



THE PEGBOARD



ANIMATION GUILD AND AFFILIATED ELECTRONIC AND GRAPHIC ARTS

Los Angeles, California, March 2018

Vol. 47, Nº 3

IATSE DISTRICT 2 CONVENTION

Nominations at March General Membership Meeting

IATSE District 2 Convention is scheduled to take place June 8 to June 10 at Ceasar's Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Animation Guild, as an affiliate of District 2, can send delegates to the District Convention. According to our Constitution, our District Convention delegates are elected at the membership meeting two months prior to the convention, which will be the general membership meeting coming THIS MONTH!

The Animation Guild is afforded the same number of delegates that we can send to the International Convention. This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in engaging with the IATSE, learning about the governance of the union and helping to make our lives and livelihood better through membership in a union. You can nominate yourself at the GMM in March.

Per Article 13 of the International Constitution, the IATSE is broken into thirteen districts made up of a varying number of states and territories. California is included in District 2, along with Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii.

The purpose of the Districts is to be able to promote the welfare and concerns of the membership in a region-specific manner. This is done by resolutions approved by the delegates geared toward committing locals to acts of state or regional activism, or promoting state or federal legislation that directly affect our members.

In my first District Convention, I was appointed to the Resolutions Committee and helped to forward resolutions to the convention that supported joining the Bluegreen Alliance, which works to develop solutions to environmental challenges and defeating the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

All delegates who attend the District Convention will be assigned to participate in a committee. Participating as a delegate to the District and International conventions is an exciting way to engage with other IATSE members, represent the interests of the members of The Animation Guild and work to promote the concepts of collective action and trade unionism.

— *Steve Kaplan, Executive Board Member and Trustee*

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IATSE LOCAL 839

UNION PRIDE DAY **CATCHES FIRE!**

Inspired by last month's show of solidarity at Cartoon Network, crews at other studios donned their TAG T-shirts on March 5th -- Union Pride Day.

Want to organize your crew to show pride in your union?

E-mail Brooke.Keesling@tag839.org and we'll help you make a plan to get your own TAG T-shirts, pose for pictures and post the photos for the world to see!

Already have a T-shirt or pin? Wear it on Union Pride Day – the 1st Monday of every month! No need to stop after one shot; keep inspiring others every day!



FROM THE PRESIDENT KC JOHNSON



Visibility and Unity

Earlier this month at The Simpsons, we joined many other productions and took a crew photo in Animation Guild T-shirts for Union Pride Day. (Did you know that we now have a Union Pride Day?)

We took our picture across the street from our building, and as we walked back to work, I heard folks saying, “That was great!” – it was! – and a few asked me, “Why is the Guild encouraging this?”

It's an important question. As an answer, first let me ask: Where does a union derive its power? The Guild collects dues, so there are some financial resources, but that's not enough, right?

Of course not. To be strong, a Guild needs its members to stand together. We need to feel camaraderie with each other and be united as a group. I'm not talking about blind loyalty – we can resolve our differences together. But it is unity, our bonds that we share, that we need to demonstrate to our producers.

We do that by being visible. The more the studios can see The Animation Guild's presence in their halls, the more they'll see that our members are proud to be part of our union, and will stand up for it and each other.

The Animation Guild's Union Pride Day is on the first Monday of each month. It started only last November when one of your fellow members came to the General Membership Meeting, made a motion, and it passed by majority vote.

The T-shirt crew photos themselves demonstrate that the Guild can mobilize our members – easily – when we need to.

One voice at the General Membership Meeting in January suggested that we were too apathetic to do it. Look at the response!

Just a couple of years ago, maybe less, that voice might have been right—apathy and disengagement, low turnout at meetings. At one contract negotiation session, there were only four people on our side of the table.

But this is a different year. And you are paying attention. You are vocal, and you are showing up.

Negotiations are scheduled for two days in May. If we need to flex our muscles, there are a lot of tools in our toolbox between doing nothing and striking. These T-shirts help lay the foundation for some of those actions.

The next Union Pride Day is Monday, April 2nd. Wear a T-shirt or a button. Be visible, and stand united.

In solidarity,

KC Johnson

Any questions? Find me at: KC.Johnson@tag839.org.



The Simpsons Crew show their Union Pride on March 5th!

*The crew was organized by TAG President KC Johnson
and Executive Board member Larry Smith*

FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE JASON MACLEOD



Wage Stagnation and Overscale Compression

At studio walkarounds, members will stop me and say “I’m making the same rate that I was fifteen years ago. I thought we got annual cost-of-living raises. What’s going on?”

What *IS* going on here?

Supply and demand. Regardless of what employers are saying publicly – things like “We can’t find enough good people” – if wages aren’t increasing, what managers really mean is “we can’t find enough good people to work for the wages we’re offering.” It is up to employers to make the business decision to increase the offered wages in hopes of attracting more candidates.

About the cost-of-living increases: the union contract sets minimum wages, and these minimums increase every year – in recent history the annual increases to the minimums have been either 2% or 3% annually, depending on how successful the negotiating committee was in the most recent bargaining cycle. But, if you are being paid above the minimums (often referred to as overscale) then there is no contractual requirement that your employer further increase your rate of pay. Market conditions might influence this, but there is nothing in the contract that forces employers to raise wages above the negotiated minimums.

When skilled workers are in short supply, the demand to hire them from the producer side often leads to higher wages. This was the case through the 1990’s for some members, and from the 1990’s through the early 2000’s for others. During periods of high demand, it is common for workers to wonder why there is a union in the first place – market conditions are so good for them that they don’t realize they’re in a bubble. However, when demand lessens, and there is an oversupply of talent, the minimums that the union contract require help prevent the bottom from dropping out of the market.

We're now looking at what may be another increase in demand for workers as streaming platforms and technology companies search for content to attract viewers and subscribers. They need talent to produce that content, and this demand may be the market force needed to help drive wages significantly higher. Will studios pay more for experience? Studios benefit from having good, experienced workers – they do not require training, they understand schedules and deadlines, and their quality of work is higher. Experienced workers also bring leadership qualities that can benefit today's fast-paced productions.

But, if it was possible to move work away in the 1980's, today it has only gotten easier. Technology, the internet, production incentives and other factors have made it possible to outsource all stages of production, and there are talented artists all around the world eager to do the work.

As a union of workers, what can we do to counter this? We can organize, partner, and advertise.

In the US, we need to chase the work in Atlanta, New York and elsewhere and organize those workers so they can have the working conditions and benefits they deserve. In Canada, we need to support our fellow IATSE unions in their efforts to have more animation done under a union contract. We need members willing to serve on committees and lead efforts to be involved with national, state and local public policy so that our voices are present in conversations about worker protections, job growth, and quality of life. We can partner with other unions that share our views on labor issues to increase our collective strength. Politicians need to hear from their constituents, not just the staff at the union office.

For locations beyond the US and Canada, we need to advertise the quality of life that we have established through years of negotiation. For most professionals in animation, working in Los Angeles at a union studio is their dream. We set the bar, and through publicly sharing our contracts, wages, and benefits with others we remind them of what they should ask their employers for.

To keep this quality of life we need to work together. Producers will not pay more than they have to. It is up to us to control the market, and to demand that talent be paid appropriately.

Yours in solidarity,

Jason

LUNCH AND LEARN!

March 27 from 12:30 to 2:00pm

Join Business Representative Jason MacLeod and IA Representative (and Local 839 Trustee) Steve Kaplan for a lunchtime conversation about Guild contracts, labor law, and any union-related questions you may have.

This session's topics include:

- Freelance, overtime, and "daily hire" hourly rates •
- What does "on call" mean? •
- New Media terms and conditions (Sideletter N) •

Space is limited to 20 participants
RSVP today to Brooke Keesling and reserve your spot!
Brooke.Keesling@tag839.org

Lunch will be provided.



Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Panel

**on Thursday, April 19th.
Dinner will be provided at 6:30pm
Panel starts at 7:00pm**

**Join TAG President KC Johnson in conversation
with Jason Oliver, an attorney who specializes in
sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation cases.**

**The discussion will include defining sexual harassment,
and explaining the rights and responsibilities of workers,
in addition to how to help create safer work environments
in the animation industry. Q&A will follow the discussion.**



**the
animation
guild**

IATSE LOCAL 839

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WHY WE JOINED THE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Ray Leong: I joined the Negotiation Committee for the same reasons I volunteered to be a Shop Steward and Executive Board Member: To be more informed about our Union and be an active participant in shaping its future.

Dave Chlystek: We are at a crossroads in our industry. Work has never been more abundant, but our wages have grown stagnant for over a decade. The schedules have been shortened to unreasonable lengths. We are being asked to do more as jobs are folded into one another. Yet animation on the big and small screen has proven to be very lucrative and successful for the studios. We need to take back our concessions and better our lives for ourselves and our families. Our legacy going forward will be viewed by how hard we fought the battle. Did we give up, or did we do what was necessary to ensure our future is bright and vital? Not just for ourselves, but for all future generations of talent, keeping our beautiful industry vibrant and alive.

Danny Ducker: To be completely honest, I didn't actually give a whole lot of thought to why I wanted to join the Negotiations Committee until now. I knew there was a lot of work to be done and felt like I had the time and energy; it seemed like the only natural choice to get involved. The Union is only as strong as its members, so it's time to dig in and do the work!

Kristin Donner: Empathy. My heart aches every time I hear that a Guild family has suffered due to inadequate benefits. I volunteered for the Family Leave Subcommittee to support my friends and all the families who help create the cartoons we love. Equality. Personal and family leave benefits are one way that companies are closing the gender gap, recruiting top talent, and showing they value their teams. It's time Animation Guild members are fully valued alongside our corporate teammates.

Steve Kaplan: Since joining TAG as its organizer, and now the IA as an organizer, I'm humbled and honored to represent animation professionals in discussions with employers over improving working conditions and raising pressing issues. While the entertainment industry provides a much needed outlet for society, animation does so in a whimsical yet powerful way. Delivering the message of the combined voices of our members will always be something I look forward to.

Henry Gilroy: I like to think of the Union as a family, as we do our crews of the productions we're on, and I intend to represent every member and protect their interests as I would family. We're all in this together and I know together we are strong.

Jason MacLeod: I'm the Business Representative – our Constitution and By-Laws state that my role includes chairing all collective bargaining agreement negotiation committees. As chair, I have worked to assemble a volunteer committee that is representative of our crafts and committed to doing the best we can for the membership. I'm very impressed by the efforts I am seeing from the group, and I encourage all members to get involved and support negotiation efforts in whatever ways they can.

KC Johnson: Negotiating our contracts is the core of why our Guild exists. Learning and experiencing how this process works is essential to a true understanding of our Union. I've learned it's a marathon, not a sprint. Every three years we have an opportunity to use leverage to improve the contract for the better, to use what we learned last time, and discover what we'll need for the next time. As your President, I'm a part of the negotiations committee to help represent you and fight for your interests, but it is your passion and involvement that makes the Union strongest. You make up the leverage. We have an incredible amount of enthusiasm and participation this time, and it's exciting to see!

Kyle Neswald: I became a Union member in '99 and little, energetic me participated in a few meetings. But I quickly became disenchanted by what I perceived as a lack of action within the Union, so I stopped caring. It took me a LONG time to finally realize that ignoring the car doesn't make it go; you gotta get in and step on the accelerator, baby!

Jason Mayer: I participated in my first negotiation committee in 2012 after a request by our Business Representative for support when the AMPTP tried to get The Animation Guild to accept a smaller wage package than the other Hollywood Locals. That experience led to more active involvement in the Union, both to educate myself and help my fellow coworkers with questions. I became a shop steward and eventually joined the Executive Board, where I still serve. I was a part of the negotiation committee again in the 2015 negotiations, hoping to bring a CG feature perspective to the discussions. My primary focus for 2018 is to clean up the confusion surrounding the job titles, particularly in Sideletter E, where there are 22 different tiers to track an artist/technician's skill level at their job, which is outrageous. There are no definitions associated with the tiers, very little defined path of progression from one to the next, and they do not relate to production credits or studio job titles. My hope is to make some progress towards alleviating the confusion.

Lindsey Pollard: I have always attended Union meetings but felt it was time to become more active, and I was inspired by the results of the last set of negotiations and the people who participated. I am enjoying the challenging process of preparation for the upcoming negotiations and getting to know my delightful peers!

Paula Spence: I joined the Negotiations Committee in 2012 when I realized that rank and file members were needed to show support for the team who had planned and attended the first round of contract negotiations, which had ended in a walkout. A labor union is run by its members, and if no one stands up for themselves as an individual the Union has no power to bargain for what all of its members want and need: the best wages and working conditions as it's possible to get. I'd like to say, "Someone's got to do it, so why not me?" but the truth is that we ALL need to do it, so why not all of us!

Mairghread Scott: I'm helping with the negotiations because no one can do everything, but everyone can do something. Even if it's just sharing your story. It makes me proud to know I'm making our industry better, even just a bit.

IT'S OUR TIME

WHY BENEFITS MATTER IN 2018

By Kristin Donner & Kyle Neswald

In this contract negotiation year, additional *benefits* are one way that we may be able to score above and beyond our hourly rates. Benefits offer valuable support – from taking sick days to welcoming new babies to recovering from the loss of a loved one – and studio executives know this. Some of the country's best benefits are part of their own corporate employment packages.

Our State of California benefits for personal and family leave just aren't enough.

Nickelodeon storyboard artist Neil and his wife already had a toddler at home when baby number two arrived via C-section. Neil used vacation and sick days for a total of two weeks with his family – that's *four* weeks less than State law suggests, and four weeks less than Neil would have liked. But with no corporate benefits and State benefits only covering a percentage of pay (approximately 60% in 2018), Neil couldn't afford to take paternity leave.¹ Sleep-deprived Neil returned to work, as his wife tried to recuperate while caring for two little ones. When compared to Viacom corporate benefits (ten fully paid maternity weeks, four fully paid paternity weeks, and twenty-five subsidized babysitting days), artists' benefits often fall short of benefits others get at the companies where they work.²

CG artist Lorin had a better experience. DreamWorks integrated its own contribution with the State's employee-funded contribution to pay 100% of Lorin's salary for the first six weeks of maternity leave. This approach bridges the gap between corporate and Guild employee benefits and shows that the studio values everyone on its team. Wouldn't it be great if *all* new parents received support?

Benefits allow us to do our best work and live our best lives. Some studios prioritize employee welfare with added benefits that help members thrive. Others . . . don't.

When Cartoon Network designer Nathan lost his father, he needed time to grieve and settle family affairs. Instead, he discovered that his studio doesn't offer bereavement days and that bereavement isn't even mentioned in our contract. Nathan's only option was to use his own sick days and vacation days to help his family – and hope that he himself didn't fall ill or need a break for the rest of the year. This *added stress* to an already difficult time.

Fox director Greg had a different experience. When his beloved grandmother passed away, he discovered that his studio offers five paid bereavement days. Benefits like these cost the studio very little but have huge value to families in need.

The discrepancies between individual member experiences like the ones above and limited benefits, which discourage workers, demonstrate a need for change. We need to negotiate a benefits package that *everyone* can count on.

Support us as we fight to add paid personal and family leave benefits to our contract in 2018. It's OUR time.



¹ Calculating Paid Family Leave Benefit Payment Amounts. *State of California Employee Development Department*. http://www.edd.ca.gov/Disability/Calculating_PFL_Benefit_Payment_Amounts.htm.

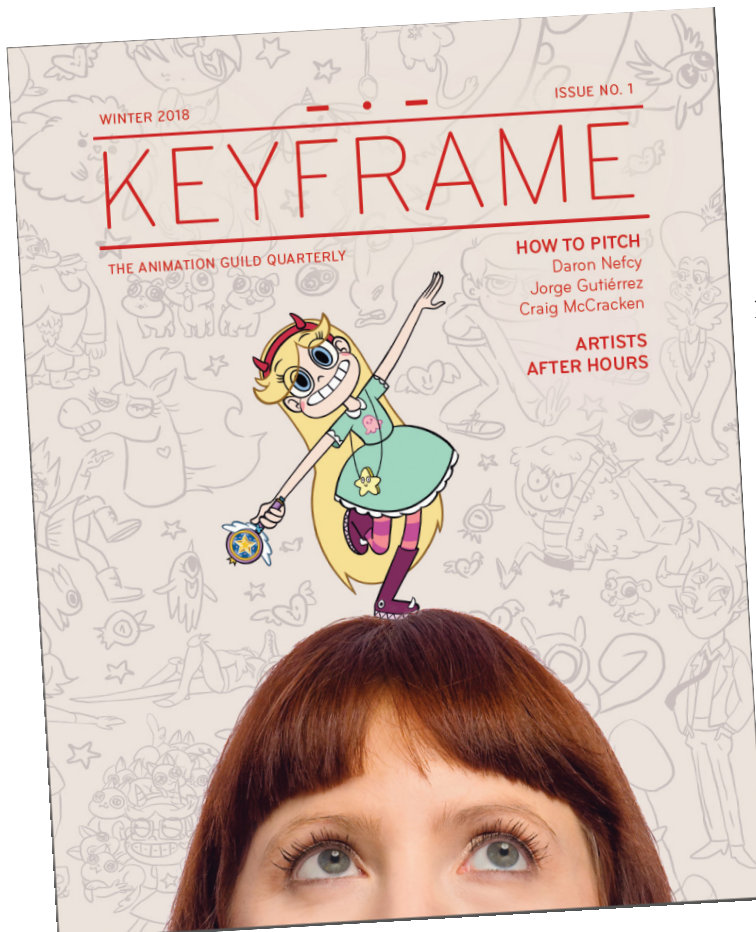
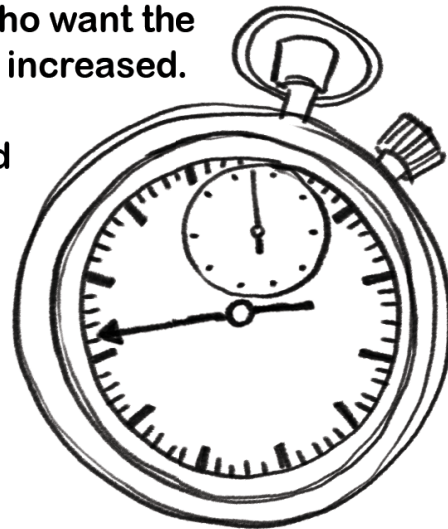
² 100 Best Companies 2017. *Working Mother*. <https://www.workingmother.com/sites/workingmother.com/files/attachments/2017/09/100best-chart-finalv3.pdf>.

Attention!

Animation Timing Directors are invited to join the 'Timers Unite!' Group on Facebook.

This is a closed group (content is not viewable to non-group members) of Animation Timing Directors who want the footage rate for freelance timing increased.

This very issue will be addressed in upcoming Union negotiations and the 'Timers Unite!' Group will keep you connected and current on developments.



KEYFRAME

The Animation Guild Quarterly magazine is here! Issue No. 1 hit mailboxes last month and feedback has been coming in from around the world!

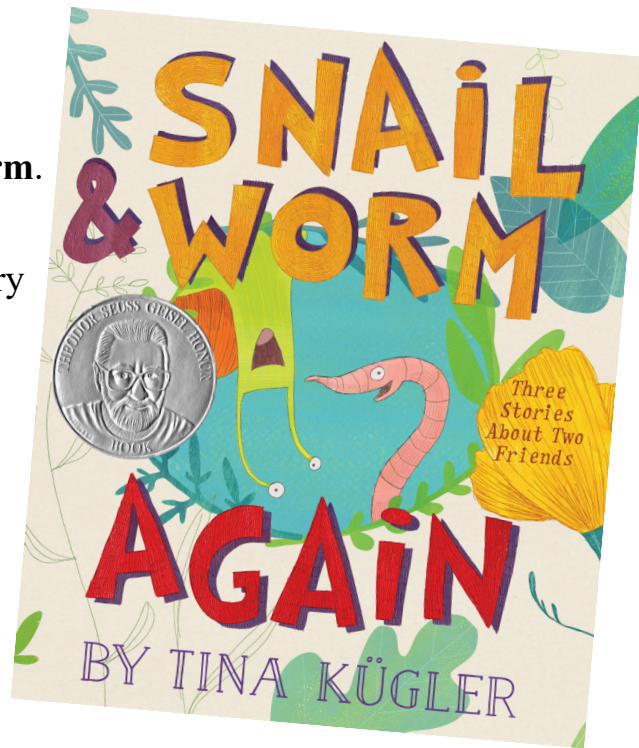
If you've got story ideas, write to our Editor-In-Chief, Alexi Drosu, at editor@tag839.org.

And if you're not an active member and would like to purchase a subscription visit animationguild.org/keyframe

Author-illustrator Tina Kügler received a 2018 Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor for her children's book, **Snail & Worm Again**, a sequel to her book **Snail & Worm**.

The Geisel Honor is awarded annually by the American Library Association to beginning reader books that merit an outstanding contribution to children's literature. Tina was a story artist for Nickelodeon, Warner Bros. and Disney Television Animation, and is currently seeking work in the craft of storyboard revision.

See more of her work and get in touch at tinakuglerstudio.com.



Ashley Long, Supervising Director at Bento Box, was appointed to the Executive Board and will be sworn in at the April Executive Board meeting.

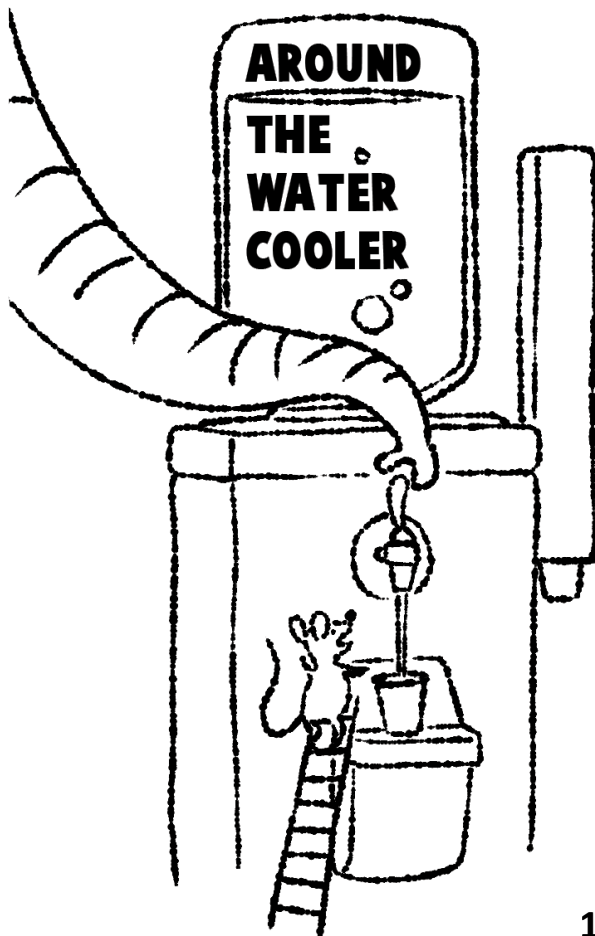
Want to organize your crew to show pride in your union?

Wear your Animation Guild T-shirts on Union Pride Day – the 1st Monday of the month!

Send an e-mail to pegboard@tag839.org and we'll help you make a plan and post pictures!

Got a piece of news for our Around the Water Cooler section? Call Office Manager Lyn Mantta at the Guild and give her the scoop!

Call (818) 845-7500 or e-mail lyn@animationguild.org





SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Gates Open at 11am

Betting Instruction Class at 11:15am

Lunch from 12pm to 2pm

First Race at 12:30pm

**Santa Anita Park
285 W. Huntington Drive
Arcadia, CA**

For more information

www.mptf.com/datr

abel.martinez@mptf.com / 818-876-1974



MPTF



Uninstructed Life Drawing

2nd and 4th Fridays!

7 - 10 pm

Life Drawing Room in Back
@The Animation Guild

18 and older

\$15 General Admission

\$10 TAG Members

Cash Only

* drawing by Lisa Dosson

Brought to you with **Model Drawing Collective**

MARCH 23RD . APRIL 13TH . APRIL 27TH

GALLERY 839
PRESENTS

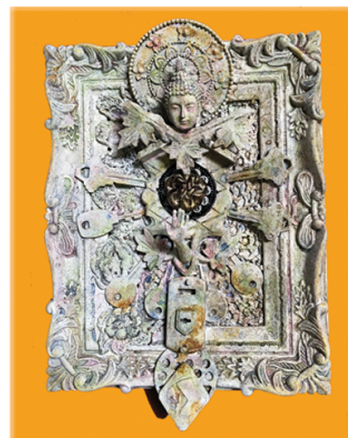
**THE 3 AMIGOS
2018 GALLERY SHOW**

RECEPTIONS:
FRIDAY, APRIL 6TH...6-9 P.M.
SATURDAY, APRIL 7TH...3-5 P.M.

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GALLERY HOURS 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

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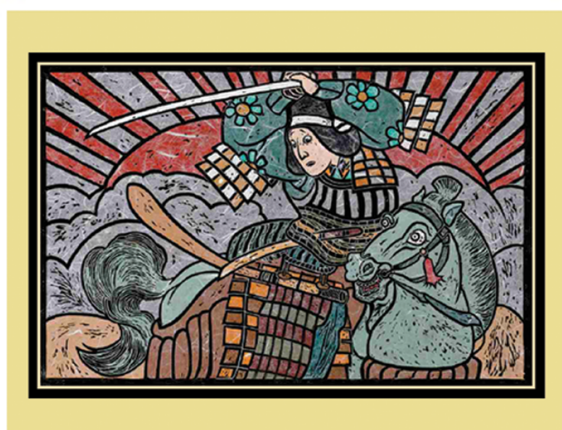
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UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

March 23rd – Uninstructed Life Drawing 7-10pm

March 27th – Lunch & Learn 12:30-2pm

Lunchtime conversation about union-related issues
On the Agenda: Freelance, overtime, and “daily hire”
hourly rates; defining “on call” status; New Media terms
and conditions (Sideletter N). Space is limited; please
RSVP by e-mailing Brooke.Keesling@tag839.org.

March 27th – General Membership Meeting

(Pizza at 6:30, meeting starts at 7pm)

On the Agenda: Trustees Report, Election of Delegates for
Summer Convention, Update on Contract Negotiations

March 30th – Contract Holiday: Good Friday

(All studios except DreamWorks, Nickelodeon and Rough Draft)

April 6th – Gallery 839 New Show Opening 6-9pm

April 13th – Uninstructed Life Drawing 7-10pm

April 19th – Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Panel

(Dinner at 6:30, Panel Starts at 7:00)

April 27th – Uninstructed Life Drawing 7-10pm



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