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## Guide to the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839 Collection

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**Contributing Institution:** Special Collections & Archives  
**Title:** Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839 Collection  
**Creator:** Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Local 839, I.A.T.S.E.  
**Identifier/Call Number:** URB.SCG

**Extent:** 4.26 linear feet

**Date (inclusive):** 1937-1951

**Abstract:** The Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild was a professional guild and labor union of cartoonists and animators. The Guild, then known as the Hollywood Screen Cartoonists, held their first union meeting in 1937. Throughout its existence the Guild represented animators at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the Walter Lantz Studios, Walt Disney Studios, and Terrytoon, Inc. The *Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild Collection* contains historical records relating to the organization of the Guild, jurisdictional disputes, and its support and involvement in union strikes.

**Language of Material:** English

**Historical Note:**

The Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild, then known as the Hollywood Screen Cartoonists, held their first union meeting in 1937. A formal constitution was drafted in 1939, and the name Screen Cartoonists Guild (SCG) was adopted. In 1940, William Littlejohn became the Guild's president. After their first year as a union, the SCG represented cartoonists at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) and the Walter Lantz Studios. The Guild then consisted of approximately 115 members. Through successful collective bargaining, the SCG was able to significantly raise the average wage paid to the industry's animators.

Walt Disney Studios, with its 700 potential members, soon became the SCG's major organizing target. Disney employees belonged to the Federation of Screen Cartoonists (FSC), an organization which the SCG identified as a "company union." The FSC and the Disney Studios' management vehemently denied these allegations by the SCG. The Guild's successful organizing drive of Disney cartoonists quickly led to the 1940/1941 Disney strike. The strike resulted in a bitter defeat for Disney and the Federation, while becoming a decisive victory for the SCG.

The SCG cast their lot with the Painters Union (International Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America), an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor (A.F. of L.), but had to fight a jurisdictional battle with the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (I.A.T.S.E.) for union recognition. The Hollywood Cartoonists then became Local 852 of the Painters Union.

Having successfully organized the Hollywood industry, the SCG soon tackled the New York animation industry. In 1944, the SCG sent its organizers to New York City to form Screen Cartoonists, Local 1461. This move also proved to be a successful venture, although in 1951, Local 1461 became involved in a tough jurisdictional dispute with the I.A.T.S.E., which was then led by Roy Brewer.

In 1947, the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild would face one of its first major defeats. Cartoonists in New Rochelle were asking for salaries comparable to those paid by other major studios. Not receiving satisfaction, the SCG organized a strike at Terrytoons, Inc. The cartoonists lost their fight in the strike, which lasted over twenty-eight weeks. Striking animators received support funding from other unions, but Terrytoons, Inc. was able to continue operating by hiring New Rochelle high school students to work during the strike.

In 1952 the Screen Cartoonists Guild changed its name to the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists, and in 2002 changed to The Animation Guild.

**Scope and Contents**

The *Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839 Collection* contains historical records relating to the organization of the Guild, jurisdictional disputes, and its support and involvement in union strikes. The bulk of the material found in the collection consists of by-laws, cartoons and sketches, correspondence, memorabilia, minutes, newspaper clippings, newsletters, notes for speeches, organizational leaflets and strike photographs. Of particular significance are the handbills, leaflets and photographs from the Walt Disney Strike of 1940/1941, extensive correspondence between union organizers Herb Sorrell and Pepe Ruiz, and records detailing the Terrytoon Strike of 1947. The collection has been divided into four series: **Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839** (1937-1951), **Federation of Screen Cartoonists** (1939-1941), **Walt Disney Studios' Strike** (1941-1946), and **Terrytoon, Inc. Strike** (1945-1948).

Series I, **Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839**, consists of the Guild's by-laws, constitutions, correspondence, leaflets, pamphlets and printed material. The series is arranged in alphabetical order by type of material and chronologically within each grouping.

Series II, **Federation of Screen Cartoonists**, includes memorandums, printed material, organizational plans and statements. The material is arranged in chronological order.

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Series III, **Walt Disney Studios' Strike**, consists of by-laws and leaflets pertaining to the Disney strike. Also included is a speech given by Mr. Disney (circa 1941) to studio employees. Leaflets are arranged in chronological order.

Series IV, **Terrytoon, Inc. Strike**, documents the strike's history through contracts, correspondence, financial records, minutes, newsletters and press releases. The series is arranged alphabetically according to the nature of the material and chronologically thereafter.

**Arrangement of Materials:**

Series I: Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839, 1937-1951

Series II: Federation of Screen Cartoonists, 1939-1941

Series III: Walt Disney Studios' Strike, 1941-1946

Series IV: Terrytoon, Inc., Strike, 1945-1948

**Electronic Format:**

Digital reproductions of selected items in this collection are available electronically as a part of the [San Fernando Valley History Digital Library](#).

**Conditions Governing Access:**

The collection is open for research use.

**Conditions Governing Use:**

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**Accruals:**

1981

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Guild, 1980.

For information about citing items in this collection consult the appropriate style manual, or see the [Citing Archival Materials](#) guide.

**Processing Information:**

Dr. Leonard Pitt, 1981

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Documents

Photographs

Scrapbooks

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**Series I: Screen Cartoonists Guild, Local 839, 1937-1951**

Box 1, Folder 1	<b>By-laws, Constitution, ca. 1939</b>
Box 1, Folder 2	<b>Clippings, 1938-1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 3	<b>Clippings, 1941-1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 4	<b>Correspondence, March 1944-March 1945</b>
Box 1, Folder 5	<b>Correspondence, April 1945-January 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 6	<b>Correspondence, February 1946-July 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 7	<b>Correspondence, July 1946-March 1947</b>
Box 1, Folder 8	<b>Correspondence, March 1947-December 1947</b>
Box 1, Folder 9	<b>Correspondence, April 1948-October 1950</b>
Box 1, Folder 10	<b>Correspondence, November 1950-December 1950</b>
Box 1, Folder 11	<b>Correspondence, December 1950-January</b>
Box 1, Folder 12	<b>Leaflets, November 1937-July 1939</b>
Box 1, Folder 13	<b>Leaflets, July 1939-December 1939</b>
Box 1, Folder 14	<b>Leaflets, January 1940-July 1940</b>
Box 1, Folder 15	<b>Leaflets, August 1940-December 1940</b>

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Box 1, Folder 16	<b>Leaflets, January 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 17	<b>Leaflets, February 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 18	<b>Leaflets, March 1941-April 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 19	<b>Leaflets, May 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 20	<b>Pamphlet: "Technical Problems", 1942 August 25</b>
Box 1, Folder 21	<b>Printed Literature, January 1938-December 1951</b>
Box 1, Folder 22	<b>Printed Literature, December 1951</b>
Box 1, Folder 23	<b>Speeches, January-December 1941</b>
Box 3, Folder 1	<b>Cartoon Drawings</b>
Box 3, Folder 3	<b>Screen Cartoonists Guild</b>

**Series II: Federation of Screen Cartoonists, 1939-1941**

Box 1, Folder 24	<b>FSC Memorandums, February 1941-October 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 25	<b>FSC Printed Literature, November 1939-February 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 26	<b>FSC Printed Literature, March 1941-October 1941</b>
Box 3, Folder 2	<b>Federation of Screen Cartoonists</b>

**Series III: Walt Disney Studios Strike, 1941-1946**

Box 1, Folder 27	<b>By-Laws, ca. 1941</b>
Box 1, Folder 28	<b>Leaflets, December 1941-June 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 29	<b>Leaflets, June 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 30	<b>Leaflets, June 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 31	<b>Leaflets, July 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 32	<b>Leaflets, July 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 33	<b>Leaflets, July 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 34	<b>Leaflets, July 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 35	<b>Leaflets, July 1946-December 1946</b>
Box 1, Folder 36	<b>Speech: Walt Disney, 1941 February 10</b>
Box 3, Folder 5	<b>Walt Disney Studio Strike</b>
Box 4	<b>Scrapbook, 1941-1942</b>
Box 5, Folder 17	<b>Photos - Walt Disney Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 18	<b>Photos - Walt Disney Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 19	<b>Photos - Walt Disney Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 20	<b>Photos - Walt Disney Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 21	<b>Photos - Walt Disney Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 22	<b>Negatives - Walt Disney Strike and Terrytoon Incorporated Strike</b>

**Series IV: Terrytoon, Inc., Strike, 1945-1948**

Box 2, Folder 1	<b>Contract Proposals, ca. 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 2	<b>Correspondence, June 1945-December 1945</b>
Box 2, Folder 3	<b>Correspondence, January 1946-April 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 4	<b>Correspondence, April 1947-May 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 5	<b>Correspondence, May 1947-June 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 6	<b>Correspondence, July 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 7	<b>Correspondence, July 1947-August 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 8	<b>Correspondence, September 1947-October 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 9	<b>Correspondence, November 1947-May 1948</b>
Box 2, Folder 10	<b>Financial Records, 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 11	<b>History of Strike, 1947 May 1</b>
Box 2, Folder 12	<b>Membership Lists, 1947-1948</b>
Box 2, Folder 13	<b>Minutes, April 1947-June 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 14	<b>Minutes, July 1947-August 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 15	<b>Minutes, August 1947-December 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 16	<b>National Labor Board: decisions, 1947-1948</b>
Box 2, Folder 17	<b>Newspaper clippings, April 1947-December 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 18	<b>Newsletters, May 1947-October 1947</b>
Box 2, Folder 19	<b>Notes</b>
Box 2, Folder 20	<b>Press Release, 1947</b>

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Box 3, Folder 2	<b>Terrytoon, Inc. Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 1	<b>Photos - Terrytoon, Incorporated Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 2	<b>Photos - Terrytoon, Incorporated Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 3	<b>Photos - Terrytoon, Incorporated Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 4	<b>Photos - Terrytoon, Incorporated Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 5	<b>Photos - Terrytoon, Incorporated Strike</b>
Box 5, Folder 6	<b>Photos - Terrytoon, Incorporated Strike</b>
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