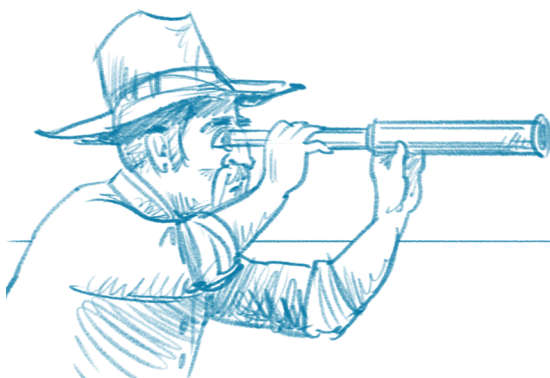


# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2020 AND BEYOND



Happy New Year! We're a few weeks into 2020 and things are getting busy again at the Animation Guild after a relatively quiet end to 2019. The new Executive Board and Officers were sworn in at the beginning of December. We will miss those leaders who are not returning in this term, but your current E-Board is ready to work with members and TAG staff on new projects and plans for the next negotiation cycle.

After their swearing-in, I heard from some board members about their goals. Testing Committee Chair Danny Ducker sees unpaid testing as her white whale and will not lay down her harpoon until she sees some positive progress, but she's set her sights on the bigger picture, too. She says, "My long-term goals are to help turn our membership into a community by encouraging and facilitating mentorship programs, management training, and outreach to both new members and longtime veterans."

After his nomination at the September General Membership Meeting, Jack Cusumano shot a campaign video with the help of fellow member Brent Noll. He says, "I wanted something quick and shareable with all the essential information." Now that he's won a seat on the E-Board, he'd like to turn that experience into positive action and "help the Guild

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**PEGBOARD SUBSCRIPTION POLICY:** Active members automatically receive The Pegboard 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 \$15.00 per year (\$25.00 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.



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animation  
guild

IATSE LOCAL 839

communicate to its membership more effectively.” Quality informational videos “could help new members get up to speed with all the Guild can do for them, and all they can do for the Guild, and may even help more established members catch up or revisit things they had forgotten about.”

KC Johnson has returned to a regular seat on the Executive Board after serving as President for over two years. She worked hard during her term in the top spot and isn’t ready to call it quits, saying “I’m looking forward to focusing on the Constitution and Preparation/Action Committees and assisting with a Committee Chairs training day. Most of our committees have the goal of improving the contract, so we need them firing on all cylinders!” I, for one, hope to see all of our E-Board members participate in planning for the next round of contract negotiations, as bargaining for the best deal we can get for members is our union’s primary reason for being. Newly elected Vice-President Jack Thomas is back and hoping to “strengthen our union internally and externally and put an end to all this “New Media” bullshit once and for all in the next negotiation.” I think we can all agree that paying people less for working on streaming projects is BS – we’ll all have to pull together to force a change in our contract regarding “New Media.”

What are YOUR goals for the new year and the next negotiations? The new Executive Board needs to know what rank and file members want and need, so please share your thoughts. You can do that by writing an email to any Board member. If you’re reading this newsletter digitally, good for you and thanks for saving a tree – you can go to page 2 and click on any Officer or E-Board member’s name to start an email. All Executive Board and office staff emails can be found, with clickable hyperlinks, on the CONTACT page of the Animation Guild’s website: <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/contact/>, so if you’re reading a hard copy of the newsletter just visit the website to start your message.

You can also find out what’s happening and let Guild leadership know what’s important to you by coming to membership meetings. If emails and meetings just aren’t your bag, then at least just stay informed by reading our publications and email blasts like *This Week @ TAG*. If you’re not getting those emails, sign up at <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/email-list/>. And please, please, PLEASE take the time to fill out those surveys when you get them in your mailbox – it’s literally the easiest way to tell us what you want and need.

— **Paula Spence**, Pegboard Editor

## FROM THE PRESIDENT JEANETTE MORENO KING



My duties as president are fairly limited. I run the meetings, both Executive Board and the General Membership Meetings, but can only vote on a motion if there is a tie. I create committees and appoint their chairs and members, and am, myself, a member of each committee. It is also my responsibility to see that all officers perform their duties according to the Guild's Constitution and By-Laws. I am to attend every meeting of the Board of Trustees and I share the duty of signing the Guild's checks on a weekly basis. On top of that, the President writes monthly articles in *The Pegboard* and a quarterly letter in *Keyframe*. Writing is the duty I honestly struggle over more than any other. All of these tasks take time.

Despite the work I'm doing to fulfill my responsibilities as President, there is more to be done every day, every week, every month and every year. Our members expect the union to evolve and improve with the times and that's something I and the other Officers and Executive Board support and strive for. The most effective way to make change is for members like you to get involved in our union. **You** are the ones who can push our agenda. **You** are the ones that can make our presence felt in our many, diverse workplaces. Our union's power comes from **YOU**.

Your involvement doesn't necessarily require a big time commitment; it can be tailored to your personal circumstances. There are many ways you can make a difference and no action is too small or trivial. All we need from you is a bit of your time and a little effort. Here are some ideas for getting involved, grouped according to estimated time needed.

### If you have an hour or less:

- Keep up to date with the Guild's goings-on by reading *The Pegboard* (monthly), *This Week @ TAG* emails (bi-weekly) and *Keyframe* (quarterly).
- Contribute a drawing to the next TAG Post-It Note Show fundraiser for the IATSE PAC – it raises money for a good cause!
- Wear your TAG t-shirt or lapel pin in your workplace.

- Share photos and news from TAG events on social media and be sure to “TAG” us! (See what I did there?)
- Engage your Shop Steward and keep an open dialogue with them about what’s happening on your production, or ask them questions about your benefits.

### **If you have a couple of hours here and there:**

- Attend one of our bi-monthly general membership meetings or one of our many committee meetings (see <https://animationguild.org/committees/> for more details and contact info).
- Organize a TAG Tuesday on your production by contacting our Field Representative Leslie Simmons and getting free TAG t-shirts for your entire crew (email: [leslie.simmons@tag839.org](mailto:leslie.simmons@tag839.org)).
- Attend one of our quarterly mixers or a committee event like the FAM Committee’s Holiday Social or the Color Design Committee’s recent sign-making event for the Women’s March.
- Volunteer to help at a committee event or an IA inter-Local event: You can represent your craft or our union out in the world!

### **If you have more time and passion:**

- Write an article or do a drawing or comic for *The Pegboard*, help the Storyboard Committee with animation for an informational video (email: [animationstoryboardgroup@gmail.com](mailto:animationstoryboardgroup@gmail.com)), contribute illustrations to the Communications Committee’s TAG A To Z project (email: [committee-comms@tag839.org](mailto:committee-comms@tag839.org)).
- Volunteer to chair or co-chair a committee, or inquire about starting a new committee with a mission and goals that are important to you and others. Proposals for action are crafted in committee, then presented to the Executive Board for review and approval (email: [committees@tag839.org](mailto:committees@tag839.org)).
- Become a Shop Steward or a Craft Representative (email: [leslie.simmons@tag839.org](mailto:leslie.simmons@tag839.org)).

The list could go on and on, but I feel this is a good start.

You can make a real difference in the direction our union takes. You are all representatives in your workplaces and you all have a voice. Now get out there and show them what solidarity looks like!

## FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KAPLAN



This is a crucial year for both federal, state and local politics, and so it's a great opportunity for Animation Guild members to get educated about the issues that matter to us as an industry and society, and get involved by participating (VOTE!) and engaging (sharing information with others and asking them to vote).

This year marks the end of the US President's current term. As the last four years have unspooled, there have been polarizing changes brought forth by the current administration. Many of the lofty campaign promises have not been kept, and the changes that were implemented have not been favorable for working people. Democrats are putting forward candidates to challenge the occupant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue this November.

The first step towards changing the political tide is voting in the primaries. "Super Tuesday" is the election day early in a presidential primary season when the greatest number of states hold primary elections and caucuses. This year, the California presidential primary will be held on Super Tuesday, which takes place on March 3. Six of the most populous states will be among the nine to hold primaries that day, meaning almost thirty percent of the U.S. population will have a chance to vote on their choice for the presidential candidates. It's also your opportunity to have a say in who will lead the country, so mark your calendars!

Along with the change in voting date, the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder has deployed a new way LA County will vote. Gone are the usual polling locations and fixed times you need to vote. Now, there are more and bigger voting centers, a longer voting period, and new voting stations called Ballot Marking Devices. You can learn more about the new system and register to vote at the LA County Registrar-Recorder website: <https://lavote.net>. Inform yourself and help spread the word.

The Animation Guild has partnered with our sister IA Locals in California to raise political awareness of our membership and push our collective interests in Sacramento through the California IATSE Coalition (CIC). For example, the CIC has committed to supporting the reintroduction and passage of AB 1611 – Stop Surprise Emergency Room Bills.

This legislation is meant to stop the outrageous bills that can be incurred from visiting an out-of-network emergency room in a time of crisis. The upcoming elections are a key focus for the CIC and messaging from the coalition that highlights their research and support of labor friendly and IATSE friendly candidates will be forthcoming.

Locally, the seat in the US House of Representatives for California Congressional District (CD) 25 was vacated by Katie Hill, and a special election will be held to fill that seat on May 12, 2020. The CIC has agreed to support Christy Smith in her effort to keep a labor friendly congressperson in the seat.

Here at our union, IA Local 839, the PAL Committee is made up of Guild members interested in raising the political awareness of all members and supporting the IATSE PAC. While the Post-It Note Show in December was a huge success, the committee is eager to participate in “Get Out The Vote” campaigns throughout our state and local AFL-CIO chapters. If you would like to participate in the PAL Committee, please let me know by emailing me at [steve.kaplan@tag839.org](mailto:steve.kaplan@tag839.org).

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## REMINDER: Dues Increase in 2020

All dues rates will increase by \$7 for 2020.

This is the final year of the four year phase-in of the increase approved by members in 2016.

Please look for the updated amount on your December dues bill and update any scheduled payments you may have in place.

Questions? Call the union office at (818) 845-7500.



# RESOURCES FOR DEALING WITH POST-HOLIDAY BLUES

The Animation Guild is here to assist you in finding the help you might need during times of grief or the post-holiday blues . . . through the Motion Picture Industry Health Plan.

## If You Have Anthem Blue Cross PPO

### *Optum Employee Assistance Program: Live and Work Well*

Most members are enrolled in the Anthem Blue Cross PPO. Under this plan, mental health benefits are carried through Optum. In-network providers have a \$5 copay. You can search for in-network providers on Optum's website—[liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com)—with Access Code **MPIPHP**.

Be sure to check with the provider to ensure they are in the Optum network before scheduling an appointment. If they accept Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefits, you can receive five free sessions by requesting an EAP letter at 888-661-9141 or through [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com).

Out-of-network providers are covered at approximately 50 percent of the cost. Many therapists accept Optum but be sure to confirm before making an appointment, and submit claims through [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com). For more information, contact Optum at 888-661-9141.

[PsychologyToday.com](https://PsychologyToday.com) is a valuable search tool when looking for out-of-network counseling.

## If You Have Kaiser HMO

Under the Kaiser HMO, in-network individual therapy sessions have a \$15 copay. In-network group therapy sessions have a \$7 copay. Out-of-network providers are not covered. You do not need prior authorization from your primary care physician to receive mental health services at Kaiser facilities.

You can search for in-network providers by visiting [kp.org/mentalhealth](https://kp.org/mentalhealth) or by calling Kaiser member services at 800-464-4000.



## If You Have HealthNet HMO

Under the HealthNet HMO, mental health benefits are run through Manage Health Network (MHN). In-network Individual therapy sessions have a \$15 copay. In-network group therapy sessions have a \$7.50 copay. Out-of-network providers are not covered. You do not need prior authorization from your primary care physician to receive mental health services. To search for in-network therapists, visit [mhn.com](http://mhn.com) or contact MHN at 888-926-5133.

If you're unsure what plan you are registered with, or if you have any other health insurance questions, you can contact MPIPHP at 855-275-4674 or visit their website at [mpiphp.org](http://mpiphp.org).

The Animation Guild office is also available to answer any questions you might have, either by phone at 818-845-7500 or by emailing [membership@tag839.org](mailto:membership@tag839.org). Reach out to us and we'll put you in touch with your MPI benefits.

— *Rusteen Honardoost*

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## Diversity and Inclusion Panel with Animation Luminaries

February 26, 2020 • 7 to 10 p.m.

Please join us for a unique event  
featuring a conversation with animation luminaries  
Willie Ito, Floyd Norman and Jane Baer  
followed by an industry mixer.

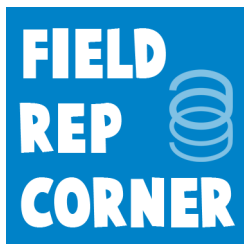
The discussion, moderated by author and Academy scholar Mindy Johnson, will revisit bias in the animation industry, look at personal experiences and contemplate solutions moving forward.

Following the conversation, we will host a reception  
and industry mixer with refreshments.

Cash bar only.

Reserve your free tickets here:

<https://animationluminaries.eventbrite.com>



## **GET TO KNOW YOUR UNION PLUS MEMBER BENEFITS!**

Did you know as members of The Animation Guild you have access to a wide variety of benefits just because you are a union member?

It's true! There's a wide variety of benefits, discounts and services available through the Union Plus Benefits program.

Out in the field and in the course of my conversations with members, many of you are learning about this unique members-only benefit. From new homebuyer programs to flower discounts to car buying to life insurance. There are lots of benefits available!

The Union Plus program is a non-profit consumer benefits organization created 30 years ago by the AFL-CIO for working families. (The AFL-CIO is the powerful union coalition that most labor unions in the United States are members of, including the IATSE and Local 839.) Their mission is to improve the quality of life for union members and their families, provide valuable benefits and services that strengthen the ties of union members to their unions and contribute funding to the labor movement.

Each benefit is diligently researched and vetted by Union Plus staff and tailored to support union members and their family.

One such program designed for union members is their mortgage program. Members can choose from the Union Plus Mortgage Company, a union-owned company, or Wells Fargo. For example, if a homebuyer is going through the Union Plus Mortgage Co., members can find competitive rates, unionized loan officers, a \$500 gift card after closing for purchasing or refinancing, a \$1,000 grant from Union Plus for qualified veterans who purchase a primary residence and a \$250 gift card for first-time homebuyers. Similar benefits are available through the program with Wells Fargo. Additionally, there are safety nets in place for participants in this program, such as the Mortgage Assistance Program, which offers special hardship assistance for union members who are laid-off, on strike or disabled.

Other benefits available include life insurance policies, free credit counseling, legal services, a scholarship program, pet insurance, a 15% discount on AT&T mobile phone plans and auto buying programs, including special rebates when you buy union-made cars. There are many more benefits you can use, including one of their most popular, 20% off or more with Teleflora. To see what benefits are available to you and to sign up, visit [www.unionplus.org/iatse](http://www.unionplus.org/iatse). Membership has its benefits!

In solidarity,

**Leslie Simmons**

*Field Representative/Political Coordinator*

[leslie.simmons@tag839.org](mailto:leslie.simmons@tag839.org)

Call or text: 747.238.0287



**UNIONPLUS**



## **PET INSURANCE**

Save up to 90% on your pet's vet bills with pet health insurance.

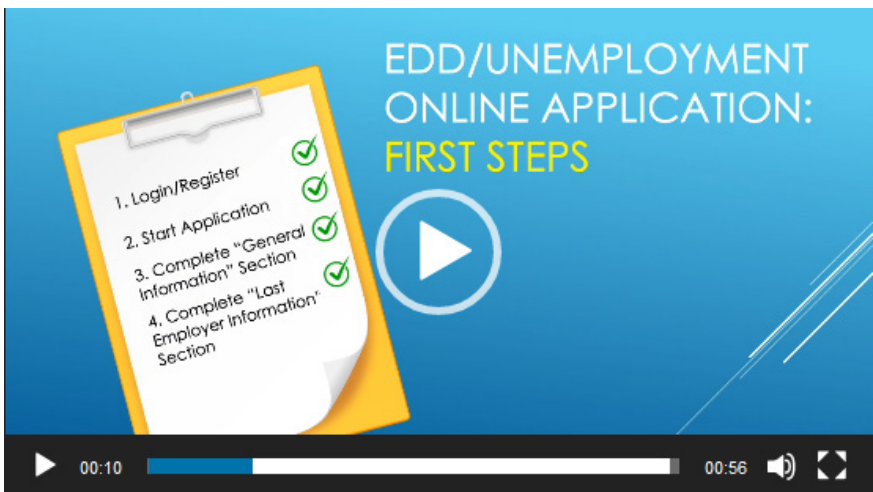


# CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: NEW CATEGORIES MAKE IT EASIER TO FILE

We have heard from Local 839 members that they are finding it difficult to complete the current California Unemployment Insurance Online Application because the job classification descriptions are confusing and often irrelevant. To fix this problem, over the past eight months the California IATSE Council (CIC) and Local 839 have been working on your behalf with the Unemployment Insurance Department of the California Employment Development Department (EDD). This is the agency that administers California's unemployment insurance program. They are required to use the federal government job classification descriptions, so we had to work with that reality to get the best solution possible.

We are glad to tell you that we have successfully negotiated some significant changes in Local 839's job classifications that work to your benefit including three new classifications—animation artist, animation technician and animation writer.

CIC has also created a step-by-step presentation of how Local 839 members can apply online for CA UI, available for viewing on our website: <https://animationguild.org/new-changes-to-the-california-unemployment/>. Please note there is a job classification slide which will help you determine which classification applies to you.



*This article was originally published on the UNION NEWS page of The Animation Guild's website: <https://animationguild.org/category/union-news/>.*

# **GET TO KNOW THE TAG 401K PLAN . . . ... AND THEN SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE!**

As one of the 14 IATSE Motion Picture and TV Locals in Hollywood, our union enjoys the benefits of the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans, which include comprehensive health care and both a Defined Benefit Plan and an Individual Account Plan. The Animation Guild, however, is one of few Locals to offer a 401(k) plan, and it can help members set aside a portion of their earnings to complement their two MPI pension plans in their retirement years.

## **Some basic information about The Animation Guild 401(k) Plan:**

- Participation in the Plan is voluntary; there have been automatic enrollments at two studios in recent years, but those members can opt out if they choose not to participate.
- In order to participate, members must have been employed at a signatory studio for at least 90 days.
- The Plan is funded through participants' payroll deductions; there is no employer match because our employers are already paying into the two MPI pension plans for every hour worked.
- There are Pre-Tax and Roth401(k) options available: Pre-Tax deductions come out of your paycheck BEFORE taxes (you'll pay taxes later when you withdraw the funds in retirement). Roth401(k) deductions come out of your paycheck AFTER taxes (there will be no taxes to pay when you withdraw the funds in retirement).
- Participants can contribute between 2% and 40% of gross earnings per paycheck.
- Deductions are limited by the IRS: The 2020 limits are \$19,500 for the year, plus up to \$6500 more for those who will be 50 or older by the end of the year.

Whew! That's a lot to absorb. If some of that went over your head, just remember this – We all need to save to secure a retirement with dignity. And you're going to be a lot better off if you save earlier in your career instead of waiting until later. To find out more about the Animation Guild 401(k) Plan or download forms to sign up or change your contributions, go to: <https://animationguild.org/benefits/401k-forms/>.

# HOW A YOUNG EARNER CAN GET AHEAD IN THE SAVINGS GAME

We all know how hard it is to stretch a paycheck to cover all of our expenses, especially when the cost of living in Southern California is so high. It's even harder to set aside some of that money to save for a secure retirement in the future. Add student loans to the mix and retirement starts to look like a downright impossibility.

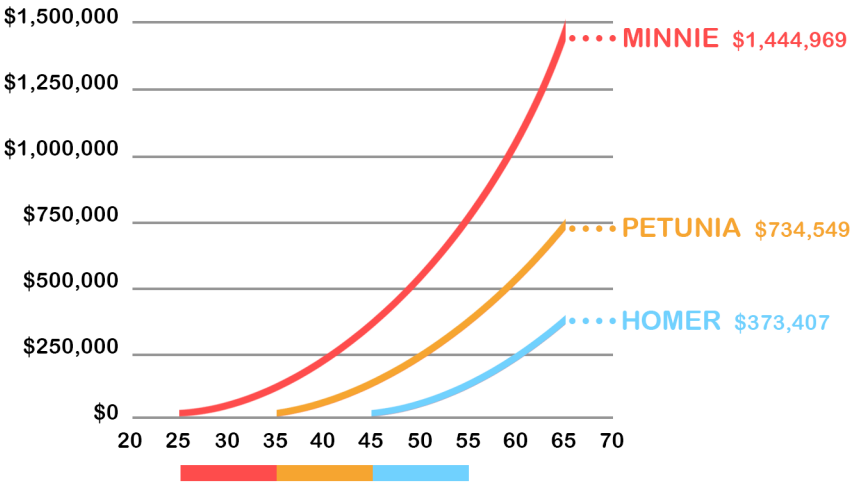
Even though the Animation Guild has a 401(k) Plan that makes it easy for participants to have a set amount withdrawn from each paycheck and invested in funds of your choosing (from a range of Vanguard offerings), it's not a surprise that someone starting out in their animation career with a big fat student loan debt on their mind might find it difficult to take the plunge into saving for retirement. It's not easy being young in today's economy, but the younger you are, the more advantage you have in starting your savings NOW because you have time on your side.

Here are two good reasons to start saving when you're young, even if you're burdened by student loans:

1. If your loan payment is based on your income, you can lower your net taxable income amount by having 401(k) contributions withdrawn BEFORE taxes. That might mean you can get a lower monthly loan repayment amount from your loan provider.
2. The money you invest now will be earning interest throughout your working years and interest that compounds over the years means the money you put away early has more time to grow than money you might put away later in your career.

Here's an illustration of the power of compound interest using theoretical numbers: Let's say three investors – Minnie, Petunia and Homer – saved the same amount of money over a 10-year term – each put away \$1000 a month for ten years. For simplicity's sake, we'll say they each earned the same 7% annual return year after year until age 65. The difference between the three is their age when they started saving: Minnie saved between 25 and 35, Petunia started at 35 and saved until 45, and Homer paid off his student loans, started saving at 45 and stopped at 55.

Again, in this example, each put away \$120,000 over ten years and then left their savings invested to grow at a steady 7% until they retired at the age of 65. Though the amount saved was the same, their balances at age 65 were quite different.



Here's what they would each have at retirement:

**Minnie – \$1,444,969**

**Petunia – \$734,549**

**Homer – \$373,407**

Minnie ended up with much more at retirement simply because she started saving earlier in life and her investment had more time to grow. That's the power of COMPOUND INTEREST: Your investment will earn interest and the interest earned will grow interest of its own. The sooner you start saving, the longer your savings will have to earn interest – and that adds up over the years.

The real-life power of compound interest means that time is the best thing a young saver has on their side. If you want to secure a dignified retirement, you should put away as much as you can for the years when you're no longer working and bringing in a regular paycheck. The amount you can put away is important, but it's even more crucial to start your retirement savings early in your career rather than waiting because money you put away later has less time to accrue that compound interest. The bottom line is: The sooner you start, the greater your advantage.





# THE MEMBER PARTY IS MOVING IN 2020

Greetings and Salutations  
to the party lovers of Local 839!

This notice is to inform you that  
The Animation Guild's Annual Membership Party  
will be moving from our usual time of year, January,  
to sometime later . . . in the spring.

We are moving the party to open up our venue options.  
Celebrating our members is much easier when we don't  
have to worry about cold weather and possible rain.

Keep your eyes on this space for future details.

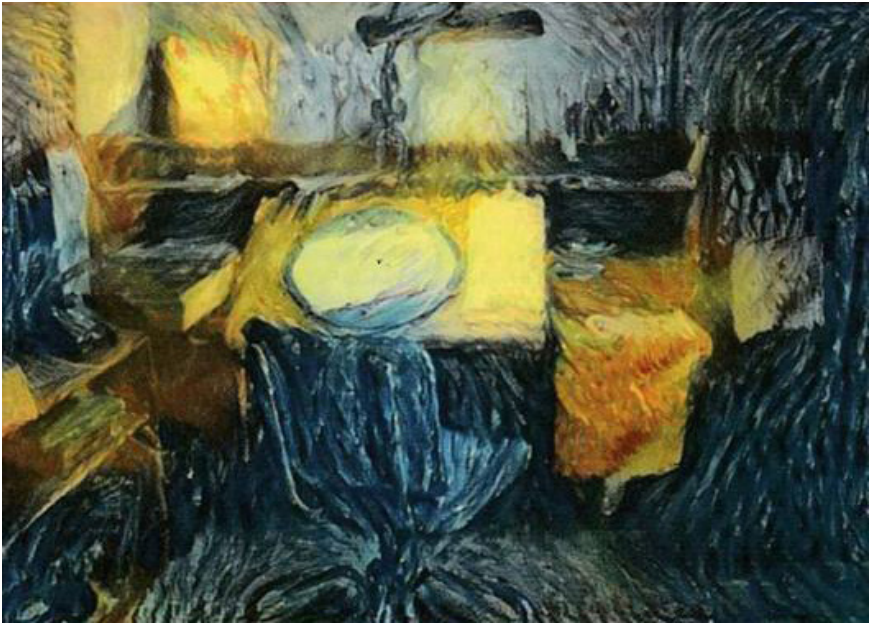


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Don't miss out on Animation Guild events! Keep your contact information up-to-date and sign up for our e-mail list at <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/change-address/>. You can GO GREEN – and save the Guild printing and mailing costs – by choosing to view our TAG publications digitally rather than receiving a hard copy in the mail. Visit <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/publication-preferences/>.

# IN MEMORIAM

*Craig Grasso* passed away on November 21, 2019 after an eight-year battle with cancer. Craig saw himself as a regular guy with a passion for story telling, film and feature animation. After stints at Ringling College of Art and Design and the US Army, he worked his magic in the animation industry for twenty-seven years as a Storyboard and Layout Artist on such feature films as *Brave*, *Brother Bear*, *Lilo and Stitch* and *Mulan*. As a story instructor at CalArts and other schools in the area, he shared his knowledge and insights with students and inspired many to move on to careers in animation.



Please join us at the **Afternoon of Remembrance on February 29, 2020**. This yearly event takes place from noon to 5 p.m. at the Animation Guild's Hulett Hall and honors members and other animation luminaries who passed away in 2019 through memorials given by family and friends. Watch this space and look for our postcard for more details.

February at Gallery 839



**MARK MULGREW**

**SPACEGIRLS & SUPERHEROES**

OPENING RECEPTION  
**FRIDAY, February 7th, 2020**  
6:00 PM - 9:00 pm

Gallery 839 - Animation Guild  
1105 N Hollywood Way  
Burbank, CA 91505

[www.mulgrewmark.com](http://www.mulgrewmark.com)

Instagram: @mulgrewmark



**Regular Gallery Hours**  
**Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

# UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

**January 20th** – Contract Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
*(DreamWorks and Nickelodeon only)*

**January 21st** – General Membership Meeting  
*Refreshments at 6:30, meeting starts at 7 p.m.*  
***PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE!***

**January 28th** – TAG Tuesday – Wear your TAG T-shirt to work!

**January 28th** – IATSE Mid-Winter GEB in Dallas, Texas

**February 7th** – Gallery 839 – New Show Opening, 6-9 p.m.

**February 17th** – Contract Holiday: Presidents Day

**February 18th** – AAI Spring 2020 Semester starts

**February 25th** – TAG Tuesday – Wear your TAG T-shirt to work!

**February 29th** – Afternoon of Remembrance  
*Refreshments at noon, memorials from 1 to 5 p.m.*



*Members take part in a TAG app focus group discussion at Cartoon Network. If you'd like to take part in a similar event in your workplace or at the Animation Guild, email [committee-comms@tag839.org](mailto:committee-comms@tag839.org) and we'll make a plan.*



**The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839**  
1105 N. Hollywood Way  
Burbank, CA 91505-2528



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