Animation Gets Flashy
by Randy Rockafellow

Delivery of animation over the web in large part is all about smaller file sizes. With advent of the Flash File format (.swf), this has given animation the ability to reach the sweet spot in overall file size by using vector graphics. Plus Flash can be used to create interactive graphics like a graphical interface, or choose your adventure style movie.

My initial experience with creating flash was brief. I had toyed around with Macromedia Flash 4.0, but hadn’t pursued it any further. After seeing Stan Lee’s “7th Portal”, a Flash style animated comic book; I began to look at flash a lot more seriously. I decided to spend some time surfing the web for other websites creating high quality flash animations that would further inspire me. Read my listed net resources for flash animation sites to visit.

The flash animation that I quickly created resulted from an exchange of project ideas from ASIFA/Central member T.L. Champion. Her idea was penned in a comic book style and because of “7th Portal” I saw immediate flash potential. With Flash you can surplant text bubbles in favor of actual sound effects and dialogue. So speaking into my 8mm camcorder I recorded the dialogue. Then digitized that into laptop using my input audio jacks and the audio recorder program that comes with windows 98. The next steps were to import the .wav or .mp3 audio file into Flash 4.0 and start making my drawings. After adjusting my images along the timeline I published a Flash file that was ready to be dropped into an html page. See my resulting animation at www.asifa.org/animate.

As of this writing there are a number of tools to create your own flash animation files. To create and string together multiple flash files you’ll want to get either Macromedia’s Flash 4.0 or the recently released Adobe Livemotion. Flash 4.0 is more powerful in its ability to create interactive experiences while Livemotion uses Adobe’s familiar toolset to get users up and running quickly. They both work from the principle of drawing a series of two dimensional shapes or otherwise known as vector graphics. Flash files can also be created using a 3D animation program. A plug-in called Illustrate 4.1 allows 3D Studio max users render their animation out to a flash file. Two stand-alone 3D products are Vecta3D and Swift3D. Read more in-depth on the capabilities of these programs from their respective websites listed in the net resources below.

Net Resources:
StanLee.net
AtomFilms.com
Icebox.com
Shockwave.com
Nosepilot.com
JoeCartoon.com
Wildbrain.com

World Internet Animation Celebration winners:
http://wiac.shockwave.com/pro

Report From ZAGREB
by Deanna Morse

This was the first time I attended the ZAGREB International Film Festival, although I had a film screened there several years ago. This was their 14th festival, held in Zagreb, Croatia, June 21 through 25th. From my experience now, I have two pieces of advice for animators:
1) Enter your films in the Zagreb festival.
2) Go to Zagreb for the festival.

Prior to going, I had some concern about traveling to Croatia. On the American news, all we hear about are the bombing and the political difficulties. But, as a tourist in the Northern region of Croatia, this was not my experience at all.

Inside this Issue
Animation Gets Flashy
ZAGREB International Film Festival
Letter from the President
and much more ...

I traveled with a friend, and we vacationed on the Istrian Peninsula for a week prior to the festival. We rented a car, and drove from the airport to the Adriatic sea, considered by many to be the most beautiful coastline in the world. Shortly after we picked this destination, the NY Times Travel Section touted “Get there before the crowds return!”, considering the area has long been known to the Italian and German tourists. We stayed near the resort town of Rovinj, an egg shaped fortress island which is now connected to the mainland. Walking through the narrow cobblestone meandering streets, I felt like I had stepped back centuries in time. Of course, there are always the
Letter from the Editor by Jennifer Eldred

Starting with the Fall edition I will be featuring a Members Spotlight section in the newsletter each quarter. In it I would like to include short tid-bits on all ASIFA/Central members. So drop me a line and let me know what you've been up to. Have you recently completed a project, schooling, or been given recognition for your work? If so, or if you have other news, please submit it to me at eldredj@usa.net. Contributing to such columns helps all members stay connected in between our annual conference, and I want to stress that ASIFA/Central is here for you year round. Plus personally, I want to know who you are, what you've been up to and how ASIFA/Central can feature you and your talent to our animation community.

If you would like to contribute to the column, please find the deadline for submission below.

Thanks to all the contributing writers who help keep ASIFA/Central members informed and connected throughout the year.

I look forward to hearing from you.

-Jennifer Eldred

The deadline for the Fall Edition of Frame by Frame is October 1, 2000.

Letter from the President by Randy Rockafellow

It's the middle of the summer. A summer that has already seen plenty of animation films hit the big screen. I've seen Dinosaur, Chicken Run, and Titan A.E. Before the summers out I'll probably see the X-men the Movie. If you only see one animated film this summer see Dinosaur. Where Phantom Menace was all about eye-popping animation and effects; Dinosaur is all about the subtle less noticeable animated details. Which as an animator you watch them in pure delight and amazement.

For this newsletter I wrote about animation on a slightly smaller screen. I'm talking about animating for web using Flash. Read my article to learn about Flash sites of interest and the tools to start creating your own Flash animations.

On the what has your president done lately for ASIFA/Central front; I've secured our Domain name registration for the next five years. Wahoo! So ASIFA/Central will stay right at ASIFA.ORG.

Til next newsletter,

Randall Rockafellow
President, ASIFA/Central
rrockafellow2@juno.com

New Free Collectors News & Service Site

www.antiquecast.com is a new free collectors news and service site designed to help collectors and dealers keep abreast of the latest market trends in their field of interest.

Check out the real time price guide and enter the Flintstone's Animation Cel Contest on the site.

If you have a web page, add your free link to "Antique Row". Using the following html code:

```
<ahref="http://www.antiquecast.com/index.html">antiquecast.com
```

Rei Kacinskas
rei@antiquecast.com

ASIFA/Central Mission Statement

ASIFA: Association Internationale du Film d'Animation

The purpose of ASIFA/Central is to promote the art of animation locally and internationally and to promote communication among animators and between animators and devotees. - adopted 3/92

ASIFA/Central Volunteers and Project Leaders

Newsletter Designer/Editor & Vice President
Jennifer Eldred, eldredj@usa.net

President Webmaster
Randall Rockafellow
rrockafellow2@juno.com

Treasurer
Deanna Morse, morsed@gvsu.edu

Conference Chair 2001
Melissa Bouwman, jezobell@hotmail.com

Membership Coordinator
Tom Brierton
stopmotion@aol.com

Reel Coordinator
Jim Schaub, jimschaub@aol.com

Storyboard Contest
Mary Lou Haynes, morgpk@aol.com

Web site Design:
Rita Dobias, rawd@hotmail.com

Web site:
http://www.asifa.org/animate

E-mail: asifa@asifa.org

ASIFA/Central Conference:
April 27 - April 29, 2001

To contribute or volunteer contact:
Randy Rockafellow
E-mail: rrockafellow2@juno.com

To join ASIFA/Central:
Send a check (payable in US dollars to ASIFA/Central) to the address on the back of this newsletter.

Printed in the U.S.A on recycled paper.
Zagreb (Morse) continued from 1
always the contemporary contrasts. For instance, many of the aged orange tiled roofs were decorated with satellite dishes. Nearby, in Pula, was a working amphitheater built in the first century, one of the best preserved in Europe. (Our guidebook described how the walls had witnessed all manners of horrors, from gladiator matches to Bryan Adams concerts...) The food was great: Italian inspired, with regional dishes. Traveling was easy. People were friendly. I heartily recommend this trip, and will be glad to offer more information to others considering this journey.

But, on to the Festival! Zagreb, considered the ideal city of the 19th century, is a perfect location for this festival. Full of museums, beautiful architecture, cultural landmarks, and a great old cemetery, it is laid out on a grid and is easy to negotiate. The festival hotel, The Intercontinental, was posh, and comfortable, with a lavish breakfast buffet and a swimming pool.

It was far more pricey than the rest of Croatia, but since the festival offers free housing and meals for filmmakers whose films are in competition, it was a luxurious gift to the filmmakers.

The festival was held in a modern auditorium which was five tram stops, or about a twenty minute walk, from the hotel. The big concert hall was nearly full, and the audience was lively and receptive. The programs started on time, and the projection was generally good, except that the video images were not as large as the film projection. There were competition programs, panorama showings, a special retrospective tribute and exhibit of Jan Svankmajer, and retrospectives of Indian, Israeli, Spanish and Croatian animated films. There was also a screening of films from the ASIFA Archives, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of ASIFA.

There was a filmmakers' picnic mid-week, which gave a chance for the filmmakers to connect with each other, eat some local fare, and do a little horseback riding. Unfortunately, it was miserably and unseasonably hot for the first few days of the festival, including the picnic day. But then the weather shifted, and it was back to normal for June. Later in the week, I spent several hours just walking around the city, enjoying the weather and appreciating the architecture. At each corner, there were surprising elements: the public buildings were impressive, with columns, gargoyles, statues, and on another block, there were beautiful Art Nouveau tiled houses. It was a fabulous city to explore on foot.

There were 586 films entered in this year's festival. Of that number, 55 were selected for Competition, and 37 for the Panorama. In my opinion, to have one film in ten selected - these are not bad odds. Watch for the Zagreb 2002 deadline. And if your film is selected, or even if it isn't, consider attending this important and longstanding European Animation festival!

The ZAGREB 2000 winners:
Grand Prize:
When the Day Breaks, Wendy Tilby and Amanda-Forbis, Canada
Best in Categories:
Festival/La Sagra, Roberto Catani, Italy
Whatever It Takes, Joanna Quinn, USA
At The End of the Earth, Konstantin Bronzit, France
Village of Idiots, Eugene Fedorenko and Rose Newlove, Canada
The Old Man and The Sea, Alexander Petrov, Canada
Ring of Fire, Andreas Hykaede, Germany
The Periwig Maker, Steffen Shaffler, Germany

Deanna Morse is an animator and Professor at Grand Valley State University in Michigan.

Randy has been busy freelancing his animation talents. Before too long he'll be once again teaching a couple of intro to 3D animation courses at Center for Creative Studies in Detroit, MI. Contact him at rrockafellow2@juno.com
The Idea
Back in the days before Dilbert and the Far Side, office workers used to xerox and pass around full-page cartoons describing life in the rat race. My personal favorite was a fish swimming in a blender, screaming about how "he couldn't handle the stress!" Years later, when I was looking for a simple animation idea to help me learn the latest versions of Macromedia Flash and Director, I thought, eh, why not?

The Story
The final animation is a simple one-gag story. As I looked at expanding the idea from one picture into a full ninety-second animation, the cast had to grow from one fish into three fish. I decided that there would be two bored fish and only one stressed fish. The whole gag revolves around how the stressed fish awaits his impending doom while the two bored fish seem oblivious of the fact that they're in a blender.

During the animation, the shots never quite reveal the precarious predicament that all three fish are in. However, a relationship is drawn between the stressed fish and a clock on the wall. As the clock gets closer to 12 noon, the stressed fish gets more nervous. Finally, the clock strikes 12 and the stressed fish snaps. He screams then goes back to trembling. After he screams, the bored fish look at him, then they edge away from him to the opposite sides of the tank.

The final shots before the credits roll are of the three fish as we track out and see that they're swimming in a blender that is resting on a kitchen counter. After the credits roll, I finish the animation with one last poke at the fish. The two bored fish look off-screen and say "oh." The last shot is of a cat standing in front of the blender getting ready to hit the puree button. Cut to black.

Initial character sketches
Other than the fact that I added tail fins, the stressed fish hasn't changed much from the initial design.

Character Concept Sketch: Bored Fish

Final Character Design: Bored Fish

However, I had to change the bored fish. When I designed him, he had two pectoral fins. Unfortunately, the pectoral fins just didn't look good. They ended up taking too much space on either side of the bored fish's body. And when I animated the fins, they ended up looking like big, floppy ears. The fin on the right side made it hard to see the gill and the fin on the left side looked like it was coming out of the fish's mouth. A command decision was made and the pectoral fins had to go.

Character Concept Sketch: Stressed Fish

Final Character Design: Stressed Fish

In this animation, the fish need to be at different sizes, depending on the shot, so several more command decisions were made. If I had gone for detail and drawn or texture mapped scales on the fish, it would have created far too much noise and pixellation when enlarging or shrinking the character models. If I had tried to use too many colors, I might have run into color banding. By removing the pectoral fins, having no visible scales, and keeping the color scheme down to a couple of solid colors, the fish look clean and sharp no matter what resolution they are displayed at.

Where I'm at right now
At the time of this article, all the character models have been created, the soundtrack is finished, and the sets are being designed and modeled. According to my current timetable, I expect to have Stressed finished just in time to bring with me to this year's Ottawa International...
**An Stressed Animation (Wilson) continued from 4**

Charles Wilson is an independent animator and the president/lead animator of Smudge Animation, located in Bath, Michigan. In 1997, Charles graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology's Film/Video department where he earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in Computer Animation. Since then, he has worked as a web designer/programmer also doing freelance multimedia projects until the summer of 2000 when he created Stressed Animation. Stressed is his first animation created through Smudge Animation. He can be reached at Smudge_Anim@yahoo.com and his work can be viewed at www.geocities.com/Smudge_Anim.

In our next newsletter, I'll be discussing my animation process as well as some things I learned about Flash and Director that made animating this story a lot easier.

---

**Festival Revue & Worldart.com**

I am writing to request show reels of animations for broadcast on both Festival Revue & Worldart.com TV which is currently under development and aims to broadcast 24 Hrs, 365 days a year.

Festival Revue was founded in 1998 and is the single largest addition to the Edinburgh Festival since its inception fifty-four years ago. One of its greatest achievements has been to extend the festival's founders' 'ideal surroundings' to a global audience. In addition to the 1.1 million people who visited the Festival Revue stage, over 5 million people in 85 different countries visited its website. In 1999 Festival Revue attracted a further 1.5 million viewers when it broadcast live to a giant screen in London's Covent Garden Piazza. This year we are looking to expand to New York City.

**What we are looking for**

Festival Revue & Worldart.com are dedicated to broadcasting live content of the world's art festivals to art lovers across the globe. We are also looking for high quality works - short films, video art, footage from degree/fashion shows - material that will look visually stunning on giant video screens and the internet.

We are looking to you because Festival Revue & Worldart.com believe that the undiscovered and original talent of your students deserves greater exposure and that the Edinburgh Festival, renowned for its innovation and quality, provides the perfect forum. But we can only achieve this with your help.

Primarily, we are looking for submissions in the form of a showreel (i.e. individual student works separated by your institutions logo) that we can broadcast live during the Edinburgh Festival and beyond. This will promote and recognise the importance of your institution in the continued development of the arts. However, individual pieces are acceptable for submission.

**Specifications**

Provided on broadcast quality format (preferably BETA SP, DVC or DVD but SVHS will also be accepted). All works must have Copyright clearance for any material used within the work that is not of their own making. All work should be submitted clearly labeled with name, address and contact number, together with a self-addressed envelope and a brief description of your work summarising its content.

**All submissions should be sent to:**

For further information contact in the first instance:-

FAO: Jasper Kynaston
Festival Revue festivalrevue@totalise.co.uk
PO Box 23332 fax no. 0131 248 2034
Edinburgh
EH8 8WU
SCOTLAND

This is a tremendous opportunity for your institution and students to participate in the world's largest arts broadcast. However, our request for submissions does not stop at this year's broadcast. We will be looking for submissions throughout the year, so if you have any pieces of work in the future please send them to us.

Additionally, any work submitted will be considered for the Worldart.com TV broadcast, giving your work the possibility of further worldwide exposure.

Thanks for your assistance.

Ian Murray
Production/Operations Manager
Worldart.com Ltd.

---

Spring 2000 5
Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design’s New Animation Program

About Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design (RMCAD)
Location: Denver, Colorado
Founded: 1963 by Philip J. Steele.
Offers BFA degrees in the following: Graphic Design and Interactive Media, Illustration, Painting, Sculpture, Interior Design, and a new program in Animation.
Enrollment: Averages 400 students.
Emphasizes: Vision, creativity, innovation, leadership, conceptual thinking, and technical expertise. RMCAD is proud of its faculty of artists and designers who share their professional expertise with students.

Animation Program Mission Statement
There is only one truly interdisciplinary visual art that merges all the genres into one medium able to evolve in motion unbounded by time, reality or physical laws. It blends art, writing, storytelling, drawing, design, sculpture, acting, filmmaking, art direction and film directing into the wondrous art of "animation".

At the very core of the Animation Arts Department is our desire to balance the intellectual and the critical aspects of visual communication and art with professional production attitudes required in the real world.

Drawn animation - Artists explore the metamorphic powers of bringing to life the purest of lines or most alien of visions. Within a two-dimensional plane, they learn to inject meaning and purpose into evolving storytelling, thus communicating impressions aimed at inspiring the audience.

Stop motion - Students explore the exciting potential of injecting life into miniature worlds of their design and creation. While studying qualities of depth, texture, motion within space, evoking mood via light and shadow within the expanse of a dimensional model, animators bestow life onto their microcosms.

Clay animation - The world of clay, which merges the metamorphic skill of drawn animation with the spatial qualities of stop motion. Clay's pliability offers students a rare ability to enhance one's vision via a use of this metamorphic, sculptural, organic, textural and tactual animation medium. After working on their personal projects, students are teamed on group projects teaching collaboration, division of production responsibilities and ability to handle a wide range of professional, studio like tasks.

Computer animation - Primed, a student is ready to enter the digital realm of computer animation. "CGI" is the future and all artists owe themselves a digital experience. We strive to insure that this grand technology does not eclipse either concepts or creativity for computer animation must merge the creative, ethereal and mystical with the pragmatic and technical. Our expert faculty is proficient in both: the software and hardware as well as the art of computer animation. Their aim is to enable students to reach out beyond that which is obvious, limited or restricted by the physical reality.

We focus on the evolution of concept, synopses, storytelling, storyboarding, character and environments design, development of personality, acting, choreography, art and animation directing, and production. We insure that students learn to be conscientious about the ways they schedule, present and produce their assignments.

Ours is a multiple task. We offer a refuge for students avid to learn about their creativity, teach low and high-tech tools enabling them to bring ideas to life and balance artistic creativity with technology to evolve animation artists able to convey original ideas and handle all stages of the production processes.

Creative Lab
Within a three-year time span, RMCAD intends to develop "The Creative Lab" in conjunction with its new Animation program.

The "Creative Lab" is a unique concept merging the worlds of advanced art education with the innovative design atelier, encompassing an entire spectrum of communication, visual arts, and a production studio aimed at the development of original projects, programming and intellectual properties for all forms of entertainment, television, theme park or game industries. By drawing upon the best of both worlds - the creative raw talent of young artists, shaped by RMCAD's undergraduate learning and its highly experienced faculty, comprised of the independent art practitioners, the "Creative Lab" merges the wild, fresh ideas of the new and eager to be tested with the battle tested experience, creative guidance and professionalism. This truly unique amalgamation is aimed at addressing diverse, innovative, educational, creative and production challenges of the ever-evolving entertainment and medium industries as well as the advancement of our college into an ever challenging and farther-reaching future.

The intent of a majority of RMCAD's undergraduate students is to develop the essential artistic, creative and technical skills which, expressed via sample reels of animations, will enable them to confidently face the outside employment market or, more importantly, be sought after by major studios allured by a unique balance of the artistic and practical qualities RMCAD develops. However, there are also those students who wish to use the undergraduate education only as a springboard for the advanced studies attainable via RMCAD's innovative "Creative Lab". There, such challenge seeking individuals are free to grow further, evolve and refine their artistic skills and creative visions by embarking on innovative, daring endeavors not easily attainable once on the outside. By offering auxiliary maturation time the Lab acts as a buffer, the go between the pure learning and experimental outgrowth attained via undergraduate education and the challenging, exacting realities of the awaiting world of the professional entertainment industry.

"Creative Lab" provides a professional, creative and production like studio environment offering all of the modern tools, technologies, production methodologies, creative guidance or direction for development and execution of innovative, ground breaking creative art, visual communication, traditional, drawing, experimental, stop motion or clay animation and all of the types of computer animation. While encompassing all of the art genres taught at RMCAD, it takes students to a higher, more advanced level subjecting the learned skills, both manual and intellectual, to a span of creative challenges posed by the context of such a realistic production environment.

About Edward Bakst, Department Chair
EDWARD BAKST
Designer/Director
160 W. 96 St. 9N
N.Y.C. NY. 10025
(212)-666-2579
Fax: 666-6395
e-mail: EBakstCGI@aol.com
Icebox

Want your amazing flash animation to be seen by everybody? Send it to Icebox.

Icebox is an assembly of Hollywood's top writers, producers and animators that have partnered to create original animated shows for the Web.

Among the talent developing original shows for Icebox are the creators, writers, and executive producers of The Simpsons, King of the Hill, The Critic, The X-Files, Party of Five, Seinfeld, Ren and Stimpy, and South Park: Bigger, Longer, Uncut.

We showcase the best in Independent animation. Providing a venue for undiscovered creators to showcase submissions alongside Hollywood's best and get the attention their animations deserve.

Benefits include mass exposure, sharing a stage with Hollywood's top writers and producers, gaining free access to a variety of programs and services. The independents section provides a space for animators and viewers to share their knowledge of animation technologies, link to animation organizations, and discuss topics pertinent to them the entertainment community.

Talent scouts are among those growing increasingly attentive to stand-out submissions on the site. Some of Icebox's independent submitters attained representation and development deals shortly after having their animations featured on Icebox Independents.

So what gets posted? We are receptive to everything from the classic fable of a legendary hero's conquests to a short about a gun-totting, chicken-murdering, yet undeniably lovable Easter bunny. As long as the animations don't contain any hate or pornography, Icebox provides a home.

To check out the shows that Hollywood couldn't make and to learn more about the independent submission process, visit www.icebox.com.

10th Annual Animators Conference - Making it a DOOZY!

We are in the process of researching venues and planning a spectacular event for our 10th annual conference in 2002. We need your input! Please email your survey results to Mary Lou Haynes before September 30, 2000. Please make as many copies as needed.

These are things I would like at 10th Annual Animators Conference & Retreat (Check all that apply)

AMENITIES
- Outdoor Pool
- Indoor Pool
- Tennis courts
- Golf course
- Whirlpool
- Restaurant(s)
- Kitchenette(Fridge, MW, Stove)
- Suite (e.g. separate bedroom and parlor/sitting area)
- Airport Transportation
- Biking
- Walking trails
- Horseback riding
- Boating
- Fitness Center/Gym
- Spa (hair, nails, etc)
- Massage

LOCATION
- Chicago Loop/Downtown
- Chicago Suburbs (remote resort)
- Illinois (remote resort)
- Michigan (city)
- Michigan (remote resort)
- Indiana (city)
- Indiana (remote resort)
- Nearby access to Public transportation (Trains, Busses, etc)

LODGING - WOULD YOU SHARE A ROOM OR SUITE?
- yes (same sex)
- yes (Co-ed)
- no

Smoking preference:
- smoker
- non-smoking

Thanks for your support!

Mail to:
M.L. Haynes
PMB 324
3400 w 11th St
Chicago, IL 60655 USA

Spring 2000 7
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2000

NAME: JIM MIDDLETON

ADDRESS: 201 Arcadia Blvd.

CITY: Battle Creek, STATE: MI, ZIP: 49017

PHONE: 616 763 7945, FAX: 

EMAIL: jim.middlet0n@jun.com

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

- STUDENT ($12)
- GENERAL ($20)
- INTERNATIONAL ($40) (INCLUDES GENERAL)
- CORPORATE ($300)

Make checks payable (US dollars) to ASIFA/Central and send to:
Deanna Morse
ASIFA/Central
School of Communications
Lake Superior Hall
Grand Valley State University
Allendale, MI 49401
email: morsed@gvsu.edu

STUDENT TYPE MEMBERSHIP

PLEASE PRINT MY NAME AND ADDRESS IN:

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

WEBSITE LISTINGS

JOIN TODAY!

Jim Middleton
"The Animating Apothecary"
201 Arcadia Blvd.
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Jim Middleton
00