

Oregon Film History Invitational / May 8, 2015

by Anne Richardson



Buster Keaton, Cottage Grove 1926 (Photo: Basil Wolverton)

On May 8, 2015, Oregon Movies, A to Z is holding a one day Oregon film history conference specifically designed for educators, historians and museum professionals.

What is the history behind, and the meaning behind, Oregon's regional strength in creating independent film artists? Where does this longstanding strength fit within the overall intellectual and cultural identity of the Pacific Northwest?

Three examples, among many others: Dark Horse founder Mike Richardson, twelve time Emmy award winner Matt Groening, and two time Oscar nominee Bill Plympton. All three artist-entrepreneurs move between film and print cartooning/comics, and are part of the history covered in Oregon Historical Society's upcoming exhibit, Comics City, USA, in 2016.

The conference is very low key and conversational. The point is just for people to hear about the wide variety of work being done.

Here is the list of presenters.

The day is split into two halves: Silent Era in the morning / Sound Era in the afternoon.

Silent Era



Steve Stone & Gary Lacher, authors of [Theatres of Portland](#)
Electrified, movie mad Portland: Mapping the 1910's/1920's streetcar/movie theater infrastructure



Gus Frederick, [Homer Davenport Project](#)
The political connections of Oregon's first cartooning superstar, **Homer Davenport**, contradict his self description as "country boy"



Ben Truwe, [Southern Oregon Historical Society](#)

Voice artist **Pinto Colvig**, one of Oregon's earliest pop culture practitioners, directed an early feature length animated film (now lost, save a handful of archived 35mm frames), in San Francisco in 1916



Walt Dimick, [filmmaker](#)

Second generation filmmaker/inventor Walt Dimick describes the business strategy of **Norm Dimick**, one of Portland's first full time film entrepreneurs.

Lunch

Sound Era



Dennis Nyback, [Dennis Nyback Film Archive](#)

George Olsen, Del Porter, Louis Kaufman, Mel Blanc, Phil Moore (pictured above), **Johnnie Ray, Jane Powell**: Portland talent hits sound era Hollywood



Anne Richardson, [Oregon Movies, A to Z](#)

James Ivory & James Blue: the Third World debuts of Oregon's first sound era directors



Sheldon Renan & Brooke Jacobson, filmmakers/educators (*the above photo is of Brooke Jacobson and Bob Summers*)

Portland's film community in 1970-71: The birth of **Northwest Film Study Center**



Richard Blakeslee & Tom Chamberlin, filmmakers

Teknifilm Lab nurtures the return of Portland independent film

We will limit the length of each presentation to leave lots of time for Q & A and discussion.

It will be a whirlwind of information, but that would be the point. To bring everybody up to speed with each other's work (in a rough way) within one day.

The conference is by invitation. It is designed for educators, historians and museum professionals.

Seating is limited.



Dennis Nyback, co-founder of Oregon Cartoon Institute, will show a Portland film so rare that when we contacted the people who made it, they said it didn't exist.

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This conference was inspired by the deluge of new information unleashed during the recent [Mid Century Oregon Genius](#) screening series which was supported by Kinsman Foundation and Miller Foundation, and fiscally sponsored by Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission.
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The first one day Oregon film history conference was made a success by the following presenters and participants. Presenters are **bolded**.

Laura Berg, writer-editor

Richard Blakeslee, filmmaker

Richard Blue, James and Richard Blue Foundation

Bill Bowling, film locations consultant, founder of the Deinum Prize

David Bryant, filmmaker

Libby Burke, Bonneville Power Administration Archives

Mac Burns, Oregon Film Museum

Tom Chamberlin, filmmaker

John Concillo, Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission

Laurence Cotton, writer-filmmaker

Walt Dimick, filmmaker

Bill Failing, Oregon Historical Society

James Fox, UO Knight Library

Gus Frederick, Homer Davenport Project

Kohel Haver, Swider/Haver

Brooke Jacobson, educator

Jerry Ketel, Leopold Ketel

Gary Lacher, film preservationist

Taz Loomans, Blooming Rock

Frann Michel, Willamette University

David Milholland, Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission

Dennis Nyback, independent archivist

Elizabeth Peterson, UO Knight Library

Ingrid Renan, Exploding Green

Sheldon Renan, writer

Anne Richardson, Oregon Cartoon Institute/Oregon Movies, A to Z

Patrick Rosenkranz, author/historian

Jennifer Stoots, art historian/appraiser

Steve Stone, historian

Randall Stuart, Cerimon House

Ben Truwe, Southern Oregon Historical Society

Eric Underwood, City of Oregon City

Kate Wagle, School of Architecture and Allied Arts, UO