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| **McCay, Winsor (1867?-1934)** |
| **Zenas Winsor McKay** |
| Winsor McCay (born Zenas Winsor McKay) was an American graphic artist and animator, best known for his Art Nouveau-inflected landmark comic strips Little Nemo in Slumberland (1905-1914; 1924-1926), Little Sammy Sneeze (1904-1906) and Dream of the Rarebit Fiend (1904-1925) and his pioneering cartoon shorts Gertie the Dinosaur (1913) and How A Mosquito Operates (1912) and Bug Vaudeville (1921).  McKay’s early comic strips are notable for their meta-humour, exploiting the idiosyncrasies of their medium: little Sammy’s apocalyptic sneezes, for example, would often demolish the panel borders of the last few frames. |
| Winsor McCay (born Zenas Winsor McKay) was an American graphic artist and animator, best known for his Art Nouveau-inflected landmark comic strips Little Nemo in Slumberland (1905-1914; 1924-1926), Little Sammy Sneeze (1904-1906) and Dream of the Rarebit Fiend (1904-1925) and his pioneering cartoon shorts Gertie the Dinosaur (1913) and How A Mosquito Operates (1912) and Bug Vaudeville (1921).  McKay’s early comic strips are notable for their meta-humour, exploiting the idiosyncrasies of their medium: little Sammy’s apocalyptic sneezes, for example, would often demolish the panel borders of the last few frames. His indisputable masterpiece, Little Nemo, is a colorful extravaganza depicting the elaborate dreams of the title character and makes extensive use of cinematic techniques like close-ups and cross-cutting, elongating or broadening panels to accommodate the lumbering gait of an elephant or a bed’s impossibly spindly legs.  McCay’s animation displays the same innovative spirit, albeit without the use of color and stunning detail of Little Nemo. With their remarkably precise lines, shorts like the landmark Gertie the Dinosaur (depicting a brontosaurus’ puppy-like playfulness), How a Mosquito Operates (in which the greedy insect explodes from overeating) or Bug Vaudeville (animated insects perform circus acts against photorealistic backgrounds) are studies in movement, testing the new medium’s potential. Their sparse, sketch-like appearance contrasts pleasantly with McCay’s naturalistic representation of weight and volume, the smooth sense of movement, and the precise timing achieved through the pioneering use of keyframe animation and registration marks. Selected Filmography How a Mosquito Operates (1912)  Gertie the Dinosaur (1913)  The Sinking of the Lusitania (1908)  Bug Vaudeville (1921) Links to Films Gertie the Dinosaur at Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/23059359>  How a Mosquito Operates at Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/46434119>  Bug Vaudeville at YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZnGyO7BhYI>  Various Little Nemo strips at The Comics Library: <http://www.comicstriplibrary.org/browse/  results?title=2> |
| Further reading:  (Bukatman)  (Canemaker) |