**Cohl, Emile (1857-1938)**

Emile Cohl (Emile Eugène Jean Louis Courtet), a renowned caricaturist and pioneering filmmaker born in Paris, is often credited with inventing the animated cartoon. In 1878, he apprenticed himself to André Gill, the period’s foremost political caricaturist. In the early 1880s, Cohl helped found the Incoherents, a group of iconoclastic, antirational artists and writers whose works anticipated Dadaism and Surrealism. In the 1890s and 1900s, his illustrations, caricatures, and comic strips circulated throughout Europe. In 1908, after discovering the Gaumont film company had plagiarized one of his comic strips, he began supplying them with scripts and then directing films for them. With *Fantasmagorie* (1908), the first completely animated cartoon film, he established his standard practice of drawing every image in the film himself. In *Clair de lune espagnol* (*The Man in the Moon*, 1909), he pioneered the use of matte photography to combine live action and animation in the same image. During a 1912-1914 sojourn in America working for the Éclair company, he created ‘The Newlyweds’, the first animated cartoon series with a regular cast, based on the popular George McManus comic strip. Between 1908 and 1921, Cohl made more than 250 films. His animated cartoons displayed many elements derived from his Incoherent philosophy -- stream of consciousness storytelling, bizarre humour, parodies of both scientists and artists, grotesque figures, and fluid metamorphoses.

**References and Further Readings**

Bendazzi, G. (1994) *Cartoons: One Hundred Years of Cinema Animation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Crafton, D. (1982) *Before Mickey: The Animated Film 1898-1928*, Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Crafton, D. (1990) *Emile Cohl, Caricature, and Film*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Crafton, D. (1993) ‘Emile Cohl and American Éclair’s Animated Cartoons’, *Griffithiana*, 47, 169-180.

**Selected Filmography**

*Fantasmagorie* (1908) First animated cartoon.

*Le Cauchemar du fantoche* [*The puppet’s Nightmare*] (1908) Animated cartoon.

*Une Drame chez les fantoches* (1908) Animated cartoon.

*Les Alummettes animées* [*Animated Matches*] (1980) Stop-motion (object) animation.

*Les Joyeux Microbes* (1909) Animated cartoon.

*Clair de lune espagnol* [*The Man in the Moon*] (1909) Live action and animation.

*Les Douze Travaux d’Hercule* (1910) Animated paper cut-outs.

*Le mobilier fidèle* (1910) Animated objects and live action.

*Le Peintre nèo-impressioniste* [*The Neo-Impressionist Painter*] (1910) Live-action and drawings.

*When He Wants a Dog, He Wants a Dog* (1913) Animated cartoon and cut-outs. First ‘Newlyweds’ film.

*He Poses for His Portrait* (1913) Animated cartoon and cut-outs. Only surviving ‘Newlyweds’ film.

*Bewitched Matches* (1913) Object animation and live-action.

**Paratextual**

Cohl’s film *The Hasher’s Delirium* (1910) can be seen on the Internet Archive at <http://archive.org/details/TheHashersDelirium1910>. Note: *The Automatic Moving Company* on this site ascribed to Cohl was actually made by Romeo Bosetti and should **not** be used here.

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