

Audio Transcript: Lowell Boston

TV Producer, *Optical Toys*

Hello, everyone. My name is Lowell Boston. I'm from Collingswood, New Jersey. But I've been working in Philadelphia for about 30 years or so. And I have my own show on a PhillyCAM called Optical Toys, that showcases live action and animated short films. And I have been part of the PhillyCAM channel from its beginning. My interest in animation in my youth in the 70s, my father had a Super Eight camera that can shoot frame by frame. And so my older brother and I got all of our, like, action figures and toys and started making animated movies. We had no idea what we're doing. We just knew we were having fun. We didn't understand camera angles, and film grammar, timing or anything we just knew, like, Oh, this is so much fun. And, you know, the film, we would send it out to the lab and like, it felt like we were waiting, like three months before we get it back. And we like it. Terrible. We loved it because it was like our own work. And that got me hooked.

When I started learning about public access, and PhillyCAM, and seeing how people, as I mentioned, were approaching it with no skills whatsoever, I could definitely relate to them, because that was me with my dad's Super Eight camera. And, you know, taking your superhero action figures and your GI Joe toys, and whatever Legos you can make for your props and sets and stuff. And I thought "wow, you guys are gonna have the best time." Whether you make a mistake or not, you know, because sometimes nothing succeeds like failure. Because when you make a mistake, especially in film and animation, you'll learn from it.

Having taught for so many years, I saw a lot of my students work, make some really amazing films. But you know, if a lot of students, their first priority is like "I kind of find work, I gotta start paying off my student loans." And a lot, a lot of them weren't really putting the work out there in the festivals or anything. And I was always, you know, like, "Oh, that's a shame." And this goes both for the animation and live action

students. And so I decided, hey, you know, why don't I have a channel, a show where I can, you know, showcase these live action and animated short films. I like PhillyCAM because, you know, it's, it's personal. You know, it is, it is made by someone who isn't trying to get views. Isn't trying to get subscriptions. Isn't trying to get their channel monetized. And so, I am hoping that has its appeal that people will find that as being having more integrity.