

SPRING 2020

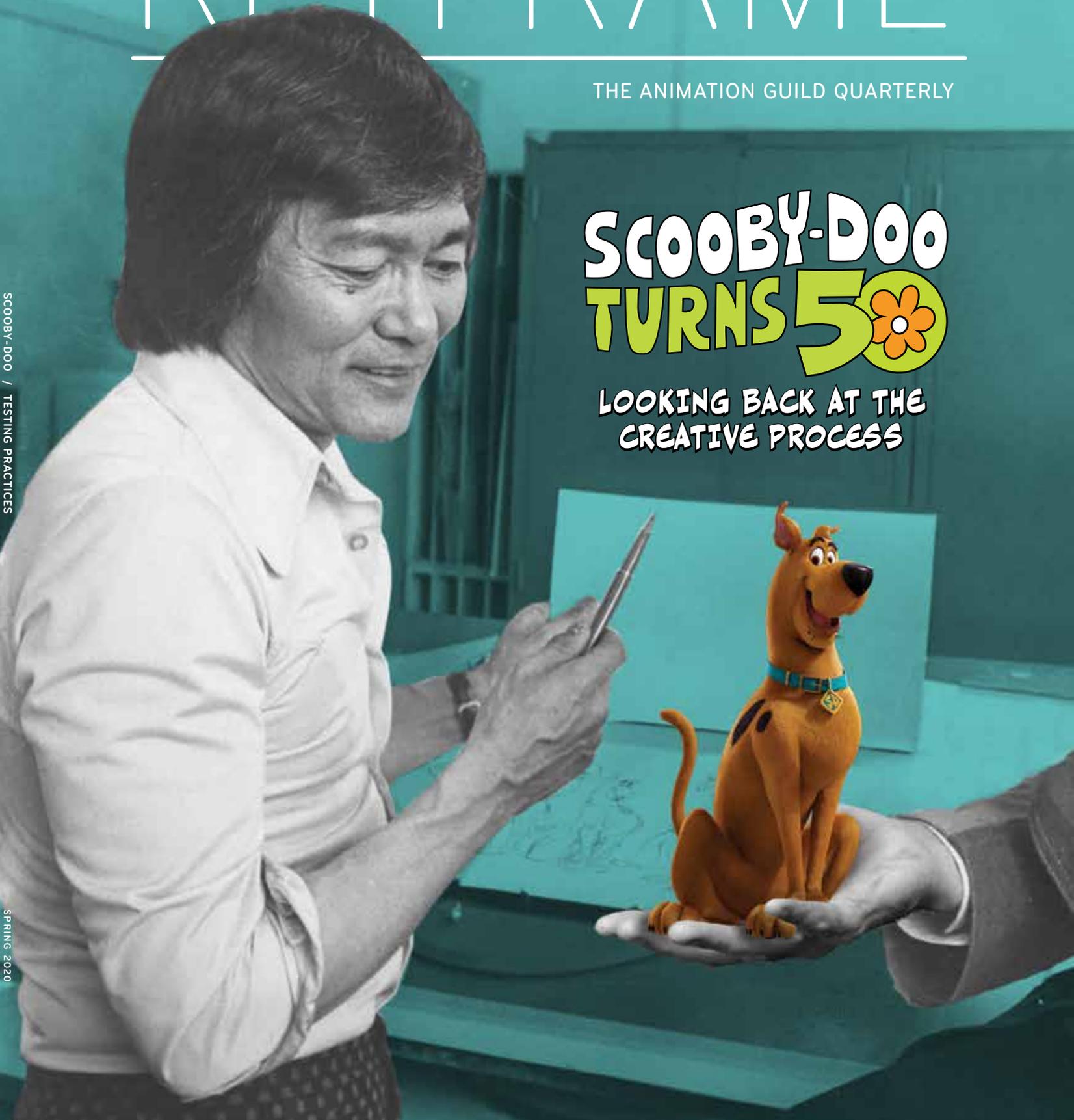
ISSUE NO. 9

# KEYFRAME

THE ANIMATION GUILD QUARTERLY

**SCOOPY-DOO**  
**TURNS 50**

**LOOKING BACK AT THE  
CREATIVE PROCESS**



ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINEE  
BEST ANIMATED FEATURE

WINNER  
ANIMATION MAGAZINE  
BEST ANIMATED FEATURE  
BY A MAJOR STUDIO

BAFTA NOMINEE  
ANIMATED FILM

WINNER  
ANIMATION MAGAZINE  
BEST FEATURE DIRECTOR  
SERGIO PABLOS

*“HAS ALL THE MAKINGS OF A CLASSIC.”*  
TIME OUT NEW YORK



*“A GAMECHANGER.”*  
INDIEWIRE

# Klaus

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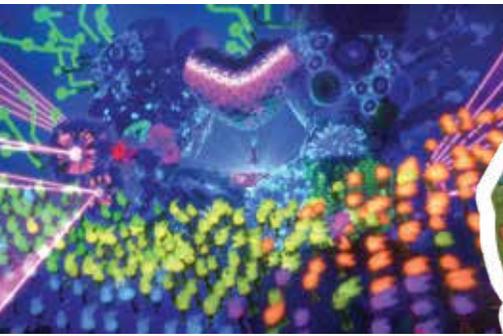
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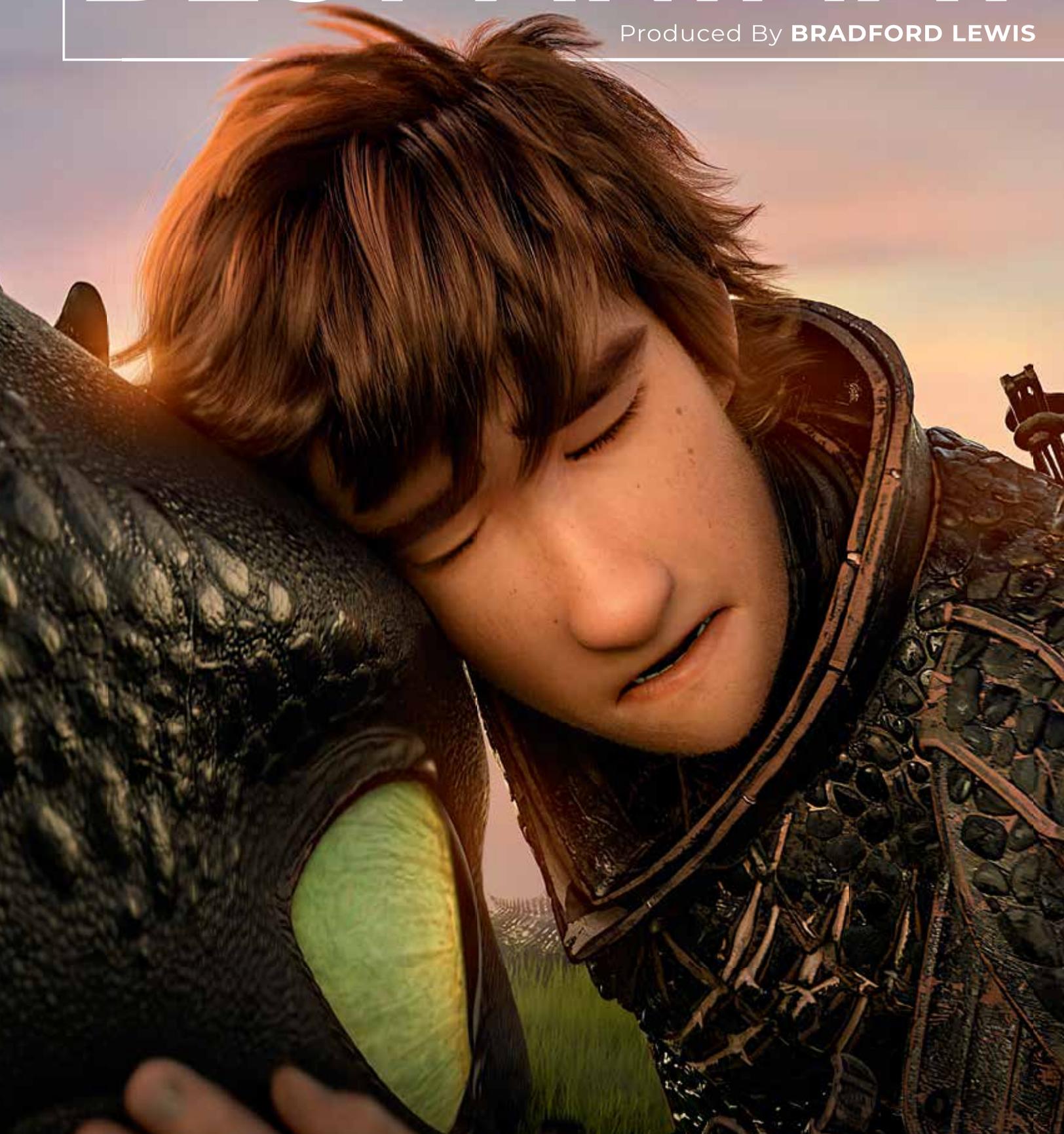
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The original series has been followed by more than a dozen rebooted series and movies, and through it all, artists and animators made sure that “those meddling kids” and a cowardly canine continued to unmask villains. But what makes Scooby-Doo appeal to audiences across the decades?



# ACADEMY AWARD BEST ANIMATED

Produced By **BRADFORD LEWIS**



# ARD<sup>®</sup> NOMINEE ED FEATURE

p.g.a. | BONNIE ARNOLD p.g.a. Written And Directed By DEAN DeBLOIS

**“DEAN DeBLOIS BRINGS HIS WONDROUS  
DRAGON TRILOGY TO A SPECTACULAR FINISH.**

THE COURTSHIP BETWEEN TOOTHLESS AND LIGHT FURY IS  
A THING OF BALLETIC BEAUTY THAT BRINGS OUT THE DAZZLING  
ARTISTRY OF THE ANIMATION.”

*RollingStone*

**WINNER**  
**BEST ANIMATED FEATURE**  
NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW



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HOW TO TRAIN YOUR  
**DRAGON**  
THE HIDDEN WORLD

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 UNIVERSAL

# WE ARE HERE AND READY TO WORK!



**YOU'LL SEE MANY NEW FACES ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, BUT THOUGH THEY MIGHT BE NEW TO THE BOARD MANY OF THEM HAVE BEEN VERY ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE GUILD. THE LEVEL OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT RANGES FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS TO SHOP STEWARDS TO DELEGATES; SOME ARE VERY INVOLVED IN THE WIDER**

**ANIMATION COMMUNITY BY TEACHING SKILLS CLASSES OR HAVE A CONSIDERABLE ONLINE PRESENCE THAT IS RECOGNIZED AND FOLLOWED BY OUR MEMBERS.**

Three of our new board members—Jack Thomas (Vice President), Laura Hohman, and K.C. Johnson (Trustee) were previous Presidents. I'm sure they will keep me on my toes. I am so happy that they have volunteered their time to make sure that this huge ship, called The Animation Guild, continues on its path toward becoming a more effective negotiator at our next round of contract talks coming up in the summer of 2021.

We are committed to improving communication and transparency so that even the busiest among us know how the union is supporting our needs. Expanding our shop steward program to ensure all studios—big and small—are represented, gives us a two-way conduit to communicate and spread information more quickly and on a more personal level. We will be providing leadership and sensitivity training to all of our shop stewards so that they can be relied on as a first responder when issues come up in the workplace.

Our new craft rep program, started by the Storyboard Committee co-chairs, Jake Hollander and Sydney Sharp, will allow participants to share real-time craft-specific concerns with us that can be molded into proposals for our upcoming negotiations.

We are also in the initial phase of developing an app that can work seamlessly with our new member portal and database. (The database will roll out in the first quarter of 2020.) Focus groups are being conducted at various studios to hear members' needs and expectations.

This new board has also approved the exploration of creating a foundation to support our members and their families with grants, scholarships, and assistance for those in need.

We have hit the ground running and are laser focused to be the most prepared for what is sure to be a big battle in 2021.

In Solidarity,  
Jeanette Moreno King | President  
The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839

## ON THE COVER

Iwao Takamoto, the original character designer for Scooby, shares the cover with the new incarnation of Scooby from the upcoming, *Scoob!* Takamoto image courtesy of Getty Images; *Scoob!* Scooby courtesy of Warner Bros.



ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINEE  
**BEST ANIMATED FEATURE**

**"THE BEST ANIMATED FILM  
OF THE YEAR."**

Hollywood REPORTER | npr | IndieWire | Vox.com | COLLIDER | THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE | PLAYLIST | DAILY BEAST | The Guardian

**"THE MOST  
DARING ANIMATED FILM OF THE YEAR.  
WONDERFUL AND TENDER."**

The Guardian

- WINNER**  
NEW YORK FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
LOS ANGELES FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
NEW YORK FILM CRITICS ONLINE  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
CHICAGO INDIE CRITICS AWARDS  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
FLORIDA FILM CRITICS CIRCLE  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
UTAH FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
ANNAPOLIS FILM FESTIVAL  
CRITICS' WEEK  
GRAND PRIZE
- WINNER**  
ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FILM JOURNALISTS  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
AUSTIN FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
ANNIECY FILM FESTIVAL  
AUDIENCE AWARD
- WINNER**  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA FILM CRITICS CIRCLE  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
ANNIECY FILM FESTIVAL  
CRISTAL AWARD
- WINNER**  
MICHIGAN FILM CRITICS  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL  
BEST ANIMATED FEATURE
- WINNER**  
BLACK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE  
BEST ANIMATED FILM
- WINNER**  
SAN DIEGO FILM CRITICS SOCIETY  
BEST ANIMATED FILM

**I LOST MY BODY**



# Get Connected!

If you're not receiving important emails from The Animation Guild—job listings, events, invitations, classes, and more—it's because you haven't opted into our email system.

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animation  
guild

# KEYFRAME

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the  
animation  
guild

Representing animation artists,  
writers and technicians since 1952.



# TIME TRAVELING IN 2020



**HINDSIGHT IS 20/20, RIGHT? AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE EXPRESSION SAYS, THAT IT'S EASY TO UNDERSTAND SOMETHING THAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED SO WHAT CAN WE, AS A GUILD, LEARN FROM THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US AND HOW CAN THAT INFORM THE DECISIONS THAT WE MAKE TODAY?**

So, the theme of this year, since it's actually 2020, is to look back, learn, reminisce and question our historical perspective. In the feature, "*Zoinks! Scooby-Doo Turns 50*" (p.34), we recall the creative process that has shaped numerous iterations of the original TV show over the last five decades. The artists and writers who worked on various *Scooby-Doo* projects share their memories and why they believe this goofy, Great Dane remains relevant today.

In another article, "*Hiring Humanely*," (p.28), Testing Committee chair Danny Ducker and a group of supervisors question the historical habit of testing for a job. Through this informative conversation, they dig into their personal experiences, how to hire using other methods, and the need to communicate more broadly about unfair practices.

This issue's After Hours column (p.14) spotlights a group of community heroes called The Blanketeers. These Guild members spend their time knitting crafts, such as warm hats for the homeless or drawstring bags filled with art supplies for at-risk children, for people in need. The Disney program, which just celebrated 20 years, continues to serve the community and active Guild members would like to see it grow outside of the studio and into the TAG community.

For David Brain, who was recently honored with the Golden Award for 50 years of service to the industry, reminiscing of his studio days brings to mind memories of meeting Walt Disney. In Final Note (p.46), he shares his impressions of the man and lets us go back in time through his memories. Maybe hearing his words will spark other memories from our older members, who can share their experiences so that we can all learn from them.

Thanks,

*Alexandra*

Alexandra Drosu  
editor@tag839.org

**CORRECTION:** In the 2019 Winter issue, Sherie Pollack was mistakenly credited as having worked on *Invader Zim*. She has worked as an Animation Director for *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse*, *God, the Devil and Bob* and *Fairly OddParents*.

## CONTRIBUTORS



After spending more than 50 years in the animation industry, **DAVID BRAIN** has a lot of stories to share. In "*A Man Called Walt*," he reminisces about his days at Disney where he kicked off his career in 1966 as an inbetweener.



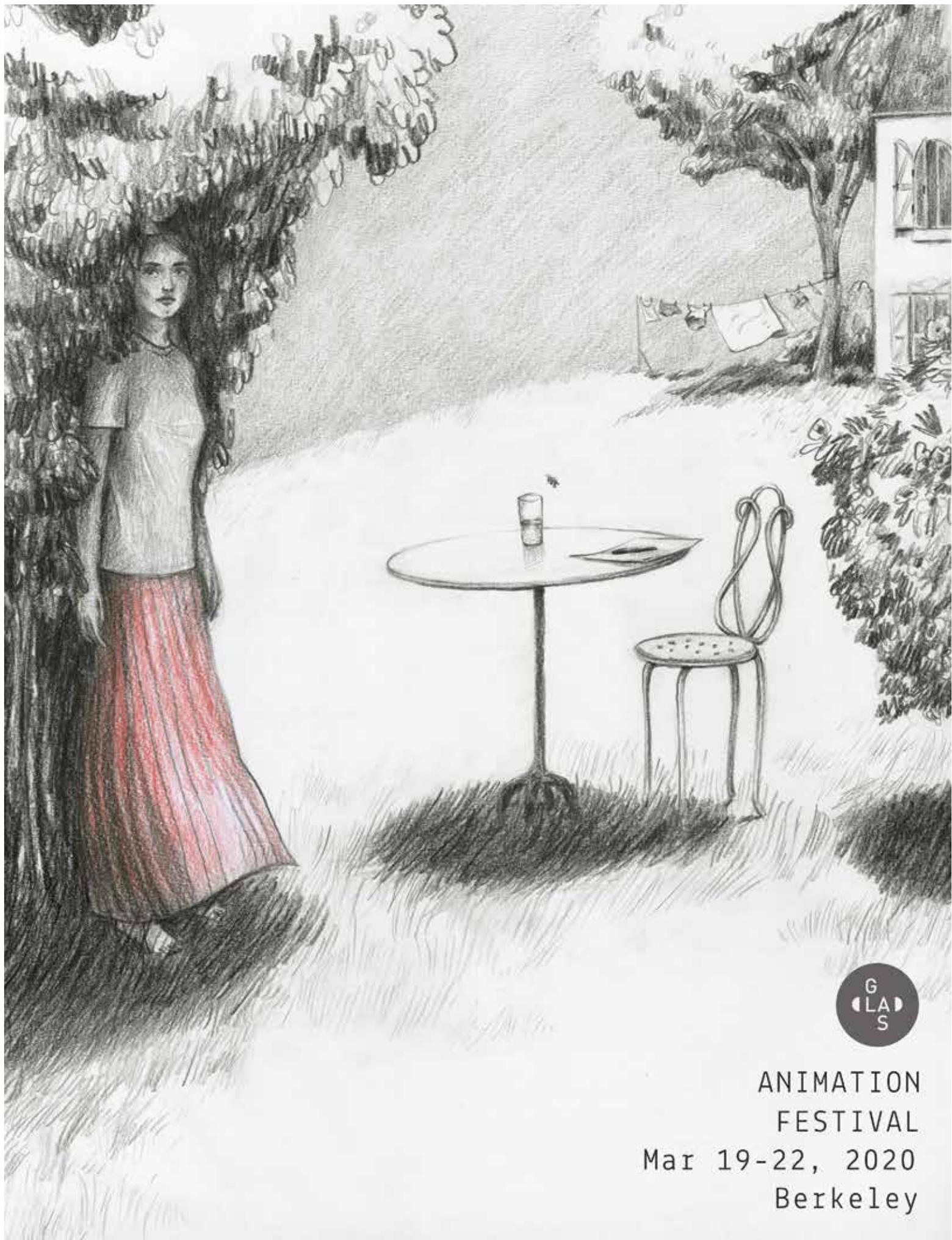
Revisionist-turned-storyboard artist **DANNY DUCKER** also serves as the Chair of the Testing Committee and on the TAG Executive Board. In "*Hiring Humanely*," she interviewed a group of supervisors to discuss ways to address the practice of unpaid testing in the industry.



**KIM FAY** ("*Zoinks! Scooby-Doo Turns 50*") is the author of *The Map of Lost Memories*, an Edgar Award Finalist for Best First Novel, and the food memoir, *Communion: A Culinary Journey Through Vietnam*. She has worked as a journalist for more than 20 years, and lives in Los Angeles.



You might recognize **RUSTEEN HONARDOOST** ("*Kickstart My Heart*") 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.



ANIMATION  
FESTIVAL  
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Berkeley

# LIVING IN COLOR



Tiffany Ford started out as a design apprentice on the 2012 PowerPuff Girls special, “Dance Pantsed,” before moving on to *Steven Universe* as a color designer. “Since I

was also doing a lot of personal comics at the time, I didn’t realize there was also an avenue to do storyboards,” she says. “So when I was offered an opportunity to do storyboards on *Clarence*, I was really taken by surprise, but I thought, ‘Why not?’” Currently a Supervising Director on CN’s *Craig of the Creek*, Ford talks here about a personal project, creating daily color blocks.

## HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE COLOR BLOCK IDEA?

I was interested in diary style artworks; things that are made daily to record or reflect what’s going on. This daily exercise of making art about my day turned into recording my outfits and colors I chose to wear that day. This practice evolved into daily color blocks: a simple representation of color trends and moods through the year. When lined up all together, I could see my personality and color moods change and stay the same.

## YOU ENCOURAGED OTHERS TO DO THEIR OWN COLOR BLOCKS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, #DAILYCOLORBLOCKS. WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THAT EXPERIENCE?

I learned so much about how art making is a conversation. Folks post their outfits, others respond with their own outfits, some folks got to know each other because of their common color block stories. It was cool how people made it their own thing and made color blocks work for them.

## HOW DID THAT COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT INFLUENCE YOUR OWN WORK?

Color blocks helped reinforce my style of working, especially on my own projects—which is to allow ideas to come naturally and try not to force something that isn’t working. My own personal color blocks felt the best for me when I was not being perfect about it. While always aiming to provide quality work for my jobs, it’s helpful to have an understanding that sometimes things can be presented as a work in progress. Color blocks really helped me understand this.



# KICKSTART MY HEART

## HOW STORYBOARD DIRECTOR MIRA ONG CHUA TURNED A PERSONAL CHALLENGE INTO A KICKSTARTER SUCCESS

The world of *ROADQUEEN: Eternal Road Trip to Love*, a romantic comedy manga by *Adventure Time: Distant Lands* storyboard Director Mira Ong Chua, is fast and furious. Leo is the most popular girl in school who would rather spend time with her beloved motorcycle Bethany than with any of her many admirers. But when Bethany gets taken hostage, Leo has no choice but to accept the kidnapper's strange demand—prove she can be a good girlfriend or lose Bethany forever.

What follows is a riff on western rom-com and Japanese manga tropes tied together with a charming sense of humor and genuine emotional heft, creating a package that's remarkably specific in its focus, which Chua believes contributed to the book's massive success on Kickstarter in 2018. *ROADQUEEN* surpassed its \$5,500 funding goal in the first hour and raised more than \$70k by the time it closed. "I wasn't trying to pretend it was anything other than what it was," says Chua. "I was promoting it under the guise that it would only appeal to just a few people but I think the more specific you are, somehow that taps into more people than if you just try to appeal to everyone."

Chua started *ROADQUEEN* as a personal challenge while working as a board artist and writer for *OK K.O.! Let's Be Heroes*. "I was working in animation for so long that I wanted to do something outside what I

would be able to do in that medium," she says. "I mostly wanted to try drawing bikes." When asked why, she laughs: "They're just hard to draw." Something as simple as a challenge to draw a new object was coupled with another incentive: "I had tied in this love story with girls that I wanted to draw so it wasn't completely a slog. A fun part of making comics is making those incentives for myself."

Chua got right to work on *ROADQUEEN*, writing and drawing the entire graphic novel in six months, describing her home office as a cave she could withdraw into without being disturbed by the outside world. This passion had produced something she was proud of, but Chua wasn't sure how to share such a personal project with the outside world.

It was fellow writer and TAG member Taneka Stotts who suggested Kickstarter as a possible venue because it allows creators to find an audience for their most personal works, but it turns out that running a Kickstarter takes just as much time as making the book itself. Another six months were invested into the 30-day Kickstarter campaign with the bulk of that time in preproduction, creating the exclusive rewards that draw attention like stickers and pins.

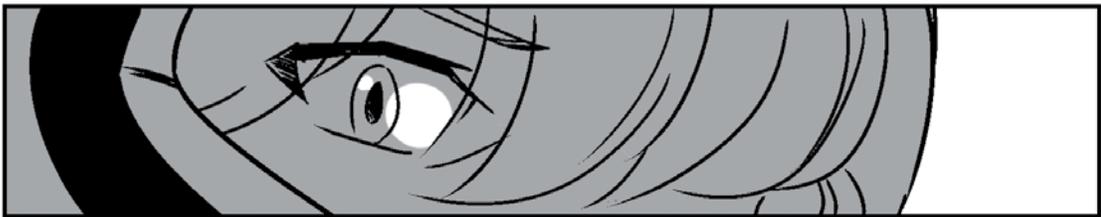
If all that wasn't enough, the next step was self-promotion, which never comes easy for introverted artists. Her advice is

straightforward and direct: "Be yourself is so trite that I don't want to say it, but I think more so be confident in the things you like and the things you want to make. And don't devalue yourself either...for people to believe that the work has value, you have to believe it yourself as well." Self-promotion can be an exhausting process, but Chua says that "it did get a little easier. I realized I had to talk about this thing, and there was no way to talk about it without being truthful to what it was, so there wasn't any room for me to be embarrassed by that point."

Posting sketches and jokes every day laid the groundwork for the campaign, raising awareness as well as providing an opportunity to preview the tone, style, and themes of *ROADQUEEN* to her prospective audience. "I thought I'd be fortunate to hit the goal, but we far exceeded [it], which was amazing," she says.

Now *ROADQUEEN* is out after getting published by Seventh Seas Publishing for retail, and Chua makes a point to retweet and reshare photos fans send her of the book. After packaging and shipping out the books herself, it's exciting to see fans from all over the world receiving their copies. "If they're taking the time out of their day to send [a photo to me], and say 'Look! I got it!' that's really sweet and I want to acknowledge that," says Chua.

— Rusteen Honardoost



# THE BLANKETEERS

*"Many of our items will go to people in our community... We don't know who it's going to go to, but we know that it will be appreciated."*

Disney TV writer Kate Moran (**BELOW**) and The Blanketeers (**RIGHT**) hold up one of their community creations. (**OPPOSITE**): Examples of the crafts the group shares with those in need.



## KNITTING A CONNECTED WEB OF KINDNESS

While many of us sit idle during lunch breaks, a group of caring individuals known as The Blanketeers, keep their hands busy with knitting or crocheting, creating hand-crafted items for people in need. At Disney Television Animation, a small but dedicated group of Blanketeers, led by storyboard artist Cathy Jones, weaves a web of kindness with yarn and fabrics donated by people who support their cause.

The Blanketeers just celebrated their 20th year and they craft everything from blankets and scarves to stuffed animals. Eugene Salandra, who's been a part of the group since 2004, learned to crochet from his great-great-aunt, Lula, when he was a child. A production board artist, Salandra has been with Disney for 20 years, working on projects such as *Sofia the First*. He was persuaded to join The Blanketeers by colleagues who'd decided to get involved more directly and wanted to loop him in (no pun intended, he insists, with a laugh). They started a little group that he would later lead along with writer Kate Moran.

Moran, who is currently working on an unnamed Disney project, says she was fascinated by The Blanketeers, whom she would see knitting during lunch. "I actually learned to knit and crochet by joining The Blanketeers about 10 years ago." Anyone who wants to learn can participate. Lori Campos, who is The Blanketeers' regional leader for



the Los Angeles area, finds local groups that need their help. Recipients remain anonymous for a variety of reasons: “Many of our items will go to people in our community,” Moran explains. “We don’t know who it’s going to go to, but we know that it will be appreciated.”

“Just knowing that the work of your hands will bring comfort or joy to someone you will never know—it’s kind of a nice feeling,” says Salandra. “You’re not expecting any response and you’re freely giving it...there’s no string of attachment there, it’s just a gift and whoever receives it, hopefully, it brings them some comfort.” He finds it’s also a social occasion because the group often sits and works together. “There’s a sense of bonding, community and sharing,” he adds. There are around five to ten core regulars who get together once a week, often at lunchtime—with many working on their own as well.

Finished projects are collected by Campos who oversees distribution. They often work with Operation Gratitude, creating scarves for the military. Recently, they donated items to the LA Rescue Mission for the homeless community—“to just hopefully get them a little warmth and comfort,” says Campos. They make caps for children with cancer, as well as blankets and shawls for patients receiving chemo. Campos believes in giving The Blanketeers free rein to craft whatever they feel like making. Her motto is: “If they make it, I will find a home for it.”

Moran mobilized her Blanketeers group to help an organization called One Simple Wish that creates drawstring backpacks for foster kids that they fill with goodies like art supplies and journals. Her group also made comfort bears for inclusion in care kits that

are provided to children in “at risk” or emergency situations, and which are given out by law enforcement. “I think it speaks to a more primal part of ourselves, where something that we make with our own hands gets infused with our love and care and that’s going to help someone—hopefully they will feel that love and care and know that they matter.”

Sometimes local organizations approach Campos with specific requests: A veteran’s organization requested stump covers for amputees, which The Blanketeers learned to make. For children’s hospitals, they’ve created superhero capes—an idea they came up with after trying to find a use for a large amount of donated fabric. Moran says that each new project provides an opportunity for beginners to learn the craft. They’ve also had requests to make falsies for breast cancer survivors who’ve had mastectomies. So their group created knit prosthetics of different shapes and sizes, and figured out a list of soft materials that worked best.

Both Salandra and Moran especially enjoy working on blankets they create as a team. Everyone contributes squares that are combined into a larger blanket. “Each blanket is a literal thumbprint of the entire group because the way each person makes their square is so individual to them,” says Moran. Moreover, each item they make counts as volunteer hours, which can be turned into a cash donation that will be sent to a local nonprofit of their choice.

If there is enough interest from TAG members who don’t work for Disney to participate, Moran would be happy to look into starting a group that meets on Saturdays. Email her at [katemoran@gmail.com](mailto:katemoran@gmail.com).

—Karen Briner



# 5

## THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR MPI HEALTH PLAN

**The Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans are trust funds established by collective bargaining agreements between employers and unions in the motion picture industry. The MPI Health Plan is governed by a board of directors and offers a comprehensive suite of services including active health, dental, vision, behavioral health coverage and prescription drug benefits. Animation Guild members working at signatory studios earn hours to establish and maintain eligibility for MPI Health Plans.**

- 1** New Guild members become eligible for the MPI Health Plans once they complete 600 hours in a Qualifying Period at signatory studios. Once you have qualified for benefits, there is a two-month processing period while MPI audits your hours to confirm eligibility. For example, if you work 40 hours per week, it will take approximately 15 weeks (or roughly four months) to qualify, then an additional two months to confirm eligibility before you can expect to receive health care benefits under the plans.
- 2** When members become eligible for their MPI plans they can choose between three different plan options—a Preferred Plan Organization (or PPO) administered through Anthem Blue Cross and two Health Maintenance Organization (or HMO) Plans provided by Health Net and Kaiser Permanente.
- 3** If you aren't happy with the health plan you chose, you have two options. Those enrolled in an HMO can switch to the Anthem Blue Cross PPO at any time during the year. However, switching to an HMO from the PPO or between the two HMO options can only occur during the yearly three-week enrollment period, starting July 1.
- 4** If you are enrolled in the Anthem Blue Cross PPO plan, you **MUST** get your annual physical completed at an UCLA-MPTF Health Center. If you get your annual physical done by a general physician, who does not practice at one of the Health Centers, you risk having to pay out of pocket.
- 5** Prescription drug benefits for the Participants and their eligible Dependents are administered by Express Scripts. You have an option of filling prescriptions for maintenance drugs at participating Walgreens, Duane Reade, and Happy Harry's retail stores. This option is offered as an alternative to the standard Express Scripts mail order option.

*For more information about your health plan benefits and options visit [mpiphp.org](http://mpiphp.org) or call 855-275-4674.*

# WHAT'S APP-ENING!



## EXPRESS SCRIPTS

The newly designed Express Scripts app lets you easily manage prescription needs. Find a preferred pharmacy, refill your prescriptions, check your order status and access your ID card.



## IATSE SAFETY APP

The IATSE Safety Info Reporting App allows one to report harassment on a job. You can call the hotline or use the dropdown menu in the app and select "harassment" as your topic.



## MPIPHP

Created for the Motion Picture Industry Pension & Health Plans, the app is designed to provide a quick guide: learn about health and retirement benefits, pay for health coverage premiums, calculate retirement benefits and view ID cards. Register your account at [MPIPHP.org](http://MPIPHP.org) before signing in on the app.



## OPTUM

### MYLIVEANDWORKWELL

This app can help you find answers. Use it to learn about your EAP services, find providers and get authorizations—anytime, anywhere. You can even connect with an EAP specialist instantly via the click-to-call and chat features.



## VANGUARD

Use the app to manage your 401K account activity (monitor performance, view account statements and messages) and stay informed (use the portfolio analysis tool, track market index trends, research investments, view and share the latest news).



## UNION PLUS APP

Union members get access to thousands of discounts on everything from pizza and the zoo to movie tickets and oil changes! You'll receive notifications about nearby offers, instant in-store discounts at nearby restaurants and retailers, and more. MEMBERS-ONLY: If you aren't registered for Union Plus Entertainment Discounts, please go to [www.union-plus.org/entertainment-discounts](http://www.union-plus.org/entertainment-discounts) and sign up.

# GET TO KNOW JUPEY



## JUPEY KRUSHO, FACILITIES MANAGER

Hailing from Minnesota, Jupey moved to Los Angeles in 2002 and within weeks landed a job at The Animation Guild. He has a passion for design, creating positive characters and playing video games (when he has the time). He has proudly served the TAG community for 18 years.

### TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES NOW AND WHAT YOU DO AT THE GUILD.

In 2002, I started as a receptionist, then moved to administrative assistant and now I'm performing duties under two job titles: Facilities Manager and Admin Assistant. Overall, I'm responsible for making sure that the building (inside and out) meets the needs of the people that work in it.

### TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.

I grew up in small towns in Minnesota where I was the only black kid. I was a nerd trapped in a jock's body so I was just as happy watching Saturday morning cartoons as I was wrestling or playing football. I attended Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN and was majoring in Physical Therapy, minoring in Art. After a few years I realized I was sick of being in sports year-round and just wanted to focus on art so I transferred to MCAD (Minneapolis College of Art & Design) and received a BFA in Media: Animation.

### TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR COMPANY, JUPEY KRUSHO.

I started JUPEY KRUSHO ([jupeykrusho.com](http://jupeykrusho.com)) in 2008 right after doing freelance for a string of bad clients. I was fed up with wasting my time on projects I had no passion for but freelance paid well so I had to make a crucial life decision—Good money plus unfulfillment or live modestly and wake up excited to create my own concepts. I vowed I would only do creative work for myself. I create character IPs in various age ranges, but they all are born from a place of pain, suffering or negativity. "Turn negatives into positives" is one of my company's main themes and the creation of the company itself follows this concept.

I created one of my first characters "Memo Me the Loving Lion" after a dear friend was diagnosed with cancer and was unable to hug her toddler due to the chemo treatment. Buying a 'get well' card didn't seem sincere enough so I made my own. Someone saw the card and asked if there were more. One week later there were seven more. Soon people began to ask if there were more cards or other items. This pushed me to create activity books, comic books, stickers, pins, plush and other items of the character. Now the character has over 40 items, but it all began as a single card to lift the spirits of a friend.



### ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH THE MEMBERSHIP?

I just want to thank the members (many whom I call friends and creative colleagues) for motivating me to keep creating.



THE ANIMATION GUILD PRESENTS

*Diversity, Inclusion &  
Breaking Biases*

Featuring Floyd Norman, Jane Baer, Willie  
Ito and More

Wednesday, February 26, from 7 pm to  
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For Animation Guild members only. RSVP at  
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# FEATURES

Artistry, inspiration, imagination...these are amongst the words that often come to mind when describing the art of animation. But what about humanity? One might argue that it's the humanity of the characters that allow us to connect with them and see more than ink on screen, where a troll becomes more than a toy. In our feature on 50 years of Scooby-Doo, many of those who worked on the project cited the deep bond between Scooby and Shaggy as one reason the show withstands the test of time. And, in a completely different realm, supervisors in animation talk about the importance of "Hiring Humanely," ensuring that working environments are both industrious and compassionate.



Photo by Tim Sullens

| A 3D model of the reef, home to the Techno trolls, crafted by textile artist Natalie Miller.

# EXPANDING THE FIBER UNIVERSE

Hitting the road allowed the production team on *Trolls World Tour* to push boundaries in surfacing and effects

By Alexandra Drosu



IN THE ORIGINAL *TROLLS* MOVIE, PRODUCTION DESIGNER KENDAL CRONKHITE SHAINDLIN WAS INSPIRED TO DESIGN A FIBER-FELTED WORLD, CREATING A SOFT, FUZZY ENVIRONMENT THAT REFLECTED THE TROLLS' COMMUNAL LIFESTYLE AND OPTIMISTIC SPIRIT. BUT, IN THE SEQUEL, *TROLLS WORLD TOUR*, POPPY AND HER COMPANIONS LEAVE THEIR HOME TO MEET TRIBES FROM DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE TROLL KINGDOM.

"For me, that was the first opportunity to expand that fiber universe," says Cronkhite Shaindlin, of the initial idea to incorporate a diverse range of fabrics and crafting techniques to create unique landscapes for each of the six musical tribes. Fortunately, the production designer grew up around fabric stores (her parents owned them) and felt at home collecting hundreds of reference photos and swatches to begin infusing each tribe with its own distinctive qualities.

From Lonesome Flats, the land of the country western trolls, to the underwater reef of the techno trolls to the subterranean lava-flowing world of the hard rockers, each tribe lives in natural environments infused with macramé coral, quilted cactus or silk-flowing lava.

"It gives it an incredible warmth," says Cronkhite Shaindlin. "It takes off that CG edge and adds charm."

The variety of assets, the need to see a great amount of detail close-up to distinguish between the fibers and render them efficiently were the obstacles for the production team, especially the surfacing department.

"On many other films, you get certain things down and carry that across multiple sequences and multiple environments," says Head of Character Look Andy Harbeck. "Once we figured out one location, we needed to redo [the process] for another location."

However, limiting the world to natural materials also gave the filmmakers an opportunity to be inventive and fresh.

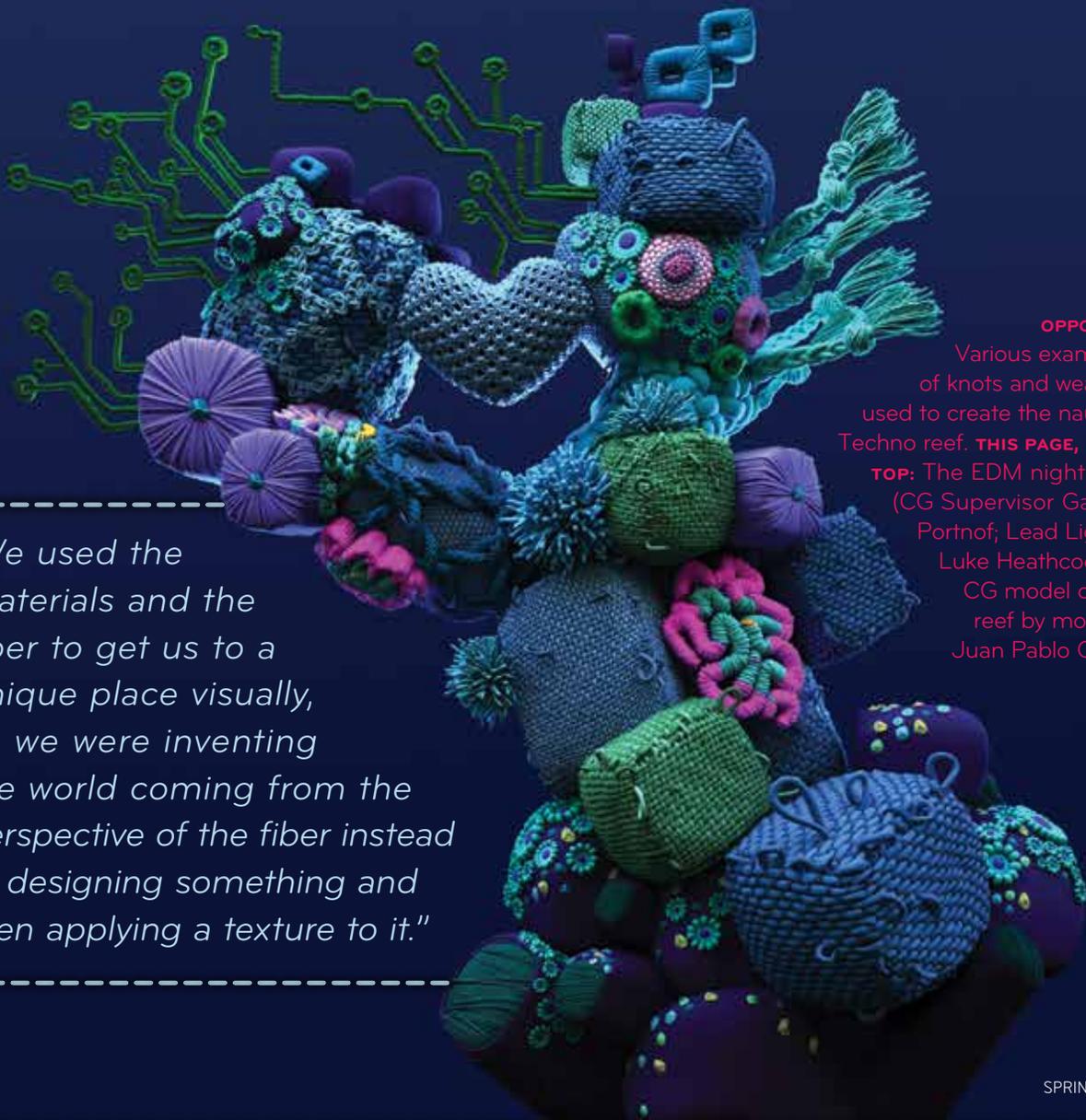
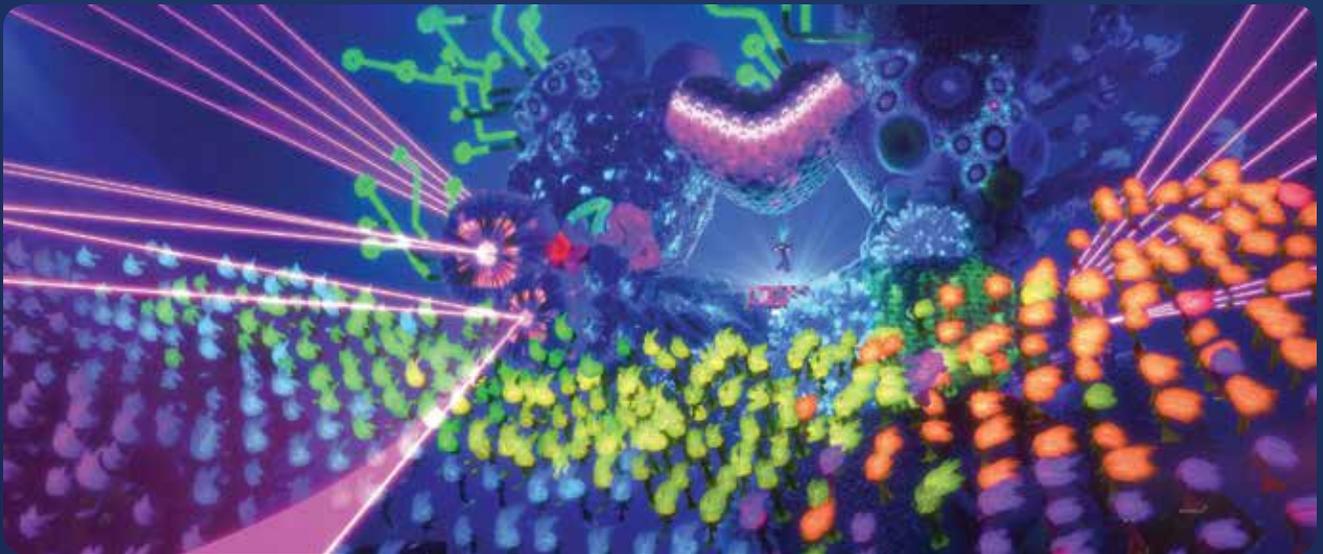
"We set up a library where you had a specific list of fiber and materials per land, it started becoming a vehicle for how we design the world," says Art Director Timothy Lamb. "For *Hard Rock*, for example, we had leather, stitching and fishnets, and we started looking at those materials in almost a stop motion way. We used the fishnets for the bars on a window [and] cut holes out of jeans for the actual window openings. We used the materials and the fiber to get us to a unique place visually, so we were inventing the world coming from the perspective of the fiber instead of designing something and then applying a texture to it."

"I didn't want to go in from a kind of computer aesthetic, where we build a gray model and then we wrap it in fabric," says Cronkhite Shaindlin. This notion was particularly true for the coral reef that doubles as an EDM dance club. The imaginative location kicks off the story that sends the main characters on a journey to stop Queen Barb and King Thrash from destroying all the other musical tribes. For this Techno world, Cronkhite Shaindlin was inspired by nautical knots, macramé and other weaving techniques. She reached out to Australian textile artist Natalie Miller to interpret the setting and craft 3D models.



Miller "used wire, foam and balsa wood as a substrate and either wove, knotted or wrapped the fibers around the substrates to create many different techniques...including Japanese Saori weaving, tapestry and heddle loom weaving, square knots, half hitch knots, sinnets of half hitch knots and coiling," to evoke a multi-colored reef.

The physical models, along with detailed vis-dev paintings, fiber samples and photographs gave the production pipeline a blueprint to start creating the world. This process was repeated for each of the varied natural environments.



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"We used the materials and the fiber to get us to a unique place visually, so we were inventing the world coming from the perspective of the fiber instead of designing something and then applying a texture to it."  
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**OPPOSITE:** Various examples of knots and weaving used to create the nautical Techno reef. **THIS PAGE, FROM TOP:** The EDM night club (CG Supervisor Gabriel Portnof; Lead Lighter Luke Heathcock); a CG model of the reef by modeler Juan Pablo Chen.

## A QUILTED LANDSCAPE

“When I’m flying, I look down at farmland and it feels like a quilt to me,” says Cronkhite Shaindlin. This quilted landscape served as the initial inspiration for *Lonesome Flats*, the country-western world, and the rich history of quilt-making aligned with the story. But balancing a myriad of patterns and textures can be overwhelming even in a mythical troll world, so the team stuck to a monochromatic palette of ochers, siennas, umbers, oranges and golds.

Again, the fibers, from twine to burlap, dictated the design and execution of the world. But it was also important to understand the scale of the materials and how they might appear to a 3-inch character with 3 inches of hair.

“Since we’re doing a movie about these tiny characters, twine is actually a big, solid rope for them,” says Lamb. “We started lining buildings, giving some detail with twine and string.”

It was imperative to get more than a 2D perspective of the surfaces, so Harbeck and Surfacing Artist Christopher N. Harvey MacGyvered a

3D scanner that Cronkhite Shaindlin says looked like a salad spinner.

“Chris came up with an initial prototype using a \$3 colander from Walmart,” says Harbeck. They soon graduated to a fancier version incorporating 50 LED lights and better cameras to be able to collect more data, such as height information, in order to sell the scale and the look of the surfaces.

“The lights would go around like a clock, divided into eight sections, and we would take eight images at different angles,” says Harbeck. The surfacing team would then feed the data into a third-party program that would build a texture set with different mapping properties.

It served as a great starting point but the artists still had other challenges to navigate such as creating more depth and geometry in the materials.

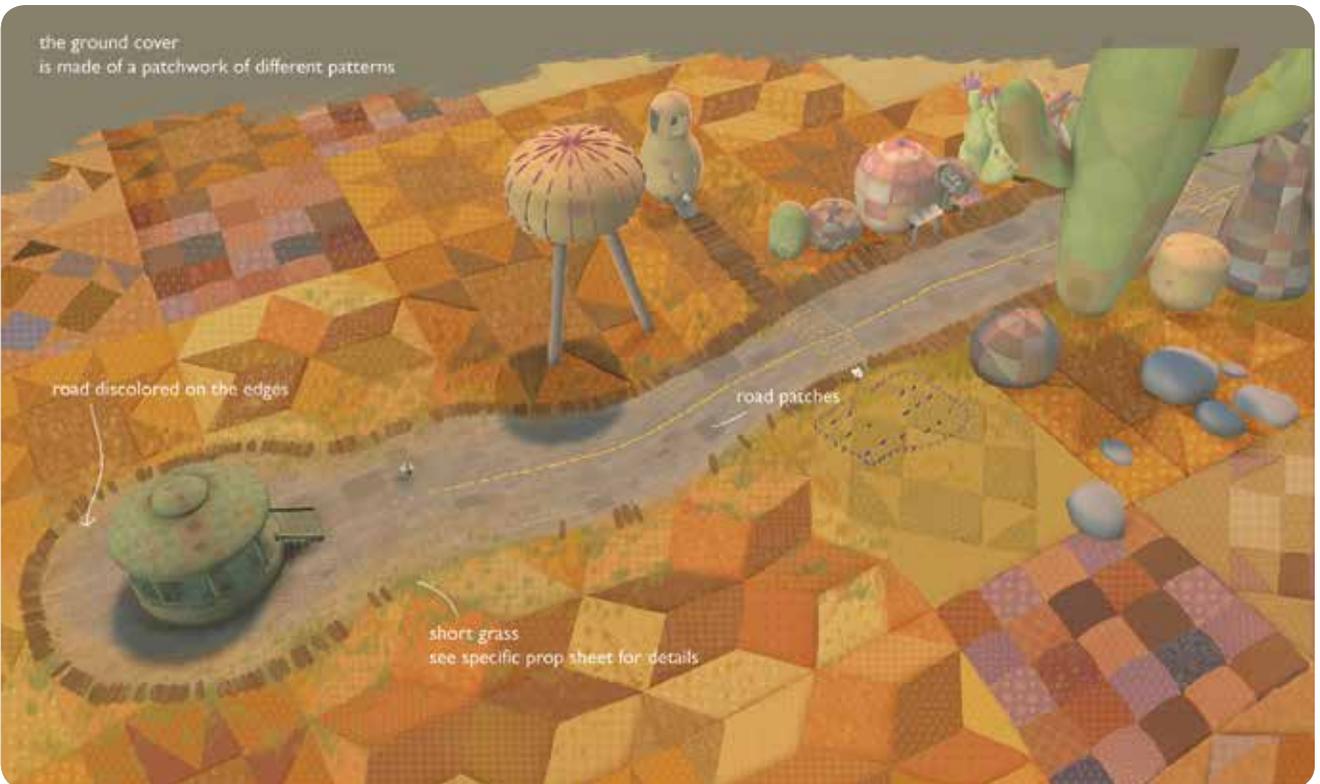
“We’re so close to all of these fibers, it just wasn’t adequate to represent the textures,” explains Harvey. “Each yarn, each thread, all the twine in the burlap [were generated] with actual curves

and rendered so that we could have a more fully geometric and dimensional effect to all the fibers—how much twist, how much fray at the end, how many loops and knots—rather than just relying on textures and traditional modeling approaches.”

We generated billions of curves to represent a lot of this geometry,” adds Harbeck. “We needed to consider there might be 10 characters in the shot, and the characters themselves all have fuzz on their skin, their hair, their clothes. When we put it all together, there is a lot going into each frame so we had to try to be as efficient as we could with all the different assets, but we also were pushing that boundary as far as we could, and lighting did an awesome job to render and optimize it.”

**THIS PAGE:** Cronkhite Shaindlin crafted patchwork cacti models. **OPPOSITE, FROM TOP:** Entering *Lonesome Flats* (CG Supervisor Sondra Verlander, Lead Lighter Lyndon Li); A bird's-eye view of the organza river (CG Supervisor Mike Hamler, Lead Lighter Iveth Bueno); and a visual blueprint of the world.





## FLOWING FABRICS

Given that the whole world is born of fibers, water also had to be depicted as fabric and Cronkhite Shaindlin chose the iridescent qualities of organza to represent the element. “When our characters fall into water, they don’t get wet. They just get messy—they have strips of organza and glitter on their bodies,” she says.

Turning fabric into a flowing river, required creative solutions from the effects department too. “We did some practical shoots where we took real pieces of organza and we saw how it interacted with light... taking heavy objects and kind of pushing them along a tablecloth to see what kind of

wrinkles and what kind of displacement we’d get,” says Stephen Wood, Head of Effects.

Cronkhite Shaindlin wanted to present multiple layers of fabric so the effects team split the river into three parts: a base, primary layer, and sheer layer. “The mid layer is the primary surfaced material with transparency and the organza texture,” explains Wood. “The base layer, below the organza, is created with an iterative noise to deform it into a scrunched-up shape. It provides non-transparent reflective highlights beneath the mid layer and for parallax. The sheer layer atop the organza adds a slight hazy rainbow iridescence with a very subtle parallax.”

Deformation guide curves were attached to the raft for the leading edge, side ripples, and the raft’s wake to make it appear as if it was floating along the river. But the team also had to keep the scale of the trolls in mind. The default would be to relate the movement to the size of a human which wouldn’t work in the trolls world. “The timing of the effect had to feel like it fit within the scale of the characters,” says Wood, which translated to more low frequency, low amplitude displacements.

These adjustments are what Wood calls “handcrafted animation” as opposed to purely simulation based: “The computer is only going to get you so far.

A visual-development painting by Peter Zaslav of the Hard Rock stage. **OPPOSITE:** The final design of the Rockfish tour bus by Art Director Timothy Lamb.



*"You have to just believe that it's possible because you don't know until you're there, honestly... It's also what makes us as a crew, excited. It's such a new, big challenge and it's exciting to see it come together in such an amazing way."*

We would have to go in and manually adjust things like speed and timing and certain displacements...We incorporated 'hang time' into our water and lava splash motion and would often cut to the next scene as the splash was at its apex."

In another climatic scene, the Hard Rock army bursts out of the water and splashes

through the surface of the ocean. "Everybody in surfacing, effects, the art department, Kendal and myself, we all brainstormed how that would look, if you're to break through the surface of water [and] it was just layers of fabric," says Lamb.

The resulting solution was to use torn fabric, fibers and glitter to imitate a splash. "A lot of that water feel comes from the material that is assigned to those individual pieces of fabric...light plays off of [the] pieces, lots of glinting, like you would [see] with a watery splash," says Wood.

The Hard Rock trolls live in a volcano that evokes a subterranean feel and features denim, leather, fishnets plus lots of studs and zippers. "It's all red and black and there's a lot of exploding lava. It's intense and it's Hard Rock music but because the exploding lava is actually silk with glitter, it's kind of charming," adds Cronkhitte Shaindlin.

Exploding silk lava from denim padded volcanoes set the stage for the effects team's work. "Initially, we produced a cloth surface that had a lot of flow properties of

real lava but in our silk reference and art we wanted to achieve a more natural silk look and also feel less threatening to our trolls," says Wood. "To achieve this, we took the underlying lava fluid simulation, traced a subset of points back in time to create flow curves, then created a force per curve that was perpendicular to the cloth surface and blended that force with the original lava flow direction. Essentially this gave us flow curves that blew wind up at the cloth surface while still giving the sense of movement that would give us a little bit of lapping and creasing."

Imagining an organza river or a silk sputtering volcano is one thing—the process to take it from a visual development concept to an effective solution onscreen takes years and there is a certain amount of faith required alongside artistry and technical acumen.

"You have to just believe that it's possible because you don't know until you're there, honestly," says Cronkhitte Shaindlin. "It's also what makes us as a crew, excited. It's such a new, big challenge and it's exciting to see it come together in such an amazing way. ☺"



# HIRING HUMANELY

Supervisors and directors in the LA animation industry discuss hiring practices, testing, and the realities of trying to staff a show ethically.

By Danny Ducker



**ELIZABETH ITO**  
Showrunner on  
*City of Ghosts*, Netflix

**PAULA SPENCE**  
Art Director of the Shorts  
Program, Cartoon Network;  
TAG Recording Secretary

ANIMATION IS A HIGHLY COMPETITIVE SCENE, AND WITH THE “STREAMING WARS” IN FULL SWING, STUDIOS ARE LOOKING TO CHURN OUT A LOT OF CONTENT QUICKLY. THE PATHS OF ENTRY FOR NEWCOMERS ARE MORE NUMEROUS AND VARIED THAN EVER BEFORE—POSTING SAILOR MOON FANART ON TWITTER ONE DAY CAN LAND YOU A STUDIO GIG THE NEXT.

But the increase in available work and the globalization of the industry have drawbacks, too. With all this content to be made, how do you find the right person to make it? Skills evaluations or “tests” have become common practice when trying to fill a creative position within a production. If you’ve never taken one, here’s the gist: if a show is interested in you but not sure that you can deliver exactly what they need, they may send a test for you to complete (e.g. a segment of a script to board out, a list of props/characters to design, a piece of dialog to animate using one of the show’s characters, etc.) These tests are almost always unpaid, are not guaranteed to lead to a job, and frequently end in the test-taker being ghosted by receiving no response at all.

According to The Animation Guild Master Collective Bargaining Agreement (under Sideletter J, pg. 98 of the 2015-2018 CBA) “*such evaluations should require only a reasonable amount of work to complete and should be related to the hiring, promotion, and/or assignment decision.*” But when the stakes are high and schedules are tight, ethics aren’t always a studio’s priority. Time consuming, excessive, and downright exploitative tests are a major problem in the industry.

I sat down with a group of Animation Guild members in supervisory and directing positions of various crafts and experience levels to discuss the issue, and the role that supervisors play in it.



Photos by Tim Sullens

**DANNY DUCKER**  
Storyboard Artist on *Amphibia* at Disney TV; Chair of the Testing Committee; TAG Executive Board member

**BEN JUWONO**  
Supervising Director on *Big Hero 6: The Series*, Disney TV

**KIMBERLY KNOLL**  
Art Director on *Centaurworld*, Netflix

**PETE MICHELS**  
Supervising Producer/Director on *Inside Job*, Netflix

## WHAT WAS IT LIKE TRYING TO GET INTO THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY?

**PAULA SPENCE:** I got my first job on *SpongeBob SquarePants*, the first season. I had a degree in illustration from Cal State Long Beach and a friend of mine was on the show. He was looking for somebody to hire for a background design position and I did a test that was two or three backgrounds. Since then, I've done other tests mostly in that first five years of my career. Most of them did not pan out and I tested three times for *Camp Lazlo* before I got on that one.

**KIMBERLY KNOLL:** I took a test for my first job for *Venture Bros* in New York and it was for BG paint. It was two backgrounds. Then for my second job, I did multiple time of days for another BG paint test. That was for *Sanjay and Craig* at Nickelodeon. I've done tests for almost every job except for this one I'm on now.

**PETE MICHELS:** I took some feature tests and got nowhere, but then realized I was not a feature animator. I took a test

on *The Simpsons* when they were first hiring and that's how I got my first job. It was a character layout test and it was two scenes. I took it twice and I never passed the character part of it, but the second time they liked my background so I got hired as the background layout artist. But I remember how harrowing an experience that was and I had no idea what I was doing.

**ELIZABETH ITO:** I did test for my first industry job. I was a story trainee for DreamWorks feature. I don't know if I tested for every single thing after that but the next test that I really remembered taking was for *Adventure Time* where I took a storyboarding test.

**BEN JUWONO:** My first job, I did have to test for it. It was for *Ultimate Spiderman*. That test was about a page of action stuff and I did not get hired based off that test but they did offer me a two page freelance [assignment], which later I found out was kind of a second test. When I was revisionist on *Spiderman*, I did take a test for *Legend of Korra*, which was awful. That test was three pages long, two pages of conversation and one separate page of just full chase sequence action. I had to take a whole week off to finish it. On the night before [it] had to be submitted, my computer had a meltdown and I lost all [of it]. I redid the test the morning of, submitted really crappy stuff a day late and, of course, I didn't get the job. But after that I was just like, "That was unreasonable." Thankfully, I had never had to test again after that.

## HOW DO YOU THINK TESTING BECAME A COMMON PRACTICE?

**PS:** I think that a lot of stuff happens out of habit and laziness in the industry. Everybody here got their first jobs with testing, so you just automatically assume that's how it works, everybody takes a test to get a job. Now, we're looking back at it and going, "Wait a minute. Do we need to do that?"

**KK:** I took my first test in 2011. I think it was very normalized at that point. So, I

never questioned it up until now when we start talking about it at the Guild meetings.

**PM:** It was there when I started in [the] early '90s and it had been going on before that. But I've seen tests on different productions get more complicated and harder. I've heard of people taking vacation days to take tests and that's just wrong. If you can't do it on a weekend, then a test is too long. I've seen tests where they call for 75 panels or more. I can tell in the first three pages if you're right for the show.

**EI:** You shouldn't have to feel like you're actually doing the job yet. It's just supposed to give you a quick taste of whether somebody has skills that you're looking for. I agree that the ones that are epic, that's based off of total laziness, where people didn't really think about why they're even doing it.

**BJ:** Now that we have a boom of content, there are a lot of young creators. They pitch a show, they get the show picked up and now they are in a position where they're basically in charge of everything. So, it makes sense that some of these people in charge of making decisions get a bit timid. So, they cast a wide net and they test everyone. [The] thing about this industry is that it's scary enough being down here as a board artist or as a revisionist because you're never sure what your next job is or if you're going to get to survive. It's a lot scarier when you're up there because now you're in charge of everything and if you make the wrong call, not only [do] you lose points with the studio, not only [does] your reputation get ruined, but you also lose respect from the people that work [below] you. I would be very scared being in that position [and] making the wrong call to a point where I would not dare to take risks anymore. The higher up you go, the more scared you get.

## WHAT CHANGES CAN WE MAKE TO THE CULTURE OF TESTING?

**PS:** I've talked to other art directors at Cartoon Network and I've had a couple of



Elizabeth Ito

them ask me about testing and I go, "The first thing you should know about testing is you don't have to test." And they always look surprised.

**EI:** There's ways to do stuff that isn't just testing or not testing. That's one of the things that we were talking about on my show because I needed to test people but there was discussion at the studio about testing in general. People were [saying] "Well, what if we just give freelance instead?" And then I think the in-between was paid tests. You're paying them for their time. Whether or not they're going to get the job, they're still getting paid. For me, I found that to feel better than just asking somebody to test for free, especially if they're somebody that's never worked before.

**BJ:** What I found out is that [at] some studios the producer [doesn't] actually have control over the budget completely because the studio controls the budget. So if you go to your producer and say, "Hey, can we set aside some money for paid testing?" as supervising director, I don't actually have that power. This has to be something that is talked about and discussed before the budget's even finalized. Once the budget's finalized, there's no more room to [say], "Can we set aside \$10,000 to test X number of people?" The last two episodes of the first season [of *Big Hero 6: The Series*], I actually kept one board artist spot on my team completely open. I never hired anyone. For the last two episodes, I would freelance them to people that I want to [hire for the next season]. Each of them gets five pages. Within 12 weeks, I got to test four people and they all get paid.

**PM:** You also get the work done.

**BJ:** I also get the work done. Well, no, some of it I have to redo. But that's the risk that you take. But from that I found one person that actually worked out and I don't feel bad about making the other people work because I paid them. And that circumvents that whole idea of, "Oh, sorry, we just don't have the budget for that." But that does require the director taking that risk.

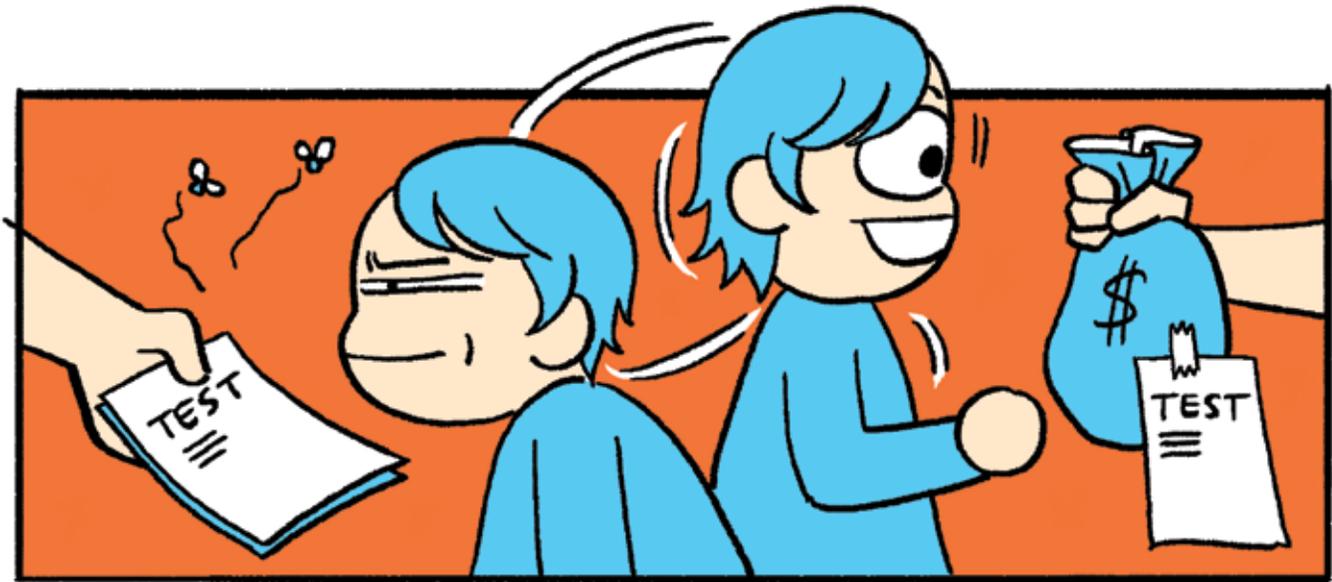
#### HOW DO YOU THINK WE AS A COMMUNITY FACE THE LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY WHEN IT COMES TO TESTING?

**PS:** First of all, we're talking about it now—that's great. And I'm really excited to hear that everybody has such similar ideas that are based in being good to other people, being fair and just talking to your co-workers. I've worked on a lot of shows that had very young creators. Just easing the tension by sometimes calling myself grandma [and saying] "Hey, grandma has some advice for you." Giving them some education and saying, "You remember what it was to take a test, right?"

*"Everybody here got their first jobs with testing, so you just automatically assume that's how it works, everybody takes a test to get a job. Now, we're looking back at it and going, "Wait a minute. Do we need to do that?"*



**TFW YOU MAKE IT TO THE TOP AND GOTTA FIGURE IT OUT ON YOUR OWN,**



Kris Mukai

## TFW YOU GET OFFERED A PAID TEST.

**KK:** I try to talk to my coworkers about their opinions on taking a test. People are very wary [of] making people work and we all want to be considerate of other people's time. If you're in a supervisor position, talk to people that you're supervising and [don't just go] along with what you're comfortable with or what you're used to for testing.

**PM:** Once you're [a] supervising director, you get more pressure. We're really middle management. But we're also artists and we have a foot in both camps. I think it can be scary to talk to your showrunner and say, "I think this test is too much. I don't want to make people do this." But I think we'd all be surprised if we did talk to our bosses, they'll perhaps say, "Really? Okay. Well, we'll fix that." I think they're probably more open to it than we realize. By getting the concerns out in the open we can talk about [testing] and not be so intimidated by it.

**BJ:** You've got to be considerate. I notice that people who are running shows are very passionate people who have a story to tell. And oftentimes, it almost becomes myopic. They are so focused on their story and their craft that they forget there are these people all working for them, with them. Oftentimes, there is this idea that the "ends justify the means." Whatever it takes to make the show good without realizing that you also have to be considerate to the people

that work for you. And if you treat them just as tools, as just the hand that draws, then all you get is the bare minimum.

**PS:** You have to trust them. Right?

**BJ:** You have to trust them. When you're a showrunner or a creator, it's your personal project, but the thing is you have to delegate. The showrunner doesn't have to be in the room and judge every test. Leave it to the directors. And people like us, we need to speak up more as well.

**EI:** Another thing is if [you] are young and you think you want to have your own show, maybe think about it as like, "I'm probably going to need to know people who could help me do this." As opposed to, "I'm going to pitch this idea and it's just going to be me making this thing." It's not realistic to what the position is. It's managing people. That's your job now.

**PM:** How do you test for [management skills]? You can't test for that.

**BJ:** I've been experimenting with this because I am in the process of picking directors right now. There's no way to test a director because it's about managing. So I schedule lunches with all my director candidates at least three times just to see their personality. We would talk about films we like and what we don't like, to make sure [our] sensibilities are similar. It's testing for a leadership position. I've seen how they behave, I've seen how they

talk, I've seen their Twitter. That's part of the judgment because you'll be working with these people [all] day.

### WHAT METHODS DO YOU TYPICALLY USE TO HIRE SOMEONE FOR YOUR SHOW?

**BJ:** If they have samples, [or] if I have worked with them before, then it's easy to decide. I do test very rarely just because from my personal experience, we don't see much more [in a test] than what we've seen in the portfolio. So testing is always the last resort for me.

**EI:** Even if I've worked with them before, I'd always meet with people first. I'd have a meeting to tell them about the show and tell them about what I would want them to do in that role. My rule was generally, if I've never worked with you before, or I don't have a good enough understanding that your experience level is right for this yet, I'm going to have to give you a [paid] test. It'll be a short test, I just need to know what your skills are and if you fit for this. It's worked out in most cases.

**PM:** When I'm staffing up, especially for storyboarders and directors, I look at it as casting. With an adult show, it's a very different style of boarding and posing than it would be for *Looney Tunes*. I'd look through portfolios. Some I'd recognize and some I wouldn't. A lot of portfolios would be people submitting online who have no experience, and there's a lot of amazing

talent out there. I strive for trying to keep a balance of new artists and veteran artists because both can learn from each other.

**PS:** I definitely try to hire without testing. If my showrunner really wants to try some unfamiliar people, then I try to make sure it's a paid test, and keep it to four to eight hours (of work) at the most. I try very specifically to create a test that will highlight the skill we're looking for. I want to set them up for success with a well-made test.

**KK:** I'm staffing up an art department for the first time. I'm in the process in real-time, figuring out how I decide who to hire and whether or not I want to test. Thankfully at Netflix, they are requiring everyone to do paid tests. When we made the test we wanted to absolutely make sure that it could be done within eight hours since the test was paying for eight hours.

#### **SINCE THEY WERE PAID, DO YOU THINK THAT AFFECTED WHO YOU CONSIDERED FOR THE TESTS?**

**KK:** I already had in my mind, before I found out about the paid testing, that I didn't want to send out more than about five tests per department. It didn't change who I considered.

#### **A FEW OF YOU HAVE SAID THAT YOU DON'T NEED A LOT OF MATERIAL FROM A TEST TO DECIDE IF THAT PERSON IS THE RIGHT FIT. WHY DO YOU THINK SO MANY TESTS ASK FOR AN EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF WORK?**

**BJ:** When I was helping make tests, sometimes you get told, "Oh, you're not allowed to use any script material that is already being produced for an episode,"

which means someone has to write a new script for that. So part of it is laziness and part of it is there's no resources to do it. It's great to have a budget set aside for paid testing, but there also needs to be some resources set aside to create tests.

**EI:** I would guess in some situations that it's a misunderstanding of the amount of work somebody is asking of the person that they're testing.

**PM:** There's been several shows that I've supervised where the tests were already made and given out before I even started. I'm like, "How did you make these tests?" And a lot of times it was, "Oh, I just took two pages out of the script."

**PS:** I think that a lot of times they come from premise [or] board driven shows. They don't know what they're looking for, so they want to test for everything. Let's get a little bit of action. Let's get a little conversation and let's get some comedy in there and let's make sure that they can draw different characters because there is no pre-design in the process, then I think it all just adds up.

**EI:** Part of it is just also reminding people who are taking the tests that you should just limit the amount of time you spend on it, too. I think sometimes people can want to really seem impressive and like they really want to get the job so they'll put in more hours than you know.

#### **WHAT'S A PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS ASPIRING TO BE A SUPERVISOR OR HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO THAT POSITION?**

**BJ:** The best advice I can give is to listen to the people that work for you. Be aware

that your words now have consequences.

**EI:** Try to be a good communicator. And the other thing is to always be aiming to simplify situations instead of over complicating things.

**PM:** The first thing I would say to someone moving into a supervisor role is learn every aspect of production. Don't assume that you know what somebody does; in other words, walk a mile in their shoes.

**KK:** I've been trying to learn [from] other art directors, asking people who I know have been in this position before, trying to talk to as many people as I can for advice. So ask a lot of questions and meet a lot of people so you don't feel like you're starting from square one and alone in the process, because having mentors and as much support as you can makes the whole process a lot easier.

**PS:** Communication's the best thing you can focus on when you're becoming a supervisor—communicating with your production team, your line producer, your showrunner, and the people that are working for you so you can build that trust and respect.

#### **WHAT'S A PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS BEING ASKED TO DO A TEST?**

**BJ:** If the test is unreasonable, it's your call whether or not you want to take it.

**EI:** Just think it over, and always know that if it feels like it's not right or that they're asking too much of you, know that it's not a big deal to say, "I don't want to do it."

**PM:** Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you get a test and there's something unclear, call up and say, "Hey, do you want me to draw the shoelaces on all the characters?"

**KK:** Ask questions and communicate when you get a test, but also after you're done be honest about how long things took.

**PS:** Work hard, but don't set unreasonable expectations for yourself or you're just going to set up a vicious cycle of overworking yourself. You should be able to do the job by working hard and using your talents, but not killing yourself. ☹️



Pete Michels

FEATURE



# ZOINKS! SCOOBY-DOO TURNS 50

By Kim Fray

LEFT: Scooby gets a CG makeover in the feature, *Scoob!*



**A CLEVER GANG, LED BY A DAPPER GUY NAMED FRED, TEAMS UP WITH A LOVEABLE DOG TO SOLVE A MYSTERY. IT'S THE TRIED-AND-TRUE FORMULA BEHIND HUNDREDS OF *SCOOBY-DOO* TV EPISODES AND MOVIES. IT'S ALSO THE FORMULA BEHIND THE SUCCESS OF THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS GREAT DANE.**

In the late 1960s, parents watch groups were protesting the extreme violence in children's cartoons. This resulted in a number of shows going off the air and a need to fill slots. CBS daytime programming executive Fred Silverman approached William Hanna and Joe Barbera—the powerhouses behind *The Flintstones* and *The Jetsons*—and the threesome came up with a basic concept: A cartoon featuring teens in a band, like *The Archies*, who solved mysteries between gigs. Throw in a dog, and the pitch was ready. But CBS execs in New York turned it down, saying the artwork was too scary.

The story of Silverman taking a red-eye back to L.A., stressed out

because this new show was supposed to anchor his Saturday morning lineup, is now legend. As the plane began to land, Frank Sinatra's "Strangers in the Night" came over the speakers. The song ended with a scat, "dooby-dooby-doo," and the lightbulb went on. Bring the dog forward, name him Scooby-Doo and reshape the concept toward Abbott and Costello meets Frankenstein. Comedy and horror in a single cartoon. Enter writers Joe Ruby and Ken Spears, who developed the storylines, and renowned animator Iwao Takamoto, who designed a bow-legged Great Dane. With the mystery of how to make this show work now solved by Fred, his gang and their loveable

dog, the suits in New York bought it. *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?* debuted in the fall of 1969. The original series has been followed by more than a dozen rebooted series, as well as a wide variety of Direct-to-TV movies. Over the decades *Scooby-Doo* moved from CBS to ABC to Kids' WB to Cartoon Network to Boomerang. Silverman, Hanna, Barbera, Ruby, Spears and Takamoto were often along for this ride from studio to studio, and through it all, an overflowing stream of artists and animators made sure that "those meddling kids" and a cowardly canine continued to unmask villains and save the day. But what makes *Scooby-Doo* appeal to audiences across the decades?

## MEMORABLE & CREEPY

A member of the talented team that shaped the original *Scooby Doo, Where Are You?*, background artist Eric Semones came to Hanna-Barbera fresh out of the Navy. “In 1964, I had wound up on a destroyer in the South China Sea during the Gulf of Tonkin incident in Vietnam,” he says. “We would get movies like *The Longest Day* and *Cleopatra* from one of the supply ships. We always traded them for any of the

*Looney Tunes* we could get. We loved the cartoons, and there was a name on the titles that stuck with me. Paul Julian.”

When Semones was discharged in 1966, he applied for a job at Hanna-Barbera. The next thing he knew, he was working on *The Flintstones* and *Josie and the Pussycats*. A few years later he was brought in to paint backgrounds for a new show called *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?*

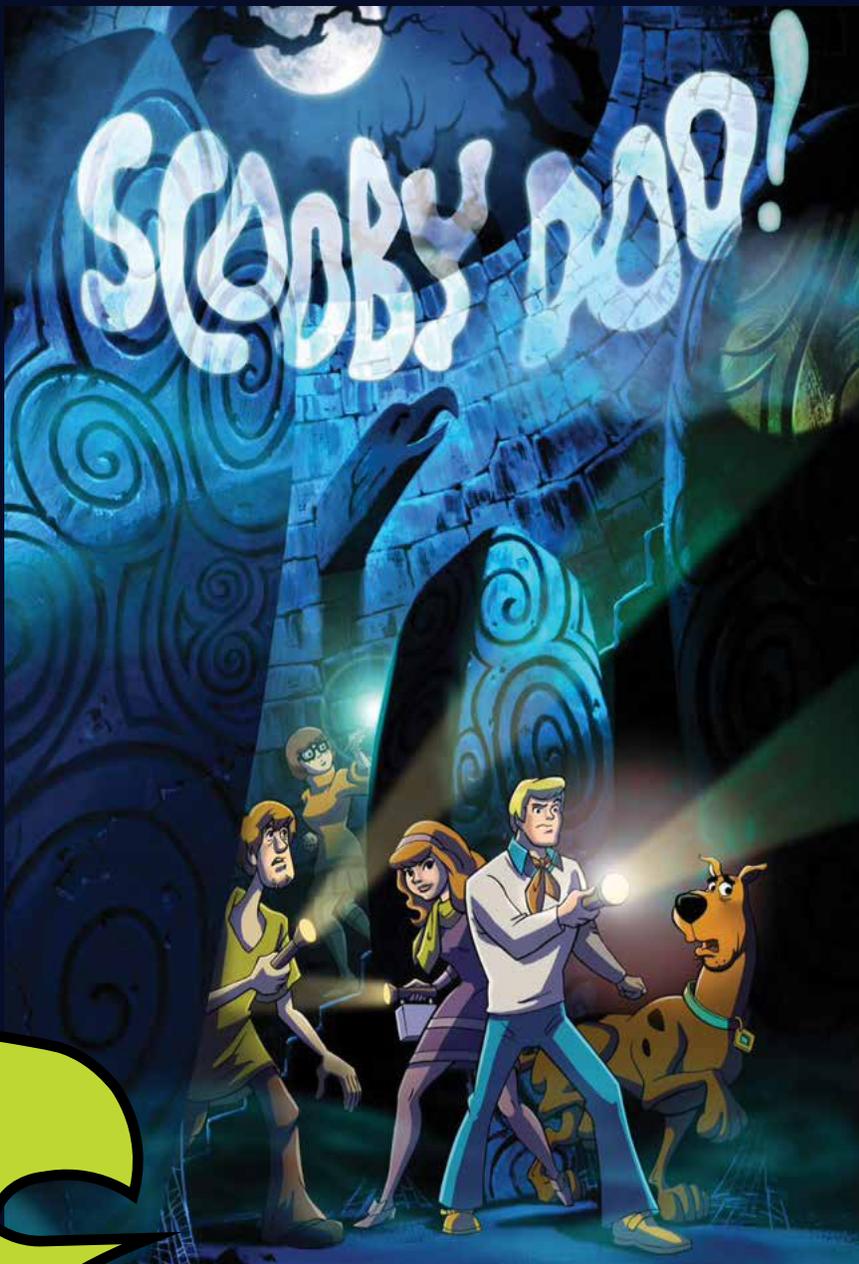
By this time Paul Julian—the man

whose work had captured Semones’ attention on a Navy destroyer—was freelancing for Hanna-Barbera. Semones says, “Paul was like a flytrap. People would come from all over the building to see what he had brought in because it was stunning. I was this 22-year-old shy kid, and I was looking at this stuff, and I didn’t want to make any noise. I just wanted to sit and study it. When I saw his work, I thought, man, I’ve got to put the pedal to the metal if I’m going to get anywhere in this industry.” With the bar set, Semones used *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?* to develop his craft, contributing to the show’s gothic, creepy backgrounds—some of the most evocative and memorable in cartoon history. “*Scooby-Doo* gave me an opportunity to stretch,” Semones explains. “There were some scenes where Paul would set the style, and it was really like a master’s degree in fine arts.” As for what makes *Scooby-Doo* still appealing after fifty years, Semones says, “The characters are funny, the writers use topical humor, and everyone likes a good whodunit.”

## FACING YOUR FEARS

For background painter Tristin Cole, “What I love most about working on *Scooby-Doo* is that it’s almost genetic for me. I watched my father [Corny Cole], who was a background painter for Hanna-Barbera, paint backgrounds for Scooby when I was growing up. He introduced me to Iwao Takamoto when I was eight years old, and imparted in me the great sense of respect he had for Iwao.”

Cole has worked on nearly 20 *Scooby-Doo* Direct-to-TV movies and more than 100 TV episodes. She’s currently



**THIS PAGE:** A poster for a 2008 Direct-to-TV film designed by Eric Semones intended to capture the brush texture of the original backgrounds.

on *Scooby-Doo and Guess Who?* and says that even now, “When you mention Scooby to people their eyes light up, and it triggers a childhood memory.”

Cole feels one reason the show maintains such a firm grip on the imagination is the continuity in the backgrounds with “a certain design and color language that was established early on.” She adds, “Iwao gave me some words of wisdom about painting Scooby. He said if you’re painting an exterior house or building, paint the windows dark, with no lights on. It automatically makes it feel haunted or spooky and in the world of Scooby.”

As for what makes *Scooby-Doo* still appealing after 50 years, Cole says, “Familiarity. I think people look forward to hearing Shaggy say ‘zoinks!’ or the villain say, ‘If it weren’t for you meddling kids!’ There’s also the fact that the villain is unmasked at the end. It lets kids know that the monsters in the story aren’t real. And when Scooby or Shaggy get scared, they face their fears and end up solving the mystery or saving the day. There is a positive lesson in that.”

## “THEY LOVE THAT DAMN DOG.”

Layout artist Susan Crossley and husband, Animation Director

Tim Walker, have enjoyed separate successful animation careers filled with *Scooby-Doo* projects. A graduate from art school in the early 1970s, Crossley learned that Hanna-Barbera was looking for people who could draw figures. But she was told, “We can’t bring you in right away.’ Another couple days after that, they said, ‘Well, you’re welcome to join the ink and paint ladies.’ I said, ‘No. You told me I was coming in at this studio, and that’s what I’m going to do.’ So that’s what I did. I got myself in. I made it happen.”

“Susan made a life for herself,” Walker adds. “Nobody sat down with her when she came in fresh off the street. She was thrown into the deep end and she came to the surface and made a career for herself.”

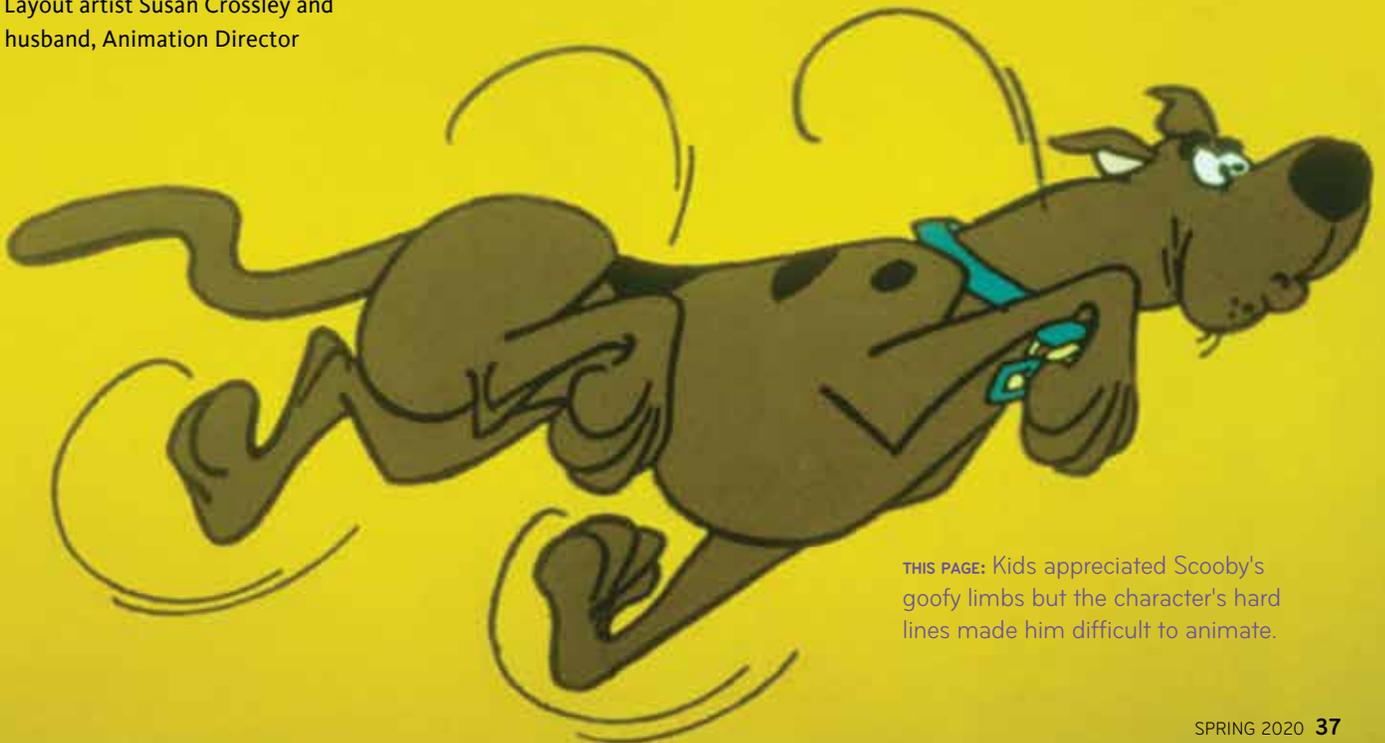
“It was hard sometimes,” Susan continues, “not having more women around. And I was always nervous. I was a perfectionist in a way, and I was always like, ‘Oh God, I hope I make it,’ especially since Scooby was a little hard to draw. He was all angles, and Iwao Takamoto had to go over our drawings.”

Takamoto drew the exact opposite, bowing Scooby’s legs, enlarging his

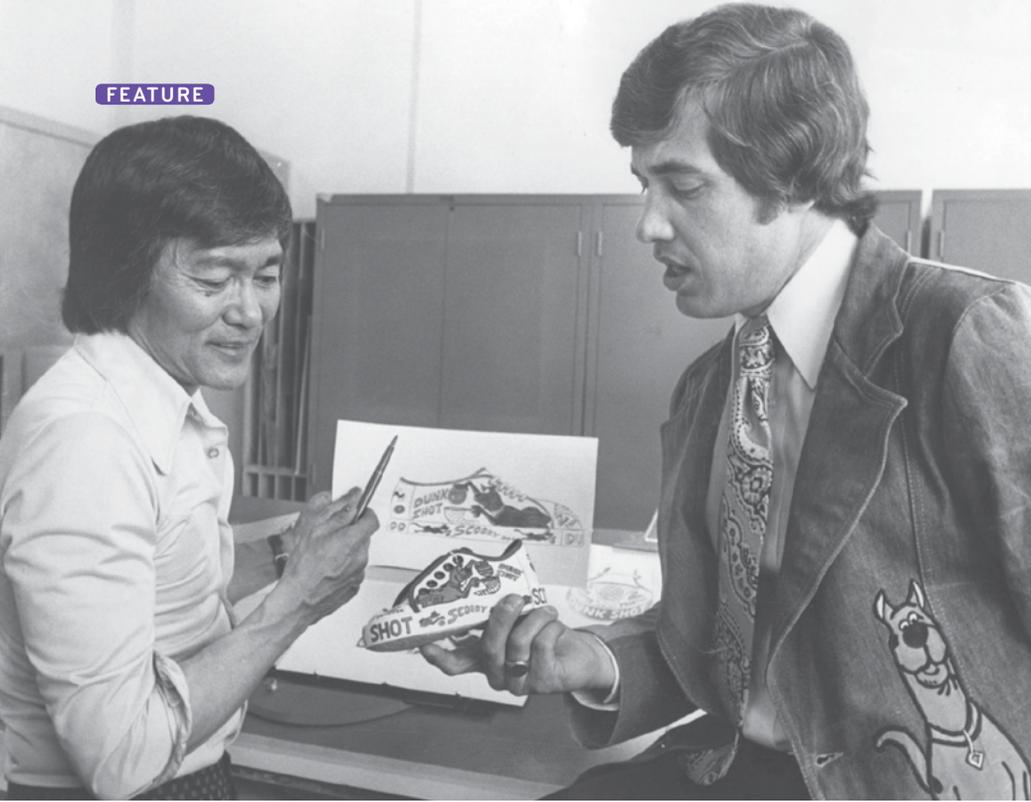
feet and sloping his hindquarters. This goofiness is fun for kids to watch, but as Walker says, “That dog is not designed for animation. Animation is circles and ovals and things like that. Things you can move around and squash and stretch. Scooby had so many hard lines.”

Like Crossley, Walker graduated from art school, but he knew even at four or five that he was going to be an animator, and later, when a neighbor told him where the Hanna-Barbera studios were located, he realized it wasn’t far from his middle school. “I had the bright idea to ride down there one Saturday. I lifted up the trashcan lid, and there were cells and backgrounds everywhere,” he says. “That started a good ten years of dumpster diving. I had backgrounds and hand-inked cells. Beautiful.”

It was only natural that Walker would wind up at Hanna-Barbera, with one of his first jobs freelancing for Ed Love, an animator on the original *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?* Throughout Walker’s career he worked for every studio in town, but he often returned to *Scooby-Doo* because, he explains, “By far I had the most fun working at Hanna-Barbera. To me it was like, I’m



THIS PAGE: Kids appreciated Scooby’s goofy limbs but the character’s hard lines made him difficult to animate.



THIS PAGE (TOP TO BOTTOM): Iwao Takamoto, Animation Producer and Gary Johnson, North America Operations of Hanna Barbera Enterprises go over design concept of Scooby-Doo tennis shoe (1976). Original Scooby-Doo, *Where are you?* sketch by Iwao Takamoto. Creative team Joe Ruby, Ken Spears, Spike Brandt, Tony Cervone and Eric Semones worked together on several DTV Scooby-Doo films.



working for my idols. Bill and Joe. Jiminy Christmas, you want to pay me to come in here and do this. I spent 50 years living my dream. Who can say that?" As for what makes *Scooby-Doo* still appealing after all these years, Crossley says, "That voice. It's fun for kids to talk like Scooby-Doo." Walker adds, "They just love that damn dog!"

## CROSSING CULTURAL BOARDERS

*Scooby-Doo* was an integral part of storyboard artist Aluir Amancio's childhood in Brazil. "I would sit every day in front of the TV, and I would try to draw my favorite characters. I drew Scooby-Doo plus all the others. That's how I became familiar with the Hanna-Barbera style."

At 10, Amancio was approached by the owner of a cartoon studio. "He told me, 'We can't hire you right now because you're too young. But what if you show up in the studio and start learning with professionals as a trainee. That's what I did. I remember one day I showed him my Hanna-Barbera drawings. He laughed and said, 'You know Aluir, you draw Hanna-Barbera characters better than you draw mine.'" Amancio's passion turned into a profession, and in 1998, when he was working in Brazil for Warner Bros. on *Batman Beyond*, he was brought to California. "My first assignment for *Scooby-Doo* came right in the middle of my move," he says. "I did my





whole storyboard section in a hotel room. It was quite a challenge.” Along with working as a storyboard artist on more than 10 *Scooby-Doo* Direct-to-TV movies and *Scooby-Doo! Mystery Incorporated*, Amancio also draws for DC comics. But his heart belongs to *Scooby*: “I love the style. Sometimes when I’m working, I forget I’m not drawing for fun. Then I stop and go, I’m drawing *Scooby-Doo!*”

### EXPERIMENTATION HAS ITS RISKS.

Zac Moncrief was the supervising director on an adult show for Comedy Central when he was approached by executives at Warner Bros. in late 2013. “They informed me that they were looking to do a more comedy-driven version of *Scooby-Doo*, and wondered if I’d like to bring the experience I had directing on *Phineas and Ferb* to this new show,” he says. For *Be Cool, Scooby-Doo!*, one of the more recent series in the franchise, Moncrief and his team played around with the familiar characters and “were able to broaden the scope of who they really are. The comedic approach I wanted to explore was more from character and the writing than from a broad visual style. I truly enjoyed diving in and creating engines that drove these characters, all starting from the nuggets of what we knew about each one from past series.”

This kind of experimentation, though, has its risks. Moncrief explains, “Familiarity plays a huge part, especially in something as universally known and loved as *Scooby-Doo*. I am so proud of the amount of true, diehard fans that finally gave this version a chance, and were able to see, and really enjoy, what we were trying to do. Once we won over the diehards, I knew that what we were doing was working. That’s rewarding.” “*Scooby* and the gang represent all that we are as human beings,” he

we learn The gang added Scrappy-Doo to the group in 1979

says. “*Scooby* and *Shaggy* are that inner voice that tells us something is off. And *Fred*, *Daphne* and *Velma* represent the other side of humanity that inevitability wants to get to the bottom of that injustice and make it right again. It’s why *Scooby* will always be relevant and why it will always have an audience.”

### A SCOOBY-DOO PURIST

Prop designer Mark Bachand estimates that he’s spent about one-third of his 25-year animation career working on *Scooby-Doo* projects, including seven Direct-to-TV movies and three series: *What’s New, Scooby-Doo?*, *Scooby-Doo! Mystery Incorporated* and the

at *Hanna-Barbera*, and *Scott* said, “*Iwao*’s absolutely gotta be on this. He’s the original designer. He knows the characters inside and out.’ I’ve worked on a number of other projects that you realize are very special, but it makes it more so when you’re working with the creative forces behind it.” Another time, on “*Scooby-Doo and the Legend of the Vampire*,” *Bachand* remembers how *Jeralds* and character designer *Scott Awley* “thought it would be a great idea if they could get all the original *Scooby* voice actors together, with the exception of *Don Messick* who had passed by that time. Along with *Nicole Jaffe* as *Velma*, *Heather North*

“Sometimes when I’m working, I forget I’m not drawing for fun. Then I stop and go, I’m drawing *Scooby-Doo!*” – ALUIR AMANICO

current *Scooby-Doo and Guess Who?* While his *Scooby* journey began in the late 1990s, his work experiences were steeped in the show’s origins.

For the first Direct-to-TV movie *Bachand* worked on, he says, “[*Producer*] *Scott Jeralds* was instrumental in bringing *Iwao* back to the property. They were friends

as *Daphne* and *Frank Welker* voicing *Scooby* and *Fred* (who he continues to voice to this day), acclaimed Top 40 DJ *Casey Kasem* returned as *Shaggy*, and “it really did affect the chemistry.” While *Bachand* might be considered a *Scooby-Doo* purist, he has enjoyed his moments of adding something new to the franchise. “I remember one Direct-to-TV





THIS PAGE: The new feature *Scoob!* is an origin story that reveals how Shaggy and Scooby met.



we were working on,” he says. “We had to go inside the Mystery Machine, and I was told, ‘You gotta design it.’ This had never been done in the original series, so we had to do it from scratch. That was a lot of fun.”

“I think it’s the chemistry and the relationships of the characters, because they really care for each other. There’s nothing snarky or undercutting in their personalities,” says Bachand of *Scooby’s* enduring appeal. “They’re very genuine toward each other. I think a lot of people just long for that. To be talked to and treated in that caring manner.”

it’s everything you love. You gotta do it, just do one.’ That was a decade ago.”

Cervone still works on *Looney Tunes* projects, but as he explains, “They’re very different in terms of the spirit behind them. I love the Warner Bros. *Looney Tunes* stuff and I love the Hanna-Barbera stuff. The difference is, the Hanna-Barbera stuff is much more personal. I can’t separate myself from the people who created it, and because it is more personal, I do kind of treat it a little differently.”

In taking Scooby and the gang to the big screen, Cervone says, “The biggest

intends “to keep the core the same. For me the most important thing with *Scooby-Doo* is the friendship within the gang, especially with Scooby and Shaggy. That’s the fire that keeps things burning. I love the mysteries, and I love the monsters, but without feeling the Scooby and Shagginess of it, it falls flat to me. Those guys are the best example we can make of the power of friendship. We get changes thrown at us throughout our whole lives, but some friendships can withstand any change that happens. That’s the kind of friendship Scooby and Shaggy have.”

*“The biggest challenge is being true to who the original characters are and keeping their DNA fully intact, but also doing something new and original with it.” – TONY CERVONE*



## A COLLECTIVE RESPECT

Rare is the person who worked on *Scooby-Doo* who didn’t cross paths with storyboard and layout artist Jerry Eisenberg, a member of the original team that, along with Iwao Takamoto, developed *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You?* While Iwao is the famed creative force behind Scooby, Eisenberg remembers helping design Shaggy because “I was doing characters with extra-long necks once in a while.”

Eisenberg was busy supervising layouts on other cartoons when Scooby went into production, but his memories capture how this longstanding favorite was a result of more than just the work done by those listed on the shows’ IMDB pages. “Back then we could interface with the writers, the background painters, whoever. Joe [Barbera] was always available. I miss the camaraderie and teamwork we had for many years, working in such close proximity.”

Eisenberg brought his expertise to numerous *Scooby-Doo* TV episodes and DTV movies in the 2000s, and he is universally praised by those who have worked with him. Although the way in which animation departments operate may not be as intimate anymore, the spirit Eisenberg describes lives on through a legacy of collective respect and care for Scooby and the gang. 🍷

## HITTING THE BIG SCREEN

Fifty years after his television birth, *Scooby-Doo* will finally hit the big screen as an animated feature film, *Scoob!* This first-of-its-kind project is being helmed by director Tony Cervone, who honed his *Scooby* skills as Supervising Producer on *Scooby-Doo! Mystery Incorporated* and producer/director on several *Scooby-Doo* Direct-to-TV movies. Unlike many others who arrived eagerly in the world of *Scooby-Doo*, Cervone was a reluctant convert. He was a Looney Tunes stalwart when former Cartoon Network VP Sam Register came to him and asked, “Do you want to do a Scooby-Doo thing?” Cervone’s immediate response: “No, I don’t do Scooby-Doo, I do *Looney Tunes* stuff.” Sam said, ‘That’s crazy because

challenge is being true to who the original characters are and keeping their DNA fully intact, but also doing something new and original with it because we can’t always do the same thing over and over again. We love these characters, and we want to honor them. And we love the people who made these characters. I don’t want to disappoint them.” Going a step further, Cervone and his team have peppered the movie with small tributes, and Scooby fans in-the-know should keep their eye out for Easter eggs like a bowling alley called Takamoto Bowl, after Iwao Takamoto. *Scoob!* will be a complete origins story—another first for Scooby and the gang. It will also benefit from the production schedule and technology of feature quality animation. At the same time, Cervone

# HONORING OUR FELLOW ARTISTS

ON FEBRUARY 29TH, THE AFTERNOON OF REMEMBRANCE WILL PAY TRIBUTE TO THOSE IN THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY WHO PASSED AWAY LAST YEAR. HERE, WE MOURN THE LOSS OF SO MANY TALENTED INDIVIDUALS.

**BRADLEY ACHORN** 9/5/2019

Though he had moved on to a second career as a software engineer, Achorn worked as a Technical Director for Disney and DreamWorks on the feature films *Bolt*, *Shrek 4*, *Kung Fu Panda 2*, *Turbo*, *Puss 'n Boots* and *Rise of the Guardians*.

**GORDON BRESSACK** 8/30/2019

Nominated for five Daytime Emmys and winning three, Bressack was most well-known for his writing on *Pinky and the Brain* and *Animaniacs*, though his work on *Tiny Toon Adventures*, *The Smurfs*, and *Darkwing Duck*, among other projects is also of note. He was 68.

**JESSICA BROWN** 1/12/2019

She shared her smile, effervescent personality and talent and worked as a Finaler and Texture Artist at Nickelodeon Animation Studios until recently, when she became a spokesperson for UX/UI design. She was 34.

**RUDY CATALDI** 1/4/2019

"The Caboose of the Golden Age" got his start drawing in-betweens at Disney at age 16. His career spanned over five decades, from coast to coast, from beloved Disney films to *Q. T. Hush Private Eye*, which aired on *Sheriff John's Lunch Brigade* to the classic Hanna-Barbera TV series *The Flintstones*, *Yogi Bear* and *Johnny Quest*, just to name a few. He was 91.

**JACK DE MELLO** 4/28/2019

The composer is perhaps best known for his synthesis of Hawaiian melodies and lush, contemporary orchestral music, but animation fans know he wrote the music for *The Flintstones* and *The Jetsons*, among other Hanna-Barbera series. He was 102.

**GIL DICICCO** 12/9/2019

DiCicco's credits as a Background and Layout Artist span from features to TV and include *The Great Mouse Detective*, *The Smurfs* and *Super Friends*, among other well-known shows. He was 76.

**LARRY DITILLIO** 3/16/2019

The creator of the *She-Ra: Princess of Power* bible wrote for *She-Ra*, *He-Man* and *Fat Albert* at Filmation, as well as *Beast Wars* and *Transformers*. Outside the animation industry, he was Story Editor on *Babylon 5* and wrote for the role-playing game *The Call of Cthulhu*. He was 71.

**ERNESTO ELICANAL** 9/4/2019

As a Character Layout Artist and Storyboard Artist at Film Roman and Klasky Csupo, Elicanal is best known for his work on *The Simpsons*, *The Wild Thornberys Movie* and *The Rugrats* movies.

**JACK ENYART** 10/13/2019

In addition to writing several *Bugs Bunny* TV specials, Enyart kept busy at just about every studio in town by writing for *Scooby-*

*Doo*, *Heathcliff*, *Bionic Six*, *Fraggle Rock*, *Duck Tales* and *Alvin and the Chipmunks*, and occasionally lent his voice acting skills as well. He was 69.

**EVELYN FLETCHER** 9/23/2019

Over the course of her animation career, she worked in the Xerox and Ink and Paint departments of Disney, Filmfair, Hanna-Barbera and Bill Melendez Productions.

**CRAIG GARDNER** 10/22/2019

He painted backgrounds on such TV series as *Dora the Explorer*, *RoboCop: Alpha Commando* and *The Angry Beavers* at Warner Bros, New World, Marvel, Nickelodeon and Hanna-Barbera.

**CRAIG GRASSO** 11/21/2019

Grasso saw himself as a regular guy with a passion for storytelling. He worked his magic as a Storyboard Artist on such feature films as *Brave*, *Brother Bear*, *Lilo & Stitch* and *Mulan*, and for several years shared his insights with CalArts students as their story instructor. He was 56.

**BETTE ISIS BAKER HOLMQUIST** 6/20/2019

After a successful career as an Assistant Animator and Character Lead at Disney, Hanna-Barbera, and Filmation, Holmquist left the industry in the mid-90s to work for Disney Consumer Products. She was 76.

**JOE KWONG** 5/4/2019

As an Animator/Modeler at Disney Feature Animation and later a Rigging Artist at Blue Sky, Kwong's coworkers knew him for his kind and friendly attitude, and his great aesthetic talent.

**MAURY LAWS** 3/28/2019

Animation fans know Laws' work well. He wrote the music for *The Little Drummer Boy*, *Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town*, *The Year Without Santa Claus*, *The Hobbit*, *Nestor, the Long-Eared Christmas Donkey* and *The Wind in the Willows*, among other favorites. He was 95.

**DIANA LEBOST** 4/23/2019

Assistant Animator and children's book author, LeBost worked much of her career at DreamWorks, though she also spent time at Film Roman, Duncan Studios and Turner Feature. She recently did cleanup animation on *Mary Poppins Returns* and was proud of her work on *The Iron Giant*.



**MARY LESCHER** 6/2/2019  
Her credits span three decades, as she worked as a Scene Planner on projects such as *The Lion King*, *Lilo & Stitch* and

*Brother Bear* at Disney Feature Animation in Florida and Los Angeles. Her most recent project was last year's *Klaus*. She was 61.

**ART LOZZI** 11/4/2019  
Name a classic, beloved Hanna-Barbera series and you can bet that this iconic Background Designer and Color Stylist worked on it. To name a few: *Yogi Bear*, *The Jetsons*, *Top Cat*, *Huckleberry Hound*, *Quick-Draw McGraw* and *The Flintstones*. He was 90.

**J. MICHAEL MENDEL** 9/22/2019  
The Emmy-Award winning Producer of *The Simpsons* and *Rick and Morty* was much respected for supporting the artists, writers and creators with whom he worked. He was 54.

**LEE MENDELSON** 12/25/2019  
The producer (and sometimes writer) of countless *Charlie Brown* movies and TV series also produced *Garfield* TV specials, the *Mother Goose and Grimm* series and *Babar* movies among many others. He was 86.

**DON MORGAN** 3/31/2019  
With a background in industrial design, Morgan was a natural Layout Artist and Designer for animation. Over his long career, he worked on classics such as *The Famous Adventures of Mr. Magoo*, *Tom and Jerry* and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* at UPA, Chuck Jones Productions, Ralph Bakshi, Hanna-Barbera, and DreamWorks, among other studios. He was 80.

**PEGGY NICOLL** 7/5/2019  
Perhaps most well known for her work on *Daria*, Nicoll also worked as a Writer and Story Editor on *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, *Bratz* and *WordGirl*. She was 60.

**LETHA PRINCE** 12/14/2018  
During her years at Hanna-Barbera, Filmation and Ralph Bakshi studios, she worked as a mark-up supervisor in the Ink and Paint department and as an animation checker on such classics as *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*, *She-Ra: Princess of Power*, *The Original Ghostbusters* and *Cool World*.

**MILTON QUON** 6/18/2019  
After Graduating from Chouinard Art Institute in 1939, Quon went straight to Disney Animation to work as an Animator and Designer. Though his career in animation was not long, he will always be known for his work on such classics as *Fantasia* and *Dumbo*. He was 105.

**C. RAGGIO IV** 2/9/2019  
He jumped straight from CalArts to a solid career in character and prop design at Cartoon Network, Disney TVA and Nickelodeon, and then made the jump to storyboarding for animated features at Illuminations Entertainment and Sony Pictures. His final film was *The Angry Birds Movie 2*. He was 40.

**CHRIS RECCARDI** 5/2/2019  
A Jack Of All Trades, he was a Designer, Storyboard Artist, Visual Development Artist, Writer, Director, Producer and musician on projects such as *The Ren & Stimpy Show*, *The Powerpuff Girls* and *Samurai Jack*. Reccardi was married to fellow artist Lynne Naylor for 25 years. He was 54.

**JACK SHELDON** 12/27/2019  
When he wasn't playing sidekick to Merv Griffin, he was teaching kids important concepts in the *Schoolhouse Rock* cartoons "I'm Just a Bill" and "Conjunction Junction." He was 88.

**MORGAN SHEPPARD** 1/6/2019  
An actor who was comfortable on the stage and screen, Sheppard was a prolific voice-over actor for animation, video games and radio plays. With his memorable deep voice, he brought to life many characters for Disney TV animation, Warner Bros. and Gang of Seven. He was 87.

**JAY WON SO (JASON SO)** 10/9/2019  
With hundreds of credits as an Animator on such series as *She-Ra: Princess of Power* and *The Original Ghostbusters*, So also worked as a Storyboard and Character Layout Artist at Baer Animation, Warner Bros., Disney, Filmation, Hanna-Barbera and Marvel.



**TED STEARN** 2/1/2019  
Perhaps most well-known for his work as a comics artist—especially the "Fuzz and Pluck" stories—Stearn worked as a

Storyboard Artist and Art Director on many prime time animated series, such as *Beavis & Butthead*, *Daria*, *King of the Hill*, *Drawn Together*, *Squirrel Boy*, *Futurama*, *Rick and Morty*. He was 57.

**RUSSI TAYLOR** 7/26/2019  
The voice of Minnie Mouse from 1986 until she passed away last year, she was married to the voice of Mickey Mouse, the late actor Wayne Allwine. In addition, she provided voices for many other animated characters at Disney, Hanna-Barbera, Warner Bros. Jim Henson Studios and on *The Simpsons*. She was 75.

**RICHARD TRUEBLOOD** 8/21/2019  
Over his 30-year career in animation, he worked as an Animator, Director and Timing Director at Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, Disney TV Animation, Universal, Marvel and Nickelodeon and other studios, and still managed to perform as a clown in many Doo Dah parades and watch every circus he could find. He was 78.

**SHERRI VANDOLI** 8/17/2019  
She worked in the Ink and Paint Departments at Disney, Ruby-Spears and Filmation as a Cel Painter, Xerox Processor and Supervisor.

**RICHARD WILLIAMS** 8/16/2019  
The groundbreaking animator brought *Roger Rabbit* to life, and his best known work includes *The Thief and the Cobbler*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Prologue*, but perhaps his greatest strength was hiring the right people to work with, in some cases his own mentors. His book, "The Animator's Survival Kit," is an essential industry reference. He was 86.



**ALAN ZASLOVE** 10/2/2019  
After starting as an "office boy" at Leon Schlesinger's studios, he went on to animate, direct and produce on the all-time classics at UPA, Hanna-Barbera and Disney. Zaslove co-created *Chip 'n Dale Rescue Rangers* and was one of The Animation Guild's earliest members—his membership paperwork is dated April 30, 1952! He was 91.

Compiled and written by Paula Spence

**3 MAR**  
**SUPER TUESDAY**



Get out and vote in the primaries!

**6 MAR**  
**GALLERY 839 OPENING**

Kristi Lyon

**17 MAR**  
**ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

**19-22 MAR**  
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**31 MAR**  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**31 MAR**  
**TAG TUESDAY**  
**SHOW YOUR SOLIDARITY!**



**1 APR**  
**SECOND QUARTER DUES**

**3 APR**  
**GALLERY 839 OPENING**  
Rebecca Rees

**10 APR**  
**GOOD FRIDAY – CONTRACT HOLIDAY**  
(except Nickelodeon & DreamWorks)

**15 APR**  
**GLAS ANIMATION GRANT APPLICATIONS OPEN**

**17 APR**  
**DREAMWORKS'S TROLLS WORLD TOUR DEBUTS**

**28 APR**  
**TAG TUESDAY**  
**SHOW YOUR SOLIDARITY!**

**1 MAY**  
**GALLERY 839 OPENING**  
Christine Mallouf, Floyd Norman, Robert Tyler

**15 MAY**  
**WB'S SCOOB! DEBUTS**

**22 MAY**  
**NICKELODEON & PARAMOUNT'S SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: SPONGE ON THE RUN DEBUTS**



**25 MAY**  
**MEMORIAL DAY – CONTRACT HOLIDAY**

**26 MAY**  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**26 MAY**  
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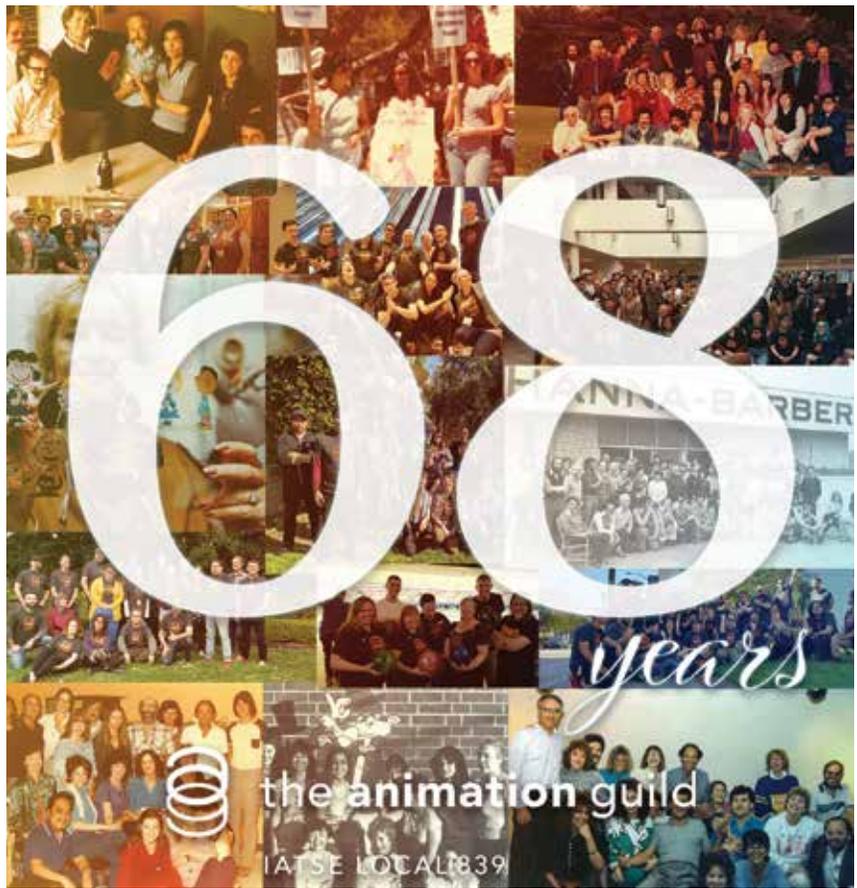
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# A MAN CALLED WALT

## ANIMATOR AND DIRECTOR DAVID BRAIN MUSES ON CROSSING PATHS WITH DISNEY



Walt Disney. I met him twice. Once outside the animation building when a group of us apprentices were on our break. Walt and Wooley Ritherman came out to where we were standing to wait for some studio guest. I'd only seen Walt on those old black and white TV shows he hosted 15 years earlier. His head looked larger now and his body drooped. The same thing happened to my grandfather—the very common aging process. Walt looked at us and said, “Wooley, these must be some of the new fellas. Introduce me to them.”

Wooley, the studio's animation feature director, didn't know any of us so he turned to Chuck Menville, the closest one of us to him, and said, “I'm sorry, I forget your first name.”

“It's Chuck,” Chuck answered. Wooley slyly said, “Chuck, will you introduce the other fellas to Walt.”

Another time, we were sneaking back to our work desks from watching a live-action shoot on our break. We pushed a sound stage door open to get out that was being pushed on from the other side. We thought it was by one of our friends trying to make us late. It wasn't. It was Walt and we'd sandwiched him between the door and a side wall. We released him and got out of there fast.

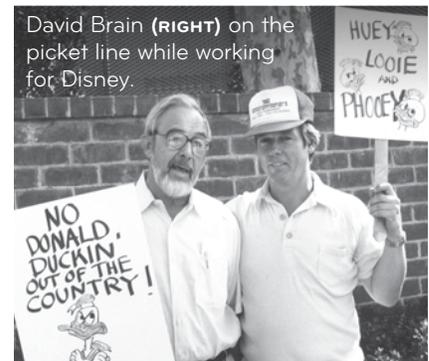
Walt was told by Ward Kimball that a group of us was making a comedy movie on the weekends. Ward was giving us

notes on our work print as we built it. Walt asked to see it. He liked it well enough to give us permission to use one of the studio's editing rooms and he gave us a key to the sound library for sound effects. I thought this was really nice of him. Thirty years later, I understood why he did it when, at the Disney Family Museum in San Francisco, I saw pictures of Walt and Ub Iwerks and a few other young people in the countryside near Kansas City in the early 1920's shooting a comedy short on a weekend. Walt had remembered himself as a young man when he looked at our footage.

One more thing about Walt. This is a story I heard about him as a young man. I heard it when listening to Dick Huemer speak at a hotel banquet in Hollywood around 1970.

Huemer was one of Walt Disney's early story men. He was 10 years or so older than Walt and first met him at a small New York studio just after WWI. Dick was a gag designer and animator. The jobs were one and the same in those early days. Walt was a general assistant at the studio, just learning how animated cartoons were put together.

At that time, the studio head would gather everyone and say something like, “The circus is coming to town in a month. The advance posters are going up all over town. Let's have our character run a small circus. Give me gags about circus stuff—the animals, the acts, building and striking the



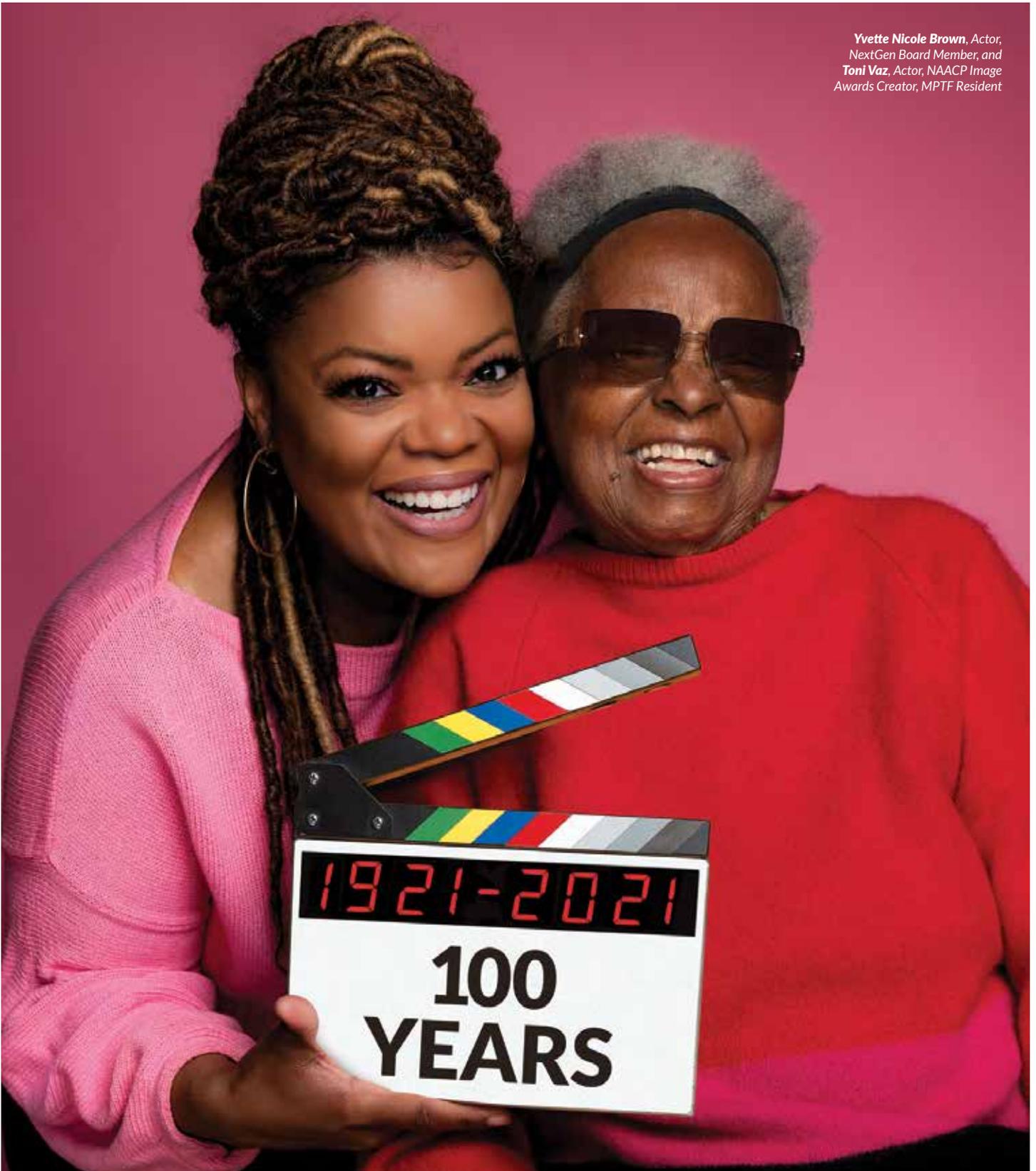
David Brain (right) on the picket line while working for Disney.

tents... that sort of stuff.” The crew would draw gag panel sequences and pin them on a display wall. Walt was looking at the panels one day when one of the artists asked, “What do you think, kid?”

Dick Huemer said, “Walt turned to the artist and said, ‘I don't like it... These beginning panels show how worried the cat is about losing his roughneck job because his truck broke down. I was concerned. I felt for him. It seemed real.... Then you have him pull his tail off and bend it into a metal crank to start the truck and the cat becomes just an ink drawing again. It loses its reality, its humanity.”

“We all thought Walt was strange to want these cartoons to be anything but ink drawings,” Dick said. “Complicated emotions and deep feelings were for live actors not cartoons. That's the first time I saw Walt show the desire he had to introduce an entirely new emotional aspect to animated film.”

Yvette Nicole Brown, Actor,  
NextGen Board Member, and  
Toni Vaz, Actor, NAACP Image  
Awards Creator, MPTF Resident



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