



“UN-BUBBLE-LIEVABLY” FUN

WRITTEN BY BETSY A. ENO
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Soapy spheres delicately drifting through the air bring to mind images of children, gleefully giggling, as they reach out to try and capture these fascinating floating balls. Magical and mesmerizing, bubbles have a magnetic quality that has intrigued scientists, inspired artists, and dazzled people for centuries.

According to an article published on the University of Miami website, soap was first invented by the Phoenicians as early as 600 B.C. However, illustrations of blowing bubbles made from this substance did not appear in Western European art until 1587. In a woodcarving dated that year, French figures can be seen blowing and chasing bubbles in a courtyard, revealing that this amusing activity has been enjoyed for at least 400 years.



In the 17th century, Flemish artists captured images of children on canvas as they blew bubbles using clay pipes. During this same era, English physicist Sir Isaac Newton examined how soap bubbles interfered with light. Through his study, he devised a method of measuring their thickness, discovering that they are 4,000 times thinner than a sheet of paper!

About 100 years later, A & F Pears, a London-based firm, launched an advertising campaign for its soaps in 1886 using a portrait of a child playing with bubbles. This painting by Sir John Everett Millais became famous when it was used for many generations to advertise the company's pear soap.

Although children have been depicted blowing bubbles in art throughout history, it wasn't until more recently that enthusiasm for the activity exploded in our culture. In 1940, cleaning supply company, Clemtoy, began bottling its own bubble solution, a product that was widely distributed to stores by the end of that decade, making it available to the masses. Twenty years later, bubble blowing sustained its popularity, and it was recognized as a symbol of peace and harmony in the 1960s.

Fascination for these intriguing iridescent orbs continued to expand. What was once just a fun way to pass the time had transcended into a creative art form. On a TV show called "That's Incredible!" which aired during the 1980s, Tom Noddy took the bubble craze to a whole new level when he demonstrated his ability to construct a spinning carousel of bubbles using a children's wand. He also created shapes of blocks and stars inside the center of the carousel, making them visible by filling them with smoke. Two decades later in 2007, he appeared on "Late Show with David Letterman," proving that bubble blowing still had a mesmerizing effect on people.

By the 1990s, bubbles began to appear in theatrical performances as well as challenging competitions. Canadian bubble artist and entertainer Fan Yang, regularly performs with his family at "The

Gazillion Bubble Show" in New York City and Las Vegas, wowing crowds with his amazing talent. The 16-time Guinness World Record (GWR) holder has received many accolades, recognizing his artistic skills, such as creating mega-bubbles, generating strands of concentric bubbles, and encapsulating 100 people inside a single bubble.

The official GWR website also credits Gary Pearlman with the record for producing the largest free-floating soap bubble, an event that took place on July 20, 2015, at Wade Oval Park in Cleveland, Ohio. Created using two fishing poles with string tied between them as the apparatus for producing the bubble, the massive soapy wonder measured an astounding 96.27 cubic meters!

Contagiously fun and engaging, blowing bubbles remains an activity that is loved by children of all ages. Since this carefree pastime can be done virtually anywhere, miniature bottles of bubble solution have become popular favors at parties and weddings. Entertaining people for hundreds of years, blowing bubbles is a tradition that shows no signs of "popping" anytime soon.

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1101 TAMAMI TRAIL SOUTH, SUITE 215A
VENICE, FLORIDA, 34285
EMPATHEA.COM • 941.867.0867