

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO GET WHAT WE NEED

It's been a very busy year so far at The Animation Guild . . . so busy that we missed an issue of *The Pegboard*! As Editor of our monthly newsletter, I gather interesting material over the course of each month and ask for input from TAG staff, committees chairs, shop stewards and members from the rank and file. We usually share news about Animation Guild events like the Memorial Committee's annual Afternoon of Remembrance, workplace and contract enforcement issues that our Field Representatives and members are working on together, organizing successes, member-led initiatives, benefits updates, and personal takes from our President and Business Representative. To be honest, it's been difficult over the last year or two to put the newsletter together each month because the folks who contribute to this group effort are so busy handling other essential and ongoing Union business.

Let's Work Together (continued on page 3)

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the
animation
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IATSE LOCAL 839

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So what's everyone so busy with, when we're experiencing the biggest industry slowdown in the last couple of decades? Negotiations, organizing, communications — all of the fundamental purposes of a labor union, which go on at all times at a growing organization like IATSE Local 839. Our Business Representative Steve Kaplan is taking part in multiple negotiations conversations every day, with different studios and the labor relations representatives and attorneys that speak for them. He also manages myriad organizing efforts that are going on around the country and around the clock; our Organizers Ben Speight and Allison Smartt are working with members and future members at countless studios so that they can have a powerful voice in their workplaces. Field Representatives Eva Nevarez and Leslie Simmons meet with members every day to help them understand our contracts and deal with violations. And our Communications team, Alexi Drosu and Kim Fay, are constantly at work to make sure that we're all on the same page with our understanding of the industry and of the benefits and resources available to members; they make sure that our members are informed and engaged.

But that's not all! Keeping our core mission going takes more effort than meets the eye. Steve has to spend time building healthy relationships with our employers' labor relations reps so that they are ready to work with us not only on negotiations, but also on non-contractual workplace issues and building support/eliminating resistance for organizing efforts. Field Reps and Organizers help with this relationship-building, and so do our members in leadership roles at the Guild. Executive Board members work off-the-clock to forge relationships with members and leadership at other IATSE Locals and with Union kin working in and outside the entertainment industry so that we can all raise our voices together to get what we need. Our committee chairs and members join in this outreach to expand awareness about our crafts and the animation industry, and to bring our concerns — like emerging technology — to arenas where we can make progress through legislation, as well as negotiations.

Animation Guild leaders are at the core of these important relationship-building efforts that are constant and essential to the growth and strength of our Union, and activist members bring more voices and energy to help us achieve our goals. Working together, we can continue on a path that brings more power and security to our members.

— *Paula Spence, Pegboard Editor*

FROM THE PRESIDENT JEANETTE MORENO KING



WEATHERING THE STORMS OF CHANGE

I've weathered many storms during my 25 years in the animation industry, but the challenges of recent years have been particularly profound. The seismic shifts brought on by the streaming wars have left no corner of our industry untouched. When Netflix initiated layoffs and cancellations in Q3 2022, followed swiftly by Warner Bros. Discovery and other major players, I held out hope that the storm would pass quickly and that the contraction wouldn't reach the other large studios. Unfortunately it did, and we, the workers and creators, bore the brunt of the studio heads' attempts to rein in spending.

At the height of the streaming wars, the industry witnessed an unprecedented surge in demand for content. Nearly 600 shows, spanning various genres, were ordered—a stark contrast to the industry's previous norms. However, as quickly as the orders came, they were slashed, with speculation now suggesting a potential 30% drop in the average number of shows ordered once the dust settles. The volatility of the industry has become painfully apparent, with decisions seemingly made at the whims of CEOs striving to appease shareholders and Wall Street.

Compounding these challenges was the AMPTP's contentious negotiations with the WGA and SAG, resulting in a double strike that paralyzed the industry for months. While most animated shows operate under different contracts and could theoretically continue production, studios seized the opportunity to cancel projects and lay off entire teams—a short-sighted attempt to cut costs and boost short-term profits.

Throughout my career, I've learned to navigate through rough patches, always with the hope that the industry would rebound. Yet the current landscape feels markedly different. The fundamental shift in how audiences consume media, coupled with studios' relentless pursuit of profit at the expense of labor, has created an unprecedented level of uncertainty.

Despite the challenges, it's crucial to recognize our value in the industry. The studios may be experimenting with outsourcing, remote teams, and emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, but they cannot create the captivating, enduring content audiences crave without our expertise and creativity.

As we navigate these turbulent times, our focus must remain on protecting our rights and advocating for fair treatment. Contract negotiations are our opportunity to secure the safeguards we need for our future selves. While studios may paint a picture of hardship to justify their actions, it's essential to see through their rhetoric and prioritize our collective well-being.

Though the road ahead may be uncertain, I am confident that we will emerge from this stronger than before. By standing together and advocating for our rights, we can ensure a brighter future for all those who contribute to the vibrant tapestry of the animation industry.

In solidarity,

Jeanette Moreno King

President

The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839

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Don't miss out on Animation Guild events! Keep your contact information up to date and sign up for our email 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/>.

Do you and your crewmates have TAG T-shirts to wear in solidarity on TAG Tuesdays? Take the initiative to organize your crew—we need T-shirt sizes for those who don't yet have a shirt—and get together for a crew photo (in person or on Zoom). We'd love to see your crew's spirit; you can inspire others! Email fieldrep@tag839.org for info.

TAG Tuesday!
LAST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

Wear your TAG logo shirt, take a photo,
and post to social media with:

#tagtuesday • #tag839 • #animationguild

 **the animation guild**



Do you have a contract question or workplace issue and need to speak with a TAG representative about it? Scan this QR code to link to a form, answer a few questions, and get assistance.

You can also use this link to connect to the same form:

<https://tinyurl.com/MemberHelpForm>

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR

Color Designers!



The Color Designer Committee is organizing a T-Shirt order for members that features their campaign message:
Equal Pay for Equal Paint

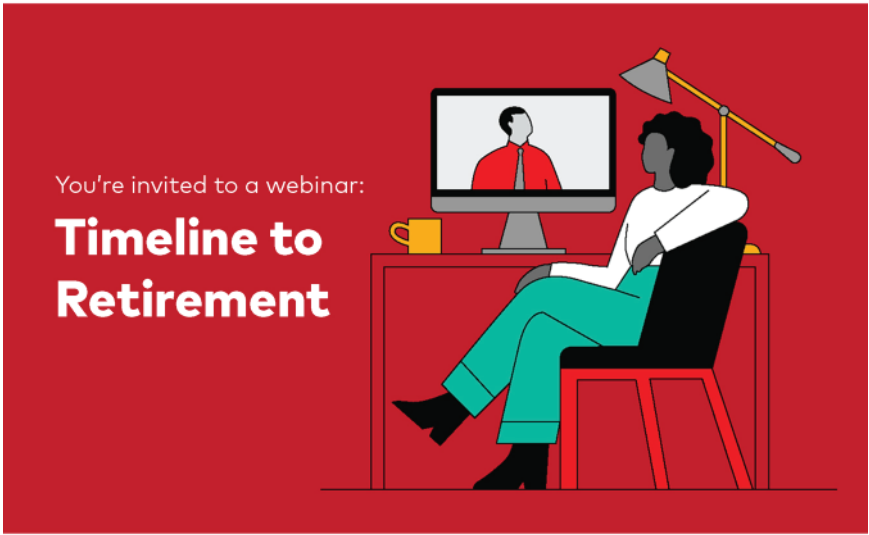
These are union made shirts sold at cost for \$13 each and can be shipped to you for an additional fee.

Fill out this form to place an order:

bit.ly/PayEquityShirts



Deadline to place an order will be
April 16th, 2024!



You're invited to a webinar:

Timeline to Retirement

Retiring in 3 to 15 years? Let's review key benefits and decision points from ages 55 to 73.

DATE	TIME
April 5, 2024	9 a.m., 12 noon, and 3 p.m.
April 8, 2024	2 p.m., 5 p.m., and 8 p.m.

All times shown are Eastern time.



Register now

Scan this code to sign up or access a recording (available for 60 days)—or visit webinars.on24.com/Vanguard_IIG/VES2024.

PLEASE NOTE: Times listed above are Eastern time zone. Follow the link to register and choose the time that works for your location. Some seminars available in Spanish.

IN MEMORIAM

Martin Forte — 02/11/1936 – 01/18/2024 — Martin worked as a Background Artist at Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, and Universal Cartoon Studio. Movie credits include *Charlotte's Web* and *Heidi's Song*. He also worked on TV series including *Captain Planet and the Planetegers*, *Super Friends*, and numerous versions of *Scooby-Doo*. He was 87.

Erica Peterson — d. 01/19/2024 — Erica was a Writer who worked at Sony Pictures Animation and DreamWorks TV.

Kent Melton — 10/3/1955 – 2/22/2024 — Kent Melton worked as a Model Designer at Universal Cartoon Studios, Warner Bros., and Walt Disney Feature Animation where he sculpted characters for *Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *The Road to El Dorado*, among many other films. He was 68.

Philip Felix — 2/6/1962 – 12/23/2023 — Philip Felix worked as a Layout Artist, Storyboard Artist, and Model Designer at Warner Bros., Marvel, Universal Cartoon Studios, DreamWorks, and Disney TVA. His credits ranged from *Tiny Toon Adventures* and *The Real Ghostbusters* to *Muppet Babies* and the *Hercules* TV series. He was 61.

David Mink — 11/29/1964 – 1/27/2024 — A Model Designer and Storyboard Artist, David Mink worked at Disney TVA, Warner Bros., and Adelaide/Sony Animation. Among his credits are *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Pinky and the Brain*, *Goof Troop*, and *Darkwing Duck*. He was 59.

Martin “Marty” Schwartz — 03/03/1953 – 02/18/24 — Assistant Animator Marty Schwartz worked at Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, Walt Disney Feature Animation, Disney TVA, and Hyperion. His credits include *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, and *Mulan*, as well as 65 episodes of *BraveStarr*. He was 70.



YOU'RE INVITED!
A SUPERHERO EXHIBIT AT GALLERY 839

Opening Reception
Thursday, April 4, 2024
5-8 pm

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



Gina Garavalia



Zachary Simon



Lindsey Carrozza



Jerry Gaylord

A collaboration of



the animation guild
LATER LOCAL 839



LIGHTBOX
EXPO



Pasadena
Ronald
McDonald
House

Gigi's
PLAYHOUSE™

To learn more about The Superhero Project visit SHPkids.org

TAG animation artists from favorite TV shows and movies have created posters of superhero personas for youth from Ronald McDonald House Pasadena, Gigi's Playhouse in Orange County, and other organizations around the U.S. and U.K. These superhero depictions are based on interviews with kids and teens impacted by illnesses and disabilities about who they are beyond their diagnosis and how they want to make a positive difference in the world—their superhero mission. The result is a visual representation of their strength, courage, creativity, and resilience. Many of the families and artists who participated in the project will be in attendance.

Regular Gallery Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

April

April 4th, 5 to 8 p.m.
New Show Opening at Gallery 839
Superhero Project

April 7th, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Peer-to-Peer Brunch
Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/april24-peer2peer-tag>

April 13th, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
TAG & Family Picnic
RSVP here: <https://tinyurl.com/TAGPN>

April 30th
TAG Tuesday
Wear your TAG T-shirt!

May

May 2nd, 5 to 8 p.m.
New Show Opening at Gallery 839
Artist: Olivia Pecini

May 27th
Contract Holiday: Memorial Day

May 28th
TAG Tuesday
Wear your TAG T-shirt!

May 28th, 6:30 p.m.
General Membership Meeting
In-person at Hulett Hall, or attend online via Zoom.
Only members who are Active and in Good Standing may attend; check your status by emailing membership@tag839.org. Watch for a TAG email to register ahead of time and receive a Zoom link to attend online, or come in person and enjoy refreshments starting at 6 p.m.

Check the full TAG calendar, including special events and committee meetings, at: <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/calendar/>



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