



TIME TO GET BACK TO READING ABOUT ANIMATION

By [Nancy Denney-Phelps](#) |

Two different but extremely interesting books have come my way: *Mastering Screenwriting from Shorts to Features* and *Michel Ocelot: A World of Animated Images*.



'MICHEL OCELOT: A WORLD OF ANIMATED IMAGES' By Laura Buono

When I watch films by an animator whose work I admire and am very familiar with, I often wonder what inspired their story and visuals. If you have ever been curious about what inspires the acclaimed French animator Michel Ocelot then a new book by Laura Buono, *Michel Ocelot: A World of Animated Images* is the book for you.

Michel is a very private person who chooses not to say much about himself. He has said that he has already expressed everything that he has to say in his films. Born in Villefranche-sur-Mer on the French Riviera, he spent much of his childhood in Guinea. That he showed his artistic talent at an early age is exemplified by a childhood drawing from the 1950s and a story that he wrote and illustrated for his grandmother, but the majority of the book is spent discussing and analyzing his films.

The author tells us that like many of her generation, she grew up with Disney films, but the unique art of Ocelot's 1998 feature fantasy/adventure film *Kirkou et la Sorcière (Kirkou and the Sorceress)* amazed her even at an early age. The film served as the starting point of her research for the book. An entire chapter is devoted to the making of the film.

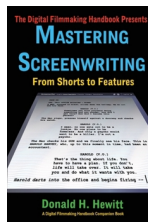
From a discussion about the history of silhouette and Ocelot's use of it in his films to his homage to his adopted city Paris, *Dilile à Paris (Dilile in Paris)*, the book gives an indepth examination of the many different techniques and stories the multifaceted animator employs in his films.

The book ends with a 2023 interview by the author with Michel Ocelot where he discusses his most recent project, *Le Pharaon, le Sauvage, et la Princesse (The Black Pharaoh, the Savage, and the Princess)*. Michel describes the film as “. . . a whimsical ‘Turqueire’ like Molière or Mozart, a comedy-ballet, in exotic costumes without aiming at historical truth”. He also talks about working with the Louvre on the production of this film.

For those of you who know and love Michel Ocelot's films the book *Michel Ocelot: a World of Animated Images* will give you insights into his creative process. For those who are just discovering his films, it will open the door to a whole new viewing experience.

€63,62 £52.99 \$65.73, eBook £17.99, order at: [Routledge.com](https://www.routledge.com)
ISBN9781032272962

202 Pages, 50 Black and White Illustrations



MASTERING SCREENWRITING by Donald H. Hewitt is not just a textbook. It takes you through the entire process from preparing yourself to be a writer and finding your story to completing your screenplay.

The book is designed as a practical guide with a step-by-step methodology and an exercise at the end of each of the 18 chapters. The

exercises build on each other, guiding the reader through the process of creating loglines, determining the major beats of your story, and developing characters that your audience will care about.

Donald shows the reader the correct screenplay format, stressing that “Nothing makes you look like an amateur more than an improperly formatted screenplay”. In fact, he feels that it is so important that he devotes an entire chapter to Screenplay Formatting.

For those just at the very beginning of a career in screenwriting and heading off to college, there is a discussion about four-year university film programs vs non-traditional or for-profit film schools as well as why a community college might be the right place for you. The book also points out that there are other university options. Maybe you should skip a traditional education altogether and go right to the Christopher McQuarrie three-dollar film school. His advice to young writers is, “Get yourself a pencil, some paper, and write a screenplay. The only thing you need is time and effort”. I would add that reading and following the exercises in *Mastering Screenwriting* by Donald H. Hewitt is as necessary as pencil and paper. McQuarrie worked at a detective agency and traveled for five years before writing his first screenplay. He never went to college. McQuarrie wrote the screenplay for *The Usual Suspects*, for which he won an Oscar. He is also a frequent collaborator with Tom Cruise.

Each chapter begins with a list of films to watch that are either referenced in that chapter or are examples of the topics in that chapter. If you love to watch film these lists will keep you busy for quite a while watching excellent films.

The book ends with an appendix containing course outlines for teachers or self-paced learners, as well as a comprehensive glossary of terms that you will need to know when embarking on a screenplay writing career.

Hewitt is a working screenwriter with over twenty-four years of experience. He teaches screenwriting at USC School of Cinematic Arts and UCLA Extension. His feature film credits include the English language screenplays for the Oscar-winning film *Spirited Away*, as well as the Oscar-nominated *Howl's Moving Castle*.

Donald says that “Writing this book is an exciting way for me to continue to share my knowledge and experience from 25 years of

professional screenwriting and 15 years of teaching screenwriting. I believe my clear, simple step-by-step process can make writing a screenplay far more accessible to everyone. My hope is that my book will be a passport to many great screenplays in the near future”.

I never plan on writing a screenplay myself, but I am a pitching coach. The book contains many useful tips that are helpful for writing and presenting a good pitch. It is also interesting for anyone who watches films to help you understand why you really enjoy some movies and other times walk out of the theatre wondering why you didn't feel a film worked. The excellent list of films to watch is reason enough to buy *Mastering Screenwriting from Shorts to Features*.

Mastering Screenwriting from Shorts to Features by Donald H. Hewitt €24.19 \$24.99 £20.15 Kindle or Kobo
\$16.99 Published by: Foreign Films Publishing/Los Angeles 277
Pages



Bottom of Form

Bottom of Form

SEE THE TRAILER FOR JOHN DILWORTH'S 'HOWEL IF YOU LOVE ME' (if you dare, Jim, who loves Jule. turns out to be a werewolf)

<https://www.cartoonbrew.com/shorts/the-creator-of-courage-the-cowardly-dog-dissects-his-new-com>



Celebrating Freedom
48TH CINANIMA ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL
8 – 17 November 2024 Espinho, Portugal
By Nancy Denney-Phelps

As the third oldest animation festival in the world, Cinanima honors the past while continuing to present the best of contemporary animation from throughout the world.

2024 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the 25th of April Carnation Revolution. On that day the nearly bloodless revolution in Portugal began as a military revolt which quickly became a mass movement of civil unrest. Portugal's dictator Marcello Caetano was replaced by a junta that pledged to restore civil liberties. Europe's longest-reigning dictatorship was toppled after 50 years in power.

This year's festival was dedicated to remembering the peaceful revolution and to freedom. Special programs asked the questions, "What is the true meaning of being free, and where does freedom begin and end?" Given the state of the world right now, these are questions that we

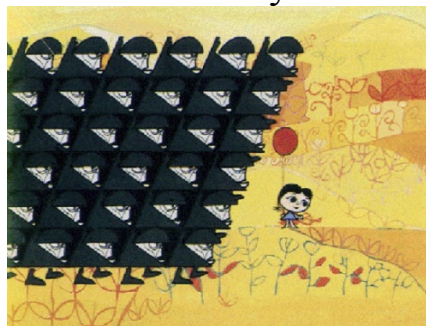
all should be thinking about.

As part of the freedom theme Humberto Santana and Jose Bandeira's two-part mini-series *25 Abril – O Rochedo e a Onda (The Rock and the Wave)* was screened. The two 26-minute episodes, made for Portuguese Public Television in 2023, deal with democracy, freedom, and repression. It is the story of a family deeply affected by the Carnation Revolution and how it changed their life. The father, a policeman in the Portuguese Dictatorship, fearing for his life decided to flee. His wife and son refuse to go with him but staying behind is not always as easy as it seems either.



The Rock and The Wave

Other programs on the topic of freedom included *Stories of Freedom*, films curated by ASIFA China from the archives of the Xiamen International Animation Festival and *Films About the Loss of Freedom and the Hope to Overcome the Traumas of the Past* presented by Thomas Renoldner, ASIFA Secretary-General from Vienna.



Chromophobia

French historian and author Olivier Cotte curated a program about what people strive for, *Freedom, the Ultimate Seek*. The nine films in his screening included such classics as Raoul Servais' 1965 *Chromophobia* where grey legions overwhelm the world of color to establish their colorless domain until resistance comes in the form of

the scarlet jester who restores the reign of color using his chromatic trickery.

The screening also included one of my favorite films, the 1965 *Elegy* by Nedeljko Dragic from Croatia. Peering out of a small barred window, a man is resigned to his fate. A red flower suddenly sprouts under his wind which he watches intently. When he is finally released from prison, he forgets all about the flower and moves on with his life. All that remains is the crushed flower which with freedom, is no longer of any importance to the man. *Elegy*

I found the *Animated April: Revolution In Two Dimensions* project very interesting. Begun in 2023, a group of students and teachers from five regular and vocational schools in the municipalities of Ovar and Espinho, in conjunction with Cinanima, came together to create a short animated film to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Carnation Revolution. The results of this collaboration, *If Freedom Ever . . .*, is a short film that is divided into four parts that explore different interpretations of the concept of freedom that people envisioned during the Estado Novo (New State) regime after the revolution on to the present and into the future.



Carnation made out of red and green toy soldiers

If Ever Freedom. . . was screened at the opening night ceremony. An exhibition of a selection of drawings and digital images, chosen from the 100's that were produced for the film, was on display in the theatre lobby gallery

This year the festival increased its length from seven days to nine so along with the special programs, master classes and presentations

there were 81 short, student, and feature films. There were also Portuguese competitions for the Antonia Gaio Award for Best Portuguese Film, the Young Portuguese Director's Award for directors between the ages of 18 to 30 years old, and the Young Portuguese Director's Award for filmmakers under 18 years old.

Pinscreen animation, the technique invented by Alexandre Alexeieff and his wife Clair Parker in early 1930, has seen a resurgence in the past few years. One of Alexeieff's and Parker's original pinscreens belongs to the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) and another is at the CNC, France's Film Agency. Recently French artist and animator Alexandre Noyer has resurrected the art of pinscreen construction. Along with large pinscreens, he has also created a mini pin screen that will travel well and can be used for workshops. Pinscreen films play with light and shadows in a way that no other animation medium can achieve.



Le Tableau/The Painting

Two lovely pinscreen films were in the festival's International Competition. Canadian animator Michèle Lemieux has made two short films using the NFB's pinscreen. *Here and the Great Elsewhere (2012)* won numerous awards. Her latest film, *Le Tableau (The Painting)* was screened in the International Competition. The twelve-minute film explores the 1652 portrait of Queen Mariana of Austria painted by Velazquez. Her father gave her hand in marriage to her much older uncle when she was only 14. Michèle's film is a meditation on the

brutality of initialized incest that was common among monarchs for centuries. The face in the portrait, as well as on the pinscreen, captures the sadness Mariana felt throughout her life and looks deep into her soul with an interplay of light and shadows.



The second pinscreen film, *I Haven't Told My Garden Yet*, is based on a poem by Emily Dickinson of the same name. In the poem, she ponders her own mortality. She has not told anyone of her impending death and does not intend to share the news with even her beloved garden.

South African animator Diek Grobler brought this touch 3'45" film to life on his Alexandre Noyer pinscreen. Diek interrupts Dickenson's 4-stanza, 92-word poem literally without trying to interpret the poet's words and lose what the writer really said. The tasteful harp music in the film, composed and performed by harpist Anne Vanschothorst, adds just the right atmosphere to the words and images. As of this writing, Diek owns the only pinscreen in the Southern Hemisphere.

The three National Competitions were a highlight of the festival for me. The Antonio Gaio Award goes to the best Portuguese film. There are also separate awards for a Young Portuguese Director Under 19 Years of Age and for a Young Portuguese Director Between 18 and

30 Years of Age.



The competition for the Antonio Gaio Award for Best Portuguese Film was very strong this year. Many of the films dealt with serious issues. In *It Shouldn't Rain Tomorrow* (11'30"), Maria Trigo Teixeira deals with an issue that every son or daughter will probably be faced with at some time in their life - what do you do when an aging parent can no longer live on their own?

In Maria's film, a young woman radically alters her life and moves back to the family home to care for her mother. Adapting to being a caregiver as her mother drifts further and further away is difficult. *It Shouldn't Rain Tomorrow* is a touching story of love, caring, and frustration.

Vincent Niro highlights the ever-growing problem of affordable housing, which is occurring not just in Portugal but throughout the world, in his 10' film *T-Zero*. The synopsis is "In a city that was once typically Portuguese, a real estate agent tries to persuade customers to rent tiny, overpriced apartments, even if it means evicting the people who live there". This has become a serious problem in Portugal as more and more affluent foreigners move into Lisbon, Porto, and the Algarve

region, forcing more local people to move further and further away from the cities.

T-Zero is the story of the moral, emotional, and mental strain on a young real estate agent who uses every trick in the book to coerce clients into renting or buying tiny apartments that are often in poor condition. The agent is as much a victim of the situation as the people who have been evicted.

Anyone who lives in a popular city realizes that global tourism is on the rise. I live in a city that is a charming historical place, on a narrow little street. During peak tourist season I sometimes can barely get out of my front gate because of the hoard of tourists that are gathered in front of it listening to their tour guide.

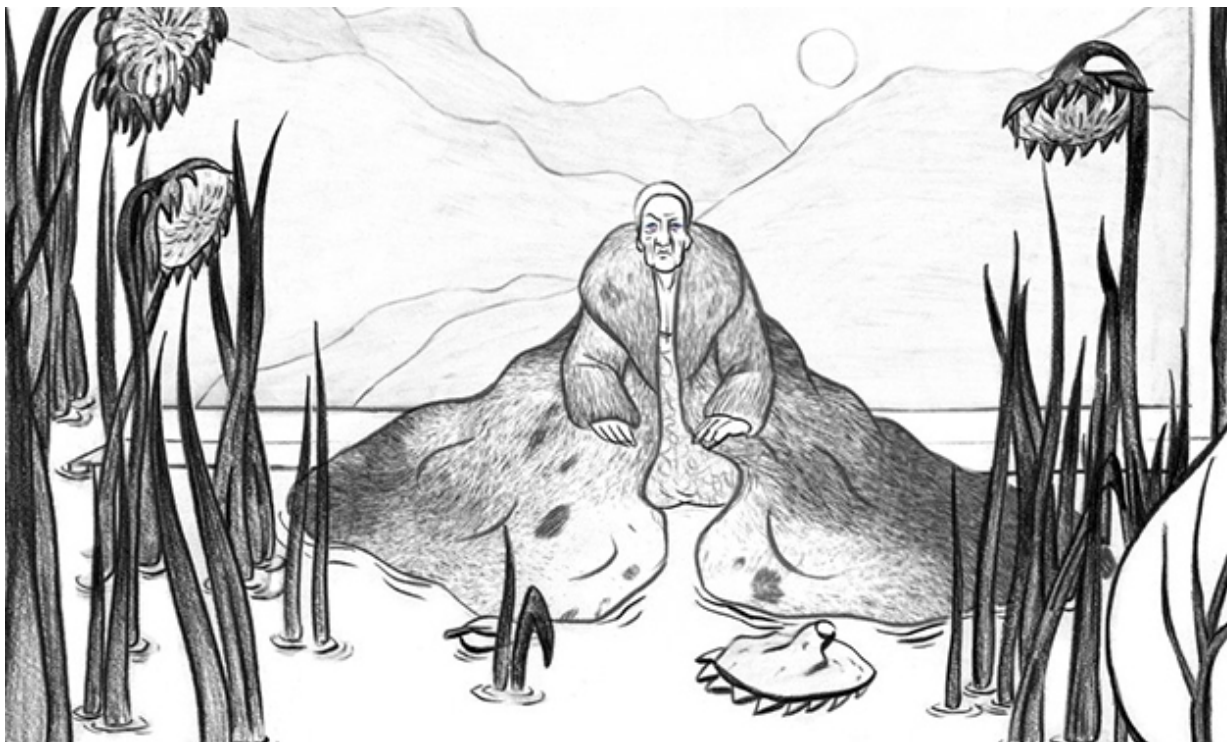


In *Citizen Tourist* Ernesto Carreiro delves into the tourist as a species with exotic and particular quirks who often forget that they are a guest in a city and engage in behavior they would never think of doing in their hometown. With humor, Ernesto turns the spotlight on the tourist industry which is shaping and altering entire cities and cultures but not

always in a good way.

Citizen Tourist encourages people to explore the beauty that is around them in their own hometown and especially to embrace nature nearby rather than seeking it in distant countries, often at great expense. We are reminded of the words of the great French novelist Marcel Proust “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes”.

The festival offered numerous Masterclasses both in Espinho and at the university in Porto which is about 30 minutes North of Espinho. Animator Joanna Quinn and her scriptwriter husband Les Mills crammed their 35 years of creating animation into a one-hour Masterclass. Along with the trials, tribulations, and joys of working together, they shared numerous humorous anecdotes as well as a selection of original artwork. Joanna is one of the most gracious and generous people that I know. She is always ready to greet everyone to who comes up to her with questions and she doesn't stop signing autographs as long as there is someone still waiting for one.



In Polish animator/director Marta Pajek's masterclass, *Impossible Figures and Other Stories – Creative Process*, **Marta** talked about her creative process, starting from finding the

concept, ideas, inspiration, and motifs for her animated trilogy, *Impossible Figures and Other Stories*. The trilogy is not in chronological order. It begins in 2016 with part two, then three released in 2018, and finally part one in 2021.

Spanish animator Coke Rioboo focused his presentation on animation in advertising with a look at his work over the past two years. He explained the different techniques that he uses with a special emphasis on plasticine on backlit glass. Coke is one of the few animators to use this technique.



Bruno Caetano, one of the founding members of COLA Animation, a collective, talked about the development of the studio from its founding in 2015 to the present. COLA Animation came into the international spotlight in 2023 when *Ice Merchants*, directed by collective member João Gonzalez and produced by Bruno was nominated for a Best Animated Short Film Oscar. The film won an Annie and received the Leitz Cine Discovery Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Nik was on the selection committee for Cinanima this year. He also gave a Masterclass at the University in Porto. During *Sync or Swim – Navigating the Channels of Visual Storytelling*, he talked to the students about the principles of integrating music into film. He also showed some of his favorite animated films that exemplify the harmonious union of music and visual storytelling.

There were three book presentations this year. Olivier Cotte is a French graphic novel scriptwriter, animation historian, and director. He is also a prolific author with a lovely sense of humor so his presentation of three of his books was not only informative but also entertaining.

From *Fantasia* to *Shaun the Sheep*, Disney to Miyazaki, Olivier covers the entire world of animation in *100 Years of Animated Film*. In his *Le Grande Livre Des Techniques Du Cinéma D'Animation (The Great Book of Animated Film Techniques)* he covers every aspect of film production from writing the script to production, post-production and in between. The 360-page book also discusses claymation, stop motion, puppet, and other styles of animation.

In his most recent book *Walt Disney, L'homme qui revait d'être un enfant (Walt Disney, The Man Who Dreamed of Being a Child)*, Olivier offers a rich perspective in his biography of one of the most emblematic figures of 20th Century popular culture.

I would love to read all of Olivier's more than 30 books, but unfortunately for all of us non-French speakers, they are only published in French.



Portuguese journalist Augusto Baptista introduced his recent book about one of the important names in Portuguese animation, Manuel Matos Barbosa. Considered a dean of Portuguese animation, Barbosa's 2022 film, *O Antiquario*, about a miserly antique dealer has been screened at festivals throughout the world. The film has won numerous awards.

His 2010 film, *O rio, a água, o homem (The River, The Water, The Man)*, is a black and white drawn animation of the title characters. In it he animates three ordinary things with a poetic sense of the images.

In the 2012 film *A Catrineta Nau (The Ship Catrineta)* Barbosa served as supervising director. The legend of the ship Catrineta dates back to the 16th century. The film, based on the legend, depicts the maritime tragedies in Portugal's history during the time of the great explorers.

I thoroughly enjoyed presenting my book, *On the Animation Trail, 20 Years of Animation Festival History* at Cinanima. To make it even more special, the amazing Joanna Quinn, who captured Nik and me perfectly on the front and back covers of the book, joined me to tell the audience about how she came up with the fabulous drawings. She also showed us drawings that she had rejected, one of me sitting on a donkey with a wine glass in my hand really made me laugh. I had never seen

these drawings before so that was a treat for me. Joanna and I laughed a lot and had fun. The audience also seemed to enjoy our talk. Nik joined us to keep me on the right track and remind me to read an excerpt from my book.



Joanna Quinn and me at my book presentation

Cinanima doesn't end with the festival. On 15 January the Cinanima On Tour and the Junior version began and will run through June. It brings animation to audiences and schools throughout Portugal and beyond.

The festival always has interesting excursions. Sometimes I don't think that it will be particularly fascinating, such as our visit to a rug weaving factory, but I am always wrong. This year we visited The Paper Museum of the Land of Santa Maria. It is an active industrial museum dedicated to the history of paper. It preserves and documents the art of paper making in a region of Portugal that has more than a 300-year history of paper production. That industry is still one of the major economic contributors to the municipality of Santa Maria de Feira.

The museum is located in two 19th-century paper factories on the banks of a small river in the quiet town of Pacos de Brandas, about 9

kilometers outside of Espinho. The Custodio Pais Factory dates back to 1822. It was the 6th paper-making mill in the area and the only one that had a woman as a founding partner.



Paper making machinery

The Azevedos Factory began producing packaging, writing, foolscap, and foil paper in 1825. For the extremely high quality of its writing paper, the factory was awarded a Copper Medal in 1863 that was presented by King D. Luis the First.

The museum contains all of the machinery for paper production as well as samples of beautifully watermarked paper from different paper producers throughout Portugal from the 18th to the 20th Century.

Juan Carlos Concha making paper

With the mechanization of the paper industry in the early 20th Century, the paper mills of Portugal began to fade away. The museum still demonstrates the art of making sheets of paper by hand to

visitors and they continue to produce wrapping paper and paper bags.

After our tour, we were given pencils and beautiful large sheets of paper to draw on. We were also able to take some sheets of paper with us. I have used two sheets of our paper to mount the two original drawings for the cover of my book that Joanna gave me at the festival.

A big thank you goes to Cristina Lina and the entire staff and volunteers of Cinanima; Your programming was exceptionally strong and your hospitality impeccable. I am already looking forward to next year's festival.

My 2024 travels were not over yet. Next, I traveled to Budapest for Anilogue, but that is a story for another time. The next edition of the festival will be held 7 – 16 2025. You can read more about Cinanima on their website: www.cinanima.pt

*******WELCOME TO "IN THE LOOP WITH LEO," A NEW
FEATURE OF OUR ANIMATION COMMUNITY'S NEWSLETTER
by Leonel Cortes, *******



The Pokémon Resort Reopens Their Doors This September.

Netflix announces a second season of Pokémon Concierge coming out in September of 2025. The stop-motion animated series follows Haru and her fellow coworkers working together to make the resort an inviting

and comfortable environment for all visitors. The series avoids Pokémon battles and instead focuses on the bonds and friendships formed with trainers and their Pokémon.

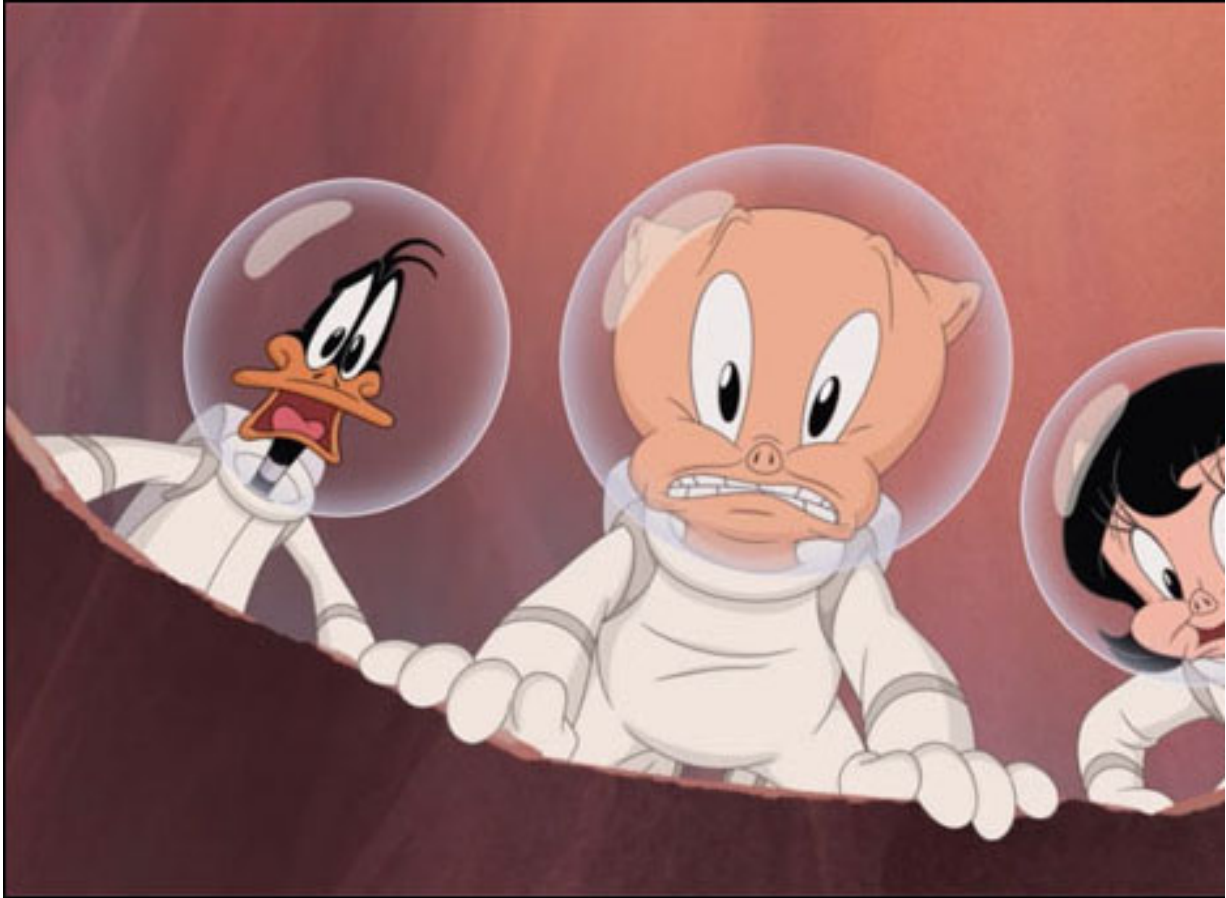


What's In the Box?

Animation studio Titmouse recently announced that they are working on a subscription-based service called [Churp.tv](https://churp.tv). This mystery box provides subscribers with animation goodies from collectables, apparel, and even codes to a secret website that hosts cartoons for subscribers only.

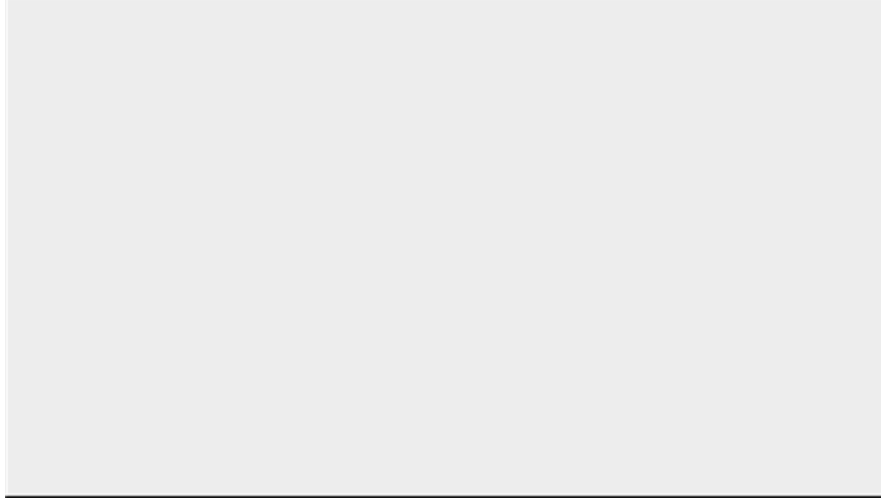
[Founder Chris Pynoski describes the service as “It’s like Sanrio for stoners.”](#)

[Pynoski talks with *Animation Magazine*](#) over Titmouse’s 25th anniversary and how the studio grew from its humble beginnings.



Daffy and Porky Work Together to Save the World!

The Day the Earth Blew Up is Looney Tunes' first fully animated film to be released in theaters. The movie follows Daffy and Porky and their attempts to save their home from condemnation while also saving the world from an alien invasion. Running on a meager \$15 million budget, this fully 2d animated movie is great for Looney Tunes fans of all ages. [You can read an interview involving the voice actors here.](#) [As well as an interview with the director here.](#)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8Jh__XdTYM



Looney Tunes Are for Kids

Streaming service Max has removed all Looney Tunes related content from its platform. [According to Deadline](#), the service places Looney Tunes under children's content which Max states doesn't fair well compared to adult and family-oriented programs. This decision follows others with Cartoon Network shutting down its website and the shutdown of Boomerang.



Coyote Will Finally See His Day in Court and in Theaters?

After a decent opening weekend with *The Day the Earth Blew Up*, Ketchup Entertainment is looking to purchase the rights to *Coyote Vs Acme*. If negotiations go smoothly then it is expected that Ketchup Entertainment will release the film in theaters sometime in 2026.

[According to a WB insider](#), Warner Brothers is looking to sell the rights of Looney Tunes entirely. WB has not made an official statement on the matter. Why Warner Brothers thinks this is a good decision is beyond me.