

KUAP

Tadpoles do not develop simultaneously – and neither do humans



In our world things often reach a point where all you want to do is turn your head and look away. But, fortunately, plenty of short films for children actually do deal with those issues. The current trend is: take a closer look where it hurts, and where the protagonists never give up. They keep on trying, again and again, to make the best out of a situation.

For adults, especially, it would be worth taking a look at some shorts for a young audience and see how open minded children can be towards 'being different'. One example is Nils Hedinger's KUAP (Switzerland, 2018), a short animation with a live action background, about a tadpole who somehow misses out on becoming a frog and is left behind.

Nils Hedinger: With certain frog species, it can happen that a tadpole stays in the water over winter and only develops into a frog the following year. All winter long these tadpoles grow bigger and bigger. When I heard about this frog-peculiarity I thought to myself this would perfectly fit a short film about late bloomers. That's where the story began...

Did you have children or adults in mind as audience?

Hedinger: Since Kuap is a tadpole, thus a 'frog-child', and the film is related to a topic that was important to me in my childhood, I always thought about it as a film for children. During the writing process I presented the story to pupils in a primary school, and they gave great feedback. Some scenes were modified due to those reactions.

KUAP is running successfully at festivals all over the world and is screened to children and grown-ups – did you notice any differences in their reactions?

Hedinger: The reaction of young audiences in general is much louder and more direct, which is obviously great fun. With the adults you never know instantly whether they like the film or not. Moreover they both laugh at different moments. The scenes which are more "slapstick", are popular with the children; more subtle elements rather work with adults.



Who is asking more questions?

Hedinger: Children of course. Mostly their questions are better and more direct.

KUAP is a coming of age film – but besides the little tadpole being a bit slower than the others, it also deals with metamorphoses in general...

Hedinger: On one hand the film tells a very human story, on the other hand it gives you an insight into nature and evolution. Tadpoles are perfect for showing the development of characters, as their transformation is so visible. I like the frog metamorphosis

very much and as a child I often used to play with tadpoles. Nature in general is very important to me. That's why I insisted on showing the peculiar beauty of the pond by using this live action background as naturalistically and directly as possible.

KUAP by Nils Hedinger; Camera: Antonia Meile; Animation: Nils Hedinger, Simon Eltz & Fela Bellotto; Music: Julian Sartorius; www.kuap.ch

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The Short Cut column is published with the help of the [Mo&Friese KinderKurzFilmFestival](http://www.moandfriese.com) 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.