

You're listening to Imaginary Worlds, a show about how we create them and why we suspend our disbelief. I'm Eric Molinsky.

DR. TEETH: We're more than just a band, we're a family!

SINGING: Rock on and on!

This week, a new show called The Muppets Mayhem comes out on Disney+. It's the first Muppet project in a while that I've been looking forward to. This show is all about The Electric Mayhem Band, which I've loved since I was a kid.

In fact, I watched the first episode of The Muppet Show when it debuted in 1976.

KERMIT: It's the Muppet Show with our very special guest star Miss Juliet Prowse!

MUPPET SHOW OPENING CREDITS

I was very young, but I remember my father saying to me, there's this new show that I think you're going to like. I sat there mesmerized for the next half hour. And over the years, I watched The Muppets become a cultural phenomenon in real time.

And I do remember when I watched The Muppet Show for the first time, characters fully formed like they had been around years. But that wasn't really the case – except for Kermit.

Kermit first appeared on television in the 1950s. Jim Henson was a teenager when he created his first puppet show for a local TV station. It was called Sam and Friends.

ANNOUNCER: Sam and Friends! Brought to you by Esskay!

In 1969, Sesame Street launched with the help of Jim Henson. He designed Big Bird, Oscar the Grouch and other famous characters. And he brought Kermit with him.

KERMIT: My name is Kermit and I'm here to talk to you about the letter F.

For the next 7 years, Jim Henson developed all these prime time specials that would eventually lead to The Muppet Show. Many of them were meant for adults. In fact, one was called The Muppet Show: Sex and Violence. It opens with the words sex in violence written in stone.

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, the end of Sex of Violence on television.

SFX: Explosion, maniacal laughter

And then the words are blown up by a character called Crazy Harry. He would later appear on The Muppet Show, blowing up all sorts of things.

That's quite a journey from this innocent 1950s puppet show to this '70s counterculture prime time special. Eventually they found a happy medium with The Muppet Show, but there was so much trial and error. They had to figure out who the characters would be, what they'd look like, how they felt about each other and who would turn out to be the real stars. And I've wanted to know how that creative process played out.

And then I learned that one of the original designers on The Muppets Show, Bonne Erickson, lives pretty close to me in Brooklyn. She is a lovely person. And I got to record an interview with her at her home.

Now I had not recorded an interview in person since the pandemic. So, it was also a thrill for me to dust off my recording equipment and take it on the road again. And it was fitting because the first interview I ever recorded for this podcast was with a puppeteer named Stephanie D'Abruzzo who performed on Sesame Street and Avenue Q.

But Bonnie Erickson is not a performer, she's a designer. So, she had a very different perspective on The Muppets. In her hallway, there was a framed drawing of one of the first designs she ever did of Miss Piggy.

BONNIE: This is one of my sketches for one of the bits the pig had to do.

Wait, when did you do this?

BONNIE: Oh, I don't know. It must have been, it might even have been from Muppet Show. I don't remember. We were doing a chicken chorus and Miss Piggy was part of that. She was, she was the leader of the chorus. So that was my drawing of the glee club with Miss Piggy in her outfit. You see, she still has her hooves.

Right. But I mean, her face is, it's Miss. Piggy.

BONNIE: Yes, it is <laugh>.

Even the attitude, the way that she has her head up and her eyelashes down.

BONNIE: Well, you know, a lot of us, when we were designing things, that was a big part of what we were doing. That's, that's part of what the, the job is.

After the first season of The Muppet Show, Bonnie and her husband Wayde Harrison started their own company designing puppets and other characters. They also designed a lot of sports mascots – like they created The Phillie Phanatic for The Philadelphia Phillies.

Now Bonnie didn't plan on going into puppetry. In the early 1970s, she was a costume designer in New York. Someone told her Jim Henson was looking to hire someone to work on a TV special called The Frog Prince. She started working with him on a freelance basis. I was curious, what was her first impression of Jim Henson?

BONNIE: He was very tall. <laugh>. That's what I, that's what I remember. Tall and slender. And it was funny because I didn't believe he really was going to hire anybody. I thought it was a joke that people had sent me there. Um, and didn't believe them at first. But he was charming. He was low key. He was, um, I don't know, very engaging. I think when I joined Jim, the staff was about seven people.

Wow.

BONNIE: We had a lot of people coming in freelance doing specialty things, but I, I was shocked <laugh> to see how small it was, because I only knew Jim at the time from all of the sort of abstract stuff he did on the variety shows and things like that. So, Sesame Street had been just aired and I hadn't really seen it yet, so I had no idea about Sesame Street. So, when I got there and saw the things that were in this workshop, I was blown away. I was so happy. It had every tool, every material that you could ever want, and great people. And I remember Jim toward the end of my contract for the, the freelance work that I was doing on Frog Prince asking me to stay on. And actually, he asked me if I would run the shop, which was scary as all get out because here were these really incredibly talented people, Caroly Wilcox, uh, John Lovelady, all these people who had worked in puppetry. And I had not, but I, I think he thought I could keep a schedule.

So, I know that he wanted to create The Muppet show, whether it was called The Muppet Show or not, he wanted a more sort of adult-ish, kind of primetime version of a Sesame Street characters. Right. Is that something he wanted to do at that point?

BONNIE: I think he never wanted to do children's television or that was not his, that that was, it wasn't that he didn't want to do it, it was that that was not his goal. Um, he became part of Sesame Street because he worked with John Stone, who was the producer for Sesame Street. But they had done a special before that. Jim did a number of specials that were, um, satires on fairy tales like Frog Prince was. I think it was John Stone, who said, if you're going to do puppets on this new children's show, you shouldn't even do them unless you use Jim. Because Jim had this incredible, um, sort of abstract thinking, this way of describing things to people and doing things often without

any words, which seemed to work very well for a lot of the things they did on Sesame Street. So, when we started doing more adult things, he tried several times to convince, uh, the networks that this was going to be something that could be a, a weekly show. uh, we did The Muppets and the Sex and Violence. We did, um, another, uh, special, which was, uh, a Mia Farrow special. Both of those were network shows, hoping on Jim's part that there would be some room for him in a weekly schedule. None of them took. It wasn't until we went to England, because Lew Grade said, Jim, I like what you do and I'm going to back you if you'll do it at my studio.

Lew Grade was a big TV producer in the UK. So The Muppet Show was made in Britain. And it aired simultaneously in the US and the UK.

So, tell me about, one thing I always think is interesting is the trial and error. You know, like even when you watch Sam and Friends, the early stuff, there is a Kermit puppet there.

BONNIE: Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.

And sometimes he is Kermit, and sometimes he's just somebody else. You know, it takes a while for then to realize, oh, this is Kermit's voice. This is Kermit as a character.

NOT KERMIT: I'm honored to be in the studio with two very distinguished NBC newsmen. I'm going to chat with them for a few minutes to learn something of their off-camera personalities.

I think Rolf started out as in dog food commercials.

BONNIE: Yes, he did.

ROLF: Purina Dog Chow is more nourishing. It's got all 43 vitamins and minerals a fellow needs to feel all dog!

Yeah. So how did the characters kind of, and it's such a classic Muppet thing, like in terms of the Muppets getting, like in The Muppet Movie. Yes. You know, they kind of slowly assemble them together. How did they, as personalities start to as like, when you joined, where did he have an idea of, well, these are the characters I want to feature. How did they kind of develop?

BONNIE: Uh, I think one of the first things where they brought a lot of the characters in and the characters that we had built for the show was Sex and Violence. The, the wonderful thing about The Muppet Show was that's five years of performers doing these characters where their personal relationships as well as the performing ones, developed along the lines of those five years. And I think <laugh>, I mean, I still look at them and I

know who they are, what kinds of funny things they've done to each other. They would play jokes on each other in character.

Even the designers would play pranks on each other. Bonnie's mentor at the shop was a puppet builder named Don Sahlin. He was instrumental in creating the look of The Muppets. He also had a very mischievous sense of humor.

BONNIE: My first day at work there, Jim sat me at his table. Hello? *<laugh>* And I could see he was checking me out. He just, you know, wasn't sure. This is a new person. And as head of the shop later on, I experienced this with other people coming in. So, I'm sitting there working, making sketches for Frog Prince, puppets, and a little nervous because I had not done, you know, things for puppets before. Although I had a, a long background in costuming, and there was this big lump of foam at the end of the table, and it had feathers in it, and it had holes in it. It, it just really looked disgusting. And every once in a while, I thought I saw it move. I realized when I looked over, it wasn't moving now and there was Donald sewing away, but the third time I just reached over and picked it up. And Don Sahlin had put an eye hook in the inside of that head, put a string on it, drilled hole in the table, put the string through to the bottom and over to his shoe. So that while he's sitting there and I see him working with both of his hands, he's pulling this thing with his foot to see what my reaction would be.

<Laugh>

BONNIE: I miss him a great deal. And I think he just was, um, person who really brought Jim's ideas and the shapes and the graphics of the characters, uh, to a refined, uh, look. He, he for instance, took the frog from salmon friends and, uh, which wasn't really a frog yet, but made that frog, which is what we know as Kermit today.

How did he refine Kermit? I'm just curious. What, what did he do?

BONNIE: Do? Uh, well, Kermit originally had sort of knobby feet. He wasn't quite as elegant looking as he is now. So, he became a frog with the frog feet that, that Don put on him. Also, I think the, the eyes changed a bit. He became, he's sort of, um, uh, lizard like looking when you see the Sam and Friends character. And he became a much more engaging character, I think with, with the shapes that Donald, the differences Donald made in the shapes for Kermit.

I read something about the magic triangle was something that he developed.

BONNIE: Um, it has to do with, uh, the eye focus, the, the whole face facial features and how that changes with the placement of each of those. But his main, his main, uh, consideration for all of that was pupil focus. So that when you're using a puppet, you actually look at the person you're talking to.

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>

BONNIE: Or the puppet you're talking to.

I just want to stop for a second to talk about how cool this is. The next time someone is listening to you or talking to you, notice where the pupils are in their eyes. They're probably not in the center. They might actually be turning in more than you'd expect.

A great designer can take a very simple visual palette like the face of a Muppet and put those two dots in exactly the right spot in their eyes, so it looks like the eyes of this Muppet are turned a little bit inward, looking at something. And the placement of their pupils in relation to the nose gives the Muppet a sense of personality. That is the magic triangle.

Now there are some well-designed Muppets that don't use the magic triangle, but as they used to tell us in art school, you have to know the rules before you can break them.

You're saying too, how in those five years that the show is developing, the relationships between the characters started to really develop, and that was how, how did that play out in certain characters or something like that?

BONNIE: Right. Well, Geri Jewell started with all the scripts that we had for the initial, the head writer for The Muppet Show. So, he created sort of an environment, but because he was there and the performers were there, and we all had production meetings together, everybody's feedback was really important. So as Jerry was writing, he was getting feedback from the performers, and everybody was seeing what was done on the set. Some of the outtakes were very important in how those relationships, uh, developed and characterized these puppets that they were performing. The, the longevity gave, um, changes to a lot of characters. Gonzo, for instance, got even crazier. Uh, some of the characters, uh, fared better than others. Miss Piggy in the first opening of the, or The Muppet Show, shows her as a, a chorus girl. She's coming across the line in the opening of the show. And then she was called on to do other roles until she finally hit on the Miss Piggy.

Bonnie first designed Miss Piggy for a sketch on the Sex and Violence special.

BONNIE: Well, Jim came and asked for three puppets, three pigs, because Jerry had written a piece where, uh, they were doing a bit called Return to Beneath the Planet of the Pigs, if you believe it or not. So, I had created these three pigs all in space outfits and Miss Piggy had hooves.

Actually, when you look at this sketch, this is clearly the beginning of what will become Pigs in Space, or as you might know it – PIGS IN SPAAAAACE!!!

This is what her voice sounded like.

PROTO MISS PIGGY: You're right! Let's bring him to Dr. Naga.

PROTO PIGS IN SPACE: Dr. Naga! Dr. Naga!

That actually was not the first TV appearance of Miss Piggy. When they were in production on the Sex and Violence special, the entertainer Herb Alpert asked them to create a diva character for a sketch on his variety show.

Bonnie redesigned the puppet to look like the Miss Piggy we know. She had very expressive eyes, a silver gown and long gloves. The voice was still a work in progress.

PROTO MISS PIGGY: This is for you, Herb! Hit it boys. (Sings badly)

When The Muppet Show debuted, Piggy had the same look and the same attitude. But she was a background character. It took several episodes for them to find her true voice.

BONNIE: That's another case where characters evolved as you, as they were used in the show so that some became more popular than others. People have said, did you know that Piggy was going to be so popular? And I said, I didn't. But she did. I had named her Piggy Lee actually, because my mother from North Dakota had loved Piggy Lee, who was a North Dakotan. I just thought, she's sassy, she's brilliant, she's talented, and she's her own woman, kind of thing. When I was designing her and naming her, it was Frank who really caught that character that I love. <laugh>

The Frank she's referring to is, of course, Frank Oz. He performed a lot of Sesame Street characters like Grover and Cookie Monster. And he did many characters on The Muppet Show like Fozzie, Animal and Rowlf. He also performed the character of Yoda in the Star Wars movies. And on the first season of The Muppet Show, when he started working with the Miss Piggy puppet that Bonnie had designed – the rest was history.

BONNIE: Once that karate chop happened, there wasn't a chance for anybody else to take that role.

PIGGY: Hi-yah!

SCOTTER: Kermit never told me about this part.

PIGGY: Part this! Hi-yah!

So, I found, I mean, both websites and videos that they, they love looking at how the Muppets changed in really subtle ways, which I never even noticed

BONNIE: <laugh>

But there's one there a time about Miss Piggy, like the changes were so subtle, uh, you know, from the beginning as we, by the time you get to the end of the seventies, her snout, sometimes it's longer, sometimes it's shorter, sometimes it's, it's tilted up more. Sometimes the ears are slightly different. The eyes are tilted a little bit, the lids come down more are up. How do those subtle design changes affect how you view the puppet even before she starts to speak?

BONNIE: Um, I'm not sure. I think she's become -- she's had work. Let's, let's face it. She's had work. When I started out, she was, um, I had just been experimenting a lot with carved foam, which was not something that had been done, you know, before everything was pretty much covered with fleece. So, when I carved her, it was all done with a manicure scissor and a, you know, belt sander to smooth it out. So, by its very nature, it was a little more rough than what you see today. And so, as time went on and they realized that having somebody hand carve it was just not very efficient, they started doing, uh, casting a very soft foam. And I think as that happened, each sculpt probably contributed a bit of a change to it. The interesting thing to me is her eyes don't blink. They never have. But you think she's coy. You think she's, you know, you, you imagine all these things because of the performance of that character. I feel that she's gotten a little younger, hence the, the work. But I think anybody who looks at her still goes, it's Miss Piggy. She is not going to be mistaken for anybody else. That's for sure.

Bonnie also designed Waldorf and Statler, the two old men who sit in the balcony and give a very sarcastic running commentary while the show is in progress.

STATLER: Do you think this show constitutes cruelty to animals?

WALDORF: Not unless they're watching it! <laughs>

BONNIE: Well, usually Jim would come with an idea of what he wanted done or he would have somebody draw something and we would build it. But often we would have some ideas on our own. This was one of those cases where Jim sent me home if I worked late in a taxi, the darling. Um, and I went around, um, Grand Central Station and I would look into the windows of the university club, and I would see these portraits and I had this imagination of these guys sitting there having their cigars and their brandy. And, um, I made a sketch of the two guys, and I gave it to Jim, and he said, I really like them, but we don't really have anything for them right now. So, I, I'm not even sure how

much time passed, but about, um, maybe the next year he said, I think we have something. And that was Sex and Violence.

And what were they doing in that special?

BONNIE: We had a chair, we had done a set, so they had the actual chairs that looked like an old library with a club setting. Um, that was their first appearance.

STATLER: You know Waldorf, I've been thinking

WALDORF: What've you been thinking?

STATLER: About the younger generation. Where they're going!

Did their design ever change? I don't think so,

BONNIE: No. It's been pretty, pretty much the same. I think, um, that they did go to a carve, not carved foam, but, um, cast foam but it seems to me they look very much the same as the original I did.

KERMIT: But right now, let's get things underway with our own Dr. Teeth and The Electric Mayhem!

APPLAUSE + MUSIC

After the break, Bonnie helps kick off The Mayhem.

BREAK

On The Muppet Show, Dr. Teeth and The Electric Mayhem Band were secondary characters to Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie, and Gonzo. But in the 1975 special Sex and Violence, The Electric Mayhem Band were the main draw. In fact, Jim Henson went on The Tonight Show to promote that special. He brought with him Dr. Teeth. Johnny Carson just can't help but interview the puppet.

JOHNNY CARSON: How would you describe your music? Is it rock or jazz or...

DR. TEETH: It's catastrophe music. It's a towering inferno of bongo drums

Bonnie was part of the team which designed the band, starting with Zoot, the saxophonist.

ZOOT: Forgive me, Charlie Parker, wherever you are.

MUSIC AND SAX

BONNIE: I did Zoot because, um, I had seen Gato Barbieri at a jazz club and I was fascinated, I mean, I loved his work in Las Tango in Paris. So, we went to see him, and I did a sketch while we were there. Uh, I built Janice from a sketch by Michael.

Michael Frith was one of the designers on the team.

JANICE SINGING: But the end of my romancing came with football on TV. Why he ain't took me anywhere since 1963.

BONNIE: But the funniest story I think I have of that is, um, when we were doing Dr. Teeth, Jim had just been down and seen Dr. John.

DR. JOHN SINGING: I been in the right place, but it must have been the wrong time.

This is Dr. John. He was a legendary jazz and blues musician in New Orleans.

BONNIE: And um, when he came back, Dr. Teeth was on his mind. And um, Mike Frith did a sketch, and he showed the hat all the moving parts. Don Sahlin was brilliant in, in building that. And um, we felt he needed a voodoo something or other. So, I went to The Warlock Shop, which I think was in Brooklyn at the time.

What's The Warlock Shop?

BONNIE: Well, they did potions and I had them make, um, a little packet that had, I don't know, cat hair and some herb, who knows what else they put in there. I said, it's got to be good luck. And I wore it. In fact, there's a picture of Jim talking to me when I have the puppets and you can see that thing hanging around my neck. I wore it until Dr. Teeth was ready to go. <laugh>.

Oh my God.

BONNIE: I don't know if he still has it, but I've looked at pictures and he's got things that hang down over his, his jaw. So, I can't tell if it's still there. But that was a, a big treat to be able to put that on Dr. Teeth when he was ready.

DR TEETH SINGING: I'm going to light some dynamite and blow open your heart.

So, you didn't want, you were, you were only on the first season, right? Yeah. Why did you want to leave so early to start your own business?

BONNIE: Um, one of the reasons was I, as I said, I had a son.

Oh yeah.

BONNIE: And he was going to school in England, and I thought that was fine and it was sort of a treat, but thinking about it over long term, I wasn't so happy about having him grow up with education there. I don't know if I'd think that now, but I'm not sure <laugh>.

But nonetheless, I want him to go to school in the U.S. So, I knew that I'd done pretty much everything I could do for The Muppet Show. Getting it started, we had a fantastic group of people, um, who were now able to do costumes, puppets, uh, characterizations, down and dirty stuff as you need to do when you're on set. So, I felt confident about leaving, but I <laugh> I think when I told Jim I was leaving, I cried. He said, don't worry, we won't lose track of each other. And we didn't. He became one of our first clients. I went back to oversee the whole build for Fraggle Rock. I went back another time from my company to um, bring in new talent.

So, what are the things when you started your own company that you learned from Jim, that you wanted to do yourself as, now that you're your own boss,

BONNIE: Keep the copyright and also treat the people you work with well. I hope we did that. We have a lot of friends that we made along the way that were, uh, that worked for us that came and went as they had, uh, jobs and other things to do. Because we had a lot of freelance people and a very small staff. And we had fun. I mean, we had wedding parties for the mice that we kept in the studio. So, we tried to keep it light because we knew the work was pretty, it could, it could be stressful when you're working on deadlines. And I think that partly came from Jim too, who had a good relationship with people he worked with.

Once you came home, you know, suddenly now you're watching The Muppet Show as a, as a, as a fan or you're watching The Muppets develop. Were there moments that you saw a Muppet character developed who you had never seen before that you thought, God, that's a great design. Who did that?

BONNIE: No. <laugh>

Really?

BONNIE: <laugh> Um, well, I'm sure there are, there are a couple. But there were a few that I thought sort of missed the mark. There's one blue Muppet that I liked very much.. They also have a lot of new characters on Sesame Street, some of which I like very much. But I miss some of the, uh, I think the whimsy of some of the work that was done before.

I was going to ask you about that. I mean, without mentioning any characters by name.

BONNIE: Probably can't, you know.

Yeah, yeah. But in general, when you see a character that you're like, oh, that misses the mark. Like what, how are they generally speaking, missing the mark?

BONNIE: Hmm. I think they, they miss something, we always wanted to do something with people or characters that had motion or an abstraction that was appealing. It's like I was talking about Miss Piggy in her eyes. They never move, but she expresses everything. And I often find that, forgive me, some of them look sort of dead eyed or, or not, not as, um, I guess engaging is another word I've used a lot. But it really is something that's important to having a puppet. There has to be a contact with eyes.

That triangle that Don, uh, talked about was a very important part of it. And I think people tried to, to match it. The, the first thing that was done by Disney I think fell short of the mark. I think they've learned who the Muppets are now.

Yeah, It's funny because you know, my first interview I ever did was with Stephanie D'Abruzzo.

BONNIE: Right.

And we talked a lot about being a puppeteer

BONNIE: Mm-hmm. <affirmative>

And we're comparing it to CGI and sort of the, the big question I was trying to understand is why are The Muppets believable? And I think the most we kind of came up with was that they're physically there, you know, physically there with on TV, with the performer, they're being lit, you know, you can interact with them. But I still, I still kind of don't understand why they are so believable. They are so obviously puppets. And yet I, I have to try and force myself to, to not suspend my disbelief when I watch The Muppets, the minute they're on, they are real to me. I, and I still don't understand why

BONNIE: I get it. Because I feel the same way. And I know they live in boxes. These, these are incredible characters. And I think part of it is, unlike CGI, these are live characters who respond to each other. These are characters that work well with human beings. So, you get an idea of the scale of what these characters are. There's nothing like an, an immediate reaction from another character as The Muppets are performing that comes from a real basis of a human reaction. It's not, uh, scripted necessarily. They have the script, but they know what it means, and they know who their character is and how they would behave. And it really makes a difference in how you perceive them.

I also believe, and this has never been done before, that the designs are so good that you could show somebody who's, who, finds somebody probably not on Earth, who's never seen The Muppets, and give them The Muppets and say, what do you think these characters are? Put this Muppet on your hand. What do you think the character is? And I bet they would come up with something relatively similar to who they actually are because the designs, the characters are so in the designs.

BONNIE: I think they are too. But I think I probably owe you, you know, a few bucks for saying that. <laugh>

<laugh>

BONNIE: But yes, I, I hope that's true. I hope it's true. Um, and I hope that, um, the look of Miss Piggy informed Frank in his brilliant performance of the character. I mean, she's so self-assured in, in a way that's probably not very realistic. But he's personified her. And I think of the pig, the diva. She's my girl. <laugh>.

Well, thank you. I mean, thank you for, thank you for wonderful childhood memories <laugh>.

BONNIE: You're very welcome. I'm really happy that that's what you got out of that.

So, at this point, we were going to wrap up the interview. That last thing I wanted to record was her showing me around her workshop.

All right, so, this is a little hard to explain but the way my tape recorder is set up, there are two ports for external microphones. That's what we used during the interview. But there's also a microphone built in on the tape recorder. And that's the mic I use when I'm walking around recording somebody.

But that mic that's built in on top of the recorder is very sensitive. Before I use it, I have to pull a windscreen over it. The windscreen is covered in black and gray artificial hair. And so many times in the past, when I would pull that windscreen out, the person I'm interviewing would say, hey, that thing looks like a Muppet.

Bonnie not only thought that it looked like a Muppet -- she had an overwhelming desire to put eyes on it. And I got a tiny glimpse into her creative process, and how far she would go in designing a character before she handed it off to a performer.

SFX: WALKING AND OPENING DOORS

BONNIE: Let me look in my studio...uh, let me see...eyes, let me see if I have buttons.

We went to her studio. She rummaged through her drawers. She got out some buttons, covered them in cloth. She drew eyes on them with a magic marker. She took out her needle and thread, and ten minutes later:

All right let's take a look.

BONNIE: Okay, here you are.

Oh my God. This is <laugh>. This is so cute. And he is, it's looking to the left.

BONNIE: Yes. He's, he's checking everything out.

I love, yeah, because we're talking about the eyes in terms of the direction of the eyes.

BONNIE: Well, I wanted him to be suspicious. <laugh>.

Really? Why?

BONNIE: I just thought it was a good idea. He is there on that microphone. Wants to know who's speaking.

<laugh>. Yeah. You started to create a personality for him.

BONNIE: Yeah, <laugh>. Yes. And he wants to be petted often.

Aw, see, I'm already petting him. <laugh>.

BONNIE: He's loving it. <laugh>.

Does he have a name?

BONNIE: Um, not yet. I think you'll have to ask him later.

I did. He told me his name is Furston.

That's it for this week, thank you for listening. Special thanks to Bonnie Erickson, and Aimee Knight, who connected us with Bonnie. And thanks to listeners like Fred Chong Rutherford, who suggested this topic.

My assistant producer is Stephanie Billman. If you like the show, please give us a shout out on social media or a nice review wherever you get your podcasts. That helps people discover Imaginary Worlds.

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