



Ottawa
International
Animation
Festival

OIAF 50th Anniversary Poster Released

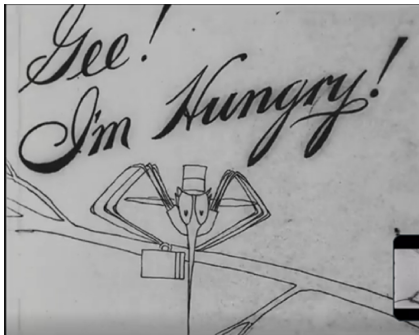
ASIFA Central Members to Receive Discounted Festival Passes

Active members by now should have received email notification of the discount code for purchasing festival passes from OIAF (their box office opened officially on June 1). If you have not received your code, drop jim.middletonrx@gmail.com a note and it'll be forwarded to you. Our membership list is on file at the OIAF, so if there is a problem with them finding you on their list, use the same email address and we'll work it out! The \$20 discount will be applied **with an additional "early bird" discount** if you dive in by July 28!



"The Ottawa International Animation Festival (OIAF), one of the world's leading animation events, runs from Sept 23 - 27, 2026. Experience the legendary event for yourself to get inspired by innovative animation from around the world, participate in special events, and make new connections in the animation industry."

A Moment of McCay - New Versions of "How a Mosquito Operates"



With so much Winsor McCay material having been discarded during his lifetime coupled with the lack of preservation after his passing in 1934, it is amazing that random scraps of his filmwork could still percolate into the public view. So it is with his second animated film, *How a Mosquito Operates* from 1912. A different print has emerged with extra brief segments or later-edited material still intact on reddit - perhaps more of *Gertie on Tour* is hiding, waiting to be rediscovered!

https://www.reddit.com/r/silentfilm/comments/1tlv1mr/previosly_unknown_footage_from_winsor_mccays_how/

(*How A Mosquito Operates* will be part of the ASIFA Central IAD showreel for this coming October)

*And, speaking of Winsor McCay, his biographer “**JOHN CANEMAKER IS BEING SEEN BY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EACH WEEK – IN A MOST UNUSUAL WAY**”*

The Museum of Modern Art is running a 15 second clip from John’s short *Bridgethampton* in the cavernous Moynihan Train Hall at Pennsylvania Station, NYC. It screens every 5 minutes as part of Penn Station’s MoMA at Moynihan. It is being screened on four huge screens and will be seen by thousands of commuters daily until the end of June.



<https://www.animationmagazine.net/2026/03/oscar-winning-director-animation-scholar-and-beloved-teacher-john-canemaker-takes-us-on-a-tour-of-his-animators-garden/>

(from ASIFA-SF newsletter)

Orrin Scott Uncovers an Update on LLCs for Artists



A new type of company designed for creative people is evolving in Colorado where artists keep majority control, intellectual property is protected by law, and the artistic mission comes first. Signed into law in June 2026, the *Artist Company Act* is the first of its kind in America — and the model in Colorado can serve for every state, giving artists the same protections as everyone else - ACORP (“Artist

Corporation”) in Colorado even comes with its own TED talk about the work by Kickstarter co-founder, Yancey Strickler, (10m30s). It seems we need more than the Creative Commons approach:

<https://youtu.be/iLhFAWKCE0M?si=EmjkGv8Hed6Be98S>

Dave Thrasher and the Challenges of Stop Motion Articulation

Just a little update from Mr Thrasher:

Rather than building a whole new figure from scratch, I’m thinking about removing material on the latest figure in areas where it needs to be flexible and filling in those areas with a flexible material. I’m thinking on one side using that Oogoo stuff I used on previous attempts. On the other side, I’m trying latex window caulk to see if that would work. I’ll report the results of that latest experiment next Coffee Zoom in July. (See more of Dave’s project at the end of this issue)

Release of Restored Fleischer Films - WHUT THE WHUT!!!!

The latest Blu-Ray from Classic Flix features 20 Fleischer releases from 1923-1941 in a meticulous restoration - so clear you can see the layers of ripped-and-torn paper cels in the silent films (notably *Ko Ko’s Earth Control*), 160 minutes of jaw-dropping wonder also featuring Betty Boop, Superman, and Popeye. Jane Fleischer Reid is among the producers of this single-disc Blu-Ray release. Commentary tracks include Mark Kausler, Leonard Maltin, and the inexhaustible Ray Pointer. You’ll want to look at these frame-by-frame.



International Updates - Shweta Marathe – Mumbai

From Shweta: Some life update, at IIT Bombay - over the past 5–6 months, I've been working with psychologists to design animated, compulsory pass/fail mental health modules for students during orientation, covering anxiety, depression, PTSD, pressures and suicide prevention. It's been a really meaningful, interesting experience. I'm also preparing applications for a Master's in animation / creative learning / education. I barely get time to work on my film project, but I squeeze it in whenever I can. Also, *Melting Shame* is shaping up as an animated experimental documentary, featuring interviews with three women sharing their experiences. I'm still editing the audio, but it already feels much more raw and authentic than the fictional direction I was initially heading in.



Shweta - from asifa.net

From Vivi Markatos - Great Britain

Update 18 May 2026 – *Among all else going on, she's now an educator!*



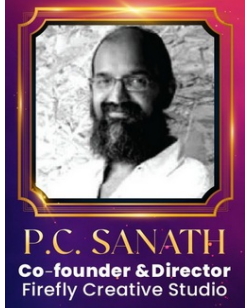
Vivi – Everyone's favorite teacher!

Our school time is crazy at the moment, but we have a small half term the end of the week (yay!). It's funny how most of the day I am out and about chasing students from one side of the building to the other, and then go back to their classes and make sure they don't break anything (today we had a fire alarm broken, and a window from a wooden and glass door!). I am quite tired at times – sometimes I find the bed calling me at 7 or 8pm. But, I was nominated by a colleague for being very artistic, mostly for the scaffolding and the creative activities I assign to students.

I also continue to work on my books and films. It's quite a bit to digest but I think I do well. I am always busy, learning about challenging disabilities, and I hope to help more kids and adults in the future through art. I think this is my calling, work through art with minorities and under-represented people and groups.

Yr hmb1 typst has an international tale to relate as well – by way of my physician in Edmore, Michigan, of all places. Turns out that my physician's father loaned money to one of his young friends in Hyderabad, India, and then further provided him space in the family garage to set up a computer terminal and teach himself 3D animation. Jump ahead twenty years, and this ambitious lad is now head of his own studio, Firefly, employing hundreds, providing CGI and character animation across India. I was given his email, and I dashed off a note, and after enough time to have forgotten I did it, I had a response appear just a week ago.





Here is a bit of what (P.C.) Sanath wrote:

We started Firefly to tell our stories to the world!! And we are still on that exciting journey, developing our own projects step by step with the money we can save from our VFX design, shooting supervision and post services for "Live action feature film projects," which have a very good market in India, supported by seasoned producers and distribution systems, unlike animation features.

We spoke of a mutual acquaintance, the late Bill Dennis, and the challenge of India finding its own stories to share amid its 350+ million in the country's cinephile middle class. He related: *Indian animation could never take off because of the "Outsourcing industry." VFX also face the threat of the money power of outsourcing work, but we continue to excel by making the live-action filmmakers dream bigger to tell their stories better, with unique visuals the world has not seen to expand their market. The story of "True Indian animation" is a topic I can talk about forever. I am really excited about the big potential great Bill mentioned and that is what keeps giving us the energy to survive in this volatile industry...there is always space for a true storyteller. In fact, it is a more exciting time ahead.*



Bill Dennis (1943-2023), founder of Toonz studios and ASIFA India

So remember, dear ASIFA clan, keep up with your annual physicals – you never know where it may lead!

New ASIFA chapters – Argentina, Canada rebuilding, Mongolia knocking at the door!



Paola Becco, ASIFA Argentina

From our ASIFA International Secretary, Agnes Li: I'd like to introduce a new contact for the ASIFA community, Paola Becco, who is going to establish a chapter in Argentina. Paola is a University Professor of Visual Arts (UNA), brings animation and documentary into her cinematic dialogue. She is the director and programmer of the SMOF Buenos Aires International Stop Motion Animation Festival and Co-director of the Juan Padrón Latin American and Caribbean Animation Forum (Cuba), and works as an advisor and tutor for animation projects.

Professor Becco is seeking support for the local festivals and will likely be joining in our monthly coffee gatherings soon. (Paola Becco paolabecco1@gmail.com)

James Murray from Canada and Nicole Altan from Mongolia continue to work with ASIFA International to re-establish or create new ASIFA Chapters in their respective countries.

“Animation unites us!”

**ITFS - INTERNATIONAL TRICK FILM
STUTTGART April 22 to May 2, 2026**

<https://itfs.de/en/home/>

(Edited from press release)

The 33rd Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film (ITFS), Germany's largest festival for animated film, began at the sold-out Gloria 1 cinema in Stuttgart's city center. Festival directors included Annegret Richter (managing director for ASIFA Germany) who welcomed 350 international guests from the worlds of politics and culture to kick off the festival week. "Stuttgart has, in a sense, become the Hollywood of animation," became the theme for the festival.

Due to high demand, the programmed blocks of the International Competition were repeated several times throughout the festival.

"The ITFS demonstrates just how powerful and relevant animation is today: we are noticing a return to traditional techniques, while new technologies are being critically examined. In terms of content, many films address the uncertainties of our time, exploring social tensions, dystopian realities and personal perspectives, often without offering any simple solutions," said Annegret of ASIFA.

Eleven prizes, totaling 60,000 Euros, were awarded, selected by international juries, a children's jury, and voting from the audiences.

Together with partnered events, the ITFS comprised Stuttgart Animated Week, which offered seven days full of inspiration and exchange, beginning with a keynote by director Reza Memari at the state reception in the White Hall of the New Palace.

And speaking of Reza Mimari, at the completion of ITFS, yr hmb1 typst also received this note:

*Annegret Richter was so kind to point me your way. I'm a member of ASIFA Germany and thought I'd reach out since my feature film **The Last Whale Singer** is about to come out theatrically on June 5. You can watch the US trailer here:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwIMQDSBjJU> *I wrote and directed the film, and am a co-founder of Telescope Animation –*

<http://www.telescopeanimation.com> *– the main producer in this production shared across Germany, Canada and the Czech Republic. The film has just been officially selected for the Annecy Presents program, which I still can't quite believe.*

As you know, small indie fish like us need all the support we can get to spread the word (even with a whale as the hero). So I was wondering whether there is a way for you guys to make members and the wider animation community aware of the film. And if that is even possible on such short notice, I'd be more than happy to do Zoom Q&As or whatever you think might help.

We don't know yet for sure how many theaters will book the film, but the distributor Viva is





Reza Memari, creator of The Last Whale Singer

planning on roughly 300–500 screens, so the release is "limited" but nationwide. You can find them on Insta here:

<https://www.instagram.com/vivakidsfilms/> I'd appreciate your support!

All the best, Reza Memari

<https://www.instagram.com/rezamemari/>

So look forward to a future Zoom coffee – or a special gathering of ASIFA Central online for a chat with Reza. I made the suggestion that he slip it into this year's OIAF, as they were at the time still accepting films. *The Last Whale Singer* is set for Canadian release on September 4.¹

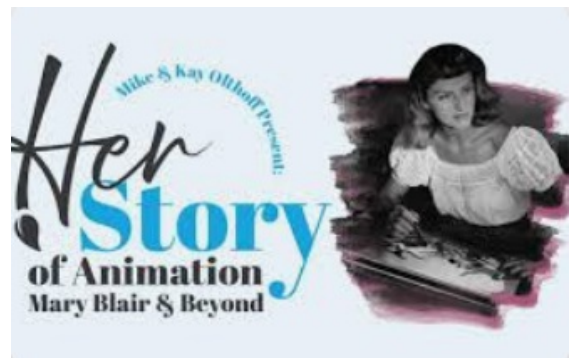
And a Random Reminder – ASIFA Central members will also be getting copies of the ASIFA SF (San Francisco) newsletter as part of your membership - and to join the ASIFA SF gang - FOR FREE drop Karl Cohen a note at karlcohen@earchlink.net

Suzanne Zack, indefatigable filmmaker and educator, reminds us of a MAJOR EVENT in – MUSKEGON!

“The HerStory of Animation”

(From the Muskegon Museum of Art)

The groundbreaking exhibition, *HerStory of Animation: Mary Blair & Beyond*, re-defines our collected animated past by revealing the story of unsung forces of animation: women. In a first-of-its-kind exhibition, women's contributions to the animated art form are explored from earliest pre-cinematic forms in ceramic narratives, shadow puppetry and magic lanterns, to a century of hand-drawn, stop motion, and experimental animation.



Throughout this landmark exhibition featuring animation production artwork, artifacts, ephemera and imagery, viewers will discover the origins of animation, explore various production processes from the dawn of the industry to the digital age, and experience the artistic advancements women developed to define some of animation's most memorable moments.

¹ There is a LOT of merchandising available across Europe for the film, but thanks to those lovely US tariffs, nothing can be slipped into our market. However, yr hmbly tpst, ever the subversive soul, will be keeping his eyes open at the OIAF in case there are some nuggets of glee at the Arts Court market looking for a new home.



Lotte Reiniger

Among the many women highlighted are Lotte Reiniger, the legendary animator/director of the earliest surviving animated feature film; Mary Blair, the beloved concept artist behind iconic Disney films such as Cinderella, Alice in Wonderland, and Peter Pan; Lillian Schwartz (who just passed away in 2024), the visionary artist who brought animation into the digital age; and the newly-discovered animator Bessie Mae Kelley, who worked for Bray, Fables, and Fleischer Studios, creating the earliest-surviving hand-drawn animated films directed by a woman.



Lillian Schwartz



Mindy Johnson, program curator

HerStory of Animation is curated by award-winning author, historian, filmmaker, and educator Mindy Johnson, who is a preeminent expert on women's roles in animation and film history. With support from leading museums, studios and private collections, this landmark exhibition runs from June 6 to September 27, 2026, at the Muskegon Museum of Art, honoring its continued dedication to women in the arts.



Bessie Mae Kelley

The William Moritz ASIFA Archives coming to ASIFA Central



Now THAT'S what I call an archival opportunity!!

Courtesy of CVM and Cindy Keefer, ASIFA newsletter material from the archives of the late, great William Moritz, Fischinger biographer and confidante of Elfreida Fischinger, will be headed to Michigan to incorporate into the mostly-catalogued boxes of other ASIFA archival material. Yr hmbl typst will be scanning the material to further share with the originating chapter(s) and make available to membership for research.

In addition, two volumes totaling 700 pages of ASIFA Central Newsletters are now available for at-cost purchase from Amazon *or free to download* at the Internet Archive (yes, yr hmbl typst is still working on the 50 year ASIFA Central history!).

<https://archive.org/details/volume-1-numbered-title-370pg-total-render>
<https://archive.org/details/2018-2025-ASIFA-newsletters-Volume-Two>

Quick Updates from Bill Plympton, Signe Baumane, and Chris Sullivan

Bill Plympton, independent animation legend and designer of the ASIFA 2024 IAD poster, was roasted for his 80th birthday during a 90-minute tribute at the School for Visual Arts by people he had worked with over his remarkable 45+ year career. There were humorous anecdotes, personal stories, and other kinds of good-natured comments that reflected on Plympton's lasting impact on the animation industry. They honored his creative vision that transformed a shy boy from Portland, Oregon into one of the most influential figures in independent animation (from June 2026 *ASIFA SF* newsletter). His latest feature, *Slide*, is a dialogue-free comedy western and took over seven years to complete.



The Set



Composite

Signe Baumane, reaching the half-way mark of her production schedule for her latest feature, *Karmic Knot*, and keynote for our 2024 ASIFA Central retreat, shared some of her production process for this issue, while recovering from a two-week bout of influenza (“My only vacation!”). Here we see the physical 3D set created by partner Sturgis Warner, the overlay sketch to guide the animation, and the final compositing image. The final product embraces the amazing depth of the 1930s Fleischer style, repurposed to Signe's unique vision.

<https://www.karmicknotmovie.com/support>



Overlay guide for animation



Kitchen set for another scene



From Chris' website - <https://orbitkickstart.com/>

Chris Sullivan has made several presentations to ASIFA Central as his second feature, *The Orbit of Minor Satellites* reached the final years of its creation, and now it is making its presence felt in the festival circuit. The film is a conversation across two parallel narratives, a psychiatrist office, and a Soviet-American Space station, examining the hallucinatory world of a patient's mind. The narrative unfolds during the period of healing, where the patient is ready to leave the care of her doctor, and both are negotiating this triumph, and this loss. One

of the more interesting credits in a feature film of this decade is that of Boris Karloff voicing “the buffalo.” *The Orbit of Minor Satellites* will have its world premier at the Annecy Animation festival, running June 21st to 27th. Chris writes, “I am so excited and a bit nervous. There are so many creative hands and minds in this film, and so many people who have supported its production. Let us raise a toast!”

The 68th Annual RIFF and Surviving the Canadian Bypasses to Achieve Pure Rochester, New York - yr hmb! typst, reporting
 Third Time's a Charm! - April 30- May 2, 2026
<https://rochesterfilmfest.org/>

In Rochester, New York, the name *Christopher Nolan* is spoken with a certain amount of soft reverence. His features *Oppenheimer* and *The Odyssey* were hugely responsible for the reactivation of several divisions of the nearly obliterated Kodak campus to create the film stock for those productions. In fact, the first shipment of film stock for *The Odyssey* was itself inadvertently destroyed before it could even be used to shoot scenes in Morocco. Customs agents too young to comprehend the concept of actual film opened all the unexposed, sealed cans for inspection, and in so doing, ruined every inch of the 70mm film before it could even be loaded into the cameras. Kodak rushed to replace it, making sure it was accompanied by physical representatives from Rochester to prevent this disaster in a second delivery to northern Africa.



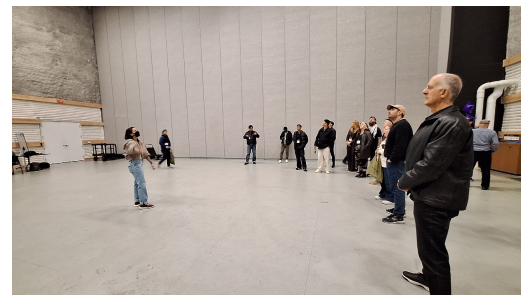
Local expressions



Garden, Eastman Museum

Rochester remains home to the Rochester International Film Festival, a volunteer run celebration with many ties to Kodak and the history of Rochester, and for three days the Dryden Theatre at George Eastman Museum hosts dozens of international filmmakers. Animation is not its focus, but animation does appear among its showings, and there is a cosy relationship between the staff and the nearby Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), where animation is prominent, valued, and sets the standards for future commercial and independent filmmakers.

Filmmakers who have their films selected not only get well - ok, *overfed* - but get to tour the vibrant, if condensed Kodak sites, the Eastman Archives (oh yeah, Louise Brooks' spirit still tickles her way around those cooled chambers), and area production sites bringing film crews to western New York state. This year brought filmmakers from England, Hungary, South Korea, Germany, Spain, Japan, Canada, India, Australia, Sweden, and the US – including a little voice from the middle of Edmore, Michigan.



Three-fourths of a soundstage at RIT, four-fourths of Jeff Gendleman in the foreground

This was my third time being invited, and beyond being fully flattered, I found myself navigating the streets of Rochester nearly as well as I can track through the serpentine curves of Grand Rapids. The hosts were beyond gracious, everyone LOVED movies, the audience was



Barely 10% of raw film stock compared to Kodak's peak years (it used to go floor to ceiling)

appreciative, enthusiastic, and the ability to have low-key, unpressured conversations with other filmmakers was conducive to creating long and lasting friendships. It has only been a few weeks since the festival and I would run back in a hot minute, even braving the traffic along my shortcut path through Ontario and the 403 – oh gods, the 403 and the Queen Elizabeth Way – never do it during a rush hour (the entire population of St Catherine's seems to migrate to Mississauga with the challenge of construction cones taking on a life of their own).

The films were all 20 minutes or less, and they chose my *Flute Solo*, remixed into *Sfumatoscope* as a faux-triptych to wedge between some very intense dramatic, surreal works of stunning sophistication. The one other completely animated work, *Look Out*, by the breathless Brian Carroll (carroll@lobsterback.com) depicted a neighborhood battle, not among the residents, but among the *signs* warning of the dangers there – which then face off with each other in escalating levels of wildly colored, noisy paranoia. Brian is a natural comedian and a tightly wound instrument of enthusiasm and creativity.



Jeff Gendleman, Chris Hirschhaeuser, Glória Halász, Mauricio Osaki, and Tej Sisodia

But Brian wasn't the only intersection to celebrate - *The Big Everything* was a one-reeler of existential self-examination among bar regulars who turn out to be interchangeable characters in an infinite loop of relived experiences, and "God" turns out to be *Bradley Whitford*. The producer for the film, Jeff Gendleman, played the bartender and is familiar with the Michigan area and creating projects, such as the indie feature *The Surface*.

Jack Auger and his partner Hope tore into male dominance with *Bright Future*, Hae-oh Park sheared ageism in Korea against those who provide rides to those too drunk or tired (the over 60 female character blended poignance with her frustration with ignorant youth), Pep Stojanovic teased some rough animation in a documentary of fans of the *Zastava 750* – a car we call *the Yugo* (toy cars were shown crashing off a broken bridge at one point), and a JD grad who decided better audiences than juries can exist for his *Conditions of Release* because, well, he knew Eric Roberts.

And another filmmaker turned from the law to documentaries – Gloria Halasz, with her focus on her native Hungary, whether it was based on TV clowns becoming physicians (the inverse of Patch Adams), a 100 member gypsy orchestra, circus performers blending Cirque du Soleil with Jacques Tati, dancers stretching themselves into tortured pretzels for our entertainment – all with a personal investment, familial affections, and a gentle, compassionate eye – her short films seem

to lay the groundwork for greater achievements, and her *Paravan* was a tight pairing of puppeteers performing for a group in the middle of a bombardment of some kind, an everyman's experience of finding comfort under ground, under siege, where one's next breath is a hypothetical.

And documentaries came close to home, but by way of Great Britain. Sarah Flower, a medieval history researcher (*Dictionary of British Arms*) and actress in London, created the short film *Finding the Chickasaw*, hoping to expand it to a feature about treaties and backgrounds she discovered in UK libraries, discovering documents discarded by the colonies when they became the United States. First Nations tribes are discovering the details about their pre-1775 agreements, locations, and populations through her diligent research, and what this film's expanded research may yet reveal. Her calm, studied voice was among the many moments of sincere self expression that the films at RIFF shared.



Sarah Flower - from *We Chose to Go*



Sandra Sluberski, working the vocals! (From SBS worx LLC site)

And speaking of voices, RIT did have its own animation showings going on during RIFF, with Dave Sluberski moving between the school and the festival, and his wife Sandra sharing her training in vocal work and how to use the science of sound and facilitate a "sound bath," both for film work and one's own personal well-being. She also raises Silkies and



Silkies!

Bantam Cochins, and can tell the difference between winter eggs and summer eggs *and oh are those chickens adorable.*



Dave Sluberski, rather adorable, too

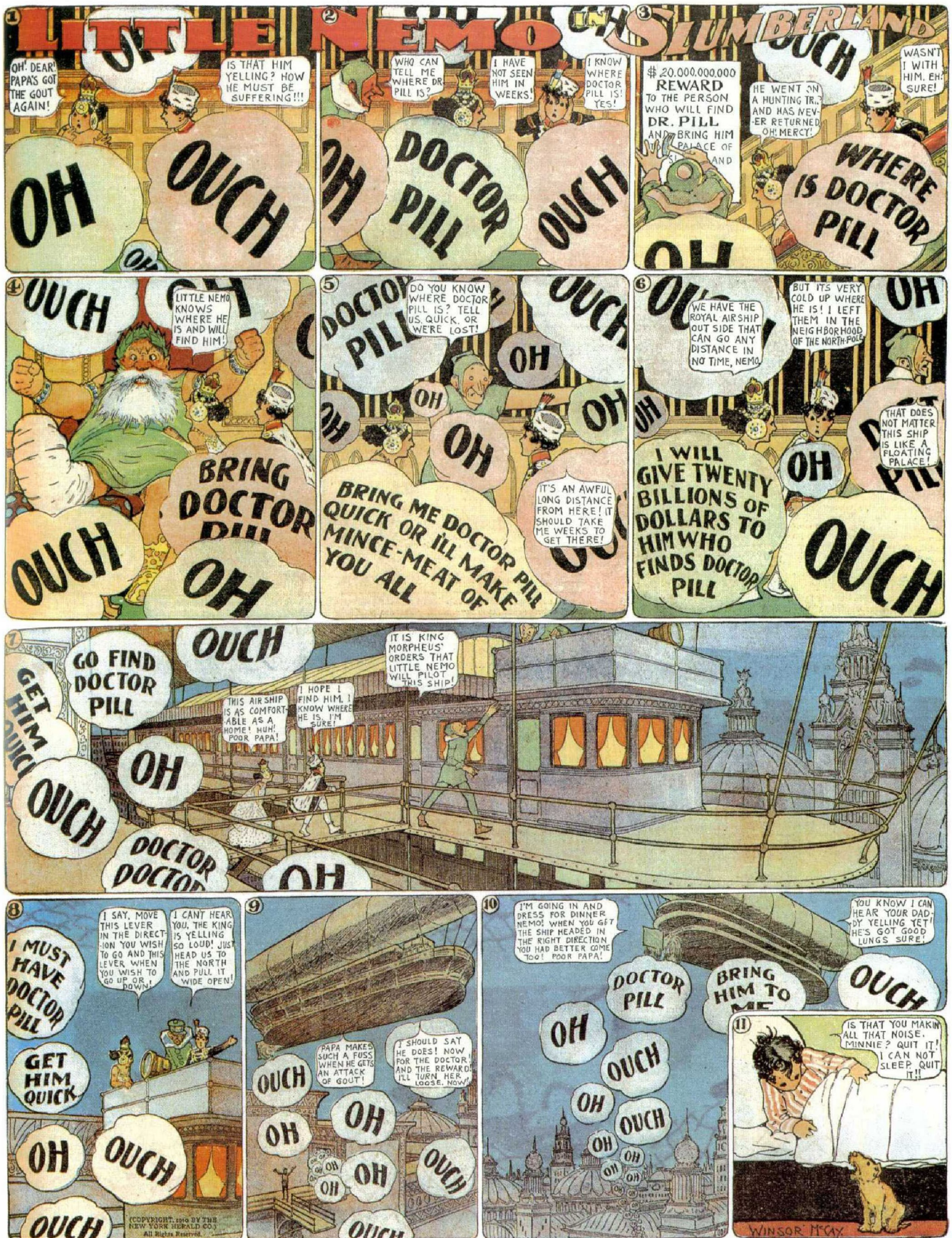
This was, as I mentioned, my third time in three years to be invited to RIFF. If there's a fourth, I'll certainly have to step up my wardrobe! Or move to Rochester! Now to the storyboards!



Summer house - Keep buying those lottery tickets, Jimmy!



Our new (adopted!) family: Jack Auger, Hope, and Brian Carroll



The Search For Inexpensive Stop Motion Figures or Posable Maquettes

I stumbled across a video on YouTube where a scene from “The Shining” was being recreated as a polymer clay sculpture. It was the scene where the Jack Nicholson character was chopping through a door with a terrified Shelly Duvall character on the other side. But instead of the live action character, the character was Olive Oyl, another role that she played in another movie.

Here is the link to that video if you want to view it:

The Shining? Olive Oyl?

https://youtu.be/DCsLW7Fn-QQ?si=3LAXgXxzLHXLo_Om

As I was watching how the clay was being applied to the wire armature, it occurred to me that if a clay-like material could be found that would cure into something like rubber or latex, the same technique could be used to create inexpensive posable figures for stop motion animation. Thinking about it more it also occurred to me that posable maquettes could also be made for reference while animating.

Maquettes have been used at Disney for the animators but they have always been rigid sculptures and I thought if arms and legs could be bent to be posed you could experiment with poses to find the right one.

Here are two examples of maquettes that were used at Disney:



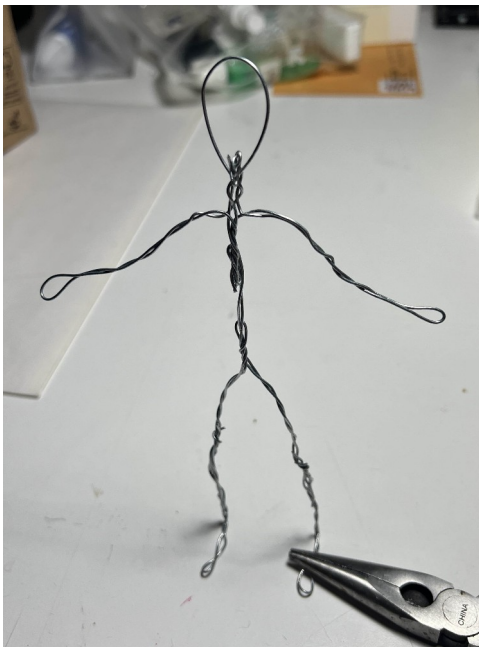
I wanted to search for some material that would be inexpensive, that just about anyone could afford. Being able to make a posable figure for less than \$20 to \$30 was ideal. Most of the time I had seen supplies that professional stop motion animation studios used, the materials were quite expensive and often involved having expensive equipment to do the work. Most people, especially students, can't afford ball and socket armatures or machines for casting figures. I wanted to find a way to use inexpensive twisted wire armatures to do the posing.

I did a search on DuckDuckGo for materials you could work like clay but would cure like rubber. The thing that came up was a material called “Oogoo”.

It was one part silicone caulk to one part cornstarch. The caulk had to not be the Type II variety because it cured differently. Silicone caulk cures from moisture in the air and thus cures from the outside to the inside. The problem with that is that if it were very thick it would take a really long time for the inside to fully cure. The solution presented with the Oogoo material was to introduce cornstarch into it. Cornstarch absorbs tiny amounts of moisture and, when mixed with the silicone in the caulk, makes it cure more evenly so you don't end up with a gooey center.

Experiment #1

My first experiment was simply applying the Oogoo mixture to a wire armature to see how well the process went. There is a very limited working time with the material before it is no longer workable – approximately 10 minutes.



I ran into problems right away. I was trying to mix the caulk into the cornstarch and it was difficult to get to mix evenly. The consistency seems closer to somewhat dry pie dough than to clay and it was hard to keep it sticking together, and in some spots it was too sticky. It definitely didn't lend itself to sculpting details. It seemed more like a race against time just to get anything at all.

I showed the results at our monthly ASIFA Central Coffee Zoom meeting. Many places cracked when you bent them but one of the arms flexed without breaking, leading me to believe this material still had a chance.

I decided to try again and show the results at the next Coffee Zoom.

Experiment #2

Thinking that the way I mixed the Oogoo was the problem, I decided this time I would gradually add the cornstarch to the silicone caulk as I mixed it to attempt to make it a more even mixture.

I also decided to add some refinements. Because there are some sections of a figure you don't want to bend (head, upper arms, lower arms, thighs, shins) I decided to use an epoxy clay that I had used for another project for this purposed. The clay sells under the brand name Milliput. It has two parts and you mix the amount you want by kneading the parts together until evenly mixed. It can then be worked like regular clay. It cures in a day so there is plenty of time to work it. It is rigid after it cures.



I used the Milliput to form the “bones” of the figure, trying to take care that I left enough wire in between so that there was enough for the bends.



David Thrasher's Special Addendum to the June 2026 ASIFA Central Newsletter

For the feet, which the Milliput helped attach to the rest of the armature, I used pieces of popsicle stick with holes drilled in them, over which nuts were hot melt glued over. This would allow you to attach a foot to the floor of your scene, if using it as a stop motion figure, or simply attach it to a platform for posing.



Once the nuts were in place I could but out the pieces for the bottoms of the feet and use the Milliput to attach them to the rest of the armature.

The figure with the Oogoo added has a similar lumpiness to the figure in the first experiment. It was hard to tell if the results were any better. Cracks still happened in places, particularly where the arm joined the shoulder.



Experiment #3

With the crude results of the Oogoo I was coming to the conclusion that it was not much good for sculpting a figure. With proper mixing it might work for covering the joints but that was just about it. I pursued a different line of thought as to material. What if there were some clay that could be baked to cure that would end up like rubber or latex. A search brought up a modified polymer clay with the brand name “CosClay” which seemed promising.



The packaging made it seem like I might have found something that would work. The front of the box trumpeted, “The fantastic flexible plastic”.

Cosclay® is a specialized, hybrid, plastic/rubber polymer clay that will retain flexibility after curing. Unlike other polymer clays, Cosclay's unique flexibility imparts a durable and resilient quality that is suitable for endless applications. This includes stop-motion characters, posable figures and much, much more!

The possibilities are truly endless!

ALSO AVAILABLE: COSCLAY DOLL & COSCLAY SCULPT

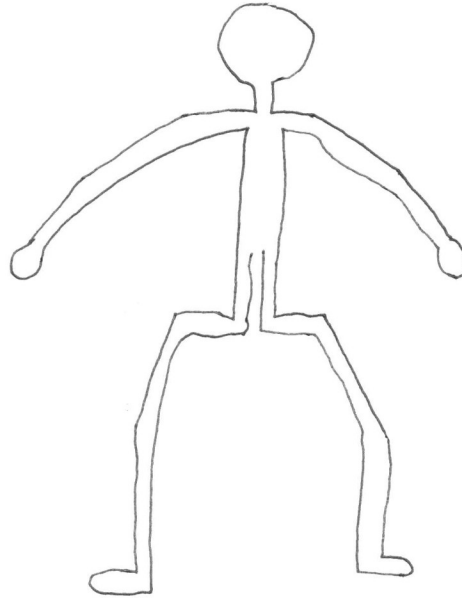
The back of the box made it seem especially promising. It said it would “retain flexibility after curing” and that it was suitable for applications including “stop-motion characters, posable figures”.

One thing for sure was that it would allow a much longer working time to sculpt details on a figure, since it was workable until it was baked.

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I started with the armature like with the other figures, this time doubling the wire in case the thickness of the limbs offered more resistance to the bend. I tried to make sure there was enough wire so that it would be continuous, as having to add sections later offered difficulties in keeping them joined properly.

Here's a rough drawing of how the wire would be formed to make it continuous:



The wire would be doubled over into equal sections for each half of the figure. The loop that forms at the top would be for the head. The section you would twist below that would be for the neck.

From there the wire sections would go out to include the shoulders and arms with it doubling back at the hands to return to the spine. Where the wire from the two arm sections meet, the wire would be twisted down to where the hips would come out and those two sections would extend past the hips through the legs and to the foot before turning back to the spine. Extra wire would be included with the spine.

Measuring how much wire involved making a drawing of the character at the size it is going to be and then overlaying where the armature would go.

You can figure out the total like this:

Start by figuring one half of the figure.

- Measure from the top of the head to the bottom of the neck, allowing some extra for the loop for the head. (Measurement #1)
- Measure from the neck to the end of the hand loop and double that so that the return to the spine included. (Measurement #2)
- Measure from the bottom of the neck to where the hips will extend (Measurement #3)

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- Measure from the spine to where the end of the foot loop would be and double that to account for the return to the spine. Add another inch or two to account for error. (Measurement #4)

Add up measurements #1, #2, #3, and #4 and double the total to include the other half of the figure and you'll know how much length of wire you will need.

As you are twisting and forming the sections, be sure to check it closely with your character drawing to make sure the sections match and you have enough armature for the particular part of the body. I made a mistake on this third experiment and ending up having to add more wire to the feet sections.

Here's the character drawing I started with:



I formed an armature like in experiment #2 with Milliput "bones"



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Because of the nature of the CosClay material I had much more time to sculpt the figure and form a more polished figure:



The figure was baked in the oven at 250° F for 30 minutes as per the instructions on the package.

Unfortunately the material did not live up to the promises:



The material turned out to be brittle and not the flexible rubber-like material that the package promised.

David Thrasher's Special Addendum to the June 2026 ASIFA Central Newsletter

It looks like it will be back to the drawing board.

A material mentioned at the last ASIFA Central Coffee was latex. It looks like it might be more expensive than the materials I've tried so far and might be a liquid you would have to apply in layers rather than a clay you could sculpt. I did do a little more looking and found that there is a latex caulk for windows which maybe has possibilities. I would guess that you'd have to use something rigid like Milliput for the detailed areas of a figure that don't bend and fill in the gaps with either Oogoo or something like this latex caulk and then paint the whole figure to hide the differences in material.

I'm not sure what's next but that is where things are right now.

-Dave