

# Mel Blanc

Inducted June 21, 1996



America's Favorite Cartoon Voice  
*Sunnyside Chapter*  
*Portland*

*America's favorite cartoon voice.*  
*Voices include: Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, Daffy Duck, Sylvester*

*the Cat, Tweety, Elmer Fudd, Foghorn Leghorn, Road Runner, Barney Rubble, Speedy Gonzales and many, many more. Recognized as an integral part of American History with a permanent exhibit in the Smithsonian Institution. Recipient of Congressional and Presidential Citations for outstanding contributions to society. Selected by young people in 1986 as one of the five individuals they would most like to meet. Others included were George Washington, Ronald Reagan and Abe Lincoln. Legion of Honor 1966. Sunnyside Chapter, Portland, Oregon. Initiated 1925.*

Anyone who has seen the cartoons “Looney Toons,” “Merry Melodies,” or “The Flintstones,” has heard the legendary voice of Mel Blanc. The “man of a thousand voices” began his career in show business immediately following graduation from high school in 1927. For the first five years, Blanc made his living with musical instruments as an accomplished bassist, violinist, and sousaphone player. Blanc played in the NBC Radio Orchestra and conducted the pit orchestra at the Orpheum Theatre in Portland, Oregon. Then Blanc began his career in radio. He appeared on the radio show “The Jack Benny Program” for twenty years.

In 1933, he married Estelle Rosenbaum, and soon after the couple began hosting a daily one-hour radio show in Portland called “Cobwebs and Nuts.” After two years, they moved to Los Angeles, where he continued to work in radio, but sought auditions with Warner Brothers, who created the cartoons “Looney Toons” and “Merry Melodies.” In 1936, after a year and a half of regularly applying for voice work at Warner Brothers, only to be rebuffed at the door repeatedly by the same production supervisor, Blanc got a break when the man died and his successor offered Blanc an oral test. He got the job, and the rest, as they say, is history.

From then on, it was upward all the way. Blanc’s first major memorable role was that of Porky Pig, which he was offered in 1937 after studio officials decided that the porcine personality, originally introduced in 1935, needed a facelift. Bugs Bunny followed a year later. Blanc created every voice he did, except for Elmer Fudd. Some of Blanc’s most famous voices include: Sylvester, Tweety, Daffy Duck, Foghorn Leghorn, Woody Woodpecker, The Road Runner, Speedy Gonzales, Tasmanian Devil, Pepe LePew, Marvin the Martin, and Barney Rubble. By 1975, Blanc diversified, forming his own production company, along with his son, Noel. In one of his last performances, Blanc provided a bit part as Daffy Duck in the 1988 film feature “Who Framed Roger Rabbit?”

Many say that Blanc was the first great cartoon voice actor, and some say, the best. There were others out there who were good, but Blanc made it an art. When Blanc passed away at the age of 81 years old, Warner Brothers ran a double-truck color ad showing Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, Foghorn Leghorn, Tweety, Sylvester, Yosemite Same and a few others, all with their heads bowed and voices stilled.

Blanc was initiated into Sunnyside Chapter DeMolay in Portland, Oregon, in 1925. He received the

Legion of Honor in 1966. In 1986, Blanc was selected by young people as one of the five individuals they would most like to meet. Blanc was inducted into the DeMolay Hall of Fame on April 27, 1987.

“I have been a member of DeMolay for sixty-three years. I thank God and DeMolay for helping me become kind and thoughtful to my parents and all my friends. I had many opportunities to do the wrong things, and I might have done them, if it were not for DeMolay. God bless them.”

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