







THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF  
TORONTO

Mar/Apr, 2000  
Volume 20, No. 2

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The LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO is a non-profit co-operative which supports and encourages independent filmmaking through the exchange of information and access to equipment and facilities. LIFT hosts a program of workshops and monthly screenings and it provides access to information regarding funding sources, festival and grant deadlines and other related matters.

LIFT is supported by its membership, the Canada Council (Media Arts Section), the Ontario Arts Council, the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council.

Articles published in the LIFT newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the Co-op or members of the Board of Directors. Letters to the editor can be sent c/o LIFT, 37 Hanna Avenue, Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario M6K 1W5, Phone, 588-6444; Fax, 588-7017.

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<http://www.inforamp.net/~lift>

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Canada Post Publication Mail Agreement #1463969

**Allyson Mitchell**

# editorial

Animation is a creative process as well as a science. In this special animation issue of the LIFT newsletter we included both philosophical and how-to writing about animation. I'm glad to have had the opportunity to gather some of LIFT's animators into one issue that teaches, profiles and celebrates. Animation is a lonely existence and we have to be pulled out of that tiny dark room once in a while. In the following pages, individual artists such as Christopher Chong, Darya Farah, Brian Montenegro, Sue Reidel and Michelle Messina share their thoughts and their work. As well, Elise Beauvais and R. David Foster uncover what is needed materially, mentally, and spiritually to start working in the frame by frame business.

I ended up animating because of a fascination with manipulating the realities provided in the world around me. After completing a couple of animations I was wooed by this film making practice that does not rely on others to show up on time, learn lines or do what they said they'd do. Mostly, it is about feeling smart when you can actually get that pea to roll out of the pod seemingly on its own.

Animation is about obsessively crafting, hunching over a tiny table and trying to wrap your brain around time/space/movement calculations. For those who are animators hopefully this issue will be adequately appreciative; for those who want to become animators, an inspiration; and for those who just love animation, a voyeurs pull back of the wizard Oz's curtain. Welcome to our weird and wacky world of light and eyeball tricks.

# board report

**Jeff Sterne**

March 8th 2000

L.I.F.T's staff and Board have decided to take a new approach to L.I.F.T's working committees and shuffle some of the Board reps around. After being introduced as a new board member, Aggie Sliwka, took the initiative and immediately decided to represent the Programming Committee. David Nancoff switched with me and decided to oversee the Special Events Committee; and I, switched back to the Newsletter Committee. Maj Qureshi took on the 20th Anniversary Committee and Tracy German moved to support the workshop committee. Tobi Lampard and Keith Cole are joining forces to develop and maintain the little known Sponsorship Committee. Remember, a volunteer run organization is only as good as it's committees (I just made that up but it sounds good).

At the last meeting, we also decided to shuffle our Board Executives around: Carolyn Wong stays as treasurer, Maj Qureshi was appointed as Secretary, Christy Garland moved from Acting Chair to her original position as Vice-Chair and yours truly was appointed Chairperson of the Board. I have no idea what I'm doing but such situations have always led to great adventures in the past.

\*Remember; L.I.F.T needs good auction items for our upcoming silent auction. The government likes it when we suck up to corporations for support, it keeps us off their backs. If you know a company or corporation who wishes to support the indi-film scene get in touch with our Executive Director, Deborah McInnes.



THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS SINCE 1957 | LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DU CANADA DEPUIS 1957



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# Upcoming Festival Deadlines:

<b>DEADLINE:</b>		<b>FESTIVAL /DATE/LOCATION :</b>		<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	<b>E-MAIL &amp; WEBSITE:</b>	
<b>VILA DO CONDE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL</b>						
4/20/2000	07/4-9/00	Vila Do Conde	+ 351 252 248469 / 646516	isffviladoconde@mail.telepac.pt	http://fcm-vc.bsi.net	
<b>MILANO-BOLOGNA INTERNAITONAL LESBIAN &amp; GAY FILM FESTIVAL</b>						
04/20/2000	05/31-06/11/2000	Milano	+39 023 319 118	marzig@energy.it	www.energy.it/cinemagaylesbico	
<b>INTERCOM - THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FILM AND VIDEO COMPETITION</b>						
4/26/2000	10/5-19/00	Chicago, Illinois	312/425-9400	filmfest@wwa.com	http://www.chicago.ddbn.com/filmfest/	
<b>CINEMA JOVE - VALENCIA</b>						
4/30/2000	06/17-24/00	Valencia	34 96 3310592 or 3310690	cinemajove@ivaj.gva.es		
<b>ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TELEVISION NETWORK</b>						
4/30/2000	06/11-16/2000	Ottawa, On	613-567-1550 ext. 228 / 1-888-278-8862 ext. 228			
<b>TORONTO ENVIRONMENTAL FILM &amp; VIDEO FESTIVAL</b>						
05/01/2000	Toronto, On		(416)537-7742	piffest@web.net	www.planetinfocus.org	
<b>TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - SHORT FILMS</b>						
5/5/2000	09/07-16/00	Toronto Ont.	416-967-7371	tiffg@torfilmfest.ca		
<b>ANTIMATTER FESTIVAL OF UNDERGROUND SHORT FILM &amp; VIDEO</b>						
05/05/2000	09/15-24/2000	Victoria, Bc	250 385 3327	rogueart@islandnet.com	www.islandnet.com/shortcircuit	
<b>TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - FEATURE FILMS</b>						
5/12/2000	09/07-16/00	Toronto, On	(416) 967-7371	tiffg@torfilmfest.ca	www.bell.ca/filmfest	
<b>INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY FILMS ON PARKS (SONDRIO)</b>						
5/15/2000	10/16-24/00	Via Delle Prese, Sondrio	39/0342/52.62.60	cdap@provincia.so.it	http://www.provincia.so.it/comunesondria	
<b>INTERNATIONAL WIDESCREEN FESTIVAL - LE NOMBRE D'OR AWARDS</b>						
05/19/2000	09/08-12/2000	London	+44 (0)20 7611 7500 / +44 (0)20 7611 7511 (direct)		joconnell@ibc.org	www.ibc.org
<b>CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL</b>						
5/31/2000	10/12-22/00	Chicago, IL	773 929 5437	kidsfest@facets.org	www.cicff.org	
<b>INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL FILM COMPETITION</b>						
06/01/2000	11/11/00	San Francisco, Ca	415 248 2736	www.tihfreddies.com		
<b>FEMINALE - INTERNATIONALES FRAUENFILM FESTIVAL KOLN</b>						
6/1/2000	10/10/2000	Koln	+49 221 1300225	feminale@t-online.de	www.dom.de/filmworks/feminale	
<b>PROVIDENCE R.I. INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL</b>						
6/1/2000	08/9-13/00	Newport, RI	401 847 7590	flicksart@aol.com	www.eatinri.com/flickers	
<b>INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET</b>						
06/09/2000	09/15-22/2000	New York, Ny	212-465-8200 ext. 2	marketinfo@ifp.org	www.ifp.org	
<b>VALLADOLID INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL</b>						
06/30/2000	10/20-28/2000	Valladolid	(983)-305700/77/88 - 305899 - 302044	festvalladolid@seminci.com www.seminci.com		
<b>SHANGHAI TELEVISION FESTIVAL</b>						
07/31/2000	10/25-27/2000	Shanghai	86-21-62537115	stvf@public.sta.net.cn	www.stvf.com	
<b>VANCOUVER VIDEOPOEM FESTIVAL</b>						
7/31/2000	Vancouver, Bc		604-904-9362	cl_hamshaw@telus.net	www.edgewisecafe.org	
<b>BOGOTA FILM FESTIVAL</b>						
08/1/2000	10/10-18/2000	Santafe De Bogata - Colombia S.A .	(57) (1) 282 5196	cidc@coll.telecom.com.co		

Guidelines and application forms for this list of festivals are on file and available for photocopying (10¢ a page) at the LIFT office. As much as we'd like to, LIFT staff cannot take the time out to fax forms to members. Please do not ask. If you are unable to make it into the LIFT office, you will have to call the festival directly to request an application form. The 1996 edition of the AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals is an invaluable resource for planning your festival entries for the upcoming year. It's available at the office as an in-house resource for all LIFT members.



# equipment news:

# new members:

**THE ARRI BL IS BACK ON TOP!!!** The camera and mags just underwent a major overhaul, and a brand new Tobin crystal speed controller was installed. The package includes 2 mags and an excellent Zeiss 10 - 100 zoom lens, and rents for only \$33/day for full members and \$60/day for associate members.

**THE ECLAIR NPR** also had a major overhaul in March. The camera body and mags were lubricated and tuned up. The flange focal distance on all lenses was checked and adjusted if necessary. The camera body with 3 mags, a 12 - 120 Angineux zoom lens, 4 series 9 filters, and a lens hood rents for only \$33/day for full members and \$60/day for associate members.

**FLATBED MAINTENANCE:** For those who still like to edit on film, you will be happy to know that our flatbed technician was in and made some minor repairs to most of the flatbeds. The best news: the super 8 Steenbeck is working better than ever, and has already been tested out by members.

The long awaited **LIFT DARKROOM** is available to the membership. The darkroom features a large wet sink, a 35mm stills enlarger, an assortment of tanks and buckets for hand processing of motion picture stock and rewind bench for breaking down film stock. The darkroom rents for \$2.50/hour for full members and \$5/hour for associate members.

**THE BOLEX "B"** package has been upgraded to include three prime lenses: 10 mm, 50 mm, and 75 mm -- in addition to an H16 body, rewind key, 18 - 86 mm zoom lens, a pistol grip, and filter set. It rents for \$10/day for full members, and \$20/day for associate members.

## ANOTHER EDITING SUITE IS COMING...

We are in the process of purchasing a second Media 100 system. The new system will also have a firewire input, which will allow members to digitize directly from DV sources. We will keep you posted on estimated delivery dates, etc.

## WORKSHOP COMMITTEE MEETING

The workshop committee helps to design the workshop series hosted by LIFT. Committee members receive 20 volunteer hours for participating in this fascinating endeavor. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month, with upcoming meetings on April 20 and May 18, 6 p.m. at the LIFT office. If you are interested in joining the committee or want more information, call Roberto at 588-6444. Or, if you have any interesting ideas or suggestions for any kind of workshop, e-mail us at: tech@lift.on.ca.

## EQUIPMENT RESOURCE MEETING

The first Thursday of every other month, LIFT hosts a meeting at which members will have the opportunity to express their views regarding the future of the equipment and facilities at LIFT. Anyone with particular interests or concerns, but are unable to attend the meeting, are encouraged to put their suggestions in writing, and send them to Roberto or Lisa, by fax (416-588-7017), e-mail (tech@lift.on.ca) or mail. This way they can be presented to the group and discussed. Volunteer hours will be given for the time spent at the meeting. The next meeting will be held June 13 at LIFT at 6 p.m.

## Welcome new members as of March 2000:

Moses Adjess  
Tara Andresen  
Keith Berry  
Jessa Bissett  
Carol Bruce  
Jan Brunton  
Pietro Cammalleri  
Randy Cantera  
Marc Cohen  
Teresa D'elia  
Darrell Derosie  
Mike Edmonds  
Andrew Enache  
Menbere Gabreselassie  
Paul Gardner  
Jonathan Gaunt  
Brian Hall  
Ray R.N. Hopkin  
Liz Hysen  
Moin Jamal  
Jeff Jordan  
Peter Komady  
Mark Kowalsky  
Diana Kubista  
Elizabeta Lazebnik  
Erwin Lodewyk  
Istvan Luppino  
Luke Lyn  
Jason Macdermott  
Jason Macfarlane  
Sara Maclean  
Janice Macneil  
Mario Marquez  
Cameron Moffat  
Jason Moore  
Nadia Nascimento  
Tom Pickering  
John Porter  
Steven Radonjic  
Aiden Reilly  
Malcolm Rogge  
Vanda Schmoekel  
Hoon Song

Test, 1, 2...

Testing, 1, 2...

Testing



**Sound Monitoring.** When you can check the sound level *before* you start shooting, you avoid wasting film (and money). Not all super 8's let you. But, the 505XL does.



# announcements:



## funding & grant deadlines:

**CANADA COUNCIL**  
1 800 263 5588 X5060  
www.canadacouncil.ca  
Travel Grants: Anytime

**ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL**  
961-1660  
www.arts.on.ca  
Artists' Film and Video: April 15 and  
Oct. 15, 2000  
First Projects: Film & Video: Dec. 15,  
2000

**ABORIGINAL FILMMAKER  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
973-3012  
on an ongoing basis, please call  
their office to confirm

**THE HAROLD GREENBERG FUND**  
(416) 956-5431  
hgfund@tmn.ca  
July 6, & Oct. 5,

**INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION FUND**  
977 8966  
www.ipf.ca  
April 15, & Aug. 1

**BRAVO!FACT**  
(416) 591 7400x2734  
June 29, September 29, & Dec. 21, 2000

**TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL**  
(416) 392-6800  
www.torontoartscouncil.org  
Media Arts: November 20, 2000

**MEMBERS' FILM INFORMATION** - Hey LIFTers, just a note to ask that you update the office of any information regarding your upcoming or completed films. You can do it on an ongoing basis - drop us an email, a fax, or call us by phone. We'd really appreciate the information, as LIFT requires the information for our funding applications. . . . so, keep us up to date!

email: lift@inforamp.net, http: www.lift.on.ca  
fax: 588 7017, ph.: 588 6444

**LIFT ARTIST TALKS** - Are you interested in talking to other filmmakers? Interested in learning about how other filmmakers trouble shoot technical and artistic dilemmas? The LIFT Monthly Screening is shifting its focus, and we're looking for filmmakers who are interested in doing a 20 minute presentation about their works. . . either in progress or completed. Over the year LIFT will host 6 Artist Talks. Each evening will include 1 LIFT filmmaker/ animator and 3 other LIFT filmmakers who will present a segment (or whole short) of their film and talk about their filmmaking process. Contact Deanna if you are interested in presenting or attending.

Join the **NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE** if you are interested in the direction of LIFT's Newsletter or in writing for the Newsletter. Members receive 20 volunteer hours for committee service. Call Deanna at the office to RSVP. Upcoming meetings (6:15pm @ LIFT): Tues., May 2, 2000.

**LIFT's MEMBERS' FILMS LIBRARY** - We're at 135!!! and still growing. Drop off a copy of your past & present film gems for other LIFT members to view. The library is another great way to show your works to other keen filmmakers in Toronto. Your works are secure in the LIFT office. . . What are you waiting for? Drop off your copy today!

**LIFT'S PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE** is looking for new members! Looking for a way to make up your volunteer hours? Members receive 20 volunteer hours for attending Committee meetings and the Artist Talk series. Come to the next meeting to discuss

## LIFT orientation:

LIFT's orientation session will be on **Wednesday, May 17, 11:30 am to 1 pm** for members who haven't yet familiarized themselves with the co-op. Call 588-6444 for more info.



all the new changes that are happening at LIFT. Next meetings: April 18, 2000 & May 16, 2000 (6:15pm @ LIFT). Call Deanna to RSVP.

**www.lift.on.ca** Yes, we know, it's been a long time with our old cumbersome web address, but finally LIFT has a new domain name. The old site design is currently uploaded and updated, but watch for an all new design later this month.

**Do you have news you'd like to pass on to the Membership?** Email Deanna at [lift@inforamp.net](mailto:lift@inforamp.net)

**ATTENTION GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:** To commemorate LIFT's 20th Anniversary, the LIFT Board of Directors is hosting a new logo Competition. Members are encouraged to submit original designs for the co-op's logo. All members are eligible to enter this contest. Designs can be/but do not have to be specific to LIFT's 20th Anniversary. The LIFT Board of Directors will serve as judges for this competition. The winning member receives 20 volunteer hours in compensation. If designed on computer, LIFT can accommodate Quark XPress 3.32, Illustrator 5.0, Photoshop 4.01 - all for Macintosh. Drop off your designs (disk or hard copy) at the LIFT office, c/o Deanna. Deadline: May 31, 2000

#### MEMBERS' DIRECTORY 2000

This year's Members' Directory is ready and waiting for purchase. The directory includes those who have agreed to be listed and is available to all LIFT members for a mere \$5.00.

Just come down to the LIFT office to receive your copy! Or, contact Christina at 588-6444 for more information.

#### LIFT FILM WALL

We are looking for posters/postcards of members' films to hang inside the LIFT office. If you have a poster/postcard for a completed film which you would like added to the LIFT Members' Film Wall, let us know. Drop by your posters/postcards, or contact Christina at the LIFT office for more information.

#### LIFT'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

If you have ideas on how LIFT can celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2001 just email them to the Planning Committee c/o Deborah at [execdir@istar.ca](mailto:execdir@istar.ca).

# WHO/WHAT MARCH 2000

Info for this column can be sent to the Newsletter: by mail c/o LIFT, 37 Hanna Ave. Ste. 301, Toronto ON M6K 1W5; by e-mail to Larissa at [fanburke@interlog.com](mailto:fanburke@interlog.com); by fax to (416) 588-7017.

Have a press release, press package or postcard? Why not send a copy to the Newsletter? (Try it, it's easy!)

#### Congratulations:

Belated congratulations to LIFT member **JEREMY PODESWA**, who scooped the Genie for best director for his feature *The Five Senses*. Jeremy was profiled in Nov/Dec 1999 issue of the Newsletter.

The awards keep rolling in for **PAUL LEE'S** *The Offering*. The latest are: Best Cinematography Award, 5th Hong Kong Independent Short Film Awards Special Jury Award, 4th Positano International Short Film Festival Honorable Mention, 8th University of Oregon Queer Film Festival.

**LIFT's Silent Auction 2000** is just around the corner! This is your chance to gather film supplies, equipment rentals and more that will fit into your project's budget.

This year's Silent Auction will follow the **Annual General Meeting in June**. Bidding for items will begin on the Monday prior to the AGM giving you an entire week to place your bids.

**After the AGM**, LIFT's doors will be open for an **Open House and Reception**. Here is how the evening will unfold:

6:30-7:30	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>
7:30	<b>LIFT's Open House begins!</b>
10:30	<b>Silent Auction Closes</b>

#### CONGRATULATIONS:

Congratulations to the following LIFT Members for receiving Media Arts Grants from the Toronto Arts Council:

**MARCOS ARRIAGA  
CHRISTY GARLAND  
SAMUEL LEE  
ANNA MALKIN  
PUNAM SAWHNEY  
LOUIS TAYLOR  
JESSICA WISE  
CAROLYN WONG  
KAREN YOUNG  
RUBA NADDA  
CASSANDRA NICOLAOU  
MIDI ONODERA  
STEVE SANGUEDOLCE  
FRANCES-ANNE SOLOMON**

Congratulations to the following LIFT members for receiving Media Arts Grants from the Canada Council for the Arts:

**SARAH ABBOTT  
CAROLYNNE HEW  
SAMUEL LEE  
RUBA NADDA  
GARY POPOVICH  
MARK WIHAK**

cont. pg 8



## WHO/WHAT MARCH 2000

### On the Screen:

**STEVE SANGUEDOLCE'S** latest film *Smack* premiered to packed houses at Artword Theatre as a benefit screening for the CFMDC. *Smack* is a beautifully shot and hand-processed film which mixes documentary and fiction to tell the story of three brothers. Congratulations to Steve and the **CFMDC** on a successful screening!

**ADAM KOZYNIAK** recently licensed his short film *Inori* to the Saskatchewan Communications Network. *Inori* is a three-minute experimental drama depicting a woman's prayer at a Shinto shrine. It features the shakuhachi (traditional Japanese bamboo flute) music of Toronto recording artist **DEBBIE DANBROOK**.

**JORGE MANZANO** traveled to Sundance with his feature *Johnny Greyeyes* and will be screening his film at the Toronto, San Fran and L.A. lesbian and gay film festivals.

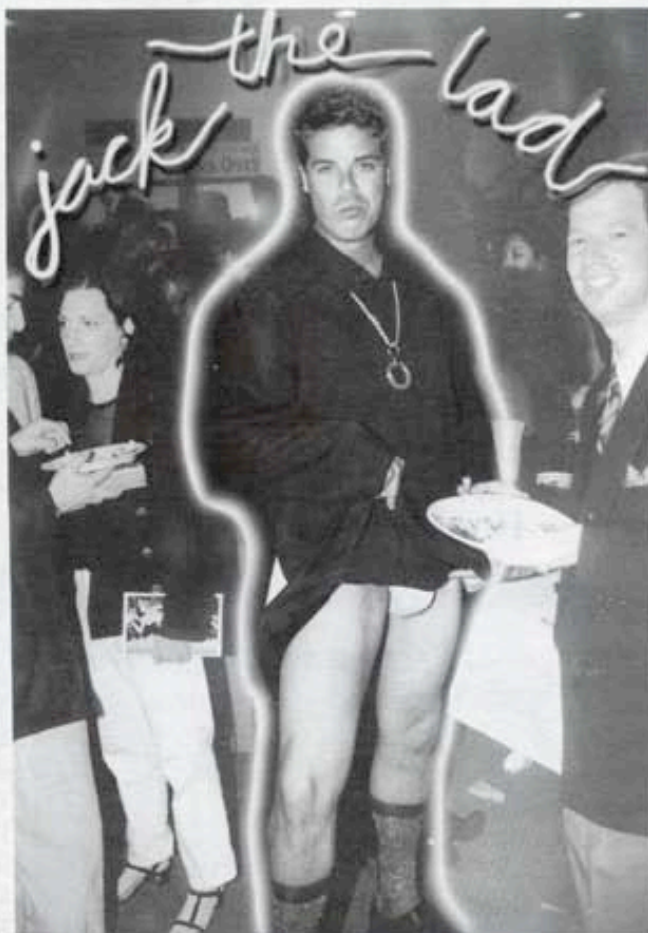
**IGOR RADOS** visited sunny California to screen his film *Deja Vu* at the Santa Clarita International Film Festival. For info on the fest check out their website at [www.sciff.org](http://www.sciff.org).

**JOHN PORTER** launched *Scanning* his super-8 performance/screening for Pleasure Dome. *Scanning* includes films made for the occasion with Porter moving the images with projector in hand.

**KEITH COLE** and **MICHAEL CAINES** have just completed their B/W Super 8 *Jack the Lad* for the much heralded Art Fag 2000 curated by LIFT's **ROY MITCHELL** for the Images Festival

### Lifters in Motion:

Indie veteran **ANNETTE MANGAARD** is dividing her time between two productions: *Insomnia* and *The Many Faces of Arnaud Magg*. The former is a diary like memory film about dreams, nightmares and insomnia; the latter a documentary about the many lives of the photographer/poet. Shot in 16mm, DV and Super 8 they'll both run about 30 minutes. *Faces* should be ready in the early fall, while *Insomnia's* finishing date is still a question mark.



*Jack The Lad*, Super 8, 2'30" B/W  
Co-Directed by **MICHEAL CAINES** AND **KEITH COLE**

**SARAH BECH** is in post production on *Chicken* and plans to have it finished by the early summer. Shot in 16mm by **RORY MCGLYNN**, it's about a man who comes home with chicken even though his wife wanted red meat.

**BRENDA DARLING** has finished shooting (with producer **DAVID MUTTART** and DOP **JOHN LESAVAGE**) her half-hour TV pilot, *Diverted*. Shot on DV, it tells the story of a young offender sentenced to community service who forces the staff in a local crisis centre to change their methods. If all goes well this will be the first part of an eventual 13 part series. Brenda has already written the next four installments.

**CHRIS POWER** and co-creator Nathan Haynes, are in post production on *The Shitty Apartment*, a 22 minute black comedy about a naïve young man who finds his first apartment to be even shittier than imagined. Shot on DV by **JERRY MENDOZA**, with music by **JULIAN KUARTI**, the project should be wrapped up by May, with an eventual transfer to 35mm to follow.

**CHRIS MCKAY** starts shooting his latest claymation project in two months. *One Stop Shopping* will depict a Dante's Inferno style descent into a supermarket. Shot on 16mm, with music by **ROBERT MACDONALD**, it should be finished sometime this fall.

**AGNIESZKA SLISKA** is "a week or so" away from completing her Super 8 short *Bedsite*, a four minute reflection on the absence of a man.

**CHRIS ARGES** and **STEVE HOLWAY** are in pre-production for *John Mowat*, a feature length mood and atmosphere piece about John Mowat. It'll be shot on both 16mm and video with an anticipated completion date this summer.

**MIKE MONCADA** is completing post-production of a trio of comedy sketches pieces, collectively titled *Fat Man*. Shot on 16mm, video and Super 8, they skewer the topics of obesity, infomercials and low budget horror movies.

**CHRISTINA BATTLE** is hunkered over one of LIFT's Media 100s, putting the final touches on her so-far-untitled 16mm experimental film about "the media's negative influence on one individual." With a running time of 3'30" it should be finished in April.

**MARIO DE AMARA** is currently editing his half-hour mystery film *Nacaixa* in which "a marionette becomes a young girl, then guides us through rooms in which people are trapped in their own dramas; the killer is in the seventh room." Mario hopes to have it completed by June.

Finally, the prolific **RUBA NADDA** has just completed her first feature film, *I Always Come To You*. Shot on 16mm BW with a running time of 128 minutes it documents "a young girl who spends three days looking for her sister." The principal roles are filled by **LAYLA** and **FADIA NADDA**, and **RANDY HAWTIN** who also composed the film's score. Congratulations! (Note: The filmmaker is already at work on her second feature!)



# The Animation Issue

## The Animation & Optical Print Club

Are you thinking about making a film with the optical printers or the animation camera and are looking for help? Do you want to volunteer on an animation shoot or optical printing session to gain some experience? Are you tired of paying the minimum charges at film labs when you want to process less than 150 ft? If you have answered yes to any of the above questions then give Roberto a call at 588-6444 and join the club. The mandate is this club is simple: to encourage use of LIFT's optical printers and animation camera and bring members together to support each others projects and make filmmaking more economical. Because animation and optical printing sometimes involve shooting relatively small amounts of footage, the club offers the opportunity for filmmakers to process their films together in an effort to save money.

Fade-in

Zooming  
&  
Macro

Super-  
imposition

Fade-out



# www.websitereviews.travelogue

There is so much out there that it can be overwhelming. Things get easier as the get more complex. We sent Vanda Schmokel and Chris McKay out into cyber space with the mission of exploring animation on the web. After days in virtual limbo the following is the information these brave foragers have brought back for us.

## Vanda Schmokel:

I don't know a thing about animation and I've been hooked up to a server for exactly two weeks. I think that makes me a perfect candidate for reviewing animation websites. Log onto any search engine, type in the word "animation", and you're likely to be faced with a glut of sites to choose from. -Some are better than others. Here's a short list of what I found:

### General:

#### Quick Draw Animation Society:

This Calgary, Alberta based animators, co-op has a lot of useful links for animators as well as a gallery of local artists' works. This was the only Canadian animator's co-op that I found online.

#### Animation World Network:

The "largest animation related publishing group on the net pertaining to all aspects of animation . . .", seems to be geared more towards industry news, but has a lot of great links to animators, sites, festival listings, and news sites. Very well put together and easy to use, much can be accessed through this large and comprehensive site. The Animated Cartoon Factory: Brian LeMay is a Layout and Design instructor at Sheridan College. The Animated Cartoon Factory is a useful site for instructional "how to" information, FAQ's, and hints on how to land work in the industry. It also has a link to Sheridan College regarding courses and workshops.

#### Stop Motion Animation.com:

" . . . Created in 1999 for animators and admirers of Stop Motion Animation." This site was my absolute favorite! It's very well laid out, with a handbook link section, a resource section covering where to buy supplies, processing etc.. The site also sets up chat sessions with prominent animators and you can view transcripts of previous chat sessions. The links section was most exciting, with segues to many artists, sites. (I got lost a few times.) You can also add your name to a mailing list which will apprise you of upcoming online events and other interesting stuff. Highly recommended.

#### Clay Animation How To Page:

<http://members.spree.com/thearts/animate-clay/clay.htm>

Another "how to" site for those interested in claymation. Very useful and easy to follow.

### Festivals:

#### International Student Animation Festival of Ottawa:

or [www.awn.com/ottawa](http://www.awn.com/ottawa)  
Features listings of the 1999 program. The 2000 program has not yet been published. (Festival to be held in late October) The 1999 festival page looked great with information regarding the scheduled program, retrospective screenings, training workshops and info about travel and accomodation.

#### Ottawa International Animation Festival:

[www.awn.com/ottawa/ottawa00](http://www.awn.com/ottawa/ottawa00)  
The official festival site, with listings of this years, program, retrospective screenings, entry forms, and other useful information for those interested in attending the festival.

### Schools:

#### Centennial College of Digital Animation Program:

This site contains information regarding their eight month training program. It includes a gallery of past student's work. I found it very hard to view the gallery as, inexplicably, it would only show portions of the image at any one time. Maybe it was me, but I don't think so. Frustrating, but otherwise very informative and easy to navigate.

#### Vancouver Institute of Media Arts:

This website provides information on Van Arts, programs offered in both Classical and Computer animation. In addition to this, there is information on summer and weekend classes. There's also a cute student gallery of recent work which of entertaining.

#### Sheridan College: [www.sheridanc.on.ca](http://www.sheridanc.on.ca)

The website belonging to Canada's most renowned school of animation has information on their programs in classical and computer animation, with links to their International Summer School of Animation. Well laid out and easy to use.

### Japanese Animation:

#### Anime North: [www.animenorth.com/](http://www.animenorth.com/)

"Toronto's premiere fan-run anime (Japanese Animation) convention." This site was slightly sticky, as it would blow up to full page and make it impossible to use to use the side and bottom scrolls. Once this minor problem was resolved (by maximizing and minimizing the screen a few times) it proved to be a fine site with information on the annual summer convention.

#### Japanese AnimationRegineAnime:

This Japanese animation club's site has links to galleries, a chat room, news and other links to online anime galleries from around the world. One stop shopping for Japanimation enthusiasts.

#### York University Anime and Marga

Association (YAMA): This site offers a listing of events and upcoming screenings, a gallery and anime catalogue links.

Entertaining and informative site for fans of Japanese animation.

#### University of Toronto Japanese Animation Club UTARPA:

Self described as Toronto's "oldest and largest" Japanese animation club, this site contains links to other galleries, catalogues and other neat stuff. Another good site for Japanimation buffs.

### Software and Supplies:

#### Linker Systems Animation Stand:

Linker Systems is a 2D animation software company which offers free software downloads from this website. I didn't try to download the free software myself, but it's there.

#### Chromacolour International Limited:

This "world leader" in animation supplies has it's own line of animation paints and equipment. You can order your supplies from this handy website!

There is so much more out there on the internet regarding animation and related subjects. Most of these sites have links to other sites, which have links to even more sites. The best thing to do is to get on your computer and explore. Happy hunting.



## Chris McKay

Daniel Richler once wrote of the Internet that "it's a twilight zone of dead ends and abandoned Web sites, booby traps and illusions, snake-oil salesmen and forbidden information". Far be it for me to argue. Upon being given the assignment then, of creating a sort of Internet "travelogue" for the independent animator, I was originally a bit taken aback. I lived in Tokyo for three years and have far too much respect for the depth and breadth of that place to even begin to attempt to encapsulate what it is to navigate it; so how will I, a computer owner of merely a few months, attempt to guide others through a web of information so vast it covers the whole world, and which has "more users in its first five years than telephone had in its first twenty"? The answer my friends: I will ask someone else.

Or so I thought in the beginning of my task. As it turns out, even on your own, it's not hard at all to find information on the Web that is extremely useful to animators of every variety. There's actually quite a lot of it around. And hence, the beginning of my tale....

Now, for the sake of structure, I suppose I might divide up the sites that I have come across into those that provide some sort of "practical" information of the "how to" variety, and those that focus more on "content". One site that I found interesting on the "practical" side of things was the website of Ruth Hayes (<http://www.halcyon.com/rhayes/index.html>), which does have the odd dead end in it, but, on top of information related to the film work of this animator, for the purist in you, has information on how to make and use zoetropes and thaumatropes. While the idea of spinning and flipping toys that utilize light retention tendencies in the eye to simulate motion in drawings might seem a bit archaic to some, they are the basis of animation as we know it today. If nothing else it is a great method to use to teach animation



to beginners to the craft - young and old alike. At the opposite end of the technology spectrum is [www.stopmotion-pro.com](http://www.stopmotion-pro.com) where one can find information pertaining to software "designed by animators, for animators", to make the process of stop motion animation easier. Among its many functions, this software has a particularly interesting "rotoscoping" function which lets you synchronize outside AVI files to your animation while you work - that is to say, if you shoot video footage of your voice actors while they're recording their dialogue (focussing on their mouths), and digitize this footage into your computer, the software will break down the mouth motion of your actors frame by frame, allowing you to accurately (and more to the point, more quickly and easily than doing a traditional dialogue breakdown) sculpt the mouth of your character to directly simulate that of your real-life actor. Check out the portion of the site that pertains to this function, and there's a rather convincing video clip to prove the worth of this application. For those shooting on video the "frame toggle" function lets you flip from the last captured frame of animation to what the camera is looking at after you've made your character move. This way you can determine before you record the next frame, if you've, for example, moved your characters arm too far, or caused her/him to take too big a stride. The software costs \$299.00 but a free trial downloadable version is available on the site. (I haven't tried it yet, but it seems like it's on the up-and-up).

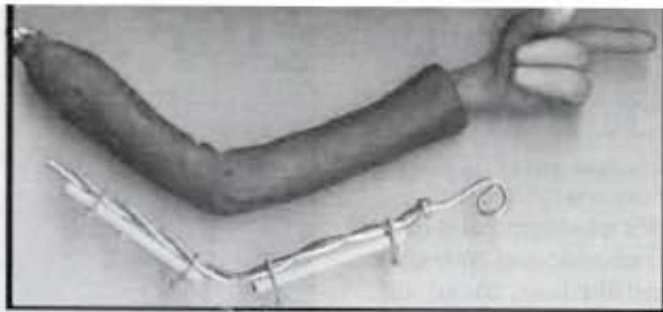
Speaking of nifty gadgets, at <http://www.animationtoolworks.com> they sell a rather expensive "pencil test/

reference test frame grabber" which seems worth checking out if you can afford it, but the really great worth of this site is in the section on articles for teachers (to go there directly add /article1.html to the address above) which have great ideas regarding techniques of keeping animation flow smooth and realistic. The article's focus on anticipation of movement, follow through, overlapping actions, exaggeration and other topics. They're definitely worth a look - especially if you ever find yourself planning to teach animation to others. For those who work with puppets in their animations, any questions you might have can probably be answered by posting them at

<http://www.sagecraft.com/puppetry/c/assifieds/index.html>. It seems to be rife with information, and email addresses from puppeteers from all over the world. Likewise the International Animators' Association website at <http://asifa.net> has as one of its four useful "zones" (the "communication zone"), a blackboard section where dialogue with other animators is a possibility. This site is pretty important for animators to be aware of anyway because of its size, and wealth of information regarding festivals, schools and just about everything else pertaining to animation. In the same vein but on a smaller scale, one might want to take a look at the Clay Animation Home Page at <http://www.intrepid.net/%7Ehollyoak/clay.htm> to seek information specifically on claymation.

Finally, there are a number of sites on the net where small format film, and cameras are bought, sold and discussed, and for animators, this can often





**www.websites cont.**

be a valuable thing to know about. If you're looking to purchase a Super8 or 16mm camera, the Ritz Camera Board at <http://ritzcam.com/board/index.html> is a good place to start looking (almost certainly cheaper than Ebay). For Super8 information particularly (including how to hand-process it) [www.dibbs.net/~brantley/s8hard.htm](http://www.dibbs.net/~brantley/s8hard.htm) is somewhere you can look. Bolex information can be found at <http://dns.city-net.com/~fodder/bolex>. On a slightly different note, there are one or two sites that people well versed in the art of "gripology" have put up to teach you how to build your own grip equipment (like jibs, and dollies etc). I've taken some of these ideas and grafted them onto the miniature scale that I work in when I do claymation. A tiny little dolly is a useful thing to have when shooting tiny little sets with small format cameras so checking out <http://w1.226.telia.com/~u22604215/boom%20and%20dolly%20plans.html> might be a good idea.

On the "content" side of things, one might want to take a look at Dr. William Moritz's site (<http://panushka.absolutvodka.com/panushka/history/teasers/t60.html>) where a very comprehensive survey of experimental animation from 1900 to the present can be found. There is also a site entitled "Animation Heaven and Hell" at [http://www.awn.com/heaven\\_and\\_hell/index.htm](http://www.awn.com/heaven_and_hell/index.htm) which provides great links and examples of the work of Jan Svankmajer, the Brothers Quay, George Pal, Ladislav Starewicz and Art and Gloria Clokey's "Davey and Goliath". My only issue with this site is its designer's opinion that Davey and Goliath "isn't really preachy". Speaking of Jan Svankmajer, there is a page which is a very complete and comprehensive look at Svankmajer's work which is helpful because this surrealist

animator/sculptor's work is just a tad hard-to-find these days (<http://filament.illumina.co.uk/svank/index.html>). For those interested in the "Bolex Brothers" (they aren't really brothers), going to

<http://www.manga.com/tomthumb/tomthumb.html> will reveal to the searcher among other things, comments from director Dave Borthwick regarding technique used in the making of "The Secret Adventures of Tom Thumb". For those interested in the work of Fred Stuhr (1967-1997), there is a memorial site which offers a thorough look at his work (<http://anp.awn.com/stuhr-gallery.html>), including downloadable clips from the two "Tool" videos that made his work so well known. There is an absolutely huge website regarding the work of Ray Harryhausen (who was responsible for most big Hollywood animations from King Kong to Clash of the Titans) to be found at

<http://lavender.fortunecity.com/judidench/584/>, which is kind of interesting. And finally, a Canadian site relating to the work of Stephen X. Arthur at

<http://mypage.direct.ca/w/writer/xenos.html> which includes GIF's and AVI files of this experimental animator's work, definitions of surrealism, and experimental animation, and notes regarding this animator/screenwriter's career including the fact that he wrote treatments for episodes of "Airwolf". There are also links to many good sites all over the world including one to the NFB.

I guess that sort of wraps up the tour so far. The important thing to remember is that there really are hundreds of places to check out on the internet regarding animation. Some as Mr. Richler so aptly points out are "booby traps" and platforms for "snake-oil salesmen", but I guess if you want to make films of any ilk, you've got to expect to run into that sooner or later....



# Drawn and filmed

R. David Foster

## celanimation step-by-step



### CONCEPTION AND STORYBOARD

The conception of a piece of animation always has to consider what is feasible to produce. Therefore it is impossible to know what to animate until one can understand how it would be animated. Anything goes as long as one is willing to draw and film it.

Working out visually what a piece will be can be done in many ways. One way is a storyboard. This is basically a comic book of some sort without dialogue balloons. I prefer to do the whole piece of animation in one storyboard on one piece of paper. Another way is to do each scene on an individual sheet so that each frame isn't composed next to another. Conveying a storyboard to someone else or even yourself five months later can be a different story. Basically you had better get your idea across in the storyboard or you'll end up in a mess one way or another.

### SOUND OR DIALOGUE

Once the story is down pat with a script the sound of the film must be finalized before animation can begin. By finalized I mean that any sound that must coincide with a visual has to be predetermined before animation can begin

because each drawing must be drawn to illustrate a certain sound. Dialogue must be recorded, transferred to magnetic stock, and broken down frame by frame. Sound effects must also be broken down. Only music or narrative can be left loose, and is often done after the animation.

Breaking down the dialogue or sound effects is done on a flatbed editor. The particular sound or consonant is located on the magnetic tape and the frame number is written down. Loose sounds are left loose but sharp sounds are pinned down to the exact frame. In a professional studio, especially if there is music, the breakdown of the dialogue, sound effects, music and narrative is recorded by frame number on the bar sheets (as in bar of written music). For myself I just use the exposure sheet because the breakdown has to be copied to them for the animation anyway, and I have only had to work with either sound effects or dialogue.

An exposure sheet is a list of all the frames of a scene written on one or more sheets of paper with columns to identify the action, dialogue, background, and cel that corresponds to each frame.

### DRAWING

The necessity of drawing ability is debatable when it comes to animation. It depends on the concept and purpose of the animation. My interest lies in documenting and depicting pure motion in all its' complexity. If I was better at life drawing I would do animation of ballet or wrestling. As it is I enjoy animating kayaking.

I draw my rough animation in non-photo blue pencil on 12 field size white animation paper which is 10" x 13" in size and basically the same as photocopier paper. Almost all supplies can be purchased at the Sheridan College Oakville Campus Bookstore at 1430 Trafalgar Road just north of the QEW in Oakville. The paper is punched with two rectangular holes and one circular centre hole using the Acme paper punch in the Oxberry room at LIFT or purchased pre-punched.

The paper is punched so that it will fit onto an Acme peg bar (plastic peg bars must be ordered for about 15 dollars from [www.chromacolour.com](http://www.chromacolour.com)). A stack of paper can be fit onto the peg bar and thereby each sheet is held in place with respect to the other sheets. This is called registration and is used to position the artwork under the camera as well as during the drawing of the rough animation.

An animation disc is a glorified set of pegbars mounted about a small piece of translucent material in a disc that can be turned to allow the drawing of careful curves from any direction while the paper is still on the pegs.

One drawing can be seen through the paper of another drawing and this is for the rough layout of the animation where tracing is used. But the actual motion of the drawings can be seen by placing one sheet per finger of the hand and quickly viewing each sheet while they are on the pegbar. This is known as flip-pin' animation.

Inbetweening is the process of drawing the frames inbetween the frames that





have the full extent of the motion to be animated ( the extremes ), after the extremes have been drawn. The number of inbetweens is determined by how long the motion should take in seconds, converted to frames and drawings.

I then clean up my drawings with a 2B pencil so that they will show up on film since a non-photo blue pencil will not show up on film ( in theory ).

Any background art that stays the same from frame to frame must either be traced onto every drawing or traced onto a cel; or a combination of both if the background appears adjacent to the animation. The cel is then placed over top of each drawing when it is under the camera to make a full image appear on every frame.

There are a number of things about filming the animation that one needs to be aware of when drawing the animation. One is that the common practice is to usually only draw one drawing for every two frames of film ( drawing on twos ). Timing of an action is based on the fact that there are 24 frames of 16mm film for every one second. Another thing to be aware of is that the camera on the Oxberry animation stand can be made to view portions of the full field. This is how zooms and pans ( and even rotations ) are achieved. However, any of these camera or table moves isn't worth much unless there is a background involved. The position of the artwork with respect to the camera is defined by a field guide – a punched cel with a grid on it. The best way to understand how to draw something incorporating a camera or table move is to first thoroughly investigate and calibrate the Oxberry animation stand after having had an orientation on it.

Traditional cel animation is a little more than this because every frame of animation is the film image of a painted, inked or photocopied cel on top of a painted watercolour background.

## CAMERA OPERATIONS

If one has thoroughly investigated the Oxberry and used the counters to regis-

ter the positions of the table and camera for use in drawing the animation then filming the animation should be a fairly straightforward though lengthy process. There are three types of camera operations that can be used : moving the camera toward and away from the artwork that is positioned on the table (zoom in/out); moving the table sideways in the four directions that correspond to the four edges of the table in the same plane as the table (table moves horizontal/vertical) or rotating the table within its own plane (rotation); and sliding the pegbar left or right in the table (panning).

Zooming in is moving the camera down toward the table and zooming out is moving the camera up and away from the table. Zooming in views a smaller portion of the field and therefore views a smaller field size. There is a counter on the camera that can be used for calibrating a slow zoom. For example if a 12 field requires the camera to be at a counter position of 1676 and an 11 field requires the camera to be at a counter position of 1588 and one wants to move from a 12 field to an 11 field in 22 frames on twos the camera would be moved eleven times, each time the counter would be reduced by 8.

The table can be cranked over to one side or the other with one crank that has a counter or cranked away from the operator or toward the operator with another crank that has its own counter. There is also a clamp that can be released to rotate the table based on the number of degrees. In a professional studio the table move directions are known as north, south, east, west, clockwise and counterclockwise.

There are pegbars along the top ( north ) edge of the artwork as well as along the bottom (south) edge of the artwork. Each set of pegs has a crank and a counter. The pegs can be panned to one side or the other. This is basically for having a background on the top pegs and the animation on the bottom pegs and thereby being able to, for example,

have a character animated in one position on bottom pegs walking along to the side and the background passing behind him to the other side on top pegs.

There is also a sheet of glass called a platen that is mounted so that it can be lowered onto the artwork to hold it flat for the camera. Please don't chip the glass.

## POST PRODUCTION

I have very little experience in post production but I would like to point out that the editing of a piece of animation boils down to syncing the dialogue and effects that have already been finalized before animation began, and adding the music or narrative if it has not already been finalized. As well, any shooting errors must be corrected, which, if the cameraperson has been careful to note the errors on the exposure sheet and reshot them as they occurred, should be very straightforward.

## ANIMATION WORK

A professional animation studio breaks up the work of making an animated film into many jobs that must cooperate in order to produce the film in a reasonable length of time. One can get an idea of the work and cost involved in each step of the animation process from the percentage of a studio's workforce that is involved in each step.

## THE PERCENTAGES COULD BE AS FOLLOWS:

### Production coordination

10%	
<b>Conception and Storyboard</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Layout</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Animation</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Cel Painting</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Camera and Post Production</b>	<b>7%</b>

*Please feel free to contact me through a Technical Coordinator @ LIFT or via email at Vid\_93@hotmail.com if you have any questions or would like help with an animation project.*



# ANIMATION BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Betty Edwards**      [Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain](#)  
*The Best drawing book I've ever worn out and actually got gooder from.*

**Preston Blair**      [How to Draw Cartoon Animation](#)  
                                 [How to Animate Film Cartoons](#)

*These two large format books can also be purchased as a single paperback. They have lots of good and gooder drawings.*

**Shamus Culhane**      [Animation From Script to Screen](#)  
*A good overview of how the animation industry was from the worthwhile and redeeming point of view of a how to get into the industry. It really takes the mystery out of making an animated film by a single individual using the cel animator studio system – and even if anyone can understand how to build an atomic bomb, not everyone who wants to will build one.*

**Zoran Perisic**      [The Animation Stand](#)  
*Now this is a book that explains an animation camera stand and it is of course out of print. Never fear!! It's at the Metro Reference Library and Roberto Ariganello, one of the technical co-ordinators at LIFT, can tell you all about it.*

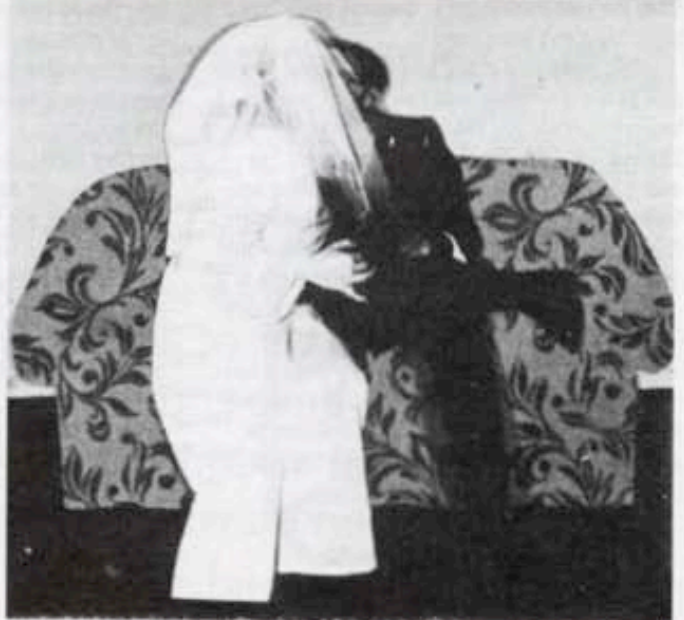
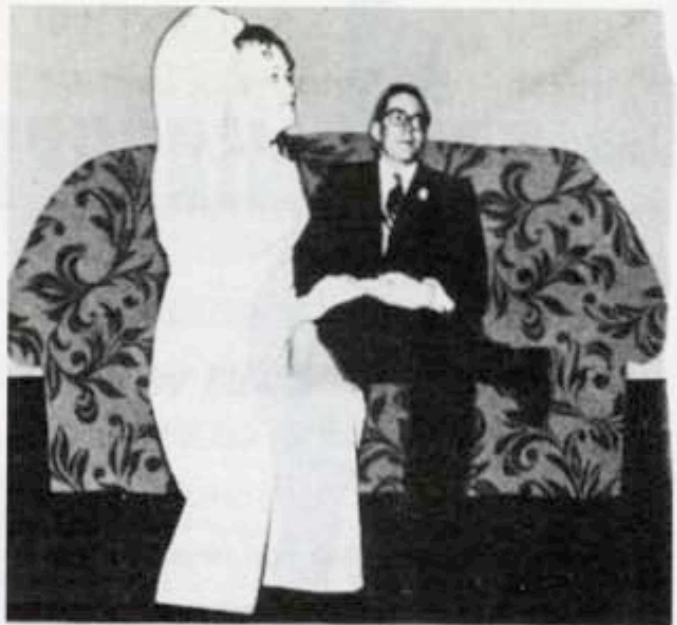
**Kit Laybourne**      [The Animation Book](#)  
*The new digital edition is as tedious as the original but there is a lot of tedious animation out there that this book overviews as well as gooder animation and methods.*

**Brian Lemay**      [Layout Made Amazingly Simple for the Incredibly Stupid](#)  
*Some version of a similar title is still available at the Sheridan College Oakville Campus bookstore along with a number of other titles by the same author, who, at last I heard, is still the Layout & Design instructor of Sheridan's highly touted Classical Animation Program. I found the book to be detailed in the art of passing paper around a studio among the kazillion people who handle the artwork in some way or another – from character design to camera instructions, but I could never draw something to be filmed on an animation camera until I figured out the Oxberry at LIFT and I am now guessing I know why animation is so expensive in a large studio. I believe there are limits to what can be done with this book.*

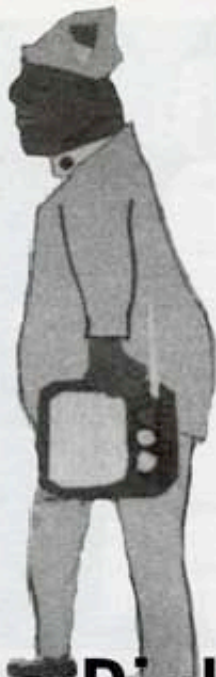


## ABOUT THE AUTHOR R. David Foster

*I am an amateur animator having animated 29 seconds of line drawings with background and 10 seconds of color and sound using the LIFT facilities. I attended the First Year of Sheridan College's Classical Animation 3 Year Program in 1993,1994 and the reason for leaving was mutual. You may wonder if I learned anything there and I'm with you brother on that one, boy oh boy. Sound and dialogue were taught in second year. I have been a member of LIFT since 1995.*







## The Right Frame of Mind - Sue Riedl

I have two and a half experiences doing animation. All were done with my animation partner, Mary MacNaughton. The first involved animating a plastecine figure going through liposuction and other such beauty treatments in a film called MAKEOVER. The next was collage style animation using magazine and paper cut-outs for a short called SALAMI HEAVEN. The half was an experiment in snowflakes falling where I forgot to open the shutter and we shot a lot of black. This leads to my first piece of advice. In such a scenario where you look at your footage and it's black, or it's out of frame, or completely useless in some other way, it is important to immediately laugh at this little blunder (maybe even toss your head back whilst doing so). Consider it a momentous learning experience and then cut that scene from the film immediately. Because really, you probably didn't even need it....

This emotional state, known as denial is integral to the animation process. Right from the beginning when you start planning your animation you will find denial a fabulous asset. For example, say you are wanting to animate a basketball. In a state of reason you would animate this ball bouncing a few times, maybe you would even have it decrease in bouncing and come to a stop. Pretty standard, do-able stuff. But picture his:

The ball is being thrown into frame by a basketball player. And wouldn't it be more interesting to see the basket ball player? And maybe animate the actual throw, and maybe the ball

goes through the hoop and then bounces. And even better, maybe one of the players from the other team swoops in and catches the ball after the bounce and runs down the court to score for his team. And the crowd (a crowd can't be too hard to do) goes wild!

See-If you're going to animate the bouncing ball anyway, you might as well animate two basketball players and a stadium of people while you're at it, right? While in denial the possibilities become endless.

A lot more is done and many panic attacks are avoided in this state of mind. When I see the final product I am always pleasantly surprised and amazed that I had the patience to even attempt such a thing in the first place.

It is also excellent to be in denial about how long the animation will take. Would anyone in his or her right mind begin a frame by frame project knowing truthfully how long it will take? It is good to go in convinced that you really only need the weekend. And then reconsider and book another FINAL weekend (knowing you'll probably only use a half day..). Isn't that how WHEN THE DAY BREAKS got finished? As if Wendy Tilby and Amanda Forbis went into the project planning to sacrifice their lives. They probably started thinking, hey, let's do something creative on the Labour Day weekend this year...for a lark. And then suddenly-it's two years later and they're Oscar nominated. All for a lark...

Other things I have learned along the way.

If you are animating with cut-outs, the cutting

out part is horrible, and time consuming and will make you want to take the scissors and maybe stab yourself in heart at some point. But once that is over with, truly everything seems easy as a breeze.

Cutting out anything with cats around may cause one to face certain rage issues.

Post it notes are amazing for sticking your pictures on. Like your character's eyeballs, or flower petals, or those damn water droplets that took forever to make and keep getting lost. Stick them on the sticky part of the post-it and then you can label them.

And, I learned this the hard way, there is nothing more important than your sound track. If you are telling a story and need sound effects, the right sound design and exact sound effects are as important as the animation. Spend just as much time considering the sound your bouncing ball will make as you do making the bounce look convincing. It seems so obvious but in the first film, we couldn't get the right effects and I think the project really suffered because of it.

Work with someone else if you can. For me it's way more fun, the ideas we come up with are way better and the other person can remind you to break for lunch, or ask if you've got the shutter open.

Mary and I are onto our next project. We're cutting and pasting and even doing some storyboards. We think we should be done for the next monthly screening. Or sooner.



# ZEN AND THE ART OF EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION....

## 3 THINGS I LEARNED ABOUT MAKING ANIMATION by Elise Beauvais

### *Meaning and Nothingness:*

There is no motion without stillness, nor sound without silence, never some thing without no thing. Its all in the timing and timing is all about the pause, the rest between the action, as "they" say: 'Its all in the delivery'.

I've played with many methods to achieve the perfect pause. Each scenario is different but for me the most reliable and versatile is the black frame.

**I use a single black frame for punctuation, transition and emphasis.**

In creating rhythms I use a black frame on regular beats between the continuous moving images. I make my images move to a beat, whether they be abstractly moving or intentionally narratively moving. But without a pause frame the beats all bleed together in one continuous flow, if I don't want to accent any image in particular but rather the musicality of the motion I use black.

**A single frame is not enough to be visually disruptive but sufficient to punctuate the beat.**

If I'm making a connection between 2 images similar in form but too dissimilar to run back to back without jarring the eye, again I use a black frame, sometimes I even dare to use 2 black frames.

If I want to emphasize a pause in the motion without losing vibrancy of life inherent in the line, I will repeat the image several times with black at least every fourth frame. it's a similar effect to drawing many copies of a held frame and cycling them as opposed to just filming one image for the length of the hold, its keeps the motion present and the illusion of being alive is not broken.

### *Meditation: or Variation on a Theme:*

Ah the joys of animating, forget to eat, postpone sleep, spending hours absorbed in a repetitive act. What might otherwise be described as obsessive compulsive behaviour. I joke with half embarrassment and half pride that it took me 3 years to make 3 minutes. I did take a few breaks.

The breaks were great, my subconscious brings me back to my work with an eerie magnetism after a length of break and I find myself creating a connection where there was none before. My hands drawing or scratching something out before my very eyes out of no conscious direction. The symbolic articulation of something I had been trying to say or even had

no idea I had wanted to say. What a magical experience who needs yoga at a time like that, and there are so many of those experiences, breaks are sometimes very necessary, even if only a nap.

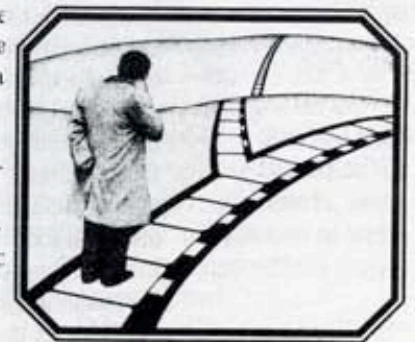
Then there's the long obsessive days, sometimes yes its only 6 hours but when the obsession grows I've been known to log 12 or even 13 hours of drawing in a day. Time disintegrates into the abstract when you're plodding through a few seconds of film over the course of a waking day. A transition over say 6 seconds may be very different from first frame to last frame, but all the frames in-between are individually so similar to the frames beside it. One differs from the other almost imperceptibly. After a few frames, the details and intricacies in line become a Zen like focus worthy of grand appreciation, the simplest gesture in ink becomes weighted with nothing and everything. The mind begins to clear, the lines arouse reflections on past music, stories and encounters. The hand continues to study the simplistic beauty of the line directing it subtly and each page is embued with its own history in time, the half hour spent drawing it your thoughts were visiting, like a guest.

(Yeah, breaks are good to keep one foot in the world of others.)

### *If a tree falls in the forest...*

#### *...or falling in love with 1/24 th of a second.*

There's a paradox to animation. If you fall in love with a frame--a frame not an image-- its only a fraction of a second in a series of seconds. If you show someone the fraction out of context it has no life, no vibrancy, no shimmer, no tempo... If you show it in context it goes by too fast to be appreciated. There is just no way to share this special image worthy of your love but alas the same dilemma only more numerous. Its a frustration I can share with my friends, those who I've tried emphatically to illustrate my frame love, but its only the frustration I share, a burden to bear.







# *Anti-Animation* feeling it frame-by-frame by Darya Farha

Animation came as a total surprise to me. I have never been interested in cuteness, characters, or children's entertainment. Although I had taken many drawing courses, none emphasized the skills and orientation associated with animation. With the exception of perhaps *The Simpsons*, it never occurred to me that animation could be a suitable medium for exploring what was interesting to me. But I went to Ryerson for film, photography and digital and emerged a short time after, disillusioned and alienated on the whole, yet hooked on what is sometimes called "experimental animation".

I'm not actually sure how to define "experimental animation" except to say that it's any animation that isn't what could be called "mainstream", that expresses a sensibility and uses techniques that would not be seen in mainstream venues. While I haven't yet had the courage to give my work in this field the attention and commitment it deserves, I have nevertheless thought a lot about the medium and about some of the particular opportunities it offers.

I personally did go into animation with a love of drawing and other 2-D image-making techniques, as well as with a longstanding fascination with puppets, miniatures, and dolls. But the particular techniques are not that important and are of course always changing, influenced as they are by a whole host of factors, including money, time, and serendipity. What animation offers to me is not just a chance to work with my hands - although that is certainly one of its pleasures - but to contemplate movement and gesture. While liveaction film and mainstream animation seem, for the most part, to take movement for granted, I think of experimental animation as providing a little breathing space in which to reflect on the requirement to movement.

First, as the name suggests, frame-by-frame filmmaking is extremely labour-intensive. Regardless of the



technique chosen, it always involves long hours of painstaking and repetitive work. Because it is so hard to create even a few seconds of film, this encourages you to plan the action very carefully, and even to think of it as choreography. With no actor there to speak a part, speech seems less integral and inevitable than in liveaction, thus further emphasizing movement.

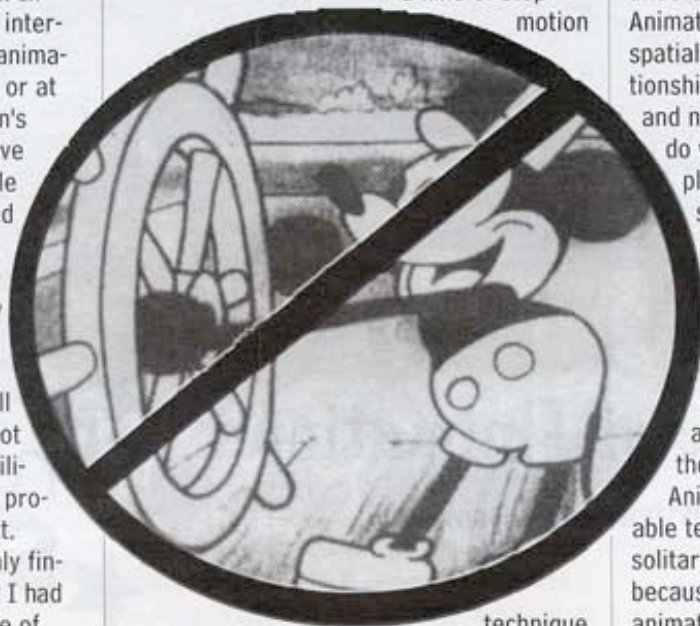
What's unique to animation is the fact that it uses still imagery and sources to create the illusion of movement. Nevertheless, stillness is a temptation commercial animators must resist, and one of the criteria of success is smoothness; in other words, success depends on the degree to which you can distract the viewer from the conditions of production. In contrast, I've started to think of my interest as "broken" or "anti-animation" animation because I'm drawn to rejecting or at least playing with some of animation's imperatives, especially the imperative to create easy, fluid, and comfortable movement. What happens, I've asked myself, when something is "wrong", doesn't live up to "standards"?

For me this brokenness is a way of introducing failure and pain into my work and of addressing the cultural pressures I feel on my body all the time. Stasis and the sense of "not being able to go on" become possibilities, and an alternative to the busy, productive and upwardly mobile subject. When I made my first and as yet only finished film "Full Service Automation" I had been studying the Graham technique of modern dance for a number of years. Distinguished by its use of resistance, its serious and even ascetic aura, and its emphasis on strength and muscularity, the Graham technique presents movement, as one critic has put it, as an "ordeal" where everything is at stake and nothing can be taken for granted. By working the tension between stasis and motion, animation can achieve a similar effect and present movement as difficult, culturally weighted and problematic, rather than as natural and inevitable.

It is a commonplace nowadays to say that we as a society are suffering from a lack of meaning, but it seems to me that the opposite is true and that we are suffering from too much meaning. Perhaps due to the proliferation of "information" and rep-

resentations, it is hard, for example, to create imagery that leaves a viewer confused as to its meaning. I suppose everyone has their own interpretation of what art is, but to me the invitation of art is summed up perfectly in the title of the film about Chet Baker "Let's Get Lost": it is an invitation to some kind of incoherence, some kind of disruption. I think experimental animation offers a lot of opportunities in this regard, for a couple reasons.

Some animation techniques and styles convey a lighthearted, easy quality that belies the labour that went into the production. Other techniques, however, hide neither work nor sense of intentionality. I am working right now, for example, on a kind of stop-motion



technique using hundreds of photographs. Although I don't feel I've managed yet to create the kind of incoherence I'm pursuing, that sense of labour and intention can (theoretically) combine with this incoherence to produce an intriguing combination of purposefulness with mystery and indeterminacy. I'm thinking here of the kind of effect La La La Human Steps achieved in the late 1980s when they started dancing in business suits, so that there was a clash between their rapid movement that overwhelmed the viewer's ability to "grasp" it, and the purposefulness implied by the suits.

Of course animation has the supreme advantage, to my mind, of being non-naturalistic. The animated world draws attention to itself as a representation: its "reality" is clearly filtered through a conscious-

ness and so is not presented as "true" and "real" but rather as mediated. This isn't always and necessarily so: the mere fact of being, say, illustration rather than liveaction doesn't guarantee a skeptical attitude towards truth claims. For example, animated worlds for children are sometimes set up as a parallel world that relies on shared and established concepts such as parent, child, school, friendship, loyalty etc.. However, I do think that for practical reasons it is easier to create an isolated, abstracted or expressionistic space in animation than in liveaction.

I've noticed that we tend to start looking for power relations as soon as figures and/or objects are combined in what we understand as a 3-dimensional space. Animation really allows you to play with the spatial quality and to manipulate the relationships between bodies, or between body and not-body. One of my favorite things to do when I'm using photographs of people, for example, is to light each person differently and then combine their figures in the same frame. Through something as subtle and inexpensive as this, you can slightly disorient the viewer so that the world in which your figures are operating seems more exploratory and liminal than might otherwise be the case.

Animation encourages some less desirable tendencies too. Because it is largely a solitary and obsessive type of activity, and because it is so difficult to create footage, animation can have a highly concentrated and condensed, even an over-burdened feel. This quality works beautifully for Judith Doyle in *The Last Split Second* where she has created quite literally a life-and-death emergency room tension, but in my own footage it sometimes seems relentlessly aggressive and ungenerous. Another problem I have found is the temptation to beauty. All kinds of stunning materials, patterns and visual sources are accessible to you in experimental animation and a lot of them look, at first, really great on the Oxberry. They say that in writing you should trash your favourite phrase or section or whatever you are most attached to, and that's probably true in animation as well, because there's usually something cloying about your favourite part.



# In the First Person:

## 3 New Animators

### Chris Chong

Super 8 filmmaking is not hip. After the current glamorization and gimmickery of "raw" S8 filmmaking, as established by Toronto high art society, the bare bones will once again expose its marrow true: no sucking here you starfuck filmmakers! When you simply have a story to tell, and the image, however loosely woven, is burned into your mind, you have to scream. The S8 camera becomes that voice. We are all born screaming from our mother's womb. The lo-fi 'technique' of S8 reminds you that screaming LOUD is super easy! It is one swift movement. Press the button, bust the volume!

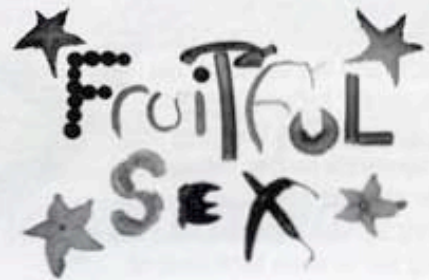
Let's take another step. Animation. S8 animation. Reckless and anarchistic, S8 animation is the truest form that captures the S8 aesthetic. The grain doesn't lie. S8 animation is a filmic quickie. It is for those who think and move quickly so as not to miss the short instantaneous convulsions that happen. Drop to the floor, mount the camera, lower its head, and start thinking in the other world you wish you were in and don your alter-ego (insert boy with swinging penis here). Grab what ever is around you and work with it. I hear it all too often: animation is time consuming and painstakingly slow (yawn...). Well ya, but so is listening to people talk

about their film but never working on it. Put your cock where your money is, baby!

Film Animation is a fantastical visual to work with because you can never be smooth enough. You will never be able to make it seem human. You will never be able to say 'wow, that looks so real'. It is a big lie! Animation bypasses reality and allows you to create gravity on your own terms. Accept the imperfections. See past the jittery movements and the lack of continuity. It is not live action. Animation has the luxury of creating its own set of realities, satin nighties on the dancefloor, baby. The S8 camera is the well-worn glove that spirited animators should be partnered with. S8 animation doesn't lie. It is freedom of equipment, fantasy in reality, and, comfort in the grain. Ladies & Gentlemen, sit back and have a scotch. Its just Gumby.

### The Raw Love of Animation:

Michelle Messina



Animation is a wonderful medium if you can get over the fact that there aren't actors to praise you for a job well done and wrap parties will not happen with a crew of 5 or less. Animation is truly for those that love the art form and have plenty of time to work at it. After all, it is film making that makes action out of nothing. Animators can't simply rely on actors, because they create the actors, their movements and personalities. I wrote, produced and directed a short 16mm stop motion animation titled "Fruitful Sex." For it, I used several pounds of fruit as actors and I tailor-made their costumes (at least there was plenty of fruit to eat during the filming to keep my energy up). I am probably the only director

who has admitted to eating her actors! Mr. Banana became irrate that a stand-in Banana was needed when he became limp under the lights during the love scene. Fantasy is a wonderful outlet for me. It gives me a chance to be a child again. Animation is challenging but exciting at the same time, as anticipation builds to the final turn out of the processed film. Magic does take place. I have developed "Fruitful Sex" into a feature film script. I have considered changing the title to better suit a children's market. "The Fruit Story" is the working title.





# "Eh, Whazzup, Doc?"

by Brian Montenegro



NASTY  
BOY

When I was asked to write an article about animation I honestly did not know what I could write about. Since I'm new to the game I felt that I could not give an authoritative viewpoint. But since I've just completed an animated music video, I thought that my experience might be of interest. Needless to say, there were some ups and down while I was making this animated short.

I first picked up on the idea to make a music video after watching Much Music's "Rap City" one evening. I thought it would be fun to make an animated short which parodied certain videos that have aired on that program. I found a music producer and paid him to produce a song. After the song was completed I set about doing the storyboards, backgrounds, character designs, and the animation. The animation was fun to do. The pain in the ass part was all the gluing, painting and cutting that went with it. Sure I could have used a computer to colorize each drawing but, since I was on a limited budget those sorts of technological luxuries were out of the question. After completing

all the artwork I started filming in the animation room at L.I.F.T. To be honest, I was nervous about what some of the female staff might think about some of my artwork. Remember, this video parodies certain elements that you see in a lot of rap videos, so there are occasional booty and bouncing breast shots. The great thing about animation is that you can take these moments to an extreme level without it being vulgar.

I enjoyed the filming process the most. There were some set backs (some of my backgrounds were too small) but overall it went smoothly. So far, I have submitted my video to TVO's "The Volt", MuchMusic and Musiqueplus in Montreal. "The Volt" has played it a number of times and are interested in playing an extended version which I'm in the process of working on. Muchmusic, on

the other hand, turned it down the first time because of the T & A and foul language. So, I re-edited it and resubmitted it. The second time around they said they were interested in playing it. But I have my doubts. Right now I'm interested in getting in contact with someone who is interested in combining animated characters to a musical format (hip hop). I've already developed a number of characters, such as nasty boy, and I'm working on some more. If anyone would like to see the video there is a copy

at L.I.F.T. The animation is called "Candy", directed by Brian Montenegro, music producer Gary Justice and lyrics and performance by rapper Stone P.

*If you have any questions or suggestions please call me at (416) 703-3591.*



## Book Review

# LUX:

## A decade of artists' film & video

CHRIS KENNEDY

In celebration of ten years of programming, Pleasure Dome is releasing a collection of writing that chronicles the development of fringe film & video over the last decade in its usual distinct way. For the decade considered within this book, Pleasure Dome has served as an exhibitor of film & video that challenges its audience on one of at least three levels: politically, intellectually or aesthetically. Often housed in the slightly hidden Cinecycle, they have hosted a variety of works that both enjoy partial obscurity and encourage another look. Because of the way these works are positioned or position themselves as separate from a more commercial popular culture, books like this one are important for maintaining a critical discussion around these often marginalised works.

The book begins with a wonderful essay by Laura Marks that weaves together a history of Pleasure Dome, a semiotic discussion of experimental film & video and the author's own dreams. Not only does this serve as a partial contextualisation of what follows, but it also sets the stage for the stories, arguments and imaginings that permeate the rest of the book. Marks keeps her history open and multivalent and the editors, Steve Reinke and Tom Taylor, have shaped a book that builds on that openness. While the names of Jack Smith, Vito Acconci and George Kuchar appear almost liturgically in the first few essays, the texts that follow gleefully undermine any totalising trajectory. This allows for a discussion of multiple issues and a sense that while things may interweave, nothing is locked down.

The editorial allowance of a mixture of themes and geographies creates a diversity of selections that still manage to build upon each other. Interviews, scripts and artists' personal reflections put the focus on the creative possibilities of fringe media while critical essays draw out its important relationship with a larger media culture. Thematically, the articles consider a variety of topics. On the one hand, identity and material politics and all things transgressive or corrective are considered, and on the other, technologies and aesthetics are also given fair discussion (even Ontario's own hand-processing film farm is discussed). And rather than taking the form of a necrology, as have many other considerations of the "lost art of film", LUX ends on a hopeful meditation on new technology by Paula Levine and Jan Peacock that channels the momentum of the book forward into the next ten years.

There are many reasons to recommend this book to LIFT members (and I am sure many will not need much persuasion). First, it maps a community—not just in the sense that Toronto plays a centralised role, but it links together a sense of a larger community of media makers who consistently challenge themselves to create distinct work. Secondly, by focusing on the writings of artists about their own work or the work of others, it serves as both an inspiration and a record of current debates. In essence, the book reinforces the notion that is so important to the marginal filmmaker: (ITALICISE) you are not alone.

One of the two criticisms I have of the book is in the lack of discussion of censor-

ship and its relationship to monetary and political control. This is especially important in Ontario, where Pleasure Dome has long had an antagonistic relationship with the Ontario Censor Board (making it one of the last exhibitors to continue the debate). The Pleasure Dome even had a recent run-in with the Censor Board over their screening of *Skin Flick*. It would seem that a re-examination of this issue would be essential to a discussion of fringe film in Ontario. An additional criticism, since *Skin Flick* raises the subject, is that race politics are not as thoroughly represented as they could be within LUX. Only a few of the thirty or more articles address race specifically, although identity politics in general serves as an underlying theme. Perhaps a more committed focus on race is a challenge for the next decade of Pleasure Dome's existence.

Finally, it should be noted that as of the time this article was written, I was only able to read the completed manuscript, so I was unable to get a visual sense of the final design for the book. However, as any film or video maker should know, a script is often a solid example of the potential for a film. If LUX's design is even half as lush and considered as the text, then it has more than enough to recommend it as an essential text in anyone's consideration of the media landscape.

*LUX: a decade of artists' film & video, edited by Steve Reinke & Tom Taylor and published by YYZ Books, will be out in May. Look for a special book launch at the beginning of Pleasure Dome's summer season in June.*



# Inside Out Film & Video Festival Preview

by Victor Fan

The 10th Annual Inside Out Toronto Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festival will be held on May 18 - 28, 2000, at Cumberland Cinemas in Yorkville with opening night galas at the ver eyepopping Paramount/Famous Players Cinemas (John/Richmond).

I was given an opportunity to check out a sampling of some of the local works we will be seeing at the festival. I found these works special as a group because they all explored, asserted and/or played with gay/lesbian identities. In the end, what stood out most was their uniqueness and diversity.

Here are three that I thought were great:

*The Offering*, **Paul Lee** (10min) Shot in 35mm, the film's cinematography vividly captures the love between a Buddhist monk and a novice amidst the natural colors of the changing seasons. With an incredibly delicate use of sound, the film plays itself out in a cyclical fashion without words. With a Chinese title that translates "fate", Lee refuses to impose established interpretations of the relationship between the two, instead contrasting it with beautiful compositions of their natural surroundings.

*My Cousin Mike*, **Gerald Hannon** (10min) : half straight-faced video confession, half home-made video porn, this

work explores the representation of sex in film by engaging with and defying avenues of representation in conventional porno flicks. We are the voyeurs of an exercise that throws the idealistic fantasies of pornos out the window and replaces it with a 'mother's basement' kind of realism. The characters, the bodies and the sex are mundane, yet strangely endearing.

*Baking with Butch*, **Nina Levitt and Melissa Levin** (4:30min), is a parody of the sterile cooking show genre. We follow the preparation of a dessert, peppered with thoughtful advice throughout, and ultimately leading us to the 'assembly' of the final dessert, and hilarious ending.

## Visual Impact... ads & classifieds!

**ADVERTISING RATES (PER ISSUE)**

Classified ads (approx. 30 words): \$ 5.00  
 LIFT members \$ 25.00  
 Non-members

Ads:

1/8 page (3 1/2" x 2")	\$ 60.00
1/4 page (3 5/8" x 4 5/8")	\$110.00
1/3 page (2 1/2" x 9 1/2")	\$120.00
1/2 page vertical (3 1/4" x 9 1/2")	\$180.00
1/2 page horizontal (7" x 4 3/4")	\$180.00
full page (7" x 9 1/2")	\$240.00
inside back cover (7" x 9 1/2")	\$360.00
outside back cover (7" x 9 1/2")	\$400.00

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# Community Calendar

Compiled by Barbara Mainguy. Send listings to [Barbara\\_Mainguy@tvo.org](mailto:Barbara_Mainguy@tvo.org)

**April 13 - 22 IMAGES FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO**  
Innis College, St. George St., University of Toronto  
[www.interlog.com/~images](http://www.interlog.com/~images)

**Saturday, April 8, 7:30 p.m.** German/Jewish Love Stories in German Cinema of the 90's  
Goethe-Institute Toronto, Kinowelt-Hall. Admission is free  
With Professor Frank Stern, Ben Gurion University, Neger, Israel

**April 12th, The Independents, Jackman Hall, AGO**  
6:30 p.m. David Barber (Saskatchewan) Hospital Fragments and Other Experiments

**April 26th, The Independents, Jackman Hall, AGO**  
French Avant Garde shorts

**April 26th, The Independents, Jackman Hall, AGO**  
6:30 p.m. Cipri and Maresco, s Cinico TV "bizarre freak shows embrace nonconformist heroes & blasphemous deviants" Truly alternative cinema.

**Until April 29** Goethe Institute: Berlin Photos Four Decades Berlin - Original photographs by filmmaker Ulrike Ottinger  
At the Goethe-Institute Toronto Gallery, 163 King St. West  
Gallery hours are Mon.-Thurs. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Fr/Sat. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Until April 29th YYZ**  
Sadomasochism, an installation by Deanna Bowen  
Suite 140, 401 Richmond St. W.

**May 1 to 7 HOT DOCS!**  
Visit the HOT DOCS website at [www.hotdocs.ca](http://www.hotdocs.ca) for listing of events in bars and pool halls throughout Toronto's Little Italy.

**June Desh Pardesh** Call 340-8025 for details.

**Sunday, April 16th, 3-6 pm** at the Lava Lounge, 507 College Street  
The Images Festival hosts the launch of three printed works: Images 1998 presented Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak's video *The Blood Records*, and they are pleased to launch the much anticipated bookwork. Laura U. Marks' new text, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*, "is essential reading for Images fans keen to situate their savvy in cultural theory and experimental cinema." Finally, guest edited by Kim Tomczak and Lisa Steele and dedicated to the endlessly intriguing subject of voyeurism, the newest issue of *FELIX* continues in its determination to provide a critical forum for all things fringe. Join us for an early soiree -- finger foods and drinks and an opportunity to talk with the writers, artists and contributors behind these important publications.

*Presented by the Images Festival in collaboration with V tape, the Oakville Galleries and Pages books and magazines, and with the generous involvement of the artists, writers and editors.*