

“No art form has influenced my life and my work more than animation, and no single character in history has had as deep of a personal connection to me as Pinocchio,” Guillermo del Toro has stated. For the film director, animation is not a genre reserved exclusively for the entertainment of children; it is a medium fully capable of engaging people of all ages. This belief has inspired his first work in stop-motion, a technique in which objects are positioned and photographed, then manipulated slightly and photographed again, over and over, to produce the appearance of movement.

The Adventures of Pinocchio (1883), a folktale by the Italian writer Carlo Collodi, has been published in countless editions (242 in Italian alone), translated into more than 135 languages, and illustrated repeatedly for generations of readers and moviegoers. Setting his adaptation in Fascist-era Italy, del Toro connects this classic story about a wooden boy in the adult world with themes central to all his work: youth and maturity, authority and disobedience, aloneness and spirituality.

Organized while the film was being made in Portland, Oregon, Guadalajara, Mexico, and Altrincham, England, this exhibition focuses on the crafts employed in the process of bringing del Toro’s vision to the screen. Materials from the “look development” phase reveal the diverse approaches and mediums used in fabricating the handmade physical world of the film, the historical research grounding it in reality, and the different forms the puppet characters took before they appeared before the camera. Large-scale working sets from the film’s production offer a behind-the-scenes experience. Supporting documentation—time-lapse, motion study, and animation software videos—demonstrates the coordinated efforts that empower the art of stop-motion to be as expressive and resonant as live performance.

Organized by Ron Magliozzi, Curator, and Brittany Shaw, Curatorial Assistant, with Kyla Gordon, Research Assistant, Department of Film.

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Discover the story and the people behind *Guillermo del Toro’s Pinocchio*, a film that was in the making for more than a decade. Scan the QR code to listen on the free Bloomberg Connects app.



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#CraftingPinocchio
#GuillermoDelToro