



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE WALT DISNEY FAMILY MUSEUM PRESENTS SPECIAL EXHIBITION ON
STOP MOTION ANIMATION

Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation



Nicky LaPoint McKay, *Morphing Gumby*, 2005; Plasticine; Courtesy of Joe Clokey. Photo courtesy The Walt Disney Family Museum.
For [more images](#) from this exhibition, please visit [our press room](#).

San Francisco, CA – August 16, 2012—The Walt Disney Family Museum (WDFM) is pleased to present the special exhibition [Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation](#), on view from September 27, 2012 to April 28, 2013 in the Museum's Theater Gallery. Curated by WDFM Registrar and Curatorial Assistant Anel Muller, the exhibition explores the evolution of stop motion animation in the United States—especially in special effects, television, and film—while examining some of the key milestones and innovators including Willis O' Brien (*King Kong*), Tim Burton (*The Nightmare Before Christmas*), Art Clokey (*Gumby*), Ray Harryhausen (*It Came From Beneath the Sea*), Henry Selick (*Coraline* and *James and the Giant Peach*), Phil Tippett (*Star Wars* and *Jurassic Park*), and more.

Between Frames tells the story of a 100-year-old art form that has been used in special effects, television, and film, and launched Walt Disney's career in animation. The exhibition includes behind-the-scenes photographs from films such as *The Lost World* (1925) and *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), replicas of the original armatures from *King Kong* (1933) and *Mighty Joe Young* (1949), along with a Digital Input Device (DID) created just for *Jurassic Park* (1993). Puppets from the *Robot Chicken* (2005) opening sequence and a puppet mold from *Gumby*, as well as original armatures from *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993), *Coraline* (2009), and original storyboards from *James and the Giant Peach* (1996) will also be on view.

Visitors will be invited to manipulate and touch armatures at a special interactive station. A film loop of great moments in stop motion animation will also be running in the gallery.

Special Effects

The origins of stop motion animation are rooted in special effects. Discovered accidentally, stop motion was the key for filmmakers to open the door to fantastical realities. Stop motion animation enabled films like *The Lost World* (1925), *King Kong* (1933), *It Came From Beneath the Sea* (1955), and the original *Star Wars* (1977) trilogy to transport the audience into worlds where anything was possible and the unexpected was certain.

Feature Films

Before *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, stop motion animated features were a huge gamble for movie studios. *Hansel and Gretel: An Opera Fantasy*, released in 1949 and distributed by RKO, was the first American stop motion feature film, and had only modest success at the box office. After *Hansel and Gretel*, the lackluster success of stop motion features continued in the United States for many years. The success of *The Nightmare Before Christmas* sparked a renaissance in stop motion features with productions, in the last 20 years, such as *James and the Giant Peach* (1996) and *Coraline* as well as the creation of stop motion studios like Laika and Cinderbiter.

Short Films

Shorts were and still are the laboratories for most stop motion animators to test out new tools and techniques to improve the art form. Not only has this format launched the careers of many filmmakers like Tim Burton but it has been the only format of stop motion animation to be awarded an Academy Award® for *Closed Mondays* (1974).

Television

Commercials and television series have both made use of stop motion animation. Commercials from cigarettes to band-aids and even memorable characters like the *California Raisins* (1986) were all brought to life with stop motion. Stop motion animated television series in the United States are limited in comparison to Europe and Asia; it remains a great platform for the art form with characters like *Gumby*, which appeared in over 234 episodes over four decades beginning in the 1950s. While more recently, *Robot Chicken* (2005) has revived interest in stop motion animated series while sparking the imaginations of a new television generation.

Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation was organized by The Walt Disney Family Museum.

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Special Programs

In conjunction with *Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation*, the Museum is hosting a suite of special programs, screenings, and events.

Panel Discussion

Saturday, October 20

Puppet Masters: Stop Motion Animation in Visual Effects Filmmaking

3pm | Theater

General: \$12 adult, \$9 youth | Members: \$10 adult; \$7 youth

Visual effects legend Ray Harryhausen inspired a generation of visual effects artists with his pioneering work in stop motion animation. Four of Harryhausen's "kids," —Dennis Muren, Phil Tippett, Tom St. Amand, and Jon Berg—all masters of this technique, will gather to discuss stop motion animation and its use in creating characters and creatures for movies. Join moderator Hal Hickel in a discussion of their work with stop motion, its history as a visual effects technique, and the transition into computer-generated animation.

Muren, Tippett, St. Amand, and Berg have created visual effects using stop motion in some of the most famous films of the last three decades. The holographic chess pieces in the original *Star Wars*, the Hoth snow battle in *The Empire Strikes Back*, the dragon Vermithrax in *Dragonslayer*, the mine car chase in

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, the flying rocket man in *Rocketeer*, and the deadly ED 209 robot in *Robocop* are just a few examples of their amazing craft.

Screenings

Film of the Month: *HallowScreen!*

Screens daily October 1-25, at 11am, 1, 3, and 5pm (except Tuesdays and October 20) | Theater
Free with Museum admission | Without Museum admission: \$7 adult; \$5 youth
Celebrate Halloween with our special selection of Disney spooky cartoon shorts, featuring *The Skeleton Dance*, *Pluto's Judgment Day*, *The Mad Doctor*, and more. You'll have a "howling" good time!

The Nightmare Before Christmas

Friday, October 26 through Wednesday, October 31 (except Tuesday, October 30)

11am, 1:30, and 4pm | Theater

Free with Museum admission | Without Museum admission: \$7 adult; \$5 youth

In celebration of our special exhibition *Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation*, the Museum will be screening the 1993 Disney stop motion musical fantasy film by producer and co-writer Tim Burton.

Special Programs

Friday, September 28

Animate Your Night: Where it's AT-AT™

7–10pm | Museum-wide

Members: \$5 | General: \$10

Join us as we celebrate the opening of *Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation*, which reveals the magic behind movie creatures such as King Kong, the *Jurassic Park* Velociraptors, and the revered *Star Wars* AT-AT! Experience the galleries in a whole new light and illuminate your imagination with music, performance, film screenings, and hands-on art activities. Complimentary bites, a cash bar featuring a thematic signature cocktail, and much, much more.

Friday, October 26

Animate Your Night: Halloweentown!

7–10pm | Museum-wide

Members: \$5 | General: \$10

Experience the galleries in a whole new light and illuminate your imagination with music, performance, film screenings, and hands-on art activities. Complimentary bites, a cash bar featuring a thematic signature cocktail, and much, much more.

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents the fascinating story and achievements of Walt Disney, the man who raised animation to an art, transformed the film industry, tirelessly pursued innovation, and created a global and distinctively American legacy. Opened in October 2009, the 40,000 square foot facility features the newest technology and historic materials and artifacts to bring Disney's achievements to life, with interactive galleries that include early drawings and animation, movies, music, listening stations, a spectacular model of Disneyland and much more.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesdays through Monday; closed on Tuesdays and the following public holidays: New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Tickets: \$20 adults, \$15 seniors and students, and \$12 children ages 6 to 17;
Admission is free for [members](#).

Where: The Presidio of San Francisco, 104 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94129

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Website: www.waltdisney.org
www.facebook.com/thewaltdisneyfamilymuseum
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