

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BILL PLYMPTON, KING OF NEW YORK INDIE ANIMATION, CELEBRATED WITH BOOK LAUNCH, SCREENINGS, AND DISCUSSIONS AT MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

May 27–28, 2011

To celebrate the publication of New York independent filmmaker and animator Bill Plympton's new book *Independently Animated* (Rizzoli), Museum of the Moving Image will present two days of screenings and personal appearances over Memorial Day weekend. The program opens Friday, May 27, at 7:00 p.m. with Plympton in conversation with co-author and animator David Levy. The evening will feature many treats and surprises, including short films, a presentation of artwork from the book, and live drawing by Plympton (who will also give an original drawing to every audience member). Among the short films to be shown is a work-in-progress, *The Flying House*, a remarkable hand-colored restoration of an early Winsor McCay cartoon that bears a striking resemblance to the Pixar film *Up*. On Saturday, May 28, the Museum will screen a preview of *Adventures in Plymptoons*, Alexia Anastasio's new documentary about Plympton, and two recent features by Plympton, *Hair High* and *Idiots and Angels*, both introduced by the filmmaker.

The lavishly illustrated new book *Independently Animated: Bill Plympton: The Life and Art of the King of Indie Animation*, by Bill Plympton and David Levy, published by Rizzoli, is part biography, part retrospective, and part behind-the-scenes look at Bill Plympton's life and career. It contains hundreds of pieces of art from his films, as well as never-before-seen doodles, drawings, and production notes. The book will be available for purchase in the Moving Image Store and a book signing will follow the Friday evening conversation.

"In this era of computer animation and big studio productions, Bill Plympton is the quintessential independent animator," said Chief Curator David Schwartz, who organized the Plympton programs. "He still draws his films one frame at a time, and his work is filled with his distinctive offbeat and inventive personality."

An animator known for his pain-staking process of drawing each frame of his films personally by hand, Bill Plympton has made a name for himself through his outrageous and sometimes grotesque sense of humor and lyrical graphite and colored pencil

animation style. In 1988 his short film *Your Face* was nominated for an Academy Award for best animated short. Plympton continues to make 2-3 short films a year which help to finance his feature-length films such as *Hair High* and *Idiots and Angels*. Of *Idiots and Angels*, Stephen Holden of *The New York Times* said, "Mr. Plympton's sixth and best animated feature, suggests Toulouse-Lautrec by way of Charles Bukowski. The brutish state of humanity is a given, and kindness an aberration...It is relentless and brilliant." Terry Gilliam has said "Bill is an extraordinary animator. He has an extraordinary mind....He seems to get right to the depth of the human condition."

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SCHEDULE FOR 'INDEPENDENTLY ANIMATED: BILL PLYMPTON'

May 27–28, 2011

All screenings and events take place at Museum of the Moving Image (36-01 35 Avenue, Astoria, NY). Tickets are free with museum admission unless otherwise noted.

Independently Animated: An Evening with Bill Plympton

Friday, May 27, 7:00 p.m.

To celebrate the publication of *Independently Animation: Bill Plympton*, the Museum presents a festive evening with a discussion, short films, and live drawing by Plympton, followed by a book signing. Everyone in attendance will receive their own original drawing from Plympton. Among the highlights: a work-in-progress screening of an exciting new short film, Plympton's hand-colored restoration of Winsor McCay's 1921 film *The Flying House*, a charming film about a husband who turns his house into a flying machine, which bears remarkable similarities to the Pixar film *Up*; a screening of the popular short film *Guard Dog* and *Guard Dog Jam*, the result of an invitation to animators around the world to remake Plympton's film by each contributing their own remake of one shot from the film.

Tickets: \$10 adults (\$7.50 students & senior citizens, \$5 children 3–18) / Free for Museum members. \$10 tickets may be purchased in advance online at <http://movingimage.us> or by calling 718 777 6800. Members may reserve tickets in advance by calling 718 777 6800. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Preview screening: *Adventures in Plymptoons*

Saturday, May 28, 3:00 p.m.

With Alexia Anastasio in person

Dir. Alexia Anastasio. 2011, 98 mins. Digital projection. This new documentary about animator Bill Plympton follows his path from Portland native who spent the many rainy days of his childhood indoors drawing, to his self-made career as an independent animator. The film includes interviews with family, friends, colleagues, critics, and fans

including Tom Kenny (voice of *SpongeBob*), David Silverman (director for *The Simpsons Movie*), Keith Carradine, Matthew Modine, Michael Showalter, Ed Begley, Jr., Peter Jason, Moby and “Weird Al” Yankovic.

Hair High

Saturday, May 28, 5:30 p.m.

Introduced by Bill Plympton

Dir. Bill Plympton. 2004, 78 mins. Digital projection. An outrageous gothic myth from the 1950s, *Hair High* is the legend of Cherri and Spud, a teenage couple who are murdered on prom night and left for dead at the bottom of Echo Lake. Exactly one year later, their skeletal remains come back to life and they return to the prom for revenge and their justly deserved crowns.

Idiots and Angels

May 28, 7:30 p.m.

Introduced by Bill Plympton

Dir. Bill Plympton. 2009, 78 mins. A misanthropic gun dealer who spouts an unwelcome pair of wings is the antihero of Plympton’s noir-flavored feature, which was entirely hand-drawn, mainly in gray pencil. According to the *New York Times*, the film, which is entirely without dialogue and has music by Tom Waits, Pink Martini, and others, “defies expectations. It is relentless, and brilliant.”

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Closed on Mondays.

Film Screenings: See schedule above for schedule.

Museum Admission: \$10.00 for adults; \$7.50 for persons over 65 and for students with ID; \$5.00 for children ages 3-18. Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. Paid admission includes film screenings (except for special ticketed events and Friday evenings). Tickets for special screenings and events may be purchased in advance by phone at 718.777.6800.

Location: 35 Avenue at 37 Street in Astoria.

Subway: R or M trains (R on weekends) to Steinway Street. N or Q trains to 36 Avenue.

Program Information: Telephone: 718.777.6888; Website: <http://movingimage.us>

The Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and its operations are made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation). The Museum also receives generous support from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals. For more information, please visit <http://movingimage.us>.