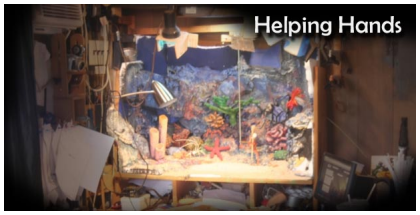

Is it possible to successfully animate puppets without the use of tie downs? John Hankins tests himself to find out.

You probably have heard of John before. He is also known as Castlegardener and was a big help to our previous test site stopmotionmagic.com. He helped with our monthly challenges and other tasks to build our community. Since the demise of that site John has gone on to concentrate on making his new film called Helping Hands.

The big test was to see if he could complete a film where no tie downs are used. That's tough because everyone knows tie downs are one of stop motions biggest helpers. They are the bolts that screw into your puppets feet and hold them in place while they walk. John instead resorted to many legged creatures, flying rigs and paint programs to remove the rigs from shots. That's because his main character the sea horse never really touches the ground. Nor do the fish. And the sandy floor set meant it would be hard to use tie downs even if he wanted to. It would involve disturbing the set way too much.

So the end result of his one year endeavor can be seen below. You can also visit his blog here to see some behind the scenes pictures and thoughts, as well as talk of his brand new project! He is a real stop motion trooper who really loves the entire process. Oh, and also watch some of his previous films
on YouTube over here
. It won't be disappointing.

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