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***IAD Poster Released for 2023!***

*Bri Yarhouse, ASIFA IAD Coordinator*

**H**ear ye! Hear ye! Announcing the 2023 International Animation Day poster - designed and illustrated by the legendary Georges Schwizgebel!



The International Non-Profit animation group ASIFA (Association International du Film d'Animation) created International Animation Day (IAD) in 2002, honoring the birth of animation. IAD recognizes the first public performance of projected moving images: Emile Reynaud's Theatre Optique in Paris, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October, 1892.

About Georges Schwizgebel:

Georges was born in 1944, in the European crossroads known as Switzerland. He studied at the School of Fine Arts and Decorative Arts in 1960-65, and in 1970 founded Studio GDS and began producing and directing animated shorts. From *The Flight of Icarus* (1974) to *Darwin's Notebook* (2020), he has directed around twenty films, almost all of which have won international awards. Two appear on the list of the 100 most outstanding animated films established in 2006 at the Annecy festival: *78 Tours* (1985) and *The Ride to the Abyss* (1992).



Georges Schwizgebel

ASIFA coordinates and helps promote the free exchange of films with IAD celebrations all over the world, putting the art of animation in the limelight in a global celebration of animation.

Edmore, Michigan has already scheduled its IAD program for Sunday, October 29, 2023! Woo!

**The 61<sup>st</sup> Ann Arbor Film Festival - With ASIFA Central as a Community Partner!  
March 21-26**

- photos and background from Deanna Morse, semi-virtual notes, and the AAFF website

Every year the Ann Arbor Film Festival Celebrates the best of the Festival, and this year's award-winning filmmakers were selected by jurors Amir George, Christine Panushka, and Koyo Yamashita.

ASIFA Central was a community sponsor for this iteration of AAFF, and President Julie Goldstein and Free-range member Gary Schwartz were on-site attendees.

This year's Super Screeners included International and ASIFA Central honcho Deanna Morse. Super screens submitted a total of 1325 reviews representing over half of this year's 2330 submissions. It's a good thing that eyewashes are no longer in limited availability.



Julie Goldstein addresses enraptured audience while Gary Schwartz guards the floor with Leslie Raymond of the AAFF



Deanna's dear friend and colleague, Christine Panushka, was one of the esteemed judges for the 61st iteration of the Ann Arbor Film Festival. She screened her animated feature, *Blood of the Family Tree*, to an enthusiastic audience. Deanna was able to interview Ms. Panushka

**The Award Winners for the 61st AAFF included:**  
Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival - *Neighbour Abdi*, Douwe Dijkstra  
Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film - *Half Wet*, Carlos Irijalba  
Best Documentary Film - *Adieu Sauvage*, Sergio Guataquira Sarmiento  
Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film - *Arrest in Flight*, Adrian Flury  
The Terri Schwartz Film Award for Parody and Satire - *Gold and Mud*, Conor Dooley

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during the festival, an event that was also streamed online.



*An award from the AAFF confers prestige and financial support; it can also qualify filmmakers for an Oscar® nomination by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the short film category. Qualifying awards are the Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival, the Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film, and the Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film.*



Christine and her posse



*Deanna's personal favorite animated (stop-motion) film/performance was You're not Listening by Jeremy Rourke.*

*(Note! Christine Panushka is responsible for the astonishing timeline for abstract animation film and history, curated by Bill Moritz in the early days of the internet - yr hmbl typst, not knowing how to download files at the time, printed the whole darn thing out and finally converted it to a couple of pdfs on the asifa.org website, in the newsletter section. Gaze upon it and be amazed at what Christine helped create for us all!)*

*(And now, some brief notes from yr hmbl typst, who attended the day-after online streaming version of AAFF #61)*

Many of the films shared a common production theme of distressed film footage, faux framing to simulate regular 8mm film stock, or compositions heavily reliant on what seemed to be ephemeral footage from archive.org. This was a thread that united many of the films in Competition #4.

But what *did* stand out were the animated pieces - the *Blood of the Family Tree* was an interesting approach to examining a family through literal bloodlines, down to the molecules themselves. *Of Wood*, by Owen Klatt of Milwaukee, captured my unblinking



*Blood of the Family Tree*



*Of Wood - of course!*

attention with its immaculate stop-motion, continuous carving on a single 18 inch diameter chunk of wood. It took Mr. Klatt *five years* to create, but the images belie any break in the process. It was his first independent animation since his college years, between which times he worked on *Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Dinosaur*, *James and the Giant Peach* (and many others), when not teaching Stop Motion, Animation Business, and a course on Animation Production Processes, at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He created this tour-de-force with little storyboarding, choosing to go where the woodgrain took him. It took the Best Experimental Animation award, and whoa, did it deserve the honor.

**Gary Schwartz's Corner - Recipes and IFFY**

April 19 - 22, IFFY

This year, IFFY (Independent Film Festival - Ypsilanti) returned in person to Ypsi's Riverside Arts Center. The 2023 festival featured a special celebration of short films fresh from the Mitten (and Ohio) region, multiple shorts programs by local film and arts enthusiasts, the return of popular live listening event Radio Campfire with a heartfelt listening program of "Movies for Your Ears," and in-person creative workshops that aimed to help hone the rising film making talent in our community (guess who worked on one of those!).

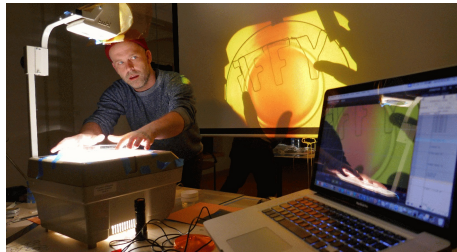
The IFFY signal film by Gary Schwartz is online! Oh that technology!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p\\_KjaSpqmsk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_KjaSpqmsk)

*Gary's PESTO recipe (from a Coffee Break discussion)*

- 2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (about 2 ounces)
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil (is it polite to ask?)
  
- 1/3 cup pine nuts
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon), more or less to preference
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, or more to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or more to taste

*Mince basil and pine nuts, add the garlic and Parmesan, mince some more, then slowly add the olive oil, then season with salt and pepper to taste. Schmear on crackers, chicken, anything. Presto! It's pesto 'd!*



*Many IFFY ways to create a film*



**Wrapping Up Productions**

*Gorilla Tactics* (Michael Long) :: *Home* (Jim Schaub-Jim Middleton)



**G**orilla Tactics, a sweet stream of contemplation on a childhood dream of a gorilla suit, will soon have the name of Michael Long returning to festival screens. Attendees of Michael's monthly coffee breaks have had the opportunity to watch his film evolve over the past year. Like all personal projects, it is a journey of discovery both in process and the need to bring a bit of joyful closure to youthful aspirations.

**H**ome, interrupted in production by the pandemic, has a scheduled premiere in Muskegon for its production team on May 21<sup>st</sup>, after which it likely will have a few last-minute changes before its release to the festival circuit. It is a feature-length documentary on the teenage years of Buster Keaton and his family at their

summer cottages at Bluffton, on Lake Michigan, near Muskegon. Combining rare footage, photos, and interviews of contemporaries (including Carl Reiner) who crossed paths with "the Great Stone Face," it describes a little-examined period in Keaton's life. Jim Schaub coordinated the narrative arc on *Home*, and Jim Middleton provided animated sequences, illustrating Keaton's elaborate practical jokes on fellow vaudevillians and townspeople.





**NEWSFLASH - NEWSFLASH - NEWSFLASH  
NEWSFLASH - NEWSFLASH - NEWSFLASH**  
*The box office for the Ottawa International Animation Festival will be live on May 29th, and as promised, they're happy to extend an association discount to ASIFA Central members. Logos, posters, and links to OIAF social media accounts can be found at: <https://www.animationfestival.ca/>*



**PD Music Excavations - Looking for instant musical partners? The “Accompany-U-Recordings” of the 1930s are going digital!**

**I**n the late 1930s, a now-long defunct vanity recording company known as J. J. Warner of San Francisco decided what the musical consumers really, *really* needed at the close of the great depression was a series of “Accompany-U-Recordings” for traveling violinists in need of piano accompaniment. A set of records was produced featuring only the piano portions of traditional classical duet pieces. Pianist Marie Coppin performed solo under the mute guidance of violinist and tutor Louis Debovsky. The fascinating results were half of a duet for Saint-Saens’ *The Swan*, variations on *Rondo* by Beethoven, Schubert’s *Ave Maria*, and many other standards, on 78rpm recordings. The archivist at The Animating Apothecary (yr hmb1 typst is being cute) is busy running these three-minute classics through RIAA filters to add to the perpetually growing public domain collection on [archive.org](http://archive.org), with a complete listing of PD music and pre-1923 recordings listed at [asifa.org](http://asifa.org) under the newsletter tab at the home page. Enjoy! (Or not. But it’s FREE!)

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

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

**ANIMATION UNITES US**

*And then dive into more digital fun at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/asifacentral> and for ASIFA International - <https://asifa.net> - be sure to check out the Facebook page on ANIZOOMATION*

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*As usual, send any suggestions, comments, or recipes for zucchini meatloaf, along with the usual castigations to yr hmb1 typst, at [jim.middletonrx@gmail.com](mailto:jim.middletonrx@gmail.com) or, for dull bloggery, <https://animatingapothecary.blogspot.com>*

**ANIMATION UNITES US**

*Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the hmb1 typst and do not necessarily reflect the thoughts, opinions, or policies of anyone anywhere else, and especially at ASIFA Central, which is a completely volunteer-run, non-profit gathering of very busy and frantic members moving at 24fps on a slow day, where shooting on twos is considered a vacation..*

## FLASHBACK: Thinking of the 2023 ANNIES

from Chuck Wilson (February 2023 blog entry, at <https://smudgeanimation.blogspot.com/>)

Well, this year represented the 50th anniversary of ASIFA Hollywood's Annie Awards, and with that comes my ramblings on the always-entertaining awards ceremony.

Opening the 50th program was Tom Kenny, the voice of Spongebob Squarepants.

Hrm, don't recall seeing *Ice Merchants*. Looks to be worth a look. Fortunately, it's on the *New Yorker's* YouTube channel (<https://youtu.be/mhj74ZjfaQ8>).

Best Special Production: *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse*. I just love the visual style of this film. Can't wait to watch it.

June Foray Award goes to animation historian Mindy Johnson and is well deserved!

I'm reminded of the fact that I need to watch Phil Tippett's *Mad God*.

Best Character Design in TV/Media goes to Blur Studio's Alberto Mieglo for the Jibaro episode of *Love Death + Robots*! What an awesome win for an incredible episode of animated film.

Best Character Animation in TV/Media goes to Tim Watts for *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse*.

Another great win for *Love, Death + Robots*: Animated Effects in an Animated TV/Media Production for the Bad Traveling episode.

Editing in an Animated TV/Media Production, another win for *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse*. This film is having a really good night!

Was very touching to see Evelyn Lambart posthumously receive the Winsor McCay award. I really loved seeing the montage of films, photos, and interviews featuring Evelyn. It's always a treat to see her work shown to a larger audience.

Was even more touching to see how ASIFA Hollywood brought out Lauren Faust to present the Winsor McCay award to her husband Craig McCracken.



Hrm. So they bring in Bob Iger to present Pete Docter's Winsor McCay award. And when they do the montage for Pete Docter's career, they blank out the video that's being streamed to online audiences "Due to copyright and clearance issues..." Ooookay...

Another win for *Love, Death + Robots*: Andrew Kevin Walker won Best Writing/ TV/Media for the Bad Traveling episode.

They produced a stop-mo segment for when the Tiny Chef Show won Best Animated TV Production for Preschool Children--with the Tiny Chef presenting the congratulatory speech. That was pretty clever.

Really like how they've added the 'Best Animated TV/Media Production, Limited Series' category. That was a really classy decision--to shine light on some shows that would otherwise be overlooked.

Not sure if Guillermo del Toro ad-libbed some of his lines but he sure was funny.

*Love, Death + Robots* is having a great night as Emily Dean won the award for Storyboarding in an Animated Television/Media Production for the Very Pulse of the Machine episode.

Another win for *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, this time Directing in an Animated television/Media Production. Now I really can't wait to watch this film.

I bump *My Father's Dragon* up on the list of features I want to watch.

A very gracious and humbling yet energetic speech from Guillermo del Toro when he won the Annie for Directing in an Animated Feature Production for *Pinocchio*.

Am a little embarrassed that I haven't seen any of the entries in the Best Indie Feature category.

And Guillermo del Toro's *Pinocchio* wins the Best Animated Feature. I quickly log on Netflix to add it to my queue.

Congratulations to all the winners and the nominees.