



Another June, 2014 LVCA dvd donation to the Hugh Stoupe Memorial Library of the Heritage United Methodist Church of Ligonier, Pennsylvania is WARNER BROS. HOME ENTERTAINMENT ACADEMY AWARDS® ANIMATION COLLECTION: 15 WINNERS. Below is a survey of the contents of this collection.

1. THE MILKY WAY U.S. 1940 Director: Rudolf Ising short musical comedy 8 minutes  
MGM / Rudolf Ising Productions Producer: Fred Quimby
2. YANKEE DOODLE MOUSE U.S. 1943 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short  
comedy 7 minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
3. MOUSE TROUBLE U.S. 1944 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short comedy  
7 ¼ minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
4. QUIET PLEASE! U.S. 1945 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short comedy  
7 ½ minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
5. THE CAT CONCERTO U.S. 1947 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short musical  
comedy 7 ½ minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
6. TWEETIE PIE U.S. 1947 Director: Isadore Freleng short comedy 7 minutes Warner Bros.  
Producer: Edward Selzer
7. THE LITTLE ORPHAN U.S. 1949 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short comedy  
7 ¾ minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
8. FOR SCENT-IMENTAL REASONS U.S. 1949 Director: Chuck Jones short comedy 7 minutes  
Warner Bros. Producer: Edward Selzer
9. SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE U.S. 1949 Director: Chuck Jones short documentary (propaganda)  
10 ¼ minutes Federal Security Agency (FSA) / United States Public Health Service / Warner Bros.  
Producer: Edward Selzer
10. THE TWO MOUSEKETEERS U.S. 1951 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short  
comedy 7 ¼ minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
11. JOHANN MOUSE U.S. 1952 Co-Directors: William Hanna and Joseph Barbera short musical  
comedy 7 ¾ minutes MGM Producer: Fred Quimby
12. SPEEDY GONZALES U.S. 1955 Director: Isadore Freleng short comedy 6 ¾ minutes  
Warner Bros. Producer: Edward Selzer
13. BIRDS ANONYMOUS U.S. 1957 Director: Isadore Freleng short comedy 6 ¾ minutes  
Warner Bros. Producer: Edward Selzer
14. KNIGHTY-KNIGHT BUGS U.S. 1958 Director: Isadore Freleng short comedy 6 ½ minutes  
Warner Bros. Producer: John Burton

15. THE DOT AND THE LINE U.S. 1965 Co-Directors: Chuck Jones and Maurice Noble short romantic comedy 10 minutes MGM Producers: Les Goldman, Chuck Jones  
Reader: Robert Morley based on the story by Norton Juster (THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH)

Each of the above animations won an Oscar® as either Best Short Subject or Best Short Animation. With one exception, all come from either Termite Terrace (Warner Brothers animation studio) or MGM. The exception is SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE, which was partly produced by the FSA (Federal Security Agency) and the United States Public Health Service. It was designed and created, of course, over at Termite Terrace.

THE MILKY WAY was the first animation from a studio other than Walt Disney to win the Oscar® for Best Short Subject. SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE was the first animation to win an Oscar® for Best Documentary Short Subject.

Five of these animations have corresponding audio commentaries:

1. QUIET PLEASE! commentary by Mark Kausler
2. THE CAT CONCERTO commentary by Eric Goldberg
3. FOR SCENT-IMENTAL REASONS commentary by Greg Ford
4. SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE commentary by Jerry Beck
5. THE DOT AND THE LINE commentary by Eric Goldberg

Two of the animations have corresponding isolated music score options:

1. SPEEDY GONZALES
2. THE DOT AND THE LINE

Parents, please be aware there is one scene of topless artistic nudity in THE DOT AND THE LINE. Otherwise, all of the remaining films are suitable for family viewing, except SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE, a documentary more suited to teens and adults due to slow pacing, and FOR SCENT-IMENTAL REASONS which deals heavily with sexual attraction / repulsion and is geared more to teens and adults. So the three films cited above would be rated 5: suitable for teens and adults and the others in the set a 4: suitable for family viewing.

Rather than attempt full formal reviews of all 15 animations, Kino Ken is instead going to provide mini-reviews of five.

Key: \*indicates outstanding technical achievement

A. THE CAT CONCERTO U.S. 1946 color 7 ½ minutes short musical comedy animation MGM  
Producer: Fred Quimby

18 of a possible 20 points

\*\*\*\*1/2 of a possible \*\*\*\*\*

Points

- 2 Direction: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera
- 2 Editing
- 1 Story: Joseph Barbera, William Hanna
- 2 Music: Franz Liszt Arranger: Scott Bradley\* Piano: Calvin Jackson\*

- 1 Lighting
- 2 Production Design
- 2 Animation: Kenneth Muse\*, Dick Bickenbach\*, Ed Barge\*, Irven Spence\*
- 2 Sound
- 2 Characterization
- 2 Creativity
- 18 total points

Mired in controversy due to many similarities in plot with RHAPSODY IN RIVETS, this superior Tom and Jerry cartoon makes excellent use of the rivalry between cat Tom and mouse Jerry. In this installment of the series, Tom is a presumably renowned pianist giving a wildly romantic reading of Franz Liszt's electrifying "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2" in a concert hall. Jerry is enjoying a nap inside the piano Tom's using --- but not for long. Rudely awakened by hammers and strings being alternately pounded and caressed by the performer outside, Jerry initially simply seeks safe haven. There is none to be found. So the mouse decides to battle back, forcing repeats, altitude adjustments, and insanely speedy dashes up and down the keyboard on the part of the player. This duel, with Tom trying to eliminate Jerry while simultaneously executing a perfect rendition of Liszt's warhorse, pits an ever-increasingly frazzled pianist against an adversary with no concern whatsoever for damage control. Piano lovers beware. What these two opponents do to your favorite instrument is barbaric. Even Bartok compositions such as "Allegro Barbaro" stop short of mayhem committed against the instrument in this film. As both physical and sonic battlefield for two rivals, the grand piano is anything but that by the time this film ends. Having too predictable a plot to qualify as "the greatest cartoon ever" as some IMDB users assert, THE CAT CONCERTO is certainly Oscar®-caliber animation. In the opinion of this reviewer, it borrowed some ideas from RHAPSODY IN RIVETS and therefore is less original than that masterpiece. Still, it's essential animation from a team of inspired craftsmen who animated the film: Kenneth Muse, Dick Bickenbach, Ed Barge, and Irven Spence.

Honor must also be paid pianist Calvin Jackson, who recorded this madcap keyboard adventure. Although no one seems to be credited as editor, the anonymous master(s) responsible deserve(s) accolades. Another outstanding achievement is the remarkably nuanced characterization of both principals. Clearly an animation too dramatic and exhaustively belligerent to miss! Special thanks to Thad Komorowski at [www.cartoonresearch.com](http://www.cartoonresearch.com) for information about proper THE CAT CONCERTO credits.

B. JOHANN MOUSE U.S. 1952 color 8 minutes short musical comedy animation  
MGM Producer: Fred Quimby

19 of a possible 20 points

\*\*\*\* ½ of a possible \*\*\*\*\*

Points:

- 2 Direction: William Hanna, Joseph Barbera
- 2 Editing
- 2 Story: Joseph Barbera, William Hanna

2 Music: Scott Bradley, Johann Strauss II Arranger: Jakob Gimpel Piano: Jakob Gimpel  
 1 Lighting  
 2 Production Design: Robert Gentle  
 2 Animation: Ray Patterson\*, Ed Barge\*, Kenneth Muse\*, Irven Spence\*  
 2 Narrator: Hans Conried\*  
 2 Characterization  
 2 Creativity  
 19 total points

Another felicitous pairing of music and animation, this time incorporating strains of Johann Strauss II's "The Blue Danube Waltz" and "Tritsch-Tratsch Polka" into antics of Tom and Jerry. This time, Jerry is a music-cherishing mouse who loves to dance to melodies of Mr. Strauss. Jerry happens to live in a mousehole adjacent to the parlor where Johann's piano sits. Prowling the same chamber is Tom. The resident cat perceives Jerry's inclination to emerge from hiding and dance when Johann plays. That suggests homicidal possibilities. But always the mouse scurries away to safety when Jerry chases it. Hoping to mesmerize Jerry with bewitching dance rhythms, Tom teaches himself to master piano from a guide that introduces the Blue Danube Waltz in nine easy lessons, one note at a time. When Master Johann leaves, Tom takes his place on the piano bench. Jerry finds it impossible to resist the attraction of his performance. Out from the mouse hole he creeps. Soon he is dancing just as spontaneously as when Johann himself performs. Abruptly melody ends, being replaced by a customary chase to the wall. However, human servants observe this rare phenomena of a piano-playing cat and dancing mouse. Word of such a marvel eventually spreads to the Emperor himself. He commands a special performance at the palace. Being loyal subjects, Tom and Jerry must attend. Who will show up, though: two musical artists or a cat and mouse vaudeville team? Watch this classic short and find out if domestic adversaries revert to typical behavior at court.

JOHANN MOUSE is distinguished by a fairytale narration delivered by Hans Conried, appropriately rhythmic music, and precise editing. Delightful gags such as the training regime of Tom keep the plot humorously energetic. There is far less violence than customary in this Tom and Jerry outing, proof adept scripting trumps mindless slapstick, even in short animations. This is another stylish entry in the MGM series, with credible nineteenth century backgrounds and compulsively agreeable pop music.

Special thanks to WIKIPEDIA for identifying the narrator of this short.

C. SPEEDY GONZALES U.S. 1955 color 6 ¾ minutes short comedy animation  
 Warner Brothers Producer: Edward Selzer

17 of a possible 20 points

\*\*\*\* ½ of a possible \*\*\*\*\*

Points

2 Direction: Isadore Freleng  
 2 Editing: Treg Brown\*  
 1 Story: Warren Foster  
 2 Music: Carl Stalling Orchestrator: Milt Franklyn  
 2 Lighting

- 1 Production Design: Hawley Pratt, Irv Wyner
  - 2 Animation: Ted Bonnicksen\*, Gerry Chiniquy\*, Arthur Davis\*
  - 1 Sound: Treg Brown
  - 2 Voices Cast: Mel Blanc\*, Stan Freberg
  - 2 Creativity
- 17 total points

Unusual for its time, SPEEDY GONZALES features a Mexican hero for children who is neither sluggish nor stupid. Not only is he the fastest mouse in the entire country, but he is also a romantic favorite of lady mice and a paragon of courage. With rapid dialogue delivery matching velocity of movement, Speedy is also intelligent and resourceful. Just what mice in Sylvester's neighborhood are seeking. For too long, their dash to obtain cheese nearby has been suicidal. None of the locals can successfully evade untimely death at the paws of a guardian cat. Mute testimony to this is a scene following one such expedition. Mouse spokesman and sombrero checker tosses the headgear of Sylvester's latest victim into a heap of similar unclaimed items. Viewers infer demise of its owner, obviating revelation of unnecessary gore. Tuneful staccato music composed by Milt Franklyn enhances atmosphere, lending it a decidedly Mexican flavor.

One splendidly underplayed moment comes when Speedy, volunteer target in a shooting gallery, momentarily loses concentration while conversing with a visitor. Result: a new bullet hole in his sombrero. Speedy takes a brief glance at the damage. Then he recollects himself and begins anew zipping about the inside of his booth in simulation of a pinball zigzagging its way through a game machine.

Successfully recruiting Senor Gonzalez to assist comrades, his host returns to the scene of abortive attempts at cheese theft. The visitor proceeds to show admirers how to successfully dodge an overmatched guard. Each time Sylvester rigs a trap for his new opponent, the scheme backfires. More and more property is swiped by intrepid intruder, causing its defender escalating embarrassment.

Resort to land mines and dynamite --- presumably not ordered from Acme, since they actually function properly --- yield unexpectedly discouraging results. Can anything stop Speedy from achieving complete transfer of tasty treats to his fans?

With finely balanced mix of dialogue and lightning action, SPEEDY GONZALES remains thrilling to watch, free of ethnic stereotyping which dogs so many Warner cartoons from decades preceding the 1960s. Voice characterization by Mel Blanc as nearly the entire cast is effectively individualized and colorful. Sound effects have been recorded with the precision of Swiss timing. Every reaction shot lasts exactly long enough to communicate a single emotion. As soon as that's achieved, action resumes in dashing adventure style. The satisfyingly explosive climax is perfectly suited to hyperkinetic precedents.

This is an ideal introduction for youngsters to the American theater of the absurd as envisioned and practiced by inhabitants of Termite Terrace. It's entertainingly suitable for family viewing. Consistently creative, SPEEDY GONZALES is highly recommended by Kino Ken.

D. BIRDS ANONYMOUS U.S. 1957 color 6 ½ minutes short comedy animation Warner Brothers  
 Producer: Edward Selzer

18 of a possible 20 points

\*\*\*\*1/2 of a possible \*\*\*\*\*

Points:

- 2 Direction: Isadore Freleng
  - 2 Editing: Treg Brown\*
  - 2 Story: Warren Foster\*
  - 2 Music: Milt Franklyn Orchestrator: Milt Franklyn
  - 1 Lighting
  - 1 Production Design: Boris Gorelick, Hawley Pratt
  - 2 Animation: Gerry Chiniquy\*, Arthur Davis\*, Virgil Ross\*
  - 2 Sound: Treg Brown\*
  - 2 Voices Cast: Mel Blanc
  - 2 Creativity
- 18 total points

In *BIRDS ANONYMOUS*, director Isadore Freleng turns satirical sights on the 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. The compulsion here is fowl. Eating poultry or wild flying counterparts is a succulent ambition Sylvester can't throttle. At film opening, he's about to enjoy stuffing himself on captive canary. The scene of this private repast is a darkened room at his home. No one else can observe the relish with which he'll dispatch his victim. Hold everything. A passerby suddenly sheds a bit of light on proceedings. He is also a cat.

Newcomer Clarence recognizes the problem. It's one which has oppressed him also in the past. He cautions Sylvester the latter's health is at risk if he persists in scarfing down birds. There's a better way to live. The lugubrious professorial feline suggests services of an organization called Birds Anonymous.

Clarence brings a subdued and curious Sylvester to a meeting of B.A. After listening to testimonials from fellow addicts who claim to have kicked the habit, Sylvester pledges to reform and abstain.

Easier said than practiced, however. Television and radio tempt with description of an appetizing chicken entree and songs such as "Bye, Bye, Blackbird" and "Red Red Robin." However, nemesis Clarence invariably shows up with appropriate obstructing devices preventing his recruit from gulping down a tasty avian morsel. His advice is to befriend potential victims rather than eat them. To show the ease of peaceful coexistence, Clarence prepares to buss Tweety. A crazed look comes into his eyes. Sylvester recognizes this symptom. Time to take action.

And then? Watch the unexpected conclusion and find out how this experiment in character reformation turns out.

There are several highly dramatic camera movements designed by Hawley Pratt that are copied to powerful effect from suspense films. Boris Gorelick created shadowy backgrounds that reinforce the notion of imminent savage murder and evil indulgences. Moments of menace, teary melodrama, suggestions of appalling violence, cheery pop melodies, even enforced silence are all effectively utilized in this amazing animation which shifts atmospheric gears repeatedly without ever dropping into confusion or lassitude. It is reminiscent of Preston Sturges at his switchback best.

Without considerable dexterity from Mel Blanc, painstaking creation of visual ambience might have been wasted. Thanks to Blanc, each cat is provided a distinct vocal personality. Tweety is his usual cynical self, though less skillful at self-preservation than is customary. This variation on standard format with its potential for redefining the relationship between two Warner principal characters piques

interest and tantalizes viewers. Suspense created by the ominous introduction is craftily maintained by appearing to supplant an old obstacle (Tweetie) with a new one (Clarence). Is Sylvester about to change from Mr. Hyde to Dr. Jekyll? Stay tuned.

Despite dark colorations intermittently appearing in it, BIRDS ANONYMOUS is suitable viewing for the whole family. Think of it as Hitchcock for beginners.

Thanks to Jerry Beck's THE 100 GREATEST LOONEY TUNES CARTOONS, published by Insight Editions of San Rafael, California in 2010 and copyrighted by Warner Bros. Entertainment that year, for illuminating background information about this film on pages 20 and 21.

E. THE DOT AND THE LINE: A ROMANCE IN LOWER MATHEMATICS U.S. 1965 color 10 minutes  
short animated romantic comedy MGM Producers: Les Goldman, Chuck Jones

19 of a possible 20 points

\*\*\*\*\* of a possible \*\*\*\*\*

Points:

2 Direction: Chuck Jones, Maurice Noble

2 Editing

2 Story: Norton Juster\*

Camera: Buf Nerbovig\*

2 Music: Eugene Poddany

1 Lighting

2 Production Design: Maurice Noble\*

2 Animation: Don Towsley\* (Supervising Animator), Ken Harris\*, Tom Ray\*, Philip Roman\*,  
Richard Thompson\*, Ben Washam\*

2 Sound

2 Reader: Robert Morley\*

2 Creativity

19 total points

A foray into abstract animation from director Chuck Jones and designer Maurice Noble, THE DOT AND THE LINE won an Oscar® for its daring departure from standard commercial format. Based on a story by Norton Juster, who also supplied the screenplay, the film recounts an exotic love triangle involving a line, a dot, and a squiggle. As the film starts, the upright and inflexible line is experiencing courtship rebuff from a fun-loving dot. This hedonistic point prefers the company of a jazzy, beatnik squiggle that resembles what a line could become if it lost all inhibitions and declined into shapelessness. Apparently a free-form doodle has substantially more appeal to a dot than a predictable bounded line of consistent habits and uniform breadth. In this tale, the dot can compress and expand, but is unable to alter form. Why should it do that? It's already perfect in design.

So both line and squiggle believe. The dot shares that conclusion, being coquettish, playful, bouncy, disinterested in interior transformations.

A degree of antagonism develops within the line towards the squiggle. Since it is self-evidently superior in rectilinear correctness to such a vagrant hodgepodge of confused angles as the squiggle, why

can it not win away affections of the dot? What does Dot behold that repels and dissatisfies? Can it be changed?

In attempting to answer that last question, the line determines usefulness is less magnetic than variety. Dot wants surprises. Line craves routine. Unless a compromise can be reached they will travel separate paths forever.

Through discovery of transformational stretching exercises which replace right angles with acute and obtuse ones, line multiplies potential exterior boundaries. It need not restrict itself to perfections of right angles. Line can become an arch, a parabola, a wave. Even a circle. It is able to spiral in, out, up, or down. A line doesn't have to be limited to its most ordinary appearance. Why not substitute something exotic?

Refashioning itself into hexagons, trapezoids, triangles, ellipses, and a host of other polygons, line experiments solo with alternative aspects. Once it becomes adept at reinvention, a new approach to the old problem is adopted. Dot shall be dazzled, mesmerized, allured. Line can do so much more with itself than the amorphous squiggle, an entity always becoming, never perfected.

Is the line's conclusion correct? Will the squiggle collapse in open competition? Check out this dvd and uncover for yourself geometric realities.

Maurice Noble's draftsmanship stops just short of converting two-dimensional drawing to three dimensional sculpture. Incredible spirals, latticework constructs, and intricate polygons predating computer graphics recall visual textures of Oskar Fischinger's finest achievements. Here, Noble and Jones prove geometric abstractions can not only enhance a story, they can also be one. A challenging film defying viewer expectations, THE DOT AND THE LINE successfully weds emotional authenticity to formal beauty. It's an adventure rewarding inquisitive minds.

Robert Morley's gently teasing reading further adds to the overall charm of this film.

Due to the completely abstract nature of THE DOT AND THE LINE, Kino Ken recommends it only for individuals who have moved beyond a concrete operational stage. For the most part, that means teen and adult viewers.

Don't miss out on an opportunity to experience this wonderful film!