latin epigrams in the motifs. T-shirts are **\$30** and can be found at philcummingsart.com.





CREATIVE SPARKLE

After building things in a digital 3D space, **Meghan Sesnie**, character TD at DreamWorks Animation, finds it refreshing to use her hands to craft something in the physical world. She's been making jewelry since age eleven and expertly crafts beautiful necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and watches. Prices vary with cost of materials, ranging from \$4-\$35. Find her jewelry on [facebook.com/meghansjewelrydesign](https://www.facebook.com/meghansjewelrydesign).

WAX LYRICAL

Egle Marcogliese designs a range of spiritually-inspired handmade candles. The color designer on Warner Bros. *Looney Tunes* Shorts is a self-taught chandler who has long been fascinated with astrology, crystals, tarot, and the occult. Her candles (\$11-\$20) can be used for decoration or ritual and can be acquired at soulwaxco.com.



MIGHTY FINE LEATHER

When searching for a hobby that would reduce his time in front of screens and machines, **Steven Chan**, storyboard artist at Bento Box, discovered the meditative craft of leatherworking. He makes every cut and stitch by hand on his range of refined wares, from key holders and wallets to leashes. Prices range from \$20-\$120, available exclusively at the Holiday Market. Email at stevdraws@gmail.com for more info.



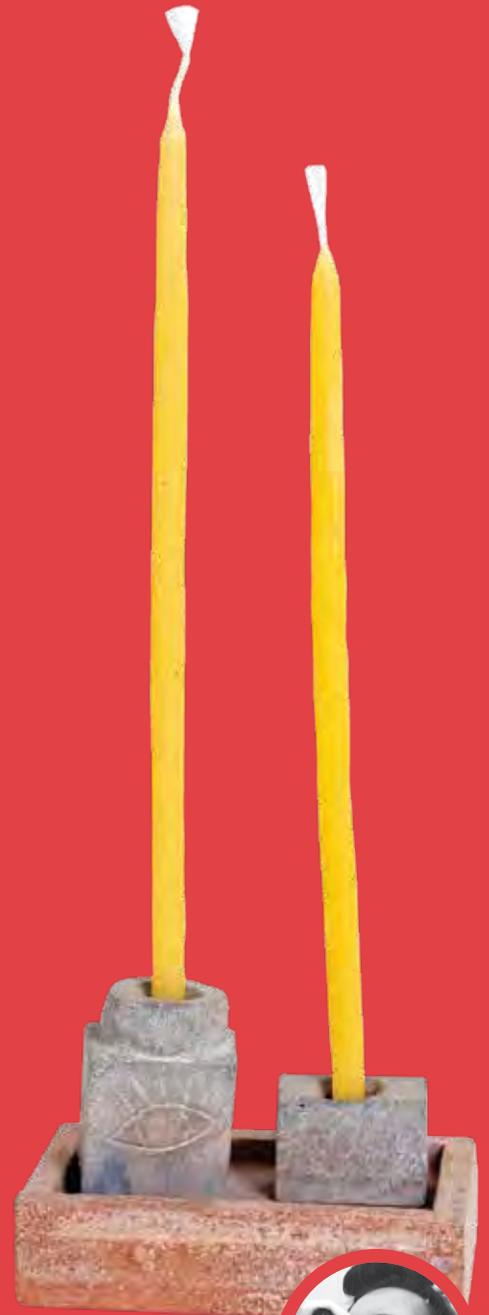
JUST ADD WORDS

The handmade cards that **Juli Murphy**, a timing supervisor on *Paradise PD*, has been creating for over 15 years are all blank inside, leaving room for personal messages. Her cards feature succulents, scenic California locations, as well as holiday themes and she's also working on a set that are 420-friendly. Cards are each priced from \$5-\$12, envelope included. Order by email at jmcc65@yahoo.com.



COOL CATS

Marissa Bernstel, a storyboard revisionist at Bento Box, is passionate about video games, nature, and animals—which all feature in her art. Each of her Bulbasaur Planters (\$25) have unique coloring and spots—perfect for small succulents. Her Cubone Terrariums (\$15-\$20) feature the skull of the eponymous Pokemon in a miniature desert landscape. Your cat might prefer a hand-sewn collar (\$12) in a cool heart-shaped pattern. Find her on Etsy at [etsy.com/shop/McRissaMart](https://www.etsy.com/shop/McRissaMart) or [@McRissa_Art](https://www.instagram.com/McRissa_Art)



BRUTAL BEAUTY

After being asked to design and produce paperweights for a Korea Town hotel, **Erin Althea** decided to launch her own line of Brutalist Art Objects. The background painter at Titmouse, who is working on *Bless The Harts*, uses concrete and resin in her handmade creations. Prices range from \$5-\$300. Find them at loveandquarry.com

ECLECTIC ORIGINALS

Christine Mallouf, whose previous work includes *The Iron Giant*, is interested in anything that involves creating art. She's offering an eclectic selection which just might include that original piece you're looking for—from clay works finished with a high fire glaze to felt purses (\$15) upon which she has sewn her art pieces. Mallouf is the Visual Arts Director for the Conservatory of Fine Arts. See more at smalloufla.blogspot.com.



CREEPY AND CUTE

Many of the designs for **Thom Nicolette's** enamel pins begin as doodles on cocktail napkins over a Mai Tai at his favorite Tiki bar. Only his best designs make it onto his final products, most of which are Halloween-themed. The prop designer, who's currently working on Warner Bros. *Animaniacs*, tries to strike a balance between weird and appealing. Pins are \$12 and can be snapped up year round at etsy.com/shop/thomfoolery.



AMAZING MINIATURES

Freelance artist **Eunsoo Jeong** loves experimenting with found materials when creating her miniature sculptures. Her pieces are inspired by items she encounters in daily life, from office supplies to taco trucks. By highlighting everyday items that are often overlooked, she seeks to remind people of the joy they can bring us. Individual items range in price from \$20-\$40, while custom “shelves” with multiple items start at \$100. Contact her at jeongeunsoo@gmail.com.



CRAZY CONCEPTS

Board artist and revisionist **Yujin Lee** creates pieces according to her personal taste, making items that she would like to own and that make her laugh. For example, she likes spam® and she finds Kermit funny, so she made a bag that combined those concepts. Her items range in price from \$5-\$25. She can be contacted via email at yujleeart@gmail.com.

GO FIGURE

Katie Aldworth, director on Cartoon Network’s *The Fungies*, has acquired tons of handy skills over the years while crafting her own elaborate Halloween and renaissance fair outfits. As soon as she learned to create molds, she began constructing unique figurines from resin, sculpting and painting them by hand. Her whimsical creatures and critters are made in extremely limited runs so snap one up before they’re gone. Contact her at katiealdworth@yahoo.com.



FEATURE



WEARABLE ART

Camille Stancin, freelance Color Designer on Looney Tunes, describes her jewelry as "oddball yet elegant". Her hand painted ceramic pieces are all kiln-fired and antique brass settings give them a 1930s look. The affordable, wearable art starts at \$30 for a necklace or brooch. Glass dome jewelry featuring her illustrations start at \$20, and T-shirts are \$26. Available for purchase at etsy.com/shop/CamilleStancinLA.



STYLISH WOOD WORKS

Drew Newman spends his spare time crafting functional, durable and stylish pieces from fine and rarer hardwoods. (Strictly no pine, poplar, plywood or veneers!) The Bob's Burgers animator offers a range that includes chopping boards, stylus holders, sketch boards and hanukkiahs, with prices from \$20-\$200. For commissioned pieces, he can be found on Instagram @drawnewman and via email at drewhah@gmail.com.



PRAYERS & PARODY

Need cash? St. Cardi B's Money Moves has your back! Kati Prescott (LEFT), a background designer on Muppet Babies, and Melissa Levensgood, a prop designer at Bento Box, teamed up to create a collection of humorous prayer candles. Each one comes with its own bold mantra and draws strength and inspiration from powerful figures in pop culture. Prices range from \$13 to \$20 (with 50% of the proceeds donated to Planned Parenthood). Email kati.prescott@gmail.com or melissalevensgood@gmail.com for more info.

CRAFTY CROCHET

Victoria Orolfo has been crocheting creatively since high school. Her fun hat creations range in theme from animals to Pokemon. The background designer at Cartoon Network also offers plant-themed enamel pins and patches—perfect for those who yearn for a garden but lack a green thumb. Crochet items start at \$20, pins are \$10 and patches \$7. There'll be special deals at the holiday market. Find her creations at etsy.com/shop/victoriaorolfo.



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THIS PAGE: A painting by Art Director Lisa Keene depicting Elsa meeting Gale, the wind spirit.

THE SPIRIT OF CREATION

In *Frozen II*, two new characters of mythical proportions inspire collaborative solutions

By Alexandra Drosu

AFTER THE SUCCESS OF *FROZEN*, THE FILMMAKERS WERE CONFRONTED WITH A LINGERING QUESTION—WHERE DID ELSA GET HER POWERS? FOR INSPIRATION, THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM BEGAN EXPLORING FOLKTALES FROM NORWAY AND ICELAND: “WE STARTED SEEING THIS DEEP MYTHOLOGY AND THESE DEEP ROOTS IN MAGIC OF NATURE,” SAYS DIRECTOR AND WRITER JENNIFER LEE. “WE STARTED TO SEE A STORY THAT FELT LIKE IT WAS ALWAYS THERE.”

This journey of discovery leads the characters out of Arendelle and into an enchanted forest where they meet Gale—a fluid and beautiful wind spirit. “The wind was the most important of the anthropomorphic spirits that came about in a lot of the folklore,” says Lee.

There was only one catch: How do you imbue an invisible character with personality? How do you visualize something that you can’t see?

and debris to describe Gale and to envision how the wind spirit would interact with other characters.

“The real challenge was the new characters and the fact that there had to be so much collaboration between departments,” says Head of Animation Becky Bresee. “There were lots of ideas thrown out in the design process.”

The animation team started to run tests on how the leaves could move to show Gale’s personality with the first

animated with the ones done by effects.

Heads of Animation Tony Smeed and Bresee questioned whether Gale always needed to carry debris to be identified in the scene. In the script, Jennifer Lee had written that upon meeting, Gale gives Elsa a hug, so the team began exploring what that interaction might look like in collaboration with tech animation, the department in charge of hair and cloth simulation.

“There’s a bit of pantomime—a lot of the animators draw first to indicate what the hair would be doing, what the cloth would be doing so that when we went into dailies the directors had an idea of the intention,” says Bresee. “It was a big blend between our two departments.”

In another example, Gale comes through the window of the palace and sweeps through the bedroom. Correy along with Character Technical Director Cameron Black created a test where Correy would animate the Gale rig interacting with the bed, do some drawovers to help show what the performance might look like, and between the rig and drawings, tech animation would come up with simulations. “In the end, we can pull the Gale rig out and what you’re left with is this feeling of wind blowing through the sheets,” says Smeed.



“The real challenge was the new characters and the fact that there had to be so much collaboration between departments... There were lots of ideas thrown out in the design process.”

– HEAD OF ANIMATION, BECKY BRESEE

FACING THE WIND

“How do I draw wind?” wondered Bill Schwab, Art Director Characters, when he first tackled the concept of Gale. Inspired by the setting of the enchanted forest, he set about using sticks, leaves

trials inspired by Schwab’s drawing of Olaf and Gale interacting. Animation Supervisor Trent Correy animated the scene then did drawovers to help inform the effects artists and seamlessly integrate the leaves that were hand

Other considerations included whether the audience would be able to track Gale through a scene, zooming back and forth. The animation team also needed environmental props for Gale to interact with and to anchor the movements. Normally, the environments team works later in the pipeline but, in the case of Gale, both departments had to collaborate much sooner in order to ensure the various props were put into place so that the animation team could clearly depict Gale's personality through these exchanges.

Getting the right performance out of Gale was another challenge that required a creative technical solution. Animators, technical directors and software engineers met twice a week for almost a year to talk about ways to streamline the rigging process, which led to the development of a new tool called Swoop. "We animate Gale by animating the path on which she travels," explains Software Engineer Hannah Swan. The intuitive tool incorporates two major components: the shape of the path (how Gale moves across the screen) and the timing of the path (where it lingers, how long it takes to zip from place to place). "We wanted to make a tool that is easy to use, easy to experiment with on the performance, and easy to change," she says.

Rather than dialing in numbers to create the rig, the new tool allowed the animators to quickly draw a curve or a path for the leaf, or whatever else was attached to it. The artists could lock off segments using anchors and manipulate small sections. The idea was to streamline the number of steps it took to complete the rig and speed up the creative process, says Swan. They also created nudge and smudge tools to make it easier for the animators to manipulate the path and applied the functionality in virtual reality so an artist could create a path and see how it moved while in the respective environment.

A PERSONAL TOUCH



When Story Artist Sylvia Lee begins working on a sequence, it usually begins with a conversation. The story team will read the script and the directors, in this case Jennifer Lee and Chris Buck, will identify specific beats they'd like to see within the scene. The artists return back to their desks and begin roughly sketching out initial ideas.

"We usually get a week to work on our scenes, then we pitch in front of the story team and get feedback," says Sylvia Lee.

"You try to address [notes] in another week then pitch again. When it's good to go, you send it to editorial."

The process is straightforward, but the artistry comes from the personal interpretation often drawing from one's own life. One scene Sylvia Lee worked on was a flashback where Anna and Elsa's mother sings them a lullaby. Lee drew from her experiences with her own mother, trying to channel how safe Lee felt when she saw her mother's loving gaze—infusing her drawings with authentic emotion.





THIS PAGE: Several departments including animation, effects, tech animation, and lighting collaborated to create the water spirit Nokk.

DRESSED TO DANCE?

As technology and rendering capabilities improved between *Frozen* and the sequel, the level of detail visible in every frame has increased

like you could actually wear it,” says Visual Development Artist Brittney Lee. Embroidery, elaborate beadwork and skillful layering of materials added eye

it had to support the narrative of the story and Elsa’s journey into the unknown. Elsa needed higher hemlines so her coat and dress wouldn’t drag in the enchanted forest; she also needed to be able to remove layers and to perform, ultimately facing off against the Nokk in the dark sea.

“We knew she was going to be underwater and it was going to be high action,” says Lee. “I grew up dancing and knew there were designs that were beautiful and tailored but allowed for movement.”

Lee pulled references of fabrics used in dance performance, and examined mobility, volume, drape and the construction of dance costumes.

“It was amazing to see my very graphic, 2D representation executed into something that looks like you could actually wear it.”

– VISUAL DEVELOPMENT ARTIST BRITTNEY LEE

dramatically. “It was amazing to see my very graphic, 2D representation executed into something that looks

catching details to Elsa’s travel ensemble. This key outfit, however, serves as more than just an aesthetic purpose,



OPPORTUNITY NOKK

While Gale's character required collaboration and multiple tests, another spirit known as the water Nokk provided its own set of challenges. The origin of the Nokk or Nixie, as it's sometimes called, is a shapeshifter from old Norse tales that often takes the form of a horse—one that can grow as large as you need it to cross the water but might drown you if you aren't true of heart. "The concept of a water spirit was really intriguing to me," says Jennifer Lee. "Elsa is connected to water in a different way; there's a fundamental principle in water that has to do with life." The idea of creating a horse made of water that moves below and above the surface of the sea presented a set of unique issues but Lee knew the team could handle the challenge: "There hasn't been one thing we've thrown at them that they said 'no' to."

Illustrator Annette Marnat began exploring the shape of the horse—how much water was needed to describe it and how abstract it could be. Then they explored the interaction between

the Nokk and the dark sea, imbuing the mane and tail with the qualities of water. "We were trying to figure out how long the mane would be—would it be more ethereal? Would it feel more like hair?" says Bresee of the conversations that occurred during the initial phase of exploration.

"The tail and mane were two main areas that we could inform the viewer that this was a creature made of water," adds Head of Effects Animation Marlon West. "We liked this curtain-like, fountain [effect]."

Next, Animation Supervisor Svetla Radivoeva studied a horse's anatomy and locomotion to shape the performance of this warrior horse, a wild stallion that needs to be tamed. She quickly learned that a horse's ears scan around like human eyes—wherever the ears are turned, that's where the horse is looking. Ears can also show emotion, for example, folded back in anger.

But since the horse is made of water without a solid surface on the face, they did a test to see how expressive the Nokk could appear. They also examined the

hooves taking off from the surface of the sea. Radivoeva applied the concept to the CG puppet animated in Maya to stretch the hooves so the effects team could build on top and create the appearance of the hooves breaking up into water as they lift off the surface of the sea. Some tests made the legs too wobbly and affected the silhouette and performance. It took collaboration to find the right balance.

Moreover, the horse made of water gallops on top of another moving surface—waves of the dark sea. "The ocean is a big challenge—it ranges from calm to chaotic so the performance is very different. We had to find contact points on the [surface] and generate splash from there," explains Effects Animator Joyce Tong. "We built a very basic setup for the artists to use [for] a rough first pass. For the last 20 percent, the artist has to dial the settings and generate additional effects elements."

The effects team worked closely with tech animation to ensure seamless collaboration. Sometimes, the splash

Then, the visual development team would create a simulation constructing the pieces as if made from real world materials. "They're ultimately tailoring these in 3D," says Lee. "They would test it to see how it moved. If it didn't move in an appealing way, they would find another way of constructing it so it would move more ethereally."

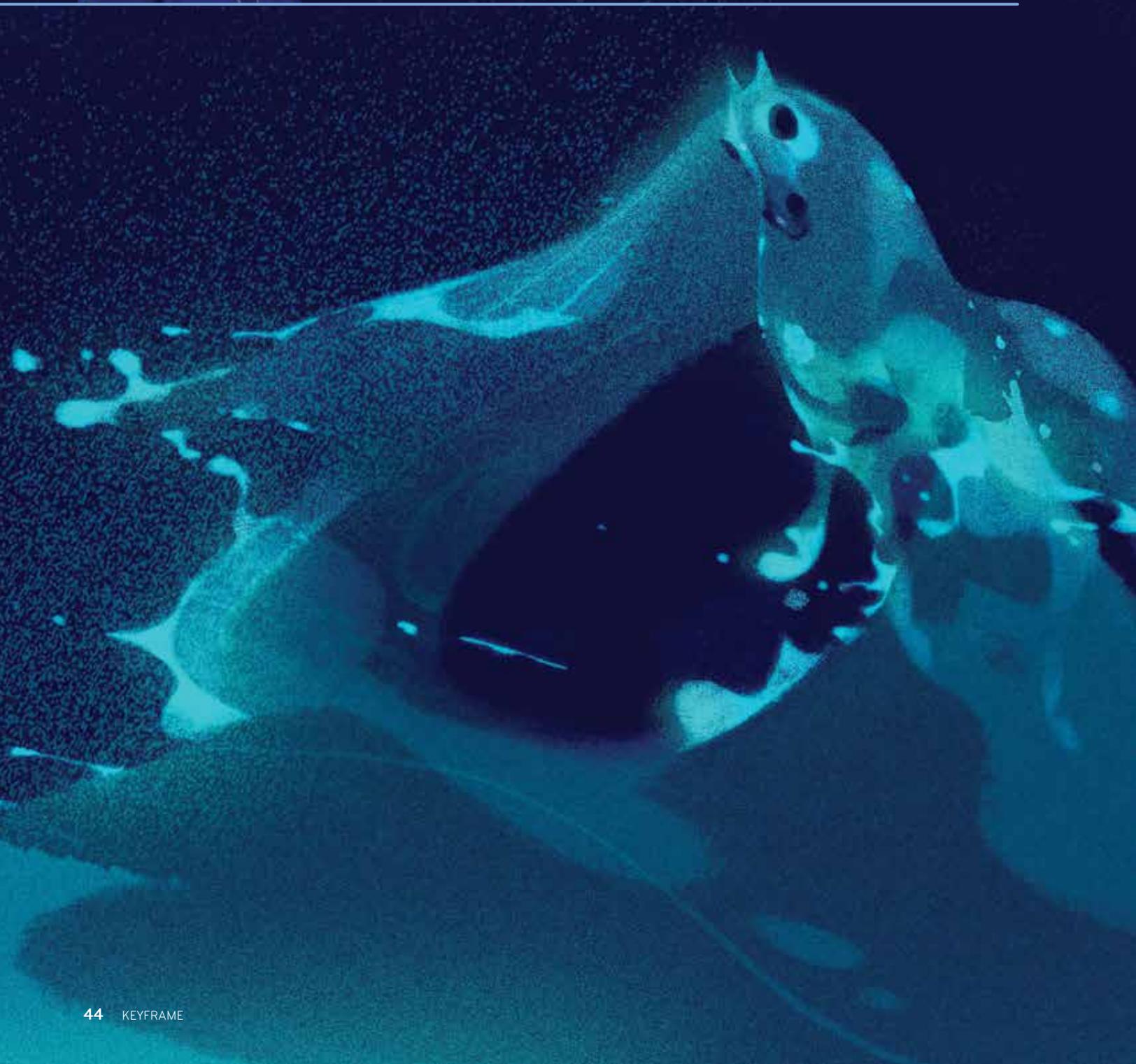
One liberty was taken—sheer fabrics were not available in Norway at the turn of the 20th century. That's when Elsa's magic comes in to play. Any embellishment that has specularity—such as sequins or beads—is created by Elsa and made from her icy powers. That logic extended to the stunning sheer overlay coat that she wears.





"The ocean is a big challenge—it ranges from calm to chaotic so the performance is very different. We had to find contact points on the [surface] and generate splash from there... It's critical that all the effects support the storytelling"

– EFFECTS ANIMATOR JOYCE TONG



LEFT: Illustrator Annette Marnat's initial paintings of the water Nokk.

patterns or the mane might detract from the focus and lead the audience's gaze astray. At times, the result wasn't ideal: The mane might flip across the Nokk's head and obscure his face. The shot would be sent back to animation to reanimate the head and motivate the mane to flip to the other side of the head. "It's critical that all the effects support the storytelling," notes Tong.

As the horse gallops underwater, the team worked on how the water breaks and how the bubbles emanate from the movement, but they had the added obstacle of a clear, liquid creature in the water. "You have to do a lot of steps to isolate the Nokk from all of the water but still have it read as made from water," says Tong. "If it's just a regular water surface you'll see a lot of reflection and refraction, so it's hard to read the shape. We have to use a volume to block out the light, so they're still see-through but not transparent."

Moreover, every shot was scrutinized by the lighting department: "We're not just taking a setup and rendering it with different cameras, we're making artistic decisions per shot," says Lighting Supervisor Amy Pfaffinger. Working on darker scenes is challenging for the lighting department, also determining the motivations of the source of the light. "Sometimes you have to decide your

strategy," says Pfaffinger. "The character might [realistically] be [in the dark] and nobody wants to see that in a movie."

For the darker scenes, the team explored movies such as *Star Wars* for inspiration.

Lights are placed to provide more than readability of the character; they direct the audience's gaze to the action. Something might catch the eye that is technically correct, for example, an interesting effect like a sparkle in the water, but takes attention off of the real focus of the scene. You might bring the intensity down in those areas while lifting the focus of other areas to align with the direction of the storytelling.

"The work we're doing now is closer to the complexity of visual effects," adds Pfaffinger.

Indeed, more than 75 percent of the film had effects in it, putting a bit of a strain on the budget but once again the filmmakers were able to come up with creative solutions: "If we say the scene is critical, then we find other ways," says Jennifer Lee. "Sometimes you have a shot where there are six people in it—if you limit it to two, you just saved three weeks in animation."

She credits having artists coming on the project early to iterate a lot sooner with helping to improve the process and allow for time to explore the story, something she'd like to see implemented in future productions. "How do we open this up so creativity can be as free as it needs to be in the beginning?" she says. "There is no shortcut to what it takes to develop a strong film. ☺

WHAT'S NEXT AT DISNEY?

Jennifer Lee may be the writer and director (with Chris Buck) of *Frozen II* but she's also the Chief Creative Officer of Walt Disney Animation Studios and in a unique position to take her experiences on films and apply lessons learned more widely across the studio. So what's next?

One of her biggest goals is developing new talent and creating new avenues in house for opportunities: "It was starting to be that unless you were on the story team, you didn't have as much access to the story and the work we do," she says. The Launchpad shorts program allows artists from all departments to submit stories: "We're going to put you in a leadership role and give you mentorship."

The studio is also focused on supporting leadership roles for diversity inclusion, making sure they are not just open to the best talent in the world but actively seeking it. "Talent is universal but access isn't," she says.

Another priority is a continued investment in technology and looking for efficiencies to be able to produce more content, specifically for Disney +.

"The level of animation we do is intense and expensive," she says. "We can experiment a lot more [by] being more efficient in technology and in our processes."



THE GOLDEN AGE

The inaugural Golden Awards was held in 1984 at Sorrentino's Restaurant in Toluca Lake to honor veterans of the industry and acknowledge their vast contributions to the craft. The award was created not to champion a meritocracy but instead to celebrate perseverance—50 years dedicated to the craft. In that first program it read: "There is no selectivity in this room tonight; the producer, the animator and the cel-washer sit together amongst us."

Forty-one members of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild were celebrated that night in January, and since then another 228 artists, writers and technicians have been honored across four decades. We continue the tradition today; another 28 Animation Guild members were honored on November 2nd. We celebrate their devotion to this wonderful and unique craft that has brought joy to generations.



2019 HONOREES

- Robert Alvarez
- Dale Baer
- Jane Baer
- Sandra Benenati
- David Brain
- Jan Browning
- Dale Case
- Vicki Casper
- Phil Cummings
- Barbara Donatelli
- Jerry Eisenberg
- William Exter
- Karl Fischer
- Bob Foster
- Milton Gray
- Bill Hutten
- Sylvia Keulen
- Mircea Mantta
- Larry Leichliter
- Floyd Norman
- Philip Phillipson
- Bob Richardson
- Kitty Schoentag
- Eric Semones
- Marianne Tucker
- Dennis Venizelos
- Tim Walker
- Carla Washburn

FISCHER started at Kim/Gifford Animation in New York learning design, animation, storyboarding, writing, and editing. In the early 1970s, he started his own studio, producing and art directing commercials and trailers, and was a part of the 1971 Academy Award-winning short *The Crunch Bird*. After moving west, he worked at Disney, Warner Bros., Film Roman and more.



Karl Fischer with his wife



FROM LEFT: Bob Foster, David Brain and Jan Browning

BRAIN kicked off his career in animation in 1966, working in a myriad of positions including as an animator, storyboard artist, and timing director at Disney, Hanna-Barbera, Warner Bros., Cartoon Network, and more.

BROWNING grew up in the industry—her mother owned an ink and paint shop. Over her career, she has worked as a painter, inker, final checker and animation checker at Hanna-Barbera, Animedia, and more, spending 21 years at Warner Bros.

At the start of his career, **EISENBERG** landed at Warner Bros. working with Friz Freleng and Chuck Jones, before heading to Hanna-Barbera for 14 years. He worked as an art director and producer at Ruby-Spears, then head of development at Marvel. Over the years, he has worked as a character designer, director, writer, storyboard artist and more at studios across town.

Jerry Eisenberg



Recording Secretary Paula Spence (LEFT) with Robert Alvarez

The six-time Primetime Emmy winner started his career in 1968 as an inbetweener for Fred Calvert Productions. Since then, **ALVAREZ** has worked as an animator, layout artist, storyboard artist, X-sheet director at Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, Ruby-Spears, Marvel, Nickelodeon, and Cartoon Network, where he has spent the last 27 years.

In 1962, DONATELLI started her career at CBS Terrytoons in New York in the ink and paint department before moving to Los Angeles and working as an animation checker with DePatie-Freleng. She also worked at Marvel and Bill Melendez before settling at Disney for two decades.



FROM LEFT: Larry Smith, Myoung Smith, Barbara Donatelli and Jim Finch



Bob Richardson (CENTER) with his wife and grandson

RICHARDSON's career has taken him from clearing frosted cels in the early days to setting up Marvel Animation Studios where he produced and directed *Spider-Man*. Inbetween, he's worked as an animator, storyboard director, supervising director and producer for DePatie-Freleng, Marvel Productions, Disney TV, and more.

Philip Phillipson
and his wife



PHILLIPSON started in the mailroom at Hanna-Barbera in 1968. He quickly got promoted to the editorial department and then worked in layout and background. In 1983, he began a 20-year run at Disney Feature Animation painting on such classics as *The Little Mermaid*, *The Lion King*, and more.

Phil Cummings



A self-proclaimed wandering hippie, **CUMMINGS** started as a cel painter. His career has spanned different roles, including animator, FX artist, sheet timer, and sequence director in both feature film and television, culminating in a 2005 Annie Award for Best Directing, shared with Shaun Cashman, for *Grim & Evil*.

Bill Hutten



HUTTEN started his career in the early '60s at a small studio in Colorado before ending up at Terrytoons in New York. After a year there, he called Joe Barbera, who fronted him the money to buy a plane ticket to Los Angeles and meet. After a decade at Hanna-Barbera, he opened his own union studio, working as a creator, producer, director, animator and animation director.

Carla Washburn and her
husband, Ron Harris



Taught by her mother, Manon Washburn, a master inker, **WASHBURN** learned to paint cels as a teenager. She has travelled the world—from London to Minnesota, Dublin to Taipei—in pursuit of her animation career, working as a checker and continuity supervisor for Sullivan Bluth, Universal, Marvel, Warner Bros. and more.

TUCKER was still in high school when she started working at Hanna-Barbera doing ink and paint. What started as a summer job turned into a lifelong career in animation as a color stylist, final checker, inbetweener and character designer at Filmation, Disney Feature, Disney TV and more.



Marianne Tucker (center) with her two daughters, Theresa and Jessica

During his career, **WALKER** worked at numerous studios including Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, and Disney as an animator and animation director before landing at Warner Bros. where the Primetime Emmy-winner spent 27 years.

BAER began her animation career in 1955 as an assistant animator on *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) alongside the legendary “Nine Old Men”. She continued to work as an animator, storyboard artist, layout artist, writer, director and producer at Disney, Hanna-Barbara, Filmation, and more before starting her own studio in 1984.



Tim Walker and Jane Baer

FROM LEFT: Wayne Carlisi, Dale Baer, wife Teddy, Cathlin Hidalgo-Polvani, and Mike Polvani

BAER began in 1970 at Filmation as a layout artist. The Winsor McCay Award winner has worked as an animator, supervising animator, character designer and in visual development at Walt Disney Feature Animation, Bill Melendez Studios, and many more.



FROM LEFT: Floyd Norman, Bob Foster and Tim Walker



NORMAN started his career in 1956 at Walt Disney Studios as an inbetweener on *Sleeping Beauty*, where he became the first African-American artist to remain at the studio on a long-term basis. He has worked as an animator, layout artist, storyboard artist, writer, and director, and continues to pursue his passion for the craft by consulting for Disney.

Starting out, **FOSTER** found work at small, commercial studios; by 1969, he was an assistant animator at Filmation. Over his career, he's worked as an assistant animator, layout artist, storyboard artist and writer (Disney Publishing) at Hanna-Barbera, Nickelodeon, DreamWorks, Warner Bros., and more.

Mircea Mantta



Romanian-born MANTTA started his career in Bucharest before emigrating to the U.S. in 1977. Two years later, he came to Los Angeles where he worked at Hanna-Barbera, Filmation and Disney Television Animation, Nickelodeon, and more as an animator, timing director, animation director, producer and director.

Milton Gray



GRAY'S first job was as an inbetweener on *The Jungle Book*, continuing his career at different studios as an animator, storyboard artist, layout artist, animation timer, director, and producer including at Ralph Bakshi, Don Bluth, Hanna-Barbera, Warner Bros., Marvel Animation, and more. He won a Primetime Emmy for his work on *The Simpsons*.

Bill Exter



EXTER started working in animation as an assistant to Kenny Muse at Hanna-Barbera. The Emmy-winning artist spent his career in Los Angeles working for Filmation, Marvel, Warner Bros., Disney TV, Nickelodeon and more as an assistant animator, production manager, checker and continuity director.

Kitty Schoentag



SCHOENTAG started in animation at the age of 14 helping at her mother's ink and paint service. Over her career, she has worked at MGM, Hanna-Barbera, Disney, Sony, Warner Bros. and more as a supervisor and animation checker. 🍷

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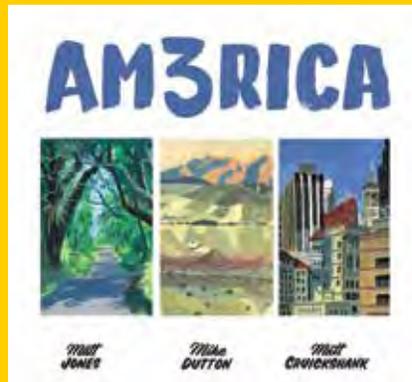
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1 JAN
NEW YEAR'S DAY –
CONTRACT HOLIDAY

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BALLOTING BEGINS

3 JAN
ACADEMY AWARD
NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED

10 JAN
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18 JAN
THE ANIMATION GUILD
CHARTERED AS A UNION
 (1952)

20 JAN
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CONTRACT HOLIDAY
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25 JAN
47TH ANNUAL ANNIE AWARDS

28 JAN
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING

7 FEB
GALLERY 839 OPENING
 Mark Mulgrew

9 FEB
92ND ANNUAL
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15 YEARS STRONG

ON NOVEMBER 1, 2004, THE ANIMATION CREW AT FILM ROMAN VOTED 166 TO 20 TO BE REPRESENTED BY THE ANIMATION GUILD IN AN EFFORT TO UNIONIZE *THE SIMPSONS*. NOW, 15 YEARS LATER, K.C. JOHNSON REMEMBERS THE EXPERIENCE.

Looking back now on the successful push in 2004 to unionize Film Roman, it feels like it was an obvious path. But like any union drive, it took a lot of diverse engagement between all of us to ultimately make it happen. People have their own point of view and respond differently to the issues at stake. Some respond to fiery rhetoric, others to hard data and pie charts, and the list goes on.

The future was uncertain—no one had a crystal ball. It took bravery, hope,

education, passion, belief in the Guild, and solidarity to make the leap. We celebrated when it was accomplished, the studio didn't come crashing down, and we returned to routine. But now, we had a better health plan, an actual pension to earn, and all the other benefits of a unionized workforce.

It's interesting—when you're at the start of your career, or just join the Guild, the idea of hitting 15 or 20 years is intimidating. *The Simpsons* was working on Season 16 in 2004—imagine the benefits everyone would have had if it had been union from the start. But as the proverb goes: "The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago; the second best is today."

And here we are 15 years later! For those who were with us when we went union, this year they will have qualified for the Retiree Health Plan at retirement,* and that is an incredible accomplishment!

**To qualify for the MPIPHP Retiree Health Plan, you need to have 15 Qualified years (20 if you joined the union after 2015), 3 of those years worked after the age of 40, and 20,000 credited hours.*



The Simpsons crew in 2018





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