



CRYPTOZOO OPENS AUGUST 20 at Landmark's Embarcadero Cinemas, San Francisco Landmark's Shattuck Cinemas, Berkeley and On Demand. The film won the Persistence of Vision Award at the 2021 SFFILM Festival, the Next Innovator Winner Award at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival and it was shown by the prestigious Berlin Film Festival.

Cryptozoo is an animated feature about a zoo that rescues and houses mythological creatures. The film by visionary comic book writer/artist/filmmaker Dash Shaw is described as a vibrant, fantastical animated feature that follows cryptozookeepers through a hallucinatory world as they struggle to capture a baku (a legendary dream-eating hybrid creature) and begin to wonder if they should display these rare beasts in the confines of a zoo, or if these mythical creatures should remain hidden and unknown. Featuring the voice talents of Lake Bell, Zoe Kazan, Michael Cera, Louisa Krause, Peter Stormare, Thomas Jay Ryan, Grace Zabriskie and Angeliki Papoulia. It was written and directed by Shaw, with Jane Samborski directing the animation.

Dash Shaw is a cartoonist and animator based in Richmond, Virginia. His debut as writer-director was the animated feature *My Entire High School Sinking into the Sea* (starring the voice talents of Jason Schwartzman, Lena Dunham, Reggie Watts, Maya Rudolph and Susan Sarandon) screened at the 2016 NY

Film Festival and Toronto Int'l. Film Festival, and others worldwide.

He's also the cartoonist of several graphic novels, including *New School*, *Doctors*, *Bottomless Belly Button*, *Clue: Candlestick* and the forthcoming *Discipline*, out September 2021 from NY Review Comics. His animated works include *Wheel of Fortune*, the Sigur Ros video and Sundance selection *Seraph* (co-written with John Cameron Mitchell), and the 2009 IFC web series *The Unclothed Man in the 35th Century AD*.

Cryptozoo is a Magnolia Pictures release, runs 95 minutes, is in English, and is not rated by the MPAA. www.cryptozoofilm.com

See the trailer at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMk2K_x956M&t=4s reviews at [Cryptozoo Reviews - Metacritic](https://www.metacritic.com/movie/cryptozoo)

SEE A VIDEO OF WHAT MAY BE THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE FLIP BOOK FLIPPED The flipbook is part of a deluxe limited edition of Gogol's *The Nose* published by Arion Press, illustrated by William Kentridge. He has created sets for the opera *The Nose*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igSwxDJSIyE>
Available for purchase at:

<https://www.arionpress.com/the-nose>

2021 HAS BEEN A ROTTEN YEAR TO RELEASE ANIMATED FEATURES IN THEATRES SO FAR EXCEPT FOR ONE FILM The only impressive worldwide box office gross so far this year has been for a Japanese anime, *Demon Slayer: Mugen Train* by Haruo Sotozaki. It opened in Japan Oct. 2020, and in April in the US. It has a worldwide gross of \$455.5 million of which \$47.7 million was made in the US. It had a \$15.8 million budget.

The second most successful animated feature so far this year has been *The Croods: New Age* that came out last Nov. making \$191 million (\$65 million budget), *Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaways* \$140 million on a \$45 million budget, *Raya and the last Dragon* \$121 million worldwide and *The Tom and Jerry Movie* \$126 million world-wide. Two features that opened in July may do OK, *Boss Baby 2* has taken in \$50 million and *Space Jam 2* has so far taken in \$53.1 million (as of July 21).

Dreamworks/Universal released *Spirit Untamed* on June 4 and it grossed \$30 million. Pixar/Disney released *Luca* on June 18 and so far it has taken in \$21 million worldwide (almost nothing in US as it may have only played in one theatre in H'wood just to qualify it for an Oscar?). A week earlier Sony/Netflix released *Wish Dragon* and it grossed \$21 million as well.

Eight other releases apparently went direct to DVD and online. They include *Arlo the Alligator Boy*, *Batman: Soul of the Dragon*, *Hansel and Gretel/Secret Magic*, *Scooby Doo: The Sword*, *Panda vs. Aliens*, *New*

Gods: Nazhe Raborn, Voyagers and Octonauts. DreamWorks Animation's feature *Trollhunters: Rise of the Titans* premiered Wednesday July 21st on Netflix. *Vivo* from Netflix may have a theatrical run when it comes out August 6.



RUSSIA HAS BANNED THE DISTRIBUTION OF 'HAPPY TREE FRIENDS' AND SEVERAL ANIME FILMS A Russian court banned the distribution of *Happy Tree Friends*, a series that several local animators and a writer worked on after the pilot was made in 1999. Unfortunately this once highly popular show in our county isn't tolerated in Russia. The powers in St. Petersburg's Oktyabrsky District Court have proclaimed "Watching the animated series undoubtedly harms young children's spiritual and moral education and development and contradicts the humanistic nature of upbringing inherent in Russia,"

The court also banned the films *Dante's Inferno: An Animated Epic*, the live-action manga adaptation of *Attack on Titan Part 1*, *Mortal Kombat Legends: Scorpion's Revenge* and *Dead Space: Downfall*. It turns out *Mortal Kombat Legends: Scorpion's Revenge* can motivate aggressive or self-harming behavior and *Attack on Titan Part 1* can harm children's mental health and spiritual and moral development."

The court also banned the Japanese classic *Akira* (made in 1988) citing possible damage to children's health and psychological development, along with *Death Note*, *Tokyo Ghoul*, and *Inuyashiki* over their depictions of violence, murder and cruelty. In the future we may see other works being censored as the Russian prosecutors have asked the court to ban other series and movies that have been posted on YouTube and other internet networks without any age restrictions.

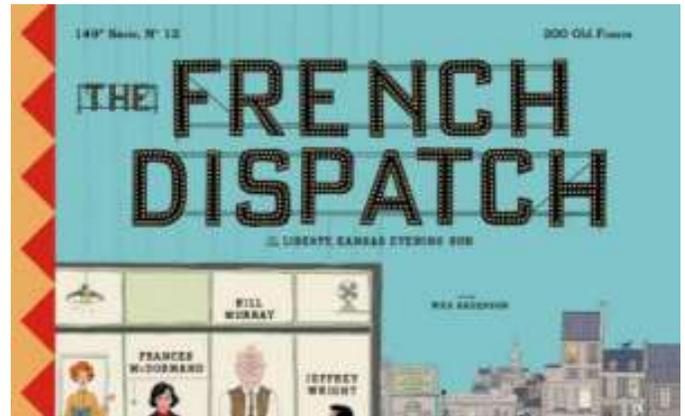
Ken Pontac was the show's story editor and frequent co-author of those shocking, scandalous episodes that could ruin a child's mind. He tells us, "This story is twelve years old, and for those twelve horrible years I've been stabbed, shot, and poisoned by more Soviet agents than James Bond during the Cold War. Every attempt has failed, but Putin's goons are as relentless as the goddam Terminator. Any publicity is good publicity, but for fuck's sake, I've been umbrella-jabbed with shellfish

toxin so many times I can't get within ten feet of a shrimp cocktail before I start bleeding out of my ass. We haven't made a new episode in years, but at this point I think Vladimir's taking it personally. I'll probably need to start up a GoFundMe to send me to Russia so I can kick his commie butt and put a stop to this nonsense."

Wikipedia says 133 episodes were made years ago, so why did it take Putin and his buddies so long to discover this series. Actually it only took nine years after the series began as the news story broke in 2009. I'm not sure I knew about it then and forgot about it, but it certainly relates to current events relating to Russia. I'm glad a friend told me about it without telling me it was an old story. It is still relevant and I suspect the story was created as propaganda in Russia as a reaction to the bad press they are getting here.

Ken invites you to view

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgiyeTIPkCM> It is a short made when the story first broke. You can also watch *Happy Tree* episodes if you can resist their evil influence.



WES ANDERSON HAS WHAT APPEARS TO BE A WILD, WACKY AND WONDERFUL FEATURE COMING OUT THIS FALL *French Dispatch* was ready for distribution over a year ago, but it was held up by the virus. When it premiered in Cannes a few weeks ago critics said "the eclectic director's singular style shines through in a sumptuous, visually splendid anthology film that warrants repeat viewings to appreciate all the details." It is a series of five short episodes and if you study the reviews on Rotten Tomatoes you will want to see it upon its release here. It may open on Oct. 16.

Lots of quirky actors worked on it including Frances McDormand, Tilda Swinton, Bill Murray, Anjelica Huston and Edward Norton. The trailer suggests it will be a fun surreal experience.

https://hyperallergic.com/662160/wes-anderson-french-dispatch-conjures-confectionary-vision-of-france/?utm_content=bufferdf84e&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=buffer

Also

<https://editorial.rottentomatoes.com/article/the-french-dispatch-first-reviews-the-most-wes-anderson-movie-ever-and-its-fantastic/>

SEE RESTORED EARLY SILENT ANIMATION
<https://www.cinema.ucla.edu/collections/watch-listen-online>



JOB OPENING AT DISNEY Who will replace the departing Zenia B. Mucha, the power behind the power? For 19 years, Ms. Mucha has been uniquely responsible for protecting and polishing the Disney brand. As the company's combative chief communications officer, Ms. Mucha commands a 500-person global media relations team; oversees the company's philanthropic and environmental initiatives; the Disney Archive and D23, the popular Disney fan club that holds enormous annual events for its million plus members. Ms. Mucha is 65 and has announced she isn't going to renew her contract. If you are curious, it brought her \$4.9 million in compensation in 2020.

Among her accomplishments has been to keep the company out of recent politics including avoiding announcing any company opinion on voter restriction in Georgia, but she has firmly supported LGBTQ rights and racial justice. She also spoke out about Disney buying Twitter as the amount of porn on it might hurt Disney's image.



NETFLIX TO RELEASE 'VIVO' A MUSICAL FEATURE AUGUST 6 It stars a singing honey bear who is on a mission to deliver a song to his owner's long

lost love. The adventure takes him through the Florida Everglades. The character designs are unexciting, but the backgrounds in the clips posted are quite lovely. Sony Pictures Animation apparently will distribute it globally starting August 6th, 2021. See a long clip at <https://www.animationscoop.com/first-look-lin-manuel-mirandas-vivo/>



That is hopefully a cool shoe from Nike that your kids will want you to rush out and buy for them.

'SPACE JAM 2021' GETS A 42% RATING FROM ROTTEN TOMATOES ON 52 REVIEWS They concluded "Despite LeBron James' best efforts to make a winning team out of the Tune Squad, *Space Jam: A New Legacy* trades the zany, meta humor of its predecessor for a shameless, tired exercise in IP-driven branding."

Like the first film "*Space Jam: A New Legacy* is only really satisfying to people who care about marketing and company profits, people who approach it as a product that's successfully been sold. It is so overwhelmingly suffused with corporate propaganda that it seems like the filmmakers are seeking exactly that sort of praise: not satisfying cinema, not a worthwhile story, not a fun time at the movies, but a great product." Apparently Nike and Converse paid part of the costs to make this film so it became a product placement ad.

A kinder review said *Space Jam: A New Legacy* is a satisfying if uninspired reimagining of an iconic piece of 90s pop culture. Another review said. "A corporate studio movie about itself, it owes more to *The Lego Movie* than Looney Tunes. The pace is fast enough to satisfy young, short attention spans and the adult-aimed quips are entertaining for a while."



DISNEY'S NEW VERSION OF 'CHIP AND DALE' HAS PREMIERED ON DISNEY+ The trailer for the 12 episode series has been posted on Cartoon Scoop. <https://www.animationscoop.com/trailer-chip-n-dale-park-life-2/>



Mickey Rooney (left) with Douglas Leigh and some of Messmer's art in the background



OTTO MESSMER BECAME AN ANONYMOUS BROADWAY STAR by Karl Cohen

Otto Messmer, who created Felix the Cat, was hired in 1937 to animate silent cartoons that could be seen nightly by thousands of people on a spectacular giant light board that was high above Times Square in Manhattan. From 1937 until 1973 when he retired, he worked for the Douglas Leigh Sign Company creating eye catching sequences that were interspersed between advertising messages. Otto was again a pioneer working in a new medium.

When I visited NY as a kid I loved watching his animated billboard. I had no idea who the artist was, but I loved his work. (note: During WWII Otto was laid off. He worked on theatrical animation at Famous Studios, formerly the Fleischer Studio.)

I interviewed Douglas Leigh (1907 – 1991), who owned the sign company, a few months before he died. He invited me to lunch at a members' only dining club in the Pan Am skyscraper's penthouse, high over Park Avenue. He told me "Mezz was a wonderful man." He once asked Messmer, who was born in 1892, why he didn't retire sooner. Messmer told him, "He liked the glamour of the outlet. He enjoyed knowing thousands of people saw his work each night on Broadway, even though none knew who animated it." Otto finally retired when he was 81 (1973) and he lived on for another 10 years.

Leigh was a visionary who had an amazing imagination along with the skill to talk major advertisers into investing in spectacular signs despite it being the height of the depression. He had worked for several companies that did standard outdoor billboards, but he grew tired with that approach to advertising products. He called the paint and paste billboards dull and boring.

He was just 26 in 1933 when he got his first chance to design and construct a major sign in midtown Manhattan. It was a giant 15 foot wide coffee cup with real steam rising from the bowl. It advertised A&P Coffee. He said that at the unveiling ceremony it worked too well. The steam was so moist it rained on everybody at the opening.

He imagined doing even more unusual eye catching signs, so the same year he bought the US rights to the EPOK sign system from its creator Kurt Ross. Prohibition had just ended so he convinced Wilson Whiskey to advertise in a novel way, being the first sponsor to use his EPOK sign.

The first sign used 500 light bulbs to create simple animated silhouette images, but there was a technical problem that Ross couldn't solve. Fred Kerwer, an engineer from another sign company, was hired to fix it. He not only solved it, Leigh hired him as his technical director and eventually Kerwer became his vice president.

In 1935 a second larger EPOK sign was built to advertise Old Gold Cigarettes. It had 1026 lights and was also set up in a major midtown location.

In 1937 Andrew "Hutch" Hutchinson was leaving as Leigh's animation director so Leigh replaced him with Otto Messmer. That year the third sign with 4104 bulbs was erected above the Astor Theatre on Broadway at West 45th St., in the very heart of Times Square. It advertised the feature being shown inside. The Astor's light board sign covered a 720 square feet area of a much larger billboard that was 3,225 square feet in size.

The Astor's sign was so impressive that *Life* magazine wrote an article about the animated portion of it. They said it was so special that the animation caused "pedestrian jams." They also wrote "useful, natty Douglas Leigh ... expects to cover the US with animated signs within the next few years." (note: *Life*, "Photoelectric signs for advertising," Sept. 13, 1937)



It turned out hiring Otto Messmer was an excellent choice as Otto enjoyed doing the kinds of work Leigh needed and he had an exceptional imagination so he could create unusual action sequences full of surprises. Also he didn't need to spend time making detailed drawings, dealing with shading in gray areas or adding elaborate backgrounds. The reason for this was the signs were created by evenly spaced 6 volt light bulbs that were either on or off. That meant the images were either solid white or black silhouette forms. There was no shading with gray tones.

The unusual mechanism that controlled the sign was in a room nearby. It used a 16mm projector to project the black and white high contrast film images on to a matrix of photoelectric cells that turned the lights on or off. It used 200,000 feet of wire to connect the cells to the light bulbs.



Otto's silhouette animation was seen nightly by thousands of people at Times Square

In 1937 the images were somewhat crude looking squares of black or white as one photoelectric cell (also known as an electric eye) controlled four lights that were placed as close together as possible. In 1939 Leigh upgraded the system, resulting in better images. He still used 4104 light bulbs, but now each bulb was connected to its own photoelectric cell. That resulted in smoother looking artwork, especially when it came to curved lines. To reduce operation costs they used a continuous loop

projector so they didn't need to have a projectionist on hand the entire time the film was running. While the original sign from 1933 used 35mm film, those that came later used 16mm film.

What Otto was animating ranged from nice attractive shapes like snowflakes and dancing flowers to short stories. Some of the narrative sequences were mountain climbers, The Bo Peep Case, Bunny Business, parades, Jungle Bungle and Jack and the Beanstalk. See **examples of Otto's work for Douglas Leigh at https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrWnWfJH_Zgq2wARhAPxQt.;_ylu=Y29sbwNncTEEcG9zAzEEdnRpZANDMjAxNF8xBHNiYwNzYw--?p=OTTO+MESSMER+IMAGE&type=Y149_F163_202167_042821&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=trp&ei=UTF-8&fr=yhs-trp-001#id=86&iurl=http%3A%2F%2Fcartoonresearch.com%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2018%2F09%2Fmessmer-Times-Square600.jpg&action=click**

Leigh told me he believed his animation should include at least one good chase, so Otto created all kinds of chase sequences. There was also the need for humor, but he said Otto didn't stress gags. An article about the films Otto was working on in the *New Yorker* in 1941 said Leigh released a new 5 minute film each month, but it didn't provide the names of who created the films. Even today that information is rarely shared with the public.

Animation director Howard Beckerman visited Messmer at the studio at 530 5th Ave in 1972. He was shown a grid on a light box that was used by Otto or his assistants to make sure their heavy black lines were in the right place to trigger the electric cells. By photographing the drawings with high contrast film any paste up lines would vanish. Beckerman said, "The animation was done pretty much the way the old Felix films were produced, except no thin lines could be used. The nature of the sign called for very course images."

Howard said "Otto was very cordial and self-effacing, the way I assume he has always been. It was his way." There was a "nice conference room with projection facilities, silent because the signs didn't require sound. There were a few desks, and a single column 16mm Oxberry animation stand." He also remembers seeing a "very old camera, a hand cranked 35mm job that resembled the kind one might find on a 1920's animation stand." The studio was just one part of the company.

He noted, "The drawings were done on paper. I guess some cels were used, but heavy black lines on stark white paper was all that was necessary. The animators worked with special field guides that gave the grid locations of the many lights." Leigh also had a stock footage library that was kept for possible use if a client wanted reference footage for an image that could be rotoscoped.

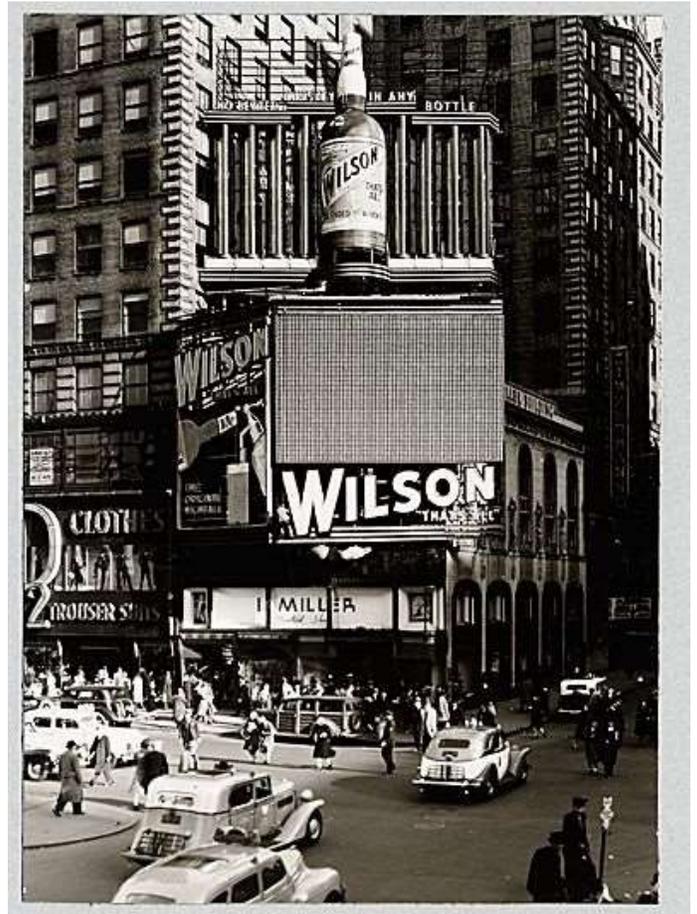
When Howard visited Otto, the Times Square EPOK sign was on a small building on Broadway at 46th St. It was only in use when it was dark enough to be seen clearly. During the day people saw a clock and the sponsors' name. (**note:** Otto spent evenings drawing Felix the Cat comic strips and comic books. Eventually he was assisted by a young Joe Oriolo, who continued creating Felix cartoons when he finally retired.)

Another artist who animated work for the EPOK signs was Norman McLaren. He is known for his abstract films made for the National Film Board of Canada, and his EPOK work promoted travel in Canada. Leigh was proud that the travel ads were designed to be shown on his EPOK signs.

The EPOK system was a success as the signs were in use in several other US cities including Boston and Atlantic City. Then in 1967 Leigh expanded his sales of EPOK signs to Tokyo, Mexico City, Barcelona and a few other overseas locations. Some of the later signs had 5128 bulbs.

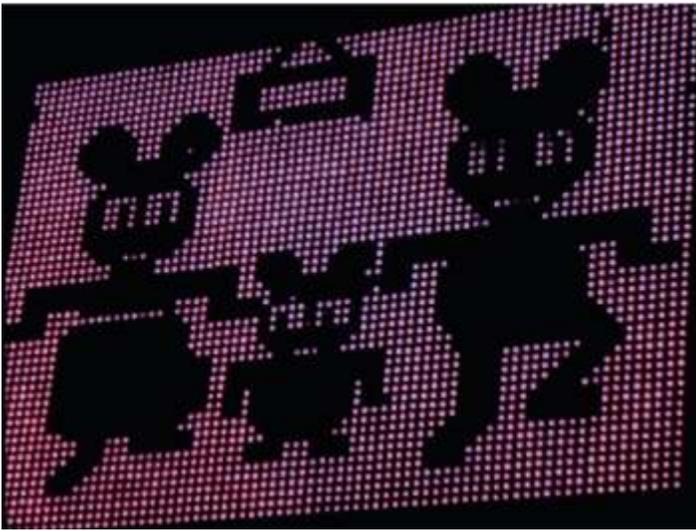
Howard Beckerman was hired in the late 1970s by Leigh to work on presentations for several proposed projects including a sign for Coca-Cola. He said the EPOK sign at 46th and Broadway was taken down in the late '70s when the lease on the rooftop ended and the landlord asked for a steep increase in the rent. Bulova decided "advertising in Times Square wasn't worth the price of the rent. They pointed out, interestingly, that displays in prominent locations like on Broadway or in Yankee Stadium didn't necessarily sell watches. The association brought luster to the company's name, but didn't affect sales that much. It was also obvious that the digital revolution was taking over." Video Jumbotrons and other newer technologies would replace them.

This article will be in the book I'm writing. Next month I'll discuss the first animated TV commercial made exclusively for the medium.



Douglas Leigh animated EPOK billboard in Times Square in the 1940s





12th GOLDEN KUKER INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL AND CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS 26-30 May 2021, Sofia, Bulgaria
by Nancy Denny Phelps

The Golden KUKER Festival combines the best of Bulgarian animation with films from throughout the world. This year festival goers were treated to 140 films from 97 countries. For the first time the festival was also available online throughout the entire country.

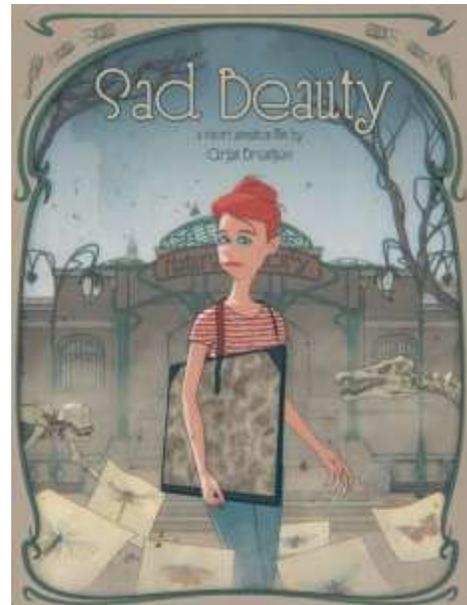
I was honored to be invited to be a member of the jury along with producer, film critic, and screen writer Alexander Donev and copywriter, screen writer and journalist Blagoy D. Ivanov. We watched films in 10 categories to select the winning films along with the Proiko Proikov Award which is given to the best Bulgarian film. The award is named after the famous Bulgarian artist, animator, and director who was also a beloved teacher of a multitude of young animators.

This year's Proiko Proikov Award went to the noted animator Radostina Neykova for **Marmalade**. Radostina created her film using the ancient art of hand embroidery. The 6-minute film was designed for children from 4 years of age and up. Embroidery fits the story perfectly. In the film two children are eating bread and marmalade when a bird snatches the girl's snack. The boy tries to get the slice of bread back but the bird flies away with the bread in its beak. The boy runs after the bird and ends up flying up in the sky with the bird. The lesson that the film has for young viewers is that if you want to become a hero sometimes you just have to spread your wings and soar above your problem.



One of my favorite films at the festival was **The Owl and the Pussycat** by well-known British animator Mole Hill. He often draws on Edward Lear's poems as subjects for his paintings and drawings. 2021 is the 150th anniversary of the publication of **The Owl and the Pussycat** which gave Hill the impetus to create his 4-minute film. He used a waximation technique where the film is etched into a layer of wax one frame at a time which gives the film a beautiful luminous quality.

The Owl and the Pussycat won the Best Animated Short Animation at the 2021 BAFTA awards. The lovely film also received the Golden KUKER Award in the Films Up to 10 Minutes category. In presenting the award the jury said that ". . . the director managed to bring a classic poem to life adding some new, quirky twists and turns without losing the spirit of the original story".



The festival has an Eco Film category where the outstanding film was the Dutch animator Arjan Brentjes' **Sad Beauty**.

The film is particularly topical during this time when everyone is conscious of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as climate change and pollution. In the film a young artist mourns the disappearance of animal species in a heavily polluted world. When she falls ill from a bacterial infection that is attacking humans, nature sends her a message through her delirious

hallucinations that mankind is causing its own demise as plants and animals are the only things left to take over the planet.

Brentjes started his professional life as a painter before switching to film in 2008. He often uses visual styles from the past to look at our present and the future. In *Sad Beauty* he uses Art Nouveau stylization to comment on our technological society and the haughtiness and selfishness of mankind today.



One of the best films I have seen this year is *Shoom's Odyssey* by Julien Bisaro and Claire Paoletti. The film, about an orphaned baby owl and her unhatched sibling caught up in a Louisiana bayou hurricane, is a real road trip movie. Aimed at 4- to 7-year-olds this enchanting film is not "cute" as so many films for small children are. Even though Shoom faces many dangers as she rolls the egg along in search of her mother, or any mother, the film is not scary and the lovely music by David Reyes sets just the right tone. This is a film that anyone of any age can appreciate and multiple viewing only made me appreciate it more.

The French/Belgian/ Swiss/Germany coproduction was originally planned it to be a 26-minute television special, the first part of a trilogy. To date it has won more than 25 festival prizes including Best Children's Film at the Golden Kuker. *Shoom's Odyssey* was also nominated for a Cesar in 2021.

Along with the competition and retrospective screenings the festival conducts workshops, masterclasses, and presentations by renowned professionals from around the world for children, students, and adults.



The festival is just part of the year around activities that festival director Nadezhda Slavova plans especially for children and students. The children's morning movie club, Animation is Magic, is held every Saturday and Sunday morning through June.

The festival also organizes an annual traveling festival which visits different Bulgarian cities. To date they have held screenings and workshops for children and adults in 35 different cities. This year they visited Veliko Tarnovo located in North Central Bulgaria. At the workshops children and older students learned how to draw favorite cartoon characters. They also make short stop motion and classic drawn animated films using their tablets or phones. Students who show interest and talent in animation and/or drawing are given the opportunity to continue their training throughout the year via zoom classes. Mrs. Slavova, head of Animart Ltd. Animation studio, also offers opportunities for art school and university students to intern at her studio in Sofia.

Nadezhda loves making films for children as well as teaching them to draw and animate. Each year she organizes Children's Day in Sofia where youngsters compete at drawing their favorite cartoon characters and creating their own short animated films. Together with Vitosha Nature Park the festival has created a cinema on Vitosha Mountain outside of Sofia where disadvantaged children can learn about animation.

Along with the State Agency for Road Safety, the festival organized a competition for a one minute animated film on the theme of Road Safety for Children. A book about safety, *Rules of the Game*, was also created in conjunction with UNICEF. Even if all of the young people who participate in these activities don't become animators, they are our future audience.

The Golden Kuker festival is organized by the Bulgarian Association of Independent Cartoon Animation Artists and is under the patronage of the Ministry of Education and Science.

The 13th edition of the festival will be held from 25 – 29 May 2022. Film submissions are open until 28 February 2022. You can find out how to enter your film at: [www;animationfest-BG.EU](http://www.animationfest-BG.EU)



HUNGARIAN ANIMATOR MARCELL JANKOVICS HAS DIED He is barely known in the US for two masterpieces, *Sisyphus* (1974) that is an amazing example of how line can be so expressive (it

was in Prescott Wright's *10th Tournée of Animation*) and his brilliant looking *Son of the White Mare* that used a bold contemporary 'op art' use of color. He was 79, died on May 29.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYBIAon683s>



ARI FOLMAN'S 'WHERE IS ANNE FRANK?' PREMIERED IN CANNES WITH A 15 MINUTE STANDING OVATION This is Ari Folman's long awaited adaptation of *Anne Frank's Diary*. It will be in theatres in Europe if all goes well on November 24th. This is the first authorized film to be made about her life by the Anne Frank Foundation. Folman is best known in the US for creating *Waltz with Bashir*.

Variety says it is "A fresh look at Anne Frank's legacy from the perspective of Kitty, the imaginary friend to whom she addressed so many of her diary entries... Folman flirts with the idea that Kitty might not know how the story ended at Bergen-Belsen. Ergo, Anne's fate is treated as a mystery that Kitty is intent on solving, blending World War II history with more kid-friendly Carmen Sandiego-style action.

The Hollywood Reporter said, "*Where Is Anne Frank* spins around exceptionally engaging central characters, expresses the story's unspeakable sadness with eloquence and sensitivity, and winningly captures the intelligence, humor and adolescent exuberance so evident in photographs of Anne Frank and in her writing."

The Guardian reviewer concluded his essay by saying, "Folman has created richly imaginative storytelling which unselfconsciously mixes the historical, the contemporary and the supernatural."

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/jul/09/where-is-anne-frank-review-holocaust-diary-imaginatively-rebooted-for-the-ya-generation>

OTTAWA ANNOUNCES TWO OF THEIR SPECIAL RETROSPECTIVE SHOWS However, you don't need to go to Ottawa to see the work of animators Wong Ping and Mike Maryniuk as much or all of it is on YouTube.

NEWS TIPS WANTED If anybody sees news that you think our members would like to know about, or if you

or a friend are doing something we should cover, please send us details. After all this is your newsletter so your input is welcomed. Send items to

karlcohen@earthlink.net



The Great Mouse Detective Ratigan and Fidget
Production Cel (Walt Disney, 1986)

MICHAEL JANTZ IS SELLING TWO DISNEY ANIMATION CELS THROUGH HERITAGE AUCTIONS He bought them when prices were quite inexpensive. If you look at what he is selling online, you can also explore hundreds of other amazing animation items for sale. View his items and others in the 2021 August 6 - 8 Animation Art Signature Auction #7255.

<https://comics.HA.com/c/search.zx?saleNo=7255&collection=17&FC=0&type=friend-consignorlive-notice>

Michael is <http://jantze.com>

<http://patreon.com/jantze>

<http://gocomics.com/studiojantze>

ASIFA-SF IS A VOLUNTEER RUN ASSOCIATION

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Special thanks to **Marty McNamara** his long article on ANNECY 2021 will be mailed to you shortly.

Nancy Denney-Phelps has been going once again to festivals in Europe. Her article on Zagreb 2021 will be in our Sept. newsletter. She represents our chapter on the international ASIFA board. **Emily Berk** is our webmaster, and **Eihway Su** keeps our email list and does a dozen other things.

ASIFA-SF is a chapter of: **Association Internationale du Film d'Animation** with over 40 chapters around the world. Membership is normally \$21 a year with the e-mailed newsletter, but right now we have a **COVID 19 SPECIAL OFFER** Due to the lockdown we are only asking \$11 a year while the virus lasts. Let's hope it is a limited time offer. We want to hold in-person events again.

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