LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

At the last meeting of the ASIFA Central Board, Deanna resigned as president and I was appointed acting-president. Since that meeting, I was offered and accepted a position on the faculty at the Rochester Institute of Technology. I am now the Coordinator for Computer Animation at RIT and responsible for a graduate program in computer animation in the Film and Video Department. Since I am now no longer living in the midwest region there will likely be a change at the fall board meeting in terms of the presidency of ASIFA Central.

Since I still identify myself as a midwesterner, I would like to remain involved with ASIFA Central in the following ways. I organized the animators retreat last spring with Marie Cenkner and have begun organizing a second retreat for the first week in April. I would like to continue working on the retreat. My primary interest, in being involved with ASIFA, is to build connections between animators throughout the midwest. The quarterly publication is one way to keep connected. The retreat is another opportunity to build connections. I would like to see regular contributions from various parts of the midwest region to our quarterly publication. I would like to invite suggestions from other ASIFA Central members for ways that we can build a community of animators among a group that is fairly far flung. Since the local programs that ASIFA Central organizes are, in general, only useful for folks that live in the Chicago area, perhaps local programs could be organized in other areas of the region where there is a concentration of animators. We could share a newsletter and the retreat as region-wide aspects of ASIFA Central.

Board elections are coming up. Any one interested in being on the ASIFA Central board should send a bio and reasons that they would like to be on the board to ASIFA Central. If you are interested in organizing programs in your corner of the ASIFA Central region, please submit a brief bio and proposal, too.

Marla Schweppke
716-271-1121
LETTER FROM THE TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Hi everyone:

I'm the newly appointed treasurer/membership chair. Why would any relatively sane and very busy animator take on a thankless task—you ask? Well, ASIFA has, over the years, been a resource where I have met many interesting friends (other animators) who I could exchange ideas with, become inspired by and recharge my batteries. So I thought I should put a little effort into keeping ASIFA going.

My job description is fairly simple: I remind you your dues are running out, you send me your new dues and I write checks for ASIFA bills (newsletter, events and international dues). Since I am just organizing the records, if you have a problem, call me (after October 5th) and we can solve it.

Combining treasurer/membership also means that I will be able to identify delinquent members easier and hopefully inspire them to rejoin ASIFA. Part of my job will be to expand out membership, so if you know someone who might be a prospect, give me their name and I'll contact them.

ASIFA Central now has a small but enthusiastic core. I'm looking forward to seeing it expand. See you at the ASIFA/Facets reception on October 10th (it's OK to bring your membership problems with you!)

Marie Cenkner  
(708) 432-7824  
1463 Glencoe Ave.  
Highland Park, IL 60035

LETTER FROM THE "PUBLISHER"

Howdy!

The deadline for the next Frame By Frame will be January 15th, 1994, with the quarterly going into the mail box on February 1st. We are seeking articles, notices, news of your recent or planned activities, committee reports, etc. Send us a short bio and a picture from one of your films, for example. You can mail stuff to Frame By Frame c/o ASIFA Central, 790 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622, or to me directly: Byron Grush, 720 Prairie Ave., Naperville, IL 60540, or e-mail to byron@art.niu.edu.

By the way, thanks to our excellent staff (I owe you each a pizza) and to the Electronic Media Department of Northern Illinois University's School of Art!

Byron Grush
10th Annual Chicago International Children’s Film Festival

The Chicago International Children’s Film Festival, sponsored by Facets Multimedia, will celebrate its tenth birthday this October with ten days of over 150 films and videos for children from over 25 different countries. The films range from live-action to drawn and computer-generated animation. The festival is the nation’s only competitive festival of films for children. The festival opens October 8th and runs through October 17th at Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave. in Chicago.

Kids are involved in the festival not only as audience members, but throughout its development. by a special panel from the Chicago office of the United Nations Committee for UNICEF to aware a special “Rights of the Child Prize” to the film that best illustrates the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, a major theme of this year’s festival.

Awards for prize-winning films from both juries will be presented at the Best of the Festival screening on Sunday, October 17th. These include Best Animated Film of the Festival and Best Live-Action Film of the Festival. Children who missed out on getting to be part of this year’s Children’s Jury can still determine award-winners by current research has been suggesting that damage can be done to children through exposure to violent media! Facets has been recognized for their excellence in children’s programming by the International Congress on Children’s Cinema in Naur, Belgium, and by the National Congress on Media for Children in Washington, D.C.

The Rights of the Child theme is addressed either directly or indirectly by many of this year’s entries. The UN Document speaks eloquently about the right to love and understanding, the right to free education, and the right to health care for children of the world. Another major theme emerging from the work of many of the animators is ecology and conservation. This is certainly a theme which children care about.

Animated films being shown include (in no particular order) FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOULD by John McCally (USA), THE TINDERBOX by Mihall Badica (Denmark), MADRE TIERRA directed by Jose Infantozzi (Uruguay), TALL TIME TALES by Faith Hubley (USA), MONTY, and MAX’S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN by Michael Sporn (USA), REBELLION OF THE FLOWERS by Mille Goldsholl (ASIFA Central member) and JOEY LEARNS TO FLY by Ed Counts (ASIFA Central member) as well as many many others.

For a complete listing and schedule, call Facets Multimedia at 312 281-9075. And by the way, discount booklets and group sales are available! AND REMEMBER THE OCTOBER 10TH RECEPTION!
ASIFA Central to Sponsor reception for Children's Festival Animators

ASIFA Central members are invited to attend a reception for the Chicago International Children's Film Festival animators and the animation jury members. Here's your chance to meet international animators who are attending the festival, and to get together with your fellow members. Bring friends and family members if you wish. Refreshments will be served, and video equipment will be available for screening work. Since ASIFA Central is putting on the reception, we could use some help with organization, food, etc. Like to help? If you are interested in volunteering (setup/cleanup) or can donate food and/or beverages, contact Dave Daruszka or Mary Haynes at 312-233-8788 (evenings). The reception will be held at Facets Multimedia at 1517 West Fullerton Avenue in Chicago on Sunday, October 10th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., just after the last screening. Opening night in Recognition of the Rights of Children.

ASIFA member Ed Count's film featured

Opening night of the Chicago International Children's Film Festival, featuring films honoring the Rights of the Child, includes ASIFA Central member Ed Count's film, JOEY LEARNS TO FLY. A reception and the Global Awareness Book Fair will be held Friday, October 8th at 6:30 p.m. followed by the screening at 7:30 p.m. at Facets Multimedia at 1517 West Fullerton Avenue in Chicago on Friday, October 8th. You should RSVP for this event to 312 281-9075. JOEY LEARNS TO FLY is also being shown during a program on Saturday, October 9th, at 12:00 noon and Tuesday, October 12th, at 10:00 a.m.

Festival focuses on Green Screen: An Animated Tribute to the Earth.

Wednesday, October 13th, the Chicago International Children's Film Festival is showing a series of animated films dealing with the ecology. ASIFA Central member Millie Goldsholl's film, REBELLION OF THE FLOWERS is included. The screening starts at 10:00 a.m. at Facets Multimedia. REBELLION OF THE FLOWERS will also be shown during a program on Saturday, October 9th, at 12:00 noon and Monday, October 11th, at 12:00 noon.
Volunteers needed for the Programming Committee
Volunteers interested in serving on the program committee are encouraged to contact Dave Daruszka
or Mary Haynes at 312-233-8788. We will be meeting in the near future to begin planning the 1994
season.

Animation sought for PBS program
Image Union, Chicago public television’s weekly showcase for independent film and videomakers is
seeking submissions. For information, call Jay Shefsky at 312 509-5593.
Recent programs aired on Image Union featuring animation have been “Three Powerful Shorts” which
included ESPERANZA by Alda Sanchez, and “Video Medley” which was a potpourri of animation,
comedy and experimental film. For information on Image Union broadcasts contact Tim Olson at 312
509-5429

‘ANIMAKERS’ looking for a few good animators
ASIFA Central’s foray into the world of television, ANIMAKERS is looking for animators who want to
promote their work through this medium. This series of 1/2 hour programs will look at the work of
various animators around the midwest. The project will be produced under the auspices of the public
access cable TV station in Chicago. Completed programs will be distributed to other ASIFA chapters
for screening, and will be available for cablecasting at other cable access facilities. For guidelines on
how you can participate in this project send a SSAE to: ANIMAKERS, c/o ASIFA CENTRAL, 790 N.
Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622.

ASIFA International publishing list of animation schools
The second issue of ASIFA List of Animation Schools is coming off the presses. It is being financed and
published by More and Romsdal College in Vold, Norway. Major listing in the USA section include The
American Animation Institute, Art Center College of Design, California College of Arts and Crafts,
California Institute of the Arts, Columbia College Chicago, Harvard University, The Joe Kubert School
of Cartoon and Graphic Art, New York University Tisch School of the Arts, Ohio State University, Pratt
Institute, Rhode Island School of Design, San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco State University,
School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, School of the Visual Arts, UCLA Animation Workshop, Texas A&M University, and University
of the Arts, Philadelphia. There are quite a few schools listed only by
address and clearly many many places in the US to study animation
which are omitted. You can write for a copy of the booklet or a
questionnaire to update or provide a new listing for your school.
Contact:

Gunnar Strom
ASIFA Education Committee
More and Romsdal College
N-6100 Volda, Norway
ASIFA 1994 Retreat!!

ASIFA Retreat planned for April, 1994! Plans are underway for a second ASIFA/Central retreat at Starved Rock for spring of 1994.

Disney Legend Marc Davis to appear at Stay Tooned Gallery!
Mr. Marc Davis, one of Disney's legendary original "Nine Old Men" and 40 year animator and studio artist, will make a rare U.S. appearance at Stay Tooned Gallery's 4th Annual Animation Lecture Series on Saturday, October 9th, 1993 at 6pm - 9pm at Stay tooned Animation Gallery located at: "The Arcade" 272 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, IL. Admission to the lecture is free. Mr. Davis, the man who created such classic Disney characters as Cinderella, Alice in Wonderland, Tinker Bell, Maleficent and Cruella De Vil, will speak and show video clips of his most remembered works, as well as show slides of his original concept art works for the creation of Disneyland. Mr. Davis will also conduct a question and answer period at the end of the evening's lecture. Joining Mr. Davis will be his wife of 37 years, Alice Davis, who will also talk about her work in costume design for all the costumes for Pirates of the Ca ribbean, It's a Small World and other park attractions. For additional information please contact Jim or Tracy Lentz.

Cartoon Classes
Dan Cascardo is offering cartoon classes for kids, adults and seniors in private and group sessions from his River North Studio. For more information, call Dan at 312 355-8262

New Address
Chicago Filmmakers has moved to Wicker Park. Their new address is 1543 W. Division Street. Phone 312 384-5533.
60th ANNIVERSARY FOR THE EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD

Some film critics consider KING KONG one of the 50 best films ever made. Some say it is one of the 10 best. And even others, one of the five best films of all time. How many films can claim such praise? How many animated films, better yet, STOP MOTION animated films, can claim such praise?

KING KONG was the crowning achievement of Willis O'Brien, stop-motion animation pioneer and special effects expert. O'Brien's career had many critical successes (THE LOST WORLD; KING KONG: 1950 Special Effects Oscar for MIGHTY JOE YOUNG) and just as many personal tragedies and professional disappointments. After making his first film in San Francisco in 1915, O'Brien began his animation career at the Bronx, NY Edison Studios in 1916. He made novelty shorts for the Edison compilation programs featuring stop-motion animation and utilizing a caveman or prehistoric setting built around basically domestic comedy situations. Only a handful of these films survive today.

O'Brien worked on various projects during the 1920's, most notably THE LOST WORLD (1925). Based on the Arthur Conan Doyle novel, it was received by the press and public with much acclaim. O'Brien improved on his early Edison work, and began combining animation with live actors.

But prehistoric films or dinosaur movies were not common. It was almost a decade later in 1933 when KING KONG burst upon the screen. It was treated as a first-rate action/adventure film. Add to that the timeless beauty and the beast plot theme and the emergence of a national symbol: the Empire State Building (which was not yet two years old when KING KONG was released in March 1933) and we have a work that over the years has crossed the boundary past film classic into folklore.

KING KONG is a powerful film. It contains one of the first original film music scores. Early sound films featured little music, or scores that were musical pastiches like silent film accompaniment. But for KONG Max Steiner composed an original score for full orchestra and conducted the recording sessions as he would do for the rest of his career. Many years later, Oscar Levant, pianist, film personality, and musical raconteur, said he considered Steiner's score for KONG the standard by which all film scores be judged.

O'Brien's animation and effects work on KING KONG are revered by animation experts. The "Composite Shot" that he developed permitted the seamless combining of elements of table-top animation photography, glass painting, rear projection and optical printing. It was a formula on which Ray Harryhausen would develop his Dynamation techniques, and the same composite concept that allowed films like STAR WARS and so on, to capitalize on and expand with new technology. The art direction of Skull Island was inspired by the detailed engravings of Gustav Doré. There were advancements in model construction, and O'Brien's work as chief stopmotion animator also played an important role in the success of bringing KONG to life with a personality. After the success of KONG in 1933 it would not be until Walt Disney's earliest cartoon features (SNOW WHITE '38; PINOCCHIO '40: and also BAMBI '42) that an animated character would have such a strong emotional hold on an audience. In later years O'Brien would only animate token scenes, so busy was he with the actual planning and supervision of special effects and effects teams.

Since these stop-motion pictures took so long to produce and were in pre-production for months or as much as a year or more, they were subject to changes in studio management, taste, style, budget, and even outside elements like war. Therefore, many projects begun by O'Brien were never realized. Some canceled projects include:

1) ATLANTIS (1926) -involved a vast, underground empire, the Atlantians, an evil monarch, sea monsters and prehistoric mammals.

2) FRANKENSTEIN (1928) -concept of adapting the novel using animated action scenes of the monster that would prove impossible for an actor or stunt man. Production begun at First National and stopped in 3 months.
3) CREATION (1930) - a shipwrecked crew find themselves on an island with prehistoric animals. Producer/Director Merian C. Cooper saw O'Brien's test reel for CREATION and that project was combined with Cooper's idea for an ape movie. Many plot elements and prehistoric sequences planned for CREATION were brought to KONG.

4) WAR EAGLES (1938-39) - based on an original story by Merian C. Cooper, it concerned a lost race of Vikings who ride prehistoric snow eagles, battle dinosaurs, and in the finale fly to New York City and help modern U.S. civilization defend itself against an aerial attack over NYC. Actually in production, with a 400’ test reel completed before shut down. For MGM.

5) GWANGI (1941) - cowboys discover prehistoric beasts in a remote corner of the Grand Canyon. To be made for RKO; canceled in pre-production. After O'Brien's death, Ray Harryhausen made VALLEY OF THE GWANGI based on O'Brien's concept art.

6) JOE MEETS TARZAN (1949) - to be the sequel to MIGHTY JOE YOUNG. Never progressed past the script stage.

7) VALLEY OF THE MIST (1949-50) - concept involved a little Mexican boy Emilio and his pet bull, Indians and a hidden, mist-filled valley inhabited by prehistoric creatures. Finale would take place inside a bullfighting arena. To be shot in Technicolor with O'Brien as effects coordinator and Ray Harryhausen as first animator.

8) FOOD OF THE GODS (1950) - to be based on the H.G. Wells novel about a substance causing things to grow to tremendous proportions. Animation sequences planned.

9) KING KONG VS FRANKENSTEIN (1961) - a descendant of Dr. Frankenstein creates a giant, new monster. Meanwhile an expedition travels to Skull Island to capture Kong. The two monsters unknowingly end up in San Francisco at the same time and in the finale a battle takes place in an outdoor stadium. Also known as KING KONG VS PROMETHEUS.

SUGGESTED READING

THE MAKING OF KING KONG by Orville Goldner and G.E. Turner A.S. Barnes/Tantrix Press 1975 271p. Ballantine Paperback edition 1976 Written by 2 members of the effects team that worked on KONG. They were there. The definitive volume on this film.


CINEFEX #7 Jan. 1982 issue. 72p.
Don Shay's expanded article on the career of Willis O'Brien. Essential reading. Copies of this magazine can be found at comics and specialty shops. Look for back issues (Original article appeared in FOCUS ON FILM #16, Autumn '73, British Publication; 31p. special feature "Willis O'Brien: Creator of the Impossible" by Don Shay)

CLOSE-UP #3 1977 Special KING KONG issue. Close-Up was a magazine on stop-motion animation published by David Prestone that lasted 3 issues.

Based on article by Bill Lorenzo, ASIFA East
EVENTS

National Education Film & Video Festival is now accepting entries for its 24th annual competition. Top winners are eligible for the Academy Award competition in documentary and short subject categories. Eligible productions include documentary, live action shorts, dramatic features and shorts, animation, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructional tapes, special interest videos, made for TV programs, PSA's, film and video art, student-made documentaries and narratives. Eligible formats: film, video and interactive media productions completed during 1992. Contact: Angie Rose or Jacky Micucci, National Education Film & Video Festival, 655 Thirteenth St., Oakland, CA, 94612, 510 465-6885, 510 465-2835. Deadline: 12/1/93.

FISEA93. The Minneapolis Symposium, November 3-6, 1993, will present exhibitions and current research, theory and practice related to art and electronics with an emphasis on the “art factor”. Participants include artists, scientists, arts critics, curators, educators, and others interested in the use of electronics in the arts. Contact: FISEA 93, Minneapolis College of Art & Design, 2501 Stevens Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404, 612 874-3754, FAX 612 874-3732.

2-Day Film School: Producing & Selling Independent Features: The Hollywood Film Institute has finalized its 1993 Fall Tour. The acclaimed weekend course, replete with Graduation Diploma, teaches anyone the steps of Producing, Financing, Directing, Shooting, Editing, Marketing, Selling and Distributing their initial movie profitably... The schedule for the mid-West is: Chicago ...(Nov. 6-7), Toronto... (Nov. 27-28). Contact: Toll Free 1-800 366-3456.

BRAVE NEW PIXELS 5 .... Chicago Siggraph's annual computer art show (and computer animation!) has traveled from the NIU Gallery in downtown Chicago where it opened this summer, to Governor State University and will end it's tour at the Northern Illinois University Art Museum in DeKalb, Illinois. The re-opening is set for October 25th, with a reception on October 28th from 4 to 6pm. Call 815 753-1936 for information.
MORE EVENTS

Independent Feature Film Market
The 15th Independent Feature Film Market, September 27th through October 4th, is the “only market devoted to new, emerging American independent film talent.” The market will take place at the Angelika Film Center, in New York’s SoHo district.

For more information, contact the 1993 Independent Feature Film Market, 132 West 21st Street, 6th floor, New York, NY 10011, 212/243-7777.

CALLS FOR ENTRIES
December 1 is the submission deadline for 24th National Educational Film & Video Festival (NEFVF), “the largest festival for educational media in the U.S.”

For more information, contact NEFVF, 655 - 13th Street, Oakland, CA 94612, 510/465-6885.

Video Shorts 13 Submissions
February 1, 1994 is the submission deadline for Video Shorts 13 for work no longer than six minutes.

For more information, contact Video Shorts, P.O. Box 20369, Seattle, WA 98102, 206/325-8449.

FUNDs/RESOURCES

National Endowment for the Arts announces grants for film/video production. Eligibility: Artists applying as individuals or through organizations may submit only one application in category. Previous grantees will not be considered for same project unless applicant submits evidence that substantial portion has been completed with previous grant. Grants are generally for production of single film/video projects that exemplify use of these media as art forms. All phases of project are eligible for support. Matching grants or organizations range from $20,000 to $75,000. Non-matching grants to individuals range from $10,000 to $35,000. Deadline: October 29. Notification after June, 1994. For application, write Media Arts Program, Room 720, NEA, Nancy Hawks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506-0001; (202) 682-5452.

FILM FESTIVALS

1994 Golden Gate Awards Competition
The San Francisco International Film Festival’s renowned competition for shorts, documentaries, animation, experimental film & video, and television presents The 1994 Golden Gate Awards Competition. Entry deadline: December 10, 1993. The 37th San Francisco International Film Festival will be held April 28th - May 12th, 1994. Inquiries to: Telephone (415) 567-4294, 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
A few recollections from SIGGRAPH '93
by Marla Schwegge

The exhibit halls at SIGGRAPH '93 were laid out on a "Main Street" theme. All the 3D animation software vendors were located in the same area instead of being scattered around the floor. As a result there was less likelihood of coming across new things that you weren't specifically looking for. A highlight in the exhibits was an ongoing presentation by a new company out of Minneapolis called "Windlight" in the Atlas booth. Folks from "Windlight" took turns connecting wires to various parts of their bodies and moving around in a space with a carpet and a chair. Their movements were immediately transferred to a character on a computer screen who bore little physical resemblance to the human in wires, but moved the same. In other words, when the human in wires lifted and arm the character on the screen lifted the same arm. "Windlight" plans to produce long format animation using this technique to automate the animation process. A number of people at "Windlight" worked previously at Lamb in Minneapolis where Crash Dummies was developed. SIGGRAPH needs to set some volume limits for vendors. Some exhibits were so loud as to be distracting in entire exhibit halls.

"The Zone" was an area set up for the art show and interactive installations. It was a little difficult to tell where the "art show" started and stopped since it was so integrated with other things, but it appeared to have two main sections. One section was focused on design and the other on interactive installations. The show was curated this year rather than being juried. There were a number of interesting exhibits for the animator. In one installation visitors made animations on the computer, then printed them out and turned them into flipbooks. In another installation, visitors touched potted plastic plants which sat in front of a large screen. Touching these plastic plants caused computer animated plants to grow on the screen. Also popular, but having little to do with animation, was an electronic confessional.

The electronic theatre was enjoyable as usual. The amount of "content" seems to increase with the years. Jim Blinn narrated a piece that was a compilation of the highlight from the technical papers and was humorous. A piece that showed lights and water got a lot of "ahs". "Gas Planet", produced by two animators from Pacific Data Images provided a simple story without words and was of general appeal as evidenced by the fact that it has won awards at 20 or so film festivals. There was lots more and as usual tapes are available form the SIGGRAPH Video Review. One part that seems to be missing from the video tape are the opening and closing animation where a gold miner sends the audience on a roller coaster ride through a mine shaft that had most of us holding on to our seats. Only in animation could parts of the track be missing and send the "riders" leaping through the air with their hearts in their throats only to land on another section of track.

A good time was had by all.
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☐ $42 INTERNATIONAL
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Chicago, Illinois

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just after the last screening.