



**Season II  
PRESS KIT  
December 2008**



## ***ANIMAL MECHANICALS***

### **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

Meet the Animal Mechanicals: **Rex, Unicorn, Komodo, Sasquatch** and **Mouse**. *Animal Mechanicals* is an action/adventure series for preschoolers that combines the excitement of monster truck rallies with the fantastic world of mythical animals on cool quests. And, best of all, Animal Mechanicals transform!

Animal Mechanicals live and play in a place unlike any other: a colorful ‘snap-together-take-apart’ world which can also transform, just like them. Things are always popping up, changing shape and most of all presenting challenges to the Animal Mechanicals. In each adventure the Animal Mechanicals get their new mission from Island Owl who displays simple pictogram images on his ‘screen-face’. Each adventure has a variety of small challenges to overcome on the road to “Mission Accomplished.” The challenges vary requiring the Animal Mechanicals to use their wide array of unique transformed “Mechana” abilities. The Animal Mechanicals (and the audience) must decide who should face each challenge.

*Animal Mechanicals* is produced by Halifax Film, a DHX Media Company in association with CBC Television.

### **SERIES SYNOPSIS**

Meet the Animal Mechanicals: **Rex, Unicorn, Komodo, Sasquatch** and **Mouse**. This powerful team of transforming superheroes is always involved in adventures that combine the irresistible fun and excitement of monster truck rallies with the fantastic world of mythical animals on cool quests.

In each episode, the Animal Mechanicals set off from Tiger Base, their island-in-the-sky home, for a mission. Their missions always take them to a new floating island that is like a fantastic theme park, with unique landscapes and features. Here, the Animal Mechanicals encounter fun and fantastic challenges. They must overcome these challenges by transforming into “super” versions of themselves. They get to choose and use their special abilities to help them complete their mission.

The challenges that the Animal Mechanicals face, mirror the conflicts, uncertainties, and changes children face as they attempt to understand and master their world. The attitude of the Animal Mechanicals, and the series, is challenges are FUN! Animal Mechanicals *love* a challenge. This series has at its core the theme that while many things may seem difficult or even impossible at first - as they often do to young children – one day, you can be or do anything. Nothing is impossible for Animal Mechanicals!



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Along with the “inner theme” which encourages resilience in children, the series also features a foundation curriculum of problem solving. The challenges the Animal Mechanicals encounter include simple color, pattern, or shape sequencing and recognition, spatial awareness, and exploration of pre-science and physics principals such as up and down, big and small, light and heavy and push and pull.

Whether choosing a transformation, deciding on a strategy, or puzzling out a problem, the series is designed to allow time for our audience to think through each challenge along with the Animal Mechanicals and, as much as possible, feel they are a part of the action.

*Animal Mechanicals* presents a world that children young and old find irresistible: big machines doing big impressive things, and stories filled with fantasy, fun, and friendly play.



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## CHARACTERS

Each Animal Mechanical has unique attributes, which young children can readily identify with. Their transformative abilities mirror the way children “become” superheroes, taking on the inspirational qualities they need to feel powerful and in control of their world.

As we get to know the Animal Mechanicals, we discover that while they may be animal machines on the outside, on the inside they’re just like any group of young children, learning to play together and interact, trying to avoid the pitfalls and potholes of friendship.

### REX

Rex is Mechana-Strong. He transforms into a powerful backhoe with numerous hydraulics that help him lift, dig, plow, and carry heavy things from place to place. His heavy-duty jaws allow him to lift and move all kinds of objects and items.

Rex is the spark and consensus builder. He’s the “Sarge,” and natural leader. Despite his rough and ready exterior, he is soft as syrup inside and often provides a good “bumper to cry on” when needed. He is the group’s moral compass and can be relied on to sort out right and wrong.

Rex’s innate ability to organize the team and build consensus to problem-solve often saves the day. He also has considerable patience for the shenanigans of Sasquatch and Komodo. Rex takes most things in stride, except when he’s hungry.

Rex has a weakness: he’s always hungry! His tummy is forever rumbling and he is always on the lookout for a tasty snack. This sometimes clouds his thinking and makes him act before he thinks and do silly, unpredictable things.

### UNICORN

Unicorn’s special power is Mechana-Fly. She sprouts rotors and rocket motors and takes off into the sky. Not only can she fly, she has a magic horn that can create a whirlwind or light things up... you name it! Unicorn always takes to the sky when she uses her horn.

Unicorn is always ready for a mission and has complete faith in her mechanical cohorts. She loves to laugh and is usually the first to break the ice after a tense moment. And Unicorn has style. She always adds her own flourish - whether it’s an extra mid-air whirl or a really cool landing - she does it all with pizzazz!



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Unicorn has several iconic sayings:

*“Strong like a titanium tyrannosaurus”* (When Rex transforms).

*“Stretchy like big rubber monkey”* (when Sasquatch transforms).

*“Fast like a rocket”* (when Mouse transforms).

*“Handy-dandy tool time!”* (when Komodo transforms).

## **KOMODO**

Komodo is the Mechana-Gizmo. His tail is loaded with a veritable Swiss Army knife of tools and gadgets which comically pop out after his transformation. Komodo represents extreme flexibility and versatility. He can manipulate any gear, lever, winch or widget that comes his way.

When Komodo transforms, his tail always emits three “wrong” objects before presenting the correct tool. These wrong tools can be silly or serious, but obviously not right for the job.

Komodo is also the brains of the group. He is very curious about the fascinating worlds that the Animal Mechanicals visit and the intriguing inhabitants they find there. He also has his own style of karate that is not always terribly effective as he carries out his part of a mission.

His quizzical nature makes him very good at identifying potential pitfalls and it’s Sasquatch that he usually needs to warn about these. And despite his best efforts, Komodo always seems to be at the receiving end of an accidental bump from Sasquatch, which usually sends him tumbling tail-over-teakettle.

## **SASQUATCH**

Sasquatch is Mechana-Stretchy. He’s like a big, round, bouncy ape with hyper-extendible legs and arms that allow him to stretch around anything and reach anywhere. Nothing is out of reach for Sasquatch... except maybe common sense. He certainly is not the brains behind the outfit.

The adrenaline junky of the group, Sasquatch loves action at high-speed and literally throws himself headfirst into any adventure. Where Komodo’s rallying cry might be *“Look first, think twice,”* XXX-Overdrive Sasquatch always leaps before he looks. His favorite saying is *“The Mighty Sasquatch – Making it happen!”*



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Highly excitable, extremely loyal, but easily provoked, he can get pretty steamed when he feels he is being slighted, (which is often). And everything is a competition for Sasquatch.

Sasquatch loves pounding stuff and can't wait for impact. He lives for action and his refrain is "*It's pounding time!*" This gung-ho attitude often leaves him and his pals in hot water. He might not be the sharpest Animal Mechanical (perhaps owing to repeatedly hammering into things head first) but he has a huge heart and is most protective of his friends.

Sasquatch never takes the sensible advice that Komodo is always eager to dispense. The end result is always some ridiculous slapstick that gets Komodo twisted up. Together, this Laurel and Hardy team keeps the other Animal Mechanicals on their titanium toes.

## **MOUSE**

Mouse is Mechana-Fast. She transforms into a rocket-powered speeder that can turn on a dime at high speeds and roll almost 90 degrees. Her small size allows her to get into places the other Animal Mechanicals cannot: tight corners, under low fences, etc. She also has super hearing thanks to her huge ears.

Like Unicorn, Mouse always has a unique perspective on the world and loves to play an active roll in reconnaissance.

Mouse speeds from place to place and has a "zippy" disposition to match. She is enthusiastic and loves surprises – preferably the good kind. The baby of the group, "Mouse" is kind of Animal-Mechanical-in-training. Her confidence is not as well established as the others and she sometimes frets about her small size. But she is sensitive and caring and can often understand the strange sounds and motions of the island creatures they encounter.

The other Animal-Mechanicals are always trying to look out for Mouse. After all, she's quite cute and all innocence.



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## ***ANIMAL MECHANICALS***

### **SEASON TWO - EPISODIC SYNOPSES**

#### **EP 201 Cobra Coaster Island**

The Animal Mechanical's mission – get the Cobra Coaster coasting again! They slide over to Cobra Coaster Island and discover the problem is a mechana monkey, which is hanging out on the tracks of the Coaster. Using teamwork, Sasquatch stretches, Unicorn flies, and Mouse super-speeds to bring the monkey down to the ground. The Coaster doesn't mind if the monkey goes for a ride on it, though, so all the Animal Mechanicals climb aboard with the monkey and go for a Cobra Coaster ride!

#### **EP 202 Pop-Out Panda Island**

The shy Pop-out Pandas need help getting to their favourite bamboo snack at the top of the slippery mountain. While Mechana-strong Rex pushes the Pandas up the hill, flying Unicorn pulls the other Animal Mechanicals up the slope. At the top, Sasquatch's loud voice causes an avalanche that buries the bamboo – but Komodo has a shovel in his tail with which to dig it out. Mission accomplished!

#### **EP 203 Mechana Cuckoo Clock Island**

The Mechana Cuckoo Clock has stopped working, and it's up to the Animal Mechanicals to find out why! They quickly discover the reason: some of the clock's numbers are missing. First, Komodo pries open the doors of the clock to let out the cuckoo bird, but the cuckoo then flies away, and Unicorn must take to the skies to catch it. The bird leads Unicorn to a mechana-number tree where they are able to locate the missing numbers for the clock. Sasquatch stretches to put the numbers back, and the clock starts working again!

#### **EP 204 Trash Masher Island**

The Mechana-Beaver has stopped recycling and the Animal Mechanicals have to find out the problem before Trash Masher Island fills up with junk! Unicorn finds the Beaver by flying high in the sky. The rest of the team use an old ladder to fix the track the junk trolleys travel on to deliver trash to the Beaver, but then they learn the Beaver's tail is worn out and can't work. The Animal Mechanicals recycle old things into a new tail and the Beaver gets back to work.



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### **EP 205 Mechana Dancing Bear Island**

The nice music on Mechana Dancing Bear Island has been replaced by unpleasant sounds, causing the Bears to dance very strangely. With Mouse's super ears and Unicorn's flying, the Animal Mechanicals find the source of the unpleasant sounds – an out-of-tune Mechana Band! Komodo uses a tuning fork in his tail to get the band back in tune, and soon the Animal Mechanicals are dancing alongside the graceful Mechana Dancing Bears.

### **EP 206 Puffer Cloud Island**

The Puffer Cloud Machine isn't feeling very well, and the pink puffy clouds that usually float in the air above it are sitting on the ground instead! The team discovers something is stuck inside the Puffer Cloud Machine, and using his super-stretchy arms, Sasquatch reaches in and finds a rock is the culprit. The Cloud Machine starts to make puffy clouds again, and Unicorn uses her super wind power to blow the sitting clouds back into the air!

### **EP 207 Baboon Balloon Island**

The team is sent to Baboon Balloon Island, where their mission is to find an air-pear for the Baboon Balloon to eat. It needs air to float! Rex breaks down a wall to get at an air-pear tree, then Sasquatch has to stretch high up to reach the air-pears. Unfortunately, he lets them all float away into the sky – but Unicorn is able to use wind power to blow an air-pear right into the Baboon Balloon's mouth! The Animal Mechanicals take turns going for rides on the re-inflated Baboon Balloon!

### **EP 208 Mechana Matcher Island**

The Animal Mechanicals learn about pairs when they go to Mechana-Matcher Island to help the Mechana Matcher. It appears the Mechana Matcher is matching things that *don't* belong together. Unicorn starts off by flying after a flying mitten, and putting it with its mate. Some super-speedy dice are corralled by super-speedier Mouse. But the Mechana-Matcher is still matching up incorrect pairs! Then the Animal Mechanicals realize it's because the Matcher needs glasses, and they use a pair of magnifying glasses to fix *that* problem!



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### **EP 209 Mechana Skee Ball Island**

The team's mission is to go to Mechana Skee Ball Island and fix the broken ski jump, so that the Skee Balls can play their game. Komodo uses super-sticky glue to put the broken pieces back together, but then they notice the scoring numbers are in the wrong places! Sasquatch must overcome his skiing anxiety to get to the bottom of the hill and fix the numbers. Mission accomplished!

### **EP 210 Chugboat Island**

The Animal Mechanicals slide over to Chugboat Island to get the lighthouse working again, so that the Chugboats can find their way in the fog. Unicorn uses her mechana-freeze powers to make an ice bridge, so that the team can get to the lighthouse's island, where they learn the crank which keeps the light turning is broken. Sasquatch stretches up high to match the circle cog with the circle peg, and Rex uses his mechana-strength to rotate the light in the Chugboat's direction.

### **EP 211 Shimmerwish Island**

The Animal Mechanical's mission is to free the Shimmer Queen from a sucker bush, so that she can fly high into the sky and be wished upon. First, Rex clears a path through the sucker bush toward the Queen, then Unicorn uses her magic horn to light up the darkness, so that Komodo can use his super-spectacular spatula to free the Queen! The shimmery Queen flies up into the sky, so that all the Animal Mechanicals are able to make wishes on her.

### **EP 212 Mechana Snow Owl Island**

The snow is melting on Mechana Snow Owl Island, making it difficult to crown the new Snow Owl King. Unicorn uses her magic horn to re-freeze everything, but then Sasquatch slips on the ice and crashes into the Coronation Statue, breaking it. They decide to carve a new statue, so Rex uses his mechana-power to move a heavy ice block into position, and Komodo uses his mechana-ice pick to carve it. To top it off, Sasquatch stretches way up to place the Coronation Crown on top of the Snow Owl King. Animal Mechanicals: Mission accomplished!



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### **EP 213 Mechana Racer Island**

There's a big race about to happen over on Mechana-Racer Island, but the blue Racer has had a breakdown and needs to be fixed! First, Sasquatch stretches to reach some out-of-the-way spare parts, and then Komodo uses his mechana-engine brush to clean out the blue Racer's engine. It is soon as good as new and the race is about to begin, but first the Racers ask Unicorn (who wishes she could fly like them) if she'd like to join the race!

### **EP 214 Mechana Kanga Bounce Ball Island**

The team head over to Mechana Kanga Bounce Ball Island to fix one of the trampolines used in playing Mechana Kanga Bounce Ball – a game Sasquatch boasts he is very good at! Unfortunately, he manages to rip the trampoline even more with his excited bouncing. But Komodo is able to cut more stretchy material from a tree, and Rex uses his mechana-strength to attach it to the trampoline. Then Sasquatch accidentally bounces the ball far away, and Mouse must use her super-speed to catch it! The Kangas surprise Sasquatch by inviting him to join in their game.

### **EP 215 Turbo Tulip Island**

Some lazy Mechana-Bees on Turbo Tulip Island are spending all their time playing, instead of collecting nectar for the Honey Hive Machine! The Animal Mechanicals slide over to the Island. Mouse gets the mechana-bees back to work by making a game of Follow-the-Leader, and getting them to collect nectar. Then, seeing that the Honey Hive Machine needs to be put back together, Komodo gets help from the Bees by pretending it's a puzzle. Unicorn plays Simon Says with them to fill up honey jars, so the honey doesn't go to waste. Sticky fun!

### **EP 216 Mechana Skate Park Island**

Something is making the Raccoon Rollers slip and slide all over their skate park, so the Animal Mechanicals head over to figure out what's going on. They discover that Mechana-Squirrels have been throwing nuts onto the skatepark because they don't like the noise, and that is what's causing the slippery conditions! So the Animal Mechanicals decide to move the skatepark away from the squirrels, and Rex uses mechana strength to get the job done. But the Raccoons are unsure of their new location, and need someone to show them how good the new park is. Mouse, with her super-speed, is just the right one to put on a zooming demonstration!



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### **EP 217 Robo Ranch Island**

Over at Robo Ranch Island, the Mechana Bull has run away, and it's up to the Animal Mechanicals to find it and bring it back to the Robo Ranch. Sasquatch pretends he's a cowboy and the team set out on the search. Mouse's super-hearing leads them to the bull, but it startles easily, and runs away again. Unicorn takes to the sky with Sasquatch, and manages to drop him on the bull's back. But the bull suddenly bolts again, and they realize Sasquatch's cowboy whistling has been spooking it. Mouse gets the bull to chase her, and they soon have it back in the corral. Yee-haaa!

### **EP 218 Mechana Tortoise Island**

The poky Mechana Tortoise is going to be late for his own birthday party, so the Animal Mechanicals go over to help speed him along! They devise a plan to place the Tortoise on logs and roll him to his party, so Komodo gets busy, cutting down trees with his Mechana-saw. But then the Tortoise rolls down a hill and is in danger of crashing into his party! Rex uses his Mechana-strength to catch hold of him and guide him to the celebration. Even Sasquatch gets into the act by holding up a treat-filled piñata for the tortoise guests to break open.

### **EP 219 Mechana Jukebox Island**

The team slide over to Mechana Jukebox Island to find out why the BeBoppers have stopped dancing! They discover the jukebox isn't working, because the music discs are missing. Who could have taken them? Jive Jumpers, of course! Mouse uses her super-speed to retrieve two discs from the Jumpers, but they need one more to make the jukebox work. Sasquatch stretches up to a tree to get another one, then Komodo bolts the jukebox's cover tight so that it plays music. The BeBoppers can happily dance again!

### **EP 220 Mechana Circus Island**

The Mechana-Circus Train can't take off, so there won't be a circus, unless the Animal Mechanicals can help. Komodo discovers the train just needs some oil, but while he's fixing that problem, Sasquatch accidentally lets the performers out of their cars. Unicorn, with her flying ability, and Mouse, with her super-speed, are able to get the performers back on the train. With the Mechana-Circus ready to roll, Sasquatch is invited to perform in the next show!



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## BIOGRAPHIES

### **MICHAEL DONOVAN – Executive Producer**

Michael Donovan, co-founder of Halifax Film, a DHX Media company has over 20 years experience creating, financing, producing and marketing Canadian film and television programming. He co-founded the Canadian production company Salter Street Films in 1983, which merged with Alliance Atlantis Communications Inc. in 2001.

His work in the Canadian television and film industry has been recognized with numerous Gemini Awards, three International Emmy nominations, a Primetime Emmy nomination and an Academy Award for the feature documentary *Bowling for Columbine*.

Mr. Donovan is currently the Executive Producer of the hit comedy series *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, the motion-capture CG animation pre-school series, *Bo on the Go!*, the CG animation pre-school series *Animal Mechanicals*, the live action puppet series *The Mighty Jungle* and the upcoming kids spelling challenge series *Canada's Super Speller* for CBC Television. As well, he is Producer for the recently released feature film *Shake Hands with the Devil* based on retired General Romeo Dallaire's award-winning book of the same name.

### **CHARLES BISHOP – Executive Producer**

Charles Bishop's producer credits include the Academy-Award winning feature documentary *Bowling for Columbine* and numerous television series such as the highly acclaimed CBC pre-school series *POKO*. Operating his own production company until 1998, Bishop merged with Salter Street Films and began managing the company's production slate including the notable series *Made in Canada/The Industry*, *Emily of New Moon*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* and *The Awful Truth*. In 2001, he took on the job of overseeing television series (fiction) worldwide for Alliance Atlantis Entertainment.

In 2004, with Michael Donovan, he co-founded Halifax Film, which is now publicly traded as DHX Media in Toronto and on London's AIM Exchange. As well as being President, Bishop continues to produce film and television programs, most recently: *Lunar Jim* a pre-school series for CBC and BBC; and for Kids' CBC the award winning stop motion pre-school series *POKO*, the motion-capture CG animation children's series *Bo on the GO!*, the recently launched live action puppet series *The Mighty Jungle*, the CG animation pre-school series *Animal Mechanicals* and a primetime drama series, *The Guard*, for Canwest Global.

Charles Bishop has three Gemini Awards and numerous international awards.



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### **JEFF ROSEN – Executive Producer**

Jeff Rosen is the Creative Head, Children’s, Youth and Family for Halifax Film. Jeff was Co-Creator and Executive Producer of the Gemini Award-winning preschool series *POKO*, and Executive Producer on *Lunar Jim*. Jeff currently oversees an ambitious new slate of children’s programs set to debut, including co-creating and executive producing *Bo on the GO!*, and creating and executive-producing *Animal Mechanicals*. In addition, Jeff co-created *The Mighty Jungle*. Prior to coming to Halifax Film, Jeff was the Executive Story Editor of the world-wide hit series *Theodore Tugboat*, Creator and Producer of *Pirates!*, and Show Runner for the multi-award winning series *Wonder Why?* The television series and feature films Jeff has been involved in have been sold to more than 170 countries to date.

### **KATRINA WALSH – Producer**

Katrina Walsh has been working in the film and television industry for two decades, in both live action and animation. She is Head of Production for Family, Children’s and Youth for Halifax Film. Presently she is producing *Canada’s Super Speller*, an exciting new spelling based show for children from across the country; and the second seasons of *Bo on the Go!* and *Animal Mechanicals*, both of which are CG animation series for pre-schoolers. She is also involved in a number of projects currently in development and pre-production. Other series she has produced include the award-winning *POKO* (Gemini – Best Pre-School Program or Series, ACT Grand Prize for Best Program, ACT Award of Excellence), *Lunar Jim*, and *The Mighty Jungle*. Katrina also has extensive post-production experience in feature films and numerous other television series.

### **GILLY FOGG – Series Director**

Gilly Fogg was born in Dublin, Ireland. She has worked as a drama teacher in South Africa, a puppeteer in Scotland and studied film in Canada. She trained in animation at the Jiri Trnka Studios in Prague, Czech Republic and then went to work as a stop-motion animator for HOT Animation in Manchester, England. Gilly animated on *Brambly Hedge*, *Rubbadubbers* and *Bob the Builder*, then trained as a director and directed the *Bob the Builder* series. She has recently moved to Nova Scotia with her family and is enjoying the fresh air. Gilly loves Children’s TV.



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## PRODUCTION COMPANY PROFILE

Halifax Film, co-founded by Michael Donovan and Charles Bishop develops and produces original film and television programming. Halifax Film manages and coordinates all aspects of a program's life, including developing original ideas; purchasing literary rights; arranging production financing; carrying out production and post-production; and exploiting worldwide distribution rights. Halifax Film is a subsidiary of DHX Media Ltd., a leading international producer and distributor of television programming and interactive content with an emphasis on children, family and youth markets.

Halifax Film has recently released the feature film *Shake Hands with the Devil*, a co-production with Barna-Alper and Seville Productions. The company has completed production of the Gemini award-winning pre-school stop-motion animation series *POKO III*; the children's stop-motion animation series, *Lunar Jim II*, a co-production with Alliance Atlantis Communications and the recently launched motion capture CG animation pre-school series *Bo on the GO!*. Halifax Film is currently producing a number of projects including *Bo on the GO! II*; the recently launched CG animation pre-school series *Animal Mechanicals* and the live-action children's puppet series *The Mighty Jungle*; the upcoming kids spelling challenge series *Canada's Super Speller*; the primetime drama series *The Guard* for Canwest Global, a co-production with Brightlight Pictures; an original family drama series, *SOUL* for Vision TV and the multi-award winning hit comedy series *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, XVI for CBC Television.



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