



## SOLIDARITY AT WORK

### *Cartoon Network Crews Suit Up To Show Union Pride!*



Did you know the first Monday of the month has been designated at the Animation Guild as Union Pride Day? Storyboard artist and longtime member Llyn Hunter suggested the idea at a General Member Meeting last year, and it wasn't long before others at the meeting took the idea and ran with it. With a little help from staff at the Guild office and with funding approval from the Executive Board, four energetic members at Cartoon Network organized their two crews, put on their Animation Guild shirts and gathered for a group photo that was shared on social media to inspire union pride and solidarity.

It took a little while, but Union Pride Day is taking off and gathering steam. When the crew of *OK KO: Let's Be Heroes* received their shirts

**SOLIDARITY AT WORK**

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**THE PEG-BOARD** is published monthly by The Animation Guild  
and Affiliated Optical Electronic and Graphic Arts Local 839 IATSE,  
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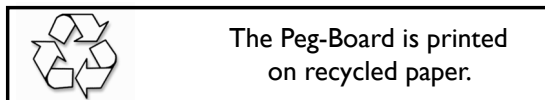
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**PEG-BOARD SUBSCRIPTION POLICY:** Active members automatically receive The Peg-Board free of charge. Members on honorable withdrawal may continue to receive the newsletter without charge by sending an annual written request on or before the expiration date on the mailing label. The subscription rate for suspended members and non-members is \$10.00 per year (\$15.00 foreign, check in U. S. funds), checks made out to the Animation Guild and sent to 1105 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505-2528, U.S.A.



at the January General Membership Meeting, so many other members were fired up that the Guild ran out of shirts within a week! Four more crews at Cartoon Network are just waiting for the new shipment of shirts so they can all wear them on the same day and take their own photos. Multiple crews at Nickelodeon and DreamWorks TVA are ready for their close-ups, too, and so are a growing list of artists at Disney Feature Animation. March 5th is the next Union Pride Day, but any day works!

Interested in organizing your own crew and inspiring solidarity in your fellow Animation Guild members? You'll need to get all TAG members on your crew to participate in order to qualify for funding, and then the Guild will supply the shirts at no cost. We'll need each person's name and T-shirt size, and while you're collecting that information it would be really helpful if you'd ask any members not receiving Guild messages to opt-in to our e-mail list and supply a current e-mail address as well. Contact Brooke Keesling, our Director of Communications and Culture, at [brooke.keesling@tag839.org](mailto:brooke.keesling@tag839.org) and let her know that your crew is ready to show their Union Pride!

We'll work with you to order T-shirts and choose a day, time and place for your event, and someone from the Guild will be there to take photos and share them with the rest of our members on social media. Our first Union Pride event – the photo on the cover of this issue – will appear in a future issue of IATSE's *Bulletin*, which reaches over 170,000 union members in the United States and Canada. When your crew shows up and says "cheese" they'll be inspiring members of other IATSE Locals across the continent to show their own forms of solidarity . . . now THAT is strength in numbers!



And don't forget, if you've already got a TAG shirt, wear it on the first Monday of the month – Union Pride Day at the Animation Guild. Send us a selfie or group shot of others on your crew wearing their shirts and we'll post them on social media. You can find out more by sending questions to [pegboard@tag839.org](mailto:pegboard@tag839.org) and you can buy extra shirts and other swag at TAG's website: [animationguild.org](http://animationguild.org).



## **FROM THE PRESIDENT KC JOHNSON**



### **Directors: It's Up To Us**

Hey there, fellow Directors – congratulations! Whether you're directing for the first time or for the 100th, you've made it to one of the top spots in the industry. It really is an incredible achievement; all those years of classes and putting in the work, and look at you – you're here!

As you probably know, there are some persistent and real problems that the Guild is always working on solving. Two constants are unpaid overtime and abusive tests. You, as a Director, have a role to play in changing the culture around these two issues.

Unpaid overtime happens when artists or writers give in to the pressures of too-tight schedules and start to think that they are either too slow or the project is too poorly funded for them to be properly compensated. Unpaid overtime is a cancer; it robs artists in their paychecks, it shorts hourly contributions to retirement and health care funds, and it gives producers the false impression that the work can get done in less time than it really takes.

Tests become abusive when they require more than a "reasonable" amount of time and effort to complete. Sometimes productions give out tests when there is no serious intention to hire, or they hand out tens of tests to all askers, even when there may be only one position to fill. Unpaid "skills evaluations" cost our members a lot of time and sometimes heartache, and when the work takes an excessive amount of time to finish, it could be considered theft as well. They steal Guild members' free time, they distract attention away from a current job, and having to spend too much time on one test hampers their ability to apply for other jobs.

Usually Guild leadership hears about problems like this from an affected artist – someone staying late without asking for and being approved to get overtime pay, or someone on the receiving end of a test that takes a week (or more) to complete. How does the Animation Guild address these issues? We advise all members not to work uncompensated overtime and not to spend more than a day (at most) to do a test, but no matter how many times we say it, the problems persist. We need the members to stand up for themselves and stand up for each other.

This is where you – we – the Directors come in. As the leader of your team, you really set the tone for your crew and for management's expectations. Ask yourself – do you work to solve the issues of unpaid overtime and abusive tests, or are you perpetuating them? First of all, consider hiring based on portfolio, resume and interview, without requiring a skills evaluation. You know what it takes to complete an unpaid test, so make sure the ones being handed out on your show take only a reasonable amount of time and effort to complete, and only give tests to a limited number of serious candidates. If you can get your producer to pay for tests, pay for the work as freelance and everybody wins. If you feel undue pressure to get work done when you know there is not enough time in the production schedule, then stand up for your team and ask for a deadline extension or permission to work extra hours at overtime rates.

We, the Directors, are the strongest voices our crews and our producers hear. Leadership at the Guild will keep giving the best advice and guidance we can, but when we hear about a problem like unpaid overtime or an unreasonable test, it's usually too late – it's already happened. You are on the front lines, however, actually doing the work and leading your crews. You can be the prevention, and you can be the cure.

Tell your team to accurately record all of the hours they work, insist that extra hours be paid at overtime rates, and fight for reasonable schedules or accept rougher drawings if deadlines can't be extended. Remember that rougher drawings make more work for other artists down the line, more work for the overseas studios doing the animation, and more work for retakes teams! Make sure your production team knows when schedules are unrealistic or when something needs to give.

Take control of testing on your production by creating a reasonable test yourself. Use your judgement, experience and empathy to create a test that can be done in less than a day. Only give it out to a select few applicants, instead of to dozens when there is only one job to fill. And remember that tests are not a requirement when a portfolio and resume already tell you all you need to know. Hire without testing!

Be strong, and be great. Chances are that you already are.

Be the union.

In solidarity,

KC Johnson

Any questions? Find me at: [KC.Johnson@tag839.org](mailto:KC.Johnson@tag839.org).

## **FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE JASON MACLEOD**



### **Streaming Is the Future**

Netflix has announced they will spend up to \$8 billion on content in 2018, with a goal of reaching 50 percent original content on their service. Amazon Prime Video has more than 30 million U.S. subscribers using the service, with an annual growth rate greater than 20 percent and a reported 2017 budget of more than \$4.5 billion for content. Hulu has announced that it ended 2017 with more than 17 million subscribers, and that annual ad revenue reached \$1 billion. The top comedies on Hulu? South Park, Family Guy and Bob's Burgers. Linear platforms (theatrical, TV, and cable) are what we have known in the past – but streaming is the future.

#### **What about the present?**

Currently, streaming services are termed “New Media” in our collective bargaining agreements, and productions made for streaming services are allowed access to terms described in Sideletter N, “Productions made for New Media”, on page 99 of the Local 839 Master Agreement. For productions with budgets less than a certain amount, some terms and conditions of employment are “freely negotiable between the Employee and the Employer”. Practically speaking, this means that some of the mandatory protections and minimum requirements in place for theatrical features, TV and cable projects are not required to be provided on “New Media” productions. When individuals have to negotiate on their own with employers, they usually don't do as well – most workers have very little leverage on their own. Negotiating together, drawing strength from a group to lift minimum wages and set basic working conditions, is the premise that labor unions are based on.

How did we get here? For new areas of work that develop that aren't covered by existing contract language, the playbook goes something like this: establish jurisdiction, possibly with conciliatory terms, then over time use the leverage and negotiating strength available to improve terms and conditions incrementally. Internet distribution began this way – as uncovered work. For entertainment workers, the process of covering this type of project began in earnest in 2007-2008 as all the entertainment guilds (DGA, WGA, SAG and IATSE) negotiated with the employers' representative, the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), to add language to their respective agreements that recognized

streaming, established jurisdiction, and set initial terms. The contract language in place in our agreements, while unsatisfactory, represents the best that the Guild's negotiation teams could achieve at the time.

### **Where do we go from here?**

Currently, additional contract provisions that bring "New Media" production terms more in line with the terms for linear platforms are triggered when productions reach a "high-budget" threshold – but current budget tiers (\$1.3M for a 22-minute episode in Tier 2) don't reflect the realities of animation budgets. Programs less than 20 minutes in length (like 11-minute episodes) are not considered "high budget" regardless of their budgets. In the current economic climate – and in animation, as opposed to live action – this just doesn't make sense. The work is the same. The effort is the same. Shouldn't terms and conditions be the same? There is no reason to give employers a discount on this work.

### **Who decides what to do?**

The members do. Members elect representatives. Members participate in negotiations. Members decide to ratify a contract. If you're reading this, and you're a member, talk to your co-workers. What do they think? Help raise awareness about this! Do you have friends working on projects for Netflix, Amazon, or another streaming service? What are they experiencing? Could your next project be "New Media"? And please, if you work in features, do not think that this issue only affects those working on the TV side. Have you seen "Bright" on Netflix? It's a \$90 million feature with an A-list star. This affects everybody in our industry.

What do you want? What can be achieved? And, most importantly, how will all of us together achieve those goals? These are very tough questions – the answers begin with member participation and engagement. Someone sitting at a desk cannot answer these questions for you; it takes all of us working together to do what's needed to make a difference. In a nationwide climate where unions are under attack by the highest levels of government, that model of union administration (the service model) no longer works. You will be asked your opinion. You will be called on to act. The answers you give and decisions you make will be up to you. Working together with everyone's participation is our best option to effect change.

What are you prepared to do to help ensure your future?

Yours in solidarity,

Jason

# GET CONNECTED!

If you're not receiving important e-mails from The Animation Guild – job listings, events, invitations, classes and more – it's because you haven't opted into our e-mail system.

You can fix that in under a minute by visiting [animationguild.org/email-list](http://animationguild.org/email-list)



**the animation guild**





## **You can pay online, now!**

The Animation Guild is updating its online payment system. By now, all dues-paying members should have received a letter in the mail describing the changes, including information on how to register with the system.

The new system will accept major credit cards as well as bank account transfers for making payments. In addition to allowing one-time payments, the new system accepts scheduling of payments on a monthly or quarterly basis.

No account information will be brought over from the old system. All members will need to register with the new system using the details being sent via postal mail to the address we have on file. This letter includes a new Local 839 member ID number, and you will need it when you register online for the new payment system.

On the Guild website, the page to visit is <http://animationguild.org/dues/>, but please note: You will need the new member ID number that has been mailed to you in order to register. Check your mail!

The new system is available now. If, after following the registration directions, you are still having trouble, e-mail [membership@tag839.org](mailto:membership@tag839.org) or call the office at 818-845-7500.

The office has worked hard to bring this new system to you – we think it is a significant improvement!

# STORYTELLING THROUGH COLOR

*By Carol Wyatt*

When asked about my career in animation, the most common question I hear is, “So, you just color things in like a coloring a book. Did you have a lot of coloring books when you were a kid?”

The word “just” is almost always used when describing a job as a color stylist. As in, you’re *just* a color stylist, or you *just* do the color.

What IS a color stylist?

The attitude that color is a less important part of the process of animation has been around since the old ink and paint days. Ink and paint, back in the day, was always done by women, in a separate building, and those women were treated differently and paid much less than all other painters and designers in the animation industry. Working in ink and paint sometimes led to color styling, but color stylists were also paid poorly and treated as lesser employees. Still today, color styling is listed along with cel xeroxing and ink and paint, in a job category separate from the one in which most other artists in 2D animation work. It is not considered a design position in the Guild's collective bargaining agreement, and is treated as a lesser position despite the continuing evolution in animation.

My experience as a color stylist over the course of 30 years has varied from job to job. Sometimes we focus only on characters and props, but sometimes we paint BGs and FX in addition to characters and props. All of us are required to have a BFA from a good art school or equivalent experience as a fine artist or illustrator, or as an experienced stylist from the early days of animation. A lot of us work in many different categories in animation because we are well rounded designers. Most color stylists are illustrators and painters outside of animation. I have done most animation jobs, but love color styling and continue going back and forth between BG paint and color. BG painting allows me to have creativity with the environment, while color styling gives me the creative freedom to work with character, dialog, and personality.

Herein lies the issue: Color styling is the lowest paying design job in animation because it is listed in the Ink and Paint category of the CBA, and not in the Animation category with the rest of the design and color

positions. Because of the antiquated categorization of a job that once was thought of as inferior or easier to do, good stylists tend to leave for higher paying, more respected jobs. Background painting, background design, and character design pay *hundreds* more a week than color styling. They require the same college degree, skill and knowledge of design, lighting, and story. Character designs, once colored, are used in perpetuity for merchandising, advertising, and amusement parks. Whenever and wherever you see Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, Homer Simpson or SpongeBob, they're usually in COLOR. Knowledge of FX animation is essential to color styling. Mood lighting, making sure characters belong in an environment, and capturing their personalities through limited color choices are all part of the job. Color styling goes hand in hand with character design, BG design, and BG paint. In animation, one does not exist without the others. And more significantly, one is not more important than another.

All jobs in animation contribute to a high quality result. Some producers have found they can call someone a color stylist, even if they do much more than what is traditionally expected of a color stylist, and still pay them much less to work on a production. When negotiating for other positions, the color stylist's wage minimums and categorization in the Ink and Paint section of the CBA is used against them, seriously inhibiting their ability to receive a fair salary. If we could recategorize color styling to include it with BG paint, layout, and model design in the Animation section of the Guild contract, we could raise wages and producers would no longer be able to pay this group of talented artists less than their peers. As long as we have a legitimate design position like color styling categorized with lower paid positions in Ink and Paint, rates will never rise up to what they should be for all involved.

This is about 40 years past due, but let's do the right thing and move color styling into the Animation category, where it belongs.

*Carol Wyatt is an artist who can do lots of other animation jobs and chooses color styling because she's **JUST** damn good at it!*



# GOOFY'S GUIDE TO SIDELETTER N

*By Brandon Jarratt*

*NB: Any use of quotes in the summary below indicates language taken directly from the Local 839 Master Agreement unless otherwise stated. References to "the Guild" mean the Animation Guild Local 839, of which the majority of Walt Disney Animation Studios (WDAS) production artists are members.*

Sideletter N is a part of the Local 839 Master Agreement that first appeared in the contract in 2009 when “the economics of New Media production [were] presently uncertain and that greater flexibility in terms and conditions of employment [were] therefore mutually beneficial.” The short version is that any content produced for “New Media” – that is, “entertainment motion pictures...that are made for the Internet, mobile devices, or any other new media platform in existence as of August 1, 2009” – is subject to lower rates for artists, at percentages below Guild minimum that correspond to project budgets.

Basically, you can be paid less money for doing the same work, just because it's distributed on the internet rather than traditional theatrical or TV release.

Right at the beginning of Sideletter N there is an important statement you should consider:

“If one or more business models develop such that New Media production becomes an economically viable medium, then the parties mutually recognize that future agreements should reflect that fact.”

It's now 2018, and New Media production is unquestionably not only an economically viable medium, but an incredibly profitable one that is quickly becoming the dominant form of media distribution. The “flexibility in terms and conditions of employment” referred to in Sideletter N is no longer “mutually beneficial.” It is not beneficial for artists who work on these productions; ask any Guild member who works on TV shows made for Netflix or other internet distribution. It's time for the provisions in Sideletter N to end and for artists to be paid their full worth for their work, regardless of distribution platform.



A Walt Disney Animation Studio (feature) artist might be wondering: None of my work goes out via the internet, so why should I be worried about Sideletter N? First, a little detail about how Sideletter N is included in The Secret Lab (TSL) Agreement between the Guild and Disney that covers Guild work at Walt Disney Animation Studios. Article 23 of the TSL Agreement states that “Provisions agreed to by the parties regarding...Sideletter N in the 2015 Local 839 Agreement are deemed to be incorporated into this Agreement.” Basically, everything in Sideletter N in the 839 Master Agreement also applies to the TSL contract, but there is also room for modification. Think of it as a reference to Sideletter N that can get additional changes in the TSL Agreement.

Now, how might this affect a Disney Feature artist whose work is distributed via traditional channels like theaters and TV (other than stirring an altruistic desire to make life better for fellow Guild members who are already affected by Sideletter N, of course)?

Three words: Disney Streaming Service.

Just because WDAS is not creating content for streaming services today does not mean it will not tomorrow, and the creation of a Disney-owned streaming service makes this a strong possibility. In the statement announcing the service, Disney CEO Bob Iger mentions “exclusive content we’re creating for the Disney-branded service we’re launching in 2019. At the moment I can tell you that in addition to feature films being produced by our Studio exclusively for this new platform, we’re already developing a number of original new series, including the first-ever live-action Star Wars series and a series from Marvel Television, as well as series based on Pixar’s Monsters franchise and Disney Channel’s High School Musical.”

That's right: New Media just might be coming to Walt Disney Feature Animation. Are you ready to join the conversation about Sideletter N?

*Brandon Jarratt is a Technical Director at Walt Disney Animation Studio, and he wants his coworkers there to understand New Media.*



# **HONORING OUR OWN AT AN AFTERNOON OF REMEMBRANCE**

Earlier this month, the Animation Guild hosted an Afternoon of Remembrance to honor our members and others with a connection to the animation industry who have passed away in the last year. The event was organized by longtime Executive Board member and now recently retired Bronwen Barry, with the assistance of Eugene Saldana and former Guild President and animation historian Tom Sito, who also emceed the proceedings. Every year the organizing team makes a great effort to contact family and friends of those being remembered, and many of those loved ones attend the event to memorialize the dearly departed.

Hulett Hall was filled to capacity this year, but the mood was joyous as friends and family came together to tell stories of coworkers and mentors, parents and grandparents, artists, technician, writers, and voice talents. Those fortunate enough to have a personal connection to the great luminaries of the animation community shared their experiences and made the rest of us laugh, cry and remember, sometimes all at the same time. Thank you to Bronnie, Tom, Eugene and the rest of the volunteers who wrote memorials, created visuals, and recorded the event.

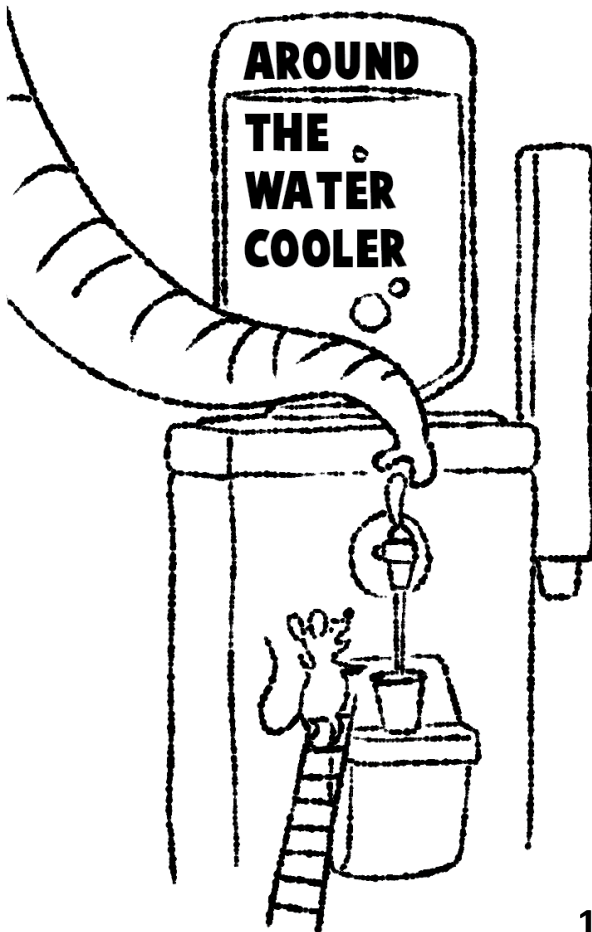


# IN MEMORIAM

**Matt Kummer** worked as an Animator at Disney on *Wreck it Ralph*, *Frozen* and *Get a Horse*. Previously, he was at Reel FX and was a graduate of Ringling College. After Disney, he spent the remainder of his career at Sony in Vancouver, where he passed away on July 5, 2017.



**Marcia Fertig (Solovy, Holt)** passed away on January 31, 2018. Born on May 28, 1920, Marcia started at Disney in the 40s, became an animator at Hanna-Barbera in the 60s, returned as an Animator on *The Fox and the Hound* at Disney in the 70s, worked at Warner Brothers, Ruby-Spears and Filmation until she retired in 1987.



Renovations were recently completed and applications are being reviewed to fill new staff positions to support Lyn, Marta and Jason at the Guild offices. Stop by and see the new work spaces some time!

Bronwen Barry retired from the industry and the Executive Board at the end of 2017. Congratulations on a long career and we wish you well in retirement in Colorado, Bronnie!

Brandon Jarratt, Technical Director at Disney Feature, was appointed to the Executive Board and will be sworn in at the March E-Board meeting.

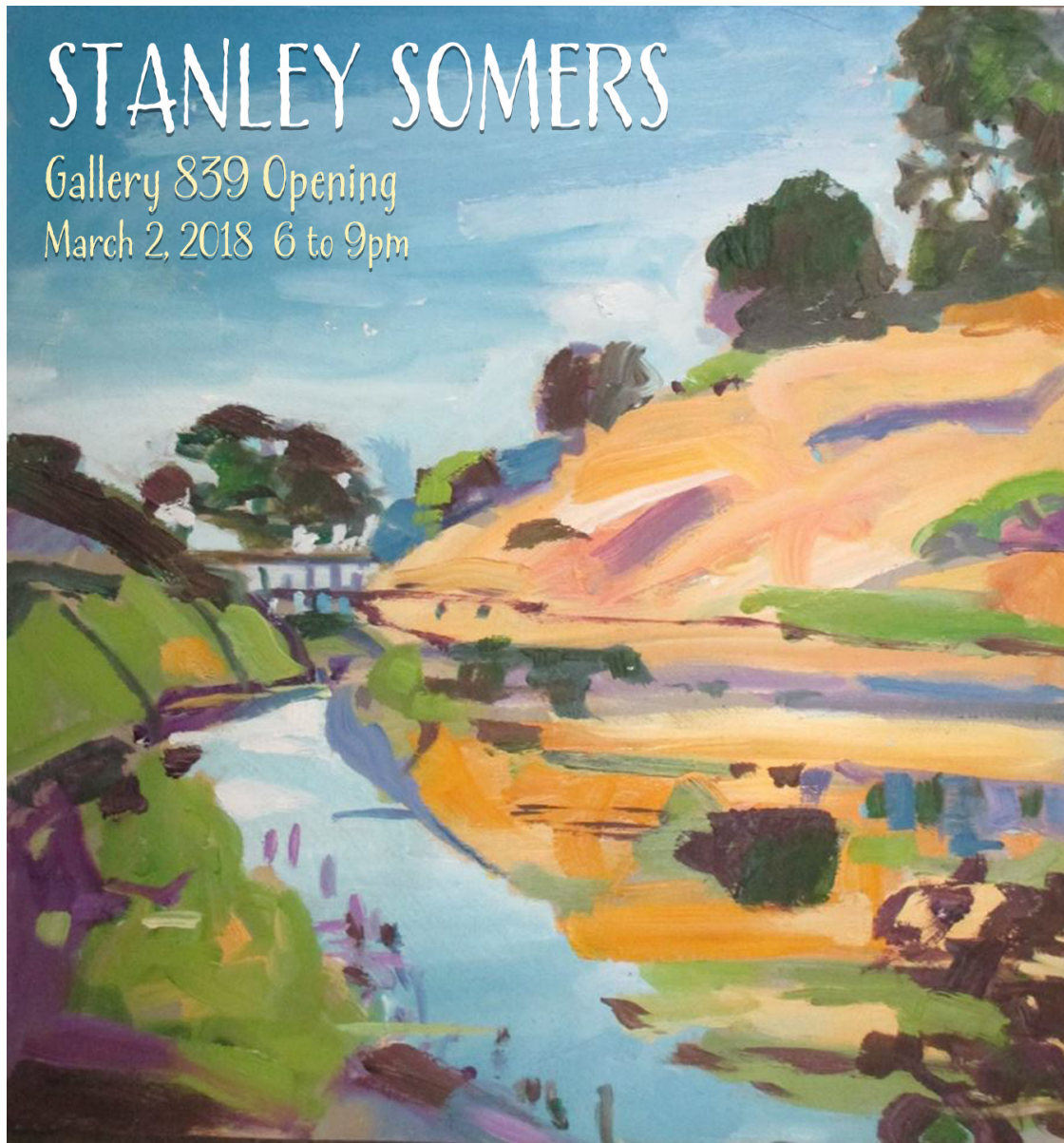












# STANLEY SOMERS

Gallery 839 Opening  
March 2, 2018 6 to 9pm

Landscape painting is a form of art I have pursued throughout my Art career, over a 50 year span of time. I believe poetic reflection in nature, is compelling, and bring up issues of man's encroachments of nature with industry, and pollution. It is a simple place to meditate on the inner mind, and find personal approach to paint, space and composition.



# UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

**February 19th** – Contract Holiday: Presidents Day

**February 20th** – AAI Spring Semester Starts

**February 23rd** – Uninstructed Life Drawing 7-10pm

**March 9th** – Uninstructed Life Drawing 7-10pm

**March 23rd** – Uninstructed Life Drawing 7-10pm

**March 27th** – General Membership Meeting  
(Pizza at 6:30, meeting starts at 7pm)

**March 30th** – Contract Holiday: Good Friday  
(All studios except DreamWorks, Nickelodeon and Rough Draft)



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