

JIM KEESHEN

Jim Keeshen decided that animation was his chosen field by the age of 5. This epiphany occurred when his father took him to see his first movie in California shortly after moving from his native country of South America. That movie was "Fantasia". Keeshen has now completed over 25 years in the animation industry.

Jim Keeshen is the president and founder of Studio Animatics, and Jim Keeshen Productions. Studio Animatics specialized in designing and producing test commercials for clients such as Disney, Proctor & Gamble, Levi's, Lexus, Toyota, Mazda, Mattel and others. Jim Keeshen Productions specializes in TV and feature stories.

As a conceptual designer and visual storyteller, Jim Keeshen has worked on animated and live action productions incorporating traditional cel animation, animatics, multimedia, 2D and 3D computer animation, rotoscoping and motion-control camera work.

Keeshen started his animation career during his studies at UCLA by animating a few scenes for "Sesame Street". Eventually he went on to produce more than 30 animated vignettes for "Sesame Street".

His first studio job in the 1970's was as production assistant and cameraman on the Oscar-winning short, "Is It Right to be Right," and the Oscar nominated short "John Henry" at Bosustow Films under the legendary UPA animator, Steven Bosustow.

Before founding Jim Keeshen Productions in 1982, Keeshen worked as a freelance animator and art director on such TV series as "Captain Caveman," "Superman," "Batman," "Yogi & Friends," "Superwoman" and "Pink Panther."

Jim Keeshen's most recent independent film, a five-minute, 2-D animated short called "Monkey Love" (1997) has aired repeatedly on Cartoon Network (U.S.) and Locomotion (Latin America). The film also won 9 awards including Worldfest Charleston, the Chicago International Film Festival, the Annecy International Animation Festival in Annecy, France, and shortlisted in that year's Academy Award nominations.

Other notable projects include the development of 3D characters in Colgate's Toothpaste TV commercials for Rhythm and Hughes, and the "Dancing Skeleton", an animated ID for Nickelodeon, which won a Creative Associate Award.

Keeshen also produced more than 15 Spanish-language public service announcements (PSAs) for the Century Council featuring actors Rita Moreno, Ricardo Montalban and Vicki Carr.

In 1998, Jim Keeshen Productions completed an original 14-minute pilot for "Family Guy," which sold the show as a new prime-time animated comedy to the Fox Network.

On the internet, Jim Keeshen Productions designed and produced the first animated character, The Peppard Leopard, for America On Line. Keeshen also designed and animated the first avatars for Microsoft's MSN 3D chat rooms.

Keeshen has just recently finished the production of a interactive language CD-ROM program for Santa Monica College's new International Business School Studies. Using current computer programs, including Flash animation, the CD teaches students 7 different foreign languages.

In addition to his production work, Keeshen has never lost sight of the importance of education. He has taught animation and design at Santa Monica College, as well as character animation at Sony Image Works. He currently teaches at the Academy of Entertainment and Technology in Santa Monica, an industry-supported and California state-funded program established in 1997. At the Academy Keeshen develop the curriculum and advised on the buying of the software and hardware for the computer animation and interactive departments.

In 1999 Keeshen was awarded the Outstanding Teacher Certificate by the Mary Pickford Foundation for his classes in storytelling, animation and storyboards.

Keeshen holds degrees from UCLA in Animation, Art and Psychology and is fluent in both Spanish and English.