



Welcome to ASIFA Central! We are the Midwest -US chapter of ASIFA, the oldest organization of animators in the world. Our chapter was established in 1975. While our community is separated by our far-flung geography, we are united by our love of animation. Our diverse membership is a blend of independent animators, animation artists, professors, seasoned pros, students, and fans of the art of animation. We have a robust board working on a number of initiatives for 2021 – including this special ZOOM COFFEE BREAK EDITION

ASIFA Central Board



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Director and ASIFA Central Website
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Esoteric Knowledge
Steven Leeper

Tallest Human Ever to Animate
Robert Swieringa

Stopped Motionator, Rocket launch
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Gary Schwartz

TIME TO ZOOM!

The ZOOM Coffee Break Experience - Deanna Morse and Jim Middleton

“Zoom” is derived from the Middle Dutch *sôom*, or from the Old Dutch *som*, or from Proto-West Germanic *saum*, or from the Proto-Germanic *saumaz*, which means something that has been sewn. Sew there. This means that you had best attend to any holes in your socks, especially in Germany or the Netherlands. Great War aviators used “zoom” to describe getting closer, quickly, and by the mid-1930s, the “zoomar” lens was contracted to the “zoom” lens, to the delight of subsequent producers of MTV videos.

[This is such a slow explanation for a word that means zippety-do-dah fast (which, as any fan of the Great Carsoni may remember, is what you do when you leave your do-dah open, but this is a family newsletter, after all).]

Since CoVid, Zoom has become synonymous with Pantsless Internet Meetings (PIMs), and the ASIFA Central board has been making monthly use of them, to the delight of at-large and long-range members, and to the chagrin of neglected gas stations. Christine Veras Martin and Steven Leeper began building experimental *anizoomation* since last year (popularized on the Book of Faces by Deanna Morse, be sure to “like” that page) and more recently, during the 59th Ann Arbor Film Festival.

Every month, ASIFA/Central members and friends gather on ZOOM around our virtual coffee pot to swap stories, show work in progress, talk about books, films, animation history... and whatever else we feel like.

These coffee breaks are a natural extension of our many PIMs when creating the 2020 IAD AniJam. We had so much fun seeing each other regularly that we wanted to continue connecting. These have been hosted by the master of foils, flunge, and magic, Michael Long from Webster University, blocks from The Gateway Arch in St. Louis. We are inviting others to join these chit chat meetings. Coffee isn’t mandatory, but it does keep things moving.

If you are interested in getting on the invitation list and sharing some watercolor-java talk, please contact Michael at: michaellonglong@hotmail.com



UPA Coffee Discussion - August 2020

Speaking of *Anizoomation*, Christine Veras Martin and Steven Leeper's workshop at the Ann Arbor Film Festival was well attended and received, as documented in the screenshot entitled "20 Animators In Search of an Exposure Sheet" – better living through post-it notes and blue objects.



And Speaking of Ann Arbor and Zooming:

Deanna Morse Defines Ubiquity at the 59th Ann Arbor Film Festival



ASIFA Central's Deanna Morse, star of stage, screen, and now, ZOOM, was a nearly continuous presence at the 59th AAFF this March - still virtual, but still with international and enthusiastic participants.

The online nature of this and many upcoming festivals allows for increased exposure - visitors otherwise encased in quarantined areas or unable to take on the travel and lodging expense can still participate in a relatively stress-free viewing experience. Don't like a film? Go make some popcorn! Nobody's going to judge you for leaving the room.



This year's festival had a heavy animation presence, and the studied and steadied discipline of creating animation helped create some of the strongest entries among the many films. Even extended documentaries such as *The Annotated Field Guide to Ulysses S. Grant* included animated sequences. There was a sense of nostalgia in many of the entries this year, with either mid-1980s style CGI or frequent use of distressed film, either by source or post-production.

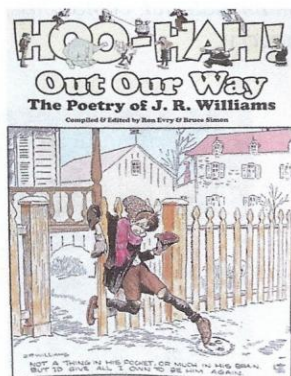
Deanna brought together filmmakers for the post-showing Q and A and coaxed production methods and some performance techniques, while fielding incoming viewer questions in the Zoom platform.

Don't forget the upcoming online festivals for Annecy <https://www.annecy.org/home> - online June 14 - 19, 2021 and Stuttgart - <https://www.itfs.de/en/> - online May 3 - 16, 2021

Upcoming 2021 Midwest Animator's Summer Retreat

Also, keep your eyes out for information on our Annual ASIFA/Central Midwest Animator's Retreat, which will happen late summer 2021. Virtual this year, again. There is a committee huddling together, working on ideas, and it looks exciting, as usual.

Hoo-Hah! - A Comic Compilation Magazine



A pet project of Ron Ervy and Bruce Simon, *Hoo Hah!* gets its name from an early entry in the *MAD Magazine* world in its celebration of comic strips of the early 20th century. The current run from Amazon press focuses on the series by J. R. Williams, *Out Our Way*, which was already a look backward when it first appeared in 1922, and even more so with its 60 year run in many newspapers, back when newspapers used to run comic strips. In a single panel format, Williams managed to convey the mood and even the poetry of bygone eras, with a fondness for characters of the wild west. Many of the panels were redrawn from source material found on archival microfilm. It's a great source of inspiration for storyboard composition.



Everything begins with Mad Magazine

Women in Animation Department - with Chuck Wilson

The poem from *Venus en Seide* (1919) titled "I Want You" features a larger, one-page silhouette illustration created by Lotte Reiniger.

My yearning breaks all walls and dimensions:
I want you! You!
My longing must endure life and time,
I want you! You!

And rocks pile up between us two -
I want you! (emphatically)
And I can forgive those who forgive your sins,
I want you! (emphatically)

My yearning does not flag at borders nor barriers,
I want you! You!
I mark this in the heart and in your thoughts:
"I want you! You!"

And I stumble, my yearning still called out of the grave:
"I want you! You!"
But I want to live, so I have you!
I want you! You!



Poem by Gustav Hochstetter (1873 - 1944), Silhouette Illustration by Lotte Reiniger (1899 - 1981), Translation by Charles Wilson, February 22, 2018
For more backstories and accomplishments by women in animation, check out Chuck Wilson's *Smudge Animation* blog, where this particular sequence can be found at:
<http://smudgeanimation.blogspot.com/2021/03/animated-women-i-want-you.html>

The Criterion Channel is offering up a rather thorough listing of Lotte Reiniger films in its April broadcast schedule.

<https://criterioncast.com/news/april-2021-programming-on-the-criterion-channel-announced>

Including her feature film, *The Adventures of Prince Achmed*, 1926

and the shorts

The Secret of the Marquise, 1922

The Flying Coffin, 1922

Dr. Dolittle: A Trip to Africa, 1923

Dr. Dolittle: The Lion's Den, 1923

Harlequin, 1931

The Stolen Heart, 1934

Papageno, 1935

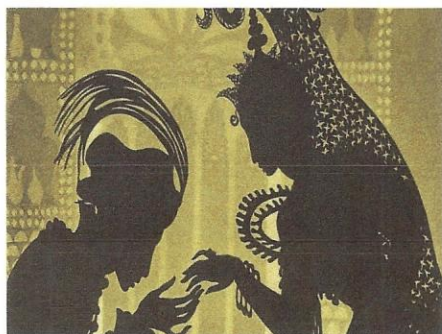
The Magic Horse, 1953

Aladdin and the Magic Lamp, 1954

The Caliph Stork, 1954

The Star of Bethlehem, 1956

The Lost Son, 1974



And, rounding up Women's Month in March, and as part of our ongoing promotion of Public Domain material, comes this rather sad tale about a graphic designer and overlooked influence on occult imagery:



Pamela "Pixie" Colman Smith secured her place in the history of Western esoterica in 1909, after she was commissioned to illustrate a new tarot deck by the author and mystic A.E. Waite. The illustrations were instantly iconic upon release, and their popularity was greatly bolstered by Waite's failure to copyright the work in the United States. Now in the public domain, her cards were widely circulated in reprint and re-purposed for other graphic projects. The Waite-Rider tarot style became a stock image of the esoteric and occult in the 20th century.

Before this, Smith began as an illustrator with projects involving William Butler Yeats and Bram Stoker, who had completed a book on the actress Ellen Terry. Smith supported the struggle for women's right to vote in Britain and donated her services for poster designs and toys for the Red Cross during World War I.

In 1903, Smith launched her own arts-and-crafts style magazine called *The Green Sheaf*, which lasted only 13 issues. *These beautiful examples are assembled online at archive.org.*



"Pixie" Smith, ca 1912

In 1907, photographer Alfred Stieglitz gave an exhibition her paintings in New York at his gallery, generally devoted solely to the photographic avant-garde. Stieglitz was intrigued by Smith's painted visions that came to her while listening to music. The show was successful enough that Stieglitz issued a platinum print portfolio of 22 of her paintings. The Smith paintings that did not sell eventually wound up in the Stieglitz/O'Keeffe Archive at Yale.

Although she continued writing and illustrating, after the 1930s Smith was unable to find publishers, possibly (and inexplicably) due to "changes in public taste." Smith died in her British apartment in 1951, apparently alone, and her possessions were auctioned off to pay her debts. It is likely she was buried in a nearby unmarked grave. Please celebrate Pixie's memory with a Tarot reading and an afternoon with *The Green Sheaf*. (*Wikipedia and archive.org*)

ASIFA Central Newsletter (cc) Springtime 2021 - see the updated website with more announcements and an ever expanding newsletter archive for ASIFA Central at - <https://asifa.org>

And then dive into more digital fun at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/asifacentral> and for ASIFA International - <https://asifa.net> - be sure to check out the Facebook page on ANIZOOMATION

As usual, send any suggestions, comments, or recipes for zucchini bread, along with the usual castigations to yr hmb1 typist, at jim.middletonrx@gmail.com or, for dull bloggery, <https://animatingapothecary.blogspot.com>