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animating to the next level

Exhibiting for the first time at MIPCOM turned out to be an excellent initiative, considering Toon Boom's latest announcements. The R&D Department introduced the world to **Symphony**, the latest animation solution that raises the bar for quality an extra notch. **Symphony** is your all-round animation solution to undertake animation projects for all media from TV, DVD, the web, to gaming and PDAs. In his keynote speech opening the latest Ottawa International Animation Festival, Michael Hirsh talked about the seven key ingredients needed to make the animation industry as vibrant and healthy as it was previously. We were proud to hear that one of them relates to the technological innovation that Toon Boom is providing today. Kudos to the team! Additionally, **Opus II** and **Concerto Service Pack 1** have been released, offering users several exciting new features and enhancements. Finally, the Mac version of **Opus II** and **Concerto** are ready to ship. This initial version is applicable to the large-scale studios working in multi-platform environments. It will be available to individual users in early 2005. On the Toon Boom Studio side, development is underway to bring Toon Boom Studio v2.5 for Windows as early as possible. The Toon Boom team has been on the road extensively during the past three months, meeting customers at their facilities and participating at conferences in Canada, France, India, China, the United Kingdom and soon in Bangladesh. While new specialized channels are created worldwide, broadcasters are also looking for fresh content. With this increasing demand for new and original content programming, the future bodes well for all animation studios.

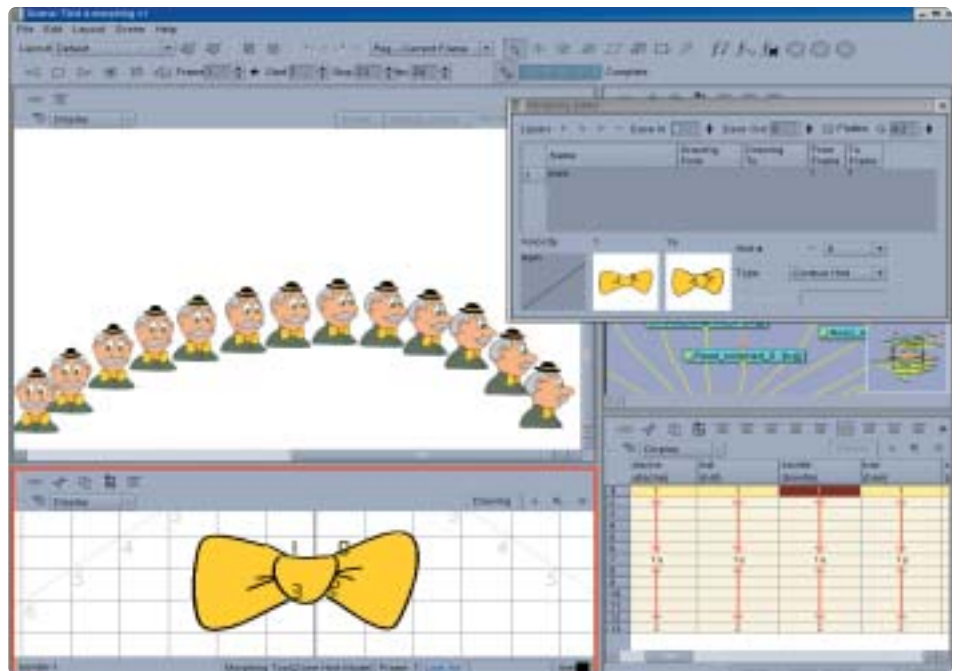
Toon Boom Hits the High Note with Symphony

Toon Boom Animation introduces **Symphony**. With powerful features – such as morphing, basic inverse kinematics and “glue” – that enhance the paperless animation production process, **Symphony** enables studios to produce digital animation of the highest quality.

Advanced drawing and asset management tools combined with a seamless, integrated workflow make **Symphony** the solution of choice for any studio that aims to save significant overhead costs while adding value to their animations. Building on the advanced features provided by **Opus** and **Concerto**, **Symphony** adds morphing, basic inverse kinematics and “glue” (automatic joint connecting) to your toolset.

“**Symphony** culminates everything that has been done in animation technology by pushing further the boundaries of creativity and efficiency. This tool brings to the table high-tech features that will not only raise the quality of animation but also reduce significantly the cost of producing animation,” shared Joan Voogesang, President and Chief Executive Officer at Toon Boom.

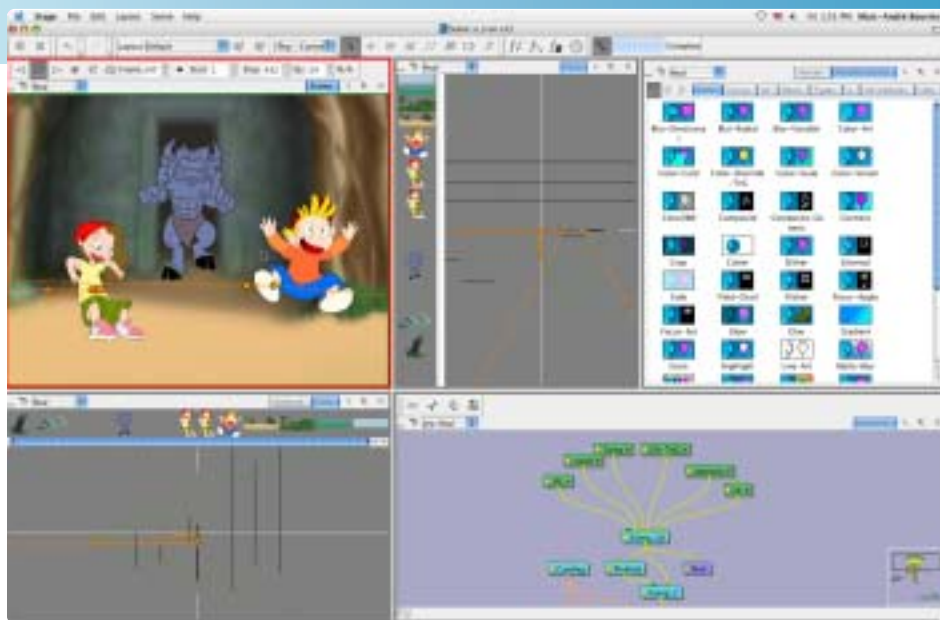
Nelvana, one of the world's leading international producers and distributors of children's programming and



The morphing tool can generate as many in-betweens as required between the key frames.

products, is the early adopter of this revolutionary technology and has used it in the production of the series *6Teen* and the pilot of *Grossology*, which was presented at MIPCOM 2004. “In Toon Boom, Nelvana saw a company poised to raise the bar for 2D digital animation,” said Scott Dyer, Executive VP of Production and Development for Nelvana. “Our early involvement in

Symphony, and the adoption of the technology for production and development, will enable us to increase the quality and expressiveness of our work while remaining cost-effective. We're thrilled to be using **Symphony** in our Toronto studios.” **Symphony will be ready to ship in the first quarter of 2005 and will be available on Windows, Linux and Mac OS X.**



Launching Opus II

Toon Boom Animation announced the release of Opus II, along with Concerto Service Pack 1. This major release includes several exciting new features, and enhancements. Highlights of the new features include:

- The ability to render a QuickTime movie in Linux and Windows
- The ability to control line thickness when zooming in the Read Module
- Access to a basic timeline and scripting functions
- The ability to customize user toolbars for every view
- The use of a new and improved template window with element types

"We are very proud of Opus II. Users will not only enjoy a new set of powerful tools but also appreciate the significant improvements made throughout the application," shared Francisco Del Cueto, Vice-President, Technology, at Toon Boom.

Opus has already been the tool of choice for several leading studios' current productions such as King Camera, Warner Bros., Universal, Cromosoma, DPSI, Mercury Filmworks, Jamination, Film Graphics, Hahn Film and Fat Cat. **Opus II is available on Windows, Linux and Mac OS X. A technical bulletin is available upon request.**

New: Concerto SP1

Toon Boom Animation announced also the release of Concerto Service Pack 1, along with Opus II. This release includes several exciting new features, and enhancements. Highlights of the new features include:

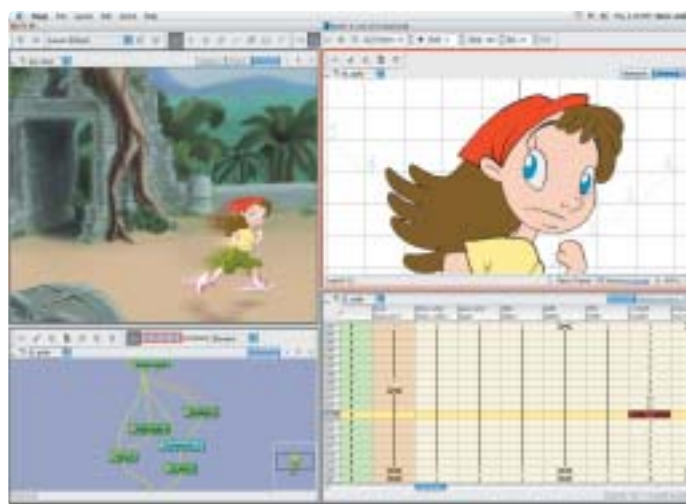
- The ability to render a QuickTime movie in Linux and Windows
- The ability to control line thickness when zooming in the Read Module
- Access to an advanced timeline with sound scrubbing
- The use of scripting functions to customize actions or create macros
- The use of a new and improved template window with element types

"We are very proud of Concerto's achievements in the digital animation production environment. This new release enables users to maximize even more the software capabilities and output high quality animation cost-effectively," shared Francisco Del Cueto, Vice-President, Technology, at Toon Boom. "We experienced exceptional

results with the use of Concerto on the first season of *Mischief City*. As we begin production on season two, our team is looking forward to taking advantage of the additional features that the second release of Concerto has to offer," Jerry Popowich, Vice-President of Creative Production at **Mercury Filmworks**. **Concerto Service Pack 1 is available on Windows, Linux and MacOS X. A technical bulletin is available upon request.**

Toon Boom Ships Opus and Concerto for Mac

Toon Boom Animation is ready to ship Opus and Concerto on Mac. OPUS and Concerto are the most advanced solutions for the production of traditional and digital animation, providing customers with an integrated production workflow, powerful 3D scene planning, sophisticated effects, compositing tools and seamless 2D/3D integration. This initial version will be applicable to the large-scale studios working in multi-platform environments. It will be available to individual users during the first quarter of 2005. OPUS and Concerto join Toon Boom Studio among Toon Boom's highly-acclaimed Mac OS X offerings.





Since its creation in 2002, **LuxAnimation** has co-produced more than 93 hours of animation. With the production of *Zombie Hotel*, LuxAnimation decided to use Opus, particularly its compositing module, for its textures treatment and special effects output required in this series' sophisticated design. Lilian Eche, general manager at LuxAnimation shared, "Adopting Opus as our tool of choice was only natural for us based on LuxAnimation's philosophy. This decision was highly facilitated by Toon Boom R&D team's adaptation, dynamism, openness and feedback." Targeted for an audience of 8-10 years old, the series follows wide-eyed twins Fungus and Maggot who live in *Zombie Hotel* along with their mom and dad Zombies, and a couple of strange employees. This hotel welcomes vampires, ghosts and monsters of all kinds. It's not surprising that most of clients go back screaming, forgetting their luggage! This hotel is nevertheless very alive: between members of the family and the regulars, it should be the most popular attraction. It's a monstrous menagerie on all floors! The series is scheduled for delivery in September 2005.

Street Football scores with US-Animation! These 26 half-hour episodes are a co-production between **Télé Images Kids, Demas & Partners, FR3** and **RAI Fiction**. **Caribara**, the Paris-based studio, will also be involved in the compositing process of the production, which is scheduled to start in early October 2004. "This project gives us the opportunity to use advanced technology. It will enable us to offer producers a tighter control over the entire production workflow and become an attractive partner for international productions," shared Fabien Baboz, Studio Manager at Caribara.

At the end of September, the **International Olympic Committee** presented in Rome the mascot for the XX Olympic Winter Games in Torino with a 90-second film, all done with Concerto by **Lanterna Magica!** Even though images are not available, you can check out this latest creation at www.torino2006.org. Lanterna Magica will also produce the series of 52 one-minute episodes.

Project Firefly Animation Studios is a full service 2D/3D animation studio offering original programming and outsourcing support for theatrical and video releases, television series, commercials, educational films and children's books. Project Firefly draws on the expertise of veteran animators and skilled artisans to produce quality, family-friendly animated content. Artists' screen credits include such films as *The Lion King*, *Mulan*, *Lilo and Stitch* and *Brother Bear*. Since it's





opening in March, 2004, Project Firefly has grown from the founding five partners to nearly 25 staff members. Current projects include a pilot for a potential television series, working title, *Farm Force*, which is a collaborative effort between Project Firefly Animation Studios and Chili Pictures and work continues on several projects for outside clients.

"As a multimedia studio, we needed a production software package that would allow us the flexibility to work on a broad range of 2D and 3D productions. The software had to allow us to process 2D artwork, combine 2D and 3D animation seamlessly and help us manage our production workflow. We looked at several software packages, but the one that really caught and held our attention was Opus. Features in Opus, such as vectorized artwork, auto-feed scanning, interactive camera manipulation, multiple output resolutions and real-time playback were the

attributes that we needed in our production arsenal. We have begun using Opus in production and continue to be impressed by its flexibility and ability to streamline our animation processes," shared Pam Darley, Artistic Coordinator at Project Firefly.

King Camera has completed work on a 90-second take of the famous show-stopping production number, *American Dream*, created and designed by highly acclaimed Pink Floyd's *The Wall* illustrator and satirist, Gerald Scarfe for Sir Cameron Mackintosh's new touring show of the legendary musical *Miss Saigon*. King Camera's Senior Digital Artist and Composer, Tim Barter, created a number of purpose-built modules within Opus to recreate the "Ink and Water-colour" style of Scarfe's model sheets.

As Tim reveals, "It's a fairly daunting task to try and emulate the work of someone with as formidable a reputa-

tion and talent as Scarfe's, and then to hone it to Geoff Dunbar and Jacqui Davies' exacting requirements! At times, I felt like the forger trying to impress the old master. It was compounded by the usual budgetary restraints, meaning that I not only had to create compositing modules that output in Gerald's style but did so automatically; with little need for further adjustments. This meant I had to pre-visualize every variation on how the animation might be delivered to me and therefore build the resultant module structures before a drop of animation arrived!

Changes in drawing and field size would also mean that the many effects for each character would need to be readily adjustable between key frames. Thankfully, Opus now allows the use of expressions so I was able to design a single control that would automatically talk to and adjust each and every effect in a network which saved a great deal of time."



Courtesy of KING CAMERA

Great exposure... www.toonboom.com.

Get exposure to an audience of skilled professionals. Place an electronic ad on Toon Boom's web site and it will be seen by thousands of decision-makers in the animation industry. Put a banner on our web site as a great opportunity to reach your clients directly.

Option 1: Placement of a 195x195 pixel graphic barker ad in rotation in the upper right menu of various key sections of the Toon Boom site.
Period: 3 months / Minimum impression: 500,000 >>> Price: **\$3,500** USD / CPM: \$7.00 USD

Option 2: Placement of a 50x200 pixel graphic barker ad in rotation in the top identification of various key sections of the Toon Boom site.
Period: 3 months / Minimum impression: 500,000 >>> Price: **\$2,500** USD / CPM: \$5.00 USD

Act fast as space is limited! On a monthly average, we get 50,000 unique visitors, with 450,000 loaded pages. Write to webmaster@toonboom.com to place your ad.

Butterfly-Effect (www.butterfly-effect.co.uk) is a creatively led new media design agency based in Farringdon, London. They recently used Toon Boom Studio to promote a Disney online multi-player game. *Toontown* (www.disney.co.uk/toontown) is a 3D game, where players create their own Toon character and help defeat the evil Cogs, who want to take over Toontown. The main interface for the site was designed around the theme of



the town itself, and Toon Boom Studio was used to create a realistic fly-through from the town centre into each of the buildings within Toontown, where visitors can find information, downloads and videos/demos of the game. "To do this by hand would have been very time-consuming and problematic. With our knowledge of its functionality, we knew that using Toon Boom Studio would be the most efficient and effective way of creating the desired 3D fly-through effect and it worked!," shared Bill Galloway, Creative Director at Butterfly. When site visitors select a building to explore, the seemingly flat town surprisingly turns into a 3D environment, which not only creates a more visually interesting interface, but more importantly is reflective of the Toontown game itself.

Run Riot is a small animation house producing both 2D and 3D animation for children's television that appeals to audiences of all ages. It is Run Riot's intention to grow and perpetuate a positive, recognizable brand image by making quality, content-responsible entertainment with prudent budgets, targeting

mainstream audiences. Run Riot uses Toon Boom Studio for its concept artwork and animatics. "The product demonstrates remarkable ease of use, has excellent online help and scene planning functionality, and its ability to import Adobe Illustrator-format files makes transferring our original artwork to Toon Boom very straightforward. Our first project using Toon Boom Studio revolves around a London Black Cab driver called Taxi Tom. Tom, in his early 30s, has a small family and is a dedicated dad and husband. Essentially, Tom's family and hardworking character are designed to instill a strong sense of work and family values within the viewer", shared Peter Birch.

The Badcat Records production of Scott's Ferret is nearing completion. Three years in the making, this beautiful, full-length animated movie for tele-



vision was created with heavy use of Toon Boom Studio. The movie makes good use of Toon Boom's multiplaning feature and its ability to import 32 bit Targa sequences. Frames were hand drawn on Wacom Cintiq tablets and rendered into high-resolution QuickTime movies, which were then edited and composited in Final Cut Pro. "Toon Boom Studio has been a joy to use and we could not have created this movie without it," shared Deborah Colony. Scott's Ferret is the story of a spoiled and frivolous ferret who sets forth on a dark night to retrieve stolen dreams. She meets many magical creatures along the way, and helps a brave old horse get his dream back.

As an independent animator/director working out of Paris and New York, Jean-Pierre Jacquet has been involved in animation in various capacities, from Saturday morning cartoons to independent short films by way of numerous commercials and TV specials. *Contrapunto* is his most recent production. In a Buenos Aires barrio, a dancing couple explore the intimacy of the Argentine tango: a sound, a scent, a



gesture, a look, a smile, a tear, a trembling body, nervous hands, a sense of implied trust and respect, all emotions set in motion by this glorious music. "For *Contrapunto*, I used Toon Boom Studio at two stages of the production. First, I imported my scanned rough pencil drawings as elements and fiddled with the timings with the exposure sheet feature. Second, I imported the scanned finished drawings and fine-tuned the timings in the exposure sheet. This was done for several layers of artwork," shared Jean-Pierre.

Studio Carambolas produces conceptual and character designs, storyboards, animation, and illustrations for film, television, Internet, theater, CD-ROM, DVD, corporate presentations, printed press and games. They strive for diversity and high-quality products to serve a commercial and semi-commercial market. Storytelling forms the core of our products. Our work was shown on international broadcast stations and festivals such as BBC, MTV Brasil, VARA, TELEAC, TV Utrecht, TV Gelderland, Annecy Animation Film Festival, Holland Anima-



tion Film Festival. They use Toon Boom Studio in a project called *Pardon Lul TV*. It is a mix of puppet and 2D drawn animation. Created by the Dutch cartoonist Hein De Kort, the main two characters, Peter and Reter, watch TV and make comments on the 2D cartoon style. *Pardon Lul TV* will be broadcast on Dutch TV and hopefully sold to other countries.

While working with **Source Productions, BHH Studio** incorporated Toon Boom Studio's animation and lip syncing capabilities into a 3D workflow. According to Brian Hoard, freelance animator at BHH, coming from a 3D back-

ground, where render times are high, it was refreshing to work out a scene in TBS and see the results immediately. The small files in TBS, and vector-based flash output made it easy to collaborate remotely. "It is magic when several complementary technologies make advancements simultaneously, channeling rivers of new ideas into the animator's cranium. I'm talking about the tri-factorial power of Toon Boom Studio, the Wacom Cintiq tablet, and Maya. You can combine Toon Boom's lip syncing as animated texture maps in Maya on a 3D character, use TBS to create 2D background elements behind a 3D foreground and animate a 3D dynamics simulation as a wireframe roscope element for 2D animation. The challenge is to let artistic vision lead, using technology to help us. Good ideas are still the most valuable element of our work," shared Brian.

Full Circle Design is a small design and animation company located in Portland, Oregon. Their services range from print design and web design to multimedia presentations and traditional and 3D animation. Lately, the bulk of their

work has been 2D traditional animation. In summer of 2003 they worked on *Little Greek Kids*, an animation project that required heavy lip syncing among other challenges. It was a 30-minute video teaching kids about the Greek language and culture. The video called for six characters in constant dialog and movement. The team decided to go with TBS for its lip sync and ink and paint features, but was pleasantly surprised with the exposure sheet



sophistication. "There were so many layers to this piece but I was able to corral the project and complete it by deadline," shared Vince Nimmoor. *Little Greek Kids* won a Telly Award in 2003.

Schools on Board

Campus Animation (www.campusanimation.com) at the East Orange Campus High School and Bloomfield College Animation Programs has graduated 18 seniors in its animation program in the since it began four years ago. Students study traditional animation—hand-drawn in the classical style. Computer animation was implemented

about two years ago using Toon Boom Studio, among others. Their students attend Pratt Institute, School of Visual Art as well as Bloomfield College and Gibbs College. This high school is one of only a few high schools throughout the US teaching traditional animation and has been visited by several universities and art schools interested in their pro-

gram. At the 2004 Atlanta Film Festival, Campus Animation submitted six animated shorts from Bloomfield College and one from the East Orange Campus High School—all done in Toon Boom Studio—for Teen Screen, which presents short films created by youths aged 18 and younger. Also, two of their shorts, *GI Teacher* and *Tiny Bubbles*, received first-place awards at the New Jersey Student Art Competition, against 50 high schools from New Jersey. Congratulations!

Toonskool offers an animation program that is designed to create competent professionals with an ability to deliver in a highly demanding work environment. The program is designed in consultation with reputed industry experts and addresses all aspects required to become an industry-ready professional. The uniqueness of the training at Toonskool is the option for the candidate to choose an area of specialization to become a character modeler/character animation specialist, particles/dynamics specialist, compositing specialist, lighting/textures specialist and so on. This is to train talent that can be readily fitted into a production studio. Toonskool will build its business on the franchise model. An international brand identity will be built through a widespread franchise network. Their vision is to have 50 centers started across India and overseas in a span of 18 months. The franchisee centers will run short-term, part-time programs while colleges will conduct three-year, full-time programs. The first few colleges will start their program by November 2004. The first franchisee has already commenced operations in Mangalore and several others are following suit in Bangalore, Delhi, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Chennai. Each of these cities can take on more centers. Toonskool is looking for franchisees across India.

User Tips are regularly added online to the Opus User Group in the Opus Support section of the website www.toonboom.com/support/forums/USAnimation/ and in the Toon Boom Studio User Forum www.toonboom.com/support/forums/toonBoomStudio/. Our FAQs also offer a wealth of information. Check out also the Opus tutorials. To assist you in your quest for more Opus production techniques, you will find two tutorials on the Opus Support web site. In the *Building Focus Effects* tutorial, you will learn how to build a follow-focus and a rack-focus effect. You will also learn how to change the focus of a selected element and change the depth-of-field of a scene over time. In the *Creating Palette Cross Dissolves* tutorial, you will learn how to use the Color Override Module and Fade Module to change the color values in a drawing over time. Both tutorials include sample material. We have provided both rough and final versions of the scenes. You can use the rough versions to follow the exercises and steps in the tutorials. You can look at the final versions of the scenes to see how we put them together. You'll find these documents in the Tutorials section of the Opus Support web site www.toonboom.com/support/USAnimation/tutorials/. You need a valid support contract to access the tutorials.



Toon Boom Animation is proud to sponsor the following initiatives.

Stone Soup, Houston's traditional animation company, has announced that future episodes of its independent television program *Will Animate For Food* will be produced exclusively with Toon Boom Studio software.

Will Animate For Food is a half-hour series consisting of a collection of independently produced animations. The show is currently airing on public access channels in multiple cities throughout the United States, and soon in Great Britain and Canada. Originally intended to provide a venue for independent animators from the United States to display their work, the show has grown in scope since its inception in February 2004. Submissions are now being received from all over the world on a daily basis. The show has also now become a contest, where viewers can vote online for their favorite animated short. The lucky win-



ner receives a very handsome prize package generously donated by one of *Will Animate For Food's* many sponsors, Toon Boom Studio among them.

With two episodes completed and airing throughout the US, Stone Soup will soon begin production of its third episode exclusively in Toon Boom Studio. "We choose Toon Boom Studio because of the flexibility of its 3D camera space," said Ron Neal of Stone Soup. "This will allow us to fly the camera through the world of Roy, the homeless host of the show." Toon Boom Studio also allows better management of the scenes and layers, as well as better output capability for the post-production process. The easy access interface is effortless for the animators to adjust to. "I was animating on Toon Boom Studio in a week with only the tutorials as a guide," reported Jason Farris an animator at Stone Soup. Ron Neal added, "It looks like we have found another great tool for our animation production process of the *Will Animate For Food* TV show."

Building upon last year's runaway success, *The Greatest Story Never Told* competition started this fall with the call for entries beginning September 17, 2004. Artists are given four months to produce an original story using any software that exports to the .swf platform. The story must be an original idea and based on one of the FlashTV genres. The *The Greatest Story Never Told* is open to novice and advanced animators, filmmakers and students worldwide. The deadline for submissions is January 15, 2005. For further details on the competition, please visit <http://www.thegreateststorynevertold.com>