

# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, March 29

Panel discussion: "Help, My Arm Hurts! Keep Me Working!"

See inside back cover



ANIMATION GUILD AND AFFILIATED ELECTRONIC AND GRAPHIC ARTS  
Los Angeles, California, March 2011 Vol. 40, No. 3



## MARCH & RALLY FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ★ OUR JOBS!

### JOIN THE FIGHT!

Throughout this economic crisis, all over the world, working people have been making their voice for change heard. On March 26, we need to do the same here in Los Angeles.

One of our principal targets will be the Ralph's supermarket downtown. Contracts for 60,000 grocery workers in Southern California will have expired. We can't let the giant corporations force another strike and lockout like they did in 2003 and 2004.

The grocery chains want Wal-Mart wages for their workers and Corporate America wants it for the rest of us.

These are Our Communities  
and these are Our Jobs!



### SATURDAY MARCH 26, 2011

- 10:00 AM - Gather at LA Convention Center (Gilbert Lindsay Plaza at 12th & Figueroa. Paid parking available in Venice Parking Structure at 15th & Figueroa)
- 11:00 AM - March begins (Multiple stops along the way including Ralph)
- 12:30 PM - Rally begins at Pershing Square

For more information, contact Glen Amodo (213) 381-5611 ext. 126 or [glenamodo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:glenamodo@sbcglobal.net)  
Sponsored by the Our Communities Our Jobs Coalition, in association with the LA County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO

Animation Guild and other IATSE members: meet us between 10:30 and 10:45 am at Staples Center between Chick Hearn Court and the corner of Figueroa St., one block away from the March. [mapq.st/gkPzLL](http://mapq.st/gkPzLL)



## **From the Business Representative**

### *About the TAG Blog Interviews*

Since the first of the year I've started a series of interviews with members of the Animation Guild. The new interviews are published on the TAG Blog ([animationguildblog.blogspot.com](http://animationguildblog.blogspot.com)), and are then archived on our website ([animationguild.org/interviews](http://animationguild.org/interviews)). By the time this *Peg-Board* goes to press, the interviews will be available for free on iTunes; go to the website for details. Here are some questions I've been asked about this project:

#### **How did you come to do these things?**

I got the idea for interviewing animation veterans for the TAG Blog last Fall, when I was running for re-election as Business Representative. Since I wasn't posting at the time, I put the execution of the idea off until after ballots were counted.

The original thought was to interview people who were somewhat younger than the "old-timers," but had been in the business twenty-five or thirty years. That policy has now been broadened, because we realize it's important to hear from artists of all ages. (I kick myself I didn't start this up three or four years ago.)

#### **Who are you interviewing?**

I strive to interview a broad cross-section of people in the cartoon industry, folks working on the theatrical and/or television side who have made big contributions to the art form. Folks in different classifications. (Animators and directors have one story to tell, background and storyboard artists another. Kind of important, we think, to get a variety of experiences.)

#### **How often are the interviews going to be put up on the blog?**

As often as we do them, but no more than once a week. At the start, it was going to be "whenever," but we've gotten into a rhythm of putting them up on Monday or Tuesday, in thirty to forty-minute chunks. We'll work to continue that.

## So where do you record these?

In studio offices. In the Animation Guild conference room. At private homes. Wherever it's most convenient for the interviewee. The sound quality varies because of the acoustics of different spaces. I use a small digital recorder placed close to the interviewed person.

## How long will these interviews go on?

Two or three years. Beyond that, who knows? The over-arching idea is to put a lot of these oral histories onto the blog and the Animation Guild website and build a mosaic of recorded information about the animation industry that will be accessible to people. In the past, the Guild has recorded interviews onto magnetic tape and the tape sat on a shelf somewhere, gathering dust. (Not super useful.)

Anyway, that's some of the thinking behind why we're doing these. We hope you find value in the project.

— Steve Hulett

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*PAYING YOUR DUES? PAY THEM ONLINE!*

[animationguild.org/payments](http://animationguild.org/payments)



## From the President

### *Storyboard tests*

*Max and Susan wanted to get some custom-made cabinets for their kitchen and asked if I could recommend someone. I knew a fine cabinetmaker named Al who had installed cabinets in my house a few years back. Al had been around for about thirty years and really knew his stuff. A friend of mine from the studio also used Al on a job and was equally pleased with his work. I invited Max and Susan over to check out Al's work and they were impressed. So Max took Al's number and decided to get a quote. Al sent them a brochure filled with photos of his work from previous jobs.*

*Another friend recommended a cabinetmaker named Gonzalo. Max and Susan were equally impressed by his work, also. Gonzalo had been in business for nineteen years. So they decided to get a quote from him, too. Max and Susan visited their friend's home to see Gonzalo's work. They looked at photos of his previous jobs and loved what they saw.*

*After the bids came in, Max and Susan just couldn't make up their minds so they asked the two cabinetmakers to come over to their home and take a cabinet-making test to see if they could really do the work.*

*Al and Gonzalo were insulted. They'd never been asked to prove their obvious abilities as cabinetmakers in their entire careers and weren't about to start now.*

*So they both decided to get out of the cabinet-making business and become storyboard artists.*

Okay, so it's a joke ... unless you're one of those veteran storyboard artists who've been told you'll have to take a storyboard test, even after your portfolio has been favorably reviewed.

How did this industry ever last until 2011 *without* storyboard tests? And why do we all of a sudden need them now? I think any test that requires lots of poses, everything on model and perfect perspective isn't a storyboard test - it's a layout test, designed to make everything easier for the less talented production artists at some offshore sweatshop.

A storyboard used to be a blueprint. Now it's a house.

"Test" is just another word for "Audition" and some auditions are insulting and unnecessary. I'm reminded of the famous anecdote about an audition that Shelley Winters went to. An actress of her stature and fame would normally have a meeting with a producer or director; instead, she was asked to audition. She arrived at the director's office carrying a big bag over her shoulder. She sat down, opened her bag, dug around in it and pulled out an Oscar® and put it on the director's desk. She reached into the bag again and pulled out a second Oscar® and put it on his desk. Then she said, "So. Do I still need to audition?"

She got the part. (And I've heard raunchier versions of this story.)

I don't really know who actually looks at portfolios. I don't know if they're artists, MBAs, writers, interns, HRs, PAs, PMs, producers, directors, accountants or the security guard. For all I know, it's all of them and they vote. Allegedly, they all want to know if you can draw. Then they want to know if you can draw their characters. Then they want to know if you can draw their characters on model and in a well-defined time period. Who are these people?

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to attach a name to the people who review your work? Wouldn't it be nice to know if they're qualified to judge your work? Can they draw? Do they know anything about composition, character acting, facial expression, attitude? If they can draw, can they draw on model? Do they know enough about layout and staging to be able to depict an image that incorporates all those requirements within a defined space in a series of images that comprise a storyboard?

And as if all those skills were still not enough to get a job as a storyboard artist, you also need to know the basics of filmmaking. You need to have an understanding of screen direction, acting,

(see *FROM THE PRESIDENT*, page 6)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*(continued From page 5)*

timing, editing, choreography, and dozens of other little things that go into making a movie. Then you have to be trained in various programs like Toon Boom, Photoshop, Maya, Illustrator, Flash, Rhino, SketchUp, Dreamweaver, etc., and be able to work on a Cintiq.

Artists in animation have more training in more skills and prerequisites than any other creative type I can think of. You have to be an accomplished artist, you have to be able to channel that training into specific parameters to support a script, to depict characters accurately, to draw those characters with good acting and expression, to work within a deadline, to think like a film maker, and to re-do work when changes are made.

Nobody works in this business for too many years unless they have those abilities and have performed consistently. And if they've done so for a long time, at a lot of places, why the Hell should they be required to take a test above and beyond their samples and resume? Ability, experience and results should count for something. If people can't tell what an artist is capable of by looking at their portfolio, maybe they've got the wrong people looking at portfolios.

Maybe it's time to test portfolio reviewers to see if they're qualified to look at portfolios. Do they know what they're looking at?

— *Bob Foster*

### ***Upcoming contract holidays:***

*Good Friday (April 22)\**

*Memorial Day (May 30)*

*Independence Day observed (July 4)*

*\*All studios except DreamWorks and Nickelodeon*

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## Read the *Peg-Board* online

To save costs and build up our “carbon footprint”, effective with this issue the Animation Guild is giving its members and other *Peg-Board* subscribers the option to receive the newsletter by e-mail rather than by regular mail.

If you choose this option, we will no longer send you the *Peg-Board* by postal mail. Instead, you'll get a monthly e-mail with a link to an online copy of the newsletter. (It will not be sent as an attachment.) There is no charge to anyone to receive the *Peg-Board* by e-mail. This is strictly voluntary – members who do not respond will continue to receive the printed *Peg-Board*.

For members (active or inactive) to receive the online *Peg-Board*, they must be subscribers to the [tag839] e-mail list. For members to subscribe, send an e-mail to [jeffm@animationguild.org](mailto:jeffm@animationguild.org) with your name and *home* e-mail address (we cannot send Guild e-mails to employer e-mail addresses).

If you are already on the [tag839] e-mail list, you will see a button in the left-hand column to send an e-mail to request an online subscription.

Non-members may request a free e-mail subscription by sending an e-mail to [pb-by-email@animationguild.org](mailto:pb-by-email@animationguild.org). Non-members requesting online *Peg-Boards* will not receive any other e-mails from the Guild. We do not sell our mailing list to third parties.

**Don't miss the next show  
at Gallery 839!**





## From the Organizer

### *F. U. D.*

F. U. D. - Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear,\\_uncertainty\\_and\\_doubt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear,_uncertainty_and_doubt)) - is the strongest tool the opposition has to union organization. It strikes hard and deep with those who choose not to look past the first few sentences.

Dispelling F. U. D. arguments is the biggest job of a union organizer.

**STEVE WRIGHT**'s tutorials and lessons are well known in the visual effects community. My respect for Steve and his work made reading his latest opinion piece ([vfxio.com/PDFs/United\\_We\\_Fall.pdf](http://vfxio.com/PDFs/United_We_Fall.pdf)) so painful.

### Fear

Steve's opening paragraph states three reasons why Los Angeles is losing visual effects work: cheap labor elsewhere, tax incentives elsewhere, and exorbitant and "punitive" taxes levied against film production in Los Angeles. He then adds that unionizing should be counted as a fourth obstacle and equates it to the final coffin for Los Angeles visual effects.

While it may be difficult to accept that change is underway, the addition of collective bargaining for artists would hardly be the death-knell for visual effects in the Los Angeles area. Steve used a broad-stroke overview of the industry's world-wide growth to strike fear by concluding that Los Angeles is seeing work leave its borders at an alarming rate. Had he bothered to do a simple Google search, he could have found the same facts that I used to write this article in the TAG Blog ([tinyurl.com/vfx-union-facts](http://tinyurl.com/vfx-union-facts)).

The fact is that studios *are* opening in Los Angeles. While some are linked to multi-national organizations, this sort of defeats his argument that Los Angeles is a scourge for Visual Effects studios. Even the multi-national organizations understand that having an office close to the studios is essential for quick turnarounds and approvals. This makes smaller and aggressive Visual Effects studios able to pick up work and grow, much as he claims used to happen but doesn't anymore.

(see *NOTES FROM THE ORGANIZER*, page 10)

## **FROM THE ORGANIZER**

*(continued from page 9)*

### **Uncertainty**

His real assault on unions and organizing comes near the end of his essay. After calling it “industrial suicide”, he makes the claim that the IATSE is attempting to raise artists pay, collect dues and provide benefits to members. This, he claims, will assault Los Angeles visual effects studios by raising the costs of doing business. He furthers the F. U. D. argument that unionization will muddy the workflow of a studio by inserting multiple locals which will argue over who can do what work.

Well, that’s crap. I’ve written about this in a TAG Blog post called *The Fallacies of Costs and Unionization* ([tinyurl.com/cost-fallacy](http://tinyurl.com/cost-fallacy)). Each contract is unique and no one can say with absolute certainty what each employer will accept or fight. Health and pension contributions are one of many costs that will be negotiated, as will wage minimums.

Providing a venue for visual effects artists to act upon their workplace concerns only serves to fortify the industry. Working at a studio that is signatory to an IATSE contract gives an artist the ability to make substantial and beneficial changes while protecting their work environment. The IATSE isn’t interested in shutting down visual effects studios. Rather, we want to see artists provided with a seamless cloak of benefits across the industry.

A strong argument can be made that any costs involved in signing a contract would be less than what is currently being paid by studios who fund benefits to their employees. If a studio is offering health care or benefits to its employees, there could be a significant cost savings should they sign a contract with the IATSE.

### **Doubt**

Steve shares his ideas on the existence of unions with this statement:

In fact, [unions only exist] to get [their] members higher pay and more benefits, which obviously raises

the cost of doing business. Their other reason for their existence, of course, is to collect union dues.

In light of what's happened in Wisconsin, this statement is vile in its inaccuracy. Unions exist to bring to their members the strength of collective action. IATSE contracts establish wage minimums, monitor labor laws, stipulate holidays and overtime regulations and provide benefits, among other things. You can read copies of the IATSE Basic Agreement at [tinyurl.com/iatse-basic](http://tinyurl.com/iatse-basic), or the TAG contracts at [animationguild.org/contracts-wages](http://animationguild.org/contracts-wages).

This struck a nerve:

In addition to the job-killing effects of higher production costs, we can add the efficiency-crushing effect of union rules. Sorry boss, I'm a compositor, not a lighter. You are going to have to call the CGI guy to come in this weekend to re-render that reflection pass. You can't tell me to use Photoshop! That's the digital photographer's union. Need to work Sunday? That's golden time (triple pay!). Roto? I can't roto my own holdout mask. That's the Rotoscoper's Local 44.

This is completely outside the realm of reality. Steve (apparently) knows almost nothing about modern entertainment unions. TAG and IA contracts have transparency and interchangeability, and have had those features for *years*. Does he think the artists at DreamWorks or Disney or Warner Bros. stop at some mythical classification edge, then run to get someone else to perform work they can do themselves? Steve should ask his colleagues who work at Sony Pictures Animation how often they have to tell supervisors it's not their job to do what's being asked of them. Like, never.

For an author of so many tutorials and opinion pieces, I find Steve's lack of fact-gathering and high-powered rumor-mongering insulting.

The IATSE will establish portable standards and minimums that will offer protections and standards of living that have yet to be felt in the visefx industry today. Visual effects artists deserve the comforts and peace-of-mind that actors, directors, script supervisors, grips, costumers, honeywagon drivers, etc. have fought and achieved collectively bargained standards they count on for their livelihoods.

## FROM THE ORGANIZER

*(continued from page 9)*

IATSE President Matthew Loeb put it best in his letter to the Visual Effects Society:

You perform critical and highly specialized services to the industry and you deserve the same dignity, benefits and voice in the workplace afforded to every other craftsperson and creator. You have my full support and commitment in this endeavor to bring fairness and equity to the workers of Visual Effects.

Steve, if you're interested in getting any facts on this matter, feel free to contact Jim Goodman, IATSE Organizer for Visual Effects, at [jgoodman@iatse-intl.com](mailto:jgoodman@iatse-intl.com) or (818) 980-3499, or myself at [skaplan@animationguild.org](mailto:skaplan@animationguild.org) or (818) 845-7500. Either of us would appreciate counting your voice among the many who have asked for information and learned that unionization isn't what you had imagined; and could be the one thing that helps bring some sanity to a tumultuous field.

— Steve Kaplan

*A more detailed version of this column has been posted on the TAG Blog at [tinyurl.com/no-fud](http://tinyurl.com/no-fud).*

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on recycled paper.

## In memoriam

Animation writer and memorabilia dealer **EDDIE BRANDT** died on February 12 at the age of eighty-nine.

After playing piano for Spike Jones and his City Slickers, Brandt wrote for Bob Clampett on the animated *Beany and Cecil* series and for Hanna-Barbera. He will best be remembered as the founder of Eddie Brandt's Saturday Matinee on Vineland Ave. in North Hollywood, probably the best known vintage movie video-rental store in the U.S. if not the world.



Assistant animator **ANN DVORAK**, who worked for Disney from 1945 until 1973, died on February 7 at the age of eighty-eight.



Animation writer and producer **DWAYNE MCDUFFIE** died on February 21 after emergency heart surgery. After starting as a writer for Marvel, McDuffie co-founded Milestone Media, which specialized in comic books featuring black and ethnic superheroes such as Static, Icon, Hardware, Xombi, and the Blood Syndicate. He later developed *Static Shock* (based on the Static character) for Warner Bros., which he produced. He is survived by his wife Charlotte, currently a writer for Cartoon Network.



Storyboard artist **JEAN-MAXIME PERRAMON** died on February 26 of injuries suffered when he was struck by a car on the shoulder of the Ventura Freeway.

Perramon was known for his drawings and storyboards for *The Tigger Movie*, *Jetsons: The Movie* and *Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest*. He also worked on commercials for Richard Williams Animation.

## Studio Arts classes start in April

Studio Arts' Spring 2011 Quarter features the following classes of interest if you are looking for training opportunities. Schedules and further details can be found at [www.studioarts.com](http://www.studioarts.com).

\*Classes are offered once a week for either five or ten weeks.

†Classes are offered in one-week intensive sessions.

For forms to apply for reimbursements for training at Studio Arts as well as Animation Mentor, Gnomon or LAVC Ideas Workshop, go to [animationguild.org/grant-classes](http://animationguild.org/grant-classes).

- ❖ After Effects 101<sup>†\*</sup>
- ❖ Avid Media Composer 1\*
- ❖ C/Plot Pro with MT Pro<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Concept Design 101\*
- ❖ Corel Painter 101<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Digital Design & Illustration\*
- ❖ Digital Life Drawing & Painting\*
- ❖ Digital Mattes\*
- ❖ Digital Set Decoration\*
- ❖ Digital Storyboarding<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Dreamweaver 101<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Filemaker Pro 101<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Final Cut Pro 101<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Illustrator 1\*
- ❖ Illustrator for Animation\*
- ❖ Luxology Modo 2\*
- ❖ Maya 101<sup>†\*</sup>
- ❖ Microsoft Office for Production\*
- ❖ Modeling 1\*
- ❖ Nuke 101\*
- ❖ Painting with Corel Painter\*
- ❖ Photoshop 1<sup>†\*</sup>
- ❖ Photoshop 2<sup>†\*</sup>
- ❖ Photoshop for Art Department<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ Rhino 101<sup>†\*</sup>
- ❖ Rhino 275 Props & Models\*
- ❖ SketchUp Pro 101<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ SketchUp Pro 201<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ SketchUp Pro 301<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ VectorWorks 101<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ VectorWorks 201<sup>†</sup>
- ❖ ZBrush 101<sup>†\*</sup>
- ❖ ZBrush 201\*
- ❖ ZBrush 350\*

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### **LAID OFF? DON'T PAY YOUR DUES!**

Contact Lyn Mantta at (818) 845-7500 ext. 105 or [lyn@animationguild.org](mailto:lyn@animationguild.org) to see if you qualify for honorable withdrawal. Don't wait!

# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**TUESDAY,  
MARCH 29, 2011**

**PIZZA &  
REFRESHMENTS,  
6:30 PM**

**MEETING, 7 PM**

**1105 N. HOLLYWOOD  
WAY, BURBANK**

Between Chandler and Magnolia  
[tinyurl.com/new-tag-hq](http://tinyurl.com/new-tag-hq)



## AGENDA

### **Panel discussion:**

#### **"Help, My Arm Hurts! Keep Me Working!"**

Repetitive motion injuries are a risk we all face. How to treat and prevent injuries to your most precious work tool - your arm. Free consultation (including complimentary chair massages) will be provided at the end of the panel.

Panelists will include **Dr. Didier Mascarade**, DC (Doctor of Chiropractic) and **Liza Rodriguez**, PT (Physical Therapy), Chiropractic Assistant and Massage Therapist, from the Olive Springs Wellness Center, and physical trainer **Lynwood Robinson** from the WF Athletics Training Center.

Also on the agenda are elections for delegates to the IATSE District Two convention in May.

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