

## ABOUT

ASIFA was founded in 1960 in Annecy, France by a group of international animators to increase world-wide visibility of animated film. ASIFA's membership includes animation professionals and fans from more than 50 countries.

ASIFA-East, based in New York City, is the Northeast chapter. We host screenings, workshops, and panel discussions on all things animation, and our film festival, which debuted in 1969, is the oldest animation-only festival in the US.

## BOARD MEMBERS

**President:** Douglas Vitarelli, [asifaeastpresident@gmail.com](mailto:asifaeastpresident@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Liz Van Verth, [secretaryasifaeast@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryasifaeast@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Emily Compton, [asifaeasttreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:asifaeasttreasurer@gmail.com)

**Social Media Director:** Emmett Goodman

**Festival Co-Chair:** Tristian Goik, [asifaeastfestival@gmail.com](mailto:asifaeastfestival@gmail.com)

**Technology Manager:** Emily Compton, [asifaeast.webmgr@gmail.com](mailto:asifaeast.webmgr@gmail.com)

**Board Member:** Candy Kugel

**Board Member:** Ray Kosarin

**Board Member:** Bill Lorenzo

**Board Member:** Christi Bertelsen

**Board Member:** Hugo Segal

**Board Member:** Ronan Madden

**International Coordinator:** Douglas Vitarelli



## FIND US ONLINE

<https://asifaeast.com>

[https://www.instagram.com/asifa\\_east](https://www.instagram.com/asifa_east)

<https://twitter.com/ASIFAEast>

<https://www.facebook.com/asifaeast>

September 2024



## Table of Contents

- President's Message
- Remembering Howard Beckerman
- Annecy Report by Jimmy Calhoun
- Exit 73 Interview
- Annecy Report by Larry Ruppel

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm excited to welcome you to our 55th year!

We've been working hard to continue improving our organization all summer long.

The most obvious is our exciting website update. Our Technology Manager Emily Compton has done some incredible front and back end work and we can't thank her enough for her efforts.

Emmett Goodman has been doing a great job in keeping us all up to date on the many animation events in our region.

Moving forward, new board members Ronan Madden and Hugo Segal are, respectively, heading up the monthly figure drawing sessions at Titmouse and our Events and History web pages.

We have three events planned so far. Robby Gilbert is bringing Jim Simon to NYC for a career retrospective. Jim is a former NYC animator, studio owner (Wantu) and ASIFA-East member whose work, like the incredible 'A Loaf of Bread, a Container of Milk and a Stick of Butter', cleaned up at our earliest awards ceremonies.

Robby and Hugo are hosting a memorial for animator, writer and long-time ASIFA-East member Howard Beckerman, whose career and years of teaching at SVA have had a profound effect on the countless animators who crossed his path.

Both of these events will be hosted by SVA's MFA CA program. Check our Events page for more information.

And there's one more thing we're working hard on: **NYC Animation Weekend**. As many of you know, we are not the only game in town. There are 3 other amazing organizations: **Animation Speak/Easy**, **Animation Nights New York** and the **NYC chapter of Women In Animation**. The four of us are coming together Oct. 25, 26 and 27 for a shared event at Hostos Community College in the Bronx. Stay tuned for more info.

Also look forward to more artist and studio interviews, more events and, of course, the oldest animation-only festival in the US.

And if you're interested in helping out, let us know. We meet once a month at Candy Kugel's Buzzco in the East Village.

Lastly I'd like to thank our summer intern from SUNY Fredonia, Katelynn J. Duarte who was a great help this summer. You'll see her work soon as she did the signal film for **NYC Anim Wknd**.

## So, what hardware and software do you use?

We all use Cintiq and an ancient program called Macromedia Flash MX.

Oh, and we didn't upgrade to Windows 11 yet. We're on Windows 10 and it works as long as you've run it as administrator. I guess I'm just a creature of habit as that's what I worked on when I started in the industry in 2002.

I like the line quality of it and every kind of iteration from Adobe felt like the brushes were getting a little worse and a little bogged down. So in terms of efficiency, we always use Flash MX because it's bare bones. It's like we're just drawing frame by frame animation, let's not complicate this.

## What are the goals of Exit 73?

Oh, I definitely want to pivot to the video game scene.

I like that there's a lot more freedom in terms of storytelling and video games are so broad that you can kind of focus on the style you like. #BLUD was an homage to Genndy Tartakovsky and Powerpuff Girls and McCracken and all kinds of late 90s Cartoon Network series.

And there is no executive to say you have to draw it like this or stay on model and all that stuff. So I found video games a little more liberating in that regard and the indie game scene is just excited to see animation. It was just a lot more creative freedom, plus when you add interaction to animation it just feels like kind of the next evolution of like what we wanted to do in terms of storytelling.

## Do you have any advice for Katelynn and others who are coming into the industry?

Yeah. Oh boy, right now, it's tough. I don't think people should be as worried about Ai as a lot of people think. It's not gonna crash [the industry] but I just don't think people are going to use it pragmatically and I do happen to find it unethical personally.

I recommend to anyone coming into animation to try to make a film on your own. And try to find what you like about making a film, do every stage or at least have a hand in every stage because you'll kind of find your voice in that.

Like, whether you really enjoy the storyboarding part or maybe the background design, the character, all that stuff, but I also like to recommend that so you have a perspective of whatever you want to do.

But I always recommend making a film because there's multiple uses for it. You can throw it on YouTube when it's finished and spread it around and be like, hey, I made this and you learned something about yourself making a film the last time I made, I learned something still. And that wasn't that long ago.

And keeping up on your portfolio and with some trends. I don't focus too much on the technology aspect of it. I believe in the craftsmanship, so I just focus on skills. And then, as I mentioned earlier, once you get your foot in the door, things come exponentially easier. But you know, and that's coupled with hardships, like the industry's having right now. Also it's always good to be able to pivot. Don't be so set in your ways that you're only a storyboard artist.

## Thanks Chris.

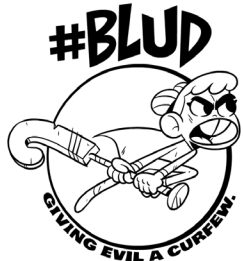
Of course, thank you.

**Do you find that it's more liberating when you have more skin in the game? You feel like you're more creative? I know that when I worked in studios I would do one part of a commercial and everyone else did their part and it all came together, but when it's just the two of you, is it more exciting?**

Oh yeah, I love running a business. There's a lot more at stake, for sure. I think it pushes you to be a little more independent, a little better at your craft. And when it's just the two of us, you find creative ways to come up with a solution for sure. When we do something that has a tight turnaround for example, we're still doing everything from the storyboards to post and it's like: "Let's make this not easy on ourselves but manageable." So when there's no surprises in storyboards, like 100 people in a scene, we do it in a creative fashion and with two people and still feel like it was done by professionals.

### **Talk to me about #BLUD.**

The story goes, we were working with Disney on a pilot called Coin, which was one of our original IPs and we're waiting for scripts. Bob and I have always been pretty good about when there's ever some down time to get a new idea rolling, which just keeps the creative pieces flowing.



It's an homage to Buffy the Vampire Slayer about a teenage girl field hockey player who has to live going through high school and she's put in a position where she has to kill vampires and we did a 45 second teaser, almost like a trailer. And since we're working with Disney, we're like, let's show them this and we did.

They found it interesting but they wanted us to focus more on the pilot and so we shelved it. Years later another roommate, Cody Greenhalge, who's a partner on the other side of the gaming studio we run, wanted to make a video game with us. We've been friends forever and he's a programmer and said, "Yeah, that's something interesting."

And we just kind of look through a bunch of pitch packets and he sees #BLUD and says "This is interesting, it could be even better as a video game than a series." And then we're sort of like, yeah, let's do it and then we're off to the races. We changed the style from the trailer and it took about seven years from a 45 second trailer to a finished the game.

We got published about two, three years in, after working the indy game scene, making demos and showing it off. Finally got the attention of a company called Humble Bundle. And from there we're granted access to funds to finish the game. It was a really long journey.

### **Are you currently working on any of your own IPS at the moment?**

Yeah, we're kind of picking up on a new kind of video game.

# ANNECY REPORTS

## The Diverse World of Animation Ascends on France By Jimmy Calhoun

Every year in the small French town Annecy, the world of Animation gathers, and the best part is that this world is inclusive and diverse. Annecy attracts large studio executives, production artists, independent filmmakers, students, and everyone in-between. You'll find short and feature films, as well as VR experiences and art galleries, that represent many styles and use many creative processes including physical mediums, digital software, and even the occasional bit of AI (which was met with "boos" in some screenings). The content represents work from many countries created by large and small studios, individual artists and students.

The festival is accompanied by MIFA, hosted at the Imperial Palace hotel, which is a marketplace where countries host their own pavilions, studios actively recruit new artists, schools connect with prospective students, and companies showcase their products such as motion capture systems and animation software. This is a great place to explore new directions to steer your pipeline, and to find opportunities to pitch your work and discover distribution opportunities. MIFA hosts many talks, press conferences, demo sessions, and panels with industry leaders, artistic talents, and recruiters. There are too many screenings, talks and events for anyone to attend them all, but I share my experience of the 2024 Annecy Festival with you as an example. I attended the conference with many colleagues from The School of Visual Arts, so we were able to collaborate and split up to experience much of what the festival had to offer.

I arrived on the morning of Sunday, June 9th. Once securing my bags at the hotel, I followed the canals flowing from the lake into the old city where I found coffee and a farmers market. Once I ate some fresh strawberries and was caffeinated, I headed to the Bonlieu, which is Annecy's main location with their largest theater. I picked up my badge and went to the Masterclass with Terry Gilliam. Terry spoke about his early work and the animation he did for Monty Python. It was clear that a lot of his animation style and technique was an answer to his need to work fast to meet deadlines, but to also get his ideas out of his head and on the screen.



On Monday I attended the WIA World Summit. I look forward to this every year because it provides me with so much to think about and learn from. W's mission to empower and advocate for people of underrepresented gender identities in the animation industry is important work. At SVA we created a WIA Club on our campus many years ago, and my colleague Hsiang Chin Moe has continued that work in many schools as WIA's Chair of Education Program.

WIA's yearly summit talks about many industry topics, but always through the lens of gender justice. I always find WIA Secretary Julie Ann Crommett's talks particularly useful. I have learned a lot about inclusion and belonging from these events.

While the summit filled most of my day, I was able to attend a Making of Session for the Oscar winning short film *War is Over!* with the director Dave Mullins, executive producer Karen Dufilho, producer Brad Booker and vfx supervisor Keith Miller. Mullins talked about his inspiration and working with Sean Lennon, and Miller went through the technical process showing how they achieved the final look and animation of this wonderful film.



On my 3rd day I attended a few screenings of short films which included animation done directly on film stock, hand drawn animation, and pixelation. One film that stood out was *Circle* by South Korean director Yumi Joung. A fun part about screenings at Annelly is the audience participation. This festival has many traditions including throwing paper airplanes at the screen before the films start, yelling "lapin!" when a rabbit appears on the screen and making

popping noises (think fish in water) when the screen goes black. Each year the festival has an opening credits film they play at the beginning of each screening that plays into these fun interactions. They also play a different short film each day before each screening about that year's host country which is created at Gobelins' students. Hsiang and I had a chance to connect with some of the educators from Gobelins on this day as well to talk about ways we can collaborate. Networking is a huge part of attending the festival for me, and this day included talking to many industry and education friends, old and new, from around the world when I attended the German Reception and the Skydance Animation party. I even met one of the Animation Speak/Easy founders Anna Samo, whose film *The Wild-Tempered Clavier* was screened at Annelly.

On the 4th day, some of the films I watched included Graduation Films screenings. Annelly showcases student films from many countries, and the students are often present. The filmmakers stand at the end of their film for recognition and the audience always shows the student filmmakers much respect with their applause. I was also able to catch a presentation from Netflix about their upcoming animated content, which included a discussions with Zack Snyder about *Twilight of the Gods* and Nick Park and Merlin Crossingham about *Wallace and Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl*.

I headed back to MIFA on the 5th day where I participated as a panelist in a talk hosted by Artstation moderated by Sally Minero from Epic Games entitled *From Pixels to Paychecks*. The other speakers on the panel were Academy Award and Annie Award winning writer and director Dave Mullins and talent acquisition and development executive Camille Eden who has worked with many studios including Nickelodeon, Walt Disney Animation, and Sony Pictures Imageworks. We talked to young artists and students about

## What are disadvantages of operating in the Northeast, but not New York City?

Well, low overhead, for sure. Riverhead is a lot cheaper. And now that everything's global and all meetings with people on the west coast are with Zoom and Skype the hardest part is aligning the time zones but the advantage for that is definitely low overhead and easier to manage and pivot.

Disadvantages of course is the city just has a more robust animation scene so if there's a mixer or something where you're going to meet other clients or stuff, we don't have the luxury of going there as quickly.

## I've looked at your website, and you have some really amazing work and a lot of it.

Oh, thank you. Yeah, 14 years, you'll get a lot.

## I'm sure you've got like 100 things that don't even make it to the website.

Oh yeah, that website we have to update for sure.

## Can you explain your jobs?

Well we're mostly focused on short form animation, anything from like 30 seconds and on. The most we've done in a single short was 11 minutes.

But we just recently made a video game. That was all hand drawn and that was about 19 minutes and cutaways.

But mostly short form stuff, on average about two to five minutes. It's just the two of us so it's easy to manage rather than a whole season of stuff to animate.

## So do you hire freelancers?

We have hired one or two in the past. But only, when things were real crunch time. I'd say 90 to 95 percent it's all just Bob and myself. He focuses a lot on the backgrounds, post-production and does music too. He wears a lot of hats.

I'm more a character animation so we kind of pair well together, though, we swap too. You know, when things get too busy I'll do some storyboards as well as some backgrounds.

## Do you think he, either of you could have done it by yourselves?

No, not initially and still not now honestly. And when you're going in (to meet clients) we never really mentioned that we were just two people. I think a lot of them might shy away from that sometimes.

We come from working with big teams because we were doing a lot of series work. You know, 30-40 people on a team. So going from 40 to two people and we're wondering: how are we going to do this? And then we sort of just figured out a way and now we have a system.

I was working for a studio called Augenblick Studios, they're just celebrating their 25th anniversary, which is focused more on the adult side. I had Comedy Central and Adult Swim and all that stuff and he's worked for like the opposite, Nick Jr, Nickelodeon and all those so between the two of us we had a lot of contacts of like on both sides of the industry.

### So you only do 2D?

Yeah we don't do 3D, we're all traditional. And from there we just kind of took the risk and reached out and told everyone that we're working on our own thing and at that time were taking freelance on the side just to fund the studio.

Our first break was with our friend, Joe Croson who helped fund one of our first cartoons. He's over at Netflix now. And from there, we used that project to build more and more. Once you get work and build a reputation the work comes a little easier, and you build your portfolio. So from there we just slowly got more clients, until we could stand on our own two feet without the freelance work.

### About how long did that take?

About a year and a half. It doesn't feel very long now but that was a turbulent time. There were times where it was hard to pay each other, that's for sure.

But we had a low overhead and it's just the two of us. So pretty much you're paying just two freelancers but there's definitely difficult times where we're just like, "Oh, you know, there's nothing in the bank."

We relied a lot on the contacts, which was nice about the animation industry. It's somewhat small so you get to know people and you know that there's no shame in asking for work.



their growth as professionals and covered a number of topics including critique and valuation of work.

After the talk I headed to TVPaint's booth at MIFA to watch my alumni Zack Lydon and Alexandra Barsky of Zine Hug talk about their animation process for creating riosgrpah printed animation. Then I connected with the Foundry and SideFX to talk about their support of our students and headed to the Epic Games reception where I met more filmmakers and industry professionals.

Friday's at Annecy are known for talks and screenings from Pixar and Disney. This year Disney Legend Mark Henn presented his new Donald Duck short film DIY Duck and directors David Derrick Jr. and Jason Hand talked about their work on and show some scenes from Moana 2. Director Kelsey Mann and producer Make Nielson presented a screening of Inside Out 2 which was delightful to watch with an excited crowd of animation enthusiasts and many French citizens that did not laugh at Ennui in the same way the Americans did. My day, and festival, ended at the Disney Picnic by the lake where I saw a rainbow and many more beautiful animation people. You can read more about my colleagues' experiences here to get an even fuller picture of the many things the festival had to offer.

### Bio

Jimmy Calhoun is an artist and the Chair of BFA 3D Animation and Visual Effects at the School of Visual Arts. His films have screened at Pixie Flix Film Festival, Animation Block Party and many more and his work as been published in Bomb Magazine and by DK Kids.



## Annecy Festival 2024: Inside Report

By Larry Ruppel

The annual Annecy International Animated Film Festival holds a special place in the hearts of many animation artists for its spectacle, glamorous Alpine location, and the scintillating choice of the latest and greatest animated films and techniques on display in the many theaters and venues around town.



As a veteran festival attendee at Annecy, my personal favorite aspect of the festival that's rarely spoken about are the opportunities for networking or making new acquaintances, which are ever present, unpredictable, and often surprising.

Think about it, over 17,000 attendees from all over the world have come together in this one place to celebrate the art and business of animation. Most

of them are accessible and generally happy to speak with you. Representatives from production companies and animation artists from throughout the world are there for good times and engaging conversations, providing myriad chances at every turn to meet new people and connect. There are multiple parties happening at any time, you just have to know where to look for them. These events are often hosted by specific countries, such as the German, Swedish, and Dutch parties, which take place at various venues around town.

Organizations and Production Studios also give receptions. I attended several, such as the ASIFA International Global Meet and Greet, which was sponsored this year by ASIFA chapters from Greece, Hollywood, and China, and held on a terrace overlooking the sparkling lake and snow capped mountains.

Representatives and animation people from several European countries and the US were there all happy to meet fellow animation enthusiasts. I was able to have a fine conversation with Deanna Morse, President of ASIFA International, and Kostas Kakarountas, an energetic Greek director there representing the Hellas chapter.

It was at this event that I introduced fellow New Yorker Jake Friedman, who was at the festival to do a book signing for his latest opus "The Disney Revolt", to veteran Scottish animator Fraser MacLean, author of "Setting the Scene: The Art & Evolution of Animation Layout". Turns out they were mutual fans, and their serendipitous encounter was memorable.

Chasing after parties can be a competitive sport at Annecy, you have to ask around and find out who's heard something or has an invitation that can also get you in. Unfortunately this is often a problem in Annecy, as many invitations for the larger parties state that they are for one person and one person only, and the French security guards seem to

## WE HAVE A LOW OVERHEAD AND IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US.

If you need a coffee while you're traveling to Montauk to meet up with NY State's eastern-most based animator, there's a little cafe on Main St. in Riverhead that serves a nice cup. Just get off exit 73 and it's right there.

And while you're sitting there enjoying your coffee and wondering about house prices and the commute to the city, take a look across the street to the 2nd floor above Star Confectionary. Inside those window sills that are in desperate need of a paint job is the home of Exit 73 Studios, a boutique animation studio that's been creating awesome animation for over 20 years.

### A conversation between Exit 73 Studios co-owner Chris Burns and Doug Vitarelli with Katelynn Duarte



#### How did you begin?

Well I started my animation career working part-time on the Venture Brothers at Noodle Soup in 2002.

And then I worked in the city for about seven years before we started the studio, which is now about 14 years old, give or take.

#### Have you been in this space that long?

Yes. We've been in this town called Riverhead on the East End on Long Island and it's where me and my business partner grew up, went to high school together, went to SVA together.

And we both had fiancés and were talking about raising families and everyone was from out here and the social aspects of the city that were fun in my 20s were less fun in my 30s.

So we all collectively decided, all four of us, that maybe we should try to start something out here. It just seemed like the right thing to do.

#### Did you have any clients?

No, we (with co-owner Bob Fox) had a decent reputation and always seemed to find work. Animation was a little different back then. There was a lot of it going on in the city, and we were constantly employed.

And we both kind of took a little bit of different pants. He was more on the children's entertainment side of things.

He wrote: "I never knew Walt Disney. However I saw him once, many years ago, walking along Madison Avenue. I remember noticing at the time how numerous were the shop windows that he passed which afforded the likenesses of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck on such items as books, watches, toys, and clothing. This man had succeeded in weaving a spell over the whole world, a spell that brought pleasure to everyone and fame and riches to himself.

To those who knew Walt Disney and were able to take their meetings with him for granted, it might seem strange for someone else to make so much of the fleeting moment.

The explanation surely lies in a fact: that fact that many of us grew up during a time of economic depression and world war, a time of very little magic. How wonderful a moment it was then for one, now grown up, to watch a gray-haired man with a mustache, recede into the distance along a New York street and be thankful for the magic that he had given us all."

Thank you, Howard.

## FIGURE DRAWING

Thursday, Sept. 26 at 7:30 pm

Titmouse Studios

150 W 30th St, between 6th and 7th. 10th floor



enjoy turning people away. You have to be persistent.

If you can't get into the parties, you're still very much in luck, as many people gather each evening at two watering holes in the old town, one known as The Scottish Bar, the second is called The Captain's Pub. Eventually everybody and anybody shows up in one of these two very popular places.

The last Saturday of the festival finds Nik and Nancy's Picnic, where all festival-goers are invited to gather onto the great lawn by the lake for fun and games. Nik Phelps and Nancy Denney-Phelps are ASIFA board members, and a fascinating couple everyone should know, as they are true lovers of the Art of Animation, and have been intensely involved in several aspects of the animation community for decades.

For successful networking or making new contacts, you really should have a business card printed up with your information and whatever you want to say about yourself clearly stated.

Pro-Tip: I find VistaPrint a very good choice for affordable and professional looking cards that you can design yourself.

For those who find socializing a bit challenging, remind yourself that you somehow got yourself to Annecy, you're here now, so make the most of it. You can always start a conversation by asking if anyone's seen any particularly remarkable films or presentations. And remember, most everyone there has gathered to celebrate Animation, it is a festival after all, and as aspiring artists, technicians, or creators, you share a lot in common.

The Annecy Festival can be frustrating as well as exhilarating. It's hard to find a place to stay (book early), and there's often too much going on at any one time. My 2024 festival experience finished with one last closing party after the awards were handed out, and I found myself overwhelmed with a mix of melancholy and nostalgia for the past seven days. At the very end of the evening, a goodnight kiss from Nancy Denney-Phelps felt like the cherry on top of a very animated sundae.

Thanks Annecy, I hope to see you again next year. Join me!



# HOWARD BECKERMAN: IN REMEMBRANCE

by Robby Gilbert

Animator, father, devoted husband and partner, historian, writer, and friend, Howard Beckerman touched the lives of so many for so long that no words can encapsulate the love felt for him as news of his passing travels throughout the animation community and the world. Howard Beckerman may not be a household name, but without exaggeration he earned a place in animation history next to the greats. His influence and example live on in his writing and films, and in the hearts and wrists of the thousands of aspiring animators he taught and mentored over course of his seventy-five year career in animation.



Howard set an indelible example of humor and human kindness to anyone with whom he crossed paths—a quality that has sadly become rarer in today's world. He was not a boastful man. Rather, Howard was charming, thoughtful, and deliberate. He possessed one of the most encyclopedic minds on animation and its history—a mind that remained tack-sharp even as his body began to give out. He was an observer who translated a lifetime of empathetic observation into a style free of outward sarcasm or bitterness. One can see this kindness in his line, which seems to dance effortlessly and freely...without judgment.

Howard Beckerman was born in Brooklyn in 1930. His older sister took him to see Pinocchio when he was a young boy and the film inspired the young Beckerman to pursue cartooning and animation. He attended the High School of Industrial Art and began working for Terrytoons in 1949. Howard served in Korea, and found himself close to the front lines working for the signal corps, which eventually brought him back to New York where he finished his time in the service making training films. Afterwards, Howard resumed his work in commercial animation in New York both as an animator and story artist. After spending time at UPA and various other studios, Howard and his wife, Iris, opened their own animation studio in 1970 on the advice of friend and colleague, Tee Collins.



In the 1970s, animation schools did not exist. But with the advent of new formats such as super 8 film, interest grew and colleges began ramping up their offerings. Howard began teaching animation at the New School, building a program from scratch. From there, he taught animation classes around the city between taking freelance animation jobs, eventually becoming a fixture at the School of Visual Arts where he taught for forty years.

Howard seemed to know or have met everyone, from Hans Richter to Evelyn Lambart. He wrote for many of the animation and film magazines of his time such as Millimeter and Making Films in New York. He was a regular contributor to TOP CEL, IATSE Local 841's monthly newsletter and remained active with ASIFA-East for decades, serving as the organization's international liaison. His work with ASIFA as well as his output of charming films allowed him to travel the world to attend festivals, serving as one of New York's most effective ambassadors for animation and earning him the unofficial title as 'Dean of New York Animation.' He taught all aspects of animation, but may be most remembered for developing and teaching some of the earliest for-credit college level History of Animation courses in the world along with John Culhane and Leonard Maltin. In 2001, his book Animation: The Whole Story, reached the shelves, providing insight and advice to a generation of aspiring animators.



UPA New York ca. 1955. Standing (left to right): Assistant animators Howard Beckerman, Tom Costello, Terry Yarricone. Seated: Assistant animator Sam Kai, animators La Guarnier, George Singer, Fred Cruppen.



Howard Beckerman straddled a significant period in animation history, beginning during a time where his contemporary, Izzy Klein, could still recall being in a room with Winsor McCay to the current industry dominated by digital methods and techniques. Howard had an expressed preference for hand-drawn techniques, and was dissatisfied by what he considered the formulaic and homogenous approaches to computer animation. But in his last months, he delighted in creating simple animations on his iPad, remarking with a huge smile at the wonder of its possibilities.

While the animation community absorbs the magnitude of the loss, it's important to remember the ways which Howard lives on. He set an example for a certain kind of empathetic approach to being, a kindness, and a sense of humor. To those who knew Howard, he will always live in our hearts. To those who never met Howard, its perhaps helpful to read his own words, written in 1966 after the death of Walt Disney, as they are equally as fitting to him—an unintended yet equally fitting metaphor perhaps to his own remembrance.