



**European Children's
Film Association**
Association Européenne du Cinéma
pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse

interviews

Summer 1993

Becoming Who I Was

**The Day My Father
Became A Bush**

Dancing For You



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KIDS Regio

Every occasion needs a president

White smoke rises over Berlin on a cold day in February: ECFA has a new president! And it wasn't even a stirring conclave: everyone is convinced that Margret Albers is the one to give this organisation the required boost.

It looks like ECFA always gets the president it needs at the right moment in time. When the organisation seemed paralysed and at the end of its powers, a president came who introduced a new efficiency. When ECFA started to rapidly grow in membership numbers, risking to lose its amicable charm, there was a new president who brought back that familiar community feel by inviting you to join projects with the same cheerful enthusiasm as when she invited you onto the dancefloor. And now that ECFA has to prepare itself for further steps in professionalisation and affecting political agendas, board members and a president are welcomed who respectively seem to be born to fulfil this role.

But don't be too fixated on presidents! Like a country is characterised by its inhabitants, ECFA is a reflection of its individual members. That is where the real dynamics come from. So send us your projects, keep on networking and wake up that sleeping dinosaur!

ECFA therefore gives you a platform to speak. Although with this new Journal, we had to do our very best to fit everyone in. After all, we are very proud about who is getting a say here. The winner of the ECFA Award 2017? Check! The winner of the ECFA Doc Award 2017? Check! Two winners of the Berlinale's Generation Kplus competition? Check! The first nominee for the ECFA Award 2018? Check! It is therefore with pride that we present you this new issue.

—
Gert Hermans



ECFA's new president Margret Albers

My Life As A Zucchini (ECFA Award 2017)

While working on short animation films, Swiss director Claude Barras had been preparing his first feature stop-motion film for over six years. His producers called French filmmaker and script writer Céline Sciamma ([TOMBOY](#), [GIRLHOOD](#)) to the rescue, who delivered the final script for **MY LIFE AS A ZUCCHINI**: “My first time writing a children’s film turned out a real pleasure.”

[MY LIFE AS A ZUCCHINI](#) that moved the film professionals during the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs in Cannes and won the Best Feature and the Audience Awards at the Annecy Animation Film Festival, now wins the ECFA Award 2017.

Céline Sciamma: The film is based on the book ‘The Autobiography of a Courgette’ by Gilles Paris, that doesn’t tell a linear story, but compiles individual episodes. I mainly had to cut out non-essential, additional characters: a grandmother, a policeman’s son... Moreover, the book is written for adult readers, making it far more tough. I

had to make the story accessible for a young audience.

Claude Barras: The film seems to please both children and adults, which is a lovely surprise.

And not a simple achievement!

Barras: In the book, Zucchini as a narrator explains how hard life has been for him. As we wanted to avoid a voice-over, we told these stories through the children’s dialogues, in a more modified way, leaving many details untold. We give a vague clue, but it’s horrible extent is to be guessed. I’m convinced that children are intelligent and sensible, maybe even more than adults. They can sense things very strongly. On the other hand, we did not want to come across too didactic.

Who came up with the puppets’ remarkable colourful design?

Barras: I was educated as an illustrator and I love sculpting... Some call it: “Tim Burton in colour” which is more or less correct! I’m also inspired by the colourful wooden marionettes



of Czech animation master Jiří Trnka and I adore ‘art brut’. In those puppets I particularly wanted to convey emotions. We were afraid the eyes would look too big on the big screen. But it all worked out pretty well for an €8 million budget. That’s a lot for a debut, but very little for a stop-motion film. Which led to certain artistic restrictions. However, I found out I like working with restrictions. They strengthen creativity.

At the end, when tears well up in the eyes of the understanding policeman Raymond, the audience starts sobbing collectively.

Barras: Hergé, the author of ‘Tintin’, once said: the simpler a character, the more directly our feelings can be

projected on it and the more we can identify with it, even if that character isn’t realistic at all. I believe animation can touch an audience more than any live action movie.

How correct is your depiction of ‘the institution for neglected children’?

Barras: To keep that realistic, I did a three weeks internship in an institution. Author Gilles Paris even went to work there for a whole year. I’ve been painting a rather idealised picture: the film mainly refers to the most cheerful moments in such institutions, not to the crisis situations.

–

Luk Menten, published in *Filmmagie*, November 2016

Dancing For You (ECFA Doc Award 2017)

“Ordinary stories are never quite ordinary”



In the short documentary **DANCING FOR YOU** ('Dans for livet', winner of the ECFA Doc Award and the doxsfestival in Duisburg) 12-year-old Vilde shows a talent in an unusual field: Halling dancing. She is one of the best Halling dancers in her age group. Her main goal now is the Norwegian Championship. But Vilde's greatest wish is that her grandfather, who has cancer, will live as long as possible. Maybe she can make that happen if she shows him how much she loves both him and life itself. We needed director Erlend E. Mo to explain what the 'Halling dance' is all about.

Erlend E. Mo: The Halling dance is an old traditional Norwegian dance for men to show who was the toughest

guy in town, to win the best girlfriend. In the old times Halling was forbidden for girls. Still hardly any girl does it because it's physically so demanding.

How good are you at Halling dancing?

Mo: I had to go to Denmark to find a girlfriend, where they don't even know about the Halling dance.

What more can you tell about your main character?

Mo: Coincidentally I heard about a girl competing for the national Halling title. Once I found her, it was not her Halling skills but her values that convinced me most. She told me at once: "Halling is fun, but what is most important now is my grandfather, in what might be the last months of his life. My family means everything to me." That's when I knew: this is the girl! Through the bond with her grandfather, she shows us what is really important in life: caring for each other.

How could you and your camera silently fit into this intimate family



relationship?

Mo: The same as always when making films about delicate issues: taking lots of time to create a feeling of total confidence, so that everyone has 100% trust in me. Once started, I really want to finish the project together. If they want to withdraw, that should be possible. If they no longer feel good about making the film, we stop! That kind of security should be there all the time.

In all my films there were moments when the project was at stake, and protagonists had doubts if they wanted to continue. Then we discuss why it's so difficult and only if they feel the film is just as important for them as for me, we'll carry on.

Any news from the family ever since?

Mo: I had a great evening with them two days ago. They treat me as a family member, I sleep over, we drink wine and talk about life. Granddad died 6 months after the shooting. Vilde is becoming a grown-up girl but she's just as pure and grounded as she used to be. She now is pretty modest about her Halling ambitions: "it's not a matter of life or death".

Was DANCING FOR YOU somehow meaningful in the family's mourning process?

Mo: Absolutely. What makes me very happy about this film, is that the family appreciates so much having this memorial about their grandfather. His





widow told me that he himself was happy about it all the way, seeing it as a kind of testament. Not concerning houses, money, or goods, but about moral values and the things he found important. He was very well aware of that, and often told me that maybe today's words could be his last ones.

Where exactly is the film located?

Mo: In Telemark, which is supposed to be the cradle of Norway. It was the last Norwegian place to be christened, a heathen place where gods like Thor and Odin lasted for a long time. A wild mountainous area where traditional folk culture always has been living strong.

That environment has a major influence on the films atmosphere: in all the people you can feel nature's nearness.

Mo: Growing up in Telemark, I have this relationship with nature myself. Many people there still see nature as a kind of 'living god' you have to che-

rish and respect. Nowadays I see so much disrespect for nature. Treating nature badly, in the end we will get bad things in return. In every one of my films you'll meet people showing this kind of respect.

The first impression of DANCING FOR YOU could be rather folkloristic, which doesn't do justice to the film. How did you manage not to make it look like a tribute to conservatism, folklore or even patriotism?

Mo: I was aware of that risk. That's why my cinematographer and I inserted special dance sequences where you wouldn't expect them. If we had edited the traditional dancing only where you'd expect to see it, the result would have been terrible. We tried it out... and it was terrible indeed. We were worried the film could suddenly turn into something the new nationalist movement would adore, as nationalism is one of the few things in life I absolutely despise. By making the relationship between grandfather and child the key subject, we shift the attention from the potential nationalistic elements. I always portray people that are different, awkward, doing things that you wouldn't expect. Misfits maybe, but with great pride in what they do. Consequently depicting the not-so-normal as normal should

be my contribution to tolerance and anti-fascism.

How did you end up making documentaries?

Mo: At film school I was supposed to become an animator, with quite good response. Until I found out I didn't have the patience, working for 2 days to get a 10 seconds result. Then I tried fiction, but the stories didn't feel real to me. How to find real stories? Let's try documentaries! That felt good: I was filming things that really happened right there, close to you. I appreciated the political impact but also the sensation to meet so many people and hear their so called ordinary stories, which actually never were quite ordinary, but always special. Being able to tell them is a privilege. Making documentaries should be no excuse for making boring films. Then you've just been lazy. I've made boring films, but only when I was lazy.

With the Doc Award, ECFA is hoping to give more visibility to youth documentaries. How can we do that, according to you?

Mo: The most important thing is that young people actually get to see the films. In Norway we have a programme called 'The Cultural Rucksack'. They make me tour with my film all th-

rough the country. The combination of a good children's documentary and the presence of a director, discussing the themes with the kids, is working really well. It makes them think about their own lives, their family relationships... We also discuss 'materialism': What do you find really important in life? Do you talk about it with your parents? Or do you just get stuff to make you shut up? That conversation 'worked' wherever I've been, even in the United States where I was invited for a school tour in Colorado. I did exactly the same thing as in Norway, with exactly the same result: kids telling me about their grandparents or lost beloved ones... There was no difference – just a small ocean between us.



Director Erlend E. Mo



Your production company Sant & Usant is one of the few having the courage to profoundly invest in youngsters documentaries.

Mo: They believe in high quality documentaries, whether for grown-ups or children. When I ask for some expensive scenes, they make an effort to come with a budget. Why should children be given less? Why should we not have the ambition to deliver them high quality? That is an uncompromising vision, appreciated by the Norwegian Film Institute.



One final question about a mythical moment in the film... A girl standing on a horse!

Mo: Isn't that magic? Often in documentaries you do a lot of planning to capture magical moments... But then they do not necessarily happen. The most magical things happen just like this. Vilde was taking care of the horse, while the photographer was packing his stuff. And then... "What is she doing? She's gone crazy! Get your camera out again!" He did in no time, got a steady shot and while we were staring at it through the falling snow, I'm sure both of us were thinking: no wonder I'm making documentaries!

— Gert Hermans

Koyaa Unique preschool slapstick



Koyaa and his friend, the wise Raven, live on a rocky ledge high above the clouds. Away from the urban hustle, they lead an exciting life without a second of boredom. Koyaa stumbles into comical adventures with everyday objects coming to life, acting all sorts of wacky: you name it... socks, scarves, books or a sunbed. Items run around, fly into the sky or mess up the house. While Koyaa tries to get things back in order, Raven is patiently building, crafting birdhouses. He grumbles amicably, but all in good spirits.

Kolja Saksida and production house ZVVIKS present six KOYAA animated short films. Following the success of the pilot episode KOYAA – THE EXTRAORDINARY (2011) which screened at over a hundred international festivals, the entertaining chap in alpine garments is making a merry return. Every day, Koyaa finds himself facing comical twists that

require clever anticipation. Meanwhile, the kind Mr. Raven is focused on his work: building a colourful assortment of birdhouses.

Simple fixes are never good enough for the situations Koyaa gets caught up in. Until he fires up his imagination, searching for an out-of-the box solution while making his signature move: slapping his knees twice and leaping up in the air.

Koyaa has been „tested“ all over the world in festivals and on TV. The response was always positive: kids love Koyaa and find his stories irresistibly funny. With his films, Saksida colours beyond the lines of standard kids productions. He takes a fresh angle with slapstick mishaps that don't moralise but cheerfully emphasise the value of creativity and independent thinking. Slapstick stop motion puppet comedy without dialogue and original scores in various musical genres (jazz, reggae, polka) created primarily for family and preschool audiences.



More info about the animated KOYAA series (7 x 2'45''): info@zvviks.net, www.koyaa.net.

→ [watch trailer](#)



Director & producer Kolja Saksida: “Reinterpreting solid objects”

“I first heard the word „Koyaa“ while watching the film KOYAANISQATSI. It originates in the Hopi Native American language, where it means „crazy life“ or „life out of balance“. Like life on the rocky ledge, where days are often chaotic.”

Kolja Saksida: As a kid I spent quite some time adventuring around forests and hills, alone or with my grandpa. Exploring nature, I kept making up stories and crafting tools to play with. Those are some of my favorite memories. The fresh mountain air clears the „fog“ from the brain, so a rocky ledge feels just perfect for discovering new ideas.

The common theme of KOYAA films is objects coming to life and playing pranks.

Saksida: The narrative formula is based on my own childhood experiences, when a tree trunk could be a space rocket or a cardboard box could be a subterranean cave - just like that. The ease with which solid objects could be reinterpreted when I was 5 or 6 years of age made me think of the KOYAA plot concept. By creating animation for kids I'm able to keep my inner child happy. The world of imagination, visual comic surprise and gag-based action is naturally close to children's perception, making them laugh and, hopefully, also spurring new thinking. We put a lot of thought into children's psycholo-



Working on KOYAA © ZVVIKS

gy and cognitive perception of audiovisual media. Koyaa always stumbles, but doesn't get discouraged. He keeps trying until he discovers a winning idea, encouraging children (and parents) towards some patience and curiosity.

Stop motion animation is a demanding, meticulous process.

Saksida: Everything, puppets and sets, is custom made. These days, most studios find that too time consuming. Once we've finished the puppets and set elements, we shoot approx. 4 seconds per day on a single set. Still, physical puppets have a unique charm to them, the material feels familiar in a tactile sense, tangible, solid. To make it all happen 35

people are involved, maintaining a sharp quality standard. And the best part is: I've already been working with many of them for over 10 years.

In March 2017 you released six KOYAA episodes.

Saksida: These shorts will continue their festival journey. Next comes cinema distribution and then television screening, which is already secured in Slovenia. Another six episodes are currently in pre-production planned for shooting in early 2018. In the meantime we've been working with an international team of screenwriters on a TV special and an expanded KOYAA's animation bible that will support future storylines. We'd also like to broaden Koyaa's world to the digital realm, by developing an app and games for mobile devices. And we're about to launch KOYAA merchandise, based on a „do-it-yourself“ concept, encouraging children's creativity.

ZVVIKS Team



Director & animator Kolja Saksida © ZVVIKS

Nordstadtkinder - Lutwi

"I'm always out on the street. No matter if it rains or snows." **Playing football, roaming around the neighbourhood or building a hut: Lutwi is 12 and being together with his buddies for him is the greatest thing. They have sworn to remain best friends forever. He feels completely at home in the 'Nordstadt', a quarter in the city of Dortmund, Germany, where he has been living with his parents and five siblings for the last four years. But for how long?**



Lutwi is a good student. He recently managed to make the transition to the fifth grade and will now attend a comprehensive school. His goal is to do his final exams in Germany. Lutwi's parents, Roma from Kosovo, are proud: *"In order to stay here you have to attain good results. Then they'll see*

you're fighting for it." The bright boy realises exactly the risky situation for his family, threatened with deportation back to Kosovo. It seems like the only reason for letting them stay is Lutwi's mother's poor health situation, traumatised as she is by the war.

Since his parents speak little German, Lutwi has to translate the talks with the lawyer and explain what is written in letters from the authorities. A big responsibility for a twelve year old. With the imminent deportation hovering above, giving up is no option. Lutwi finds his own way of dealing with an uncertain future.

In this affectionate portrait, the camera follows Lutwi wherever he goes, whether he is on the street playing soccer or at home where the atmosphere is much more charged, consistently maintaining Lutwi's point of view. Without being artificially charged with emotion, NORDSTADTKINDER - LUTWI tells the story of a boy torn between exuberant play and overwhelming insecurity.



The film by German directors Jörg Haaßengier & Jürgen Brügger is part of the WDR documentary series „Hier und heute“ and their cross-media project „Nordstadtkinder“ which accompanies - in various portraits - children and adolescents in their everyday life documenting the habitat of youngsters from Nordstadt. In 2016 NORDSTADTKINDER - LUTWI was part of the doxs! festival programme.

Recently, the film was awarded with the prestigious German TV prize 'Grimme-Preis'. In their award proclamation, the jury stated: *"The closeness between the filmmakers and their protagonist, an unconditional qualification for this kind of documentary work, is constantly felt and completely free from voyeuristic temptations. If the documentary theory had not put the term out of action, this would be the time to speak with a clear conscience of the power of the 'authentic'."*

The Doxspot column is published with the help of the doxs! festival for children & youth documentaries (Duisburg, Germany), www.do-xs.de.



Find more information about the WDR series [NORDSTADTKINDER](https://www.wdr5.de/nordstadtkinder).

NORDSTADTKINDER - LUTWI, Germany, 2015, 29'.

Directors & script: Jörg Haaßengier, Jürgen Brügger, DOP: Jörg Haaßengier, Editing: Gerhard Schick, Sound: Jürgen Brügger, Production: WDR, Editorial Department: Hier und Heute, Emanuela Penev.

Contact: Brit Kaemmerer, brit.kaemmerer@wdr.de, www.hierundheute.de.

40 YEARS OF CHILDREN'S CINEMA AT OBERHAUSEN

63rd International Short Film Festival Oberhausen (11-16 May)



SCENT OF GERANIUM, Naghme Farzaneh, USA

When the first official children's film programme was shown in Oberhausen in 1978, it was organised by a member of the team in addition to his "official" functions and consisted of four films. The festival bulletin wrote: "During the preparations of this children's film programme was noted that very few new short film productions are on offer and almost none of the few available films seems adapted to meeting the needs of a children's audience, whether in terms of entertainment, information or education." One year later, in 1979 (the "Year of the Child"), there was already a whole week of programming for children, though one review still complained of the critics' disregard of the program-

mes and the scarcity of good children's films. The way and format in which films should be screened for children was much under discussion – Oberhausen's children's film programmes in Germany were, in many ways, ground-breaking.

The Oberhausen children's films programmes have since come a long way. Today, 40 years later, the festival presents around 40 new films from around the world every year. Films are programmed by age groups (from 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 years) and screened to local schools, as well as to an increasingly interested industry audience. It is no longer just the Children's Cinema but the Children's & Youth Film Competition with regular extra programmes like the MuVi 14+ selection, screening music videos suitable for an audience of 14 years and up, or this year, to celebrate the section's 40th anniversary, two programmes of children's films from the festival history. The selection for the competitions is compiled by a group of experts and is as open as to genre and format as the "adult" competitions. The aim is always to find films

that relate to the children's world, and that will offer them different formats than what they see on television or in the cinema.

Children curating

There's another anniversary in 2017: in 1993, the first children's film competition was organised. Today Oberhausen is proud to welcome its 25th children's & young people's jury. Both juries award prizes worth a total of €3.000. Over the past ten years, Oberhausen has also increased its activities in media education. The juries are tutored in advance about how to evaluate films and develop criteria for what makes a "good" short film. Since 2009, kids from both age groups annually produce a trailer for the children and youth film programmes. Oberhausen has also experimented with different formats, for example a workshop with children curating a programme of experimental films or staging a Poetry Clip Competition, in which adolescents wrote texts and produced clips to premier at the festival.



EVENT HORIZON, Joséfa Celestin, France & UK

In addition to activities geared towards children, Oberhausen is also organising events for teachers and media educators. In cooperation with the diocese of Essen, the festival is traditionally offering a workshop for media educators and in 2017 the festival is organising, for the first time, a teachers conference entitled "LOOK. What can short films contribute to education?"

More info: www.kurzfilmtage.de; Contact kiju@kurzfilmtage.de.

Festival accreditation (until end of April): <https://www.kurzfilmtage.de/en/festival/professionals/accreditation/>

– Sabine Niewalda

One Berlinale, two winners

In this year's Berlinale the Grand Prix of the Generation Kplus International Jury, endowed with €7.500 by the Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk (Children's Charity), was given ex aequo to the films **BECOMING WHO I WAS** (Chang-Yong Moon & Jin Jeon, Republic of Korea) and **SUMMER 1993** (ESTIU 1993, Carla Simón, Spain). Uta Beth spoke with the directors of both films.



Carla Simon about SUMMER 1993

Six-year-old Frida lost her mum, who died of a disease that at no point in the film is it called by its name, but is clearly recognised by everyone. Now Frida will move in with her uncle, in her new countryside home. At night, she prays for her mother, while during the day playing house with her niece Anna should help her to acquire her own place in this new family. Despite all the underlying tension Frida remains honest and sincere in all her emotions: in her grief and her joy, in her obedience and her rebellion.

In granting the award to this documentary, jury members Fabian Gasmia (Germany), Aneta Ozorek (Poland) and Yoon Ga-eun (Republic of Korea) stated: "Through the eyes of a little girl we learn how to cope with loss. The lesson that this incredible heroine learns us, is that no matter how much it hurts, it is the unconditional love of the people around you that will ease your pain. Besides the outstanding performance of the young main actress the jury was impressed by the beautiful cinematography and sensual mise-en-scène!"

SUMMER 1993 also got the GWFF Best First Feature Award, endowed with € 50.000, funded by the Gesellschaft zur Wahrnehmung von Film- und Fernsehrecht. The prize money is to be split between producer and director. Debut films from the sections Competition, Panorama, Forum, Generation, and Perspektive Deutsches Kino compete for the award.

Carla Simon: **SUMMER 1993** is my own story, that I've been carrying around my whole life. While studying at the London Film School, I made three short films, all of them somehow inspired by my family. **BORN POSITIVE** was a documentary about young



people born with HIV. They all shared a secret that was kept hidden to them when they were children and that, once they found out about it, they had to hide from others. In the short film **LIPSTICK** two siblings are facing the death of their grandma and my graduation film **THOSE LITTLE THINGS** showed the relationship between a mother and a daughter who suffers from achondroplasia. Those two characters (just like many other elements from all three films) found their way into **SUMMER 1993**, as Grandma and Aunt Lola. Probably living in London made me realise what was special about me: this extended family, with its countless stories and entanglements. However, **SUMMER 1993** is the most personal story I've

ever told, taking my own memories as a starting point.

On stage you told the audience this film was actually 'born in Berlin'?

Simon: I applied to the Berlinale Talent Campus, and I found out there was this Script Station lab where you could get feedback from script editors. **SUMMER 1993** got selected in 2015, which indeed caused important progress in my script development. After the sessions with Selina Ukwoma, I wrote a new draft in which more importance was given to Frida's mum.

Was Laia Artigas pre-destined for the role of Frida, your six year old alter ego?

Simon: It was important that she re-



sembled a bit to Frida in terms of personality and family context. Living in a city, Laia is not used to the countryside, and neither is she growing up in a conventional family structure. Moreover, she has a great acting intuition. With an innate talent she listens to her co-actors and reacts to them. There were few girls who could carry a truth like Laia does. She can look innocent but dark at the same time; her eyes expressing deep feelings and nuances.



How did you work with her, and with 4 year old Paula Robles (playing Anna)?

Simon: The casting took about 6 months, but what you finally see in the film is really 'a family'. For me that was crucial. The girls have never read a script. We had long settings to make them forget about the camera, sometimes improvising for more than 5 hours to capture the right feel.

That's tough for such small children!

Simon: The girls enjoyed it, for them it was a game. During rehearsals, we met on weekends or after school and played being a family, doing very simple improvisation exercises: going for a walk in the park, cooking, playing games, reading books, celebrating a birthday... All simple things that Laia and Paula themselves would do with their real families, but now shared with 'a fictional family'. Then I introduced some little conflicts to install specific relationships between the characters. If all actors could share some common memories, their relationship would feel more real. For me the best scenes were those in which Anna and Frida play their games, making every take a different adventure.

How did you manage the scene in which Frida lures Paula into the water?

Simon: The water was icy-cold. I stood behind Laia, telling her: now Esteve will shout at you, but it has nothing to do with you, it has to do with the film.

What about the adult actors?

Simon: David (playing Esteve, Frida's new dad) and Bruna (new mum Marga) were very generous towards the girls. David had a great connec-



SUMMER 1993 crew © The Berlinale

tion with both girls, while Bruna developed a special bond with Laia. They both didn't have children themselves (although David will soon become a father), so they were learning about different phases of parenthood. My grandpa and my aunt died a few years ago. Creating the characters of the grandparents (Isabel Rocatti and Fermi Reixach) and aunt Lola (Montse Sanz), it was strange but beautiful to see them coming to life again on screen. And the character of young aunt Anna is played by my cousin Berta Pipo, which was a true enrichment, as we share the same family, the same background.

Jazz music seems to have a special function in the film.

Simon: Esteve loves music, songs always play when he is at work. Going through his own grief, Esteve is very

introspective. The music makes you feel Esteve's presence, his isolation and his sorrow over the loss of a sister.

My new dad loves music too and in our house jazz has always been around. That's why I asked my brother Ernest to compose the music for the film, inspired by the tunes we always heard at home.

Where the girls ever curious about AIDS?

Simon: We never really talked about the way Frida's mum died, until we rehearsed the scene in which Laia and Bruna are lying on the bed... I told Laia to ask whatever she wanted, and like in the script, her first question was: how did my mum die? Bruna answered, explaining about the disease without mentioning its name. However, when Laia heard the word AIDS, she reacted: "what an ugly name!" So together they invented new names for it, that sounded more kind to their ears.

In the early nineties AIDS was a taboo.

Simon: Unfortunately, it still is. It carries an unfair stigma that is difficult to get rid of. In the nineties little was known about it, there was no cure and



people were scared. Nowadays, those who carry the virus lead normal lives but most of them still hide it because of the social taboo. I think it's important for those who have been close to someone who died of AIDS, to talk about it openly, trying to normalise what should have been normalised already a long time ago.

What do the awards mean for you and SUMMER 1993?

Simon: We were so happy to premiere at the Berlinale, I will always remember the first screening as one of the most beautiful moments in my life. Then, when we got the prizes, I was speechless. The award is such a big recognition for everyone who worked on the film.

Making SUMMER 1993 did help me to grow, both professionally and personally. I learned a lot about my family, about my place in the world, about the condition humaine... I so much came to appreciate the creative process of working with a team. It's amazing to feel how a personal story can touch so many people's hearts. The audience in Berlin came out of the screenings saying "thank you for the film", which I think is the most beautiful thing someone can tell to a filmmaker.



Chang-Yong Moon & Jin Jeon about BECOMING WHO I WAS



Jury statement: "In this beautifully shot tale we learn in a wonderful bittersweet way how much an adult and a child can learn from each other. The filmmaker achieved the most difficult thing: making the audience laugh and cry. The film gave us confidence in humanity. If the values of the story's young hero would only be reflected a little bit by its audience, the world would become a better place."

Chang-Yong Moon has been working as a director and cinematographer since 1998. Jin Jeon grew up in four different countries and after working for South-African television, she is now based in South Korea. They've been working for more than 8 years on this wonderful documentary about



Padma Angdu, the later Rinpoche, and his aged mentor and later assistant, doctor Urgyan Rickzen.

Moon: The story developed quite different from what we expected. In 2009, when working on a documentary about traditional Asian medicine, I went to Sakti, a mountain village in the North-East of India. There I met Urgyan and a young boy who was always in his company. Urgyan was a high lama and a renowned traditional doctor, using herbal medicine that he made from herbs gathered in the mountains. I was fascinated by the relationship between the doctor and the boy named Padma Angdu, based on absolute love and trust. It conjured up a familiar feeling of the unconditional love I received from my mother

and I decided to show their extraordinary bond in a documentary. One year later Padma Angdu was enthroned as a 'Rinpoche' in a nearby Ladakh monastery. At that moment we had no idea where the story would lead to...

What exactly is a 'Rinpoche' and what is so special about the case of Padma Angdu?

Moon: In Tibetan Buddhism 'Rinpoche' is an honorary title for a reincarnated Lama or teacher. But as the boy is a reincarnation of a high monk living 1500 years ago in Kham, a region in East Tibet, he was in political terms reborn at the wrong place. That is to say: he is separated from his monastery through a severely guarded border and his disciples can't find him.





Therefore people did not believe any longer in the reincarnation of Padma Angdu and thought he might be a 'false' Rinpoche, a fraud.

Moon: We were deeply emotionally involved and felt for him. We had some negative experiences with people getting suspicious but contrary to us, Ugyan and Angdu remained positive and relaxed under every circumstance.

Why did it take you so long to finish the project?

Jeon: It was a difficult production process. To make ends meet, we had to keep our daytime jobs in TV while saving time, money and efforts to continue our passion project. As the process took longer than expected, funds got insufficient, and hence we couldn't take others on board in the production. Moon and I had to do pretty much everything ourselves. And then there were the travel costs, two or three times per year to Ladakh for two months...

Our main characters had to prepare their journey to Tibet, crossing the border between Tibet and North India near Sikkem. They put it off for over a year due to the fearful news they heard from Tibetans in exile. Their journey was postponed until early 2016. We had to wait patiently – all the time we knew we definitely had to capture this trip, as it would be a significant moment in their lives. During the journey we were anxious for what could happen. We followed them wherever we could, but sometimes we had to part, when they wanted to make prayers in a temple or attend a funeral.

Did Angdu like being in front of the camera?

Moon: Not as much as he liked playing soccer – always India versus Korea!

How did you manage to shoot the scenes in the snow?

Jeon: It wasn't easy to work in minus 20 degrees. We were using drones to film those scenes, but at one stage Moons fingers were frozen from working those drones too long. There was no proper heating, due to frozen pipes we had no running water and there was a food shortage in the remote village of Sakti.

Moon: Our protagonists were used to the cold – we even had a snowball fight with them. They only wore the clothes you see, while we had extra jackets and were struggling with the thin air at that height.

Jeon: But the biggest challenge was Angdu entering the age of adolescence. He got really difficult and easily upset, rebelling against his mother and his mentor. No one had the authority to discipline him like an ordinary child, as he is a noble boy. Often we had to put the camera down in order to spend time understanding his demands – like for example building a mud monastery.

What was the true reason to tell this story?

Moon: This young Rinpoche, born first 1500 years ago, in contrast to his noble birth has been dealt a bad hand. He only has his poor, aging mentor to depend on. This story highlights how difficult yet beautiful it is to guard one's belief on the journey to find one's place in the world. This heart-warming story found in the barren land of Ladakh gave me a sense of hope: there is always someone to guard us. I wanted to remind the world of this valuable human experience that we have long forgotten, living our busy lives.



Jin Jeon & Chang-Yong Moon © The Berlinale

How does it feel to win an award at the Berlinale festival?

Jeon: Moon and I can't believe what happened, it feels unreal. All I know is that this wouldn't have been possible without the support of family, friends and colleagues, who never stopped believing in our seemingly futile efforts – working tirelessly without funds. Now the film will be screened at festivals around the world, like Hot Docs in Toronto, and will be theatrically released in South Korea in September.

–
Uta Beth

DFI 'on the road' in the Middle East

'Cinema on the Road' is a project in full bloom, now reaching out towards new locations: the Lebanese refugee camps. "There, film creates a free space for children who know the seriousness of life all too well," says Khadije Nasser from the Danish Embassy in Beirut.



Cinema on the Road is a cultural programme with different components, like screenings in urban and rural environments, and since 2015 also in camps and settlements. Charlotte Giese (The Danish Film Institute): "It started as a Danish Embassy programme in Lebanon, screening films offered by the DFI. With so little content available for young people in that part of the world, the project really seemed

to work. Two years ago we got a local partner involved with a background in the art & cinema scene - in order to secure sustainability as well as local anchorage: Metropolis Art Cinema in Beirut, a beautiful high end arthouse cinema and distribution company. Now Metropolis, together with the Embassy, is doing an amazing job in the execution of the program!"

In which the DFI acts as an advisor?

"DFI trained local NGOs on how to work with film – which for most of them is a rather new thing to do. We taught them skills like: how to open a dialogue through film? And how to prepare for reactions from children, who themselves are often dealing with serious issues: their childhood and education often severely affected by the war, they might be traumatised by the terrible things they've seen, i.e. we had to be careful selecting the right films."

Satire & provocation

Then what specific selection criteria did you use? "The final selection was mainly done by Metropolis Art Cinema,



Al-Bass Refugee Camp (Charlotte Giese, right)

sometimes consulting the NGO's on how a film would be received. What the films on our list have in common: they carry within a feeling of hope. They're not too tragic, not explicitly dealing with refugee stories, and not about children facing the loss of a family member. Stories stimulating fantasy and friendship, preferably with a 'soft approach': all titles should have a certain lightness or humour – it's good to laugh! The selection is never easy. Working in Tanzania and Uganda for the DFI, there was a specific demand for film with no sex, no nudity, no bad language, and no violence. Knowing the Danish film tradition, with its satire and provocation, we're at times challenged! Ending up in our selection were features like [WE SHALL OVERCOME](#) (Niels Arden Oplev) and the [KARLA](#)

trilogy (Charlotte Sachs Bostrup), short films like [HELIUM](#) (Anders Walter) and [THE MOUSE](#) (Pil Maria Gunnarsson) or Jannik Hastrup animations like [WAR AND PEAS](#). In programs like this, the DFI is sharing more than films: a mindset, a model, our experiences in using cinema as the powerful tool it is."

It's obvious you want to show them films, but why 'trouble' your audience with film education?

"Maybe the name of the workshop 'Film & Dialogue' describes more precisely what it's about: introducing film culture as a tool for empowerment of children in conflict or crises. It's more about making them talk in general and using film as a starting point, than explaining exactly i.e. how the editing process works.

What is so good about films is that they shift the focus away from the audience's own problematic situation. The young viewers can identify with a character through questions like 'what would you have done if you were in his/her shoes?' Maybe they might project some of their hopes and dreams onto that character. Cinema can strengthen the creative capacity to imagine what





does not already exist.”

Khadije Nasser adds: “Films have a huge untapped potential as teaching tools. They stimulate children’s imaginations and play. Even if the stories are set far from their own reality, children have no problem identifying with the characters.”

100 plastic chairs

How should I imagine those screenings in refugee camps? Giese:

“Even in a camp, or a settlement with tents, there is often a little projector, and a general challenge to limit the light coming into the room. Often children are sitting on the floor. In one place they had a small theatre, a charming

but worn-out old cinema. They gathered a 100 plastic chairs to sit on. Often there is a screen or a white wall... that probably even isn’t always that white. If the film is subtitled or sometimes dubbed, is all a matter of costs. Once we have a film dubbed, we can use the copies elsewhere i.e. in Palestine, Egypt and in refugee camps in Greece and Denmark.”

True exchange

Developing projects in the Middle East can hardly be seen outside a political context? “If we had the resources, we would cooperate with the entire world. But we have to prioritise. Due to the actual global situation, the

national government has for a number of years been giving high priority to activities aiming at promoting dialogue with the Middle East. Another key priority area has been the new generation of young people. We found generous funding partners in the Agency for Culture and Palaces and the Danish Institute in Damascus.”

It also proves a commitment from the DFI. “Our international work is only a very small part of what we do in the Children & Youth Department. But within that corner we do our best to give access to the knowledge that we have. More than money and funding what we share is based on our best practice experiences and on our belief in the importance of high quality films for young people. Meanwhile, we’re eager to learn from our local partners. It’s not the DFI implementing a worldwide media literacy standard, it’s a true exchange. These programs make an impact for all partners. With such experiences we use them in developing a system to use films as better tools for the integration process in Denmark. That is an ambition we’re currently sharing with the BFI (UK) and Vision Kino (Germany).”

Local content

What would help you to take Cinema on the Road to a next level? “There is very little audio-visual content available for young people in the Arab region as well as in Africa. I currently do research (on a private basis) on how to support content development for young people in these areas. I often combine cinema programs for youth with masterclasses for the professional film industry, because they’re the ones to produce new content in the future. The DFI assisted in establishing ‘Film Lab: Palestine’ in Ramallah – which could be an environment for the production of short films for young people, produced in their own country. I hope that our humble experiences from the Middle East and Africa can be built upon in the future in order to stimulate more continuous local and global initiatives, that aim at empowering the next generations through film and media.”

–
Gert Hermans

Why we love short films!

Short films (also for adults) are often shrugged off as child's play, in which students can learn their craft, an exercise platform for the big 'feature film' brother. But short film is much more than just a training ground for feature films. Especially for children and young people the short form offers an infinite number of advantages: it might fit to the young children's attention span and offer an ideal introduction to cinema as a new and magical place. On the other hand, because of the relatively small budget, it often allows greater artistic freedom and more room for experiments. Short films are often less standardised than features, which often have to adhere to visual or narrative conventions, because of financial pressure. Children and teenagers are much more receptive to experimental forms and surprises, which makes it particularly important to get them in contact with different film formats at an early stage.

That the short film can be much more uncomfortable for our (fixed) viewing habits than the feature, is a hurdle worth to overcome: although it leaves us after some time alone again with our thoughts, thus limiting immersion, at the same time it offers us more time to reflect and discuss. This can be important, not only for schools, but for early media reception in general. Short films can span all genres. Short film programmes therefore often offer a possibility for direct comparison. A contextualisation

on that is necessary and conducive for the development of media comprehension and not in the least for the development of one's own taste.

Condensing and translating

As diverse as the world of short films may be there are, of course, some not compelling but often common features. Often it is simply a matter of perfectly condensing a short idea and translating it into a story. Like *AWAKER* (Prebůdzač, 2017): this brand-new Czech animation by Filip Diviak shows an older man, who every morning in wind and weather travels the long way from his house to the village. What he does exactly, the audience discovers only gradually, finally surprised by a small, charming plot.



AWAKER

Another, but equally appropriate example is the experimental documentary *TEN METER TOWER* (Hopptornet, Sweden, 2016) by Maximilien Van Aertryck & Axel Danielson, winning last year's Youth Jury Award in Hamburg. People who have never been up on a 10-meter tower have to decide whether to jump or descend. The situation illustrates



TEN METER TOWER

tes a dilemma: estimating one's fear against the embarrassment of retreat. Again, form determines the content, thus illustrating the quality of a good short film: to capture a certain moment, a feeling or an idea exactly to the point!

Nothing more, but definitely nothing less!

The Short Cut column is published with the help of the [Mo&Friese KinderKurzFilmFestival](#), one of the few children's film festival exclusively dedicated to short films. As a part of the Hamburg Short Film Agency, the festival aims to present documentaries and experimental films in addition to animation and short films as well as to arouse the curiosity of children and to stimulate their imagination.



Luoghi Comuni (Common Space)

A 'Different' Video Contest



In Bari, Rome and Milan, a series of video workshops with active participation of Roma and non-Roma boys and girls has come to an end. The workshops had been organised as a collaboration between three schools, video professionals, an educator and a Roma mediator, and were implemented with financial support from the Rights, Equality & Citizenship Programme of the European Union.

During six months, boys and girls have been engaged in a participatory artistic path. The teenagers were given a chance to express themselves freely and debate on issues such as 'discrimination against Roma people' and 'being different'. Most importantly, they were able to discover what they actually have in common, and which bridges can be built together to create a culture of inclusion.

The participants gathered weekly during school hours in Bari or after school, in Milan and Rome. The three schools joined the project with great enthusiasm, and informed their students about the opportunities offered by taking part in video workshops. In Milan and Rome participants had to be selected from a large number of applicants. Even Roma boys and girls who didn't attend one of the participating schools were able to join the project every week.

Everyone got a chance to use the camera; many played a part in the short movies; some even developed a passion for the final editing process.

Getting the videos out there

The three videos produced are the result of the hard work by teenagers, supported by selected professionals. Together with the Roma mediator and educator, the students were able to co-design the videos' filming process, theme, format and music. A real participatory and empowering process!

Here we are now, with three short movies that we intend to disseminate on a national and European level. We're planning to broadcast the videos through festivals, about which we hope ECFA members or other festivals will get in touch with us.

To this end, we're organising awareness incubators in schools and youth centres. The incubators will be directed by the participants themselves in order to encourage peer education, though always supported by an educator and Roma mediator. The relationships between all participants are strong now! In addition to viewing videos this should inspire teens to discuss about diversity, stimulating a reflection on equality and inclusion.

Finally, we believe that the Video Contest Luoghi Comuni will be crucial for the dissemination of the three videos made by Roma and non-Roma boys and girls. The videos will be permanently available online, but voting for your favourite is only possible from 18 April - 14 June. This contest proves that bridges for inclusion can be built, and that the new generations are indeed willing to build them!

→ [watch clips & vote](#)

More information about the project and about screening these films through your (festival or other) platforms: [BiR Onlus – Associazione Bambini in Romania](#), progetti@bironlus.eu.

– Antonella Lamorte



New European films for children or young people which are ready to be discovered for your programmes. More information and more films can be found at www.ecfaweb.org/european-childrens-film-network/feature-films. Producers, distributors and sales agents are kindly invited to inform us of their new releases.

Almost Heaven



Feature, UK, 2017

Director: Carol Salter
 Prod. & World Sales: Rocksalt Films
 Phone: ++33-1-46-43-20-60
info@rocksaltfilms.com
www.rocksaltfilms.com

Anka

Feature, Croatia, France, 2017
 Director: Dejan Acimovic
 Prod. & World Sales: DA film
 Phone: ++385-1-48-16-610
dafilm.dejan@gmail.com

Cloudboy

Feature, Belgium/Sweden/Netherlands, 2017
 Director: Meikeminne Clincspoor
 Prod.: Bulletproof Cupid, Götafilm, Submarine
 World Sales: LevelK
 Phone: ++45-48-44-30-72
tine.klint@levelk.dk
www.levelk.dk

Elementary



Feature, France, 2016

Director: Hélène Angel
 Prod.: Lionceau Films, Studiocanal, France 2
 World Sales: Studiocanal
 Phone: ++33-1-71-35-35-35
anna.marsh@studiocanal.com
www.studiocanal.com

Enough



Feature, The Netherlands, 2016

Director: Tessa Schram
 Prod.: Shooting Star
 World Sales: Incredible Film
 Phone: ++31-6-53-94-89-86
danielle@incrediblefilm.nl
www.incrediblefilm.nl

The Girl Down Loch Änzi



Documentary, Switzerland, 2016

Director: Alice Schmid
 Prod. & World Sales: Ciné A.S.
 Phone: ++41-44-20-24-969
cineas@cybermail.ch
www.aliceschmid.ch

Goodbye Berlin

Feature, Germany, 2016
 Director: Fatih Akin
 Prod.: Lago Film, Studiocanal
 World Sales: Studiocanal
 Phone: ++33-1-71-35-35-35
See address above

Grand Hotel



Feature, Norway, 2016

Director: Arild Frøhlich
 Prod. & World Sales: 4 1/2 Fiksjon
 Phone: ++47-40-00-63-28
vigdis@fourandahalf.no
www.fireogehalv.no

How I Met My Father

Feature, France, 2017
 Director: Maxime Motte
 Prod.: Chapka Films, Vendôme Prod., D8 Films
 World Sales: Other Angle Pictures
 Phone: ++33-9-54-88-02-41
otheranglepics@gmail.com



Little Harbour



Feature, Slovakia, Czech Rep., 2017

Director: Ivetta Grófová

Prod.: Hulapa Film, Endor Film

World Sales: Loco Films

Phone: ++ 33-7-86-12-89-67

info@loco-films.com

www.loco-films.com

Mum is Wrong



Feature, France, 2016

Director: Marc Fitoussi

Production: Avenue B Prod., SND

Groupe M6, France 3

World Sales: Kinology

Phone: ++33-9-51-47-43-44

gmelin@kinology.eu

www.kinology.eu

The Mystery of Green Hill



Feature, Croatia, 2017

Director: Cejen Cernic

Prod. & World Sales: Kinorama

Phone: ++385-1-23-16-787

info@kinorama.hr

www.kinorama.hr

Oskar's America

Animation, Norway, Sweden, 2017

Director: Torfinn Iversen

Prod.: Original Film

World Sales: LevelK

See address above

Room 213



Feature, Sweden, 2017

Director: Emelie Lindblom

Prod.: Dansk Skalle, Sveriges Television

World Sales: Dansk Skalle AB

phone: ++46-70-72-07-54-27

info@danskskalle.se

www.danskskalle.se; www.rum213.se

Summer 1993

Feature, Spain, 2017

Director: Carla Simón

Prod.: Inicia Films

World Sales: New Europe Film Sales

Phone: ++48-50-30-35-163

kat@neweuropesales.com

www.neweuropesales.com

The Summer of All my Parents



Features, France, 2016

Director: Diastème

Production: Karé Prod., France 3

World Sales: Films Distribution

Phone: ++33-1-53-10-33-99

info@filmsdistribution.com

www.filmsdistribution.com

TRIO – The Hunt for the Holy Shrine

Feature, Norway, 2017

Director: Eva Dahr

Production: NordicStories

World Sales: Sola Media

Phone: ++49-711-47-93-666

post@sola-media.net

www.sola-media.com

Wallay

Feature, France, 2017

Director: Berni Goldblatt

Prod. & World Sales: Bathysphere

Phone: ++33-1-40-21-37-02

diffusion@bathysphere.fr

www.bathysphere.fr

Wolf and Sheep

Feature, Denmark, 2017

Director: Shahrbanoo Sadat

Prod.: Adomeit Film, Wolf Pictures, La

Fabrica Nocturna

World Sales: Alpha Violet

Phone: ++33-1-47-97-39-84

info@alphaviolet.com

www.alphaviolet.com; www.wolfandsheepfilm.com

More information on all these films you will find on our website:

www.ecfaweb.org/european-childrens-film-network/feature-films

Fred – A Film Literacy Radio Channel

FRED (Film Radio Entertainment & Dialogue) is a multi-channel internet radio station targeted at all those who love independent cinema and who gravitate around the world of film festivals: filmmakers, film critics, film students, festival organisers, film industry workers and simple film buffs who want to know more about independent cinema. Now FRED also has a channel to serve the needs of those working with film education and media literacy.



FRED aims to convey “the festival experience” by allowing not only all those who cannot be at the spot to share in the experience as if they were, but also to offer more in-depth information and targeted entertainment to those actually there. This is why

FRED’s tagline is the “The Festival Insider”.

All programmes and news focus on a single theme: the world of film, festivals all over the globe and independent cinema.

Federico Spoletti (FRED): “We have 29 channels: 25 language channels plus 4 thematic channels: **FRED Education**, **FRED Entertainment**, **FRED Extra** and **FRED Industry**. We also have a minority language channel: FRED Sardu in Sardinian. We keep expanding our network of young correspondents attending festivals all over the world.”

FRED Education is a channel entirely dedicated to film literacy: an audio-platform available to all institutions involved in film education. “We promote film educational content, projects, seminars and events on the subject, offering a network to film literacy organisations who are interested in spreading content which, in different ways, tackles the subject of film education. The content can be very diverse, such as education to film direction, cinematography or to the

many professions in cinema, but also about film classics, film restoration, digitisation, the use of films as a tool to teach other topics etc.”

FRED Education is a platform available to any organisation interested in promoting their events/seminars/conferences/projects which can be broadcast in streaming, but also remain available as podcasts (in the form of audio-clips that can be posted on different websites and social networks).

FRED Education is also the main channel to promote **FRED At School**, an audience development film literacy project conceived to raise awareness of European films and culture among secondary school students. The project, implemented in 8 EU countries, was co-financed by Creative Europe.

You can tune into FRED online on **FRED.FM**, or download the App to your iPhone or Android smartphone. FRED is also available through TuneIn and Reciva. All contents are also available as podcasts on the website and on iTunes Podcast.

Info: Federico Spoletti, FRED Film Radio, Federico.spoletti@fred.fm, +44-20-81-44-43-42, www.fred.fm.



YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING FILMS

Many members of ECFA are active in the field of ‘young people making films’, a specialised section in the children’s film & media landscape, for which we need specialised people to report about it. From the next edition onwards (August 2017) ECFA Journal will update you about different initiatives in youngsters’ filmmaking, with help from Young Dogs, experts in the use of film and digital media as tools for creative involvement of youngsters. [Young Dogs](#) brings together teenagers from all over Europe and provides access to different European actualities through working with film. ECFA is looking forward to this new cooperation that will further add to the Journal’s quality.



Ciné-Agora

Good practice in 'Service Learning'

Service learning methodology is being introduced into Catalan classrooms! With the provision that the Education Department of the Catalan Government will make it mandatory for all students in compulsory secondary schools to participate in a service learning project over the course 2019-2020. Moreover, institutes experienced in audio-visual training shall explore the possibilities of this methodology and consider its opportunities.

One of the reasons for the recent popularity of service learning is the way that projects integrate content learning, skills and values blended with intentional solidarity. Thus encouraging a connection between the processes of accessing knowledge, putting this knowledge in use, with social return. Educational processes combined with community service, in a well-articulated project in which participants are trained while working on the real needs of the environment, with the aim of improving it.

The Public Square

It is within this context that CINE-ÀGORA was born. A school film club, organised by 15-year-old students, focused on cinema as an art in which tradition, innovation and knowledge meet. The project

aims to advance social transformation and achieve equal opportunities in the cultural field. CINE-ÀGORA seeks to explore the social cohesion derived from a quality consumer culture both active and committed. We want to link the film club with the agora, the public square that becomes a space for conversation, sharing opinions, feelings, collective growth and therefore, one of the centres of school life.

The project allows a wide interdisciplinarity. Students have to agree on common interests, propose a programme, manage a screening copy, plan a communication strategy, develop material for diffusion and make a presentation and Q&A. The program pretends to provide relevant reflections on understanding the contemporary world and to show creative and empowering initiatives both locally and globally.

The project involves a process of work, collective and continuous, that lasts over several months, and results in a community service in the form of free film screenings. The experience is rich and complex and the links established serve to encourage the educational project of the city.

Replanting a Forest

However, we have found some resistance. A service learning project should serve a social need. Replant a forest after a fire, increase blood donations in the neighbourhood or accompany grandparents to an old people's day centre, are social needs identified

quickly and clearly. To identify differences in access to culture or a lack of skills for managing conflicts, often related to audio-visual consumption and its culture of violence, is probably a subtler exercise but, by no means less necessary for social change. Moreover, the service learning methodology is often still linked to its closest antecedent, volunteering, with all its paternalistic risks. Disregarding all these conceptions on educational values is fundamental for a deep and radical social transformation.

– Marga Almirall & Marta Nieto
Drac Màgic (www.dracmagic.cat)



Nicole Van Kilsdonk about 'The Day My Father Became A Bush'

"Maybe we were being caught up by time"

In a small town in an unspecified country, ten-year-old Toda spends her free time baking sweets with her father. Until dad is called away unexpectedly to defend the country and the town turns into a warzone. Toda has to undertake an adventurous journey across the border to the neighbouring country where her mother lives, on the way she'll meet strange people and find a new friend. Set in the present day, this film tackles complex issues like national borders, language barriers and the status of refugees. **THE DAY MY FATHER BECAME A BUSH**, winner of this year's first ECFA Award nominations in Kinodiseea (Bucharest) and JEFF (Antwerp / Bruges), is based on a book by Joke Van Leeuwen, an author often residing on the edge between realism and absurdity.

Nicole van Kilsdonk: The book is beautifully written in a very visual style. A substantial part of the story takes place inside Toda's mind - we had to get thorough to her head, without using a voice-over. The result is a kind of expanded reality, typical for Joke van Leeuwen's idiom. Yet, we restricted the horrors of war: certain elements are tangible (on one night even bombing can be heard) but always in a micro version.



Why keep it so small? Didn't you want to show the real horror?

Van Kilsdonk: This is the story of Toda's journey and the people she meets on her way, who may or may not help her. The war is only a trigger, explaining the urgency of her flee. If we made it too extreme, we would exclude a substantial part of the target group. The country is never defined specifically and we remain vague about the moment in time - the story takes place in modern times, but not with all modern assets; there are no computers or mobile phones. Which keeps the story universal and timeless, as if it could take place everywhere in the western world.

Oddly enough, during the shoot, the story started to gain impact because of the situation in Europe.

Van Kilsdonk: We were spotting locations in Croatia when the refugee crisis started. During the shoot in September and October 2015 the international refugee crisis broke out in full intensity. We asked ourselves if we should adapt the story to the current events, but finally chose for our timeless version. Joke van Leeuwen based her book on the stories she heard from Bosnian friends fleeing the Balkan war. Highly educated people who were welcomed in a society even less hostile than it is nowadays. Yet, they had to say 'thank you' all the time: "Thank you for helping us with your old junk." Those people left their lives behind in Bosnia, but still had to show gratefulness all the time.

Nevertheless, THE DAY MY FATHER BECAME A BUSH is often used to make a current situation open for discussion. That wasn't the original intention.

Van Kilsdonk: The longer we kept working on the film, the more up-to-date it became. I found it rather scary: maybe we were being caught up by time. That's why we kept the story abstract; it's an adventure film, not a newspaper article. We primarily concentrate on the absurdity of frontier and administrative formalities. We asked ourselves how it would feel as a child, being put on a bus all by yourself towards safer havens. There have always been refugees in this world, but we never estimated the phenomenon to grow like this. That's why parents and schools feel the need to talk about it with children.





Were there any moments where reality got scarily close?

Van Kilsdonk: There is one scene with human traffickers: "If you're not paying enough, I will leave you behind..." And Toda's arrival in the refugee centre, filmed with Croatian extras, while only five kilometres away in Zagreb, people arrived in the emergency shelter at that very moment. The producer travelled back and forth from the set (in a bankrupt pencil factory, a weird location) to the shelter. All the Croatian crew members had been witnessing the Balkan war, and started telling stories about how they as children once were transported on busses.

Why particularly Croatia?

Van Kilsdonk: The landscape, the hills and the old houses looked like an ideal spot. It feels like Europe, but you don't know where exactly. And the people in that country speak a weird kind of language. The Croatians were laughing about all those 'sj' sounds. It almost sounded like Croatian.

Was Celeste Holsheimer (Toda) with you in Croatia all the time?

Van Kilsdonk: For six weeks, only accompanied by her father, four Dutchmen and a Croatian crew. She quickly picked up the language and the crew loved to pamper and tease her. Celeste is rather a night-hawk than an early riser. She hated to get up at 6 in the morning; she needed an hour to get rid of her bad mood. Celeste's acting is impressively natural. She read the script, but didn't learn it by heart. We talked every scene through beforehand and then she gave it her own interpretation.

Toda stays true to herself no matter how much the situation around her changes. As if she is the element of stability in a world going mad.

Van Kilsdonk: Yet, she changes as well. In the beginning she is hardly independent, her world does not extend beyond her father's bakery. As the film continues she learns how to take initiative and grows stronger. She doesn't wait with the troops by the river, but takes her friend Sticky with her through the water. That was Celeste's favourite scene. There was a strong current and the water was cold, but underneath they were wearing thermal clothes. However, there were divers on standby in case of an emergency.

Does THE DAY MY FATHER BECAME A BUSH appeal more to the heart or the mind?

Van Kilsdonk: I hope to both. The film does have an intellectual side: the meaning of frontiers, the language games... But you also wish for Toda to be fine and you identify with her. I could have made it a sentimental story, which it actually is, but that felt too easy. Even the music often emphasises the



absurdity of the situation more than the heart-breaking aspect. Otherwise it's like painting the roses red.

What does this film say about parenthood?

Van Kilsdonk: The book never explains why her mother lives in another country. This we had to handle with subtlety, because a mother leaving her child never comes across as acceptable, regardless the reasons. An absent father seems to be tolerable – which says something about our society, doesn't it? On the other hand, Sticky is an orphan, although that is never said out loud. After the test viewing, we asked the audience what would happen to Sticky now. Some children thought he had to go searching for his parents, others believed Toda's mother could take him home. So the film ends more or less optimistic: in the end everyone finds his place, which in reality is not always the case.

–
Gert Hermans

Vizo's Vision

Institute for Advancement of Visual Culture



Vizo is a non-governmental and non-profit cultural organisation for film education, founded in Ljubljana, Slovenia in 2013. What do we do? What are our goals and what dreams do we follow?

Vizo's main mission is to enthuse young people about film culture, through organising film literacy programmes for children and youth in educational and cultural institutions. Our qualified mentors prepare training programmes of film lectures, seminars, workshops and discussions as well as a summer film camp. In fulfilling its mission Vizo cooperates with kindergartens, primary and high schools, local and art house cinemas, libraries and festivals. As film and media education are still not included in the Slovenian education curriculum, Vizo strives to push film education for youngsters onto a level of national recognition.

As external collaborator with all main Slovenian cultural institutions, Vizo has so far successfully realised more than 400 film events across the country and reached out to more than 25.400 (mainly young) people.

Festival & Platform

Two of our most important projects are: the International Film Festival for Youth 'Eye on Film' (in Slovenian "Film na oko", or "FNO") and the Mad About Film (MAF!) platform for young people.

Eye on Film is the first Slovenian film festival dedicated solely to the 8-18 years old age group of children and young people and runs in ten cities across the country. The focus of the festival is the best European youth films as well as world cinematography. Eye on Film also organises various supporting events such as film seminars, masterclasses and discussions with film authors and pedagogues. Youngsters are included in the organisation of the festival, some as volunteers working on the festival floor, others as a creative force.

Mad About Film (MAF!) is an informal online platform, giving young generations access to quality film education. Through our mentorship programmes, lectures and workshops, we engage young enthusiasts to (co-)create film-related content they themselves find interesting and post it on MAF's www.madaboutfilm.si. MAF also connects different institutions, societies and associations working with film into a bigger network.



Vizo is supported by the Slovenian Film Center and cooperates with the Slovenian Art Cinema Association and Cinematheque. Bonds have been established with international youth film festivals such as Zlinfest (Czech Republic), LUCAS (Germany), Kiki (Croatia) and LIFFE (Ljubljana). Since 2014 Vizo is included in the catalogue of European Film Literacy Initiatives (prepared by CED Berlin, Poland and Denmark).

Vizo's director Rok Govednik's main ambitions for the future could be summarised as: *"a long and prosperous life of working in the field of film culture for the youngest population and launching pan-European or worldwide collaborations with supporting organisations."*

[More about VIZO](#)

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Daša Ložar

Inspire, Engage, Immerge

KIDS Regio's The Opening Industry Day 2017

For the 8th time KIDS Regio and The Financing Forum for Kids' Content joined forces in curating The Opening Industry Day in Malmö, Sweden. On 14 March the very well-attended industry event provided a rich programme of speakers and case studies under the motto: Inspire, Engage, Immerge.



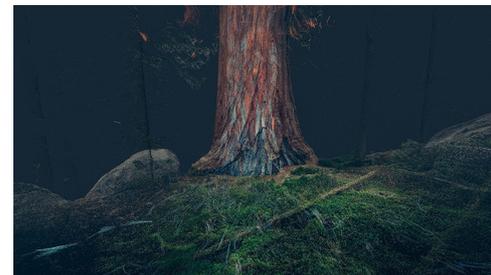
The Opening Industry Day

The programme started with an inspiring panel exploring the Nordic recipe for success with Jean-Philippe Randisi (Zodiak, UK / France), Jonas Forth (Moomin.com / All Things Commerce Helsinki Ltd, Finland) and Yaba Holst (Swedish Film Institute) later compared with real cases such as RICHARD THE STORK and GIGGLEBUG. Here Kristine Knudsen (Knudsen & Streuber Medienmanufaktur, Germany /Norway), and Anttu Harlin (Gigglebug Entertainment, Finland) reflected on their creative process

which made an original story like RICHARD pre-sold-out worldwide in over 100 countries and about the challenges and explorations of the journey so far for GIGGLEBUG in building a 360 degree brand for pre-schoolers. An excursion towards new technologies concluded the day. Aksel Køie (Step In Books, Denmark) and Ersin Han Ersin (Marshmallow Laser Feast, UK) did shed light on projects that created poetic universes, with new opportunities for bewitching immersive storytelling experiences.

The Gaming Ecosystem

When talking about an engaged audience, VOD platforms and digital games of course come top of the list. Like, for instance, Hopster TV (UK) are embracing a particularly young audience. Miki Chojnacka shared her ideas and her mission on how to make screen time a win to both children and parents. By presenting Hopster TV's structure and design, she explained about the user experience and how to engage with even a small target audience. The eco-system of the gaming industry includes many challenges for producers with an ambition to meet the demands of children and youth. Particularly timelines are completely different from the film and TV tradition. Martin Walfisz (game developing company Massive Entertainment, Sweden) did further unfold this particular ecosystem.



Marshmallow Laser Feast: poetic universes
(photo: Treehugger Wawona)

However, once more The Opening Industry Day did put the target group itself into the centre. Jonas Rygaard (Fremtidsfabrik, Denmark) involves young talents in the development and marketing of commercial customer projects. He believes that *"it's the nerds you have to look out for and that the youth of today can become the most generous generation ever"*. You simply have to provide them with the right framework to grow and express themselves. By bringing on stage some of those young talents participants of The Opening Industry Day did get first hand insight into the thinking patterns of a contemporary generation of teens. What choices do they make when being invited to take over the work process? According to 20 year old Mathias Skaarup (Copenhagen), the driving force to establish your own business is *"curiosity and arrogance"*.

More info: www.kids-regio.org/home

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Viola Gabrielli



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ECFA's goal is to support cinema for children and youth in its cultural, economical, aesthetic, social, political and educational aspects. Since 1988 ECFA brings together a wide range of European film professionals and associations, producers, directors, distributors. ECFA aims to set up a working structure in every European country for films for children and young people, a structure adapted to Europe's multicultural interests.

For more information and memberships (€ 200 per year):

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The European Children's Film Distribution Network:

www.ecfaweb.org/european-childrens-film-network/network

Databases on children's film festivals, sales agents, distributors and

TV-programmers interested in European films for children.

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