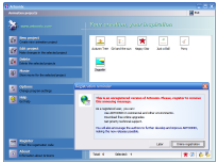


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[Do You Want to Create Some Cartoons?](#)

Artoonix makes it easier!

No matter what will happen in the future in the media industry, I am sure that the hand made cartoons done in the first half of the last century will live forever. Evolution has good parts and bad parts, and the use of the computer in the animation industry is no exception. While the production of a cartoon movie is much faster, I think that the old ones had more life into them, they were somehow more "real" than their computer-animated competitors today. The proof that I am right is that DVD editions of Tom and Jerry or Bugs Bunny still sell a large number of copies in the 21st century, but that's not the topic here... ...what if you could create your own cartoons, on your old home computer? Of course that you won't compete with Walt Disney Company, but this would be a nice way to spend your free time, enjoy yourself and maybe entertain your family. Let's see what we have here... The name of this program is well chosen, giving an insight of what you're going to find inside it: art and cartoons, resulting Artoonix. Pretty cool, isn't it? What I have here is a shareware version full of nags, but with all the features available. Still, be aware that your movies will be watermarked until you buy the program... Anyway, the full program costs only 20\$, so if you're going to like it, buying it shouldn't be a problem. The installation kit is 7MB in size and very easy to setup. Now, let's check the monster inside the box... As usual, first stop is the interface. As one would expect, the interface was designed according to Artoonix's area of activity. I couldn't imagine a program used for fun that has a grey interface and looking like a missile-launch application, no way! Although not skinnable, Artoonix has an interface that uses a blue gradient for the main window, while the editing window is...grey, but looks well. To draw a line, this is not an Ashampoo interface, but it won't hurt your eyes and is well organized. Behind the interface hides what I found to be an average animation creator for the beginners and average computer users. Artoonix comes with six built in animation samples, so before creating your own movie, best choice would be to open one of the existing ones and play with it. All you have to do is double click one of the samples that can be noticed inside the main window. Good, now press Later to get rid of the nag screen (and prepare to see more of this, I won't tell you from now on when it appears, because it happens more frequently than it should). Once the nag is gone, we're inside the project window. Inside the main window, the editing area or the movie preview window, you won't see any menu bars. Everything is placed right in front of you, one mouse click away. For each frame of the movie you have opened, there are the following things to notice: its number, starting time, thumbnail and delay. Just right click inside a frame area to bring up the contextual menu and explore it, there's enough for you to discover. In the lower part of this window you can notice the audio tracks available for your movie. Artoonix can import WAV and MP3 files, but you can also record audio using a microphone. There aren't any special audio effects, but they would be interesting to have in the future. To edit a certain frame, double click its thumbnail. Wow! The frame editor looks good! The objects are organized as the layers you can use in most advanced graphics editors. New objects can be added, you have a History window and some basic drawing tools - freehand, brush, eraser, airbrush or color picker. Don't worry about learning how to use this editor, there aren't hundreds of tools here - all you have to do is explore and use what you see. Once you have edited your project, saving it is just as easy. Artoonix uses the video and audio codecs installed in your system for this purpose, so if you don't see a compression option available, get the codec and install it! You can play with this program until you get bored or until you get the money to buy it, but for me, it's the time to draw the conclusions... **The Good** Artoonix can be a lot of fun, is easy to use and has a nice interface. If you decide to

buy it, its price is very good, in my opinion. **The Bad** Unfortunately, I noticed some speed issues (and my system is much faster than the one required to run it) and the shareware version gets annoying really soon because of the nag screen and the watermark it puts on your movies (one of them should have been enough, don't you think?). **The Truth** What can you do for your amusement with twenty bucks and make it last more than a day? I think that Artoonix is one of the best choices, and before you get to spend that money on it, you can taste it for free...but beware, the free version has some salt added into the sugar! *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*