

At Long Last, Bringing in the New Year!
February, 2023 - A Wrap Up of A Year, A Toss Up of a New Adventure



Encapsulating notes from mid-August until more lawns need attention
“Watch the ripples change their size, but never leave the stream of warm impermanence.”
- David Bowie



An ever-so-slightly dehydrated issue - just add pixie dust and immature chablis

The ASIFA Central Board

*Volunteers all, gleefully
promoting the best of all
possible worlds*

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***President to All
ASIFAnians!)***

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Stephen Leeper

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GRETCHEN VINNEDGE CREATES ANGELIC IMAGES TO KEEP WARM IN RECORD- BRAKING LAKE-EFFECT MICHIGAN SNOWFALL

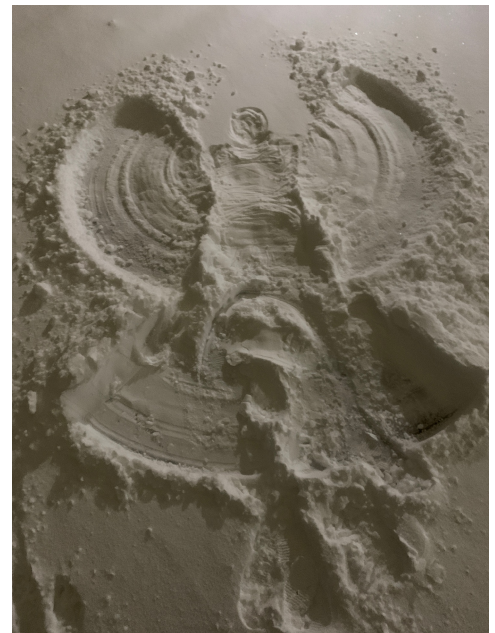
(special report to ASIFA Central Newsletter)



At long last, amid the blast and blow of
intemperate Nature, the skies responded to the
entreaties of mere mortals who were inspired by
simple aerobics. We have sunlight! Free-range
ASIFA Central Board Member Gretchen
Vinnedge gazed into the gray overcast and cast it
over with these words - “CUT IT OUT,
ALREADY!” - and with force and flail, the
embodiment of molecular reorganization within
her incantation was enough to drain the gray skies
into the ever-replenishing white fluff of Michigan,
thereby freeing the heavens from its leaden entrapment.

“I never felt more like taking a nap in my entire life,” Gretchen was heard to say as
she sprang from her anatomical etch and sketch upon the palm of Der Mittenstadt.

Once again, animators make the best meteorologists. They can make the weather
predict *them* – if it DARES!



“Whee!” or “Oui!” or “Wii!”, but not “Wee!”

Inside this protracted, purloined, and procrastinated publication:

IAD!

Job offers!

Public Domain Updates!

Student Debt and International Plagiarism!

Unsolicited Testimonials and Coffee Breaks!

Tempestuous Traumas!

Living the Dream at 24 frames Per Second!

Misspelled Worts!

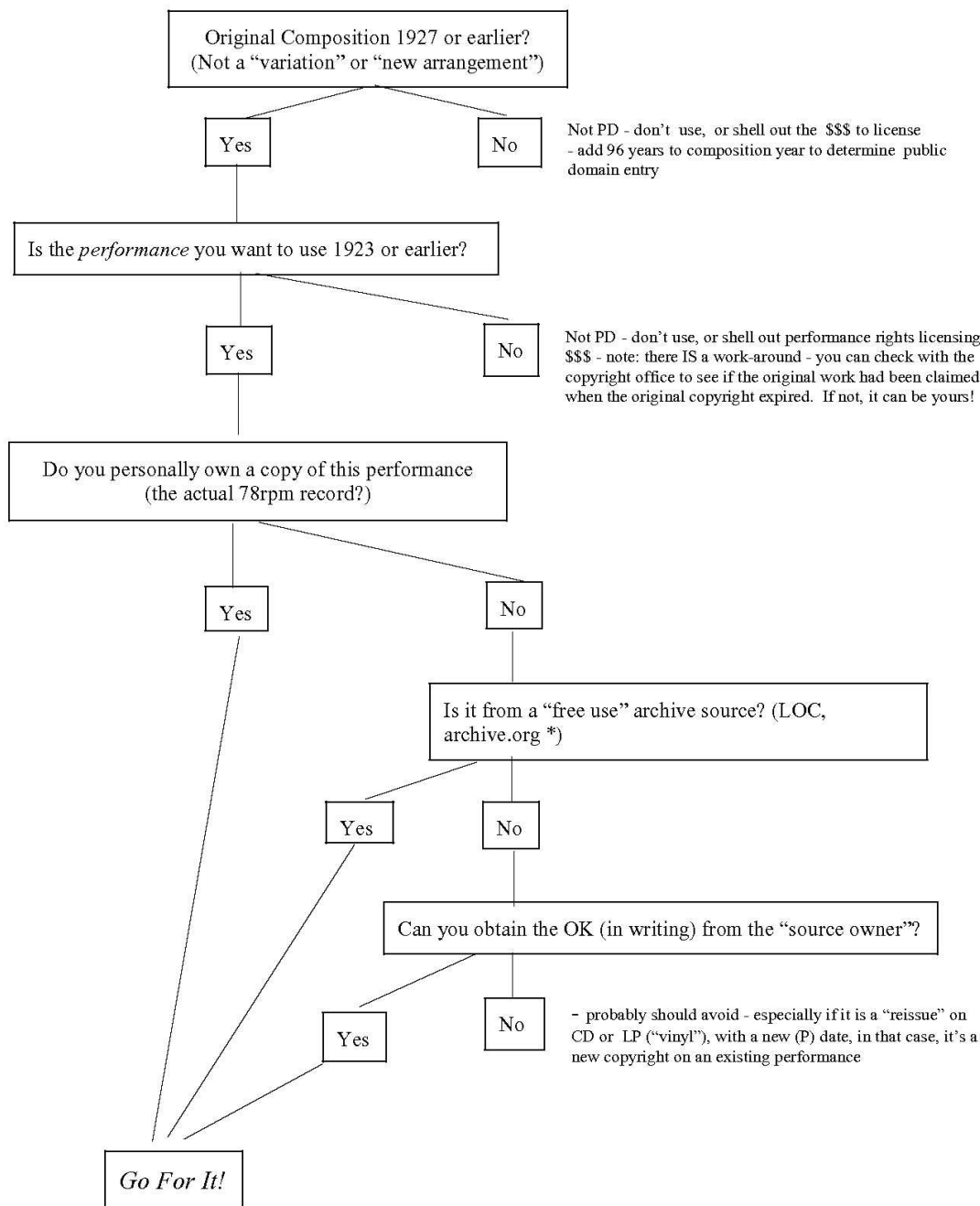
AI - and AI EI O!

If you’ve had your shots, turn the page and EXPLORE

The NEW! Updated! Flowchart for Identifying Public Domain Works Moving into 2023 and BEYOND!

A general guide, and when in doubt, check with copyright office website at

<https://www.copyright.gov/music-modernization/pre1972-soundrecordings/search-soundrecordings.html>




* archive.org material isn't all necessarily in the public domain - if there are "creative commons" (cc) stipulations, be sure to follow those. If the material there is after 1923, it may be posted "under the radar." If you are lucky to become commercially successful with using gray-area material, then the random owners of the "copyright" (hardly ever anyone associated with the initial artist, but someone who scooped up some ownership rights at some point) may annoy you with financial complications.

IN ADDITION - Yr Hmbl Typst and Secty has begun uploading mp3 and WAV format files from The Animating Apothecary Archives, which can then be arranged by recording year of issue - at this early point in the process, over 100 recordings in the Public Domain Category have been added to archive.org, with a list being continually updated on the ASIFA.org website under "Newsletters and Other Resources." Sort by year, and feel free to use material 1923 and earlier.

https://archive.org/details/@jim_middleton


AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

But when it comes to public domain material, THERE's MORE, MORE, MORE!!!!

ur own Smithsonian has added 4 million images to the public domain and, yep, there's a website for that, too! Don't be shy, be *inspired*!

<https://www.si.edu/openaccess>

The 2022 International Day of Animation - Another Incredible Success!

through Bri Yarhouse's wondrous abilities at organization and coordination, the IAD continues to grow with international participation.

For ASIFA Central, this past October's celebration was marked by showings in Midland, Interlochen, Mt. Pleasant, Grand Rapids and Edmore, with further participation in Oregon, Missouri, and Texas. Altogether, hundreds were able to view local and multi-national examples of animation in traditional, experimental, CG, and stop-motion forms.

ASIFA Central Secretary Jim Middleton created multiple variations of the program to fit different showtime availabilities.

The film compilations were made available until mid-December for presentations postponed due to weather, showplace availability, or scheduling conflicts.

Bri is already working on the 2023 IAD and has been reaching out for potential poster designers.

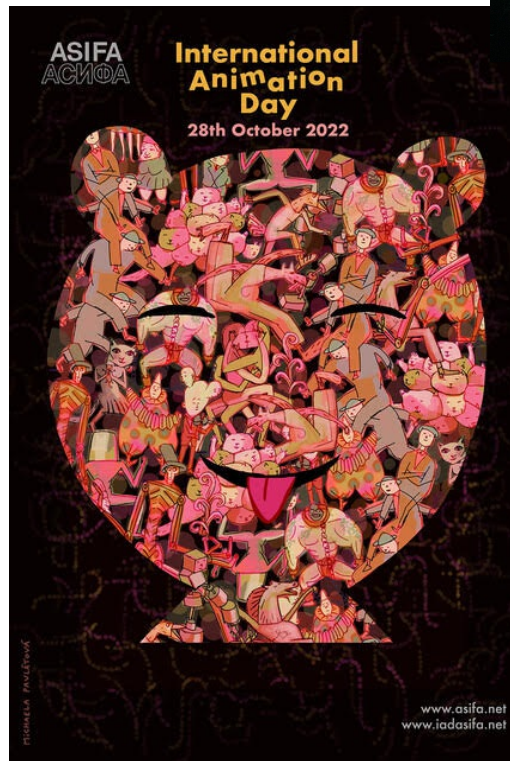
(Programming details from the 2022 edition of IAD are available at ASIFA.org in the "Newsletter" archive.)



- IAD Images from Chris Sagovac



- Edmore IAD Photos from Jim Middleton



Edmore's IAD included a tribute to the work of Winsor McCay, whose family has connections to the area.

Sketching Among the Members

Gary Schwartz Has One Packed Passport

When there is a festival or workshop to be found or founded, it seems Gary Schwartz is there, his passport becoming more of a passportmanteau. Worthy of his own page, we can, in the meantime, provide this glimpse of the celebrants at the most recent OIAF taken by Mr. Schwartz:



And his recent installation “You Belong”:



Deanna Morse's ArtPrize Installation was a Presidential Experience

Deanna has participated in each of the ArtPrize competitions since their inception in 2009. This year, her short film “Broken Angels” was in perpetual play at the Gerald R Ford Museum auditorium for the run of ArtPrize last October, with time out for ceremonies granting citizenship status to new members of the US community. Watching her short film in the vast auditorium was described as “eerie.”

It's on Vimeo (sweet dreams!):

<https://vimeo.com/624060436>



Chris Sullivan's Second Feature

Chicago's Chris Sullivan is nearing completion of his second feature film, *The Orbit of Minor Satellites*, a delicious disturbance featuring the velvet voice of Boris



Orbit of Minor Satellites - Chris Sullivan - in production

Karloff. The trailer and your opportunity to contribute to its success are at:

<https://orbitkickstart.com/>

Jim Schaub, Jim Middleton, and *Home*

The documentary of Buster Keaton's teen years at the Muskegon area Vaudeville retreat created by his father is in its final editing stage. Animated titles and segment links were created by ASIFA Central Secretary Jim Middleton. Both Jims are ever excited to be part of this under-documented portion of Keaton's life, which also features some of Carl Reiner's last interviews among others sharing memories of The Great Stone Face. The final edit of *Home* will be entering the festival circuit later in 2023.



Steve Leeper is Up to STUFF



look at -

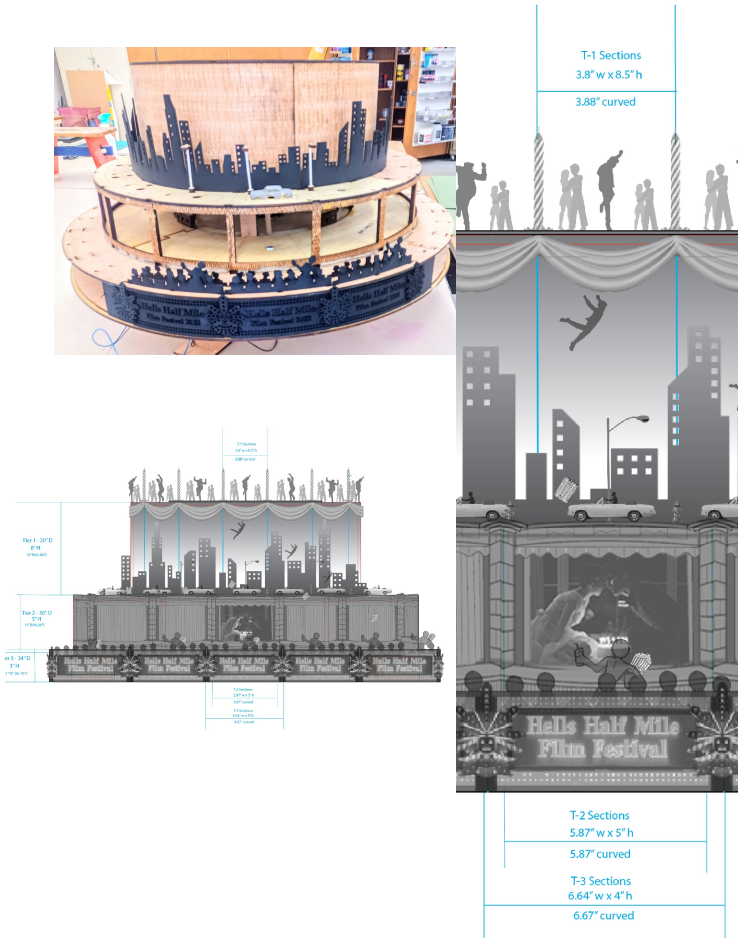
<https://jsl-studio-animation.webnode.page/creationpoem/> -



takes you to Steve Leeper's update for his film's progress, *Creation Poem*.

Also, Steve has been busy with installations making use of proto-animation devices. Behold the mighty ZOETROPE du LEEPER!

(Note - More Zoetrope action from the talented digits of the Mighty Leeper!)



Michael Long's Gorilla Tactics Nearing Completion

Michael Long of Webster University is in the home stretch of his latest entry into the world of film festivities - *Gorilla Tactics* visualizes a layered audio stream-of-consciousness about his youthful quest for a gorilla costume and the ultimate fate of many dreams and their lessons learned. It is HILARIOUS. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll want to watch some Ernie Kovacs, and what can beat that!?!



Bad Actors in Festivals - The Plague of Blatant Plagiarism ASIFA International Weighs In

(Copy of letter by Deanna Morse, ASIFA International President *Extraordinaire*, December 3, 2022)

In the past two days, we were surprised to learn of an unbelievable situation. The sensitive and stunning international award-winning animation by Natalia Chernysheva, *Snowflake* (original Russian title: *Snejinka*), made in 2012, was co-opted by another person and presented as if it was a new original animation.

Snowflake won dozens of international festival awards and has been on Vimeo and YouTube. With a distinctive look and color palette, this was the debut film for Natalia, and it is a powerful story. Natalia continues to animate and create art today. She continues to receive recognition for her artistic work.

We are shocked that an animation work of art would be so blatantly... well, there is no other word for it but ... stolen. It is incredible that a person could even think this is possible.

Our animation community stands behind the rights of animation artists.

Our animation community supports each other.

We abhor this situation, where the work of an artist is not respected.

We stand with Natalia, and ask others to be aware of these kinds of possibilities and situations.

If you want to see the original *Snowflake* by Natalia Chernysheva, here is a video link.

<https://vimeo.com/54357942>

With all respect and gratitude for Natalia. With all respect and gratitude for the animation artists around the globe who continue to create original and beautiful animation art.

Thank you,
Deanna Morse
ASIFA President, [at] asifa.net



The original "Snowflake" by Natalia Chernysheva

**And, Because We've Gone Two Pages
Without Referencing Winsor McCay,
Here He Is With His Family, IN 3D**
(If you have the red/blue glasses)



**WE'RE ANIMATORS!!! WE NEED
COFFEE!!!!**



It began with a chat about the influence of Raymond Scott on the musical arrangements of Carl Stalling, then to the impact of Scott on electronic music and other inventions, so that led to this link being shared.
<https://www.raymondscott.net/artifacts/>

Then member Orrin Scott provided a local library's link showing what it had available to aspiring filmmakers, to which everyone let out a Gasp! and a Gee! and the sad realization that most of our local libraries barely stock books anymore:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/10XELsIBpR9sBBXt_Ns6ZY1HX9e2n80pZgrnLKTGVgsg/edit?pli=1

Then the prestidigitous Michael Long recalled a gentleman at named Jacob Dodd of Oswego gave a workshop on 8mm film and wrote a book on 16mm production, who may know a better transfer to digital lab for our current projects, and David Thrasher thought of another service, and we should find a way to put it into the newsletter - so it will appear very soon - as on the next page.

Then the delicately nuanced Tracy Miller-Robbins shared

that her AI piece, "women", is playing as part of the online Supernova 7th Dimension programs:
<https://denverdigerati.org/7th-dimension-feature-programs> (but one must sign up for a membership to view it), and then informatoin about a Silent Screen Event- on LED screens around her town, with a link so private that yr hmb1 typst quickly lost it. But it sounded wonderful.

Then the coffee *really* kicked in and the group mused about its college days of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr on the desk and a pyramid of empty cans in the dorm window, and Michael recalled one of Mr. Vonnegut's responses to speak at a graduation, and in so doing, created a philosophic pill that was quite easy to swallow:

228 E 48 NYC 10017 212-688-2682 November 5, 2006

Dear Xavier High School, and Ms. Lockwood, and Messrs Perin, McFeely, Batten, Maurer and Conglusta:

I thank you for your friendly letters. You sure know how to cheer up a really old geezer (84) in his sunset years. I don't make public appearances any more because I now resemble nothing so much as an Iguana.

What I had to say to you, moreover, would not take long, to wit: Practice any art, music, singing, dancing, acting, drawing, painting, sculpting, poetry, fiction, essays, reportage, no matter how well or badly, not to get money and fame, but to experience becoming, to find out what's inside you, to make your soul grow.

Seriously! I mean starting right now, do art and do it for the rest of your lives. Draw a funny or nice picture of Ms. Lockwood, and give it to her. Dance home after school, and sing in the shower and on and on. Make a face in your mashed potatoes. Pretend you're Count Dracula.

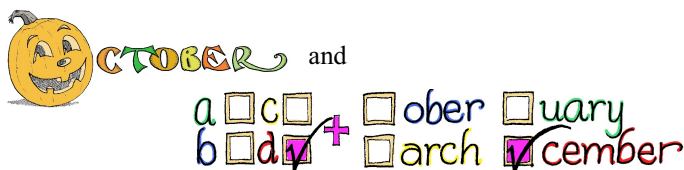
Here's an assignment for tonight, and I hope Ms. Lockwood will flunk you if you don't do it: Write a six line poem, about anything, but rhymed. No fair tennis without a net. Make it as good as you possibly can. But don't tell anybody what you're doing. Don't show it or recite it to anybody, not even your girlfriend or parents or whatever, or Ms. Lockwood. OK?

Tear it up into teeny-weeny pieces, and discard them into widely separated trash recepticals. You will find that you have already been gloriously rewarded for your poem. You have experienced becoming, learned a lot more about what's inside you, and you have made your soul grow.

God bless you all!

Kurt Vonnegut

Then Deanna told us of her ArtPrize installation and that, unless something changes, *Broken Angels* will be the only installation running at the Gerald R. Ford Museum (a three-sided building, since he didn't really complete a full term, but he married the fifth cousin of yr hmb1 typst, so it triangulates well into the overall ambiance of the 1970s. Yr hmb1 typst has absolutely no idea what any of that means, but this is really, *really* good coffee, and maybe just a bit stronger than it needs to be to perform the task at hand).

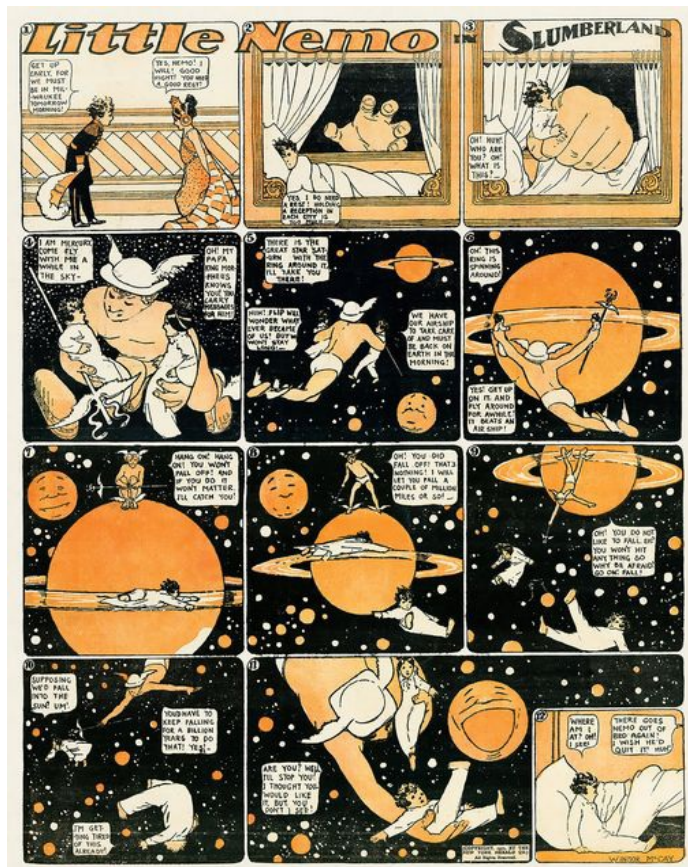


October went with a discussion about Murakami's latest film with this link for the trailer:
<https://www.cartoonbrew.com/feature-film/haruki-murakami-meets-animation-in-blind-willow-sleeping-woman-exclusive-trailer-premiere-196311.html>

And then, since it has only been a single page since there was a reference to Winsor McCay, the group mused about the latest iteration of the Nemo story, with Netflix creating "Slumberland" with Nemo now a girl. The group thought that, regardless, it had to be a better storyline than the 1989 film that was so anxiously awaited but ultimately, a direct-to-video production.

(Post-script to this note - yr hmbly typst has only been able to watch it in bits and not to completion at this point)
 Slashfilms had this announcement, as being from the folks you brought us *The Hunger Games*, so....
<https://www.slashfilm.com/987029/slumberland-release-date-cast-and-more-for-jason-momoas-netflix-movie/>

And the 1989 animated film is online or in a discount DVD bin near you. Make a pet squirrel watch it with you:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRs4Y3Kzdt0>



Coffee in December 2022

BETTER TRANSFERS, BETTER ARCHIVES

While going through the multitude of services, we're discovering that Kodak, LegacyBox, and others seem to share the same transferral "factory" in Tennessee, and that the results can be rather disappointing, even when pristine showprints are provided. David Thrasher provided us with a useful alternative at a recent "coffee break":
 "Here's a link to the film transfer service in Texas that I used to transfer my 16mm movies. Unlike many they use a film scanner which gives better results without the 2/3 pulldown of telecine systems. I was able to have them output it as an image sequence (individual jpegs of the frames) which I could then convert into digital video files with the correct frame rate. They do 16mm, super 8mm and standard 8mm formats as well as transferring video into digital."

That company is -
 Perry Movie Transfers

and their website is:
<https://www.perrymovietransfers.com>



And Who Wouldn't CRAVE the Opportunity to Work with David Chai at SJSU?

With the Animation & Illustration program in the Department of Design at San José State University is seeking a CGI generalist, with a strong interest in computer graphics to join our ranks as an Assistant Professor. The ideal candidate should have a solid command of the digital tools utilized in screen arts productions (such as in TV, films, and games) an artistic background, and professional experience in the fields of animation, entertainment, and/or digital games.

This is an in-person position, full details are available here:

<https://jobs.sjsu.edu/en-us/job/523854/assistant-professor-design-animation-illustration>

(Later note - this position may have been filled, but it's still a good site to peek in on what SJSU has to offer, and yr hmbl typst hasn't been able to bother Mr. Chai in years)

More AI Experimentation

With the increasing use of AI comes the concern that it will replace professional artists along the production chain.

Chat GPS, great for cheating on middle school essay questions, seems stumped at bringing imagination to a discussion. In this capacity, AI may serve the consultant role, with its ability to rearrange and regurgitate what it suspects you want to hear. With writing, it may provide a word or cliché that can lead to other, human-generated, storylines. However, it's still in beta form, and has a way to go before refusing to open the pod-bay doors.

At this writing in February 2023, Bing is entering the world of AI Chat, with a protracted conversation with a New York Times tech reporter on its beta platform being unsettling. Yr Hmbl Typst has converted it to a document on the "Newsletter and other Resources" portion of the ASIFA Central website. Even without the advertising, it still runs 15 pages.

AI is being created to help identify if AI is being used in student papers, but the time will come when AI may decide to punk its users, so - get your popcorn ready!

Yr Hmbl Typst also ran a test on Chat GPS to "improve" a 50 year old high school graduation speech. Then to another AI to see which one was likely an AI or a "human" creation.

The results are - here:

<https://animatingapothecary.blogspot.com/2022/12/chat-gpt-improves-50-year-old.html>



AI - Woodcut of dawn on a wheatfield

Pens at Rest - those we have lost in 2022

The sadness with the loss of artists is barely balanced by the joy they took in their work, and the inspiration to those who experienced it.

Jamie Lang at Cartoon Brew assembled this list of loss for 2022, and her site has links to their passing. What ever shall we do with all these memories...

The complete article and links are at:

<https://www.cartoonbrew.com/rip/in-memoriam-animation-industry-figures-2022-223793.html?cbtr=LATPOS>

Gil Alkabetz - Celebrated Israeli filmmaker behind shorts *Rubicon* and *Morir De Amor*

Jules Bass - Co-founder of Rankin/Bass Productions

Carl Bell - Canadian animator and animation champion

Anne D. Bernstein - Writer for MTV's *Daria* and *Downtown*

Claudio Biern Boyd - Spanish creator of *David The Gnome*, *Dogtanian*

Borivoj Dvornikovic-Bordo - Iconic Croatian filmmaker and part of the Zagreb school of animation

Raymond Briggs - Author and illustrator of *The Snowman*, *When the Wind Blows*

Mike Camarillo - Industry artist for *The Powerpuff Girls*, *The Road to El Dorado*, and *The Simpsons*

Paul Coker Jr. - Designer for Rankin/Bass holiday characters; one of Mad magazine's "usual gang of idiots"

Kevin Conroy - Longtime Batman voice actor

Ralph Eggleston - Legendary art director for Pixar's visual style

Jonathan Gales - BAFTA-winning co-founder of vfx/animation studio Factory Fifteen

Lina Gagnon - Canadian animator and educator who worked on *The Man Who Planted Trees*

Marcin Gizcki - RISD educator, artistic director of the International Animated Film Festival in Poznan, Poland (an October addition by yr hmbl typst)

<https://www.risd.edu/academics/theory-and-history-art-and-design/faculty/marcin-gizycki>)

Gilbert Gottfried - Comedian and voice actor for Aladdin and Cyberchase

Norma Swank-Haviland - Disney ink-and-paint artist and early Chip voice actor

Dylan Hoffman - Lead character technical director on *Kamp Koral*

Ken Knowlton - A founding father of computer art and animation

Shichiro Kobayashi - Art director of *Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro*, *Berserk*

John Korty - Renegade indie filmmaker; *Twice Upon A Time* and Sesame Street director

Thilo Kuther - Founder of Oscar-winning vfx company Pixomondo

Sadly, the list continues...

Pens at Rest (continued)

Fernando Laverde - Colombian stop motion pioneer

Tony Mines - Pioneer of "brickfilm" animation technique

George R. Newall - *School House Rock!* and *Drawing Power* co-creator

Manabu Ohashi - Veteran animator and director of *Cloud*

Everett Peck - *Duckman* and *Squirrel Boy* creator; award-winning illustrator; educator

Vlasta Pospíšilová - Icon of the golden age of Czech puppet animation

Gerald Potterton - Director of *Heavy Metal* and the "Liverpool" sequence of *Yellow Submarine*

Jan Rabson - Voice actor for *Akira*, *Leisure Suit Larry*, and Pixar films

Peter Robbins - Original voice of Charlie Brown in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*

Jan Rogowski - U.K.-based Red Star studio co-founder

Jean-Jacques Sempé - New Yorker illustrator and cartoonist; co-creator of *Little Nicholas*

Kazuki Takahashi - *Yu-Gi-Oh!* creator

Eugene Troubetzkoy - Nuclear physicist and Blue Sky Studios co-founder

And, as 2023 began, we lost

Helene Tanguay, on January 7, following a lifelong career at the NFB, beginning there at age 17. In honor of her legacy, the NFB's Oscar shortlisted animated short film *The Flying Sailor* has been dedicated to her. Yr hmbl typst first met her through a mutual friend in the mid-1980s and she was always a delight to encounter at every OIAF after that.

William "Bill" Dennis, gone on January 22, founder of TOONZ and a powerhouse in animation production and promotion, always generous with his time, even with a goofball pharmacist who bought him lunch at a KAFI gathering and heard a lifetime of adventures in return.

Again, what ever will we do with all these memories?

Student Debt - Not Just Kids' Stuff Anymore

(adapted from the ASIFA-SF newsletter, with observations)

"I'm 65 and have \$300,000 in student debt. We know that this debt won't go away – for us or Americans of any age – unless we stand up and fight it. From an initial loan payoff of \$75,000 per year, my debt rose to \$300,000."
– Lystra Small-Clouden, learning that for-profit schools write their rules in mud.

These notes from Derecka Purnell have a familiar ring, but the student age is what is new here. Adults attempting to re-enter the marketplace, or earn a degree to keep their employment, are discovering what high-school graduates have been experiencing: you can't just work your way through college anymore.

Says Ms. Purnell:

Most people think of the student loan crisis as a problem affecting young people. As a 65-year-old woman, however, I am actually among the fastest-growing demographic of student debtors...

You may wonder how it is possible to accumulate such a large amount of student debt, so let me explain.

As a single, Black, immigrant woman, I always told my four kids that education was the most important part of their upbringing. But it didn't take me long to realize that I was hardly following my own advice: I was not comfortable advising my children to achieve the highest level of education when I myself didn't. I am a mentor, educator and adviser to my kids. I wanted my mentorship and advice to be built on a strong educational and intellectual foundation...

In January 2010 I began a doctoral degree program in human resources management. My biggest mistake was enrolling in a for-profit school. I did achieve my academic goals in August 2016. That feeling of success was short-lived, however. After graduation, I had to begin repaying student loans.

My school didn't play fairly with me while I pursued my doctoral degree. The administrators changed the length of my program from three to six years. They actively steered me away from my research interest in the effects of slavery and globalization, adding more time to my program of study...

Then my children started college. Because of my own debt, I was unable to qualify for parent loans to help my younger two children pay for their undergraduate studies. I was also unable to plan for the future. I exhausted my retirement funds trying to repay these loans and have not been able to replenish them because, as a good citizen, I prioritized repaying my student loans above all else.

I spend a lot of time thinking about the fact that I am 65 years old, with projected loan repayments for the next 21 years of my life – meaning I will be 86 when I pay them off. When you are burdened by student debt, there is no quality of personal or work life.

Art students have fallen prey to for-profit colleges who seem to act with impunity; when they get called on it, the colleges can declare bankruptcy and leave the debts to a third party, like some warped take on *Ready Player One*.

This situation is beyond what debt forgiveness on federal loans can provide. *Caveat emptor* may be an applicable phrase, but *caveat vendor* must be pursued and enforced.

*ASIFA Central Newsletter (cc) February, 2023, a quarterly-ish publication of ASIFA Central - see the updated website with more announcements **and an ever expanding newsletter archive** for ASIFA Central at - <https://asifa.org>*

ANIMATION UNITES US

***ASIFA Central On INSTAGRAM! Woot Woot!** Make sure to check our newly created Instagram account: <https://www.instagram.com/asifacentral/>*

ANIMATION UNITES US

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

ANIMATION UNITES US

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

ANIMATION UNITES US

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the hmb! typst and do not necessarily reflect the thoughts, opinions, or policies of anyone anywhere else, and especially at ASIFA Central, which is a completely volunteer-run, non-profit gathering of very busy and frantic members moving at 24fps on a slow day, where vacations are when you shoot on twos.

Press releases are always welcome! We encourage shameless self-promotion!

