

# ANIMATION EDUCATORS *forum*

<http://animationeducatorsforum.org>

## Birds of a Feather Discussion: Navigating the Film Festival Maelstrom 2015: What Your Students Should Know About Film Festivals, Web Venues and Contests

November 22, 2014 from 10:30 to 11:15 AM at CTNX 2014 in the Executive Boardroom  
Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, 2500 Hollywood Way, Burbank, California 91505

### Welcome and Introduction

**Chuck Grieb**, AEF Steering Committee Member & Professor at California State University, Fullerton

**Tom Sito**, AEF Steering Committee Co-Chair, Professor & Incoming Chairperson at the University of Southern California

### Discussion: Navigating the Film Festival Maelstrom 2015: What Your Students Should Know About Film Festivals, Web Venues and Contests

For a student who just completed a short film, knowing how to make the next move can be daunting. In a bewildering world of festivals, websites and shifting regulations, faculty and mentors can serve as guides that point them in the right direction. Join animation educators from around the globe as we discuss approaches to navigating the open seas of short film distribution.

### Discussion Contributors



**Ellen Besen**, AEF Steering Committee Member, Presenter & Author

Ellen Besen is an animation storytelling specialist, mentor, filmmaker and author of the acclaimed book, *Animation Unleashed*. She has directed award winning films for the NFB and the independent sector which have been shown internationally in festivals such as Annecy and at institutes including MoMA. A former faculty member of Sheridan College's School of Animation, her students work at studios that range from Nelvana to Pixar. On-going projects include co-authoring a book with Aubry Mintz titled *Theory of Integrated Storytelling* and presenting workshops in popular film analysis that examine integrated storytelling in animation, live action and hybrid film. She has delivered presentations at numerous events such as OIAF, UFVA and most recently with Mintz at CTNX, Walt Disney Feature Animation, DreamWorks Animation and Blue Sky Studios.



**Sheila M. Sofian**, Associate Professor at the School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California

Sheila Sofian is a narrative filmmaker with a special interest in documentary animation. Her films investigate social issues utilizing a unique hybrid of animation and documentary. She has produced, directed and animated seven independent animated films. Sofian has received grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, Rockefeller Media Arts Fellowship and the Pew Fellowships in the Arts, among others. Her award-winning films have been exhibited world-wide and are distributed educationally as well as in home video markets. She recently produced, directed and animated a one-hour documentary on wrongful conviction, *Truth Has Fallen*. Professor Sofian has taught painting-on-glass and documentary animation workshops internationally at several institutions including the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá, Colombia, the Central Academy Of Fine Art in Beijing, China, the University Of Buffalo and the Kansas City Art Institute. She has developed curriculum and designed coursework for Documentary Animation Production as well as written on the subject. Ms. Sofian is an Associate Professor at the University of Southern California, where she teaches animation production. In addition, she teaches Documentary Animation Production and Story Art Development courses. She holds a BFA in Film/Video/Animation from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA in Experimental Animation from the California Institute of the Arts.



**Lee Crowe**, AEF Steering Committee Member & Adjunct Professor at The Art Institute of California - Hollywood and Woodbury University

Lee Crowe began in the animation business over twenty-five years ago, having worked as a character cleanup artist, effects animator, timer and storyboard revisionist for many studios including Disney (*The Little Mermaid*, *Rescuers Down Under*, *Brother Bear*), Warner Brothers (*Space Jam*, *Osmosis Jones*), Dreamworks (*Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron*), Bakshi (*Cool World*), Film Roman (*Garfield*, *King of the Hill*) and Fox (*Family Guy*). Lee received her BA in Art from LaGrange College in Georgia, her Applied Arts Diploma from Sheridan College in Ontario and her MFA from Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. Lee has been an animation professor for ten years. She resides in the Los Angeles area where she teaches and works as a 2D freelance artist.