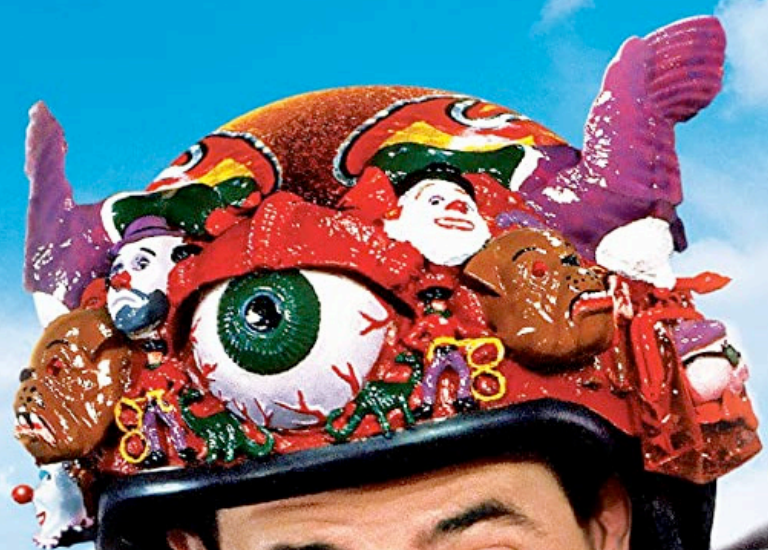




THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2020 / 4:00 PM  
WITH GEORGE MCGRATH, BILL STEINKELLNER,  
AND WAYNE WHITE

# PEE-WEE'S PLAYHOUSE





This freewheeling conversation will explore the radical visual style, origins, and enduring legacy of the subversive Saturday morning classic television show *Pee-wee's Playhouse* (1986-1990). Along with a team of writers, including our guest Bill Steinkellner, actor Paul Reubens developed the Pee-wee Herman character for a live stage show that premiered in 1980. The character would go on to appear in the TV movie *The Pee-wee Herman Show* and the feature film *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* (1985).

Centering on Pee-wee's adventures in a playhouse filled with toys, bizarre gadgets, and talking furniture and appliances, the TV show featured a groundbreaking blend of live action, puppetry, stop-motion animation, and claymation. Our panel will include writer/actor George McGrath (Globey/Pterri/Cowntess/Fish) and artist/designer/puppeteer Wayne White (Dirty Dog/Randy/Mr. Kite), as well as Bill Steinkellner. The conversation will be moderated by Cheri Steinkellner.

*Pee-wee's Playhouse* can be streamed on Amazon Prime and Netflix. The panel will focus specifically on season 1, episode 10 "The Cowboy and the Cowntess" and season 2, episode 10 "Pajama Party."

This event is sponsored by the Carsey-Wolf Center.

## Guest Biographies: George McGrath (writer/actor)

George McGrath began his career as an actor in New York. He performed with the Groundlings in Los Angeles from 1983 to 1992, where he also taught, directed the *Sunday Show*, and directed and created the long-running *Your Very Own TV Show*. He was one of the original writers of *Pee-wee's Playhouse* and a series regular on that show. He was inducted into the TV Theme Song Hall of Fame for co-writing the series theme song. He co-wrote the Paramount film *Big Top Pee-wee*, and created and starred in Nick-at-Nite's first original late night series, *On the Television*, which he also co-executive produced. He co-starred with Tom Hanks and Sally Field in the feature film *Punchline*. He wrote *Based on an Untrue Story*, a FOX TV movie, and had a recurring role on HBO's *Tracey Takes On*, a series he also wrote and produced. Other TV appearances include *Whose Line is It Anyway?* (the London and New York productions). He has received four Emmy nominations for writing *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, and for writing and producing *Tracey Takes On*, a series for which he also won a GLAAD Award.



## Bill Steinkellner (writer)

Bill Steinkellner was the head writer and co-director of *The Pee-wee Herman Show* at the Groundlings Theater in 1981. With Paul Reubens, he developed and co-wrote the 2010 Broadway stage revival of *The Pee-wee Herman Show*. He served as writer and executive producer for *Cheers* (1985-1992) and *Teacher's Pet* (2000-2002). He has been involved with improv comedy as a student, teacher, and director for over fifty years and has taught improvisation and comedy writing at both USC and UCSB.



## Wayne White (artist/designer/puppeteer)

Wayne White is an American artist, art director, illustrator, and puppeteer. After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University, Wayne traveled to New York City where he worked as an illustrator for the *East Village Eye*, *New York Times*, *Raw Magazine*, and the *Village Voice*. In 1986, Wayne became a designer for the hit television show *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, and his work was awarded with three Emmys. Wayne designed sets and characters for shows such as *Shining Time Station*, *Beakman's World*, *Riders In The Sky*, and *Bill & Willis*. He also worked in the music video industry, winning Billboard and MTV Music Video Awards as an art director for groundbreaking music videos including The Smashing Pumpkins' "Tonight, Tonight" and Peter Gabriel's "Big Time." More recently, Wayne has had great success as a fine artist and has created paintings and public works that have been shown all over the world. Wayne's recent show at Rice University included the world's largest George Jones puppet head for a piece called "Big Llectric Fan To Keep Me Cool While I Sleep."



## Moderator Cheri Steinkellner

Cheri Steinkellner has earned four Emmy awards, two Golden Globes, a Writers Guild, People's Choice, World Animation, and British Academy Award for writing and producing TV's *Cheers* and creating Disney's *Teacher's Pet*; as well as receiving a Tony nomination for writing Broadway's *Sister Act the Musical* with husband Bill. Cheri lectures worldwide and teaches writing for screens and stage at Stanford and at UCSB, where she and Bill were honored to receive the 2017 Inspiration Award.





# SUBVERSIVES

FALL 2020 & Winter 2021

*Sorry to Bother You: 10/13*  
*Parasite: 10/15*  
*The Great Dictator: 10/22*  
*Pee-wee's Playhouse: 11/5*  
*Blood Quantum: 11/12*

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# SUBVERSIVES

Throughout film history and across the globe, mediamakers have resisted social conventions and attracted the ire of governments and censorship boards. The Carsey-Wolf Center's fall 2020 and winter 2021 screening series will showcase films and TV shows considered politically, socially, culturally, and ideologically subversive. From mischievous caricatures to biting social critiques, the events in this series invite discussion of the efficacy of subversion and the historical contexts that have rendered these works subversive in the first place.

## CWC TV

In recognition of the extraordinary accomplishments of the Center's namesakes, Dick Wolf and Marcy Carsey, the Carsey-Wolf Center is committed to examining television as an institution, industry, and cultural form. In our post-network, multi-channel, multi-media environment, understanding television demands understanding its past as well as its future, through exploration of individual episodes, mini-series, and documentaries.

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