

# Stop Motion

Magazine™

December 2012 / Issue #19



BEHIND THE SCENES OF -

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This latest issue of stop motion magazine was no easy adventure, especially considering that most of the design layout and magazine production is produced by one person with greatly appreciated volunteer help from a handful of people. Over the past two years I have been very fortunate to be a part of many great productions in the stop motion animation world located in Hollywood California. Unfortunately the work at the animation studios turned into a very time-consuming and physically draining workload that doesn't allow for writing, and editing a full issue of stop motion magazine. It's great to have work doing what you love, but it is also frustrating when you find out that a 60 hour work week can leave you exhausted with no time to spread the love of stop motion to the world. Though these interviews in this issue were conducted back in November 2012 I was very grateful to have the opportunity to interview the guys at screen novelties along with having Mark Caballero as a guest editor on this current issue and yet frustrated that I wasn't able to get this issue out sooner.

So now here you are reading my crazy ramblings about making this issue of SMM. The good news is I have decided to focus most of my energy towards making future issues of stop motion magazine throughout 2013. Having had the opportunity to work in the field of stop motion I have been very fortunate and lucky to have made lifelong friends and gain experience in this field. Now with the opening of our Hibagon Animation Studios I hope to produce a great deal more content for print in the magazine along with video tutorials and animated shorts for your viewing enjoyment. It has been a long tough road over the years but I hope to get the magazine back on track with regular issue releases.

We will also be offering affordable print issues for you to purchase and read at your leisure. By purchasing a print issue of stop motion magazine you are helping to continue future issue releases. Though we have advertising in each one of these issues our rates for advertising are so low that it makes it hard to sustain momentum when producing each issue. This issue is labeled as December 2012 for release it is actually being released in April 2013. That's literally five months delay in releasing one issue and is solely due to lack of financial support for the magazine. I hope to alleviate this problems and delay in future releases of issues by seeking new avenues to help fund the magazine. Stay tuned to see what's in the pipeline

I greatly appreciate your support as a subscriber in reading these issues. The amount of knowledge contained in each one is pretty cool. With your continued word-of-mouth support and spreading the love of stopmo I'm sure we can work together in keeping stop motion magazine alive for many years to come.

All the Best  
John Ikuma  
Executive Editor  
Stop Motion Magazine

# Stop Motion Magazine™

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DITOGEAR 



Motion Control Goodness **for Animators**

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# ANIMASAPIEN

## *Review*



In today's world of animation there is no shortage of stop motion ball-in-socket armature kits. It seems as if there is a new website offering a new Armature kit every week. This makes it extremely hard to figure out what kits are best fitted for your project and which ones you should avoid all together. With Julian Clark's Armature kits you are pretty much guaranteed a beautifully designed and functional kit that you build at your leisure.

I initially was very skeptical about trying any of these Armature kits that are on the market. What always frustrated me the most was that you are subject to the materials quality that the manufacturer sends you. Another concern that I have is that the threaded rods that come in most of these kits are easily obtained at your local hardware store. So what's to stop me from going out and buying the pieces myself locally and making my own kits?

The Animasapien product line is unique in the fact that the pieces that make up the sandwich plates of the Armature kits are beautifully constructed and manufactured. The designs of these pieces are solely designed and manufactured for use with in the Animasapien product line. Now I'm not 100% sure how these pieces are manufactured, but it looks as if each individual piece is cold pressed steel using a platter and a die to cut out the individual pieces, and then those pieces are then drilled, tapped, and threaded. Individual pieces of the ball and socket Armature plates are so uniquely designed that they don't even look like the traditional plates you find in your typical Armature.

Now I often find it hard to get motivated when assembling any new things that are just so different that they can lead to complications when building. And I must confess I struggled with this Armature, this was solely and completely user error. For one, there is no instructional manual that comes with your specific kit. You must go online and find the one manual that fits your kit from Julian Clark's website. Of course I was the nerd that picked the wrong manual and ended up cutting my rods to the wrong lengths.

Once I discovered the error I contacted Julian Clark and he sent me new rods right away. When the new rods arrived very quickly I set out to resolve the mistake that I had made. The tools that I use tend to be geared towards puppet making fabrication in general. So once my rods were marked off to the correct length I quickly cut each one using my powered cutoff wheel which gives me a precise and exact cut each time.



With everything finally cut within the right parameters specified in the online manual I was ready for assembly. I was very pleased to see that the threaded steel balls were of high quality. There was no warping or pitting on any of them. The kit came with a few extra balls and rods just in case you might have made a mistake. I had also found that one or two of the balls was missing threads, but this is okay since there were extras. Using a hardware store purchased thread locking compound I was able to glue all the pieces together properly.

What made this a lot more fun was that as each piece was assembled you could see the truly beautiful design that Julian Clark had come up with. For the most part each piece slots like a puzzle piece to another piece then gets tightened together and makes for a brilliantly gorgeous Armature. There was however one hiccup, I initially was confused by a small piece that went into the chest block to connect the spine. This piece though thinner than the other pieces resembled the joint lock pieces for the legs and the arms, but since I was able to separate the rods and this piece within 30 minutes of assembling, the disaster was diverted since the glue had not cured completely.

After maybe a total of two hours of focused concentration and a little head scratching the Armature was completed. This is outstanding and yet exciting since a home brewed handmade Armature from scratch can take days if not weeks to design build and assemble.

Now the real test is with the Armature fully assembled. What I have found is that since Julian Clark has supplied such high quality components, tightening, movement, and overall performance of the Armature is exceptional. When tightening the plates there is very little if any bowing within the center of the plate and the bolt. The tension secured around each ball can be easily adjusted to fit your desired movement requirements for the Armature. After hours of tweaking each joint of the Armature I have yet to find any marring on the stainless steel balls. Also since the balls are of good quality I could not find any popping of the joints between positions.

Julian Clark's Animasapien Armature is both beautiful in design and function. I highly recommend this Armature to those interested in using ball and socket Armature's but have limited resources for production. The biggest hurdle in building these armatures is really in your first experiences assembling such a kit, but once you have gone through the initial set up and build of one of these Armature kits you can easily build more kits without any error. The greatest advantage of the Julian Clark Animasapien kit is within the speed and accuracy that you can assemble and bring into production a fully functional stop motion puppet.

Though I have not tested this Armature kit in a foam latex casted or silicone casted body, I do believe that these kits are brilliant for making a build up stop motion puppet. In conclusion, you will not be disappointed with the Animasapien kit. Alternatively, if you would like to have your kit fully assembled you can purchase the kit and pay a little extra to have it built professionally. By and by this is probably one of the best ball and socket Armature kits on the market, and you should definitely look into getting one to tryout today.

Website: <http://www.julianclarkstudios.com>

# DitoGear OMNIHEAD

## Review

Now you may have read our last review in regards to the DitoGear OmniSlider. We gave it glowing marks and praised it endlessly. Well we pretty much will be doing the same with this review of the DitoGear OmniHead. This amazing accessory to the OmniSlider bolts directly to the carriage of the sliders moving platform, once attached it quickly and easily can be wired up, configured and setup for shooting in Dragon Frames Arc Moco window.

What's amazing about the OmniHead is once you've used it, you can't imagine how you ever lived without it. It is truly amazing in every sense of the word. It's fast to set up and automate, plus paired with the slider you pretty much have some amazing pan and tilt options along with the ability to Dutch shots as well (Dutching is a term used in film for turning your camera at a side angle).

Now an added bonus to having the OmniHead and OmniSlider paired up is the ability to do what's called "Under slinging" which is when you turn the whole rig upside down and invert the OmniHead so that the camera is right side up. This is great for miniature city scapes, Spaceship flybys (Like the Starwars Deathstar Flybys), and moving through stop motion rooms where the camera wouldn't normally be able to go. Of course you would need some strong rigging to do this, but with a few C-Stands and some grip gear you can easily set this up.

It's amazing how quiet the OmniHead is. As compare to the OmniSlider that makes a little chime for each step it takes, the OmniHead moves very quietly and doesn't squeak or cry as it moves. One noise it does make is if you accidentally jam the swing arm against the gear box. This will result in a high pitched squeal warning sound that something is wrong. You definitely don't want to hear this sound, but if you do, you simply turn of the power to the head and unplug the control cable, rest the position manually, and then plug it back in. Shazam! It's fixed! Over all this is one of the best toys you could possible own in your arsenal of stop motion gear. Just having the OmniHead and OmniSlider will instantly add a professional look and feel that you can't get doing camera moves manually. If you'd like to find out more about the OmniHead you can visit DitoGear at <http://ditogear.com> and tell them we sent you.





The boys and girls of screen novelties have once again joined forces with Nickelodeon's very own SpongeBob SquarePants creators to give you their latest Sponge Bob adventure, "It's A Sponge Bob Christmas". This latest stop motion animated film brings the legendary SpongeBob Square Pants and all of his crew of underwater misfits. Screen Novelties has been known to produce classic animated and puppetierd segments for a variety of shows found on the Nickelodeon television network.

The artistry and magic produced by the studio has made Screen Novelties one of the most sought after collective of talented individuals found in the world. Their use of texture and color is so exceptional that they have defined and refined their own classic look found only in their animation. By once again adapting stop motion to a classic hand-drawn cell animated television show, Screen Novelties has brought us a new and exciting way of experiencing the classic phenomenon known as SpongeBob SquarePants.

This new Christmas special not only bring excitement and joy to your holiday experience, but will also warm your heart and bring back memories of classic stop motion Christmas specials from holiday past. We were very lucky to conduct a one on one interview with each individual studio executive at Screen Novelties. Seamus Walsh, Mark Caballero, and Christopher Finnegan, shared with us a rare behind the scenes look at a new modern stop motion holiday classic. We hope that you enjoy these interviews as much as we do.

# Interview with

# CHRIS FINNEGAN

SMM: How many animators worked on this project?

Chris: We had anywhere from 5 to 6 animators working on any given day. Mark and Seamus did a handful of shots as well when they could find the time. By the end we had to do a lot of weekends but we got it done.

SMM: Did you have any challenges during production?

Chris: I think one of the things that was a little bit challenging with animation as we were getting into it was that the puppets that we designed and made were a little bit experimental in the sense that some of them had limbs that pinned on or mouths that were a little tricky to put on the face. They weren't like your standard human puppets with stick on paper mouths. I think all the animators had a little bit of a learning curve figuring out the best way to rig and manipulate the puppets. Once people got the hang of it then it started to move a little quicker. We really had to make these puppets look like Sponge Bob characters and that required that we try different approaches than our standard puppets.

SMM: Was there anything that you enjoyed most during this production?

Chris: I think re-imagining all the characters from 2D into puppets was probably one of the coolest parts. Just because we shopped around for all these different fabrics and foams and really started to see the puppets take shape.

SMM: What was the work schedule like for you guys?

Chris: Usually we'd show up around 9am or so and then everyone would be working by 9:30am. We normally tried to go 9:30am to 7pm or something. Mark, Seamus, Kelly and I would stay here late a lot since there was always catch up to do. Kelly was the Art Director/Production Designer on this one so he had his hands full, but when we were in animation around the second half the hours got really crazy and erratic. So we'd have some people starting earlier and leaving earlier and other people kind of staying on a late shift and working until midnight. So it kind of got nutty toward the end.





SMM: What kind of cameras did you use on this production?

Chris: Canons, we have a few 7D's and a few 60D's and we use Nikon Glass with the little adapters. We didn't really have any issues with the cameras or Dragon Frame. It was all pretty solid on that end.

SMM: Were there any techniques that really stood out to you guys?

Chris: Well we tried a few things. We tried this weird Jello thing. There's an x-ray shot where you're seeing Sponge Bob's Skeleton. We actually made a Jello version of Sponge Bob and shot that live action to try and get that jiggly Jello thing. We tried to find opportunities to mix it up with some of the techniques. There was the underwater Santa dhot which a lot of people comment on about being kind of weird and creepy. We did another one where Sponge Bob eats the fruit cake and says something about his taste buds. For that, we made a big tongue puppet and poured Coco Crispy Cereal all over the place. So that was another kind of weird puppet shot that we did.



SMM: SpongeBob's friend Patrick had replacement heads with his puppet design, right?

Chris: With him and some of the other characters we modeled some of the heads in Maya and then did the rapid proto-type technique, but from there we ended up molding and casting them and covering them in fabric. So it was a pretty elaborate process. Even when we do the rapid proto-typing we still like to finish them, weather its coating in fabric or applying a noticeable paint texture so it still feels handmade.

SMM: Did you have any characters that were your favorites during production?

Chris: I think there were a few that I liked. Even though he's not in it that much, I really like Mr. Crabs. I think puppet turned out really cool for him. He'd have to be my favorite.

SMM: Did he have a similar replacement technique as Patrick?

Chris: His wasn't a full head swap, it was just the mouth. It worked with the design to have a seam line where the mouth would just pop out. I think we debated early on about digitally blending that seam, but it just sort of worked for his design. So the whole front part of his face would be a replacement part and those were printed digitally.

SMM: How big were the stages?

Chris: We had a mix, there were 2 big stages that were 20x25 feet or something like that and then we had 3 stages that were more like 20x20 . We also had a small stage for green screen and that was about 8x10.



SMM: Were you using the standard threaded tie-downs or did you employ different techniques?

Chris: Yeah, it varied. Some of the characters had more standard tie downs, but we also did a lot of overhead rigging just because we wanted the characters to be jumping around a lot. So it was kind of a mix. On some characters like Plankton because he was so tiny we'd pin his feet into foam set pieces. So it was kind of all over the map.

SMM: Was Plankton a replacement animated character since he was so small?

Chris: We actually had three different scales for Plankton. There was a really tiny one when you wanted to see him next to other characters. Then there was a bigger one when it was just his dialog scene in his lair and we also had a medium one for certain shots. We did have some replacements like when he's in his lair and gets really angry and screams. We have a whole replacement body with a big open mouth. He was a fun character but also challenging with the rigging.





# Interview with **MARK CABALLERO**

SMM: How did you guys build your relationship with Nickelodeon and working on the SpongeBob Square Pants show?

Mark: We've always been fans of each other's work. Mark Osborne initially contacted us to help out on the first SpongeBob Feature. Then over the years, Paul Tibbitt would contact us now and then about tackling a few more stop motion projects for SpongeBob.

SMM: You guys just recently changed locations right?

Mark: Yeah, we moved over from Melrose to Echo Park. Our old space was a little too small so we decided to move over to a bigger space.

SMM: So the Christmas Special coincided with your move?

Mark: It did. We started puppet fabrication at the old place and did everything else at our new space. It's kind of cool it worked out that way. I love that old space so it was nice to finish up there on a good note.

SMM: How many stages did you have?

Mark: We have 6. Um, technically 5 & a half.

SMM: The live action Santa Claus puppet in the water looked amazing. What brought that into being?

Mark: We've always been about incorporating mixed media in our projects. In this case, we wanted Santa to maintain an omniscient presence, keeping his eye on everyone. Like the song. The ethereal feel of the water puppet helped us amplify that. It was a little spooky but every proper kid's show needs to have a bit of a creepy factor to it. Gotta feed those young imaginations!





SMM: What was your favorite part of this whole production?

Mark: All of it! We really love getting in the trenches with our crew to help build and animate. You have to put in your heart and soul into what you do because it will reflect in the finished piece. I could never imagine not taking part of every aspect of production. We've always done it that way. Most of my heroes (Arthur Rankin, Ray Harryhausen, Ward Kimball, etc) worked like that.

SMM: Did you guys hide any surprises in the show?

Mark: Hmm, not really. All the weird animation bit (smear, replacement, live puppetry) are intentional. We like spicing it up a bit.

SMM: Can you talk a little about the puppet designs?

Mark: It was a challenge figuring out the correct 3D translations but we like these kinds of challenges.

The most important thing is to capture the spirit of the character, not necessarily a literal copy of the 2D. Puppets have their own kind of energy and you have to be careful about what to include and what to leave out. We love to translate 2D characters... in the past we've done quite a few, but among those, Spongebob, Chowder and the Flintstones were definitely favorites.



SMM: How did you connect the facial expressions to the puppets?

Mark: We used all sorts of techniques. Sandy, Patrick and Mr Krabbs were digitally sculpted and printed. But to ensure we were keeping true to our style, we “devolved” a bit of the process and slightly modified each replacement after it was printed. SpongeBob and the rest of the gang were made with replacement facial expressions. Sort of like “Mr. Potato Head”. Each had a combination of lids, mouths and eyebrows would either pin, stick or attach with magnets.

SMM: Was the parade sequence in the cartoon a tribute to George Pals Puppetoons?

Mark: yes, it was a little mini-tribute to George Pal. On script, the parade scene sounded pretty epic. But there were some spatial/budget limitations that forced us to be imaginative with that scene. We felt miniaturizing the marching band would give us some freedom. Then the Puppetoon idea came up. We thought it would be keen to recreate those amazing “replacement waves” that George Pal invented.

SMM: When you were animating were you leaving wires in the shots to be cleaned up in post or were you hiding the wires to make the post process easier.

Mark: We did a little of both. Whenever possible, we tried to hide the flying rigs but not to the point that it would alter the animation.

SMM: Was the animation close to what you storyboarded?

Mark: It was pretty close. Luke Brookshier & Marc Ceccarelli over at Nick did an amazing job at boarding the special. They're regular board artists on SpongeBob and know the little guy inside and out. We asked them not to hold back on the crazy expressions. Seamus and I boarded a few scenes, mainly to keep to our house style of storytelling and visuals.

SMM: The beginning section with Patchy the Pirate reminded me of those old Rankin/Bass intros.

Mark: Yeah, that was our little homage to Rankin/Bass. We studied "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town". Specifically S.D. Kluger, the postman voiced by Fred Astaire. We wanted to "Rankin/Bassify" Patchy since his scenes didn't need to be visually tied to the main Christmas story.

SMM: How does this production compare to the other productions that you normally do?

Mark: Every project done here has a unique personality. This one had a very lighted hearted and silly feel, full of creativity. Our crew being a little bigger contributed to that. A lot of good comradery was going on.

SMM: With all the materials used in the show it was a like a materials wonderland with all the textures.

Mark: It was! We approach textures much like a color stylist would approach color. Making sure the whatever we picked synced well with the characters and the overall look of the show. To us, texture helps define the character and you can't pick just anything willy-nilly. A lot of time and research were put into each and every character making sure the texture was a reflection of their personality.





# Interview with **SEAMUS WALSH**

SMM: How did this show happen for Screen Novelties?

Seamus: We've had an ongoing friendship with the guys from SpongeBob for some time now, starting with the puppets we made for them maybe about seven or eight years ago and then working on the first feature, that short little clay sequence we did. Paul Tibbitt and Mark Osborne had been involved with a short film that we really liked called "HERD". Our films had played together at some film festivals and I guess they had seen "Mysterious Mose" and we had seen "HERD" and than we finally met after the festivals and really dug each other's work. I think that may have been the original connection there.

Whenever they wanted to do something special with puppets and stop motion stuff they thought of us. After we did the 10th Anniversary title sequence (for SpongeBob) they were saying "If we ever do another Christmas Special, we'll only do it if we can make it all in Stop Motion." I think when the executives at Nickelodeon started asking them to do another special, that was kind of like their deal breaker, they wanted to do something very different from what they had done before because they had already done a Christmas Special in 2nd season.





SMM: Were you working off of a script that Nickelodeon supplied you?

Seamus: The story springboard actually came from a song Tom Kenny and Andy Paley wrote called “Don’t be a Jerk it’s Christmas.” That one kind of caught on, so they ended up with a story about Plankton turning everyone in Bikini Bottom into jerks so that he - in comparison - would look nice. So Paul ran the story by us (to make sure it sounded doable) and we thought it was great and cute - they boarded the whole thing along with the rest of their shows, we only added a few scenes on our end. There were a few times they were asking us “What should we stay away from because it’s going to be in Stop Motion and there are going to be big crowd scenes”, and we just told them “Don’t think about that right now because if you start thinking about that then it’s not going to feel like a regular Sponge Bob episode”.

We wanted this to have the same spirit of all the other shows. There were some things that we had to find creative ways around - like the parade scene - that sort of raised a red flag on our end. We’d find a way to establish a wide shot with a lot of people there and then we’d cut into shots with 10 or 12 puppets maximum. Then let sound effects sell a lot of the crowd aspect of it.



SMM: Do you have a particular scene or shot that you take pride in?

Seamus: I like the opening song, that's my favorite song in the whole thing, the "Santa's got his Eye on Me" song. I like anything that starts with a snappy song like that. My favorite way to animate is to music and to a beat. I find that's what I really get excited about animating mostly. That was really fun. I also like how the parade sequence came out. At first it was little bit complicated and then when working with the temp track and hearing the first audio mix, Mark came up with an idea that I think helped the sequence quite a bit. He said "Why don't we change the song so it sounds like the marching band is playing it." Before, it had more of a Christmasy orchestration to it. I thought that brass band sort of thing really helped button up that scene and tied it all together. It made it more organic to the location. And any of those scenes in Plankton's Lab, those are a bunch of my favorite scenes also. The robot coming out of the ceiling and all that stuff was really fun to do.



SMM: What was the Sponge Bob Robot made out of?

Seamus: He was carved out of rigid foam and then covered with metallic tape and styrene and there were some found objects glued in.

SMM: How was the process of moving your studio and doing this special all within one year's time?

Seamus: Ummm... pretty crazy! I guess a year is a little misleading, cause I think that's maybe from when they first started talking to us about it. I wish we'd had a whole year! I would guess that 7 months of that time was real production. Basically the way it broke down was we had a small R&D skeleton crew of us, just kind of figuring out how to make the most appealing puppets out of these 2D characters. You want to make sure you capture the spirit of the character and not get so hung up on the literalness of the translation, that's where the "artful interpretation" comes in. Then there was another couple of months of some hardcore puppet building, and then the shooting took about 4 to 5 months - the actual animation phase.

SMM: What was animating the different characters like?

Seamus: Patrick was cool because he had nice, dynamic replacement heads. I liked Krabs because the design translated into a pretty cool weird looking puppet. I hadn't seen too many puppets with these kinds of proportions before. SpongeBob was fun because he had so many parts to him - he could do so much while you were animating him. He had all these different replacement squashes and stretches that you could tap into. He had three different lengths of legs and arms. He had this cool little double bounce walk thing you could get. You could just pop on this longer leg and then stretch it. He was so fun and cartoony to animate.





**SPECIAL FINGERING**

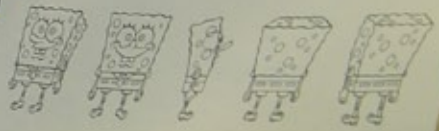
1. Cut out the sponge character from the pattern.

2. Glue the eyes and limbs to the sponge.

3. Use a hot glue gun to attach the sponge to the base.

4. Add the final details to the sponge.

5. The finished sponge character is ready to use.





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Article by: Bryan Walman

If you live in Northern California or are visiting the San Francisco Bay Area and have not had a chance to go and experience the wonderful Walt Disney Family Museum in the Presidio, “Stop, do not pass go! Do not collect \$200. Go directly there!”

The Family of Walt Disney has created a world class Museum in the heart of the city of San Francisco. It was created to showcase the history of Walt Disney and his influence on animation.

In addition to the permanent collection, there are also rotating exhibits and screenings.

The current show - *Between Frames: The Magic Behind Stop Motion Animation* - is on display September 27, 2012 to April 28, 2013. This exhibit, beautifully put together by curatorial assistant Anel Muller, covers the history of stop motion animation in the United States. The exhibit’s stop motion artifacts have a primary focus in modern television shows, feature length films and its use in special effects.





On display in the exhibit are a variety of historic and modern stop motion artifacts, which were lent to the Walt Disney Family Museum by a variety of donors. From Phil Tippet's (owner of Tippet Studios and a former ILM stop motion animator) personal collection, he loaned out a collection of rare artifacts. Two of the items are replicas of an original Willis O'Brien King Kong (1933) armature and a Ray Harryhausen Mighty Joe Young (1949) armature. Both armatures were constructed by Marcel Delgado. Marcel revolutionized stop motion puppet creation by adding in a metal skeleton underneath the exterior skin, prior to this, models were typically made with clay, this gave the models a more natural look and it made them easier to handle. There is also a replica of an AT-AT that Phil animated for Empire Strikes Back (1980) and a DID (Dinosaur Input Device) from Jurassic Park (1993) which allowed stop motion animators to work in a CG world, but still have complete control over the puppet.



On loan from a variety of donors, are artifacts from a handful of Henry Selick films. From Coraline (2009) a Laika production, there were several armatures, puppets and models. Coraline was the first stop motion film to use a new technique called rapid prototyping. This process allowed the fabricators to use a new 3D printing technology to create identical duplicates of puppets and puppet parts. The exhibit has one of the mice used in the circus scenes, of which hundreds were created using this process. After the film was completed, these were gifted to the staff in thanks. In addition there is a selection of puppets from Nightmare Before Christmas (1993) which was produced and written by Tim Burton and directed by Henry Seleck. There was a Jack Skeleton armature and a Santa Claus character model statue. From Henry Seleck's film James and the Giant Peach (1998) there was a "Stand in" Mrs. Ladybug puppet, which is a puppet used in the film to check the lighting and camera moves of a shot, before the main puppet is put in.



A treat for the exhibit was to see some of the molds and puppets from Gumby. The creator of Gumby, Art Clokey (1921-2010), is often considered an American pioneer of stop motion animation. Gumby had over 230 television episodes created as well as a feature length film. To commemorate Art Clokey's 90th birthday, Google recently created an interactive Google "Doodle" with homage to his characters and style.

With a variety of images and other historical pictures the Walt Disney Family Museum and their staff have created a wonderful stop motion exhibit in San Francisco.





Animation Supplies offers a variety of high quality animation materials including armatures, Stop Motion Pro animation software, animation rostrums, cameras, plasticine, acrylic eyes, modelling materials and much more. Our products are used by animators all over the world.

Products new to our range this year include bespoke armatures, built to your exact requirements; Sugru, a fantastic new modelling material which sets to look like plasticine but remains flexible; and two new, improved Aluminium Armatures.

Visit [www.animationsupplies.net](http://www.animationsupplies.net) to see our full range of products.



#### Armatures

We offer bespoke, tailor made armatures as well as exceptional value kits which can be made to your exact requirements.

We sell armatures to award-winning studios across the globe but also have a range of products suitable for students.



#### Stop Motion Animation Software

Stop Motion Pro is used worldwide by the very best studios. There are several versions available including a generously discounted educational version.

Stop Motion Pro is the software used to make Wallace & Gromit.



#### Rostrums

We offer a range of great value animation rostrums. They are exceptional quality and ideal for an under the camera production.

Our large rostrum with lights is a popular choice with animators.



#### Sugru - Modelling Material

Sugru is an excellent new material which sets to look like plasticine but remains flexible like silicone. It's brilliant for animation and can be used in conjunction with the Newplast Plasticine that we offer.

A range of colours are available on our website:  
[www.animationsupplies.net](http://www.animationsupplies.net)



#### Acrylic Eyes

These eyes are beautifully realistic and will add that finishing touch to a character, taking your animation to the next level. The eyes are exceptional value and come in a range of colours and sizes. Visit: [www.animationsupplies.net](http://www.animationsupplies.net) to see our full range.



#### Newplast Plasticine

Newplast is a high quality Plasticine which is used by award winning animation studios all over the world.

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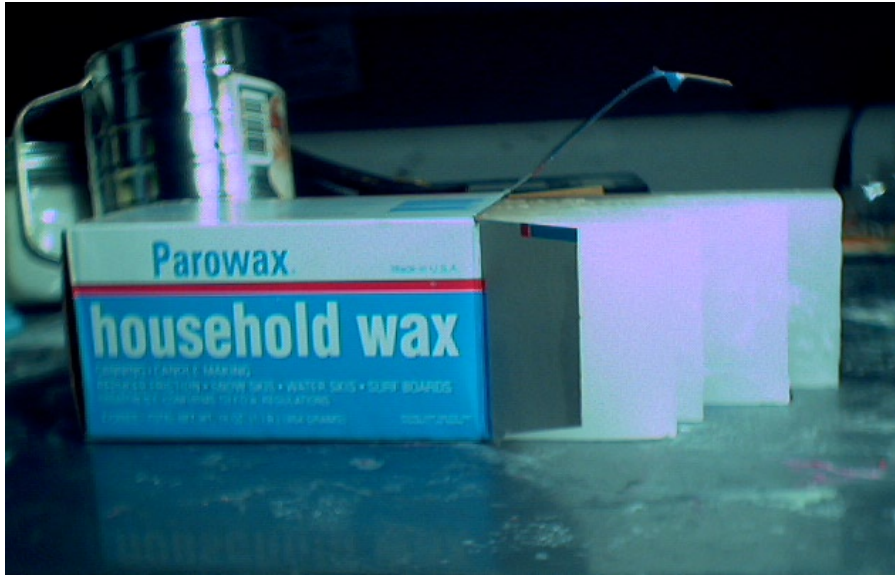
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# HOT ANIMATION TIP!!!

**Don Carlson and Marc Spess are teaming up for an upcoming book release titled “Making and Improving Modeling Clay” by Don Carlson and Marc Spess. Don was so kind as to provide us with one of the hot tips that you can only find in this future release. Check it out**

(exerpted from “Making and Improving Modeling Clay” by Don Carlson and Marc Spess)



## SECTION 4: FIRMING THE CLAY

To harden modeling clay, you use a hardening wax. The most common and easily available wax for this is gulf wax. You can also use sculptor’s wax, which costs about three times as much, but it will keep your clay flexible while hardening it so it is the best option to go with if you can afford it. Other waxes for hardening clay are carnauba wax, Japan wax, and luster wax (derived from coal).

If you make a clay puppet and want to save it forever, you can spray it with liquid acrylic sealer or brush Mod Podge Matte (a kind of thinned-down white glue) onto it. Once you do this, the figure becomes a statue that you can no longer animate, but if you change your mind the sealer can be chipped off with sculpting tools and the clay can be reused.

If you want to work with soft clay that can be temporarily hardened, you can use a can of air duster held upside down (be careful not to spray this on your fingers, as it can cause frostbite). Another option is to pop the puppets in the freezer. Generally, you want a fan-cooled room and lighting that is not too hot. You can get away with lower wattage bulbs and this will go a long way toward keeping the set cool. To compensate, you use a longer exposure on your DSLR camera or turn up the gain on your video camera. These days, DSLR’s are recommended for serious work.

For more information, see “Making and Improving Modeling Clay”, the upcoming E-book from [Animateclay.com](http://Animateclay.com).

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