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Editorial

**Signs Of Appreciation**

On June 24th – 25th the 1st KIDS Regio Forum was organised in Erfurt. The theme of the forum was 'The Future of European Children's Films'. After attending the seminars and round tables we can't but conclude this was an outstanding gathering. Not only the hosting in the beautiful city of Erfurt but also the presence of professionals from the most diverse fields of children's film culture made this forum one of the most successful meetings of the last years.

The organising German Children's Media Foundation Golden Sparrow is an active member of our association and amongst the participants many ECFA members could be found. In this Journal you'll find an overview of the main outcomes of this forum, the Erfurt Declaration. But there are two points I want to underline.

The subject of the forum was limited to the field of 'long fiction films' for children. When you read in this Journal about the enormous amount of newly produced films coming up, then it is clear that the Scandinavian countries again, after some quiet years, are investing a lot in the production of films for youngsters while Holland and Germany maintain a strong belief in the future of children's film. I think the main problems for such films are not situated in the production area, but most of all in the field of distribution and exhibition.

Secondly there is the small but important sentence in the proposals made up by the attending professionals. **ECFA should be the site used to build a virtual network for EU children's film professionals and adequate funding should be provided for this.** This is surely a strong sign of appreciation for the work of ECFA but it is also a challenge for our association to fulfil this expectation. Therefore it is obvious we will have to rely on all of you. An association like ECFA is only as strong as the members make it, all together.

*Felix Vanginderhuysen*  
General Secretary

**ECFA co-hosts expert meeting in Cinekid (Amsterdam)**

**ECFA was asked by the Cinekid Festival (Amsterdam) to co-organize an expert meeting about 'A Digital Long Tail for EU Children's Film' on Thursday 22nd October. A report about this closed meeting you'll find in the next issue of the ECFA Journal.**

European children's films are rarely distributed outside their home country. Can the new digital technology – causing a massive expansion of international distribution potential - enable them to travel across borders? How can the film industry and other stakeholders realise the opening up of a European online distribution platform? A group of experts will outline the possibilities in this field.

One conclusion from the 1st KIDS Regio Forum was the need for a European online platform, a 'non commercial window' for the education market. Whereas theatrical or DVD releases of children's films rarely occur in most European countries, online distribution could reach millions of children through schools all over the continent. In the USA the educational market is big business, in Europe it's not yet an issue.

Experts on new online forms of film distribution will engage in discussing new business models, current realities and possible co-operations and strategies. Keywords will be 'creativity' and 'innovation'. The moderator is Christophe Erbes, International Media Consultant.

ECFA expects this meeting to result in concrete proposals, providing useful guidelines and pragmatic solutions for the needs of today's professionals.

To be continued in Cinekid, Thursday 22nd October (invitations only).



*Margret Albers - German Children's Media Foundation Golden Sparrow*

**KIDS Regio Forum in Erfurt**

**On June 24th - 25th the 1st KIDS Regio Forum was held in Erfurt: 98 professionals gathered to discuss 'The Future of European Children's Film'.**

The opening session of the conference provided participants with facts & figures on children's film in Europe, the focus being live-action feature films for children up to 12 years of age. In workshops the participants discussed in depth the general conditions and challenges for the development, production and distribution of children's films in Europe, considered possible synergies and co-operations, and developed strategies to meet these challenges.

As one result of the 1st KIDS Regio Forum, the participants agreed on a five-point-agenda, the Erfurt Declaration, stating that the production of feature films for children is a natural and self-evident part of the European film culture and industry.

## The News Section: Films, Festivals, Awards

### Goldener Spatz, German Children's Media-Festival, Erfurt & Gera, Germany

Young Audience's Jury, best feature film, best direction, best main actress (Alina Freund): „Lilli the Witch – The Dragon and the Magic Book“ by Stefan Ruzowitzky, Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy 2008.

[www.goldenerspatz.de](http://www.goldenerspatz.de)

### Int. Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlín, Czech Republic

Experts Jury's Awards: Best feature film for children: „Who is Afraid of the Wolf“ by Maria Procházková, Czech Republik 2008. Special Mention: „A School Day With a Pig“ by Tetsu Maeda, Japan 2008.

Best feature film for young people: „Max Embarrassing“ by Lotte Svendsen, Denmark 2008; Special Mention: „It's Not Me, I Swear“ by Philippe Falardeau, Canada 2008.

Best European Debut: „Pa-ra-da“ („Clowns“) by Marco Pontecorvo, Italy, France, Romania 2008.

Special award for debutants: „City of the World“ by Christian Klandt, Germany 2008.

Joint Jury of Children and Adults for Animated Films: Best animated film: „Post!“ by Christian Asmussen and Matthias Bruhn, Germany 2008.

Award for Artists Younger than 35: „Paul and the Dragon“ by Albert 't Hooft & Paco Vink, The Netherlands 2008.

FICC-Jury's Don Quixote Award: „Cowards“ by José Corbacho & Juan Cruz, Spain 2008.

International Ecumenical Jury's Award: „Max Embarrassing“; Special Mention: „Little Robbers“ by Armands Zvirbulis, Latvia & Austria 2008.

International Children's Jury: best feature film: „Hell with Princess“ by Miloslav Smídmajer, Czech Republic 2008; Special Mention: „It's Not Me, I Swear“.

Audience Awards: best feature film: „Hell with Princess“; best animated film: „Carrot on the Beach“ by Pärtel Tall, Estonia 2008.

[www.zlifest.cz](http://www.zlifest.cz)

### Int. Shortfilmfestival Hamburg Children's Film Section „Mo & Friese“, Hamburg, Germany,

Friese-Award (4 - 8 years): „Rif“ by Hanna Larsen, Norway 2008.

[www.moundfriese.de](http://www.moundfriese.de)

### Erfurt Declaration

There is a consensus among the 98 professionals from 17 countries that the support of live action features for children is necessary because:

- These films form an essential part of the concept of cultural diversity and, furthermore, valuable means in terms of media literacy and cultural and personal education.

- Children are the audience of today: they have a right to see films that take them and their stage of development seriously. They deserve films that find the right, convincing tone.

- Children are the audience of tomorrow: if they don't have the possibility to become familiar with the full variety of genres, subjects and styles it is unlikely that they will develop a taste for this variety as adults.

- The need for original stories grows when children's films are doing better in the market.

- While the thriving films are usually spin-offs of famous books, they do not automatically increase diversity.

- Market pressure suppresses a sufficient national and especially international exploitation of these films and hence impairs conditions for financing and developing.

Based on these principal conclusions the participants agree on a 5 point agenda:

#### 1. Research & Controlling

- a) Children's film tag at the European Audiovisual Observatory.
- b) Audience research (children's needs, expectations and admissions).

#### 2. Financing

- a) Special European, national and regional schemes supporting children's film from development to distribution.
- b) Stimulation of co-production – not as a makeshift solution but as an opportunity to exchange knowledge and to enhance the possibility for films to travel more successfully.
- c) Simplification of funding regulations.

#### 3. Specialised platforms for network & exchange

- a) Strengthening the existing networks.
- b) Establishing one European online platform.

4. Film literacy should be part of education in European countries. Children's films have to be firmly established within film education.

5. Support for new and experimental marketing and distribution strategies aimed at children (e.g. based on the assumption that children are early adopters of new technologies).



Lennart Ström & Lisbeth Mathiesen

We – the professionals of the European children's film industry – make among others the following proposals:

- EU: A live action children's feature film should receive an automatic MEDIA grant within the Selective Support Scheme, if 5 EU distributors have picked it up for distribution.

- EBU should promote and implement an EU Children's Film Award Ceremony and the European Film Awards should have a children's film category; this could coincide with a Europe-wide Children's Film Day.

- Cinema as the 7th art should be recommended as part of the Curriculum and this proposal should be put on the agenda of the next meeting for European Ministers of Education.

- ECFA should be the site used to build a virtual network for EU children's film professionals and adequate funding should be provided for this.

- Publicly funded broadcasters should have proper time-slots for children's feature films.

Within many discussions in different working groups the importance of ECFA within the international structures was positively underlined. Point 4 in the concrete proposals was a strong sign of appreciation for the role played by ECFA in the European children's film industry.

*Felix Vanginderhuysen*

*based upon the official KIDS Regio Forum Report ([www.kids-regio.org](http://www.kids-regio.org))*

The 1st KIDS Regio Forum was organised by the German Children's Media Foundation 'Golden Sparrow' and took place under the patronage of Gerold Wucherpfennig, Thuringia's Minister for Construction, Regional Development and Media.



## Report

# Girls In Dutch Teenage Movies

For years Holland has produced a remarkable amount of teenage movies about young girls and their problems. It almost seems like we came across a new genre in the Dutch movie industry. Journalist Leo Bankersen researched the roots and social context of this phenomenon.

We shudder with abhorrence about the youth of today. But the same teenagers watching video clips in which scarcely dressed willing girls throw themselves at the feet of gold-blinged gangster types, went to the cinemas last year to watch 3 Dutch movies propagating a very opposite image of youth. No romantic sexy fairytale but realistic, emotionally strong adventures of normal Dutch adolescents.

DESPERATE (Dave Schram) was made after a book by author Carry Slee. A young girl is pushed by her mother towards a modelling career. As a result she becomes an anorexia patient. Two books by Carry Slee were adapted to the big screen before: XTC, JUST DON'T DO IT (Maria Peters) and TIMBOEKTOE (Dave Schram). HOW TO SURVIVE MYSELF? (Nicole van Kilsdonk) about a brooding girl trying to make new friends is based on two books by the equally popular Francine Oomen. DUNYA & DESIE (Dana Nechushtan) deals with life's big questions as posed by two bosom friends, the Dutch mad-cap Desie and Morocco-rooted Dunya.

These films scored between 200.000 and 330.000 viewers with the audience being mainly female.

### Kissing or sex?

There must be reasons for this sudden booming of a new genre. Most of these films were backed by successful books. Since Carry Slee published her first children's book in 1989 she became a successful franchise. Slee digs deep into heavy subjects such as divorce, suicide or addiction. Francine Oomen's work is more playful but she too addresses children at their own level. Her stories are adorned with emails and MSN-messages. The tone is witty, even when things might end up in a dramatic way. These books contain plenty of lessons for life, which is useful at an age when you won't accept any advice from parents or teachers.

In Slee's work these lessons are rather emphatic, turning the books into a catalogue of today's teenage problems. Melissa in 'XTC, Just Don't Do It' gets under the spell of a smooth but

dangerous boy bringing her in touch with drugs, luckily she survives. Yara ('Desperate') is suffering from anorexia. 'Love' is always involved, but sex stays out of the picture. For these teenagers the first kiss offers enough excitement already.

Only DUNYA & DESIE takes it one step further. Being 18 already, the girls are self-assured and enterprising, although life is still confusing for them. Nechushtan didn't want to make a problem-based movie. "This should be a film about friendship."



Desperate

### Zoop & Co

Films by producer and director Johan Nijenhuis are playing in another league. Light-weight films, but an unmistakably important element in the Dutch movie supply for teenagers. Out of his low budget exploitation debut COSTA! (beaches & discotheques with a pinch of romance) the teenage audience learned one important lesson: watching a Dutch movie can be fun!

Nijenhuis shot a series of three TV-spin-offs for an 8 – 14 years audience. In ZOOP IN AFRICA and its sequels a bunch of young zoo employees gets involved in adventures with crooks and wild animals in far away locations. Nijenhuis' films are completely unrealistic but the heroes and heroines are, in spite of the clichés, simple boys and girls.

The line between teen movies and movies about teenagers made for a grown up audience is sometimes thin. As proved in KATIA'S SISTER (2008, Mijke de Jong), a subtle portrait of a 13 year old daughter of a prostitute and sister of a stripper.

Leo Bankersen

(Dutch freelance film journalist)

The complete version of this article can be found on [www.ecfaweb.org/projects/fimmaking/bankersen.htm](http://www.ecfaweb.org/projects/fimmaking/bankersen.htm).

## The News Section: Films, Festivals, Awards

### Animafest - World Festival of Animation Films, Zagreb, Croatia.

Among the winners were some films for children: The Grand International Jury had special mentions for „Brendan and the Secret of Kells“ by Tomm Moore & Nora Twomey, France, Ireland, Belgium 2008 and „Mary and Max“ by Adam Elliot, Australia 2008. [www.animafest.hr](http://www.animafest.hr)

### Plein la bobine – Sancy Film Festival for Young People, Massif du Sancy, La Bourboule & Le Mont-Dore, France.

Short film competition.

Films for children from 3 years on: Professionals' Jury: „The Children in the Moon“ by Ursula Ulmi, Switzerland 2008.

Pupils' Jury: „Booo“ by Alicja Jaworski, Sweden 2009.

Audience Award: „Wawa“ by Mona Achache, France 2009.

Films for children from 7 years on: Professionals' Jury: „Les Escargots de Joseph“ by Sophie Roze, FR 2009.

Pupils' Jury: „Signalis“ by Adrian Flückiger, Switzerland 2008.

Audience Award: „Le Mulot menteur“ by Andrea Kiss, Belgium, France, Hungary 2008.

Films for children from 12 years on: Professionals' Jury: „La Souris“ („Musen“) by Pil Maria Gunnarsson, Denmark 2008.

Pupils' Jury & Audience Award: „Acuse-nous“ by Chad Chenouga, France 2008.

[www.pleinlabobine.com](http://www.pleinlabobine.com)

### Filmfest Munich / Children's Film Fest, Munich, Germany.

Audience Award: „Little Robbers“. [www.filmfest-muenchen.de](http://www.filmfest-muenchen.de)



Zoop in Africa



Cosmonauta

## The News Section: Films, Festivals, Awards

### Giffoni Film Festival, Giffoni Valle Piana, Salerno, Italy.

Annual Best Films Awards:

+6-section: „Carlitos and the Chance of a Lifetime“ by Jesús del Cerro, Spain 2008. +10-section: „A Time to Love“ by Ebrahim Forouzesh, Iran 2008. +13-section: „Broken Hill“ by Dagen Merrill, Australia/USA 2009. +16-section: „My Suicide“ by David Lee Miller, USA 2008.

Jury Great Awards: +13-section: „Accidents Happen“ by Andrew Lancaster, AUS & GB 2009. +16-section: „My Suicide“.

Special Awards:

+6-section: „The Missing Lynx“ by Raúl García & Manuela Sicilia, Spain 2008. +13-section: „No Hard Feelings“ by Yves Hanchard, Belgium 2009, and „Broken Hill“; +16-section: „Skin“ by Anthony Fabian, Great Britain & South Africa 2008 (this film also received the Amnesty International Award) and „Once upon a Time in Rio“ by Breno Silveira, Brazil 2008.

[www.giffoniff.it](http://www.giffoniff.it)

### Nueva Mirada – Internat. Film Festival for Children & Youth, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Professional Jury:

Best feature film for children: „Teo's Voyage“ by Walter Doehner, Mexico 2007. special mention: „Dunya & Desie“ by Dana Nechushtan, The Netherlands 2007.

Best feature film for young people: „Mommo, the Bogeyman“ by Atalay Tasdiken, Turkey 2009.

Special Award „Mother Nature“: „Frogs & Toads“ by Simone van Dusseldorp, The Netherlands 2009.

Best animated film for children: „Sunshine Barry & the Disco Worms“ by Thomas Borch Nielsen, Denmark & Germany 2008.

Best animated film for young people: „Sita Sings the Blues“ by Nina Paley, USA 2008.

Children's & Young People's Jury: Best feature film: „Teo's Voyage“; special mentions: „Frogs & Toads“ (children); „Mommo, the Bogeyman“ (young people). Best animated film: „Sunshine Barry & the Disco Worms“.

[www.nuevimirada.com](http://www.nuevimirada.com)

## Production News

ECFA Journal wants to inform regularly about films still in production and highlight some titles. If you have information available about films in every possible phase of the production process, please send it to [ecfa@jekino.be](mailto:ecfa@jekino.be).

### COSMONAUTA

It's 1957 and the Soviets just launched the dog Laika into outer space, when 9 year old Luciana escapes from her Holy Communion ceremony, announcing to her family "I'm not going back there. I'm a Communist!" In the Italian film COSMONAUTA debuting director Susanna Nicchiarelli wants "to tell a fairytale in which the cosmonauts' dreams of winning the space race (newsreel editing makes their faces and smiles light up the screen) meet with the dreams of the protagonists, 'normal youngsters' dealing with everyday life problems."

Main characters are Luciana and her elder brother Arturo, captivated by the Soviet Union and above all by the space race against the US (Arturo transmitted his interest in politics to his sister). Meanwhile, Marisa and a group of young FIGC-members (Italian Communist Party Federation) are helping the girl through her difficult moments. Modern versions of sixties songs help to depict a piece of recent history, unknown to the younger generation.

"The historical setting of this story is so little known but so close to the present that it adds a surreal dimension to the narration. This is a story about growing up, a parable of adolescence, recreating the climate of fascination and enchantment so typical for the teen years," says the director. "The young audience doesn't know about the history of Cold War nor about the space adventures and successes." The film therefore is also a tool to teach history. Nicchiarelli states that COSMONAUTA can be appreciated by any young audience in every country. And by the way: She has never been to a children's film festival! (ES)

COSMONAUTA, Directed by Susanna Nicchiarelli. Screenplay: Susanna Nicchiarelli & Teresa Ciabatti. With Claudia Pandolfi & Sergio Rubini. Italy. 2009. 85'

Contact: Fandango, [www.fandango.it](http://www.fandango.it).

### The Scandinavians Are Coming!

The end of summer is the moment when the Scandinavian countries present their latest productions in the New Nordic Film Days and the Copenhagen Screenings. No one can deny in the field of films for children & youngsters' the harvest this year was overwhelming. At the dawn of a new festival season hereby you'll find a first listing up.

\* New Nordic Film Days in Haugesund: KNERTEN (Asleik Engmark, Norway) is a very charming film for small children (aged 5 - 8). I am convinced the movie will become a real success. ORPS, THE MOVIE (Alte Knudsen) is a rather classic film with stereotype characters and plots, but done in a very humoristic and convincing way.

Two films for teenagers deserve our special attention. STARRING MAJA (Sweden, Teresa – THE KETCHUP EFFECT – Fabrik), a sensitive story about a young actress, is convincing all the way. VEGAS (Norway, Gunnar – TRIGGER – Vikene) is a modern, quite tough story about three youngsters in a home.

\* Copenhagen Screenings: Presenting nothing but Danish films is a defensible option considered the booming of the national film industry, with 6 brand new titles. Only the screening of the animated THE APPLE AND THE WORM was cancelled at the last moment.

SUPER BROTHER (Birger Larsen), MONSTER BUSTERS (Martin Schmidt), TIME TRIP-The Curse of the Viking Witch (Mogens Hagedorn) and STORM (Giacomo Campeotto) are all very well-made but none of them caused this special thrill one should experience from an extraordinary film. Subjects such as a magic stone turning your brother into a superhero, saving a poor dog mistreated by its owner or travelling back in time to the age of Vikings... it seems to me that we've seen all this before.

The most inventive one was ZOOMERS (Christian E. Christiansen) in which two brats cover the school with surveillance cameras. A practical way to get your paws on the exam papers or find out whether a girl loves you or not. But what if you also find out things you rather wouldn't like to know about?

A fruitful ending to a Scandinavian summer with outstanding films, but lacking sometimes the exceptional new ideas. (FV)

All films in the Copenhagen Screenings: World Sales: TrustNordisk Film Int. Sales, Filmbyen 12, DK-2650 Hvidovre. +45-3686 8788. [info@trustnordisk.com](mailto:info@trustnordisk.com); [www.trustnordisk.com](http://www.trustnordisk.com). Except STORM: ASA Film Production, Det Danske Filmstudie, Blomstervaegnet 52, DK-2800 Kgs. Lyngby. +45-3961 3030. [asa@asafilm.dk](mailto:asa@asafilm.dk); [www.asafilm.dk](http://www.asafilm.dk).

## Festivals & Events

**dvoted**

### REClimate – Dvoted Calling For Films!

Dvoted, the exquisite Scandinavian platform for young filmmakers, is calling to arms all young filmmakers. "Make a film about 'climate' and win € 2.000!" All you need is a camera, a mobile phone or whatever equipment you can record with. Edit the film on your computer and upload it on the dvoted-website. Deadline: October 23rd. The winners will be presented in November and the finalists' films will be screened at the United Nations Climate Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. Read more on the Dvoted website: [www.dvoted.net](http://www.dvoted.net)



### Pleine la Bobine On Tour

As so few films for the youngest audience are running in the cinemas, the French festival Plein la Bobine organized a regional tour along 12 cinemas in the Auvergne region. 'Coup de Cœur' (January – May 2009, set up with the help of a local association of art house cinemas) compiled six short films sailing under the flag '100 % European, 100 % animation'. Considered the target audience's young age (3+) 5 out of 6 films had no dialogue: 'Shadows and Reflections' (Stephen Whittle, UK), 'Les Chasseurs' (Jānis Cimernanis, Latvia), 'Tarte aux Pommes' (Isabelle Favez, Switzerland), 'Rendez-vous' (Ferenc Cakó, Hungary) and 'Ein Sonniger Tag' (Gil Alkabetz, Germany). The 6th title in the selection was 'Le Jardin' (Marie Paccou, France). Festival manager Florence Dupont was very satisfied with the results. "Unfortunately we only have a deal for the Auvergne, so we can't distribute the program nationwide."

Educational pages were created for each film (available on [www.pleinla-bobine.com](http://www.pleinla-bobine.com)). After every screening the children met with a festival or film professional, often expressing their delight. The tour's success allows the festival to work on another edition of 'Coup de Cœur' next year, presenting a new series of short films.



### World Summit on Media for Children and Youth (14th - 18th June 2010, Karlstad - Sweden)

In 2010 the World Summit on Media for Children and Youth will take place in Karlstad, Sweden (approx. 300 kilometres from Stockholm). The program looks very promising, combining a variety of perspectives and viewpoints. Unfortunately at this moment 'children & youth film' is still a blank spot in the catalogue.

The main theme appears to be 'human rights': How can media for children promote health education, freedom of speech, world peace and democratic values? The topic of 'the new sexualised childhood' is another major concern, as well as the social environment in which children are using the media: How media influence the relationship with parents, the importance of outdoor playing, etc... Alongside the presentation of Nordic projects the scoop of many lectures is international with – in succession of the latest summit in Johannesburg – contributions from/about South-Africa, Ethiopia, China, Brazil, etc.

Most important in every summit is the way in which a creative generation of youngsters presents itself, proving themselves able to fully use and understand the media and its content. Like in the 'Youth Producing Media' workshops and creative classes using radio, internet, cell phones, newspaper industry, gaming, etc.

The complete program & information: [www.wskarlstad2010.se](http://www.wskarlstad2010.se).



## The News Section:

### Lucas – Int. Children's Film Festival, Frankfurt/M., Germany

„Lucas“-award for the best feature film: „Carlito and the Chance of a Lifetime“; best short film: „The Mouse with a Mouth“ by Andrea Kiss, Belgium, France, Hungary 2008. CIFEJ-Jury's award: „Morrison“ by Barbara Bredero, The Netherlands 2008. Don-Quijote-Award given by the Jury of the Int. Film Club Federation FICC: „A Time to Love“. This film also received a special mention by the festival's main jury. [www.lucasfilmfestival.de](http://www.lucasfilmfestival.de)

### Forthcoming Festivals

#### Schlingel - International Film Festival for Children and Young Audience, Chemnitz/ Germany.

Oct. 5th to 11th 2009. [www.ff-schlingel.de](http://www.ff-schlingel.de)

#### Gaffa - Int. Film Festival for Young People, Vienna/Austria.

Oct. 5th to 11th 2009. [www.gaffa-filmfestival.at](http://www.gaffa-filmfestival.at)

#### London International Film Festival, London/Great Britain.

Oct. 14th to 29th 2009. [www.lff.org.uk](http://www.lff.org.uk)

#### Cinekid, Amsterdam/Holland.

Oct. 14th to 23rd 2009 [www.cinekid.nl/nl/festival](http://www.cinekid.nl/nl/festival)

#### Int. Film Festival Ciné-Jeune de l'Aisne, Saint-Quentin/France.

Oct. 16th to 23rd 2009. [www.cinejeune02.com](http://www.cinejeune02.com)

#### 6th Int. Children Films Festival „Borders – Childhood and Beyond“ & Congress Children and Communication, Istanbul/ Turkey.

Oct. 19 to 21st 2009. [www.tiaistanbul.org](http://www.tiaistanbul.org)

#### Discovery – Scotland's Int. Film Festival for Children and Young People, Dundee/Scotland.

Oct. 20th to Nov. 1st 2009. [www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk](http://www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk)

#### Chicago Int. Children's Film Festival, Chicago/USA.

Oct. 22nd to Nov. 1st 2009. [www.cicff.org](http://www.cicff.org)

#### Righteous Heart, Int. Children and Youth Film Festival, Moscow/Russia.

Oct. 26th to 30th 2009. [www.vernoeserdce.ru/eng.html](http://www.vernoeserdce.ru/eng.html)

## The News Section: Forthcoming festivals

**Doxs! - Documentaries for Children & Young People, Duisburg/Germany.**  
Nov. 2nd to 8th 2009.  
[www.duisburger-filmwoche.de](http://www.duisburger-filmwoche.de)

**Nordic Filmdays Luebeck, Germany.**  
Nov. 4th to 8th 2009.  
[www.filmtage.luebeck.de](http://www.filmtage.luebeck.de)

**Istanbul Int. Children's Film Festival, Istanbul/Turkey.**  
Nov. 6th to 19th 2009.  
[www.iicff.com/english.htm](http://www.iicff.com/english.htm)

**Int. Children's Film Festival, Vienna/Austria.**  
Nov. 14th to 22nd 2009.  
[www.kinderfilmfest.at](http://www.kinderfilmfest.at)

**Castellinaria Festival internazionale del cinema giovane Bellinzona, Switzerland.**  
Nov. 14th to 21st 2009.  
deadline for film entries: Oct. 8th 2009.  
[www.castellinaria.ch](http://www.castellinaria.ch)



Little Nicolas



Cowards



The Balcony



Little Robbers

## Films on the Horizon

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](http://www.ecfaweb.org). Obviously we can never guarantee that we cover all important new films. Producers, distributors and sales agents are kindly invited to inform us of their new releases.

### The Apple and the Worm

Animation, Denmark 2009  
Director: Anders Morgenthaler  
Production: Copenhagen Bombay  
World Sales: Copenhagen Bombay  
Refshalevej 147, 1432 Copenhagen C  
Phone: +45-72-420-800  
E-mail: [info@copenhagenbombay.com](mailto:info@copenhagenbombay.com)  
[www.copenhagenbombay.com](http://www.copenhagenbombay.com)

### The Balcony

Feature Film, Lithuania 2008  
Director: Giedre Beinoriute  
Production: Monoklis  
World Sales: Monoklis, Naugarduko 34  
03225 Vilnius  
Phone: +370-687-90681  
E-Mail: [jurga@monoklis.it](mailto:jurga@monoklis.it)  
[www.monoklis.it](http://www.monoklis.it)

### Cowards

Feature Film, Spain 2008  
Director: José Corbacho & Juan Cruz  
Production: Ensueno Films, Filmax  
World Sales: Filmax, Miguel Hernandez  
81-87,  
Poligono Pedrosa, E-08908 Barcelona  
L'Hospitalet de Llobregat  
Phone: +34-933-368555  
E-Mail: [filmxint@filmax.com](mailto:filmxint@filmax.com)  
[www.filmax.com](http://www.filmax.com)

### The Indian

Feature Film, The Netherlands 2009  
Director: Ineke Houtman  
Production: Lemming Film, Bos Bros.  
World Sales: Lemming Film  
Valschermkade 36F  
NL-1059 CD Amsterdam  
Phone: +31-20-6610424  
E-Mail: [info@lemmingfilm.com](mailto:info@lemmingfilm.com)  
[www.lemmingfilm.com](http://www.lemmingfilm.com)

### Starring Maja

Feature Film, Sweden 2009  
Director: Terea Fabik  
Production: Svensk Filmindustri  
World Sales: AB Svensk Filmindustri  
Greta Garbos Väg 13, SE-16936 Solna  
Phone: +46-8-6803500  
E-Mail: [international@sf.se](mailto:international@sf.se)  
[www.sfinternational.se](http://www.sfinternational.se)

### Yohan – The Child Wanderer

Feature Film, Norway 2009  
Director: Grete Salomonsen  
Production: Penelope Film AS  
World Sales: TrustNordisk Film Int. Sales  
Filmbyen 12, DK-2650, Hvidovre.  
Phone: +45-3686-8788.  
E-mail: [info@trustnordisk.com](mailto:info@trustnordisk.com)  
[www.yohan.no](http://www.yohan.no)

### Little Nicholas

Feature Film, France, Belgium 2008  
Director: Laurent Tirard  
Production: Fidélité, Wild Bunch, Scope  
World Sales: Wild Bunch  
99, Rue de la Verrerie, F-75004 Paris  
Phone: +33-1-53-01-50-20  
E-Mail: [vmaraval@wildbunch.eu](mailto:vmaraval@wildbunch.eu)  
[www.wildbunch.biz](http://www.wildbunch.biz)  
[www.lepetitnicolas-lefilm.com](http://www.lepetitnicolas-lefilm.com)

### Little Robbers

Feature Film, Latvia, Austria 2008  
Director: Armands Zvirbulis  
Production: Studio F.O.R.M.A., Minifilm  
World Sales: Studio F.O.R.M.A.  
Lacplesa iela 36 - 4A, LV-1011, Riga  
Phone: +371-7313105  
E-Mail: [s.forma@studioforma.lv](mailto:s.forma@studioforma.lv)  
[www.studioforma.lv/en](http://www.studioforma.lv/en)

### No Hard Feelings

Feature Film, Belgium 2009  
Directors: Yves Hanchard  
Production: To Do Today Productions  
World Sales: Flach Pyramide Internat.  
5 rue du Chevalier de Saint-George  
F-75008 Paris, France  
Phone: +33-1-42960220  
E-Mail: [pricher@pyramidefilms.com](mailto:pricher@pyramidefilms.com)  
[www.pyramidefilms.com](http://www.pyramidefilms.com)

### Orps – The Movie

Feature Film, Norway 2009  
Director: Atle Knudsen  
Production: Monster Film AS  
World Sales: Delphis Films  
225 Roy Street East, S. 200 Montreal,  
Quebec, H2W 1M5, Canada  
Phone: +1-514-843-3355  
E-Mail: [distribution@delphisfilms.com](mailto:distribution@delphisfilms.com)  
[www.delphisfilms.com](http://www.delphisfilms.com)

### The Scouting Book for Boys

Feature Film, Great Britain 2009  
Director: Tom Harper  
Production: Scouting Book Films Ltd.  
c/o Celador Films  
World Sales: Pathé International  
Kent House 14-17, Market Place  
GB-London W1N 8AR  
Phone: +44-20-74624427  
E-Mail: [internationalsales@pathe.co.uk](mailto:internationalsales@pathe.co.uk)  
[www.patheinternational.com](http://www.patheinternational.com)  
[www.celadorfilms.com](http://www.celadorfilms.com)

## ECFA in persons

### **Agnieszka Piechnik, Poznan, Poland** **International Young Audience Film Festival 'Ale Kino!'**

Agnieszka Piechnik, born 1979, has been working for the 'Ale Kino!' International Young Audience Film Festival in Poznan, Poland since 2006. In 2007 she took over the task of 'Ale Kino's!' festival-coordinator. In February 2009 she was elected to the board of ECFA.

The main goal of her work for the 'Ale Kino!' Festival Agnieszka Piechnik defines as "giving children and teenagers in Poznan a possibility to encounter a variety of interesting and intriguing films from all over the world. Our festival is still the only chance for them to actually see films that their peers from other countries and continents watch."

Since the very beginning of her work for 'Ale Kino!' Agnieszka Piechnik has been in contact with ECFA: "When organizing an international film festival the information on new films is crucial, as well as sharing experiences with other people organizing similar events." Therefore in Agnieszka Piechnik's opinion the most important aspect of ECFA's activities is networking and exchanging ideas. "I like the atmosphere of co-operation and good will among the members of our association. ECFA gathers people who are all interested in the same type of cinema. Apart from this, they are from different professions, institutions and countries. Thanks to that, every time we have the possibility to meet or exchange information is very fruitful. That is important for promoting children's films across Europe, for developing our 'Ale Kino!' Festival and personally for my own professional experience."

In her professional routine ECFA's media – the website and the Journal – are quite useful tools. "With their reliable information they help developing a festival easier and faster, which is really important."

What ECFA should do according to Agnieszka Piechnik is to attract more members especially from the Central and Eastern European countries. These regions are still not represented enough in our association. At the moment ECFA has two board members from these countries: Petr Koliha, the director of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Zlin, Czech Republic and Agnieszka Piechnik from Poland. So the prospects to change this situation are quite good.

[www.alekino.com](http://www.alekino.com)

### **CIFEJ General Assembly in Taiwan**

The CIFEJ General Assembly, hosted by FUBON Foundation, took place in Taipei from 20th – 23rd September, attended by 30 CIFEJ members from all over the world - with a strong Asian representation. With ongoing kindness FUBON took responsibility for the accommodation, local transport, meals and the encounter with Taiwanese media and culture. Visiting the Public Television Service (PTS), which also hosts the Taiwan Children's Film Festival, was a rare opportunity to see a public broadcaster taking responsibility for both media literacy and locally produced quality media for children. For the first time in CIFEJ history the GA had also a virtual platform with live-streaming and delayed pod-cast for viewing on demand, managed by Miomir Rajcevic.

The GA confirmed that the headquarters will move to Tehran, Iran, hosted by KANOON since the other proposal from Germany had to be withdrawn due to lack of sufficient support and funding. With only one legal proposal the CIFEJ members unanimously voted for Iran to host the HQ. Firdoze Bulbulia from South Africa is the new President.

KidsForKids will remain the flagship of CIFEJ. The international award ceremony 2009 will be held in December in Belgrade, Serbia. Jo-Anne Blouin will continue coordinating the KFKF and implementing a global KFK network, that already includes Africa, Iran, Balkan, UK, Baltic and Nordic States.

Andrzej Jasiewicz made a proposal about a new production office. These and other projects will be discussed by the new board. Secretary General: Mohsen Chiniforoushan (Iran), President: Firdoze Bulbulia (South Africa), Board members: Katarína Minichová, (Slovakia - Vice-President), Günther Kinstler (Germany - Vice-President), Samir Nasr (Canada), Antonella Di Nocera (Italy), Vinod Ganatra (India), Jean-Luc Slock (Belgium), Helen Ward (UK) and Bitte Eskilsson (Sweden).  
(Report by Maikki Kantola)

We're hoping CIFEJ will come out as a strong and united partner for a further mutual and friendly cooperation in every field of the children's film landscape.

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*Agnieszka Piechnik*

### **Adam Goes Australia**



ECFA board member and notorious corrector of the ECFA Journal Adam Graham said farewell to the Leeds Young People's Film Festival and has left for Australia. But as Adam stated: "There is plenty of ways to stay in touch and see what we are up to. For instance: our blog for updates, pics and videos. Post your comments on [www.antdownunder.blogspot.com](http://www.antdownunder.blogspot.com) Stay in touch and thanks to all of you for everything."

ECFA wishes Adam and Tanja Graham a bright and shiny future in Australia. Adam's succession in the ECFA Board will soon be discussed in the next board meeting in Cinekid, Amsterdam.



*Cifej in Taiwan*



*Firdoze Bulbulia & Athina Rikaki*



## ECFA Journal

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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. ECFA since 1988 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/network.htm](http://www.ecfaweb.org/network.htm)  
Databases on children's film festivals, sales agents, distributors and TV-programmers interested in European films for children.

## FILM IN THE FOCUS

**Christian Ditter's THE CROCODILES (Vorstadtkrokodile)**  
"Social backgrounds don't matter for a child - friendship does"

**In 1977 the book 'Vorstadtkrokodile' by Max von der Grün was adapted into a TV-film. Now Christian Ditter has made a remake for the big screen. THE CROCODILES still carries along the heritage of the late seventies: Society's view on ethnic minorities, disabled children, etc. needed to be updated to a more modern setting. THE CROCODILES could be considered an interesting case study in group's dynamics: A bunch of children with a different social background brought together in the suburbs of a German town.**

It's Hannes' big dream to become a member of The Crocodiles, the coolest gang in town. Kai too shares the same dream but for him things aren't so obvious since he is disabled, wheeling round in his wheelchair. One night Kai witnesses a burglary, suddenly the gang is interested in him after all. With Kai's help and a shot of Crocodile courage, the whole gang sets about cracking the case...

THE CROCODILES tickles the audience's senses with a thrilling story, some spectacular scenes (this is no movie for people suffering from a fear of heights), a wheelchair chase and a vibrant and positive view on life in suburbia.

Christian Ditter: "I grew up in a suburb. In suburbia all your friends live close to you, you can easily meet each other, you can go everywhere by bike and you don't need your parents to drive you. As a kid it makes you quite independent."

### **Can the children of today easily identify with these characters?**

Ditter: "In THE CROCODILES every gang member has very different characteristics. I hope every child of today finds someone to identify with: the leader, the foreign kid, the only girl, the fat boy, the disabled one, the stutterer or the small boy. Individually they would all be outsiders but together they are the coolest gang in town. Social backgrounds don't matter for a child - friendship does."

### **Some of the ideas and concepts from the seventies you had to transmit in a trustworthy way to a modern setting.**

Ditter: "We didn't try to live up to the old film, we tried to tell the story again from scratch. Friendship, courage, loyalty and love are relevant to everybody, no matter how old you are or where you live. In the seventies' version The Crocodiles were portrayed as a gang, not so much as individuals. That's why we made every child special in it's own way and we included a Greek boy."

**On a technical level, the film had some interesting challenges for you. How did you handle the scenes above upon the roof?**

Ditter: "We built a roof which was only a few meters above the ground and we pointed the camera towards the sky as much as possible. We did some shots looking down into the depth. We used a green screen and later added the 'depth'. The most spectacular stunt was Hannes sliding from the roof. It wasn't as high as it looks, but still high enough to fall down. We had big boxes piled up below our actor Nick Reimann, but if he fell he could still hurt himself badly. He insisted not to be doubled and to slide down the roof, grab the drainage and hang on to it in one shot. Everybody was very impressed."

### **Who's the boy playing Kai's role? Who could train him in riding his wheelchair?**

Ditter: "We had Fabian Halbig trained by a doctor who usually trains people who become disabled after an accident. For the scene with the high-speed wheelchair we had a stunt man from Las Vegas who could do everything with a wheelchair you could possibly imagine (and more!) and had him double Fabi. We shot the close-ups of Fabi while pulling him along behind the camera car."

### **The film was pretty well received in Germany. Were you pleased with the result?**

Ditter: "We received so many letters from children who had seen the film over and over again, and that's the most rewarding experience: Creating someone's new favourite film."



*Plans for a CROCODILES-sequel are getting concrete. Production support has been applied for already. Christian Ditter once more will be the director.*

The complete version of the interview can be found on [www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/ditter.htm](http://www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/ditter.htm).