



## ANIMATION GUILD AND AFFILIATED ELECTRONIC AND GRAPHIC ARTS

Los Angeles, California, February 2013

Vol. 42, Nº. 2

### Training grants approved for 2013-2014

We're pleased to announce that for the 2013-2014 grant year, the Contract Services Administration Training Trust Fund (CSATTF) has approved reimbursement grants for qualified members of the Animation Guild to take selected classes at seven of the best schools for animation and CG training. Also, a grant has been approved for two classes in **TOON BOOM STORYBOARD PRO** to be taught by TAG member and certified product master and trainer **SHERM COHEN**.

The grants are for classes that begin between February 1, 2013 and January 31, 2014. To qualify, you must have worked at least thirty days under the Guild's jurisdiction in the two years previous to the date the class begins. You must apply for and be accepted for the grant before the class begins, and no more than ninety days in advance. (In other words, if you are approved and subsequently postpone taking the class, you will have to re-apply.)

You will have to submit paystubs and/or a letter from your current or past employers to CSATTF to prove your ninety days' employment. This is a reimbursement grant, so you will have to pay the class fee in full in advance. Upon completing the class after grant approval, you will apply to the CSATTF to receive two-thirds reimbursement.

(see *TRAINING GRANTS*, page 2)

**DON JURWICH**

**at Gallery 839**

**opens March 1**

**6-9 pm**

**see page 9**

We are offering two class sessions of Sherm Cohen's **TOON BOOM STORYBOARD PRO** class in 2013, the first to be held on March 23 and 24. These classes will be open to TAG members who have worked under a union agreement for at least thirty days in the last two years.

*Space in these classes is limited.* Registration for the class requires advance class approval from CSATTF and a class fee of \$75.00 payable to the Animation Guild. Class registration approval from CSATTF must be received by the Animation Guild by March 18. For further details, contact Steve Kaplan at (818) 845-7500 x112, or [skaplan@animationguild.org](mailto:skaplan@animationguild.org).

## **TRAINING GRANTS**

*(continued from front page)*

Grant applications are available on the guild's website at [animationguild.org/grant-classes](http://animationguild.org/grant-classes). The grants will reimburse two-thirds of the cost of classes taken at the following schools:

**ANIMATION MENTOR**'s online character animation classes have been designed by industry professionals. Their program is a "real world" curriculum that is deep-rooted in what industry recruiters and studios are looking for in animation talent. The online program provides the freedom to attend class and perform homework assignments at your convenience.

Website: [animationmentor.com](http://animationmentor.com). (877) 326-4628 [curriculum and registration]; Amiko Foster, (510) 450-7232 [administration]

**CONCEPT DESIGN ACADEMY** is a private design school located at 55 Waverly Drive in Pasadena. They are committed in establishing a community where artists with passions for both traditional & entertainment arts can meet to develop their skills together. Their goal is to provide the best art and design instruction available.

Website: [conceptdesignacad.com](http://conceptdesignacad.com). Contact them at (818) 669-4657 or by email at [contact@conceptdesignacad.com](mailto:contact@conceptdesignacad.com).

**FXPHD** is an online vfx, production and post-production training program led by professionals. They offer both application and craft-based courses, online forums for feedback, and vpn software. Students have access to the high quality footage from fxphd shoots as well as other effects material, such as traditional 2D animation and advanced multi-pass 3D render.

Students can utilize a wide variety of software using the fxphd VPN. Licenses to run full versions of software packages such as Nuke, Maya, Smoke on Mac (with no 30-day trial limitation), Mocha, and more can be issued. These copies are for non-commercial use and can be used for educational purposes and to build shots for their demo reel.

For further information, go to the website: **fxphd.com**.

**GNOMON SCHOOL OF VISUAL EFFECTS**, located at 1015 N Cahuenga Blvd. in Hollywood, is an accredited training institution, that offers artistic and technical training for careers in the visual effects and animation industries.

Website: **gnomonschool.com**. Contact them at (323) 466-6663 or [admissions@gnomonschool.com](mailto:admissions@gnomonschool.com).

**iANIMATE.NET** is a complete set of online workshops designed to target all your animation needs. All the assignments are specifically designed to target the troublesome areas that professional animators go through on a daily basis. iAnimate allows you to begin your animation studies at the right level for your current skills.

Contact Jason Ryan at their website (**ianimate.net**) for further details.

**LAVALLEY COLLEGE IDEASWORKSHOP**: The Institute for Developing Entertainment Arts and Studios (IDEAS) offers classes on the campus of Los Angeles Valley College, 5800 Fulton Ave. in Valley Village. The IDEAS Workshop serves those already in the entertainment industry by providing the required information resources, training, and technical assistance.

Website: **lavc.edu/ideas**. School contact: Dan Watanabe or Casey Bernay, (818) 947-2453.

(see *TRAINING GRANTS*, page 8)

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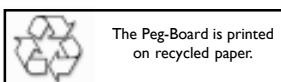
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attribution is given. You can stop by the Animation Guild office weekdays between 8:30 am and  
5 pm and pick up current or recent back copies of *The Peg-Board*, free of charge.



IATSE LOCAL 839



## From the President

### *Syncope*

Nothing like planting your head on the parking lot cement to make you appreciate the friends you've got.

This time I was in the parking lot at work and I tripped over one of those parking space bumpers. I made a dramatic recovery over a distance of four or five awkward steps and rose up triumphantly into one of those “Nyah-Nyah” poses a nanosecond before I went down like a sack of oatmeal.

I had just experienced Syncope. It's something we've probably all experienced. Syncope is a medical term for fainting. It usually occurs when not enough blood reaches the brain. Syncope can be caused by emotional stress, dehydration or getting up too quickly. They forgot to mention parking space bumpers.

Fifteen minutes passed before I was aware of anything and by then I was being loaded into an ambulance. I wound up at Providence Holy Cross Hospital in Mission Hills where they specialize in head trauma. Bad as it all sounds, apart from the five stitches over my left ear, the final outcome was pretty positive. The ambulance medics were terrific, the hospital staff was top-notch and the doctors and nurses were excellent. If you must experience head trauma, I recommend Providence Holy Cross in Mission Hills.

Through it all, from the start, my friend Lisa made the 911 call, directed the ambulance to where I was, found her way to the hospital to make sure I was okay, then picked me up the next day and gave me a ride to where I needed to be. She was joined on her hospital watch by my other friend, Christine, who stayed until I was released and then gave me a ride home.

My favorite book is *Call of the Wild* by Jack London. I always identified with Buck, the dog who grows up in a pleasant home, is stolen and turned into a sled dog during the Alaska gold rush, then winds up joining a wolf pack. I've always been a self-reliant, independent cuss and never wanted to impose or depend on others.

(see *FROM THE PRESIDENT*, page 11)



## From the Business Representative

### *“Creative destruction”*

And yet another animation/visual effects house bites the dust ([tinyurl.com/rh-bankrupt](http://tinyurl.com/rh-bankrupt)):

Oscar-nominated, VES-winning and Annie Award-winning animation studio Rhythm & Hues will be formally filing for bankruptcy Monday morning (2/11). Within hours of winning the BAFTA for Special Visual Effects for *Life Of Pi*, the financially troubled company informed employees around 9 PM Sunday of the upcoming Chapter 11 filing, insiders say. Many Rhythm & Hues employees were also told by management not to show up to work Monday.

In Animationland (which is also, if we're honest, VisualEffectsLand) things change quickly. The Fleischer Studio disappeared in 1942 after a couple of decades of existence, and lots of animators had to relocate from Florida. Disney came close to dismemberment in the early 1940s and then again in the 1980s, when corporate raiders threatened a leveraged buyout. Hanna-Barbera went the way of the Dodo bird after buyouts by Ted Turner and Time-Warner.

And of course, a week ago, DreamWorks Animation, in a world of hurt after *Rise of the Guardians* under-performance, began to cut staff, just as Walt Disney Productions did after *Sleeping Beauty's* less-than-boffo performance in 1958.

Call it “creative destruction” ... for employees. Companies restructure, companies go out of business, and the execs at the top take their exit money. Everybody else clears out their desk and heads for the unemployment office.

And it happens in all corners of the animation business. Like Disney Interactive a few weeks ago. Or game company THQ three weeks back, when the corporation went into receivership.

But perhaps the worst area of the biz is the one that the unfortunate Rhythm and Hues inhabited, where Visual Effects shops often

have the life expectancies of fruit flies. As the veteran effects honcho Scott Ross explains:

... Visual effects operates on a fixed bid, often without a well-defined plan or blueprint. **All companies, at every level, are underbidding for their services.** And the opposing, client side - I mean, it's like Godzilla.

The VFX services business is the ultimate swim to the bottom. There's tons of work, it requires highly specialized IP and know-how, there are significant barriers to entry, to play at the Hollywood level.

This is a business that any Harvard economist would tell you should make lots of money. Yet nowadays running a big VFX facility is like keeping a big airline in business - the basic theory being that a plane in the air, even earning half its average revenue and losing money for the business, is better than that plane remaining stuck on the ground and losing even more.

The entertainment business has always been competitive to the point of dog-eat-dog, where you sink or swim on the strength of your last project. But the visual effects industry is even worse, because visual effects studios cut each others throats with low-ball bids, thereby guaranteeing their own extinction.

Lastly, the VFX Law blog ([tinyurl.com/rh-fallout](http://tinyurl.com/rh-fallout)) has pithy advice to laid-off R & H employees, as well as the rest of us:

These last few years have proven to be exceptionally hard on VFX workers, and I do not see this trend letting up anytime soon. For starters, other companies are also nearing collapse, and there are just as many that work job-to-job with no guarantee of future work.

As VFX artists, it is time for you to consider the possibility of working together to form an international guild that will give you leverage against the major studios.

(see *FROM THE BUSINESS REP*, page 8)

**FROM THE BUSINESS REP**

*(continued from page 7)*

For those of you deeply affected, and those of you who are brave enough, now is a great time to pick up a sign and march outside the big studio gates around Hollywood, showing your displeasure. This is not a story of a ho-hum VFX company going broke. *Life of Pi* was extraordinary, and without R&H an important part of the VFX industry will be deeply missed.

My sentiments exactly.

— Steve Hulett



**TRAININGCLASSES**

*(continued from page 3)*

**STUDIO ARTS** is the premier learning center for professional-level CG skills training for motion pictures and television. They offer classes in everything from Maya, Nuke, Rhino and ZBrush to Photoshop, After Effects and Illustrator, as well as other programs and disciplines. Their classes are offered at 570 West Avenue 26 in Los Angeles.

Website: **studioarts.com**. School contact: Eric Huelsman, (323) 227-8776

*All questions regarding CSATTF grants should be directed to: Kimberly Kemp, CSATTF, 2800 Winona Avenue, Burbank, CA 91504; phone (818) 847-0040 ext. 1260; skillstraining@csatf.org. For details on classes, contact the schools directly; otherwise contact Jeff Massie or Steve Kaplan at the Animation Guild.*



**HELP TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN!**

Donate TODAY to the Motion Picture and Television Fund!

[www.mptvfund.org/ia](http://www.mptvfund.org/ia) or  
(818) 876-1977





**DON JURWICH**

Gallery 839 Animation Guild

March 1 through 30, 2013

*Jurwich*



## From the Organizer

### *Don't work for free!*

Recently, the Cartoon Brew blog ([cartoonbrew.com](http://cartoonbrew.com)) featured TAG member and renowned artist Stephen Silver's video plea to industry artists. In the video entitled "Protect Your Art Career" ([tinyurl.com/dont-work-for-free](http://tinyurl.com/dont-work-for-free)), Stephen talks about the prevalence of requests by employers of all caliber to do work for free, and the equal prevalence of artists who are willing to accept that work. Ultimately, Stephen tells anyone watching that this practice hurts the artists and the industry:

If you don't get paid, you'll not get any respect [from the employer, and the chances are they'll] never use your work.

Steve Hulett regularly tells of artists working uncompensated overtime at signatory studios. When approached to discuss, those who admit to doing it usually say they're attempting to put in extra time to impress the studio and ensure their longevity.

Recently, I received an email from an artist in the industry who had questions regarding unions and TAG. In his letter he wrote: "Right now I'm working as an unpaid intern at [*studio name*] in [*local beach-adjacent community*]."

As Stephen points out, this practice is prevalent because the community stands for it. Numerous times, I've engaged both members of the Guild and the animation community regarding "free work". Personally, I don't believe there is ever a time where exercising skills in this or any craft for someone else's financial benefit without proper compensation is acceptable.

Plenty of scenarios have been raised to me in rebuttal, some Stephen even mentioned. I am of the mindset that any artist who is passionate about their craft will be exercising their skills outside of the workplace. Animation artists doodle for fun, writer pen scripts for exercise or personal exploration, storyboards artists board for practice. Those would be perfect for charitable or other altruistic donations.

However, the “you need to put your time in the trenches like the rest of us” argument is complete horse-excrement. Devious employers have come up with countless ways to attempt to cut costs and get artwork for free. Artists allow this to happen because the art form stems from the heart, and not the head. They ultimately feel the need to devalue themselves for the sake of their passion by donating their skills and time. Employers capitalize on this by pointing out how much of a “good worker” said artist is to the rest of the group, thus establishing the pattern.

Again, from Stephen (*edited for content*):

You just don't do it for nothing. Trust me, these [employers] are lining their pockets [from your work] and taking advantage of you. And when they take advantage of you, they disrespect the art form and every [other artist out there]. So, don't give away your talent for free. You deserve better.

Stephen opened his video by stating that the time had come to spread this message. I'm glad to assist him in that effort.

— Steve Kaplan



**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*(continued from page 5)*

But when you whack your head on the parking lot cement and the only people who can do anything for you in a traumatic situation are your friends at work, it's always good to have friends like Lisa and Christine. The call of the wild is still there, but it's making room for some friends. Owooo!

By the way, the ambulance ride, the hospital care and the scans, drips, shots and stitches were taken care of by the Motion Picture Industry Health Plan. What's not covered by the health plan is picked up by the State of California because it was a trauma situation. I learned a lot that night. Thanks to my friends.

— Bob Foster

## Investment for dummies (like us)

From the *New York Times*, January 19:

*If you're perfectly capable of running your own retirement savings, selecting the right mix of low-cost investments, rebalancing at the right time and not buying and selling out of fear or greed, then good for you.*

*But the majority of people — maybe the vast majority — are not like that. They may be smart enough to do the right thing, in theory, but they forget or slip up or are taken in by well-meaning friends bearing stock tips or annuity-peddling scoundrels who make nice to them over free steak dinners. ...*

I've been involved with the TAG 401(k) Plan for seventeen years, and based on day-to-day experience, I think it's possible for individuals to handle their own investments without a huge store of investment knowledge, or spending a boatload of money.

What 401(k) participants need are some basic facts and *discipline*. They also need to know that passive investing with low-cost index funds has been proven to be a winner.

### **When Investing Remember That:**

- 1) Time is your friend.
- 2) Broad diversification is beneficial (both stock AND bonds).
- 3) Low costs are important.
- 4) "Chasing performance" is a no-no.

After years of doing not-smart things, I've settled on investment guru Larry Swedroe's approach to investing.

- 1) Short term/intermediate term treasury and investment grade bonds.
- 2) Small cap value equity funds

As Mr. Swedroe says :

*In years like 2011 when Small Value equities do poorly (not relatively poorly but negative returns) that is when*

*bonds likely do very well and if you do it my way (lowering beta and increasing bonds) you lose more on your full value tilt but make more on your larger bond portfolio!!!!*

*Never think of these things in isolation. So in 2011, the full tilt really hurt the [small cap] equity side, but full tilt allows for very low equity exposure and bonds did very well, so portfolio did not do so poorly ...*

The Mrs. and I now own a bond-weighted portfolio (We're of an age where it's prudent to do that anyway) with a strong tilt to small-cap value stocks. Research has shown that SCV provides higher returns over time than large cap stocks. And we've minimized our costs by investing in bargain-priced index funds.

The main point I've learned? Anyone investing for retirement needs to develop a plan and stick with it.

Weighting to large company stocks in a Total Stock Market of Large Cap index is perfectly fine.

Weighting to small and mid-size stock indexes is also good.

What's important is to map an approach that's palatable for you and *commit to it*. (This is harder to do than it sounds. Too many folks — and I've known several — chase after the latest hot trend and live to regret it. Tech stocks in the nineties would be one good example of this. They had HUGE returns for most of the nineties, then lost 80% of their value in 2001-2003.)

The big take-away:

*There is no perfect. Just map out a good plan and stick with it. You'll beat ninety percent of investors.*

— Steve Hulett



## Save a tree – read the *Peg-Board* online

In an effort to reduce the Guild’s “carbon footprint” and cut the expense of printing and mailing the *Peg-Board*, you can register to be notified by e-mail when the monthly newsletter is available to be read online.

When you sign up, in place of sending you the newsletter by U. S. mail, you will receive an e-mail letting you know when the latest issue is available to be read online or printed out. The *Peg-Board* is published online a week before it is printed and mailed, so you’ll get the Guild news earlier than those who receive it by mail.

Members who don’t respond will continue to receive the *Peg-Board* by U.S. Mail. Active members and those withdrawn for a year or less will continue to receive it free of charge by U. S. Mail; the charge for postage-mailed subscriptions for suspended members and non-members is \$10.00 per year.

Members can go to [animationguild.org/email-list](http://animationguild.org/email-list) and sign up for the online *Peg-Board*, and you can register for the [tag839] e-mail list while you’re at it.



## Pay your dues online - without fees!

*Use our system at [animationguild.org/payments](http://animationguild.org/payments)*

The Animation Guild offers members a way to pay their dues and fees without having to write checks or pay postage or processing fees. Just go online to [animationguild.org/payments](http://animationguild.org/payments) and click on the button to connect to our online payment system.

To use the system you must have a checking or savings account with any bank or credit union. You can make single payments to post by the next business day or for up to ninety days in advance. You will continue to receive bills by U.S. Mail as you have in the past, and you can continue to send in checks or money orders by U.S. Mail; you can also pay by cash or check in person during our office hours (Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5 pm).

Contact Lyn Mantta at [lyn@animationguild.org](mailto:lyn@animationguild.org) or (818) 845-7500 ext. 105 if you have any questions.

The Afternoon of Remembrance will be held on **March 2**  
and not on March 9 as stated in the January *Peg-Board*.

We apologize for the confusion.

The Animation Guild, ASIFA Hollywood and  
Women In Animation present

# **AN AFTERNOON OF REMEMBRANCE**

a non-denominational celebration of departed friends  
from our animation community:

Frank Andrina ✿ Charlotte Armstrong ✿ Dick Beals ✿ Iris Beckerman  
Lucille Bliss ✿ Carmela Blitz\* ✿ Dave Borthwick ✿ Jack Bosson  
Grigor Boyadjiev ✿ Richard "Kip" Carpenter ✿ Ernie Chan  
Kristine "Casey" Clayton ✿ John Coates ✿ Franco Cristofani\* ✿ Tissa David  
Jim Duffy ✿ Jake Eberts ✿ Ethel Falkenberg ✿ Ann Gefre  
Jean "Moebius" Giraud ✿ Karen Greslie ✿ Dave Hanan ✿ Jim Hiltz  
Daphne Huntington\* ✿ Diane Keener ✿ Fyodor Khitruk ✿ Thomas Kinkade  
Peter Kranjceвич ✿ Joe Kubert ✿ Bob Lambert ✿ Ken Landau  
Maxine Markota ✿ Nancy McCullough\* ✿ Rusty Mills ✿ Sheldon Moldoff  
Conne Morgan ✿ Mark Nelson ✿ Margaret Nichols ✿ Naomi O'Loughlin  
Rod Parkes ✿ Bretislav Pojar ✿ Buzz Potamkin ✿ Al Rio ✿ Geri Rochon  
Ken Sansom ✿ Mary Sarbry ✿ Bruce Schaefer ✿ Maurice Sendak  
Mel Shaw ✿ Robert Sherman ✿ José Silverio ✿ Marcia Sinclair  
Dan Thompson ✿ Ken Walker ✿ Manon Washburn  
Tom Woodington ✿ Run Wrake ✿ Uvon Young

**Saturday, March 2, 2013**

**Food and refreshments, noon ✿ Memoriams, 1 pm**  
**Hollywood Heritage Museum (Lasky-DeMille Barn)**  
**2100 N. Highland (across from Hollywood Bowl),**  
**Hollywood**

The Afternoon is free of charge and is open to all;  
no RSVPs necessary.

If you can help us finding speakers for those persons marked with an asterisk above,  
or if you know of anyone in the animation business who passed away in 2012 and is  
not on our list, please contact Jeff Massie at (818) 845-7500 or  
jeffm@animationguild.org.

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