

## DIRECTING

I THINK THERE ARE ONLY A FEW IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT DIRECTING - BUT WE'VE GOT TO KNOW THOSE.

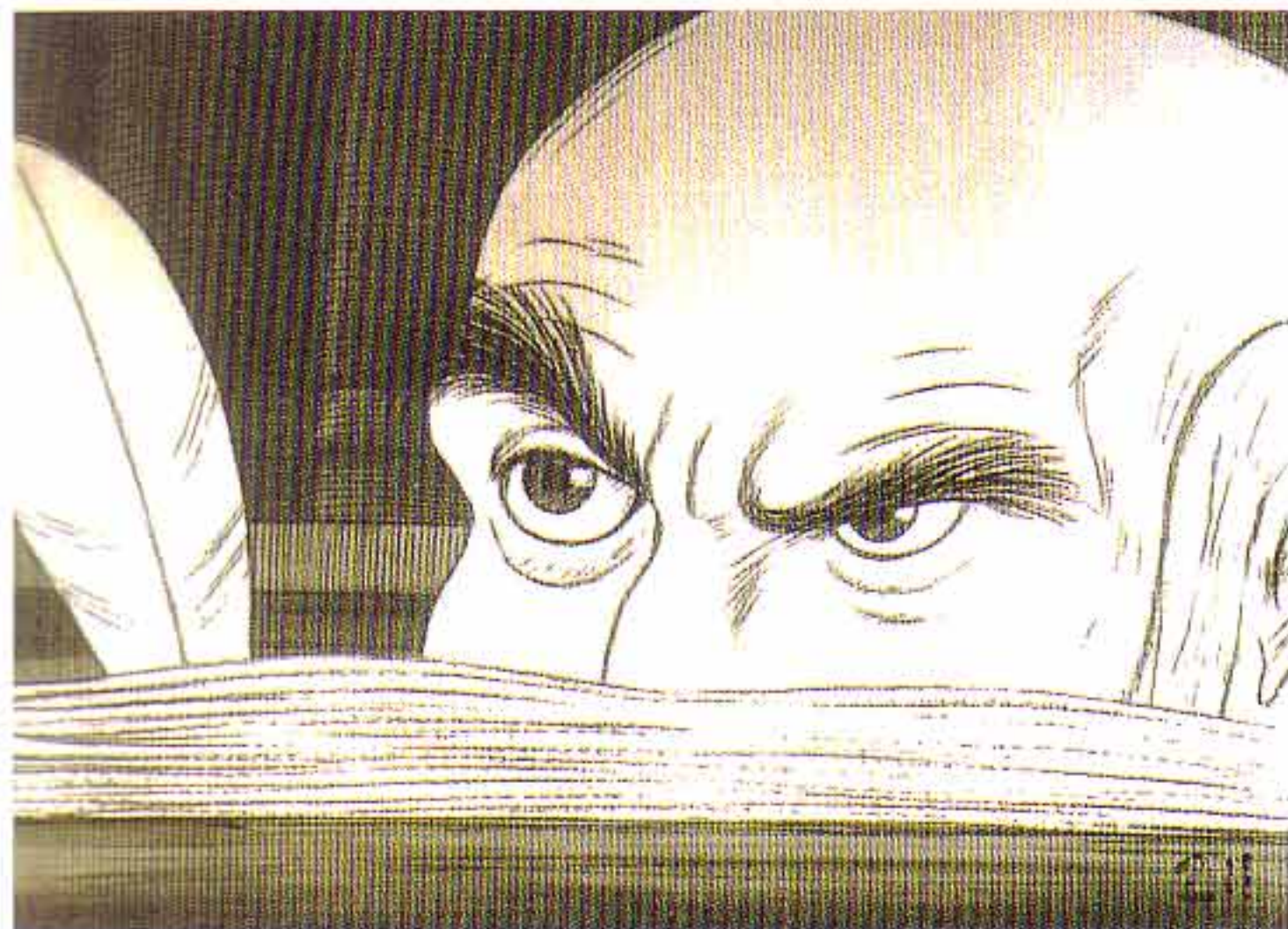
The DIRECTOR'S JOB IS TO MAKE IT ALL WORK. I HAVE THREE RULES:

- ① BE SIMPLE.
- ② BE CLEAR.
- ③ PUT EVERYTHING WHERE YOU CAN SEE IT.

The DIRECTOR IS A 2 FACED CREATURE WITH A FOOT IN 2 CAMPS. The SITUATION DEMANDS IT.







"IT'S A **BUSINESS**, GOD DAMN IT!"  
(ANON. EXECUTIVE)



"IT'S NOT A BUSINESS IT'S AN **EXPRESSION**!"  
EMERY HAWKINS (ANIMATOR)

OF COURSE IT'S BOTH - BUT DO YOU KNOW THE GOLDEN RULE?

**WHOEVER HAS THE GOLD MAKES THE RULES.**

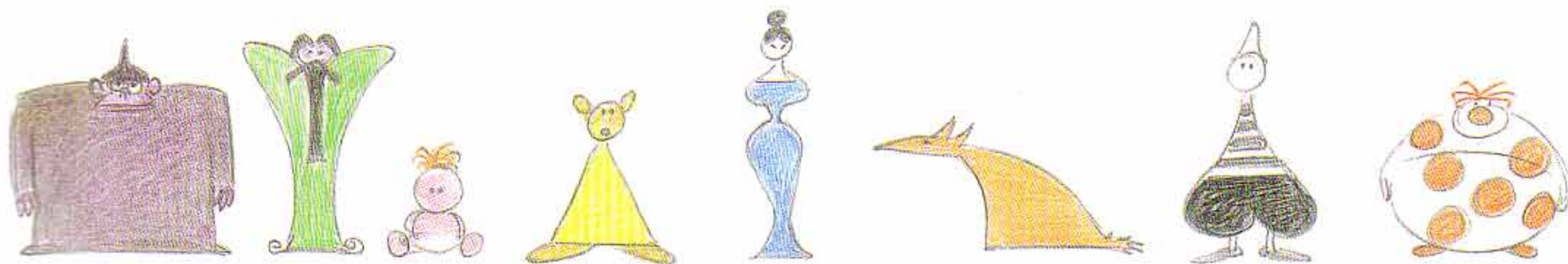
WE'RE BEING HIRED TO DO A JOB and WE SHOULD DO WHAT WE'RE BEING HIRED TO DO. WE SHOULD FOLLOW THE RULES. IF WE WANT ARTISTIC FREEDOM THEN WE PROVIDE OUR OWN GOLD.

**The 'BRIEF'** IS SO IMPORTANT! I ALWAYS WRITE ON ONE SHEET OF PAPER WHAT THE GOALS ARE - WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DO. FOR EXAMPLE, THE "WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT" FILM:  
FIRST, MAKE THE MARRIAGE OF LIVE ACTION and CARTOON REALMS BLEND TOGETHER CONVINCINGLY.  
SECOND, USE (A) DISNEY ARTICULATION  
(B) WARNER TYPE CHARACTERS  
(C) TEX AVERY HUMOUR (BUT NOT SO BRUTAL.)

OUR JOB IS TO ALLAY THE FEARS OF THE EXECUTIVES and INCITE GREED BY OUR TALENT DISPLAY - SOLVING THE PROBLEMS UP FRONT. DESIGN THE STUFF OR SELECT WHAT'S GOOD and SHOW IT WORKS.

**The LEICA REEL** OR ANIMATIC, OR FILMED COLOUR STORYBOARD WILL SHOW WHAT'S WORKING - (AND WHAT ISN'T) IT'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE TO HANG THEIR HAT ON and CALM DOWN. THEN WE MAKE THE CHANGES TO THAT LEICA REEL - NOT TO THE ANIMATION. THIS WAY THE ANIMATORS CAN GET ON WITH THEIR WORK IN SOME KIND OF PEACE.

**SEPARATE THE CHARACTERS** SHOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM. IT'S ALL TO DO WITH CONTRAST: SIZES, SHAPES, COLOURS, VOICES. PUT OPPOSITES TOGETHER: BIG and LITTLE, FAT and THIN, TALL and SHORT, ROUND and SQUARE, OLD and YOUNG, RICH and POOR etc.





THIS IS SO VERY IMPORTANT! A SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLE IS DISNEY'S 'LION KING' WHERE ALL THE CREATURES SOUND, LOOK and BEHAVE QUITE DIFFERENTLY FROM EACH OTHER.

### BEST FOOT FORWARD

PUT THE BEST ANIMATORS ON THE OPENING, ENDING and AS PILLARS SPOTTED THROUGH THE MIDDLE — LIKE ACTORS WHO KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF STAGE ENTRANCES and EXITS. PUT THE BEST PEOPLE ON CLOSE UPS and LONG SCENES, LESS EXPERIENCED PEOPLE ON 3 FOOT LONG-SHOTS and MIDDLE PEOPLE IN THE MIDDLE.

### CASTING ANIMATORS

EVERYBODY HAS THEIR 'THING' THEY DO WELL. IT'S OUR JOB TO CAST THEM FOR WHAT THEY CAN DO and NOT WHAT THEY CAN'T DO.

### MAKING CHANGES

UNLESS THEY'RE ASKING FOR HELP, ALLOW THE ANIMATOR TO GIVE BIRTH UNIMPEDED. ONCE THEY'RE PREGNANT WITH A NEW SCENE THEY WON'T MIND MAKING CHANGES TO A PREVIOUS ONE. WE'RE ALL THE SAME.

### "SAY! SAY!"

KEEP THE DOOR OPEN FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EVERYONE ON THE TEAM. IF YOU CATCH THEM MUTTERING, ASK THEM TO "SAY! SAY!" THEY MIGHT BE RIGHT ABOUT SOMETHING.

### VOICE RECORDING

IF YOU CAST THE RIGHT ACTOR FOR THE JOB IT'S THE EASIEST THING IN THE WORLD. THEY'LL USUALLY GIVE IT TO YOU ON TAKE ONE. THEN JUST GET ANOTHER TAKE FOR INSURANCE. ACTUALLY THEY'LL USUALLY GIVE IT TO YOU ON THE REHEARSAL — SO TELL THE RECORDIST TO RECORD EVERYTHING. IT'S ONLY IF YOU HAVEN'T MADE CLEAR WHAT'S REQUIRED THAT YOU CAN END UP WITH FIFTY TAKES.

### HOOK-UPS

IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ONE ANIMATOR'S SHOT HOOKS UP PERFECTLY TO THE NEXT PERSON'S SHOT. THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR AN ANIMATION DIRECTOR TO GET THIS WRONG AS WE CAN DRAW PERFECT MATCH-UPS.

### RESEARCH

VERY, VERY, VERY IMPORTANT. RESEARCH EVERYTHING TILL YOU KNOW THE SUBJECT INSIDE OUT. DON'T WING IT.

### EDITING

WE SHOULD KNOW EDITING TECHNIQUES. I STUDY AKIRA KUROSAWA THE JAPANESE DIRECTOR, WHO I THINK IS THE WORLD'S GREATEST EDITOR AS WELL AS DIRECTOR.

### BELIEVE IN YOUR MATERIAL

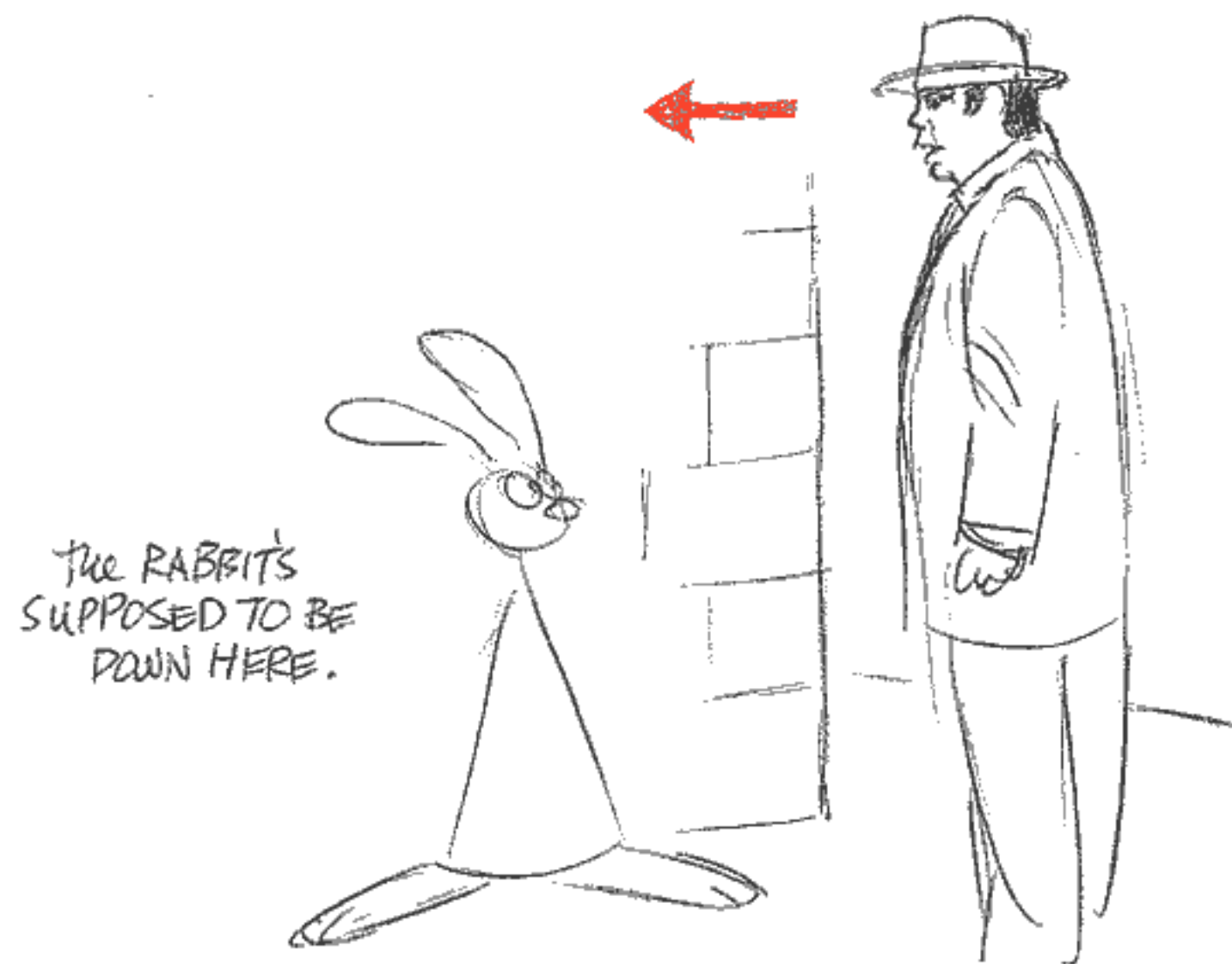
ANOTHER GREAT THING ABOUT KUROSAWA IS THAT HE BELIEVES IN HIS MATERIAL. HE TRUSTS THE AUDIENCE and TRUSTS HIMSELF TO TELL HIS STORY and ALLOWS THE AUDIENCE TO COME TO THE FILM. SO AS A DIRECTOR YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE IN YOUR MATERIAL.

IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH.

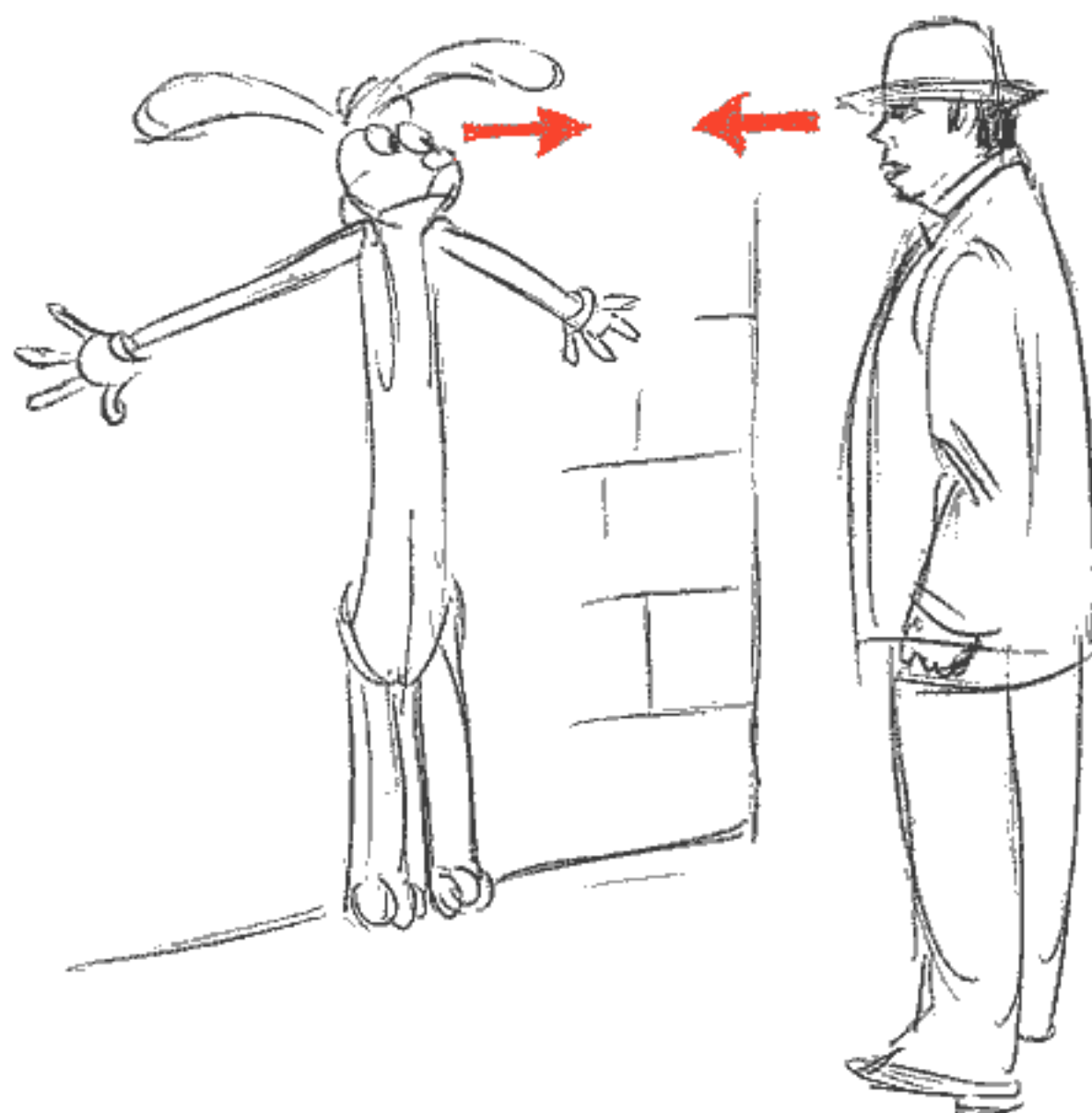
AN INTERESTING THING HAPPENED ON "WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT."

THE ACTOR, BOB HOSKINS HAD A GREAT ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE ON A NON-EXISTANT RABBIT WHO WAS 3 FEET HIGH. UNLIKE MOST ACTORS WHO LOOK THROUGH OR PAST THE INVISIBLE CHARACTER, BOB COULD STOP HIS EYES RIGHT AT THE 3 FOOT LINE WHERE THE RABBIT'S EYES WOULD BE.

ONE DAY ANIMATOR SIMON WELLS (NOW A TOP DIRECTOR) CAME IN TO ME AND SAID, 'WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM - HOSKINS IS LOOKING AT A 6 FOOT HIGH RABBIT - WHAT DO WE DO? HE WAS RIGHT. HOSKINS HAD TEMPORARILY LAPSED AND WAS LOOKING and TALKING TO A WALL ABOUT 6 FEET OFF THE GROUND.



I THOUGHT, 'WELL, THE RABBIT'S GOT THESE HUGE FEET - LET'S JUST STRETCH HIM UP ON HIS TOES AGAINST THE WALL'. 'FOR NO REASON?' 'WHAT ELSE ARE WE GOING TO DO? THE RABBIT'S NEUROTIC - IT SHOULD WORK.'



THEY EVEN USED THE SHOT IN THE PROMOTIONAL TRAILERS AND NO ONE EVER QUESTIONED IT.



I ALWAYS SKETCH EVERYTHING OUT SMALL FIRST. The LITTLE DRAWINGS, BECAUSE THEY'RE 'THINKING' DRAWINGS, ALWAYS SEEM TO SHOW IF THE IDEA IS WORKING CLEARLY OR NOT:



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