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for us on the

# 3rd Annual Conference & Retreat Held

by Deanna Morse

Twenty four animators from five states Here are some things participants said about gathered at Starved Rock Conference the conference: Center for the 3rd Annual ASIFA/Central Animator's Conference on April 21-23, 1995.

The conference featured screenings of professional, independent and student works, presentations on animation history. and leisurely activities which included hiking. swimming and late night conversation.

There were many highlights of the weekend. included: screenings of the ASIFA/East Animation Reels and the "Best of Sesame Street Animation". Adwua X. Muwzea read a paper on the involvement of African-Americans in the animation industry, and George Hagenauer showed the original paper cels and comic panels of Andy Hettinger, a Chicago animator who worked between 1913-1915, Jowan animator David Thrasher screened his work. His recent reanimation of a series of Red Raven picture records from 1956-58 were complex and entertaining. Byron Grush, Adwua X. Muwzea, and Deanna Morse showed reels of their independent animation. University reels from Northern Illinois student University and Rochester Institute of Technology were screened. Five students from Grand Valley State University made individual presentations of their work: Rich Sharp, Melodee Luyk, Jennifer Eldred, Fred Bresky, and James Schaub. Corporate and industrial reels were presented by Alex George of Chicago and Animasaur (Marie Cenkner and Paul Jessel.) Deanna Morse presented highlights from the SIGGRAPH 1994 Art and Design Show, which she organized for the conference in Orlando last August.

"Seeing the different variety of work was inspirational for me. I also enjoyed the hikes and the casual atmosphere of the conference." · Fred Bresky

"It was useful for me to see the Sesame Street reel. I am interested in education and I find my stories often get quite long. It was beneficial to see how they could get so much content across in such a short time." - Jennifer Eldred

"I enjoyed the weekend and the chance to meet with other animators. It was interesting to see the innovations of others. I respect their animation because I know it is hard to dol" · Tarena Ruff

"I liked Adwua Muzeas' use of rhythm and mixed graphic styles. And her commitment to education in that she is reaching out to include young animators in her work. Rich

"I finally got out of the state of Michigan. This was only my second time to travel out of that state. They had a lot of mayapples, but I have to say that the cliffs were too steep for me. It was fun" -Venia Coleman (a former biology major who recently became an animation student)

"It was interesting to see how different University programs run, to compare their approaches, equipment and resources." Jim Schaub

"I am eagerly awaiting retreat number four next spring. Thanks to Marla Schweppe for all of her work in organizing this retreat." · Deanna Morse

## .. a letter from the president

ASIFA Central has undergone a gradual transition in the last two or three years from an organization whose activities were centered in the city of Chicago to an organization whose activities encompass the 'Central' region of ASIFA. Since our membership comes from the larger region we feel that this is an appropriate direction for the organization. The transition includes a change in emphasis to an organization more focused on 'animators' and less on animation fans.

Shortly after I took on the responsibilities of president two or so years ago, I changed jobs and moved to Rochester, New York. I continued as president despite the change of location. It is my preference to be the ASIFA Conference Chair and not serve as president. Fortunately, at this years board meeting, <u>Deanna Morse</u> agreed to take on the duties of president again now that she has finished her work with the SIGGRAPH'94 Art and Design Show. I am delighted to pass these duties on to her.

<u>Marie Cenkner</u> has served as the treasurer of the ASIFA Central Organization for the last fourteen years. She has taken care of membership renewals as well. After these many years of service Marie has resigned her duties as treasurer. Thank you Marie for all of your years of service.

<u>Deanna Morse</u> has agreed to take on the duties of treasurer and membership as well as the presidency.

The other major decision made at the yearly board meeting was to drop our not-for-profit status in Illinois. This decision allows us to make several changes in our day to day operation. The bank account can be moved to Michigan so that it is easier for Deanna to manage. Our board can now be a working board. Each board member must take on and fulfill duties relative to the mission of ASIFA Central. The size of the board will be smaller and we think more efficient. We will do most of the business of the board through electronic mail. This aids the organization in including board members from different cities. Our new board will be comprised of:

Deanna Morse, President and Treasurer Byron Grush, Quarterly Publications Mary Lou Haynes Studio Tours Coordinator Maria Schweppe, Conference Chair morsed@gvsu.edu byron@art.niu.edu morgpk@aol.com mks@cs.rit.edu

Anyone interested in serving on the board can make a proposal to the board of the tasks they would like to take on as a board member. Membership on the board will be reevaluated at each years board meeting at the yearly conference.

Byron Grush proposed that we develop a page on the World Wide Web for ASIFA Central. He will be following up on this project. We will probably post an electronic copy of the newsletter and information about the yearly conference will also be posted at the site. If you have other ideas about things to include let Byron know.

I hope I have covered most of the important decisions made at the board meeting. It is always a pleasure to be involved in the activities of ASIFA Central. I have made many special friends through the organization over the years. Even though I am at a distance, I was born and raised in the midwest and have lived most of my life there. I will always be a midwesterner at heart. Look forward to seeing every one at next year's conference! — Maria Schweppe



Bimbo: Betty, I hope our members are as excited about our new projects as we are. Betty: Yes, Bimbo, but you know, all this cost money! Bimbo: That's why I paid my dues.

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## What is ASIFA International?

#### by David Erhlich

ASIFA was founded in 1960 in France. chartered under UNESCO, as a membership organization devoted to the encouragement and dissemination of film animation as an art ASIFA Film and Video Archive and communication form. In its 35 year existence, it has grown to over 1100 members in 55 countries, with large national chapters in such unlikely places as UlanBaatar, Mongolia and Tehran. The national chapters maintain the most immediate and direct contact with our members, many, like the American regional groups, with their own monthly newsletters and screenings. The international provides the linkage between all the chapters as well as a direct connection to International events such as animation festivals and seminars, which must adhere to ASIFA's regulations.

#### ASIFA's Connection with Festivals

ASIFA support of a festival aids them with mailing lists, film retrospectives and animation artwork exhibitions. ASIFA maintains a booth at all animation festivals. There is usually an ASIFA party at most major festivals, and ASIFA hosts the CONVERSATIONS WITH A MASTER series. ASIFA has made sure admission to the week of screenings is either free (Zagreb) or discounted (\$25 at Annecy).

#### **ASIFA NEWS**

ASIFA publishes a 32-page ASIFA NEWS four times a year in its three languages, English, French and Russian. The NEWS has become a source of some of the field's most interesting articles and interviews and is sent airmail to all our members.

#### ASIFA Employment Databank

Last year we inaugurated the Employment Databank in Praque, run by our Czech Board member, Jiri Kubicek. All ASIFA members may fill out the forms and have them input into the bank at no charge, with free updating. So far, 80 of our members have entered the bank and companies like IMAX

and Warner Bros. have accessed the files at a emall fee.

ASIFA has had a Film Archive in Berlin for many years. Under East German control until 1989, it was a bit difficult for members to utilize the films. With the political situation stabilizing the Archive is now affiliated with a University in Babelsberg which is transferring all our holdings to VHS. The films will be available to students and historians to view there, while videos will be freely circulated to ASIFA groups around the world.

#### **ASTFA School list**

Once a year, ASIFA publishes an updated School List, describing animation programs in schools and institutions around the world. The booklet is available free of charge to any ASIFA member who sends for it: Gunnar Strom, MRDH, N-6100 Volda, Norway.

#### **ASIFA Pamphlet on Contracts**

Robi Engler, our Swiss Board member, is presently working on a pamphlet detailing differences between Anglo-Saxon contracts and French contracts. Antran Manoogian, president of ASIFA Hollywood, will work with him to differentiate American contracts. ASIFA has been asked by its members to consolidate and disseminate information on various legal issues.

### ASIFA Children's Animation Workshops

Since 1982, the ASIFA Workshop Group, comprising children's animation workshops in over 30 countries produces one international collaboration each year. Each one run by a professional ASIFA member, films are produces which have been screened at festivals and sold to TV abroad and in the U.S. The project for 1995 is a series of segments based on UNICEF's Rights of the Child Declaration. It will be distributed by UNICEF.

# **ASIFA Vancouver!**

#### by Leslie Bishko

Former ASIFA Central member, <u>Leslie Bishko</u>, lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she teaches at Simon Fraser University. She recently started a new ASIFA group there, ASIFA Vancouver. Here is a letter just sent us:

I have been having meetings for about a year and 1/2. We meet at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design. The situation here in Canada is that. Montreal is ASIFA-Canada. They do a good job. They also have a storyboard group that seems to be pretty solid - they meet every two weeks, and if there's no work in progress to deal with, they make up fun drawing tasks. Their membership is 25.00 per year and that includes the international. My chapter here is really a subchapter of Montreal. I am not collecting a membership fee. The NFB covers our mailing costs. So when people join, they join ASIFA-Canada - and it just includes Vancouver. That way I don't have to do a newsletter here. I'm just sending tidbits to Montreal and they include it in their publications. What I like about that aspect of it is that it makes us one big happy family, instead of being divided east/west.

I think it is happening, but very slowly. If I just persist, I think ASIFA can sink in here. The film community is big but scattered. I'm slowly starting to meet more people who seem interested and have the right idea about how to get people involved. We may try to do a weekend film next summer - Gail Noonan who lives on Mayne island has this beautiful cottage in the woods by the sea (it is as idyllic as it sounds!) and she proposed we camp out for a weekend and animate a film. Also, a funky little screening venue/cafe just opened up, and that would be a nice, sociable place for us to meet, hang out and actually dialogue. We talked about doing a scratch-on-film night - where we run a loop through the projector and scratch as it goes - live animation performance art! Also, 3-4 NFB films are finishing up this summer, so in the fall I think we can have a nice screening event.

I'm going to attach something that's coming out in the June ASIFA-Canada bulletin - they had me conduct a survey of who's animating what in Vancouver. This list is partial, because the job was split between two of us. Elaine Pain came to Vancouver from Saskatchewan for the warm weather. For her MFA work at the University of British Columbia, she is currently making a 10 min. experimental film, manipulating images with the Amiga Toaster. Her thesis project will explore structure, abstraction and movement via the windmills of Alberta. Elaine will return to her animation teaching job at the University of Regina, where it is a lovely place to do animation in the winter.

Gail Noonan recently finished "Your Name in Cellulite," a six minute piece about women and body image. The film explores the disparity between women's real beauty and the images of beauty in popular culture, encouraging women to accept the reality of their own bodies. Gail and her four cats live on Mayne Island.

<u>Paul Boyd</u> is directing and animating "Chile Con Carnage," a short film about teenagers at a convenience store. There will be lots of ketchup. International Rocketship, Ltd., producer.

Mary Newland is producing and directing "Fuv." It is about the things that happened before God came on the scene. It is a very important subject. Mary believes that every single frame of the film is very important.

Stephen Arthur creates abstract 2D computer animation. But his recently completed piece, "The Recess," tells a dark story using animated characters that were created by warping and "morphing" photographed faces.

Leslie Bishko is designing computer animation software based on human movement analysis at Simon Fraser University. Her computer animated piece Gasping for Air (1993) recently won awards at the Northwest Film and Video Festival, the Berkeley Video Festival, the Humboldt International Film Festival and Video Shorts in Seattle. She is a founding member of ASIFA Canada/Vancouver.

Marilyn Cherenko is directing and animating "About Face," a 3 to 5 min. experimental mix of media. She teaches at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.

# Animation's Dirty Little Secret?

### by David Thraser

It's often been treated with scorn, often viewed with suspicion. To many it is "mere rotoscoping", a crutch that no "true animator" would ever stoop to use. If Walt Disney were alive today he might hear, "You used rotoscoping? ... Wait! Say it isn't so!" One can almost imagine "Rotoscopers Anonymous" groups springing up to purge the industry of this malady. The cause of all this is a technique where one takes live action footage and uses it to create animation by copying, usually by tracing, the moving images, frame-by-frame, onto animation paper. These hand-drawn images are usually altered to create the final animated images.

Rotoscoping was invented around 1915 by Max Fleischer, who would eventually own the studio that would bring Betty Boop and Popeye to life. While working as an art editor at Popular Science Monthly, he had beaun to wonder if it might be possible to use mechanics in the process of making animated cartoons. Along with his brothers, Joe and Dave, he conducted an experiment to see if his theories were correct. Joe, a wizard at machinery, built the devices necessary for the new process of 'rotoscoping' and Dave posed in a clown suit for the creation of the live action reference footage. The cartoon character that came out of this was at first known simply as the 'clown' but later was given the name of "Koko the Clown" and the cartoon series was called "Out of the Inkwell." The cartoons were immediately popular. The realistic movement added a whole new dimension but it was the clever stories and gags that sustained the series. A reviewer for the New York Times wrote in 1919, "After a deluge of pen-and-ink 'comedies' in which figures move with mechanical jerks with little or no wit to guide them, it is a treat to watch the smooth action of Mr. Fleischer's figure and enjoy the cleverness that animates it."

For much of its history rotoscoping has been used in only its most basic form — carefully tracing every frame or every other frame of the live action film footage of the desired moving images. This has been done not only for character animation but also for moving backgrounds, for moving inanimate objects, and for many things moving in perspective in order to precisely capture the action.



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Disney's "Snow White" went well beyond the normal methods. Although it has been significantly downplayed by historians since its 1939 release date, rotoscoping was extensively used as the basis for the movements of the least cartoon-like characters in the picture (Snow White, the Wicked Queen, the Woodsman, and the Prince). Publicity releases of the time spoke of using reference footage. The term "reference footage" -material to be referred to where and when appropriate -- is much closer to the methodology that was used than the usual approach of always closely following the action. Much of the live action footage was used only to create extremes (the beginnings or endings of actions) for creating "Key" drawings which would then be inbetweened in the usual manner. This left it more up to the animator to decide the timing of the movement.

To create the reference footage for the character of Snow White, Disney hired a Los Angeles dancer named Marjorie Belcher. She gained fame later as a dancer in film musicals under the name "Marge Champion". It would not be too much of a speculation to say that her movements must have been very carefully planned and choreographed in advance. This would prevent wasted movement and having the action purposely 'overplayed' would make Snow White's character blend in more easily with the traditionally freehand animated characters. "Snow White" being the first feature length animated film, was a huge financial and artistic risk where the usual two-dimensional cartoon characterizations would not work. It is not surprising that Disney Studio would rely on rotoscoping to get the film done within as reasonable period of time as

possible and within as tight a budget as possible. What choreographed beforehand, proper care was given to is remarkable is that the practice of roloscoping was not used in a slavish way, but rather with imagination and great selectivity.

Rotoscoping has not been limited to the production of animated films. It has also been used as a way to learn the art of animation. Use of it for this purpose began in the silent era and it became known as "action analysis". In Leonard Maltin's book, Of Mice and Magic, Walter Lantz recalls, "I would take the old Charlie Chaplin films and project them one frame at a time, make a drawing over Chaplin's action, and flip the drawings to see how he moved. That's how most of us learned to animate." Action analysis later became a cornerstone of Disney's in-house studio art courses.



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"It's a mechanical process and looks that way on the screen." In truth, rotoscoped footage looks only as mechanical as the animator makes it. If this comment were interpreted broadly one could say that animation (and with it film) itself is a mechanical process.

"Using rotoscoping (not to mention computers) is being lazy." Animation form the beginning has been a very labor intensive process and methods and tools have been developed since its inception to save work. To not use these labor saving methods and tools would take us back to the days when acetate cels weren't invented and you had not only to animate every frame but had to redraw the background every time as well. "Rotoscoping footage stands out like a sore thumb." True, if it isn't done with care. In order to be successful, rotoscoped elements must not clash with the rest of the animation in a scene and have to look appropriate. How loosely of tightly the rotoscoping is done as well as how realistic the element being created is can make a lot of difference.

"Animation has a magic that rotoscoping does not." The effect of rotoscoping all depends on what the animator adds to it. Rotoscoped footage created by only tracing and little else adds very little to the finished film. But if movements have been carefully

the design of a character, and the animator's skills were used at the proper points to add just the right amount of exaggeration to movement and facial expressions, then this sort of footage can have all the magic that footage created strictly from an animator's head and with their hand can have.

Rotoscoping, when used as a learning tool, can enhance traditional freehand animation. Although it has been used mostly as a time-saving device, rotoscoping can actually improve an animator's skill. However, the opportunity must be taken to study what is happening in the frame.

An experienced freehand animator can enhance the look of rotoscoped footage if their expertise is used to determine which details to exaggerate. Small details in live action film which are often too subtle to translate well during rotoscoping can be exaggerated to "read" better. For instance, a smile or some other change in expression that might be rather difficult to see otherwise can not only be made to "read" but can add much to the scene if an animator uses their skills well. An animator can also use their skills to enhance movement using such concepts as "squash and stretch" or spacing patterns to make a heavy character (such as if an actor is portraying an elephant) show more weight or to make a dancer seem to float in the air. This can make rotoscoped footage looked more lively and "animated". Lack of these important qualities is what is commonly criticized about rotoscoped action and is what most of the time gives rotoscoping its bad reputation.

The practice of rotoscoping can cover a whole range of approaches. In its most basic form every frame or every other frame is traced and used mostly "as-is" and altered very little. A looser approach is to use only the extremes and to fill in all the frames between by freehand means. This still saves work and gives the animator more freedom in the timing of the action. (Of course, in the more usual approach, drawings can be added or deleted to do the same thing.) An alternative approach to either of these is to very loosely draw over the original figures. This gives a much more spontaneous appearance and for certain kinds of films is the sort of asset that rotoscoping in its strictest form would not normally be able to provide.

Frames from the live action footage do not even have to be traced. An animator can look at a frame of the referenced film on a viewer and draw freehand either the image as it exists on the original film or draw

### Pedagogy & Cinema Technology: Hidden Stories

by Adwoa X. Muwzea

Adwoa X. Muwzea is an Assistant Professor at Wayne State University, in the Department of Communication, Detroit, Michigan. She teaches animation history and techniques, scripting and television production. Sonny's Song, was screened at the Chicago International Children's Film & Video Festival in 1991 and is one of several short, animated films by Muwzea.

#### Animation and its creative architects

are seldom the focus of cinema studies. Yet animation serves a dual purpose in discussions of cinema history. First of ail, history and the development of technology inform modernist approaches to production and academic discourse in film and television studies. In the arena of technology, animation embraces a system of its own essential equipment, techniques, conventions and devices. Secondly, just as an authentic examination of any western media format dregs up the denigrated images of an African Diaspora, animation history is tainted by the vilified images of the Diaspora. So this discussion explores the relationship between the African Diaspora, animation and the development of cinematic technology in western society.

#### Investigation & Conferencing

In a recent study of animation texts, and early issues of the NAACP's <u>Crisis Magazine</u>, scarcely a word about the role of Black people in animation could be found. The texts attribute no developments of animation technology to Black inventors. Beyond its usual format, <u>Crisis Magazine</u> provides only rudimentary focus and criticism of Black representation in comic strips.

One animation researcher, digging in Disney Studio archives,<sup>2</sup> noted that an African American presence was absent. In a 1991 study, researcher Charlene Love of Los Angeles, began a national search to compile a list of African American animators. Only one of the animators contacted was working independently to produce animation targeting Black audiences. Animator, Leo Sullivan, General Manager of his own production company, notes that "the University of California, Los Angeles interviewed him on video tape for their archive of animators in the twentieth century." In animation history overall,

however, neither the impact nor the contributions of the Diaspora have been credited or investigated in any sort of authentic manner.

New York University recently hosted a conference, Black Cinema: A Celebration of Pan-African Film (22-30 March 1994). No mention of animation history, technology or Black achievement in these areas was put forth. Even as one panel prompted a discussion of "the ways in which television and new technologies provide possibilities for distribution and exhibition," the discussion did not focus on Black contributions to animation or cinema technology. It seemed unlikely that topics of technology would emerge.

A flicker of encouragement was kindled when American Book Award author Toni Cade Bambara spoke, however, during the "History of Blacks in Cinema" panel. Her discussion related to notions of Black achievement in the development of cinema technology.

#### Training Memory: Toni Cade Bambara<sup>5</sup>

To engage a Pan-Africanist view of education in practice, the discussion pursued by Bambara represents a particularly relevant approach to examining issues of animation and cinema technology. Bambara, reflecting upon the history of Black cinema, points out that during Reconstruction, Black folk in America filed several hundred patents for inventions that relate to physics, light, motion and the development of the kinescope (a television receiver tube). According to Bambara, there is a "hidden history in patents, diaries, journals" which demonstrate the poignant interest in technology of Black citizens in early America.

Bambara contends that Robert B. Forten, the father of well known anti-slavery crusader, Charlotte Forten (1837-1914),<sup>7</sup> was known to have financed several "optical toys," a phonograph and a kinescope. Such instruments figure easily into the technology of animation and cinema. Yet in her discussion of hidden histories, Bambara stresses that the papers of inventor Lewis Latimer (1848-1928), are key to investigations of technology and cinema in the Diaspora. She cites late 1880-1890, as the time in which Latimer was most active, noting during this period "he's on the move."

Lewis Latimer: A synopsis

Latimer, a self taught draughtsman, drew the technical plans for Bell's telephone patent. He was the only African American on the team of the Edison Pioneers. Latimer improved the life and quality of light bulbs by replacing the carbon filament with cotton and bamboo conductors, making electric light practical for homes. He supervised the installation of Edison's electric light system in New York, Philadelphia, Canada and London, England and served in court as an expert witness in defense of Edison's patents. Latimer also authored the book. Incandescent Electric Lighting: A Description of the Edison System (1890)

Bambara confirms that during the period 1880-1890. Latimer was a chief engineer on the boards of Edison and General Electric, Edison's ventures into animation and motion picture productions are documented. 10 Expanding on the notion that Latimer was involved in the motion picture industry, Bambara adds that he was present at the first major public projection of cinema, in October 1886 and at subsequent first projections throughout the United States and in overseas events. She explains that Latimer's presence is evinced by his writings on audience responses at such events. Latimer was in London with the Lumiere Brothers. He was with "talking Coster and Beale scientific. technology...documenting Negro exhibitions." Bambara assets. He stayed with Black families during his most active years and conducted seminars in Black homes to consider the possibilities

Latimer's testimony in defense of nearly all Edison patents, challenged through litigation, brought him recognition as a patents expert. Bambara notes that he also played a significant role in helping other Black inventors to register patents with the U.S. Patents Office. Latimer's significant encounters include meetings with Ferinand Marquiche, a Nigerian associated with the Lumieres. Framing the Pan-African context of the conference, Bambara notes that Latimer's links to Warquiche indicate investigation across the Diaspora. She also cites Picinnies Dancing on the Sireets of London and Native Women Folding a Ship, as foreign films related to Black panicipation in early cinema. Of the latter, Bambara notes that an African American, possibly Spencer Williams, was benind the as animation and chema history are taught in megaphone. Various dianes recount that in addition schools across the Diaspora, and negative to performance. Black folk were assistants and descriptions of the Diaspora appear, film students camera operators on such films. Their roles as will know that African people have used their intellect inventors and accentists are also implied in cliaries of and creativity to raise cinema, animation and Black Americans of the era

- Bambara's insights into hidden history is, at least in pert, minutes by serily assessment with the teller selections.

telephone books, Greyhound schedules and patents texts." The patents texts were given to her father by Latimer himself, who taught at the Henry Street Settlement.

Digging Deeper: The Rest of the Story

During the early era of animation and cinema. African Americans were inventing and contributing to the technology of the nation. They've made significant contributions in many disciplines, without recognition, so it's probable they've made contributions in the field of animation too. Thus you have the cotton gin-- more likely created by the cotton reaper than the exploiter; the ingenious patents of Granville T. Woods for phone relay systems and rail telegraphy between 1885 and 1888; and the genius of electrical wiring and patents from Lewis H Latimer

In 1982, Bell Laboratories, a private research and development company, employed close to a thousand African Americans, 11 who made important contributions to the company. Brian G. Jackson built and instructed computers for Bell Labs. Light reflected back from concentric circle registry marks, called Frensel lenses, is relayed by a system of mirrors to a television camera. A unit Jackson created, called a "frame grabber," captures a picture of light intensity, representing the relative position of circles in the mask and wafer. <sup>12</sup> Such work may relate tot he development of animation and cinema technology, but requires further investigation. Dr. John Henrik Clarke, who was in contact with the of creating new films, new applications and Latimer family, is an excellent source for apparatus. sources also provide information on Black inventions.

Pedagogy: A Summary

African contributions to communication technology is apparent. Their works are utilized by media professionals. Still, it is important that their achievements be recognized and taught as contributions from the Diaspora. Applications for inventions and designs from the Diaspora need to be established. It's necessary to determine the extent to which the Diaspora contributes to the development of animation stories, characterizations, cinema history and technology. The African Diaspora, itself. must be held accountable for encouraging and producing creative scholarship in these areas. Then, technology to modern heights.

CHATTATE MERCETA

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Animation on the Internet:

## Frame By Frame Pixel By Pixel World Wide Web

Frame By Frame becomes Pixel By Pixel on the World Wide Web! by Byron Grush

WWW http://laotzu.art.niu.edu/fbfindex.html

Frame By Frame Animation Quarterly has just entered the electronic age. Beginning this summer, 1995, you will be able to access articles and special features of Frame By Frame over the internet. The digital version of our newsletter and journal will join the thousands of other information sites on the World Wide Web. Through a graphical "browser" like Netscape, Mosaic, or any one of many other programs or services, all you need to do is type in our URL (Universal Resource Locator),

http://laotzu.art.niu.edu/fbfindex .html, and you will be linked to the Frame By Frame Index page. From there, you can download and read articles which have been published in present and past issues of Frame By Frame. Current festival and conference listings will be updated periodically.

Planned are a form to input your personal and/or professional data into our on-line membership database (optional to you), a chance to link to your own "home page" from ours, and an image and animation clip archive. We will have a membership form for "web surfers" to join ASIFA Central and ASIFA International. We will have links to other sites on the internet of interest to animators

and aficionados. For those of you who don't have an internet or SLIP/PPP connection as yet, but who E-mail, we will have an E-mail address,

asifa@art.niu.edu, so that you can communicate with us electronically. If there is a great deal of interest in the E-mail account, we could establish a list-server as an added feature.

So what is the World Wide Web? WWW is a collection of individual sites scattered all over the world on computers connected to the Internet. The Internet is a sort of network of networks, maintained by private companies, schools and universities and government agencies who have agreed to relay data over their lines. Web sites are linked together by imbedding the addresses of documents found at other sites in special documents called "pages" written in a very simple language called html, or hypertext markup language. When a user encounters a link in a document, an interface program called a browser allows them to "click" or otherwise select the link. This selection causes the new document to be downloaded into the user's browser program. Thus the metaphor of a web of connections has been used to describe it

WWW started at CERN, a physics lab in Europe, which developed it as way for scientists to communicate globally. The first Web software appeared publicly around 1991. The National Center for Supercomputing at the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana published Mosaic, a graphical "browser" client for the Web in 1993. There have always been resources on the Internet which have made it one of the most valuable information assets we have. Until the appearance of the Web, only a few methods of finding things existed. These include gopher (go for some info), and archie, text-based search methods. Indeed, the Web was originally accessed through text-only interfaces like Lynx. When Mosaic came out it was easier to have pictures. sound and scripted forms on the 'net. Users finally had a "point and click" interface.

There are now thousands of Web servers in 84 countries. All the major on-line commercial services have been forced to provide WWW interfaces for their customers, since they have been charging users for access to data and services

### Conference Planned for Next Spring

The Fourth Annual ASIFA Central Midwest Animator's Conference and Retreat is scheduled to be held next April 19-21, 1996, at Starved Rock State Park Lodge, Utica, Illinois.

#### THE CONFERENCE

The Conference is open to anyone with an interest in animation. You need not be a member of ASIFA to attend or to present. The setting, Starved Rock State Park in Illinois, located on a 125 foot sandstone butte overlooking the Illinois River is named after an Indiana tribe who starved to death during a battle with another tribe. The park has 18 canyons, waterfalls and other spectacular rock formations and 15 miles of trails. The lodge has an indoor pool, whirlpool and saunas.

#### PAPERS, PANELS AND WORKSHOPS

Papers can be on any subject relating to animation: critical, theoretical issues in historical, contemporary or future contexts, social, political, commercial, independent, experimental, personal, educational or computer related topics all are welcome. Papers will be juried and may be published in Frame By Frame, the quarterly publication of ASIFA Central.

Panels are to be organized and proposed by one presenter who is responsible for contacting the other panelists in advance. Short biographies of the panels should be provided in addition to an outline of the discussion topics when making the proposal to us.

Workshops should be of interest to a range of people from professional animators to non-animators and those with an interest in the art form: introduction of new technology or new techniques, creative approaches, collaborative projects, etc. Please be very specific about equipment and space needed for your proposal, including what you will supply yourself.

#### POSTER SESSIONS

Poster sessions will provide opportunities for animators to present their own work or the work of other animators. Let us know what format (film, video tape, etc.) you will need, and the approximate length of your presentation. Proposal should include a short biography of you and/or the artist whose work you are showing. Stills, slides, a video clip or sample reel may be requested if we run out of time slots. Student animation and school reels are especially welcome.

#### **FURTHUR INFORMATION**

Maria Schweppe ASIFA Central Animator's Conference 762 Elmwood Terrace Rochester, New York 14620-3716 E-mail: mks@cs.rit.edu



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#### 6th Annual Midwest Animation Lecture Series

Stay Tooned Animation Gallery has announced the 6th Midwest Animation Lecture Series. Held each year from April through November at the Arcade, 272 E. Deerpath in downtown Lake Forest, Illinois, the lecture series has brought a virtual who's who of animation to the Chicagoland area. Each lecture includes rare behind the scenes video clips as well as an audience question and answer period. Previous quests of honor have included Marc Davis, Ward Kimball, Ollie Johnston, Joe Barbera, Bill Hana and Robert McKimson, Jr., just to name a few. The lectures are usually conducted on Saturday evenings at 6 PM and admission to the lectures are free. Invitations are required and can be obtained by calling Stay Tooned Gallery at (708) 234-3231. Invitations to lectures will be mailed to all who call.

Monday night, June 5th, from 7 to 9 PM at the Lake Forest Gallery, Stay Tooned is proud to present Eric Goldberg, creator/animator of Genie (Disney's Aladdin) and co-director of Disney's Pocahontas. Mr. Goldberg will lecture, show rare video clips and conduct a question and answer period. Orders are now being taken for a special serigraph. The first twenty-four ordered will be signed by Mr. Goldberg.

On Saturday, June 10th, from 6 to 9 PM at the Gallery 4944 France Ave. S. (50th and France) in Edina, Minnesota, Stay Tooned is proud to present Mr. Bill Justice, creator of Chip and Dale and Bambi. The phone number in Edina is (612) 927-8797.

## Chicago's Lost Animations

by Daniel Gummerson

This year's midwest chapter of ASIFA conference attracted speakers ranging from students who had just completed their first animations to professional animators. However, one of the most interesting presentations was given by historian George Hagenauer.

Working as a historian, George Hagenauer's research of Chicago gangsters took a turn about ten years ago, when he discovered the animations of Andy Hettinger. In the early days of animation between nineteen thirteen and nineteen fourteen. Hettinger worked as a cartoonist

assisting on
Sidney Smith's "Old Doc Yak" series.
Hettinger would later go on to create his
own series featuring Amos Roach which
appeared in the McHenry Illinois
Newspaper. Amos Roach would eventually
come to life in two animated films by Andy
Hettinger, "A Restless Night" and "The
Stolen Dream."

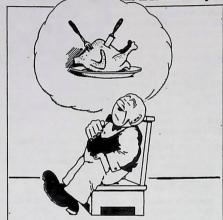
During the making of the two films Hettinger developed techniques that are now thought of as the Hanna Barbera school of animation. Methods such as drawing the figures on transparent paper and printing only a single background that would be used for the entire scene, instead of redrawing the background on every frame of the animation. Another time and labor saving technique of Hettinger's was using a single frame of animation for

twenty to thirty shots by simply drawing more and more onto the frame. This particular process was mainly used for word balloons, giving the illusion of words drawing themselves without rewriting whole words and entire sequences for every shot. Hettinger also made innovations in his artistic technique. For example, he

would create a rubber stamp for objects that needed to be frequently drawn and redrawn. Andy would then use an air brush to shade these objects and figures to create a sense of depth.

Taking more of an interest in Chicago's history of being a major area for the production of animated films, George Hagenauer

began looking for more work by Chicago animators. George soon realized this would be more difficult than he had imagined. Not being able to uncover any other animations George assumed it was because of the self destructive nature of the film stock used in those days. Further investigation did however reveal a much different story. According to George Hagenauer, most of the Chicago animations were actually destroyed in the later part of the nineteen tens by Windsor McKay after he obtained the patents to several types of animation processes. McKay then used the patents to force the Chicago animators to destroy their work. causing them to go out of business. The animations of Andy Hettinger seem to have only escaped destruction due to his own death in nineteen fifteen.



# Animator Wanted!



### **Animator Needed to Restore Silent Cartoon**

About ten years ago, I obtained most of the art and a partial print of two animated films produced in the Chicago area by Andy Hettinger between 1913 and 1915. In the early days of animation, Chicago was a major area for the production of cartoons, usually featuring characters appearing in local newspapers. Hettinger initially assisted on Sidney Smith's Old Doc Yak series. Hettinger later produced two cartoons featuring his own character, Amos Roach, who was appearing in the McHenry Illinois newspaper and possibly other outlets. The two films, "A Restless Night" and "The Stolen Dream" were animated on the pre-printed backgrounds. Over 10 minutes exists on the film of "The Stolen Dream." Only the last 200 drawings need to be reshot to replace the nitrate film that had disintegrated. In spire of the fact that "A Restless Night" seems to have been shot first, no footage exists of this film.

In the late teens, New York animators who owned the patent to various processes forced the Chicago area animators who worked on paper out of business. As a result, most of the early Chicago cartoons were destroyed. Hettinger's films escaped destruction because of Andy's sudden death in 1915. I would like to restore these possibly only examples of Chicago animation. I have experience as a historian, researcher and grantswriter. I'm not, however, an animator. I'm looking for someone skilled as an animator who'd be willing to collaborate on the project. Interested individuals can contact:

George Hagenauer, Box 930093, Verona, WI 53593. Days: 608-271-9181; eve: 608-845-9651

#### What is ASIFA? by David Erhlich Continued from Page 4

#### **Dissemination of Animation Artwork**

ASIFA has done its best to further animation as a fine art. We encourage and organize exhibitions of animation artwork at animation festivals, and we have served as an informal agent for our members, selling art work to collectors in the U.S. and Europe.

#### **Visiting Animators Program**

Once or twice a year, together with our other American Board member, Marty McNamara, I bring a Visiting Animator to the U.S., to tour and screen films. In the past three years Lejf Marcussen (Denmark), Michel Ocelot (France), Barry Purves (U.K.) and Bordo Dovnikovic (Croatia) have all toured the U.S., screening films and lecturing at museums, schools and churches.

#### **ASIFA International Membership**

ASIFA member ship is open to all individuals interested in animations. Students, teachers and afficionados are most welcome. You get a lot of benefits with your membership, including the knowledge that you are supporting a world-wide organization that lobbies effectively for the best in animation, that brings the world a little closer to our shores, and that brings hope to hundreds of our colleagues living in poorer circumstances. We need you and we hope you need us. Give us a chance to show you what we can do together.

David Ehrlich, vice-president, ASIFA International

#### ASIFA Vancouver! by Leslie Bishko Continued from Page 5

Bob Bennett is finishing "Thorax the Conqueror," in which a prehistoric mosquito accidentally thawed from the ice by 3 scientists comes to life and wreaks havoe in a science lab in the middle of the Yukon. Produced by Duane Beaver. Bob is currently working on storyboard ideas for his next film.

OH yeah - about the web...I'm not going to do an ASIFA-Vancouver home page per se, but I am keeping animation resources on line - ASIFA addresses, SAS, AJ, etc., and I'm going to stick addresses for film fests in there as well. Let's LINK!!

http://fas.sfu.ca/cs/people/GradStudents/bishko/personal/leslie.html

Animator's Dirty Little Secret? by David Thraser . Continued from Page 7

their character in the same exact pose as the actor. This approach solves a lot of problems if your

cartoon character does not happen to have the same proportions as a natural human figure. This very likely how Snow White was drawn. (Snow White stood five heads high while a natural human figure stands around six heads high. This would have presented problems had the footage been directly rotoscoped.)

Rotoscoped and freehand animation can exist sideby-side if both are used intelligently together. Both have their place and their purpose. Rotoscoping, by no means, eliminates the need to develop animation skills and knowledge. These things are still necessary if you wish to use it effectively. The fairly recent introduction of computers is blurring many boundaries and turning many cherished beliefs about animation upside down. The very notion of animation is being changed by something called "performance animation" (a process where the movements of an actor directly affect the movement of an on-screen character in real time). Even with that new way of doing things the basic understandings of movement and action still affect the success of the project - knowledge that is (or should be) part of an animator's basic set of knowledge -- things animators take for granted like "squash and stretch" and concepts like "anticipation". There will always be a need for animators in one form or another.

What really matters is not how a project was created but the magic that is hopefully created when the work is finished. A film still has to be entertaining, no matter how beautifully animated it is or what methods were used in its making. To believably create that other world up on the screen (no matter what kind of screen it may be), it's up to animators to use ALL their tools wisely and effectively and with imagination.

Research sources:

"Walt Disney: An American Original" by Bob Thomas, 1976, Fireside Books (Simon and Schuster)

"Of Mice and Magic: A History of American Animated Cartoons" by Leonard Maltin, 1980, McGraw-Hill Book Company

#### Hidden History by Adwoa X. Muwzea Continued from Page 9

1 "Animation Signifiers: An African World View," A.X.Muwzea. Unpublished paper presented at the "5th Annual Society of Animation Studies Conference," Famham, U.K., 1993. The paper references animation texts by Charles Solomon; The American Film Institute; and Leonard Maltin.

<sup>2</sup> "Gallup Goes to Hollywood: Opinion Polling, Market better, 28.8 is more or less standard now), a SLIP or Research and American Film," Susan Ohmer. PPP connection (Serial Line Internet Protocol), and Ohmer presented her dissertation research from software needed to interface with your server New York University, Department of Cinema Studies, at a Wayne State University colloquium, 4 Feb 1995. From the vita and self composed biography of Leo Internet In A Box, but read carefully! Some of these D. Sullivan, Jan 1994. Sullivan has overseen all phases of production on animated television shows in China, Thailand, the Philippines, Spain, France, Canada, Australia, Germany, Ireland and the United States.

Black Cinema: The Artist's Perspective, "Black Participation in the Film Industry: Black Hollywood." was a panel convened on Saturday, 26 March 1994. The panel's discourse in outlined in the conference

bulletin.

Toni Cade Bambara called her presentation by the title "Training Memory." The details of her speech which pertain to cinema technology is outlined in the discussion which follows, along with direct quotes from her presentation.

Burrows, Wood, Gross. Television Production, Disciplines & Techniques, 5th Ed., (1992), p. 125,

187. Wm. C. Brown Publishers, Iowa.

Sterling, Dorothy, ed., We Are Your Sister. Black Women in the Nineteen Century, (1984), p. 119. W.W. Norton & Company., New York. The text provides a partial discussion of the Forten family. An Elder Charlotte Forten (1784-1884), was the matriarch of this Philadelphia family, and the mother of Robert B. Forten.

Black Americans in the Field of Science and Invention," Robert C. Hayden, in Blacks in Science, ancient and modem, Ivan Van Sertima, Ed., p220. Transaction Books, New Brunswick, 1983 (1989).

9 Ibid., p. 273.

See Animation, A Reference Guide, Hoffer, Thomas W. (1981), p. 10, Greenwood Press, Connecticut. Also, The Animation Book: a complete quide to animated filmmaking from flip-books to sound cartoons, Layborne, Kit (1979). p. 86, Crown Publishers, New York.

Van Sertima, p. 227. 12 Van Sertima, p. 227.

#### Animation on The Internet by Byron Grush Continued from Page 10

which are more or less "free" on the Internet. Of course, nothing is really ever free, your school or company is paying for the Internet connection you are using. But if you have Internet access at your job - even only E-mail - you have access to Buckminster Fuller's "Global Village" in a very real sense.

Recently, a number of private companies have popped up who can provide dial-up access to the Internet for your home. Often the cost is less than the Internet service offered by Compuserve or America On-line. All you need is a computer capable of graphic display (256 colors is adequate) and a high-speed modem (9600 baud is minimal, 14.4K is

(usually available from your provider) and some kind of browser. You can buy off-the-shelf products like products restrict you to a specific provider. If you already have Compuserve, Delphi, America On-line, Genie, or another on-line service, they will be your easiest way to get started.

The old "my computer is better than yours" argument isn't even relevant any more. The Web doesn't care if you have a MAC, a PC, an Amiga, an SGI or a dumb terminal in some dusty old room on the third floor of some Music building somewhere. It is the browser software, like Netscape or Mosaic, which "knows" what your computer can do to display text and images. The document is embedded with "tags" to tell the browser what text style to draw or if there' is an link to select. The browser can evoke other related programs called "viewers" to play movie or sound files which can be downloaded over the Web. This last feature is what should be of interest to animators. Already there are numerous on-line galleries like the 911 Gallery in Indianapolis, who offer images for sale over the World Wide Web.

So get virtual! Start surfin' the Web with us. Let us know what you would like Frame By Frame (Pixel By Pixel) to offer on-line: a job data base, an on-line animation gallery, digital resumes, interactive feedback?

#### SCAN '95: Digital Passion

The 15th Annual Symposium on Small Computers in the Arts at the Franklin Institute Science Museum Philadelphia, PA November 3 - 5, 1995

Call for Proposals for papers, presentations, panels, performances, corporate presentations, workshops and Computer Art Competition.

contact Misako Scott, (610) 664-3417 E-mail: scan@netaxs.com Small Computers in the Arts Network 209 Upland Road Merion Station, PA 19066-1821

#### **SCAN '95 Computer Art Competition**

Silicon Gallery 139 North Third Street Philadelphia, PA November 3 - 25th, 1995 deadline: August 18th, 1995 For more information contact: Rick de Coyte phone: 215 235-6060, Fax: 215 238-6067 E-mail (Compuserve) 71233,1437 or (Internet) decoyte@omni.voicenet.com

**Bradford Animation Festival** 

June 30-July 8 1995
a partnership of Bradford Festival
and the National Museum of
Photography, Film and Television
Animated Shorts Competition for
professionals and students: any
animated medium, in U-Matic or
VHS format. Mark entry amateur
or professional and send with
large sae and B/W publicity still to:
Jill Carpenter, BAF! Rm1, The
Wool Exchange, Bank St;
Bradford BD1 1LE England
tel (++44) (01274) 309199

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OCTOBER 6-15, 1995
LIVE ACTION, ANIMATION, FILMS,
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MONTREAL: FESTIVAL DU FILM SCIENTIFIQUE DU QUEBEC

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ABITIBI: Festival International En Abitibi-Temiscaminque

Ahitibi-Temiscaminque
Oct 28 - Nov 2, 1995
Deadline: September 1
animation, documentary, fiction,
original version with French or
English subtitles.
215 Ave Mercier, Rouyon-Noranda,
Quebec, Canada J9X 5W8
Tel: (819) 792-6212
Fax: (819) 762-6762

ISEA95 Montreal
6th International Symposium on Electronic Art
from September 17 to 24, 1995
307, rue Sainte-Catherine Quest, bureau 310
Montreal (Quebec) Canada H2X 2A3
T:[514] 281-8282 [514] 990-0229
F:[514] 842-7459
isea95@er.uqam.ca
WWW http://isea95.comm.uqam.ca/isea95.html
fttp isea95.comm.uqam.ca

The Art Center of Battle Creek is currently reviewing proposals for their upcoming exhibition "IN ACTION: CARTOONS, ANIMATION, AND CONTEMPORARY ART" to be on view December 1, 1995- January 21, 1996. Illustrated catalog of exhibiting artists, artistrun workshops, and Visiting Artist lectures are possible pending funding.

Interested artists working in animation, cartooning, or other media influenced by these artforms may send examples of their work (videos, slides, or photos), resume citing experience and background, and a stamped self-addressed envelop for return of materials to:

"IN ACTION" attn: Tim Norris, Art Center of Battle Creek, 265 E. Emmett St., Battle Creek, MI 49017 Deadline to receive materials is July 1, 1995

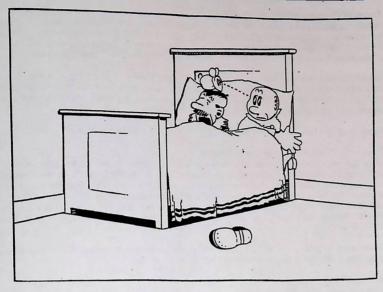
London: British Short Film Festival

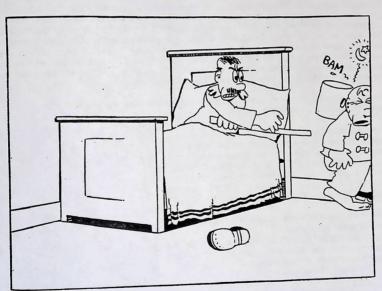
Fax: 081-740 8540

September 15-24, 1995
Deradline June 2, 1995
Films produced in 1994 & 1995 less than 40
minutes long, English subtitled or dubbed. For
submissions: films & videos accepted VHS,
PAL & NTSC only.
Room 313, BBC Treshold House, 65-69
Shepherds Bush Green, London W12 7RJ
Tel: 081 743 8000, ext 62222/62052

LIEPZIG: INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR DOCUMENTARY & ANIMATION OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 5, 1995

DOKFESTIVAL LEIPZIG, ELSTER. 22-24, 94109, LEIPZIG, GERMANY





all Andy Hettinger images courtesy of George Hagenaur. © 1995 by George Hagenaur

Tours of Chicago Animation Studios

Would you like to participate in our tour of Chicago Animation and Production Studios? We're looking for studios who would be willing to host an ASIFA Central Studio Tour for our members. What's in it for you? The satisfaction of knowing you've provided a connection to the Midwest's ONLY professional Animation organization with ties to the International animation community.

Would you like to help out with the Studio Tours? We're looking for members (and new members) to work on coordination, food, mailings, phone calls, transportation, and so forth. What's in it for you? You'll get to experience the Chicago animation scene up close. If you feel programs like this are valuable, remember, they depend on your help and support!

Please contact Mary Lou Haynes at 312 233-8788 if you want to participate!

Corporate Sponsor's Advertising Program

ASIFA Central depends on its corporate sponsors to provide a vital connection to the world of professional animation in all its aspects. We want to give something back. As an experimental program, ASIFA Central will begin to run notices on its World Wide Web pages for corporate sponsors. The value of this kind of advertising is probably dubious, since it is a public venue [something like 6 million people access the World Wide Web], and therefore kind of a random market. However, purchasing this kind of advertising on Compuserve or Prodigy would cost you lots of bucks, so there must be something to it. We are hoping you will try it out.

Please contact Byron Grush at 708 357-7607 or mail to Frame By Frame, 720 Prairie Avenue, Naperville, IL 60540, if you are interested in WWW advertising.

Pixel By Pixels Animation Gallery

Want your animation on-line? We will be setting up the ASIFA Central Pixel By Pixel Animation Gallery on the World Wide Web this summer. We want ASIFA Central members who have original animation or graphic art to be represented in this gallery. There will be no fee for (paid) members. You need not be a computer expert or even have an internet account to participate. We can convert your animation clips and stills into digital form. You need to send a good quality video of the clip you want in the gallery, along with the proper credits. No more than 10 seconds, please! Stills can be glossy photograph or high-resolution digital images. DOS/windows, MAC or SGI movie and image formats can (probably) be used. If you have a question, please contact us.

Please contact Pixel By Pixel, c/o Byron Grush, 720 Prairie Ave., Naperville, IL 60540, byron@art.niu.edu or asifa@art.niu.edu

#### Membership Directory

When you send in your membership dues, Please remember to include a short bio and other info that you would like published in the directory. Please keep us informed of any changes in your listing.... many members move or change jobs and our mailings come back without forwarding addresses!

### ASIFA Annual Midwest Animator's Conference and Retreat (see page 11)

Would you like to help with next year's conference? we want to make the next one bigger and better than ever! You can help. Please contact:

Maria Schweppe
ASIFA Central Animator's Conference
762 Elmwood Terrace
Rochester, New York 14620-3716
F-mail: mks@cs.rit.edu



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