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2222 Laguna Canyon Road • Laguna Beach, California 92651

www.lagunacollege.edu

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CONTACT

Jennifer Daniels (949) 376-6000 x233
jdaniels@lagunacollege.edu

Walt Disney Studios Producer, Don Hahn, Speaks at Laguna College of Art & Design

Students and faculty enjoyed the first in a series of guest lectures featuring distinguished filmmaker Don Hahn. Don addressed the students and faculty on campus September 25 and signed copies of his recent book *Drawn to Life: 20 Golden Years of Disney Master Classes*.

Mr. Hahn discussed the contributions of legendary Disney artist, Walt Stanchfield who helped train a new generation of animators, including John Lassiter, Tim Burton, Ron Clements, John Musker, Shawn Keller and many, many others, in the ways of drawing for Disney animation. This training was one of the key elements that helped this generation of animators to bring about a second Golden age of Disney animated features in the 1980s and 1990s. Don's lecture featured his personal thoughts and remembrances about Walt Stanchfield and about Walt's contributions to the animation art form, augmented by excerpts from *Drawn To Life*, Don's 2 volume set of Walt's compiled master classes in drawing for animation, classic photos of Stanchfield in action and images of Mr. Stanchfield's personal art work.

"One of the things about Walt Stanchfield that I was always impressed with was his indomitable Spirit and the endless energy with which he taught his classes and lived his life, right into his 70s and up to his passing. While surrounded by youth, Walt never seemed 'old', he was always one of 'us'. Walt was one of very few people who really understood classical drawing and cartooning equally and he helped me to see and understand the real relationship between the two in a way I had never experienced before," said Animation Professor David Pruiksma. "For me, Walt Stanchfield brought Life Drawing to LIFE!"

Renowned as one of the most successful producers working in Hollywood today, Don Hahn has been working creatively as a filmmaker at The Walt Disney Studios for over 30 years. Hahn produced the classic *Beauty and the Beast*, which became the first animated film to receive a Best Picture nomination from the Motion Picture Academy. His next film, *The Lion King*, broke box-office records all over the world to become the top-grossing traditionally animated film in Disney history and a long-running blockbuster Broadway musical. Hahn also served as associate producer on the landmark motion picture *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. His other films include *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* and the 2006 short, *The Little Matchgirl* which earned Hahn his second Oscar nomination.

Hahn is currently developing the stop-motion animated feature *Frankenweenie* with director Tim Burton, and is also directing and producing several documentary projects. Hahn has authored three books on the art of animation, including the 2008 release entitled *The Alchemy of Animation*, which provides the definitive account of how animated films are created in the modern age.

"Don's casual, conversational style of presentation is very personal, entertaining and engaging and makes his love and enthusiasm for the topic palpable to any audience," remarked David. "Mr. Hahn's vast experience in the field and his very friendly and approachable demeanor is an inspiration and an

encouragement to everyone that attend this very rare and coveted time with one of the biggest names in animation today.”

Pruiksma continued, “Due to my many years in the animation industry, I have close friendships and long time personal ties with many of the leaders in the animation and film fields today. This is one of the first of a long list of noteworthy people in the industry that I intend to invite to speak at LCAD in a regular series of lectures, kicked off with a BANG by famous producer and writer, Don Hahn.”

The Animation major at LCAD has been carefully designed to meet the evolving needs of the entertainment industry and to exceed the industry’s standards. In addition to teaching a mastery of digital technologies, the program is distinguished by requiring a solid grounding in traditional skills as well as promoting the development of individual artistic skills and enhancing the creative imagination. Guest lecturers and mentors from the industry complement coursework by providing relevant insight.

Images:

Don Hahn captivates students with his presentation, Photo courtesy of Glen Miller.

One-on-one discussion with animation student, Photo courtesy of Glen Miller.

Don Hahn and David Pruiksma, Photo courtesy of Glen Miller.

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Laguna College of Art & Design is a private, not-for-profit college where outstanding artist-educators, visual arts programs, state-of-the-art facilities, and year-round exhibitions give fresh vision to Laguna’s extraordinary legacy in the visual arts. Founded in 1961, the college educates artists at all stages of their creative careers, offering Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Drawing and Painting, Graphic Design, Illustration, Game Art and Animation, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting.

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