

Inside *Disney On Ice* presents *Disney•Pixar's Toy Story 3*

My day with the skaters and the creative development team
by Victoria Beebout

Feld Entertainment® and Disney®

Disney On Ice shows are produced by Feld Entertainment®, the largest provider of live family entertainment in the world. Feld currently produces 8 ice shows (touring domestically and internationally), several stage productions, motorsport competitions and shows, and last but certainly not least the *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*® Circus. Feld annually entertains more than 30 million people. Disney and Feld have enjoyed a business relationship for many years.

Thanks to the Young Artists Showcase, Feld Entertainment®, and specifically thanks to the effort of choreographer Doug Webster, I was able to spend a wonderful day with the show while it was still under development. Understandably, I was not allowed to take pictures of the fantastic costumes or props so my photos are limited.

The Choreography Development Process

- Preliminary cuts of music are provided to the creative development team which includes the director, choreographers and others.
- Cindy Stuart and Doug Webster meet in California to brainstorm and map the choreography. This is done in great detail (every 8 count of the proposed music) and recorded in a 3 ring binder. Typically the choreographers must balance good skating with the telling of the Disney story.
- If the choreographers lack experience in any subject matter they will research the topic in order to maintain accuracy. Cindy and Doug took lessons from a rifle team drill instructor before choreographing a number for the Green Army Men.
- After the initial choreography is set, the line captains will be brought to California to learn the routines. This provides two advantages: first, the line captains will rehearse with the skaters for which they are responsible. This makes for an efficient learning process. Secondly, Cindy and Doug do not remain with the show while it is touring. The line captains assist with choreography maintenance. Doug and Cindy visit the traveling show on occasion.
- While this has been taking place, the personnel director has been selecting talent (skaters) for the show from a large number of applications received. Some skaters are veterans (our own Adam Blake for example) of other shows like *High School Musical: The Ice Tour* and some are fresh to Feld and even fresh to the U.S. Feld receives a number of applications yearly from Canada, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia.



Some Members of the Creative Development Team

From left to right:
Judy Thomas, Artistic Director;
Victoria Beebout Y.A.S.;
Cory Obst (visiting director),
Patty Vincent, Show Director;
Doug Webster, Choreographer;
Cindy Stuart, Choreographer