Sound in Animation

Morgan Ames CS 294-7, Art of Animation Spring 2004

Sound in Animation

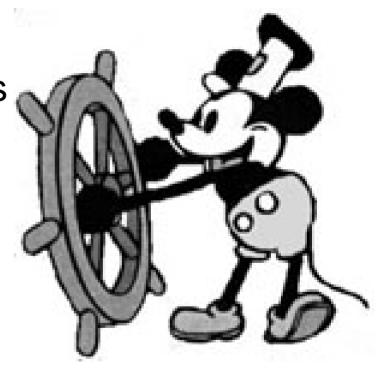
- "A truth whispered among animators is that 70% of a show's impact comes from the sound track."
 - Michel Dougherty
- "The right music can help your animation flow, and sound effects can give your work a solid feeling that adds to the illusion of life."
 - Mark Simon
- "Sound effects play an important role in conveying action. Music helps express emotion."
 - Michael Geisler

Sound in Animation

- Scratch track: "sketch" of soundtrack (done with the storyboard)
- Sound effects can come from standard libraries (CDs), everyday sources
- Sounds are shorter in animation than in real life
- Doesn't need to be a connection between object creating sound and picture! (e.g. coconuts for horses' hooves)
- Don't wait for the animation to be finished to start thinking about sound!

First Sound: Steamboat Willie

- First "talking picture:" The Jazz Singer (1928)
- Steamboat Willie (1928) was one of the first experiments in composing an audio soundtrack for animation
- Willie screened with (live) sound when animation was half-finished – test audience was wildly enthusiastic



History of Music in Animation

- Warner Bros. owned hundreds of songs
 - Animation composers required to use a snippet in every animation
- Disney owned few songs in 20's and 30's
 - Encouraged composers to write variations on well-known themes
 - Original work in Silly Symphonies, starting with "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" (1933)
 - Music in feature-length animations (1939 on)

Music in Animation: Carl Stalling

- Often regarded as the greatest animation composer ever
- Started as a organist, improvisationist for silent movies
- Worked for Warner Bros. 1936 to 1958, after Disney and Iwerks



- Famous for musical gags, from orchestral accents (pizzicato violins for tiptoe) to obscure references
- We've learned that cartoons should work without the sound. His cartoons worked without the picture!

History of Voices in Animation

- "It feels like the character came from some place before you see him on the screen, and when he's done he's going to go some place else. There's a life for this character that happens exclusive of the 22 minutes you see him on screen."
- "I don't just stand still in front of the microphone and speak. I put my full body into the perfomance just as I would on stage."
 - Greg Burson

Voices in Animation: Mel Blanc

- Radio and Vaudeville
- Started with Warner in 1937 with Porky the Pig, after being rebuffed for 1½ years
- Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Foghorn Leghorn, Sylvester Pussycat, Woody Woodpecker, Speedy Gonzales, Tasmanian Devil, Pepe LePew, Marvin the Martian, Roadrunner, etc.



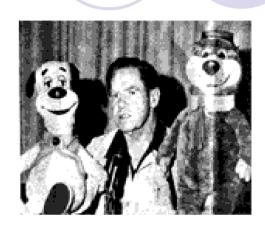






Voices in Animation

- Daws Butler
 - Yogi Bear, Huckleberry Hound
 - Mentor for many other voice actors
- Nancy Cartwright
 - Acted throughout youth
 - Went in to audition for LisaSimpson, landed Bart instead
- Recent trend toward using celebrities for voices







Mel Blanc and Carl Stalling in Action

- Rabbit of Seville
- Fast and Furry-ous (1949)

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