## VI. The Dead Years

Between 1965 and 1985, it was pretty dismal (= dark, depressing) in the animation world. The costs of producing a quality animation just about killed the entire field in the U.S. The big studios had almost 60 years of high quality shorts stockpiled in their library and didn't see the need to produce new work. Animation was seen as something for little kids to watch after school and on Saturday mornings, not as a media that the whole family could enjoy. U.S. studios started sending their animation overseas, usually to Japan but sometimes to Europe, where it was cheaper to find the painstaking labour it need to create even the limited animation that was used. Animation was a dead field and there was serious talk about it dying out altogether and becoming an esoteric art for a small group of fans, like opera or ballet. While a feature film (= full-length movie) was occasionally produced by the big studios, most of the quality work was created by independent artists, many of whom worked out of their homes.



**In 1965**, James Whitney does "LAPIS" in motion control animation.
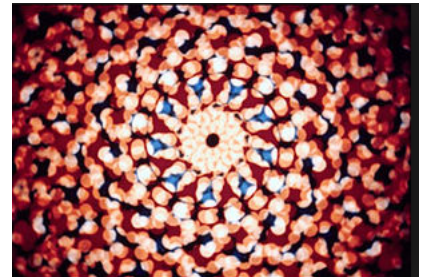


The Superhero vogue is started on Saturday Morning TV by Fred Silverman.

**In 1967**, The Internet is born at UCLA, although there are several other countries from Russia to the UK who claim to have invented the Internet.



Debut on TV of "SCOOBY DOO, WHERE ARE YOU" (see video 23).



**In 1971**, Robert Abel and Assoc. Studio starts first by doing motion control and in a few years begins doing high quality computer animation commercials. First computer animation is used in "THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN" as a special effect (see video 24). Special effect animation during this period played a major role in the amount of animation produced.

**In 1972**, Japanese animation genre, known as Mecha, comes into being at this time.

University of Utah, Ed Catmull develops an animation scripting language and creates an animation of a smoothly shaded hand.



**In 1973**, National Research Council of Canada releases a film "HUNGER" directed by Peter Foldes (see video 25), which features Burtnyk and Wein using interactive wireframe and keyframing techniques. This film earns an Academy Award nomination and is the first animated, computer- generated film nominated.

**In 1975**, Industrial Light and Magic is founded by George Lucas.

"CAROSELLO," an Italian advertising program on the state-owned television station, begins a 20-year run that gave life to many hand drawn, stop-motion characters and ingenuous experimental techniques.

**In 1976**, Single-frame videotape animation systems were introduced. Used for pencil testing, they were a major development in the production of animation.
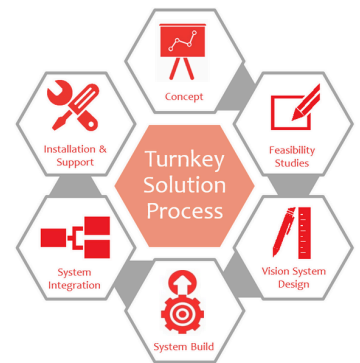
First anime fan club started in Los Angeles.



**In 1978**, Peter Lord and Davis Sproxton establish Aardman Animation in England that specializes in stop-motion clay animation.

**Turnkey systems** are first introduced in computer animation.

Pacific Data Images (PDI) founded.





**In 1981**, A Disney science-fiction live-action "TRON" (see video 26) is made with 15 minutes of computer animation for 235 scenes at a cost of $1,200 per second. Almost all computer animation by now is digital except effects done on tape using the analog system. Disney starts selling home videos of their old short and feature- length animations. 28 million U.S. households have cable TV.

The Disney Channel begins broadcasting.

In 1984, one of the most influential anime of all time, "NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF THE WIND" (see video 27) is made. The film gives more respect to the anime style, allowing for more projects to be funded. It also allows director Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata to set up their own studio under the supervision of former Animage editor, Toshio Suzuki. This studio would become known as Studio Ghibli and its first film was "LAPUTA: CASTLE IN THE SKY" (see video 28) (one of Miyazaki's early ambitious films).

The success of Dragon Ball Z (see video 29) introduces the martial arts genre and becomes influential in the Japanese animation industry.
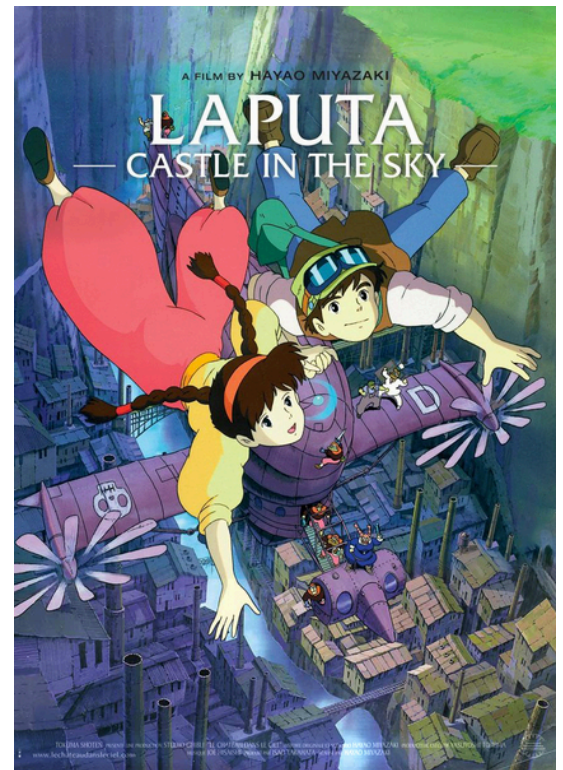




**YOUR MISSION**

1. Introduce the period of THE DEAD YEARS.
2. Read the information about the DEAD YEARS age and make a timeline for this period, including dates and pictures of famous animated movies. Your presentation must be appealing.