At the **2012 Consumer Electronic Show**, Toon Boom received record-breaking media coverage with hundreds of published articles and tens of live interviews. This sets the tone for the year ahead.

In keeping with this high momentum, Toon Boom will be featured live in two major television shows. The first feature aired in April as part of a CBS NewsWatch segment with technology expert **Scott Steinberg**. This show was broadcast on the ION Cable channel, ranked as the ninth most watched network in the United States. The second is part of the **In View with Larry King** series, which will be broadcast in May to 85 million households via networks such as Bravo, Discovery Channel and the Learning Channel. A one minute Toon Boom promotional segment, going out to millions of households, will also be broadcast on CNN, FOX NEWS, MSNBC and Family Net.

Moving on to online outreach, Toon Boom has created a task force with a mission to focus on improving the web site experience, connecting with the Toon Boom community via social networks and engaging visitors with stimulating and relevant content. The new online team is working at full steam, so make sure to visit Toon Boom’s web site on a regular basis to stay tooned! As the creative industry welcomes more and more hobbyists interested in communicating via visuals, Toon Boom is pulling out all the stops to give its online visitors the most rewarding experience possible on toonboom.com.

Toon Boom remains active in the field, with road trips planned to the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean and Europe. After attending **Cartoon Movie** (March 7-9), **Game Development Conference** (March 7-9), the **Tokyo Anime Fair** (March 22-24), and **Cartoons on the Bay** (March 22-25), the team will attend **MIPTV** (Booth 06.06) in Cannes, France, on April 1-4; **AQUOPS**, (Booth 2), in Quebec City, Canada, on April 10-13; **Savannah International Animation Festival**, in Savannah, GA, USA, on April 13-14; and **FMX**, in Stuttgart, Germany, on May 8-11. We hope to see you soon!
AWARDS

We are thrilled to announce that the global business research & consulting firm Frost & Sullivan has granted Toon Boom the 2011 Global Animation Software Entrepreneurial Company of the Year Award. Frost & Sullivan’s research reveals that Toon Boom creates value for its customers in three ways: one, by providing extremely feature-rich high-end products; two, by focusing on ease of use and creativity in its hobbyist, student, and teacher products; and three, by lending its deep and broad understanding of the animation technology and customer requirements. The Entrepreneurial Company of the Year Award underscores the steps taken by Toon Boom to address challenges and opportunities as a core part of its growth strategy. Congratulations to Toon Boom’s Executive Team and entire staff!

In addition, the Institute of Technical Education in Singapore has honoured Toon Boom with the Distinguished Partners’ Award, to be presented by Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Teo Chee Hean, at their 20th Anniversary Dinner on April 3, 2012. The Award is in recognition of Toon Boom’s strong support and invaluable contributions towards ITE and the development of enhanced learning opportunities for their staff and students in animation and the digital arts.

Hearty Congratulations to the Bluffton Elementary School of Bluffton SC, recipient of the Arts Innovation Award from the Arts School Network, the largest professional membership organization of specialized arts schools in the United States. Designed to recognize schools committed to taking innovative artistic risks, this award is presented annually to a school that has “broken the mold” in using the arts as a vehicle for teaching academics. As part of their Animate Me program, Bluffton Elementary School uses Toon Boom’s products to bring the Language, Science, and Social Studies curriculum to life using animation; resulting in greater student performance and higher attendance.

TOON BOOM STAR

This section is dedicated to Toon Boom employees. In each issue, we introduce you to the people behind the technology and put a face to the voice you may have spoken to.

Toon Boom is truly committed to Education and has built a dedicated team to handle that market. This is how Caroline Bélanger joined Toon Boom two years ago, taking care of business development in Quebec and the Maritimes. She also coordinates all sales activities for the entire Education team throughout Canada and the United States of America. Working closely in the field, Caroline has helped elaborate new licensing schemes for schools in larger set ups as well as develop French-language learning material. She also works very closely with the provincial learning services and Art departments at the higher education level. Prior to joining Toon Boom, Caroline worked for thirteen years at Omer De Serres, Canada’s leader in the field of art, craft and DIY hobby supplies, in charge of Graphic Arts and Education. Following her graduation from Dawson College in Graphic Design and Université de Montréal in Communications, she worked in the creative arena for ten years, designing annual reports and branding. On the personal level, Caroline is the proud mother of Patricia, a 15-year old teenager, who is both a great student and alpine ski racer. A former ski instructor, Caroline has certainly shared a few good techniques with her daughter! Caroline likes to travel, counting New York and Rome among her favorite destinations. Her great temperament and sense of humor make her a wonderful colleague and a dynamic member of Toon Boom’s Social Committee.
Get Toon Boom Certified!

Check out the 2012 training calendar for upcoming Toon Boom Certification classes, all of which will be held in Montreal. Course prices (USD) include a one-year license of the related software, as well as the certification.

More info on Toon Boom’s certification programs at toonboom.com/education/certification

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**Professional Training**
Leading to Professional/Master Certification

**HARMONY**

**Conditions:** Have a working knowledge or experience working with Toon Boom Harmony

**Capacity:** 5

**Price:** $2,499

**Dates:**
- May 28 - June 1
- August 27-31
- November 26-30

**STORYBOARD PRO 3D**

**Conditions:** Have a working knowledge or experience working with Toon Boom Storyboard Pro 3D

**Capacity:** 5

**Price:** $1,999

**Dates:**
- May 23-25
- August 22-24
- November 21-23

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**Associate Training**
Leading to Associate Certification
(Creative Entrepreneur Programs)

**HARMONY**

**Conditions:** Have a basic knowledge of or experience working with Toon Boom Harmony

**Capacity:** 7

**Price:** $2,499

**Dates:**
- May 14-18
- August 13-17
- November 12-16

**STORYBOARD PRO 3D**

**Conditions:** Have a basic knowledge of or experience working with Toon Boom Storyboard Pro 3D

**Capacity:** 7

**Price:** $1,999

**Dates:**
- May 21-23
- August 20-22
- November 19-21

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New Flying Camera with Toon Boom Storyboard Pro 3D

Toon Boom has just released a new version of Storyboard Pro 3D, one which includes an impressive 3D aerial camera you can fly through your scenes. Manipulate the camera in full 3D space by zooming, panning, and trucking, rotate the camera on all axes, and reposition it anywhere within your scene.

The 3D Flying Camera comes in extra handy when you are working with mixed media and want to generate an anamatic that will leave your customer awestruck. Enjoy the freedom of working with a variety of media by importing 3D assets, 2D drawings, pictures, as well as sound, while making use of the creative tools to draw in the software. Take your storyboards up a notch and explore the limitless visual possibilities this latest version of Storyboard Pro 3D delivers right to your fingertips.

More info at toonboom.com/storyboardpro3d

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**Technology News**

4 Toon Boom News  SPRING 2012
Libraries
by Mark Simon

I’m always for options that save me time in production. From the moment I started using Storyboard Pro, it saved me time. A lot of time.

But I was using it for quite a while before I realized the power of their libraries.

A library is a quick access within Storyboard Pro to templates, drawings and elements you want to access over and over while you are boarding.

At first, I just used the library to copy and re-use layers and panels. That was great. I love not having to redraw backgrounds over and over.

Then I learned that I could make a library of reference photos and images. Even better.

But then as I kept working with the software I realized you can use libraries for audio files too. Wow. That’s another great time saver.

I organize my dialogue audio files numerically in one folder and put my sound effects in another folder. I open those folders as libraries in Storyboard Pro and then I have instant access to all my sound files as I work.

Importing audio files one at a time takes a number of clicks. The library allows you to just drag and drop audio files out of a library as you work.

It helps to name dialogue files numerically with a brief description so they appear in order and it’s that much faster to use them in my animatics. I will name them like 001-Bob-oh_no.wav, 002-Brenda-yes.wav.

As I’m boarding, I can grab the files in order and drag them onto the timeline and work without any delay.

I also always name my sound effects files to make it easy to identify them. Proper organization of all audio files can save you a huge amount of time during a production. It also keeps you from screwing up, which I’ve found is a nice bonus too.

Keep on boarding!

Mark Simon is a 25-year entertainment industry veteran amassing nearly 3,000 production credits. He is head of story on the upcoming Hong Kong Phooey feature for Warner Bros and animation producer on Fox’s Tooth Fairy 2. Mark has landed more than 25 deals for his original concepts. He is owner of three industry companies in Orlando, FL and the author of ten popular industry texts. He also lectures around the world.

Are Writing Contests for You?
by Donna Lisa

A newly completed script is more than enough to make a writer smile. When dialogue, characters, and action all work well, there is a huge sense of satisfaction. If you are the writer, and the script is your own IP, you will probably want to develop a marketing plan. Should writing contests be part of your plan?

Some would argue against entering contests. I have heard script writers remark that competitions are a waste of time and, “just for beginners.” I disagree. Writers of all levels can benefit from participating in a contest, including those who write for animation. The most obvious benefit to be gained is recognition. If you win or place, you will receive valuable press and web attention. Experienced writers may have less need for renown, but the announcement of a new award can enhance any CV.

Another benefit that contests provide is an evaluation of your work. Many judges will critique your script for little or no fee, and this kind of professional feedback can help correct flaws. The Creative World Awards is one contest that offers quality feedback. The KIDS FIRST! Film Festival, run by the Coalition for Quality Children’s Media, will post reviews of their selected scripts, series, and DVDs. These reviews are written by judging panels consisting of kids and adults. I found the feedback from the kid’s panel to be especially helpful. Some contests offer cash prizes, ranging from $100 - $10,000. Most of these prizes are delivered in a timely manner. A few contests offer performance opportunities to winners. Through Chicago ScriptWorks and The International Family Film Festival, I was able to watch a professional reading/performance of three of my scripts. This was an exciting way to gauge audience reaction.

I recommend contests that are large and international in scope. They offer more chances to win in more categories (teleplay, animation, television pilots, etc.). I am partial to international film festivals that include contests, workshops, and opportunities for networking. One of my favorites is The Moondance International Film Festival, where I met a producer that I am now working with The Worldfest Houston International Film Festival is another worthwhile festival/contest.

In my opinion, contests can be very useful to writers of all levels. For more information on contest opportunities, visit moviebytes.com. You can search there by genre, significance, and other criteria.

Donna Lisa’s scripts and songs have been honoured by iParenting, NAPPA, Children’s Music Web Awards and other media organizations. Her screenplay, Kheng Kheng Crocodile.is under option with Flat Rock Pictures. Her series, Bat Cat and Bitsy, is being promoted by Engine 15 Media. Donna’s CD, Toucan You Can, received twenty international awards. She is A&R Coordinator for Playful Journeys, a 2012 CD release.
Deploying a property to television, theatre, interactive games, web, mobile, books, educational kits and merchandising was a daring challenge which Image Entertainment Corporation Inc. was ready to take. Thanks to Sylvain Viau’s strong vision and a true confidence in the Walter franchise, this property is spreading its wings across the entertainment and education arenas. Based in Montreal, Canada, Image Entertainment specializes in television and cinematic production, featuring 2D and 3D animation, as well as live action. The studio adopted the Toon Boom pipeline, including Storyboard Pro and Harmony, and used it to produce Walter and Tandoori Season I, a fifty-two 11-minute episode series, as well as Walter and Tandoori’s Christmas, an 85-minute stereoscopic animation feature film.

Walter is a true labour of love. Co-created by Sylvain Viau, founding president and executive producer at Image Entertainment, the concept was originally labelled M. Ecolo and was the subject of an 11-minute live-action short done with the financial collaboration of the National Film Board of Canada in 1997. Its immediate success, with rave reviews and nominations in Paris, New York and Toronto, triggered the beginning of the Walter franchise (rebranded from M. Ecolo).

In essence, Walter carries an educational message while being entertaining, offering great potential for cross-media development. Sylvain Viau stated that he is “…proud to be able to carry out these productions in Montreal and to contribute to greater awareness of the environmental issues around the planet. We have the chance to work with local creative teams whose talent is also recognized worldwide, these productions create approximately 150 high-level jobs. The multi-platform, interactive digital content of the series also permitted our younger generation to develop and experiment with new media technologies and their applications.”

The Walter and Tandoori feature film production team also included: Frank Gladstone as Executive Producer; Bonita Siegel as Creative Producer; François-Pierre Le Scouarnec, as Associate Producer; Daniel Decelles, as first Assistant Director; Jean Noël Le Moal, as Art Director; and Alex Epstein, Lisa Hunter and Vito Viscomi as script writers. The French voices were acted by Benoit Brière (Tandoori), Rick Jones (Walter), Benoit Rousseau (voice over), Bianca Gervais (Mélanie) and Michel Courtemanche (turkey leader). The animation was done by the team at Oasis Animation in Montreal.
Sylvain Viau decided to make *Walter and Tandoori*, Quebec’s first stereoscopic animation, something really impressive by using Daniel Decelles’s knowledge of Harmony to fine tune it and add life and humour to the animation, all the while pushing the traditional look and feel even further. It was also a great opportunity to make the pipeline entirely paperless. For the background design, the team planned all of the camera angles, placing elements in the front to give more depth during the stereoscopic treatment. For example, the character’s feet were placed near the edge to give more depth of field while moving the camera. Viau emphasized the importance of the pre-production stage, explaining, “The storyboard needs to be rock-solid. We took our time to choose the music and set the right mood for the movie.” The entire storyboarding stage was done using Storyboard Pro. Once the animatic was approved, it was sent to Oasis, along with the model pack, the turnaround and line-up. In view of the stereoscopic treatment camera moves were set to change at a slower pace. The animation team at Oasis created all of the characters within Harmony. The feature film introduced 20 new characters compared to the television series. Midway in the production of *Walter and Tandoori* Season I series, the team at Image Entertainment decided to give certain characters a special role in both the series and the feature film, this created parallel connections and efficient asset reuse. “This helped save a lot of costs as the assets were used in both projects. Savings were evaluated at close to one million dollars, which as a producer is [a] major benefit,” said Viau.

“When creating a stereoscopic project, you have to understand that stereoscopy is more intense for children. Their eyes are closer compared to adults. We organized several focus groups with kids of all ages to identify the level of stereoscopy that would be comfortable for them. It was a long, but wise process, to ensure they would enjoy watching the movie from beginning to end!” explained Viau. Based on these findings, they have set the characters and elements at the correct distance and slowed down the rate at which camera movements occur.

During the animation production stage, the team at Oasis made sure each scene had the right level of animation quality and number of characters. “When you create animation for the big screen, the format is more demanding as in any given scene, you deal with more characters and they all need to be animated,” explained Jacques Bilodeau, President of Oasis Animation. Once the scenes were approved by Image Entertainment, Oasis delivered the Harmony scenes with the multi-plane information to Mercury 3D Imaging which took care of adding a second camera to create the stereoscopic effect. The position of the second camera was based on the distances determined during the focus groups. Also, the 3D Sens technology enabled to add some volume and roundness to some elements.

As for post-production, the team at Image Entertainment added more depth to the project by playing with different sound levels as well as a great soundtrack. “Daniel Scott included more instruments to create a richer sound,” stated Viau. The team also managed to secure the rights to use well-known songs such as *Fragile* by Sting.
As mentioned previously, beyond the television series and feature film production, the Walter franchise can be found in the following formats:

- Septembre Éditeur has produced an educational kit entitled Walter which is linked to environmental remedial issues in the context of science and technology classrooms and has up to now been used by more than 16,000 Quebec youths in various institutions.

- Walter is also available as 65 five-minute episodes or 65 two-minute episodes for internet and mobiles. Radio Canada netcasts the webisodes on www.radio-canada.ca to promote the television series.

- The television series ranks very high on Cartoon Network Latin America, because of this, Image Entertainment is currently negotiating merchandising opportunities with firms specialized in this territory.

- The 13 twenty-two-minute episode live-action series started post-production in December 2011. Designed à la Mr. Bean to reach all age groups, the series has no dialogue and lots of physical humour.

- The well-known and accomplished Quebec writer, Bryan Perro, has just completed the first book in a trilogy about Walter. It is published by Les Éditions La Presse for a run of more than 5,000 copies.

- Interactive games titled Walterre are already available online on www.radio-canada.ca. There is a second phase of development, thanks to the Bell Funds, that will enable to make them even more interactive and engaging.
Image Entertainment is also planning to create a Walter & Tandoori Foundation that will be financed by a percentage of the Walter franchise sales. This Foundation will offer funding for environmental projects anywhere in the world.

Mercury Holding is responsible for the feature film distribution internationally. This is a great opportunity to have Walter and Tandoori hit the big screen in the United States and overseas. The voices will be redone with well-known American artists. The goal is to hit the international market and be ready for Christmas 2012. The feature will also be submitted to prestigious international festivals to gain more visibility. The future bodes very well as Walter has already been granted the 2010 Award of Excellence by the Alliance for Children and Television as well as receiving the 2011 Gemeaux Award for Best Animated Series.

The Walter franchise could not have been possible without the financial support of Fondaction CSN, the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund, Alliance Vivafilms, Société Radio-Canada, TV5, VRAK, BBC Kids Canada, Cartoon Network Latin America, Nuevo Mundo Televisión Mercury Holding Group, Branscombe International and Fidec.

With such a 360° approach to making Walter a solid international franchise, Image Entertainment serves as a cornerstone for the successful development and distribution of multiplatform projects. With more projects under development, Image Entertainment will surely continue to impress us with their determination and quality of work.
Rubicon Group Holding (RGH), a diversified entertainment company founded by CEO Randa Ayoubi, is devoted to the creation of incomparable entertainment experiences and interactive educational content across all media channels. With its global team of over 300 employees in four locations: Amman (Jordan), Los Angeles (United States), Manila (Philippines) and Dubai (United Arab Emirates), RGH is a developer/co-producer of world class IP. To make a global digital production work at the highest level possible, RGH relies on its world class team of artists and animators who collaborate to provide a unique perspective into the realization of compelling digital content and immersive entertainment.

Combining award-winning creative and cutting-edge technology, RGH has an established reputation for innovation in four distinct business segments: Animation - television and features (www.rghentertainment.com), Themed Entertainment (www.rghthemeentertainment.com), Games (www.rghgames.com) and Education (www.rgheducation.com).

The Animation division at RGH...
has worked on acclaimed television series such as Asia Lee, Postman Pat, Ben & Izzy, Blake: Double Identity as well as Pink Panther & Pals, which will be the focus of this article.

Co-produced with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Television and created using the Toon Boom pipeline, Pink Panther & Pals continues the hilarious adventures of one of the most-beloved animated characters of all time, the one-and-only Pink Panther. In his new incarnation, Pink Panther is a bit younger – more teen than grown-up. But while he may be young, he has all the attributes that made the grown-up pink panther the icon that he is today – cool and savvy, curious and confident.

Pink Panther & Pals remains true to the original series with great storytelling, great animation and great comedy. Kids will love the fresh cleverness of the Pink Panther and his jaunty attitude, and those who grew up with him will be happy to see that the Pink cat has not lost one ounce of his integrity.

Pink Panther & Pals is based upon the animated Pink Panther character created by David DePatie and Friz Freleng for the Pink panther films of Blake Edwards. David J. Corbett, Isam S. Ayoubi and Walter Mirisch served as Executive Producers with Joe Patrick, Executive Vice President of Domestic Television, overseeing the series for MGM.

David Corbett wrote the series bible and executive produced the project together with Isam S. Ayoubi and Walter Mirisch. In addition, he wrote and edited multiple stories and scripts, and provided voice direction.

David is a highly regarded animation industry veteran who has contributed to a number of television’s most successful animated properties over the past 30 years. Winner of the Humanitas Prize, three Silver Angels, a Golden Marble, a New York Times Critic’s pick and an Emmy nomination, a partial list of his credits include: Transformers, GI Joe, Defenders of The Earth, Flash Gordon, Blondie & Dagwood, Prince Valiant, Phantom 2040 and most recently, Pink Panther & Pals and the Pink Panther Christmas special, A Very Pink Christmas, among many others. David is now Executive Director of RGH’s North American operations.

Acting as Supervising Producer, Kerry Valentine joined the Pink Panther & Pals production team at RGH in 2008 after serving as a post production supervisor at Funny Garbage on Young Person’s Guide to History for Adult Swim and on Harden High for MTV. Prior to Funny Garbage, she was an associate producer at Six Point Harness where her credits include: El Tigre for
Nickelodeon, *Slacker Kats* for ABC Family, *Read A Book* for BET, *Bamination* and *Where My Dogs At* for MTV, *Medium* for NBC, and *Wacky Races* for Warner Bros. She began her career in television production at VH1 after earning a Bachelor of Arts in Cinema and Television Arts at California State University, Northridge. Kerry currently oversees all of RGH’s very active production slate.

Another important team member includes Carrie Kost who manages animation production at RGH Entertainment. During her time there she has served as production manager on *Pink Panther & Pals* and *A Very Pink Christmas* as well as producer on Sesame Street Road Safety PSA’s. Earlier in her career she served as head of production at Six Pont Harness. Carrie’s many illustrious television credits include second unit production manager on *El Tigre: The Adventures of Manny Rivera*; assistant animation director on *The Adventures of Chico and Guapo* and Drew Carey’s *Green Screen Show*; and puppet fabrication coordinator on *Robot Chicken* and *Robot Chicken: Star Wars*.

Produced in the same classic 2D animation style used in the original Pink Panther cartoons, each show contains two seven-minute episodes of a teenage Panther and his buddies, and one short of the classic Ant & the Aardvark characters.

Premiering in the spring 2010 to high ratings and critical acclaim, *Pink Panther & Pals* airs on all Cartoon Network and Boomerang channels around the world, and has been sold in an additional forty plus territories, including the Middle East and North Africa. The Pink Panther Christmas Special, *A Very Pink Christmas*, also developed in association with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Television, continued RGH’s successful string of animation success stories when it debuted with high ratings on ABC Family and Cartoon Network in the UK. MGM Television International will distribute the property worldwide.

The production of *Pink Panther & Pals* spanned about two years, which included eight months of preproduction, eight months to produce the animation and approximately four months of post production work. Relying on Story-
board Pro and Harmony, the entire production was 100% paper free, between RGH in Los Angeles, RGH in Manila and RGH in Amman.

Pre and post production were handled at RGH in Los Angeles by a staff of 45 full-time employees. Each team was overseen by a director who oversaw a team of story-board and clean-up artists.

Directors at RGH’s Los Angeles facility worked closely with the animation teams at their studios in Amman and Manila to ensure that the integrity of the overall vision of the show was communicated flawlessly across the company. The Storyboard Pro files created in LA were converted into Harmony animation files in each of the overseas locations.

“Storyboard Pro was an invaluable asset that enabled our directors to seamlessly transfer files to their own desktops, which provided for great flow between the directors and storyboard artists without the need to continuously print out copies on paper. The digital files were then uploaded across the world to our animation facilities, giving them immediate access to accurate representations of our timing and staging. The addition of dialogue and scratch music and effects tracks allowed for a greater understanding of the director’s intention for gags and timing in each episode. Creating the animatics in Storyboard Pro allowed us to screen them faster, make changes on the fly and export them into Harmony without having to deal with the problems of time delays from shipping and faxing. In production, every day counts,” commented Carrie Kost, Production Manager at RGH Entertainment.

2011 was an incredible year of growth for RGH Entertainment. The studio’s history of success as a producer of animation and educational content in the Middle East opened doors for the company in the U.S. where they continued to build on their reputation for producing high-quality award-winning animation at their facilities in Los Angeles, Amman and Manila with the production of Pink Panther & Pals. The series was honored to win four KidScreen Awards at the event in New York in 2011, including Best Animated Series.

A Very Pink Christmas was a ratings winner on ABC Family in 2011, and RGH was proud to produce a series of animated PSAs for Sesame Workshop in support of the UN’s Decade of Action for Road Safety. The PSAs were distributed around the world and “Grover Safari Road Safety” was recently awarded a CINE Golden Eagle Award.

Currently, RGH is well into production on Classic Media’s property Postman Pat, The Movie, You Know You’re the One. The CG 3D Stereoscopic film is slated to be released worldwide in spring 2013. The company is also in pre-production on a second feature based on L. Frank Baum’s The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus.

In addition, RGH Games released two entertaining apps for iOS, Dragon Eggs and Trashers, and is in development on a number of new titles for iOS and other emerging platforms. Trashers debuted with rave reviews and was named “Best Kids Game” in the iOS division at the 2011 Best App Ever Awards.

RGH Themed Entertainment began the design and project management of The Red Sea Astrarium, a 184-acre themed entertainment resort with a budget of $1.5 billion opening in Aqaba, Jordan, in 2014. In addition, the division was recently invited to serve as master planner and concept designer for InspireWA, a multi-billion dollar integrated themed resort planned for Perth, Australia.
A visually rich and emotionally poignant animated adventure for all ages, Zarafa is a classical hand-drawn feature by writer/director Remi Bezançon (The First Day of the Rest of Your Life) and animator Jean-Christophe Lie. Lie directed the short The Man in the Blue Gordini and has worked on features such as Triplets of Belleville, Disney’s Tarzan, Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas, Kirikou and the Wild Beasts and Nocturna. For this traditional paper-based production, Toon Boom Harmony was put to great use throughout the scanning and colouring stages, with 150,000 drawings on average, 1,195 shots in the film, as well as on average 2.5 characters in each shot. A fact-inspired story, it recounts the lively tale of the first giraffe to reach France, a gift from Egypt to the King of France in 1826. The giraffe befriends an escaped slave boy during their long trek from Africa to France. The feature opened in France, Belgium and Switzerland on February 8, 2012 to rave reviews. It was produced by Prima Linea Productions and Chaocorps and distributed by Pathé.

Arc Productions is a Canadian based CG animation and visual effects facility with a well-earned global reputation for quality, efficiency and reliability. With over 250 artists and technical directors using the most up-to-date hardware and software resources available, Arc brings the vision of both major Hollywood studios and independent producers to life. The team is proficient in a wide array of formats, including theatrical features, television, DVDs, shorts, and game cinematics. Renowned features CG has worked on include Veggie Tales: The Pirates Who Don’t Do Anything, Hoodwinked Too, Gnomeo & Juliet and Dolphin Tale, to name a few. As storytellers, Arc uses Toon Boom Storyboard Pro for “everything story”, from development pitches to storyboarding their animatics. “We use the PDF export option to conduct all of our reviews and pitches. At the animatic stage, the editorial department works closely with the production team and the storyboard artists to turn panels into the cut. Exporting panels to editorial is easy and efficient. The wide range of options the program contains allows for a level of personalization that really helps us get the flexibility we need. We often require a different resolution, aspect ratio, colour palette, etc. and we have yet to run across anything that Storyboard Pro can’t do for us. The program is universal and most of the artists we hire are already proficient with the program, minimizing the learning curve and maximizing efficiency. Storyboard Pro is also a very facile program which allows our artists to illustrate their ideas very quickly and when working in conjunction with editorial, allows necessary additional sketches to be made extremely efficiently. When it comes to helping us get our story team working efficiently and creatively, all things considered, there isn’t a better, more powerful software tool on the market,” shared David Stoten, Head of Story at Arc Productions.

El Hombre Invisible Visual Arts is an Ecuadorian agency that excels in the fields of audiovisual production and 2D animation. Thanks to a team of high-level professionals and to the experience garnered in both areas, they are recognized as the leading animation agency in Ecuador. El Hombre seeks not only to produce terrific animated films, but to join forces with existing talents in other artistic fields. This is how they created and produced their first animated short film Po-Poc, soon to be released to principal movie theaters in Ecuador. El Hombre is looking for co-producers to create an animated series based on the short film El último canto de Unush (Unush’s Last Song). At the moment, the agency is beginning production on its second animated short film, titled Cincopata, to be released in real 3D. “We chose Toon Boom Harmony to make and produce our short films because of the technology it offers. Fabricio Ulloa, the Director of Animation, and the animation team agree that Toon Boom’s tools simplify working and compositing the characters, thus speeding up the production process via the use of high quality products. “We have been able to develop short films that meet our expectations and objectives,” says Daniel Jácome. “Based on our achievements," he adds, “we are pioneers of the animation industry in Ecuador and we want to encourage the production of animated films in our country by continuing to propose cutting edge, high quality productions.”
Camouflaj is a Seattle-based, independent studio developing narrative-driven and emotionally-charged games. Comprised of industry veterans whose credits include projects like Halo, Lord of the Rings, F.E.A.R. and Metal Gear Solid, the team at Camouflaj is working to deliver AAA game content to a growing global market. Camouflaj is experimenting with a different kind of game development process, one that champions a long pre-production phase, during which story and game play is tried, tested and completed before art and cinematic production begins. This allows the team to focus on the creative core longer than most AAA game projects permit. With their original production philosophies and a commitment to communicating meaningful content through its creations, Camouflaj is a unique, up-and-coming game developer worth keeping an eye out for. Camouflaj used Toon Boom Storyboard Pro in pre-production to establish the various scenes of the game trailer and game play sequences featured in their 2012 Game Development Conference trailer debut.

PJP Film & TV Productions is a unique family business located in the Southern Netherlands. Besides production of TV programmes, the company also makes Web TV, industrial films and TV commercials. PJP was founded by Peter Joosten and started in 1985 with the dubbing of foreign cartoon and animation series. PJP is also the Benelux distributor of 120 nationally renowned Dutch dubbed cartoons and animated series. In 1995, PJP became an independent producer of mainly children and youth TV programmes for the regional broadcast channel L1 TV. This is when PJP adopted Toon Boom Studio. “It was the simplest package at that time. A trainee was put to work and within one week the first episode of five minutes was completed,” enthused Peter Joosten. This convinced them to move up the product line by acquiring two packages of Toon Boom Digital Pro to produce the first series of 13 episodes of The Adventures of Jippe. The studio is now using Animate Pro. “This package has the most features on board for easy animation. The lip sync feature is an especially huge addition. The paperless workflow, the lip-sync function, the ability to build and use a library, the compatibility with Illustrator and Final Cut Pro are great benefits. This translates into a fast way of animating. Now all cartoons and animations are made with Animate Pro. Currently, we are considering switching to Toon Boom Harmony,” concluded Peter Joosten.

Having established a strong foundation in the Philippines with an international clientele from all corners of the world, Bang On Animation and 3lbs Animation decided to combine their expertise and know-how in order to form Tycoon Animation Inc. Fast becoming the country’s largest animation studio, Tycoon Animation Inc. is growing from a service work, commercials, and VFX company to one developing original content as well. The team has been using Toon Boom Harmony since 2006 for digital ink and paint on 2D hand-drawn animation but is actively working towards using Harmony’s paperless animation systems and 3D integration. “The fact that Harmony can run on Linux thus cutting down on license costs and virus dangers, the fact that Harmony aids immensely in animation production, has made this process all the more successful,” commented Tony Tullipano, co-founder at Tycoon Animation. Tony first used Harmony while working on Monstories through Bang On Animation Inc. And with Tycoon Animation now centering on creating original features and TV series, Harmony is all the more vital a component to the company’s expansion.
Based in Paris and Lille, Planet Nemo Animation is a highly creative independent producer and distributor of animated series and interactive gaming content for the youth market. Their expertise includes the artistic development, raising of funds, production and co-production of animated properties and interactive programs.

With more than 100 hours of kids programmes, Planet Nemo Animation has become the sixth-largest animation series producer in France (origin: CNC 2010) with a varied and original Editorial Line, thanks to successful programmes such as Bali, Missy Mila, Silly Bitty Bunny, Nelly and Cesar, Manon, and Bali Signing Time, sold all over the world.

Groove High is the latest production of the French company, combining animation and live action and aimed at 7 to 12 year olds, coming soon to Disney Channel in Europe. Stefan Vermeulen was the Storyboard Supervisor on the series, working with Toon Boom Storyboard Pro for the first time along with many of his team of boarders. Here, he shares his experience of using Toon Boom’s storyboarding software: “I had been doing paper boards for over ten years and had wanted to try a more WYSIWYG approach for some time, since I am convinced that working directly on a soundtrack makes for more dynamic boards.”

“As it turned out for Groove High, this was certainly the case. First of all, it allowed us to detect some flaws in the original concept of the show early on in production. The scripts were well-written alright, with beautiful dialogue and exciting plot developments, but sometimes lacked opportunities for the kind of visual gags that Disney and Planet Nemo were after. They had a distinct live-action sitcom feeling that didn’t always blend well with an animation show.”

“So it was up to David Freedman, the director of the show, and the storyboard team to translate these live action sitcom scripts into full-blown animation comedy. Basically every board started with an in-depth (very intense, but often hilarious) briefing session with David where every sequence was dissected and reassembled again, telling the story in a more visual, ‘animated’ kind of way. And we thought up a ton of gags. Then, the storyboarder would make a very rough version of the board loosely timed to the recorded dialogue and some occasionally added sound effects. David edited these rough boards, improved storytelling, pimped up some gags, cut or added others, all directly on the rough board. These edits then came back to us to finish the boards. Luckily David is the kind of director who challenges his team to have a creative input all along, so even while finishing the board we could improve or add a gag if we could come up with a better idea.”
“For all this, and particularly for the song sequences which are an essential part of the show, Storyboard Pro proved to be a great asset. Working directly on the soundtrack is definitely the way to do this kind of comedy for me.”

“It might have been challenging sometimes from a production point of view, but the WYSIWYG approach definitely allowed the boarders to be more daring and creative than they would have on paper boards, and the resulting comedy is therefore more pointed and fresh.”

“Apart from all this, the WYSIWYG approach proved very helpful for me as a storyboard supervisor when working with first-time story boarders, of which there were several on this production. Coming up with a good gag is one thing, but translating it into a storyboard in an efficient and attractive way is something else. Storyboard Pro allowed these first-timers to have an immediate feedback of what works and what doesn’t. And it allowed me to make changes in a very direct way. This certainly speeds up the learning process, in my opinion.”

“On a more practical note, the advantages of being able to renumber panels, export boards and panels in different formats, reframe shots and add camera moves are of course a big leap forward. But for me the creative possibilities remain the main reason to work with Storyboard Pro.”

“I would and will reuse Storyboard Pro in the future and would certainly recommend it for use on television series,” concluded Vermeulen.

*WYSIWYG: What you see is what you get*
Rodrigo Duéñez, Julian Jáuregui and Arturo Jáuregui share a passion for illustration and animation. The trio has been close friends since high school, when they first started creating animation just for the fun of it. And although they all pursued different studies at University, animation was what they really loved. This desire to animate brought them together to make a career in animation. Adding Francisco Guerrero to the mix completed the team, putting him in charge of backgrounds. All of the team are self-taught animators and cinematographers; this has helped them to develop their own animation style. In 2010, the group turned their talent into a new company called Lapis Lazuli which is based in Mexicali, Baja California. They originally used Flash and started taking small contracts to create animated shorts which they posted on newgrounds.com to get exposure. Their work mostly consisted of parody; this was successful as they managed to attract significant audiences with over 1 million views. That was the turning point.

Lapis Lazuli was ready to start creating their original content. “We aspire to become the Mexican Disney!” exclaimed Rodrigo Duéñez. “We want to bring people’s attention to our area, as all the studios are located in the centre of Mexico,” added Francisco Guerrero. Their strategy is to create a short and submit it to international festivals; that will be the basis of their feature film project. Their desire to take Mexicali’s cultural expression to the international community, led them to approach Gabriel Trujillo Muñoz, a famous local author with over 130 book titles. They asked him to write a story and he suggested three of his books, all of which consisted of short tales. The team read the books and all picked the same story: A Veces la Oscuridad nos Habla, which led to the creation of La Oscuridad te Habla.

For this project, the small team decided to try Toon Boom Animate and immediately knew that this was the tool they wanted. “We love the animation features, such as the lines and the colour palettes. Compared to Flash, we are much faster and create nicer quality drawings,” explained Arturo Jáuregui.
To undertake this independent production, the team decided to solicit some local companies as sponsors. With sponsors like Urbi Vida Residencial, Kenworth, Instituto de Cultura de Baja California, La Voz de la Frontera and De Hoyos y Avilés Abogados on board, the pre-production started in September 2010 and production in January 2011. This 10 minute short tells the story of a young boy named Esteban and his journey through El Pozo, a small town next to the highway, and the diligent search for the truth kept within its isolation. Arturo Jáuregui acted as lead animator, Francisco Guerrero as background and cleanup artist while Rodrigo Duñéez took care of the sound. The team also got some help from students at Digipen, where Julián Jáuregui is studying animation. This perfect connection gave them access to several students who could assist them as they completed the project.

Opting for frame-by-frame animation style, they all used Toon Boom Animate from beginning to end: “We just draw, starting with rough drawing and then easily cleaning up the lines. We don’t need the symbols anymore and don’t miss them. Moving on to colouring, this is a breeze! The colour palettes make it very efficient to change colours anytime during the process. We enjoy using pegs a lot! The multi-plane camera is easy to manipulate, we don’t have to fake it anymore like in Flash. We also did all our effects within Animate,” said Arturo Jáuregui. Once the project was completed, Rodrigo Duñéez explained how much he appreciated Animate’s export capabilities as a movie file. “I am using Apple’s Logic to add sound effects and music and the file I am getting from Animate is perfect. Before, rendering with Flash was a pain, especially with sound. There were a lot of lags and glitches. Even though I am not using Animate, I am benefitting from it in post-production!”

Whenever they had a technical or user question, they turned to the Animate’s User Forum and received a reply within a day. “This is excellent support from Toon Boom and the community. We also watched Adam Phillips’ videos to learn a few tricks!” concluded Arturo Jáuregui.

Knowing that lapis lazuli is regarded as the stone of friendship and truth, this young and talented team has certainly picked the right name to carry their creativity and get the world’s attention on their original content.

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**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO**

The University of Torino Takes an Animated Approach to its Technology and History

For many years, the University of Torino, one of Italy’s most prestigious universities, has been an active proponent of innovative multimedia and communication arts. Their new animated spot series Unitoons was conceived to promote the University’s services, as well as keep the Unito Community informed. The films center around two animals who are awarded the historical Seal of the University of Torino, the University’s symbol since 1615. Alma the eagle and Tauro the bull serve as funny and ironic hosts, guiding students through the university’s online services. Although the subject matter is mainly technology and innovation-related, Unitoons forges a strong connection with the city’s traditions and locales, in which the episodes are set. Beginning with Storyboard Pro, the team produces everything within Toon Boom Animate Pro, from the characters and rigging, to animation and final compositing. The advantages go beyond the creative, doing well by the budget, too. “Making full use of libraries enables the team to cut production costs,” shared Patrizia Tron.

www.unito.it/media

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Image courtesy of the University of Torino
Working out of his secluded home in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, Australia, Adam Phillips is publisher of Bitey Castle, the creator of the Brackenwood series and an all-time top scorer on Newgrounds. He works paperless in all aspects through design, storyboard, layout, backgrounds, animation and effects. Recently, Adam adopted Toon Boom Harmony stand-alone and makes full use of its superior features, such as the dynamic brush, the particle systems, the Effect modules and Network view, the 3D integration with Maya as well as the Shift and trace capability. Light and colour play a huge role in his work, so he thoroughly enjoys experimenting with the effect modules, like glows, variable blurs, variable opacity cutters and refraction. “Previously, I was using Animate Pro which itself is a fantastically powerful program. With regards to efficiency, there are many features in Harmony Stand Alone that make light work of almost any task. At the end of the day I can look back proud and amazed at what, and how much, was accomplished. (...) Whenever I hear someone singing the praises of a particular 2D animation program, I like to track it down and test it out for myself. As yet I haven’t found anything that comes close to Harmony’s vast scope and impressive power. Right now I really can’t see myself working with anything else,” admits Adam.

www.bitey.com
Originally from Denmark, **Anders Worm** is now a resident of Sweden. In 2012, Anders and his crew created six short films as part of an anti-littering campaign entitled *Håll Sverige Rent* (*Keep Sweden Tidy*). Created for both the web and broadcast, the films soon went viral. Anders used Toon Boom Storyboard Pro and Animate, together with live footage shot on a Nikon D7000. Preferring paperless frame-by-frame animation, he makes full use of the Storyboard Pro and Animate integration and appreciates viewing his animation in real-time with just one click. “It is very fast, to see what you are doing in progress. And Toon Boom Storyboard Pro, in combination with Animate, just makes an animator/storyboarder’s life easier, especially with renumbering, changing (the) places of drawings, export to both PDF and .mov,” commented Anders.

**Toni Junard** is an ambitious, multi-talented person whose creative pursuits take him from animation, to music, acting, and hospitality. Originally from Fort Lauderdale FL, Toni enrolled in electrical engineering studies at the University of Florida where he was introduced to both music composition and Anime. It wasn’t long before he decided to pursue a more artistic career path. Toni transferred to the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, where he obtained a BA in media arts and animation. In 2010, he moved to Los Angeles CA, where he embarked on an expansive animation career. Toni relies on Storyboard Pro and Animate Pro in the creation of his projects. “I used to draw all of my storyboards on paper and then scan them into my computer, but now Storyboard Pro works as an excellent medium for working digitally. (...) I really admire how Toon Boom gears its products towards animation. To me, that makes them the undisputed tools to use.”

www.andersworm.com

www.tonijunard.com
Located in Columbus, Ohio, the Columbus College of Art and Design (CCAD) prepares the next generation of creative leaders in Animation. The college's curriculum is amplified by partnerships with Illustration, Fine Arts, Cinematic Arts, Photography and Advertising & Graphic Design industry practitioners. Animation students engage their critical thinking and expand their worldview through liberal arts classes tailored to relate directly to visual arts.

In the CCAD Animation Major, students leverage traditional color and design theory to modern techniques. Students develop a critical appreciation of contemporary and historical animation in both liberal arts and studio classes, while courses stressing a variety of drawing styles bolster observational drawing and an understanding of anatomy. As students apply core animation principals as a vehicle for personal expression, they are also introduced to the production pipeline and the sense of achievement that comes with group accomplishments.

CCAD Animation students are supported towards the production of a portfolio that showcases individual style and professional products. The senior year is focused on fostering projects with external partners and completing an individual or group project.

Animation Faculty member Andy Friz has brought a wealth of production knowledge and craftsmanship to CCAD since he joined in 2001. Active professionally in the animation industry since 1993, Friz has worked in all areas of production.

Mr. Friz animated the Signal Film for the 2010 Ottawa International Animation Festival that featured a different gag for each of the five days of the festival. Two versions of the Ottawa Signal Film were official selections at the 2011 Citrus Cel Animation Festival and have also been selections in numerous international festivals. Two commercials that feature Mr. Friz's animation, SHRM's Winds of Change and Important Assets won three 2008 Telly Awards. Mr. Friz received the 2005 American Graphic Design Awards “Best of Show” for his illustrations in the Fairytales Playset books for Little Tikes.

Toon Boom technology has been a cornerstone medium in Mr. Friz’s portfolio and classes; he has been utilizing the software since 1998, when it was known as USAnimation. “Toon Boom Harmony offers the flexibility to see a rough test instantly, allowing us to focus animation principals,” offers Friz. The ability to efficiently control effects and color treatments broadens the student’s capability to tell their story. Adds Friz, “We encourage students to make films that are entirely their own. We don’t want to have a ‘house style’ at CCAD.”

In addition to its dedicated faculty, CCAD remains committed to keeping up with current industry practices, hardware, and software. In that regard, Toon Boom plays a key role in the school’s curriculum. “CCAD has better equipment than most people will have in their first job!” admits Friz.

Mr. Friz’s advice for all animation students “You can study and copy from great animation to learn technique, but observe and sketch from life, so you can draw from experience, making work that is uniquely YOURS and delivering it with the highest quality possible. Toon Boom is a big part of that process.”

www.ccad.edu
The Arts & Technology Institute is dedicated to helping students learn in a way that is more natural and applicable to real-world scenarios than traditional classroom teaching. Courses at the Arts & Technology Institute not only teach children skills that they will carry with them through adulthood, they are designed to foster an appreciation for lifelong learning as well. Yulia Piller and Jami Woychesin founded the Arts and Technology Institute (ATI) to meet the needs of children in their community and are now providing a cutting-edge experience for students grades three and up. One of the most popular classes offered at ATI is 2D Animation, in which Flip Boom Classic is utilized to teach the basics of animation. Students may progress to Toon Boom Studio and on to take their certification test to be qualified for industry Toon Boom Studio training.

Courses are designed to teach subject matter in a holistic manner, bringing together math, science, language arts, and much more to offer a fun and creative learning environment. Yulia and Jami are highly motivated, state certified technology teachers who possess a combined classroom experience of 20 years. They understand that children sometimes need encouragement and guidance to open up and dream outside the box, qualities that will serve them well in a world that increasingly calls for creative, independent thinkers. In addition, ATI provides children and teens with an opportunity to explore their career possibilities, prepare for college, and gain practical work skills through hands-on application.

With eight locations throughout Italy, the International School of Comics was founded in 1979 by Dino Caterini. Over the years, the school has garnered numerous successes and awards. The school offers courses in the fields of fine arts, graphic design, illustration, animation and web design that stimulate students to unearth their personal style and talents. More than 60% of current Italian authors are school alumni. In addition, the school has developed strong ties with educational organizations throughout the world such as ICAIC, – the Cuban Institute of Animation and the Tokyo Animation Gakuin in Japan. The school has adopted Toon Boom Animate Pro for its first year students, who learn drawing, clean up and keyframing for animation tweening. In their second year, they learn to manage the creation of an animated sequence, followed by creating scenes, compositing and final editing in their third year. Also, the school uses Toon Boom Storyboard Pro to create animatics, import paper drawings and set the timeline, as well as add camera motion on various layers.

www.scuolacomics.it
Paperless storytelling
Recognized as the most innovative software, Toon Boom Storyboard Pro 3D speeds up pre-production and offers limitless visual possibilities combining 2D, 3D and mixed media.

From the idea to the reel
Based on Emmy award-winning technology, the Toon Boom Harmony Solution includes superior vector technology, real-time animation, a powerful compositing engine, 2D-3D integration capabilities, all set in a multi-plane environment.

Track from anywhere
Toon Boom Manager is the perfect production tracking system that combines everything required for monitoring daily activities, production pace and communication between members of the team.