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# Not Just for Kids: An Alternative Look at Animation

Rich Johnson

## Notes - Week 2

### PART I: TIME

#### Rototypes & Pioneers

An historical overview looking at the evolution of animation and the animated film through early experimental shorts; from the first ever (lost) animated feature, *El Apóstol* to the pioneering processes of Winsor McCay and the Fleischer brothers where both rotoscope, live action and frame-by-frame drawings were employed.

*La Noria* (2018)

**Director:** Carlos Baena

**Studio:** Nightwheel Pictures

*Soul* (2020)

**Director:** Pete Docter, Kemp Powers

**Studios:** Walt Disney Pictures / Pixar Animation Studios

*If Anything Happens I Love You* (2021)

**Director:** Will McCormack and Michael Govier

**Studios:** Gilbert Films, Oh Good Productions

*Father and Daughter* (2000)

**Director:** Michaël Dudok de Wit

**Studios:** CinÉTé Filmproductie BV / Cloudrunner Ltd.

- Modern animated film references.
- Oscar winners.
- Links to traditional style as explored via...

*Pauvre Pierrot* (aka *Poor Pete*) (1891)

**Director:** Charles-Émile Reynaud

**Studio:** N/A

- *Pauvre Pierrot* (aka *Poor Pete*) was directed by Charles-Émile Reynaud in 1891 and released in 1892.
- It consists of 500 individually painted images and originally lasted 15 minutes.
- One of the first animated films *ever* made.



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- The first film to demonstrate the Theatre Optique system (a natural evolution from Reynaud's Praxinoscope) developed by Reynaud in 1888, showcasing an early form of projected film.

#### ***Fantasmagorie*** (1908)

**Director:** Emile Cohl

**Studio:** N/A

- One of the earliest examples of traditional (hand-drawn) animation.
- Similar to McCay's *Little Nemo*, there are sections of live action where the animator's hands enter the scene.
- The title is taken from the original French word for 'phantasmagoria', in reference to the magic lantern shows depicting images of ghosts.
- Made from 700 drawings, drawn as black lines and inverted to create the chalk effect.

#### ***Little Nemo*** (1911)

**Director:** Winsor McCay

**Studio:** N/A

#### ***Gertie the Dinosaur*** (1914)

**Director:** Winsor McCay

**Studios:** McCay / Vitagraph Company of America

- His pioneering animations were inspired by his son's flipbooks.
- His animated shorts were elevated by his proficiency as a cartoonist.
- Self financed his earliest work.
- His original strip cartoons are still considered some of the most influential on comic book art with his detailed drawings of characters inhabiting both cityscapes and dreamscapes.
- Contemporaries were...

#### ***Out of the Inkwell: The Clown's Pups*** (1919)

**Directors:** Max Fleischer and Dave Fleischer

**Studio:** Fleischer Studios

- 1914. The first commercially produced animated cartoons begin to appear in movie theaters.
- Invention of the Rotoscope. Often seen as stiff and jerky, Max Fleischer combined a projector and easel for tracing images from a live-action film. Although it is often seen as a 'cheat', Max Fleischer, along with his animator brother, Dave, produced more realistic animations since the initial works of Winsor McCay.
- A patent was granted in 1917, however, Max and his brothers Joe and Dave had tested between 1914 and 1916.
- The influence and legacy of McCay and the Fleischer's can be directly linked to...

#### ***Frank and Ollie*** (1995)

**Director:** Theodore Thomas

**Studios:** Theodore Thomas Productions / Walt Disney Pictures



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#### ***Floyd Norman: An Animated Life* (2016)**

**Directors:** Michael Fiore, Erik Sharkey

**Studio:** Michael Fiore Films

- Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston helped create the Disney signature style and, as with *all* animators, is very much imbued with their mannerisms and personality.
- They make a cameo in *The Incredibles* (2004).
- Floyd Norman was the first African-American animator. Disney credits include: *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), *The Sword in the Stone* (1963), *The Jungle Book* (1967) and *Robin Hood* (1973).
- He co-founded Vignette Films, Inc., with business partner animator/director Leo Sullivan, producing six animated films; one of the first companies to produce films on the subject of black history.