



THREE BAY AREA THEATERS TO OPEN THE 19TH ANNUAL ANIMATION SHOW OF SHOWS

The 19th Annual Animation Show of Shows will be at the Alamo Drafthouse New Mission, Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland and at the Rafael Film Center.

Saw the program this week and absolutely loved it! Can't stop thinking about it.

- **Mark Osborne**

Gosh, this was such a good show! Hilarious, thought-provoking films were shown, and I'm so happy to have had the opportunity to view them!

- **Angie Martinetti**

Awesome, inspiring show this year!

- **Levi Davis III**

I took my teenager to see this show. We loved it! It is a great mix / collection of interesting, beautiful, thought-filled, and weird stories - but interestingly, on the way home my teenager talked mostly about "Hangman" (restored from 1964), it is surely a timely and thought-provoking classic. I highly recommend this show.

- **Michelle Starkweather**

Check out the theatrical trailer for yourself <http://bit.ly/2wD0sJx>.

SAN FRANCISCO

ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE NEW MISSION

F/Dec 1 [12:55PM](#), (* **6:30PM/SOLD OUT!**)

S/Dec 2 * [10:05PM](#) **S/Dec 3** [3:10PM](#),

M/Dec 4 [4:20PM](#), **T/Dec 7** [3:20PM](#)

* Q&A w/ **CURATOR, RON DIAMOND**

SAN RAFAEL

RAFAEL FILM CENTER

M/Dec 4 * [7:15PM](#) **F/Dec 8 - 14th** [Showtimes TBA](#)

* Q&A w/ **CURATOR, RON DIAMOND**

OAKLAND

GRAND LAKE THEATRE

F/Dec 8 [11:30AM, 1:35PM, 3:45PM, 6:00PM, 8:15PM, 10:15PM](#)

S/Dec 9 [11:30PM, 1:35PM, 3:45PM, 6:00PM, 8:15PM, 10:15PM](#)

S/Dec 10 [11:30AM, 1:35PM, 3:45PM, 6:00PM, 8:15PM](#)

M/Dec 11 [3:45PM, 6:00PM, 8:15PM](#)

T/Dec 12 [3:45PM, 6:00PM, 8:15PM, 10:15PM](#)

W/Dec 13 [3:45PM, 6:00PM, 8:15PM](#)

T/Dec 14 [3:45PM](#)



70 YEARS OF POLISH ANIMATION IS COMING TO THE PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVES IN DECEMBER Four different programs will be shown, **Sun., Dec. 3 at 7:15 PM;** **Thurs., Dec. 14 at 7 PM;** **Sun., Dec. 17 at 7 PM** and **Wed., Dec. 20 7 PM.** Some of the older works will be shown in **35mm.**

“Polish animation under the Soviet yoke built its reputation on the clever, often brilliant ways that it defied

totalitarianism without being caught by the censors. Animators became adept at the use of irony, indirection, and allegory as subversive tactics.” The series includes many of the old masters like Jan Lenica, Walerian Borowczyk, Kazimierz Urbanski, and Jerzy Kucia and more recent artists who continue the experimentation and the breaking of new ground. The subject matter has little to do with Disney. What may seem to be familiar themes, female power, exploitation of the soil, the generation gap, male impotence, fear of aging, superhero fantasies, are in fact lures into the unpredictable, lyrical, and outrageous. Details at <https://bampfa.org/program/polish-animation-70-years>



Holiday Family Event

PIG: The Dam Keeper Poems

Sunday, December 10, 10:00am, Free

The Castro Theater

Please RSVP

Join SFFILM Education and Academy Award nominated animation studio [Tonko House](#) for a special Bay Area premiere screening of their newest work [PIG: The Dam Keeper Poems](#), and a book signing of their debut [graphic novel The Dam Keeper](#). Since 2014, SFFILM Education has been proud to support and showcase the beautiful filmmaking and storytelling from this local treasure of the independent animation community, founded by former Pixar art directors [Robert Kondo](#) and [Dice Tsutsumi](#). This event, perfect for families (with children ages 5 and up) and grown up fans of independent animation will feature a screening of the new work, a Q & A and behind the scenes peek into the making of the series with a live drawing demo, and a meet & greet session where attendees will have an opportunity to get autographs and photos with our guests. Just in time for the holidays and last minute present buying, Tonko House will also have a number of [unique items for sale](#), including their brand new graphic novel, written and illustrated by Robert and Dice. All children in attendance will also be eligible for a free raffle of a few special items, including a signed drawing from [Erick Oh](#).

Holiday Book Drive

Along with their amazing artistic contributions, Tonko House is also known for their philanthropic work. In honor of this commitment to help make a difference in the community SFFILM Education has partnered with a wonderful local organization, [The Children's Book Project](#), for our event. The Children's Book Project helps disadvantaged children learn to read by providing children and their shelters, schools, daycare and community centers with books and other resources. Since their beginning in January 1992, they have given over 2,000,000 free books to hundreds of facilities, including San Francisco public schools, serving thousands of children throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. If you are able to, please bring a new or gently used book to the event for donation. The Children's Book Project gladly accepts books for all ages - infants to teenagers.

The button below will take you to an Eventbrite event page where you will be able to reserve your seats.

[**BOOK MY SPOT**](#)

SFFILM Education receives generous support from Google, the Hearst Foundation, the Nellie Wong Magic of Movies Education Fund, and Sharon Ow-Wing



THE BREADWINNER IS AN UNUSUAL AND EXCEPTIONAL ANIMATED EXPERIENCE

The film's artwork is lovely, but the importance of this work is the ability to tell a powerful story that would probably be too uncomfortable to watch if it were depicted in live action. The film, based on a best-selling novel of the same name by Deborah Ellis, follows a young girl who is forced to assume responsibility for her family when her father is hauled off to the Pul-e-Charkhi Prison east of Kabul by the Taliban. She becomes a reluctant hero who barely survives several encounters with truly despicable people before it reaches twin dramatic climaxes.



To relieve the tension there are lovely moments where people within the story tell stories that are full of rich stylized images reminiscent of the first two features from this Irish studio, ***Secret of Kells*** and ***Song of the Sea***. Unlike the earlier features from Cartoon Saloon which are wonderful fantasies, you somehow know that ***Breadwinner*** is sharing with us what life is probably like for thousands of people today living in times of great conflict.

At the SFFILM, ASIFA-SF preview, made possible by GKIDS, there were several young teenagers in the audience who appreciated this film along with lots of adults, so if you have teens who want to

experience intelligent animation it's important to see it opening weekend in local theatres. It opens early in December around the country. This is an impressive meaningful film experience. (Starts at the Rafael Dec. 1)

For full list of local theater and play dates: <http://www.thebreadwinner.com/>



CHARLES M. SCHULZ MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER REOPENED SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5. This contradicts the Facebook news that said the museum was destroyed in the devastating wild fires.



AAUGH! is one of the current temporary exhibits. It explores the words of *Peanuts* through a selected collection of comic strips and objects that demonstrate the variety of ways Schulz created a language that influenced millions of people for generations, and remains popular today. *SIGH*, *BLEAH*, *Rats!* *Good grief!* and *Ha Ha Ha!* are just a few of the other expressions that he immortalized. It is on view through May 21, 2018.

26 ANIMATED FEATURES SUBMITTED FOR THE 90TH ACADEMY AWARDS.

The submitted features are *The Big Bad Fox & Other Tales*, *Birdboy: The Forgotten Children*, *The Boss Baby*, *The Breadwinner*, *Captain Underpants The First Epic Movie*, *Cars 3*, *Cinderella the Cat*, *Coco*, *Despicable Me 3*, *The Emoji Movie*, *Ethel & Ernest*, *Ferdinand*, *The Girl without Hands*, *In This Corner of the World*, *The Lego Batman Movie*, *The Lego Ninjago Movie*, *Loving Vincent*,

Mary and the Witch's Flower, Moomins and the Winter Wonderland, My Entire High School Sinking into the Sea, Napping Princess, A Silent Voice, Smurfs: The Lost Village, The Star. Sword Art Online: The Movie – Ordinal Scale, and Window Horses The Poetic Persian Epiphany of Rosie Ming.

Several of the films have not yet had their qualifying run. For the first time, all members of the Academy can vote to nominate the top five films in the Animated Feature Film category. Nominations for the 90th Academy Awards will be announced on Tuesday, January 23, 2018. And the ceremony will be on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood. It will be televised on ABC and in more than 225 countries.



‘IN THIS CORNER OF THE WORLD’ AN UNUSUAL ANTI-WAR ANIME Set in small towns near Hiroshima before, during and after WWII, it deals with the hardship of life for ordinary civilians in a most unusual way. It doesn't get overly dramatic. Instead it is a realistic diary of a young female who leads a very ordinary existence. She is simply struggling to survive in a world gone mad.

Suzu has an arranged marriage and first meets her husband on her wedding day. Food during the war was rationed so eating white rice with dried fish became a luxury. We see her gathering vegetables and wild plants outside of her in-laws hillside house that the family will later eat. (Nancy Phelps adds “I think that Suzu is collecting nettles to cook and eat. People do collect nettles, dandelion greens etc. which are very edible.) Part of her daily ritual is tending to the wood burning stove.

Why I was impressed with this work was it shows what I assume daily life was probably like. A rare trip to the black market, her getting lost so a woman in the red light district giving her directions, too frequent trips

into air raid shelters, seeing a once scenic seaport town reduced to rubble, seeing the dead and wounded, etc.

The film shows a lot without it needing to comment. Each viewer who has any knowledge of WWII should react to what they see in a personal way, including the mushroom cloud over a distant mountain. While we see lots of Navy ships in the harbor and airplanes attacking the town, the only overtly political moment is a person breaking down after hearing the Emperor announcing Japan has surrendered on the radio.

I feel this is definitely not a film for preteen kids. It is slow moving compared to what they are used to. It is too low key and it gives you time to think about what you are seeing and the meaning of life. Amazon sells it for under \$12. <http://inthiscorneroftheworld.com/seeit.html>

Nancy suggests that people watch this feature with *Ethel and Ernest* which shows daily life for an average British family during exactly the same period. Both films are on the list of films this year that can be considered for the animated feature Oscar.

When asked if kids relate to *In This Corner of the World* she replied, “I have sat in audiences of 6 through 12 year olds and they all watched the film with rapt attention. They are not going to get all of the connections to WWII but they can understand hardships in life because many of them are going through difficult times in their own lives.”



IS DISNEY’S RETELLING OF ‘THE LION KING’ LIVE ACTION OR ANIMATION? The old debate is back in the animation and visual effects community, what are “live action” motion pictures created in a computer? Back in 2002 *Stuart Little 2* distributed by Columbia starred a CG mouse in a live action world. It qualified as an animated feature for an Academy Award.

In the 90th Academy Awards their rules say an animated film is “a motion picture in which movement and characters’ performances are created

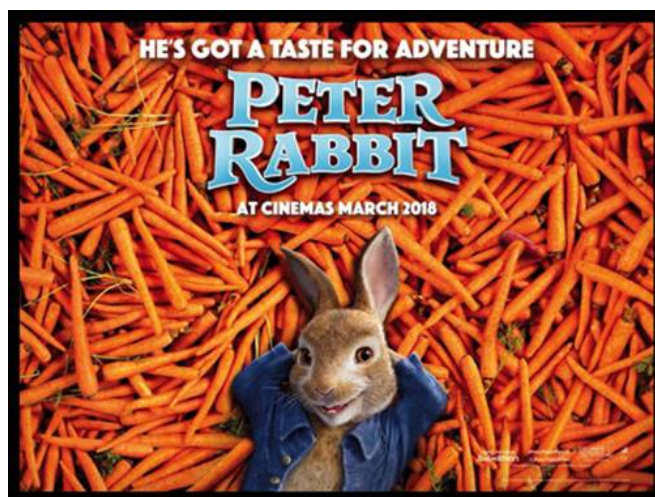
using a frame-by-frame technique... Motion capture and real-time puppetry are not by themselves animation techniques.” Also, “animation must figure in no less than 75 percent of the picture's running time. In addition, a narrative animated film must have a significant number of the major characters animated... If the picture is created in a cinematic style that could be mistaken for live action, the filmmaker(s) must also submit information supporting how and why the picture is substantially a work of animation rather than live action.”

So are films like *Avatar* and *The Jungle Book* animated features? James Cameron asserted that *Avatar* is not an animated film and other filmmakers share that opinion. People working on Disney's next *Lion King* feel it is also live action, but much of it was filmed on a bluescreen stage and then composited with photo-real CG backgrounds. It also is using lots of virtual reality tools so when the film's opening sequence was screened last summer at Disney's D23 Expo people felt it was shot on location, yet it was digital. So, should this be considered an animated movie?

ASIFA-SF'S WEBSITE IS UPDATED WEEKLY Emily Berk is doing a fine job keeping it updated with local events, etc. Thanks Emily.
www.asifa-sf.org.



CHECK OUT THE 'EARLY MAN' TRAILER This looks like it will be another delightfully silly feature from Aardman. Nick Park directed it.



PETER RABBIT, COMING FROM SONY IN MARCH The new trailer mixes cg animals in the real world and the clips suggest the actors are playing it straight and have no use for the wild creatures. Kids might love it, but I wasn't impressed by the trailer. It was animated in Australia at Animal Logic. Phil Lord directed. The company founded in 1991 won an Oscar for the *Lego Movie*.



'SHERLOCK GNOMES' is a detective mystery about the world famous detective trying to figure out who is stealing garden gnomes. Coming from MGM/Paramount in March 2018.



MYAZAKI IS WORKING ON A NEW PROJECT The new film will be titled *Kimitachi wa Do Ikiru ka*, which translates as *How Do You Guys Live?* He is 76 and stated in 2012 that he was retiring as he was too old to do another full length feature. The film is named for a book with the same title by Genzaburo Yoshino, published in 1937. He expects the film to take three to four years to complete.



Hotel Transylvania 3: A Monster Vacation opens July 13, 2018



PIXAR'S LEE UNKRICH TALKS ABOUT DIRECTING 'COCO' For an intelligent discussion about Pixar's *Coco* listen to Lee's interview on PBS' *Maximum Fun*. It covers the evolution of the film, voice casting, how he got his job at Pixar 25 years ago and other topics. www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwt-yYPUxyI

CONGRATULATIONS PIXAR! 'COCO' OPENS WITH EXCELLENT REVIEWS RATINGS AND BOX OFFICE On the Tomatometer rating was a 96% from the critics and a 97% from the public.

Peter Hartluab, *S.F. Chronicle*, "What a joy to watch *Coco*, filmmaking that actively sandbags the viewer, with the emotions of a starving

artist and the mind of a pool hustler. Pixar's new Dia de los Muertos-themed animated movie crams the first sequences with exposition, and then takes a colorful yet light spin through the Land of the Dead. But everything is leading up to a powerhouse finish.

"The success of this final act, and the way it transforms the entire film, is remarkable. It's less a twist than a series of puzzle pieces coming together, each one designed by director Lee Unkrich and the story team to make you feel a little more. The end credits sequence becomes a necessary respite. There you sit, composing yourself from an ugly end-of-movie crying jag, wondering what hit you"...

A.O.Scott, *N.Y. Times*, "One of the pleasures of a new Pixar feature is the chance to be amazed by what animation can do. Sometimes you witness a big, bold breakthrough, like the computer-assisted rendering of fur in *Monsters, Inc.*, of water in *Finding Nemo* or of metal in *Cars*. The innovations in *Coco* are no less satisfying for being of a more subtle kind. The grain of leather and the rusted folds of corrugated metal have a rough, almost tactile quality. Human bones, hairless dogs and orange flower petals look uncannily (but not too uncannily) real. There are moments of cinematic rigor — when the animators mimic the movements and focal effects of an old-fashioned camera in actual physical space — that will warm any film-geek's heart. Not to mention the Frida Kahlo-inspired musical number with dancing papaya seeds."



Peter Travers, *Rolling Stone*, "With its cast of skeletons and macabre "I see dead people" vibe, *Coco* may be the strangest thing ever to come out of the Pixar animation factory. That's a good thing. Their latest animated movie finds the company spreading its wings and pushing into new territory, including betrayal and murder, without neglecting its family franchise responsibilities. It's a tricky business, which Pixar, mostly, pulls off in high style."

Stephanie Merry, *Washington Post*, "Pixar does what it does best — creating fanciful new worlds. In this case, the land of the dead is where remarkably non-creepy skeletons hang out among ostentatiously colorful

spirit animals, and a strict bureaucracy dictates which deceased members of society are allowed to travel back to the living world once a year to spy on their descendants.”

Mark Hughes in *Forbes* wrote, “Word of mouth among parents and kids will be outstanding for this one, on par with the terrific 96% Rotten Tomatoes score from critics who are praising the film's enormous entertainment value, gorgeous animation, and emotionally gripping dramatic stakes. I'd expect an A Cinemascore, and potentially an A+, and this all means it'll enjoy continuous large turnout by families.

Christopher Orr, *The Atlantic*, “**Coco** Is Among Pixar's Best Movies in Years... is a tale told with considerable wit—this is one of Pixar’s funniest films—and genuine tenderness. There are a few nice twists and reversals along the way. And while the movie’s conclusion is not difficult to see coming, anyone whose heart is not warmed by it may wish to consult with a cardio-therapist.”

Unfortunately Orr ended by adding, “I wish the movie suggested that all was now well with Pixar, but warning signs are, if anything, multiplying. The studio’s next two films will be sequels, *The Incredibles 2* and an utterly heretical “franchise reboot,” *Toy Story 4*. With *Coco*, even the customary delight of a Pixar short before the movie is missing: In its place is *Olaf’s Frozen Adventure*, which whatever its quality (it did not screen for critics) suggests that the studio is being ever-more subsumed into its Disney parent. And the interlocking news story that Pixar guru John Lasseter is going on leave due to alleged inappropriate behavior and that Rashida Jones left *Toy Story 4* over issues of diversity are depressing on almost every level imaginable.”

“COCO” IS THE MUST SEE FEATURE OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON – IT IS A WONDERFUL FILM EXPERIENCE! by KC I saw it in Dolby’s new screening room and both the film and private theatre are amazing. I guess *The Incredibles* is still my favorite Pixar film and now *Coco* comes in second. It is an exceptionally well crafted story, drop dead gorgeous backgrounds, fine acting, etc. A great family film and for parents worried about all the skeletons scaring you kids, this is a great adventure film in search of something, but it isn’t a scary one. Congratulations to Pixar for creating an exceptional original work of art.

As for the new theatre it has a state of the art sound system that was demonstrated in a promotional film that showed the sound can come from

any direction. I also seemed to feel my chair vibrating with the subsonic vibrations. The screen was extra-large as were the seats with 6 or 8" wide armrests. I hope ASIFA-SF members get invited to see films there.



'COCO' BEGAN WITH PIXAR OFFENDING THE LATINO COMMUNITY, BUT IT WAS TURNED INTO A RESPECTFUL TREATMENT HONORING MEXICAN CULTURE Disney had wanted to name the feature *Día de los Muertos*, the name of the sacred Mexican holiday. They applied for a trademark for the phrase, an offensive, stupid mistake. Segments of the Latino community made their feelings known to the media, consultants were called in, and the script and the title were changed. The finished film shouldn't be found offensive to anyone, but I fear some people will object to Lasseter's name in the credits.

Walt's *Song of the South*, had a similar problem in 1946, but when consultants were called in Walt didn't take their advice. I interviewed one of the script writers, Maurice Raft, for my book *Forbidden Animation*. He said that Walt was told what was offensive in it, the script was revised, but later Walt ordered some of the objectionable elements put back into the script. That resulted in the N.A.A.C.P. picketing the film in several cities. They didn't go away when it was rereleased and eventually the studio stopped rereleasing it due the racist content.



DISNEY ADDS NEW FROZEN SHORT TO 'COCO' RELEASE PACKAGE TO PROMOTE THEIR HOT MONEY MAKER Will the next *Frozen* feature gross a billion dollars? Why are the lovely ladies slightly cross eyed? You can now buy twin Anna and Elsa dolls for Christmas.

DISNEY WOULDN'T LET A 'L.A. TIMES' REVIEWER SEE A FILM AS THEY APPARENTLY HATED WHAT HE RECENTLY SAID ABOUT THEM They were upset about what they considered a biased story critical of taxpayer money going to Disneyland in Anaheim. The story written by Daniel Miller said they had received generous subsidies from taxpayers, such as "an agreement to shield Disney's theme parks from any potential entertainment tax for as many as 45 years. In return, Disney is building the *Star Wars*-themed area at Disneyland and will invest in another major project at its park in the future."

He also said Disney's longstanding relationship with Anaheim is deteriorating amid changing demographics and a new electorate that doesn't appreciate the benefits that come with being a neighbor of the theme park. Apparently local elected officials seek to rein in the tax breaks given to Disney.

Disney was going to continue the ban of the reporter, but other journalists and filmmakers expressed their solidarity with the *L.A. Times*. Several reporters including those working for the *N.Y. Times* said they'll refrain from reviewing Disney movies for as long as Disney boycotts the *L.A. Times*. The critics also threatened not to include Disney films in year-end awards events run by the National Society of Film Critics, the New York Film Critics Circle, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and the Boston Society of Film Critics. Disney wisely ended their ban. The *N.Y. Times*

headline read “Disney ends ban on *Los Angeles Times* amid fierce backlash.”

A reporter from the L.A. paper suggested Bob Iger was behind the snub. Since he may have political ambitions when he retires from Disney in 2019 they asked, “Is this how Bob Iger will react to reporters asking tough questions should he run for office?”



JOHN LASSETER IS TAKING SIX MONTHS OFF TO WEATHER OUT THE STORM. I hope his services are still needed in the future. He, like all of us, has flaws. He is one of computer animation’s most important pioneers and I hope people will take a balanced view of recent events and consider his positive contributions to the art of animation.

One reason for John’s actions that some consider objectionable is he is warm hearted and has been known to greet friends with hugs, a common action seen at European festivals, as is kissing a friend on both cheeks. In the future will the only safe way to greet people in the U.S. be a friendly handshake? NEW INFO. On Nov. 29 a woman on staff said his actions with her alone were much more personal... How sad that his stupid behavior may destroy his career.

THIS IS ABSURD - ONE OF THE LAWSUITS AGAINST HARVY WEINSTEIN FOR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT ALSO NAMES DISNEY

Disney may be guilty of other things, but did Disney help Harvey do what he did? The incident occurred when Disney owned Miramax. A Disney spokesperson responded to the Toronto woman's claims by saying, "The Weinsteins operated and managed their business with virtual autonomy, and we were unaware of any complaints, lawsuits, or settlements. There is absolutely no legal basis for this claim against The Walt Disney Company and we will defend against it vigorously." I suspect her lawyer named Disney just to get publicity.

IF PASSED THE PRESENT PROPOSED REPUBLICAN TAX REFORM WILL SCREW PRESENT AND FORMER STUDENTS The bill would eliminate students' deductions that you presently can claim. The amount of interest you pay adds up so you could lose hundreds of dollars in tax refunds every year for as long as you are paying off your student loans.

The Tax Bill proposal will also eliminate the Lifetime Learning Credit, which allows Americans that cannot attend school full or part-time to write off \$2,000 worth of tuition expenditures for as long as they need to complete a post-secondary education. Also any money you get from an employer towards undergraduate or graduate education will be considered part of your income and subjected to being taxed.

The House version that was passed will tax graduate students who work at the school for a reduction in their tuition. The value of that break will be taxable.



SAN FRANCISCO GALLERY TO EXHIBIT A RARE MASTERWORK BY OSKAR FISCHINGER, A THREE PROJECTOR PRESENTATION IN HD OF HIS RAUMLICHTKUNST (C. 1926/2012) The three-projector HD reconstruction by Center for Visual Music will be shown Dec 16-Jan 20 at Weinstein Gallery at 444 Clementina, San Francisco. It runs continually. They will also be showing animation artwork from the film *Radio Dynamics*, and other material from Fischinger's papers from the Center for Visual Music's collection in LA. Gallery is closed Sun. & Mon. www.centerforvisualmusic.org/Raumlichtkunst.html

OTHER FISCHINGER NEWS The Center for Visual Music has just finished a new Fischinger DVD, for release at the end of December. They are taking pre-orders now for *Oskar Fischinger: Visual Music* www.centerforvisualmusic.org/Fischinger/newdvd.htm

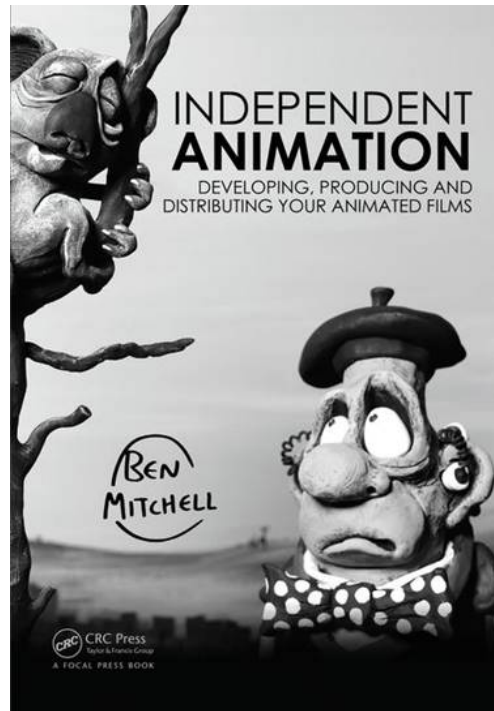


JAPAN'S ANIMATION INDUSTRY GROWS TO A RECORD \$17.7 BILLION (US) Revenue at animation houses climbed by nearly 10 percent, but a lack of capacity is likely to hamper further growth, with most studios fully booked for years.

The industry's big hit was Makoto Shinkai's *Your Name*, and it saw growth in exports and revenue from mobile game licensing. Revenue was up almost by 10 percent. Animated series for Japanese TV networks brought in \$936 million for 2016.

Keiichi Hara, the subject of an animation sidebar at the Tokyo Film Festival, says there is still snobbery about anime, though less than in the past. It has legions of fans worldwide and is arguably the country's largest cultural export, yet some within Japan's \$17 billion anime industry believe the art form still fails to get the respect it deserves at home. He says, "I'm no longer embarrassed to say I'm an anime director. Now I can be proud."

NANCY'S CHRISTMAS SUGGESTION



***INDEPENDENT ANIMATION Developing, Producing, and Distributing
Your Animated Films***

By Ben Mitchell, reviewed by Nancy Phelps

Christmas is fast approaching so if you are looking for that perfect gift for the independent animator in your life or you feel like you deserve a treat, than look no further than Ben Mitchell's new book *INDEPENDENT ANIMATION Developing, Producing, and Distributing Your Animated Films*.

There are plenty of books on animation but Ben's 444 page book is unique in that it thoroughly covers the entire process of creating an independent animation from development and storyboard to finally sending out your film to festivals, the pros and cons of putting your film on YouTube or Vimeo and finally the all-important distribution maze. Along the way you meet some of the biggest names in independent animation today. Adam Elliot talks at length about his approach to the writing process and likens it to baking a cake, but you will have to buy the book to find out why he says that.

Bill Plympton talks about his passion for animation and what keeps him going on as an independent animator.

A chapter is devoted to funding your film with tips on how they did it from such pros as Academy Award winning animator Thomas Stellmach, the prolific Dutch animator Rostu, and New York animator Signe Baumane. The book goes into crowd funding and even discusses the etiquette of crowd funding with a reality check on how much time and effort it takes to send premiums back to funders not to mention how much the postage costs.

A few of the other important topics the book covers are animated documentaries, designing a series specifically for the web, and choosing your music and voice over talent. The ultimate objective is to finish your film and begin submitting it to festivals. Ben gives you tips on how to do that and then how to deal with rejection.

Best of all the book is not only packed full of information, it is well organized and easy to read. There are 100's of color photos and illustrations of everything from script excerpts and exposure sheets to story boards. The index is thorough and the recommended reading list is very comprehensive. This book should be at every animator's finger tips. No matter whether you are just starting to make your first film or have been at the game a long time, the book is full of good advice and practical information.

Ben Mitchell knows what he is talking about. As an independent director Ben has produced four short films. *Guest House*, *Ground Running*, *The Naughty List*, and *Klimenthas* have been screened at over 100 international festivals including such prestigious festivals as Ottawa International Animation Festival, TrickFilm Festival in Stuttgart, I Castelli in Rome, and Anima Mundi in Rio. He also works as the managing director of Skwigly Online Animation Magazine.

You can listen to the introduction of the book in podcast form at: <https://soundcloud.com/skwigly/independent-animation-01-introduction> The embed code is:
<iframe width="100%" height="166" scrolling="no" frameborder="no" src="https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/tracks/295144060&a_m_p;_c_o_l_o_r=%23ff5500&auto_play=false&hide_related=true&show_comments=false&show_user=true&show_reposts=false&show_teaser=false"></iframe>
The price in the United States is \$49.95, United Kingdom £31.99 and in Euros 42.50. It can be ordered from the publisher, CRC Press at: <https://www.crcpress.com/Independent-Animation-Developing-Producing-and-Distributing-Your-Animated/Mitchell/p/book/9781138855724>



WOMAN POWER AT THE VOLDA ANIMATION FESTIVAL - 14 – 17

September 2017 Volda, Norway by Nancy Denny-Phelps

Volda, Norway is home to the respected Volda University College Animation Department and the Volda Animation Festival. The festival is a completely student run undertaking and this year the four festival organizers were women as befits this year's theme, *Women In Animation*. Astrid Pfefferkorn Øverli, Linn Hafslie Petker, Karoline Sundet, and Anna E. Sæbjørnsen did a super job gathering together a great group of international guests to give presentations to the students along with three screenings of Nordic/Baltic student films.

I was delighted and honored to be invited to give a 1 ½ hour keynote address on the opening day of the festival in the Volda University Animation Department auditorium. I began by speaking about ten of the unsung women heroes of animation such as Lillian Friedman Astor, who was hired by the Fleisher Brothers Studio in 1930 and in 1933 she became the studio's first female studio animator to receive a screen credit for *Pudgy and the Last Kitten*. Lillian was only credited for six of the eleven films that she worked on.

I went on to talk in depth about the long career of Joy Batchelor, one half of the renowned British Animation studio of Halas & Batchelor. In an era where women in all fields were undervalued, under paid, and relegated to the lower grade jobs, it is not surprising that publically the lion's share of the credit for the success of Halas & Batchelor went to her husband John Halas, but Joy's contributions to Halas & Batchelor and British animation was immense.

She worked on over 100 films in her long career as animator, scriptwriter, designer, storyboarder, and/or director. Although her contributions often went uncredited on the screen, Joy's style and aesthetic sense are stamped on every film that she worked on at Halas & Batchelor Studio. On what became the studio's best known work, *Animal Farm*, 1954, the first British feature length animated film, Joy is given screen credit as designer, scriptwriter, character designer, story boarder, and director. She finally received the screen credit that she had deserved all along.

Joy's daughter, Vivien Halas, remembers that "after the release of *Animal Farm*, Joy was hailed as "the female Disney" and there were journalists all over the studio and our house taking pictures for magazines. Joy thought all of this was fairly patronizing, as the press seemed to take more interest in her as a homemaker than a filmmaker". I want to thank Vivien Halas for her assistance with material and photographs for my lecture. My entire speech appears at the end of this article.

Over the four days of the festival six other guests gave presentations at the festival theatre. They were all interesting talks but for me the most fascinating one was given by Samantha Moore from England. She is a senior lecturer at the University of Wolverhampton where she uses her animated documentaries to combine research and practice to document perceptual brain states.

Sam began by showing us clips from some of her animated documentaries such as *Doubled Up* where she explored the nature of twins. She made the film when she discovered that she was pregnant with twins.

Next she described synesthesia and her work with Dr. James Ward and a group of people with audio-visual synesthesia. The people with synesthesia taking part in this project had a strong visual reaction to sound. When they heard sounds, speech, music, or even the phone ringing they experienced colors, shapes, and movement. No two people experienced the same colors or shapes.

An Eyeful of Sound, Sam's 2017 animated documentary, takes a selection of everyday sounds and animates the participant's responses together with the sound that inspired the reaction. The film is not only visually beautiful but taught me a great deal about a condition that I knew nothing about. Sam won an award from the journal *Nature* for scientific merit for *An Eyeful of Sound*. You can find out more about Samantha's work and see her films at: www.samanthamoore.co.uk

Linda Fagerli Sæthren is a producer, director, and animator based in Oslo working primarily in stop-motion puppet animation. A graduate of Volda University Collage, Linda won the Amanda Award for her bachelor film *Janus*. The prestigious Amanda Award is presented at The Norwegian International Film Festival in Haugesund. During her presentation she screened *Janus*, a very clever puppet animation about a lonely old man recalling all of his memories of long lost friends at his neighborhood bar.

Freelance character designer and illustrator Celia Kasper gave the students a no-nonsense but visually stimulating talk on the realities of life as a freelancer. She stressed the importance of discipline and routine and took the audience through her daily regimen. Celia, who began freelancing in 2015, has worked on commercial spots, television productions, mobile games, and book illustrations. She is from Germany, and came to Volda as an Erasmus student in 2013. She now lives in Bielefeld, Germany, and she returns to Volda University College each year as a guest lecturer.

With 18 years of experience in the animation industry Turkish born Yaprak Morali had a lot of information to share with the students. She has

worked worldwide for the big and small screen as a 3D animator, classical animator, story board artist, and character designer. Yaprak now lives in Oslo with her Norwegian husband and works at Qvisten Animation, one of Norway's top animation studios.

Fraser Maclean was by far the most enthusiastic of the guest lecturers. He has worked in commercial animation since 1987 with screen credits that include *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, *Space Jam*, and Disney's *Tarzan*. Fraser has also written the definitive book about the art of animation layout design, *Setting the Scene: The Art and Evolution of Animation Layout*. With his years of experience he had a lot of stories and insider tips that he shared with his audience.

The final guest to present his work was Andreas Palegolas. He is an animator and director, having worked on MTV Nordic ID's, MTV Art Breaks, on music videos as well as on the short children's animation *Tindra's Light*. His other passion is electronic music and he treated the festival audience to a live synthesizer performance with animated visual images.

The opening ceremony began with a concert by Volda University College students. The real highlight of opening night was the special award that was given to Gunnar Strøm for his continued dedication and hard work in the animation department of Volda University College. He has retired from active teaching but he still has an office at the University and is still a valuable resource for the students. Gunnar was also the force behind the founding of the animation festival.

Volda Animation Festival also serves as the selection committee for the Nordic/Baltic Student Film Competition at the Fredrikstad Animation Festival in Fredrikstad, Norway in November. From the 33 films in the 3 Volda Student Competitions, 16 films were selected by the jury, which was comprised of Celia Kasper, Yaprak Morali, and Fraser Maclean. The 16 student films will be in competition to win the Golden Gunnar for Best Student Film as well as the Grand Prix and the Fredrikstad Animation Festival Audience Award.

Several of the student films stood out to me. The Animation Workshop in Viborg, Denmark consistently turns out strong, well made animation and *Whale Heart* is no exception. Written and directed by Robert Allen and animated by a team of third year character animation and CG art students in Viborg, *Whale Heart* is a father and son story of a voyage to hunt a whale. It is also a coming of age story for the son as he is initiated into a grim tradition. The stop-motion film has a strong visual style that compliments the serious story.

The Southern Gate was created by Anna Haggstrom, Aljona Sju-Fa, August Florian, Eleonor, Frankenberg, Emanuel Garnhein, Katherine Yan, Marjo Palokangas, and Simon Fischer. The film was made as a collaborative effort during their first year at Stockholm University of the Arts. As a first year project the film is quite impressive with an interesting story and art work that shows promise for future films from these students.

Set in 1940's Stockholm, *The Southern Gate* is the story of Beckomberga Psychiatric Hospital. Over decades thousands of patients and visitors passed through the gate. When the hospital closed in 1995 the area began to change and gentrify, leaving some ex residents of the hospital with mixed and confused feelings about the uses the former hospital and grounds were being put to.

Another Animation Workshop film that I liked very much was Julie Herdichek Baltzer's *Nachthexen (Night Witches)*. The 2D film tells the story of Katja, a young Russian woman who decides to go against the norm and join the first all-female night-bombing squad of the Soviet Air Force during WW II. In the film an elderly Katja recalls her memories as a member of the all-female squad nicknamed Nachthexen. The Germans called the flying ladies night witches because they attacked the enemy with their engines shut off, gliding silently to their bombing target.

I had the opportunity to visit the Volda University College Department of Animation. Volda may be a small town in Central Norway but it definitely thinks globally with more than 200 international students at the university out of its 3,500 student body.

My guides on the tour were Gunnar Strøm, Professor Emeritus and Trygve Nielsen, Head of the Animation Department. The animation facilities are very large and impressive. There are rooms devoted to model making, light tables, computer graphics, and lecture halls. There are also good camera and green screen areas for shooting a film as well as an excellent recording studio. There are plans to build a new state of the art media building across from the present media building which will give the animation department even more room.

Volda University College has all of the things that you would expect to find at a first rate animation school and one more item –showcases filled with work done by their renowned alumni such as a frame from Anita Killi's multi award winning film *Angry Man*.

The festival organizers made sure that all of the guests had lots of fun. Volda sits next to a fjord. The definition of a Fjord is a long, narrow inlet with steep sides created by glacial erosion. One evening we were treated to a

delicious dinner with all of the shrimp and salmon that we could eat washed down with lots of red wine on a boat on the Fjord. After dinner we watched the sunset from the boat. It was a unique opportunity to see Volda and the beautiful mountains that surround it.

One evening Gunnar Strøm invited all of the guests to his lovely home. Gunnar's home is a delight to visit with his many treasures from his life in animation as well as his other passion, music, which is attested to by his vast record collection.

At Gunnar's party animator and master magician Stefan Eriksson performed sleight of hand tricks to entertain and amaze us all. Stefan conducted an animation workshop for 5th graders at the Volda School and the results of their hard work was screened on Sunday at the festival. Sunday was family day at the festival and along with the workshop screening there was a children's disco and a free screening of the 2014 Oscar nominated Studio Ghibli film *When Marnie Was There*.

One day festival volunteers cooked lunch for all of the festival attendees and each evening the theatre was turned into a disco with café tables with candles on them surrounding the dance floor.

I cannot thank Astrid, Linn, Anna, and Karoline enough for inviting me to be part of their festival as well as for the many kindnesses that they showed me during my stay in Volda. A special thank you goes to my old friend Gunnar Strøm for all the laughter and good stories over food and drink.

The 11th edition of the Volda Animation Festival will take place from the 13th to the 16th of September 2018. Read more at: www.animationvolda.com

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STEPHEN PARR - RIP

Stephen died October 24 (he was 63) and thanks to the internet the news is spreading quickly. That news is quite disturbing to a lot of people in the film community as many of us have fond memories of him.

Stephen's sister **Claudia Parr Tooley** wrote, "It is with deep sadness that we confirm that Stephen passed away Tuesday October 24, 2017 from complications due to Parkinson's disease. Viewing the loving tributes posted on our brother's page only confirms what we always knew to be true; that Stephen was a kind, loving, funny, talented, unique and generous human being. He had a vision for how he wanted to live his life and pursue his passion and he single-mindedly achieved that. It was his desire that his archival legacy remain intact. Therefore, that is our mission now.

As plans unfold as to how best to honor Steve with a memorial we will provide those details."

Betsy de Fries' (Little Fluffy Clouds) note to Claudia said, "Stephen was a quintessential San Franciscan, quirky, inclusive, caring and incredibly tenacious about his art. He was interested and interesting and I will miss his presence on this planet."

Karl Cohen, president of ASIFA-SF says, "I have many enjoyable memories of him that span over 30 years. He used to toss wild parties, and I do mean wild. They were crazy enough that I got one written up in Herb Caen's column back in the 1980s. One of the characters I met that evening called himself Pie Faced Mike. He got off by having women at the party smash a

pie tin of whipped cream or shaving cream in his face. I told Herb about the guy and he wrote about him along with a mention of Stephen. Stephen was quite impressed he was mentioned in that well-read *Chronicle* column.

Stephen had an amazing film archive, Oddball Films, and he held frequent screenings there. He used to say there were about 50,000 films in his collection.

Several times a year we would discuss research projects we were working on. He was so bright and knowledgeable. I also looked forward to hearing about his occasional trips to non-tourist areas in India.

Last June I asked if he wanted to host our ASIFA summer party at his loft. We had been renting his space at least twice a year for events for many years. I was quite surprised when he said no, he needed to take it easy. Until now I didn't understand what might have been going on.

Stephen, I'm feeling quite sad along with hundreds of other people who now know you are gone. You were part of what makes San Francisco a wonderful and unique place to live."



Film archivist **Dennis Nyback** wrote, "Terrible news to hear. I first heard it this morning from Jack Stevenson in Denmark. Over the years I showed many of my films at Stephen's place on Capp St. He'd always allow me to sleep on the office sofa to avoid paying hotel bills. In his space I really liked seeing the giant 17 Reasons sign. (It used to be on a store roof at 17th Street and Mission.) It is hard to believe it was back in 2004 that he barely escaped death in the Thailand Tsunami. He was a generous man and friend to many."

Dennis has traveled the world over showing unusual film programs including *Bad Bugs Bunny!* He presently lives in Portland where he once ran

the Clinton theatre. In NYC he ran the Lighthouse way down on the East Side and before that he had a screening space in Seattle at the Pike St. Market. He says, "Stephen told me that his favorite program of mine was Vaudeville Deluxe."

Kim X Mossman on Facebook wrote, "RIP my dear friend. I will miss your combative spirit and wicked sense of sarcasm. Thank you for having been such a relentless and passionate crusader and archivist for the underground art with Oddball Films. San Francisco lost an avant-garde cultural icon!"



STEPHEN PARR AND ARMISTEAD MAUPIN

At the world premiere of Jennifer Kroot's doc *Untold Tales of Armistead Maupin*, the opening night feature of the Frameline film festival. Oddball Films has rare footage in the film.

Melissa Margolis said, "I'm in shock. I hadn't seen him since the last ASIFA party a few years back, but I found some email exchanges from last year. I knew him for about 15 years, mostly a friendly acquaintance from underground art scene parties, but I got to know him better when I served as his acupuncturist for a while when I lived in SF. My work schedule was still pretty empty, I was new in the field, so I had lots of hours to pass--and in these hours, we talked about many, many extremely varied subjects, from weird music, to weird film, to weird performance art, to chaotic travel

experiences. He was expert on all of them and told stories with such a biting wit. I am so sad at this tragic loss. He exemplified the quirky world that drove me to settle in the Bay Area before it changed into what it is today. I still remember my first time at Oddball Films and what a fantastical sensation it was walking through those stacks of reels. Hard to believe he is gone. RIP dear Stephen.”

Claudia Parr Tolley, Stephen’s sister writes, “Thank you for your kind words about Steve and Oddball Films. The write up is wonderful and it's so very hard to understand after reading all the comments, articles, and obituaries how someone so clearly appreciated, so talented and so vital could be gone from our lives. Oddball is currently up and running and my brother, sister and I will do all we can to preserve our brother's archive.”

Stephen said in an interview posted online, “I started the archive in 1984. My background was film and video art at the Center for Media Study at SUNY Buffalo in the late 70s. I was also an artist in residence at the [Experimental Television Center](#) in Binghamton, NY. I made my way out to San Francisco and started creating visual backgrounds for nightclubs. Ridley Scott was



shooting in a club I created ambient imagery for and licensed some clips. I realized if I started my own archive I could have all the source material I wanted to create my own work. I chose film because I thought it would end up being the medium with the most longevity-and it still is-though not many people shoot or project it anymore.”

The company he created was Oddball Films, a stock footage company specializing in offbeat and unusual footage. He wrote on LinkedIn, “We have an amazing collection of rare, entertaining, eclectic and eye-opening subjects as well as historic and contemporary High Definition clips in all genres to support your projects. Our company is founded on a historical knowledge of film culture and an intimate relationship with media

production. We work in tandem with clients to visualize concepts, research requests and upload or ship out master footage instantaneously. Our worldwide clients include ABC News, Google, Miramax, Disney, Nike, MTV, HBO, Industrial Light & Magic, Young & Rubicam and many more.”

To see Stephen’s tour of Oddball click on <https://vimeo.com/176204115>.



DISCOVER LIPPY’S ANIMATED 360 DEGREE JOURNEY INTO A PREHISTORIC CAVE

You don’t need special goggles to see this interactive work. It has a button you click on to pan left or right and up and down to follow the action. It was made for the people who bring us the Ted Talks.

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/explore-cave-paintings-in-this-360-animated-cave-iseult-gillespie>

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ASIFA-SF is a chapter of: **Association Internationale du Film d’Animation** with almost 40 chapters around the world. Membership is \$26 a year with printed newsletter mailed to you or \$21 a year if you only want the issue e-mailed to you

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