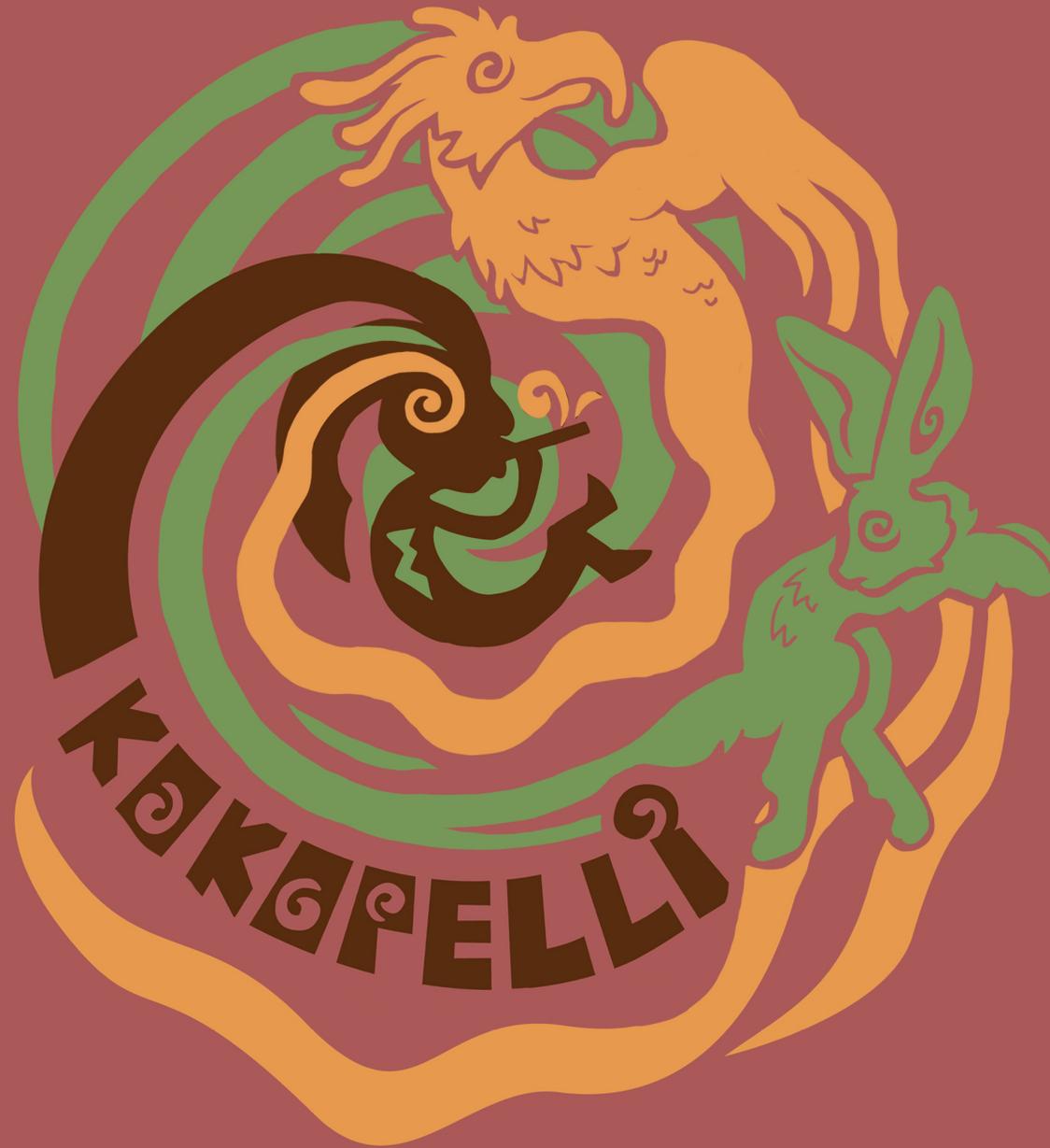


TV series, adult animation



In ancient Meso America, the exiled child of a violent royal birth, though a disinterested young musician and lover, must follow his destiny by returning to Teotihuacan and destroy an evil empire based on brutal slavery and blood sacrifice, making him forever a beloved legend among his people.

SYNOPSIS



Born the grandson of the Supreme Lord of the Teotihuacan Empire, Kokopelli (Koko) is maimed at birth by an enemy prince. The infant Koko is sent into hiding to the northern deserts to live with Popo, the daughter of the regent of the Five Nations. As the boy grows, Popo teaches him the *Nagual*, a spirit world opened by using psychoactive drugs.

At 18, Koko and his adopted sister begin their journey from Chaco, the new city in the north hinterlands, back to Teotihuacan. On their travels, Koko performs his songs and is besieged by girls eager to lay with the popular

musician and prolific lover. Upon entering Teotihuacan, Koko is abducted and tortured by the Tikal king and his evil daughter. Popo and a child gang of warriors rescue Koko. Returned to Teotihuacan, Koko finds the empire overrun by drug-crazed Tikal priests. Koko sings and plays songs of love and hope to raise the will of the people. They rise against the Tikal prince, retaking power—but the great city is burned to the ground during the fight.

Koko and Bebe return to Chaco, dispensing music, poetry, and magic, while Bebe carves images of Koko all along the way, still present to this day.

KOKO

Kokopelli (Koko) is born a bastard prince, grandson of the Supreme Lord of the Five Nations of the Teotihuacan Empire. At his birth, Koko is maimed by an angry enemy prince.

With a broken back, he is taken into hiding as an infant to the land of the cliff dwellers of the northern deserts. His guardian is Popo, whose father is lead advisor to the Supreme Lord. She teaches the child how to skinwalk the spirit world by finding his first talisman as a rabbit, and later, a desert hawk.

Koko loves making music and learns to play the flute very well. He is also well-endowed. Koko was quite likely the world's first rockstar.

Koko learns of his larger destiny to return to Teotihuacan, though he is really a disinterested but genuine young poet and lover.



MAIN CHARACTERS

BEBE



Bebepuente (Bebe), 12 to 20, born a slave in Maya, is traded to Popo for spirit drugs. She is large for her age, very smart, and physically strong. Popo adopts her, like Koko, and together they spend their teen years learning how to be shamans. She is very open about her sexuality and her desire for love and song. She has strong leadership talents with her band of warriors. She learns how to live with freedom and direct her own life to get what she wants: love and respect.

Popomagipta (Popo), 25 to 45, daughter of the Supreme Lord's chief regent, Xlangl, a wise man rumored to be a stranded person, pale in color, washed ashore as a young man and claiming to be from a great city called Alexander. His knowledge of science and astronomy makes him immediately indispensable to the royal leaders of the Five Nations. Popo is half white and well-learned from her father. She learns to travel the spirit world as a jaguar, desert hawk, or condor.



POPO

MAIN CHARACTERS

Coltal (Two-Fang Bat clan), 18 to 38, a young ambitious Mayan warrior who turns to the priesthood after being maimed at the big Katun ball game. As a priest, he devises a new way to use slaves and recruit sacrificial victims, which makes him powerful in the land of the Five Nations. He becomes dark and sullen, shrinking in size and becoming starkly skinny and twisted. With a sharp tendency for evil, he can skinwalk as a crow and a serpent. Nxmul recruits Coltal and makes him his personal assassin and enforcer.

COLTAL



NXMUL

Nxmul (Monkey Python clan), 18 to 38, the spoiled prince (and later, king) of Tikal. In a rage after losing the big Katun ball game, he learns that he is being deprived the promised virgin daughter to the Supreme Lord of Teotihuacan. He tries to kill her child, Koko, at birth out of spite and revenge. He kidnaps Koko's mother and rapes her, spawning a female child of darkness who he trains to take over the empire when he can kill Koko. Nxmul is heavily tattooed, but with ugly scars and sores all over his body from infections due to blood and dirt he collects from his many sacrifices. He practices deranged bloodletting from his genitals and those of his kidnapped wife. He is followed by flies wherever he goes.



MAIN CHARACTER

XIXI



Xixichupaka (Xixi), 0 to 17, evil daughter of Nxmul and Juju, trained in the dark arts by Coltal and her father. She gains power through harvesting innocent souls for the gods of the underworld, giving power to her to see and travel in the Nagual. She gets a kick out of watching people die. She knows she will soon be ruler of the Five Nations and she makes plans about who she will honor and who she will punish. She has no ethics, except those of survival and dominance.



SUPPORTING CHARACTERS



PLOXI

Ploxi, 45, a warrior of dubious history, now a soldier of fortune and partner to Krux. He is tall, very strong, and muscular. But he is also soft inside, often stepping in to save people, or just to even the odds in a fight.



ARABL

Arabl (Serpent-Eagle Clan), 20 to 40, is the young warrior captain and champion ball player who falls in love with the Supreme Lord's only daughter, Juju, and in turn, is Koko's true father. He goes into exile in the northern hinterland and changes his name to Krux. As Krux, he is a wandering soldier of fortune looking for strong-arm work, when he and his partner, Ploxi, meet Koko and Bebe. He does not reveal his relationship to Koko until late in the story. His one wish in life is to have vengeance against his Mayan opponent for kidnapping his love and leaving him with the broken baby.



SUSU

Susu, 24, keeps it a secret that she is really from a northern tribe that was raided by Vikings, evil gods to her, who raped her mother and left her an unwanted orphan because of her blonde hair. She keeps it dyed with soot and blackberries. She travels far away from her home, looking for a place of peace and brotherhood with Ploxi and Krux, where she can be secure with her differences.

WRITER'S STATEMENT

Kokopelli's icon is one of the most recognizable symbols of Meso American Pre-Columbian times. It consists of over 300 different distinct styles, all based on a single familiar image in over 4,000 documented petroglyphs from Central America to North America. What stands out is that these depictions of Kokopelli are not of a god—but a real person with flaws, yet a destiny to understand and fulfill.

The image of Kokopelli is immediately recognized by millions of people, but few know his story. Kokopelli is the bringer of good fortune, happy times, rain for the crops, and babies for the women. In spite of overwhelming deformities, he is proof that a human can keep their optimism and achieve their destiny.

This story combines two intriguing events in human history that demonstrate the classic struggle between good and evil. One is the very existence of Kokopelli—his tragic birth, his rise as a great performer for his people, and the other is the total destruction of the greatest city in the Western Hemisphere in a single night caused by a bloody revolt by the poor against the wealthy.

Beyond this larger arc, the key features of the story—long periods of peace and prosperity torn apart by a caste system and slavery to provide the needs of a large nation, the use of psychoactive drugs in the economics and religious practices of these people—are easily recognizable to a contemporary audience. The tragedy of the Teotihuacan people is a timeless story. Koko's spirit can be inspirational and instructive in our own time.





THEME AND TONE

The main theme is the acceptance of one's destiny, not of our own making, but fate. The main characters all have lives that are broken somehow, yet they come together to accomplish great things, despite handicaps and youthful naivete. Younger generations today are faced with world-shaking events that challenge them to stand up to what is wrong and try to make the world a better place. The model of who is fit to meet these challenges is changing, more inclusive, and Koko and the supporting cast demonstrate that.

The tone is one of love, respect, happiness, and freedom in the face of blind royal privilege and bloody religious repression. There is a strong fantasy component with the use of psychoactive drugs, giving the acolyte the ability to assume the form of a talisman, a spirit animal, also called skinwalking. This is based on stories of Don Juan by Carlos Castaneda, the famous Sonoran shaman. There are elaborate costumes and customs from the Teotihuacan period.





VISUAL STYLE

This is an adult animation film that is based on reality, with some fantasy. The look could be a cutting-edge graphic novel style involving extreme camera angles and magnification. Ideally, it could be made in a 3-D animation style, with traditionally drawn characters and foregrounds, mixed with abstract backgrounds and fantasy scenes producing an effect of traditional animation coming to life in a new era. The characters must be likable and believable, but stylized in a raw, perhaps primitive manner.

Comparable styles are Genndy Tartakovsky's *Primitive*, or *Rick and Morty* at Bardel Animation Studios in Canada, or even Tim Burton's *Coco*. The pioneering work of Doug Jones at Warner Bros. Studios doing years of *Looney Tunes* and *Wiley Coyote* cartoons might be an inspiration for the desert spirit world the main characters experience.

VISUAL STYLE, COMPARABLE FILM / TV

Coco

Lee Unkrich, Pixar, 2017



Coco broke many barriers for animation, primarily its setting in a fantasy world of the dead, which blends ancient Meso-American myth and legend with modern cultures and family values. The characters, though strict fantasy and bordering on the morbid, seem just as real and relatable as the audience watching. It takes on issues of traditions, family values, and freedom of expression in a very honest and provoking manner.

Apocalypto

Mel Gibson, Touchtone Pictures, 2006



Epic drama presenting pre-Columbian Meso American society with all its brutality and appalling religious rites about a man and his innocent family from a peaceful rural village fighting for survival against overwhelming odds and evil intents. Much of the situational conflicts in this film compare closely to Kokopelli's heartfelt story of innocents surviving the onslaughts of evil.

The Road to Eldorado

Bibo Bergeron, Don Paul, Dreamworks, 2000



Animated feature aimed at a family audience depicts the Meso American culture hidden from the Europeans until two hapless crooks discover the hidden city and are mistaken as gods. Many of the animated characters in this film form the basis for developing the special characters of Kokopelli, except it takes it to a more adult and historically accurate level of open sexuality, complex religious cults, and tolerated brutality.

Wizards

Ralph Bakshi, Bakshi Productions, 1977



Ralph Bakshi pioneered adult animation features in the seventies and eighties, bringing a whole new form of entertainment to the commercial market. He started it all.

LOCATIONS

The city of Teotihuacan, with many shrines, broad stone plazas, and among the tallest pyramids in the world: the Temple of Quetzalcoatl, the Pyramid of the Moon and the Pyramid of the Sun.

The Sonoran Desert of northern Mexico, with cliff dwelling villages such as Mesa Verde, Chaco Canyon Pueblo, and the Copper Canyon mining works.

The city of Tikal, with similar pyramids and stone structures as Teotihuacan, along with the surrounding jungles.

Grand palaces for the great nobles of Meso America, with elaborate decorations and costumed people playing court or simply gambling among the lazy and indolent.

The traditional ballcourt, well-documented in Meso American history, with many surviving examples preserved yet today. The ball game as envisioned in this work is a violent game played for keeps. The nobles enjoy betting on the games and the priests demand the losers for slavery and eventual sacrifice.

The central plaza, where a grand marketplace is positioned with booths and stalls selling goods from all over the world of the Five Nations, and beyond. Trade over a network of roads using slaves for transport is the dominant economy, besides food production. Goods consists of exotic feathers and cloths from remote places, along with jewelry, precious stones, psychoactive drugs used in religious and shaman healing arts, exotic animals, and above all, obsidian in various colors and flavors used to make a wide variety of weapons and knives.





SAMPLE SCENE

INT. SPIDER LADY'S TAVERN BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Juju squats over pillows while an older woman, SPIDER LADY, 47, kneels in front. Servant Girl stands behind, supporting Juju as she bears down and cries out in pain.

SPIDER LADY

Here. Drink. Push when you feel the pain. Breathe! Keep breathing!

JUJU

A-a-a-i-i-e-e-h! Come my little one! G-a-h-a-e-e-i-i-a! Oh mighty Gods...help me!

Nxmul flings open the door. His team players are seen behind him cornering and killing two guards.

NXMUL

IT'S TRUE! You've been despoiled by a common snake!

SPIDER LADY

You can't be here! Get out!

NXMUL

I'm Monkey-Python, son of Stormy Sky, prince of mighty Tikal! She was to be my virgin wife! WHORE!

Nxmul grabs Spider Lady, pulling her away from Juju.

JUJU

I-i-e-e-a-g-g-h! He's coming!

Juju bears down, screaming. A baby boy flops out onto the pillows, still attached to his mother. Spider Lady drops to her knees, carefully picks up the baby, and bites off the cord. She hands the baby to Juju then turns back to confront Nxmul.

NXMUL

I'll take care of this!

He grabs the baby and swings it over his head, but loses his grasp and the baby slams against the wall behind Juju. She screams and pounds Nxmul with her fists.

JUJU

I-i-e-e You murderer! Arabi will have your head! I will eat your bleeding liver!

Servant Girl scoops up the baby, wraps him hurriedly in cloth, and runs from the room.

MUSIC EXAMPLES

Flauta de Bambu
para Meditação Repouso
Rick Jones Anderson

<https://youtu.be/kGFqN6Ykc2g?t=112>

El Condor Pasa
Leo Rojas
Matsuri

<https://youtu.be/4wYCe79rtEo?t=315>

Despacito ft. Daddy Yankee
Luis Fonsi
Flute

<https://youtu.be/12Th6-4USGU?t=171>



WRITER

Dr. Norman P. Johnson

I've spent a lifetime of watching and closely studying films and the graphic fine arts. I have stage training in direction, lighting, and acting and have a thorough understanding of all aspects of the film business from conception, pre-production, location shooting and post editing, dubbing, and distribution. I am now writing and developing projects. *Kokopelli* is my third film script.

Credits and bio:

Studied filmmaking under George Manupelli at the University of Michigan. Made short art films for the Ann Arbor Film Festival, 1972. Credits: *Ann Arbor Summer '70*, *Challenge of Change*, and *The Tortoise and the Egg*.

35mm carbon arc projectionist and business manager for the Princess Theater in Crested Butte, Colorado, 1974 to 1980; chief projectionist for the Telluride Film Festival, 1977-80, under Bill Pence.

Experimental video with Dana Atchley, video artist and Ace of Space Showman, 1974-80.

After a career in theoretical physics and internet communications, I now split my home between Woodinville, Washington and Molokai, Hawaii. In my off hours, I enjoy volcano skiing, raising chickens, deep-sea fishing, and restoring cars.

