

No. 2 / 2014

MAY

EDITORIAL

Meeting Informally

Thank you to all ECFA members present at the Annual General Meeting in Berlin. The success of this meeting was partly based on the way you all made use of the opportunities for informal gathering. ECFA would love to facilitate such informal networking in an even better way. Due to ECFA's continuous growth, the format of the AGM should soon be reconsidered. The ECFA Board gathered again in Slovenia, where the stimulation of members meeting each other was designated an operating point for 2015. Already a pro-posal came from one of the members to make the website an even more user-friendly networking tool.

All members recently received the minutes of the AGM and will soon be sent the latest board meeting report. In these documents you can see how ECFA is stimulated and inspired by its members. Also within the projects that are currently in the pipeline (a seminar on documentaries for children, new ECFA seminars, optimized responding to the opportunities given by Creative Europe) we'll count again on your input. It is clear that the vigor emanating from meeting you all is the biggest motivation in our work. You can rightly say that ECFA as an organisation is driven by the energy of its individual members. Therefore we're looking forward to all occasions to meet, formally or informally, in 2014. (GH)

ERNEST & CELESTINE WINS ECFA AWARD 2014

With striking supremacy the animated movie by Benjamin Renner, Vincent Patar & Stéphane Aubier was voted by a majority of ECFA members as last year's best film for children. At ECFA's Berlinale party, President Céline Ravenel welcomed former winner Boudewijn Koole (KAUWBOY) to hand out the award diploma to Rodolphe Buet (Studiocanal), world sales agent of ERNEST & CELESTINE.



Ernest & Célestine



© Judita Soukupova

DOCUMENTARY SEMINAR COLOGNE



ECFA partners in a particularly interesting project: a European symposium on 'Documentaries for a Young Audience', held in Cologne, 11 – 13 September 2014.

Since the first German symposium on children's documentaries in 2001, film education methods and scholastic structures have gone through drastic changes. Most documentary festivals nowadays have a children's section and a few programming slots have been developed on television. Now it's time to take a next step. That's why ECFA is happy to be involved in what could become a landmark for the future of documentaries for a young audience.

European producers, distributors, festivals and intermediates are invited to the seminar. Cinema and television should be equally part of the event, making efforts to screen documentaries there where young audiences can find them (TV, internet etc.).

ECFA, taking up its role in the advisory board, highly recommends this project. We're hoping many ECFA members will join us on 11-13 September to work towards joint initiatives.

Organiser of the symposium is the Dokumentarfilminitiative im Filmbüro (www.dokumentarfilminitiative.de), with funding from the Northrhine-Westfalian Ministry of Culture and Filmfund.



Photos: Domen pal / Kinodvor

KINODVOR'S SEMINAR IN LJUBLJANA

The international 'Film Education in Cinemas' seminar, organised by Kinodvor (Ljubljana, 7-8 May) at the occasion of the 'Year of Cinema', explored the role of cinemas as cultural centers. Co-organiser Petra Slatinsek launched the debate through pertinent questions: how to attract teenagers to cinema in leisure time? How to include new media in film education? And how to optimise the cooperation between cinemas and educational institutions?



Gluing all subjects together through his limitless experience in the world of cinema was Ian Christie, film historian, curator, former vice-president of Europa Cinemas and notorious source of cinema-related anecdotes. He guided the audience along the early film club days, the film decoding theories of André Bazin and the still vivid legacy of media theories in the turbulent seventies and eighties (like Marshall McLuhan's 'the medium is the message').

Several ECFA members contributed to the seminar with short presentations. Like Celine Ravenel, designing a roadmap for festival managers, teachers and cinemas to build a bond with teenagers. A large involvement of teenagers can be achieved through participation in workshops, programming and voluntary work. The Ciné-Jeune festival launched a

couple of such long term projects, for instance on film costumes, resulting in a fashion show with creations from a local school.

Ian Christie summed up examples of interesting programming projects (Ecran Large sur Tableau Noir - Belgium, Bristol's Watershed, Sheffield's Showcomotion - UK) and defined a 'threshold problem' for modern cinemas: compared to shopping mall marketing strategies where doors have disappeared and people are 'sucked into' shops almost unnoticed, cinemas excel in fending people, creating barriers through ticket offices and strict screening schedules.

Methods to include new media technology were presented by Riccardo Costantini from the Italian Cinemazero association, integrating youngsters through

activities and competitions making use of twitter and instagram etc. (www.cinemazero.it).

A resume of the seminar's presentations can be found on <http://www.kinodvor.org/en/year-of-cinema/film-education-in-cinemas-international-conference/>



Martina Peštaj, Ian Christie & Kathy Loizou
Photo: Domen pal / Kinodvor

KIDS REGIO ORGANISES FORUM 2014

Children as Audience – Challenges and Potentials

The KIDS Regio Forum 2014 (June, 19-20th 2014 in Erfurt, Germany) brings together the gamut of children's content creators, funders and distributors of the European film industry with film academics, in order to share profound insights on research and practice. The aim of the forum will be to support visibility of, and access, to children's films in Europe by recognising specifics of the young audience and market circumstances.

In an interactive hub participants will reflect on two thematic priorities:

1. The Young Audience of the 21st Century – Consumption, Interests & Needs: What one needs to know in order to build an audience.

2. Channels & Visibility: How can we create more and better access to children's films?



All parts of the programme will look at the following key questions from different angles.

- How can we build an audience for profound children's films produced in Europe?
- How can we create and design children's films for the young audience of the 21st century?
- How can we create more and better access to children's films regarding

children's consumption, interests and needs?

KIDS Regio has lined up examples of best practice, from successful productions and VOD platforms to inspiring film literacy projects. During the 'think tanks' all participants get involved and will work out synergies.

The KIDS Regio Forum is organised with financial support of the Central German Regional Film Fund, the State Chancellery of Thuringia, Film I Skåne and the Creative Europe Desks Denmark and Berlin-Brandenburg, in collaboration with The Financing Forum for Kids Content, with the support of the German Golden Sparrow Foundation. (Viola Gabrielli)

EFA YOUNG AUDIENCE AWARD FOR REGRET!

More than 1,000 film fans across Europe participated in this year's EFA Young Audience Award (www.yaa.europeanfilmawards.eu). The 3rd edition of the European Film Academy's initiative for 12-14 year olds included film screenings in 17 cities: Aalborg, Barcelona, Belgrade, Bratislava, Budapest, Cluj-Napoca, Erfurt, Izola, London, Prizren, Riga, Sofia, Stockholm, Tbilisi, Tel Aviv, Valletta and Wroclaw. Each of these cities brought into the project a distinct local taste, with kids acting as one big European jury.

Having watched three nominated films on Young Audience Film Day (4 May), the youngsters had the opportunity to discuss the films and vote their favourite. The results were then reported live via video conference to Erfurt during the awards ceremony transmitted as a live stream. The award was presented to



Regret!

Dave Schram for his bullying drama REGRET! Other nominees were THE CONTEST (Martin Miehle-Renard, Denmark) and WINDSTORM (Katja von Garnier, Germany). (Copied information from European Film Academy Newsletter)

MAGIC LANTERN LAUNCHES MOVIEQUIZ

For its 20th birthday celebration, Swiss ECFA member The Magic Lantern launches a special App to introduce the youngest audience (4+) to the world of film in a playful way. The free MovieQuiz App comes in 7 languages (English,

French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arab and Swiss-German) and prepares the youngest audience for the movie theatre sensation. Through interactive animation this fun App offers a method for very basic film culture formation. By answering a multitude of questions about the 'big screen experience' (Why is it dark in the theatre? What's the use of special effects?), young children are awarded with various surprises. To play The Magic Lantern's free educative game, simply type MovieQuiz in the App Store or Play Store. (Raphaël Chevalley & Andrea Wildt).



NEW FILM BOOSTER TO BOOST BELGIAN YOUTH CINEMA

Early May **BOOSTER** premiered in Belgium. A youth film in a raw visual style. "On the international platform for some time, we saw the rise of films for young adults," says distributor Felix Vanginderhuysen. "But so far such a film hadn't been produced in our territory. Finally **BOOSTER** gives a voice to a subculture that has never before been portrayed in a Belgian movie. **BOOSTER** is up-to-date young urban cinema."

BOOSTER puts on the map the lives of seasoned city young people, showing off with boosted mopeds in suburban parks and squares. Among them is street racer Jimmy, fighting his own war with the new kid in town, talented BMX rider Brent. Author Marc Hendrickx: "I see **BOOSTER** as a contemporary **REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE**. The theme is similar: young people challenging each other with the threat of a possible bad outcome."

Director Daniel Lambo: "BOOSTER is guerilla cinema. We have been working extremely fast in a visual style referring to the unpolished images that young people post nowadays on the internet. Enthusiasm is much more important than budget." All young actors agree the film speaks 'the language of youth'. Rookie Nathan Gybels: "In my dialogue I recognise the way kids of our age speak and act. It's our slang." Adding to the auditory universe of young people, Belgian metal band Channel Zero offered some songs to **BOOSTER**'s soundtrack.

The budget was 'non-existent'. The film was shot with a minimal crew. Whoever visited the set was called to arms as an extra and actors brought their own 'costumes'. "These pants are mine," explains actress Frederike Migom. "These shoes I got from another film set and the T-shirt was bought in a second hand store. On the set we used little light and a super flexible camera. This allowed the actors maximum freedom of movement and caused an exceptionally big involvement of everyone. The usual film set hierarchy disappeared completely."

Main actor Maurits De Baets: "One hour before the shooting started, I first sat on a BMX. It didn't exactly go well. Luckily I had a stunt double."

Aaron Roggeman: "I did my own stunts and went flat on my face immediately."



It was raining, the asphalt was slippery and covered with leaves and I drove a Suzuki dirt bike... I twisted my wrist, which was very painful."

De Baets: "I found the love scenes even more difficult than the ones on the BMX. It had to look spontaneously, but I came to the set well prepared."

Roggeman: "Yes? With your puppets, I suppose?"

De Baets: "No, acting in the mirror."

Roggeman: "Oh, you mean: with your dog?"

Despite the guerrilla methods, the crew only once got in trouble with the authorities. Director Lambo: "We shot the inside car scenes while driving a heavy Dodge in circles on a remote parking lot. Suddenly we found ourselves surrounded by a platoon of agents aiming machine guns at us. Apparently the building behind our back was the national depot for bank transport money. An incessantly touring Dodge aroused some suspicion there." (GH)

Contact info: Jekino, info@jekino.be, +32 2 242 54 009, www.jekino.be.

Successful start for Czech Children's Television



In September 2013 ECFA board member Petr Koliha was designated to the launch of a new Czech young audience TV channel. In 5 months CT :D worked its way up to become Europe's most watched children's channel established by public service broadcasters, achieving the highest audience share in the 4-12 target group. Last January brought the record breaking share of 21,68%. CT :D combines international productions with Czech public TV archive material and brand new programmes.

The News Section: Films, Awards, Festivals and other events

Children's Film Fest. Cine Junior; Val de Marne, France

Grand Prix: "Les Jours d'avant" by Karim Moussaoui, Algeria & France, 2013.

Prix CICAIE: "Petit Frère (Bauyr)" by Serik Apyrmov, Kazakhstan, 2013.

Award Du Grain a Démoudre Jury: "The Weight of Elephants" by Daniel Joseph Borgman, Denmark, New Zealand & Sweden, 2013.

Awards given by schools: "Beautiful Life" by Jean Denizot, France, 2013; "The Weight of Elephants" & "Les Jours d'avant".

Audience Awards (Short films): "5,80 mètres" by Nicolas Deveaux, France, 2012; "Le Premier Pas" by Jonathan Comnène, France, 2012; "La Fugue" by Jean-Bernard Marlin, France, 2013.

www.cinemapublic.org

Int. Film Fest., Generation; Berlin, Germany

Generation Kplus: Children Jury's Crystal Bear for Best Feature: "Killa" by Avinash Arun, India, 2014; Best Short: "Sprout" by Ga-eun Yoon, Republic of Korea, 2013.

Int. Jury's award, Best Feature: "Ciencias Naturales" by Matías Lucchesi, Argentina, 2014. Best Short: "Moy lichniy los" ("My Own Personal Moose") by Leonid Shmelkov, Russia, 2013.

Generation 14+: Young People Jury's Crystal Bear for Best Feature: "52 Tuesdays" by Sophie Hyde, Australia, 2013. Best Short: "Mike" by Petros Silvestros, UK, 2014.

Int. Jury's Award: "Violet" by Bas Devos, Belgium, 2013. Best Short: "Vetrarmorgun" by Sakaris Stórá, Faroe Islands, 2013.

www.berlinale.de

European Youth Film Fest.; Antwerp / Bruges, Belgium

Professional Jury (ECFA): Best Feature: "Mother I Love you by" Janis Nords, Latvia, 2013. Best Short: "Sissy" by Siri Rutlin, Norway, 2013.

Children's Jury's: Best Feature: "Felix" by Roberta Durant, South-Africa, 2013 and "Windstorm" by Katja von Garnier, Germany, 2013. Best Short: "Rabbit and Deer" by Péter Vacz, Hungary, 2013 and "Sissy".

Film Fun in Bed Jury (hospitalized children): Best Short: "Mia" by Wouter Bongaerts, Belgium, 2013.

Audience Award: "Windstorm".

www.jeugfilmfestival.be

Int. Children's Film Fest. FIFEM; Montreal, Canada

People's Choice: "The Rooster of St. Victor" by Pierre Greco, Canada, 2013.

Children Jury & Int. Jury: "Bekas" by Karzan Kader, Sweden, Finland & Iraq 2012. Special Prize: "The Tough Guys" by Christian Lo, Norway, 2013

Inis Jury: "On the Way to School" by Pascal Plisson, France, 2012.

www.fifem.com

Int. Children's Film Fest., New York, USA

Grand Prize: "Foosball" (aka "The Underdogs") by Juan José Campanella, Argentina, 2013.

Best Animated Short: "Jamón" by Iria Lopez, Spain & UK, 2012. Best Live Action Short: "Crocodiles Without Saddles" by Britta Wandaogo, Germany, Burkina Faso & Ghana, 2012.

Audience Awards Short Films: Grand Prize: "A Town Called Panic: The Christmas Log" by Stéphane Aubier & Vincent Patar, France & Belgium, 2014.

Ages 3-6: "Snowflake" by Natalia Cherusheva, Russia, 2012.

Ages 5-10: "A Town Called Panic: The Christmas Log"

Ages 8-14: "The Dam Keeper" by Dice Tsutsumi & Robert Kondo, USA, 2013.

Ages 12-18: "Sleight of Hand" by Michael Cusack, Australia, 2012

Parents' Award: "9 Meter" by Anders Walter, Denmark, 2012.

www.gkids.com

BUFF – Int. Children & Youth Film Fest.; Malmö, Sweden

City of Malmö's Award: "Mother, I love you".

County Council of Skåne's Short Film Award: "Agnes" by Anja Lind, Sweden, 2014.

Swedish Church Award for Best Youth Film: "Leave to Remain" by Bruce Goodison, UK, 2013.

Young People's Award: "Regret!" by Dave Schram, The Netherlands, 2013.

ECFA Award: "Kick it!" by Katarina Launing, Norway, 2014.

www.buff.se

Youngabout – Int. Film Fest. for Young People; Bologna, Italy

Best Feature: "Before Snowfall" by Hisham Zaman, Germany, Iraq & Norway, 2013.

Adults' Jury, Best Short: "Falling Floyd" by Albert T Hooft & Paco Vink, The Netherlands, 2013; "The Gift" by Julio Pot, Chile, 2013; "Sinceridad" by Andrea Casaseca, Spain, 2013.

Children's Jury, Best Short: "Memorial" by Francescp Filippi, Italy 2013; "Falling Floyd" and "The Gift".

www.youngabout.com

Young People's Film Fest.; Leeds, UK

Younger Jury Award: "Vampire Sisters" by Wolfgang Groos, Germany, 2013. Older Jury & Audience Award: "Lad: A Yorkshire Story" by Dan Hartley, UK, 2013.

www.leedsyoungfilm.com

Kinderfilmfest; Augsburg, Germany

Pupils Jury, 1st prize: "For No Eyes Only" by Tali Barde, Germany, 2013; 2nd prize: "Casper and Emma" by Arne Lindtner Naess, Norway, 2013. Adult Jury: "Felix".

www.filmfest-augsburg.de

DIRECTOR VEIT HELMER ABOUT FIDDLESTICKS

"Coati's can play the piano"

Bollersville's inhabitants are average. Proud to be! And willing to do everything to stay average. In fact, they're so average that they get to test every new product before it hits the market. The children of Bollersville are no longer keen on being human guinea pigs and set a new goal: when you break a world record, you're not average anymore. This marks the start of a new era for Bollersville: the era of total chaos!



Veit Helmer: Some years ago I realised it was almost impossible to take my 4 year old son to the movies. All we could watch was animation; there were hardly any live action features for children. So I made my son the main source of inspiration for this movie, compiling everything he likes: fire cars, cranes, bulldozers, and most of all... accidents! Like a POLICE ACADEMY movie for the youngest audience! Also THE LITTLE RASCALS was a true reference, offering me the blueprint for my 6 main characters.

The story takes place in a bizarre location: the ultimately average city.

Helmer: Strangely enough such places really exist. In Germany there is an ugly city called Hassloch where they get to test all the new stuff, to see how 'average people' will react on it: green corn flakes, blue chocolate spread... I've been told in France the same happens in Angers. But in my film, children are fed up with being mediocre. The thing is: their parents simply love to be average; they would sacrifice everything for it.

That's why they call in the help of their grandparents.

Helmer: In FIDDLESTICKS (an old fashioned word for nonsense, funny things), parents are boring but grandparents are exciting. They used to be inventors, discoverers, composers... All of them unique individuals! Children love their crazy ideas. By starting an uprising, they walk in the footsteps of their grandparents.

Your actors were very young. How do you test the capabilities of a 4 year old?

Helmer: The main thing to be tested was not their acting skills but their dedication. Are they persistent enough to go through

10 weeks of shooting? Therefore we organised a dance class every Saturday, 3 months in a row. Ultimately we ended up with 6 candidates. Not a single one dropped out during the production.

What about the technicalities of the production?

Helmer: Hardly any visual effects were used, not even for the animals. The children find an odd partner in a coati, a South-American mammal that supposedly can't be trained. Until I found a perfectly trained specimen: it could drill, play the piano and carry books. We used a few computer effects for a crane crashing into houses. For three car crashes we build miniatures and little puppets. Most of the crashes were real: grotesque, violent and absurd! We bought old garbage trucks and tractors and had stuntmen crashing them.

Sounds like a Michael Bay movie.

Helmer: After every accident the children jump out of the cars laughing. There is not a single moment of anxiety. But I agree: the movie is politically very incorrect, which was the topic of many arguments with TV-partners. "You can't show children driving cars or climbing cranes, it might inspire them!" I saw Pippi Longstocking dancing on a train as a child, but did I ever dance on a train? Maybe grandparents should take children to watch this movie, as parents are simply too scared these days.

You were involved in many stages of the production process.

Helmer: I wrote the first draft of the script before handing it over to scriptwriter Hans-Ullrich Krause. I was also the producer. And I just started working on the world sales. I'll dedicate the next year of my life to supplying distributors with material to facilitate the film's further career. For the dialogues we used almost 90 % voice over, so there is not a lot of lip sync to do. We have all the music tracks also available in English, and I'm willing to personally assist in international dubbings wherever needed. (GH)



FIDDLESTICKS was presented at Golden Spatz and in Cannes and will be screened at the Zlin festival soon. Watch the trailer on www.fiddlesticksmovie.com. More info & World Sales: Veit Helmer, veit.helmer@arcor.de; www.veithelmer.com.

The full version of this interview can be found on: <http://www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/Helmer.htm>.

PRODUCTION

THE GOLDEN HORSE

The Black Mother, a vicious goddess of death who feeds on human tears, kidnaps a charming princess, the heir to the throne. By making the whole country weep, she can harvest their tears. Until Antis comes to prove his strength. In a seemingly impossible mission to free the princess, he has to fight not only the Black Mother and a cruel prince, but even his own greedy brothers. This is the story of a pure-hearted boy growing up to become more manly and less of a dreamer.



THE GOLDEN HORSE is a classic Baltic fairy-tale, based on a play by poet and politician Rainis that was part of the spiritual inspiration that led to Latvia's independence in 1918. Production designer Xavier Dujardin (THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE, KIRIKOU AND THE SORCERESS): "THE GOLDEN HORSE evokes the awakening of a culture that had fallen asleep a long time ago, while still bearing the scars of Russian occupation."

THE GOLDEN HORSE is the first animated feature by Latvian director Reinis Kalnaellis, with co-production studios Paul Thiltges Distr. (Luxembourg), Vilanimo (Lithuania) and Copenhagen Bombay (Denmark). Producer Rija Films is still in search of partners in transmedia marketing activities.

Reinis Kalnaellis and Rija Films are already working on the next project. APPLE PIE LULLABY is a follow up to Kalnaellis' short film 'When Apples Roll'. Little Mouse dreams about becoming a hero and when the chance comes to visit Penguin City, we will discover how big Little Mouse already is. A 75' animation for the very youngest scheduled for 2015.

Watch the THE GOLDEN HORSE trailer on <https://vimeo.com/84766722>.
Contact: Rija Films, +37167362656, info@rijafilms.lv; www.rijafilms.lv;
www.thegoldenhorsemovie.com

LABYRINTHUS



"In LABYRINTHUS, friendship gives a 14-year-old more courage than he ever dared to dream," says director Douglas Boswell. This Belgian young audience production by Savage Film will be released domestically in June.

Frikke happens to find a strange computer game. When playing, he ends up in a fantastic virtual world: a labyrinth of endless corridors. The game takes an unexpected turn when he recognises avatars as real children from his village and they're in great danger! In a race against time, Frikke goes all the way to find the evil mastermind behind this terrible game.

CGI was largely used to create the different universes entered throughout the game. While telling an exciting tale, Douglas Boswell's film touches several hot topics, such as virtual reality versus reality and the limits of online anonymity. Boswell: "LABYRINTHUS is an adventurous rollercoaster for the whole family." Watch the trailer on

<https://vimeo.com/92242406>

World Sales: Attraction Distribution,
info@attractiondistribution.ca;
www.attractiondistribution.ca.

MORE MOZZIES



Jannik Hastrup only recently finished his 'Asylum Children' (short animated testimonies from children in an asylum center, including 'Jamila, if only I could fly' and 'Solén, I always remember daddy') to dig up the old characters from A TALE OF TWO MOZZIES (2007) again and dive once more into the intriguing insect world.

In MINI AND THE MOZZIES the beetle Mini works in a flea circus with Egon and Dagmar. Bullied by a dodgy flea-girl, Mini runs away and joins a gang of robbers, who have stolen Egon's bike. Ordered by a brutal gang leader, Mini breaks into the bees' honey stock, gets caught and is sentenced to life-long hard labour...

In MINI AND THE MOZZIES Jannik Hastrup and Fleming Quist Møller once more join forces for an adventurous journey (75') through a colourful and slightly chaotic-anarchistic universe. Based on a book by Møller, this Dansk Tegnefilm production premieres in June.
World sales: TrustNordisk,
info@trustnordisk.com,
www.trustnordisk.com.

TIFF Kids – Int. Film Fest.; Toronto, Canada

Children's Audience Awards: Best Feature: "Regret!" by Dave Schram, The Netherlands, 2013; Best Short: "The Numberlys" by William Joyce & Brandon Oldenburg, USA, 2013. Young People's Jury: Best Feature (8-10 y.o.): "Felix" by Roberta Durrant, South Africa, 2013. Best Short (9-13 y.o.): "The Dam Keeper" by Dice Tsutsumi & Robert Kondo, USA, 2013. Best Feature (9-13 y.o.): "Side by Side" by Arthur Landon, UK, 2013; Adult Jury: Best Live Action Short: "Anything Goes" by Steven Wouterlood, The Netherlands, 2014. Best Animated Short: "My Mom is an Airplane" by Yulia Aronova, Russia & USA, 2013.

www.tiff.net/festivals/tiffkidsfestival

Ciné Jeune – Fest. Int. de Cinéma; San Quentin & Department of Aisne, France

ECFA Award: "Jack and the Cuckoo-Clock Heart" by Mathias Malzieu & Stéphane Berla, France & Belgium 2013.

Award of the City of St. Quentin: "Class Enemy" by Rok Bicek, Slovenia, 2013.

Int. Young People Jury's Award: "Kiss Me, You Fucking Moron" by Stian Kristiansen, Norway, 2013; special mention for actor Demos Murphy in "The Weight of Elephants". Children & Young People's Jury: Best Short (3-6 y.o.): "La Petite casserole d'Anatole" by Eric Montchaud, France, 2014; Best Short (7-11 y.o.): "5 mètres 80" by Nicolas Deveaux, France, 2013; Best Short (12+): "Rhino Full Throttle" by Erik Schmitt, Germany, 2013.

www.cinejeune02.com

Int. Children & Youth Animation Film Fest.; Varaždin, Croatia

Children's Awards for animated films made by professionals: Best Film -10: "Mops and Ollie" by Kirstine Kuntz, Denmark, 2013. Best Film for Young People (11-14 y.o.): "Mirage" by Iker Maidagan & Dana Terrace, Spain & USA, 2013; Best Film for Young People (15-18 y.o.): "Fallin' Floyd" by Albert 't Hooft & Paco Vink, The Netherlands, 2013.

www.vafi.hr

Int. Fest. of Animated Films, Section "Tricks for Kids"; Stuttgart, Germany

Tricks for Kids Awards: Best Animated Short: "Poppety in the Fall" by Pierre-Luc Granjon & Antoine Lanciaux, France, 2012. Best Animated Series: "The Amazing World of Gumball: The Hero" by Mic Graves, UK, 2012.

Cartoons for Teens Awards: Best Animation: "The Centipede and the Toad", France, 2013.

www.ifs.de

Indie Lisboa, section Indie Junior; Lisboa, Portugal

Indie Junior Jury's Award: "Rabbit and Deer" by Péter Vácz, Hungary, 2013.

Indie Junior's Audience Award: "Sissy".

www.indielisboa.com

Golden Sparrow – Fest. of Films & Media for Children; Gera & Erfurt, Germany

Children Jury: Best Feature: "The Black Brothers" by Xavier Koller, Germany, 2013; this film also received the awards for Best Di-

rector & Best Actor. Best Animated Film: „Tarzan“ by Reionhard Klooss, Germany, 2013; Best Short: „Bye, Dad“ by Hendrik Maximilian Schmitt, Germany, 2014. MDR-Jury's award Best Script: „Rico, Oskar and the Deeper Shadows“ based on a books by Andreas Steinhöfel.
www.goldenerspatz.de

Forthcoming festivals & events

Prix Jeunesse Int.; Munich, Germany
May 30 - June 4th 2014
www.prixjeunesse.de

Int. Fest. for Children & Youth; Zlín, Czech Republic
May 30 - June 5th 2014
www.zlifest.cz

Int. Children's Film Fest. Golden Butterfly; Tbilissi, Georgia
May 30 - June 15th 2014
E-Mail: qqrospelpela@yahoo.com

Children's Cinema Fest.; Florianópolis, Brazil
May 31 - June 8th 2014
www.mostradecinemainfantil.com.br

Children's Film Fest. Mo&Friese; Hamburg, Germany
June 1 - 9th 2014
www.moundfriese.de

Animafest - World Fest. of Animated Film; Zagreb, Croatia
June 3 - 8th 2014
www.animafest.hr

Kids Fest.; Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina
June 6 - 10th 2014
www.kidsfest.ba

Plein la Bobine –Film Fest. for Young People; Massif du Sancy, La Bourboule & Le Mont-Dore, France
June 14 - 20th 2014
www.pleinlabobine.com

KIDS Regio Forum: Children as Audience – From the Perspective of Research & Practice; Erfurt, Germany
June 19 - 20th 2014
www.kids-regio.org

Int. Childrens Film Fest.; Krakow, Poland
June 22 - 26th 2014
www.ffdd.pl

Youth Film Fest.; Espinho, Portugal
June 24 - July 1st 2014
www.fest.pt

Children's Film Fest.; Munich, Germany
June 27 - July 5th 2014
www.filmfest-muenchen.de

Cinemagic– Int. Film & Television Festival for Young People; London, UK
June 30 - July 3rd 2014
www.cinematic.org.uk

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

ZAGREB CELEBRATES CHAPLIN

Kids Meet Art (Zagreb, Croatia) found a wonderful way to celebrate Charlie Chaplin's 120th birthday and 100 years since the birth of his iconic 'Tramp' character.



How do you make art an integral part of children's lives through film? Kids Meet Art has tried successfully. Within 2 years, 15,000 pupils from elementary schools participated in their 'Seventh Continent' film programme. Contemporary European films and classic cinema followed by film analyses, alongside a guided tour through an exhibition on 'moving pictures' in the Zagreb Museum of Contemporary Art are at the basics of this project.

This spring two Chaplin-related anniversaries were celebrated. School children enjoyed the screening of THE KID and got carried away by the Tramp's affection for a harmless child. Chaplin's magic filled the theatre with pure tenderness and sympathy. Children were guided through the session by actor Dražen Šivak, whose performance gave them an insight in the profession of an actor today, in relation to the silent movie era.

Kids Meet Art is planning a projection of THE KID with Chaplin's full symphonic score, performed by a live orchestra of young musicians. Edita B. Galinec & Ivana J. Alpeza: "By giving a tribute to this masterpiece, a significant message is passed to the younger generation. We invite other associations to programme this event in their cities and countries. Let's introduce Chaplin to the generation of our children!" (If you're interested in partnering in this project, please contact Kids Meet Art: e.galinec@sedmikontinent.org.)

In addition to the regular film programming for primary schools and kindergartens, Kids Meet Art is especially proud about their inclusive film projection and analysis for deaf and blind children, organised in collaboration with UNICEF's 'Festival of Children's Rights'.

ANIMATION RESIDENCY TO KICK-START INDIAN ANIMATION

TOY STORY wins millions of fans across the world, for its distinct visual design, which is rooted firmly in the American ethos. Similarly Anime films carry the aroma of Japan. ERNEST & CELESTINE and the work of Michel Ocelot have an unmistakable French stamp. While animation producing countries in the developed world have evolved their own unique styles, the trajectory of the Indian animation industry despite becoming the world's favourite for visual effects outsourcing, hasn't been quite the same.

The \$2 billion industry is growing by 20% per year and infrastructure is flourishing. Bangalore based studios have 'serviced' Hollywood biggies like LIFE OF PI, KUNG FU PANDA and HARRY POTTER. And yet home grown content that reflects the aesthetics and richness of South Asia continues to be conspicuous by its absence. A lack of faith in commercial return has not allowed the industry to take advantage of the highly developed storytelling tradition, available talent, and a ready audience of the largest number of children.

The South Asian Children's Cinema Forum (SACCF) intends to fill this gap with a South Asian Animation Residency. This residency invites established and emerging animators to create original work, rooted in the South Asian reality, memory and imagination. The residency will provide fellowships to 10 animators from across 9 countries to come together in a 4 month residential lab to produce high quality animation shorts for children. Fellows will have access to guidance from industry professionals and assistance from animation students. The resultant 10 films will be packaged as a series and promoted through festivals, screenings and sales.

SACCF has joined with Arnab Chaudhuri, one of South Asia's foremost animators to lead the residency and Srishti School of Art, Design & Technology to host it, hoping to pave the way for nurturing a distinct South Asian school of animation.

With key partners already on board, the South Asian Animation Residency slated to start next year will be announced in August 2014. SACCF is currently looking for global investment, co-production and distribution partners who are fearless about pushing forward new boundaries while also reaping long-term benefits from the same. (Monica Wahi)

For more info on the South Asian Animation Residency please contact monica@ccfsouthasia.org



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. Producers, distributors and sales agents are kindly invited to inform us of their new releases.

Annabell's Spectacularities

Feature Film, Sweden, 2014
Director: Elisabet Gustafsson
Prod. & World Sales: Filmance Int.
Box 27156, 10252 Stockholm, SE
Phone: ++46-8-459-73-80
E-Mail: hq@filmance.se
www.filmance.se

Bamse and the City of Thieves



Feature Film, Sweden, 2014
Director: Christian Ryltenius
Prod.: Tre Vänner Prod., Sluggersfilm Aktiebolag
World Sales: TrustNordisk Film Int. Sales
Filmbyen 22, 2650 Hvidovre, DK
Phone: ++45-36-86-87-88
E-Mail: info@trustnordisk.com
www.trustnordisk.com

Broken Hill Blues

Feature Film, Sweden, 2013
Director: Jan Tomanek
Prod. & World Sales: Digital Filmmakers
Sveavägen 98, 5tr. 3; 11350 Stockholm, SE
Phone: ++46 -8-22-97-22
E-Mail: info@dfm.se
www.dfm.se

Come to my Voice

Feature Film, Turkey, Germany & France, 2014
Director: Hüseyin Karabey
Prod. & World Sales: Asi Film & EZ Films
14 rue Mandar, 75002 Paris, FR
Phone: ++33-953-69-80-94
E-Mail: elie@ez-films.com
www.ez-films.com

The Good Life

Feature Film, France, 2013
Director: Jean Denizot
Production: Mezzanine Films
World Sales: Match Factory
Balthasarstr. 79-81, 50760 Cologne, GE
Phone: ++49-2-21-539-70-90
E-Mail: info@matchfactory.de
www.matchfactory.de

Jack and the Cuckoo-Clock Heart

Animation, France & Belgium, 2013
Directors: Mathias Malzieu & Stéphane Berla
Prod. & World Sales: EuropaCorp, Walking The Dog, 137, rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, 75008 Paris, FR
Phone: ++33-1-53-83-03-03
E-Mail: inter@europacorp.com
www.europacorp.com

Kick it!

Feature Film, Norway, 2014
Director: Katarina Launing
Prod. & World Sales: Cinenord Kidstory
Akersbakken 33, 172 Oslo, NO
Phone: ++47- 22-95-55-80
E-Mail: spillefilm@cinenord.no
www.cinenord.no

Lola on the Pea

Feature Film, Germany, 2014
Director: Thomas Heinemann
Prod. & World Sales: Super Neun
Fraunhoferstraße 35, 80469 Munich, GE
E-Mail: info@superneun.com
www.superneun.com
Festival contact: Renate Zylla,
rzylla@arcor.de

Shana – The Wolf's Music



Feature Film, Switzerland, 2014
Director: Nino Jacusso
Prod. & World Sales: Reck Filmproduktion
Dienersstrasse 7, 8004 Zürich, SW
Phone: ++41-44-241-37-63
E-Mail: info@reckfilm.ch
www.reckfilm.ch; www.shanafilm.com
Festival contact: Renate Zylla,
rzylla@arcor.de

Supernova

Feature Film, The Netherlands, 2013
Director: Tamar van den Dop
Prod.: Revolver Amsterdam, IJswater Films, Coin Film, Epidemic
World Sales: Wide Management
9, rue Bleue, 75009 Paris, FR
Phone: ++33-1-53-95-04-64
E-Mail: wide@widemanagement.com

T.I.M. – The Incredible Machine

Feature Film, The Netherlands, 2014
Director: Rolf van Eijk
Prod. & World Sales: Dutch Mountain Film, AVRO, Van Hallstraat 52, 1051 HH Amsterdam, NL
Phone: ++31-20-68-818-43
E-Mail: info@dutchmountainfilm.com
www.dutchmountainfilm.nl

The Word

Feature Film, Poland & Denmark, 2014
Director: Anna Kazejak
Prod.: Opus Film
World Sales: LevelK; Gammel Kongevej 137 B; 1850 Frederiksberg C, DK
Phone: ++45-48-44-30-72
E-Mail: tine.klint@levelk.dk
www.levelk.dk

More information on all these films:
www.ecfaweb.org/ecfnet/films.php

Children's Media Conference; Sheffield, UK
July 2 - 4th 2014

www.thechildrensmediaconference.com

Cartoon Club – Int. Fest. of Animation Cinema & Comics; Rimini, Italy

July 4 - 27th 2014

www.cartoonclub.it

Showcomotion - Fest. for Children & Young People; Sheffield, UK

July 7 - 20th 2014

www.showcomotion.org.uk

Film Fest., Children's Film Programme

"Pulica"; Pula, Croatia

July 12 - 26th 2014

www.pulafilmfestival.hr

Int. Youth Media Summit; Belgrade, Serbia

July 14 - 27th 2014

www.iyms.info/iyms

IFI Family Film Fest.; Dublin, Ireland

July 17 - 20th 2014

www.ifi.ie/familyfest

Int. Film Fest. for Children & Youth; Tel Aviv, Israel

July 17 - 24th 2014

www.cinejeune02.com

Film Fest.; Giffoni Valle Piana, Salerno, Italy

July 18 - 27th 2014

www.giffoniff.it

New Horizons Int. Film Fest.; Wroclaw, Poland

July 24 - August 8th 2014

www.nowehorizonty.pl

Kodomotachino Children's Film Fest.; Tokyo, Japan

August 12 - 16th 2014

www.kinder.co.jp

Int. Filmfest. Children's Film Section Cinemagi; Haugesund, Norway

August 16 - 22nd 2014

www.filmfestivalen.no

Int. Youth Film Fest.; Seoul, South Korea

August 21 - 28th 2014

www.siyff.com

Ciné Int. Film Fest.; Espoo, Finland

August 22 - 31st 2014

www.espocine.fi

Nueva Mirada – Int. Film Fest. for Children & Youth; Buenos Aires, Argentina

August 28 - September 3rd 2014

www.nuevimirada.com

Fantoche – Int. Animation Film Fest.; Baden, Switzerland

September 2 - 7th 2014

www.fantoche.ch

Buster – Int. Film Fest. for Children & Youth; Copenhagen, Denmark

September 12 - 28th 2014

www.buster.dk

Int. Children's Film Fest. KICFF; Kristiansand, Norway

September 16 - 21st 2014

www.kicff.no

Lucas Int. Children's Film Fest.;
Frankfurt, Germany
September 21 - 28th 2014
www.lucas-filmfestival.de

AniFest ROZAFa- Int. Fest. of Ani-
mated Films for Children & Young-
sters; Shkoder, Albania
September 21 - 28th 2014
www.anifestrozafa.org

Cartoon Forum; Toulouse, France
September 23 - 26th 2014
www.cartoon-media.eu

Children's & Youth Film Fest. "Mi-
chel"; Hamburg, Germany
September 26 - October 4th 2014
www.michel-kinderfilmfest.de

International Biannual Festival of
Animation, Bratislava, Slovakia
October 6 to 10th 2014
www.bab-slovakia.sk

More information on all these festivals:
www.ecfaweb.org/ecfnet/festivals.php

'DANCING IN JAFFA' BY HILLA MEDALIA

Can you dance with the enemy? Yes, because "dance can unite even the most divided of worlds" says 4 times ballroom dancing world champion Pierre Dulaine. His city of birth, Jaffa, for generations has been defined by hostility and hatred. People live side by side in a state of constant tension. That's why Pierre decided to 'give back' something of his lucky life to the children of Jaffa, divided by two communities that continue to grow apart.

Over a 10 week period Pierre taught Jewish and Palestinian-Israeli children to dance. "May I have this dance, please?" Face to face, eye to eye, that's how the process of fighting racial and cultural prejudices began.

In DANCING IN JAFFA director Hilla Medalia witnessed this long, difficult process. The film explores the complex stories of three children, forced to confront issues of identity and segregation. The skills



Monsieur Pierre teaches them transcend the dance floor: etiquette, self-esteem, respect, regarding each other as individuals rather than members of religious factions. Pierre transforms their lives, with a strong belief that dance can shift the paradigm and stop the hate.

The film demonstrates the role that art, and dance in particular, can play in enabling children to be aware of positive possibilities: being part of a community, learning one from another and sharing tolerance, both on an individual and collective level. (Eva Schwarzwald)

www.dancinginjaffa.com

NATURAL SCIENCE

"Feeling like... Mick Jagger"

This year's Generation Kplus Grand Prix went to NATURAL SCIENCE, a deeply salutary film by Matias Lucchesi (Argentina). 12 year old Lila leads a lonely life in the mountains. Desperately wanting to trace her unknown father, she finally finds a tenuous clue: a company address on a rusty metal plate. Sneaking out of boarding school, Lila gets caught by her science teacher. Together they set out on a journey through a bare land, in search of a stranger.



The most striking quality of NATURAL SCIENCE I found: its honest simplicity.

Matias Lucchesi: We made the film by the motto: the simpler, the better. The project started spontaneously. A producer told me I had to wait one and a half years for my next film. Immediately co-author Gonzala Salaya and I decided to write another script. We approached things in a simple way, honest with our story. We never claimed the virtuosity of smart filmmakers.

The rough landscape adds to that.

Lucchesi: The landscape in Cordoba, the province where I was born, is immense. Once you leave the city, you're in the 'big nothing'. It's no coincidence that we pay so much attention to natural elements such as wind, fire and fog. The film was partly shot in Las Altas Cumbres, the highest mountain in Cordoba, where the

climate is cold and harsh. In this isolated land, boarding schools are still key points. Children might have to ride a horse for 6 hours to get to school and then stay there for several days. Me too, I rode horses as a child. I even played polo. But not anymore, I'm living in Buenos Aires now.

How was it to work there?

Lucchesi: Tough! We stayed in that school for 10 days. There was one bathroom for 30 people, it was cold, the pipes were frozen and one actress was pregnant. It was a problematic shooting with a very small crew, lacking all the basic needs. Only the passion of the actors made it possible, but at that moment, they must have hated me.

I suppose there was not much of a budget.

Lucchesi: We had nothing. If you want the INCAA (Argentine National Film Board) to support your production, you have to be patient, but I couldn't wait. So we didn't apply. We used all our savings, took a loan and asked for help from friends and family.

All the action in the movie is driven by Lila. She is the motor behind the story.

Lucchesi: Lila radiates life in all its pureness. She doesn't rationalise, but just follows natural impulses. Her strongest need is to discover the truth about her father, and nothing can stop her from doing that. Paula Galinelli Hertzog was only 11 but she carries the entire movie. Working with children was a hard, but powerful experience. I've learned a lot from it: to speak in a different way, to be careful in my instructions etc.

I particularly appreciate the scenes in which she finally finds her father. You were always sure this was the right way to do it?

Lucchesi: In the original script the ending

was part of a larger narrative. In the editing we brought the story back to its barest simplicity, avoiding all 'big emotions'. Sometimes it's better not to give away everything. It's up to the audience to fill in the blanks.

What can you tell about the father?

Lucchesi: As a welder, he works with strong metal and models it. Even the hardest material can be reshaped by human hands. Consider that a metaphor. In Argentina we have workers travelling around, doing jobs in a place for one month and then move on. Every now and then they meet women on their path. As soon as the character of 'the Puma' is mentioned, in Argentina the audience starts laughing. We all know somebody like Puma.



The film has already been released in Argentina?

Lucchesi: Not yet, only after the World Cup. Until then, people can think about nothing else but football.

In Berlin the film won in the Generation section.

Lucchesi: That was a surprise, we never thought about it as a film for children. But we were delightfully surprised: the cinema was packed with enthusiastic children, they understood the story and cued in a long line for Paula's autograph. She felt like... Mick Jagger. The appeal of a film doesn't depend on you. Such things have a life of their own, you can't impose them upon your audience. (GH)

NEW MEMBERS



INT. CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, KRAKOW (PL)

The Int. Children's Film Festival (Międzynarodowy Festiwal Filmów dla Dzieci) has taken place in Krakow and other cities in Southern Poland since 2008. With a rich program of screenings, workshops, and other activities for children aged 4-14, each year in June the festival attracts thousands of children from this region.

Our mission is to immerse children in the world of film through a wide range of screenings and workshops led by acclaimed actors, filmmakers and animation artists, in which they create animations and short films themselves with the use of professional equipment.

Through a nationwide amateur film competition we encourage young people (under 16) to become filmmakers in their own community. In the festival amateur productions are screened (and awarded) alongside the main competition. This is our answer to the lack of quality children's films in Poland due to a primarily commercial focus of cinema and TV programmers.

The winning films receive a 'Green Frog' statuette from the adult professional Jury (for best feature & short) and awards from the children's jury and the audience. Entry to all screenings and events is free. During the festival a chosen charity organisation is invited to collect voluntary donations for their purposes.

The Int. Children's Film Festival is organised by the Cinema Development Foundation, an NGO devoted to the spread of digital cinema technology and advocating for interdisciplinary film and cultural education. The foundation has carried out an EU-funded project, equipping 18 local art-house cinemas with digital projectors (Malopolska Digital Cinema Network), while our many other projects aim at school children, young cultural professionals, and film industry stakeholders. (Marta Zurek)

Contact Festival: Marta Zurek, biuro@ffd.pl, festiwal@ffd.pl; www.ffd.pl.

NEW BOARD MEMBER: TANJA MILISIC

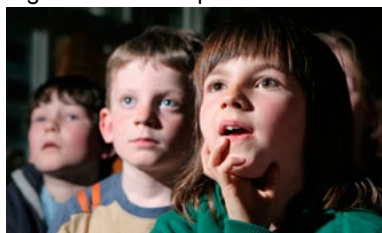
At the ECFA Annual General Meeting Tanja Milicic was elected as new member of the ECFA Board. Since 2003 Tanja has been working with the Pula Film Festival (Croatia) as festival producer, artistic board member and manager of Cinema Valli. Her work has always been characterised by a dedication towards a young audience through programming and media education initiatives. Tanja's presence will be a true enrichment for the ECFA Board in the upcoming years.

INTO FILM (UK)



Into Film is a UK wide charity specialising in the delivery of film education and seeks to put film at the heart of children and young people's learning. Our programme of learning through and about film provides 5-19 year olds with opportunities to see, think, make and imagine.

Into Film was born from the legacy of two leading film education charities, Filmclub and First Light, both had experience in delivering film-based programmes of significant scale to young people. In 2012, the respective Boards of Filmclub and First Light endorsed working jointly on a bid to deliver the British Film Institute's 5-19 film education scheme. As a consequence Filmclub and First Light merged into a new organisation in September 2013.



Into Film embraces a model that uses insight from the experience of the two founding organisations. Paul Reeve joined as Chief Executive. His 20 year background in cultural education includes a position at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, where as Director of Education he built one of the world's largest learning departments within an arts organisation. He is a passionate advocate for art being a fundamental entitlement in the education of every child.

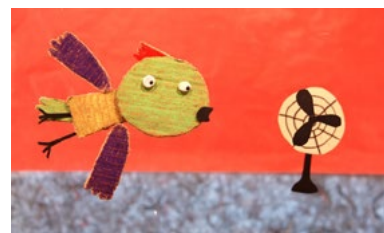
Into Film believes that it is important to be an ECFA member because access to high quality films from around the world is critical to delivering one of our key aims: to increase opportunities for young people to have a rich cultural and educational relationship with film. We believe that film is the richest of educational resources because of its synthesis of art forms to tell compelling stories and because of the enormous historic, literary, geographic, cultural and social value those stories embody. Film truly speaks across age, class, gender and background. It is the medium that has more than any other over the last century represented our past, present and our visions for the future. (Pip Eldridge)
Contact Into Film: Pip Eldridge, pip.eldridge@intofilm.org, www.intofilm.org.

CAMERA-ETC (BE)



Camera-etc gained international acclaim for its specific approach in producing animated films as collaborative projects. On the international platform, Camera-etc distinguished itself through projects developed in co-operation with countries from 'the South'. The studio is also involved in producing auteur films, music videos, and documentaries. Its original productions in varied graphic styles are regularly awarded in international festivals.

Created in 1979 and licensed as production workshop by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Camera-etc organises creative workshops for young people and adults in Belgium and abroad. Although animated films are rarely used as socio-cultural tools, Camera-etc produces around twenty short films per year in educational as well as socializing projects carried out in schools, social welfare agencies, neighbourhood associations, NGOs in Africa, Latin America, Palestine, Bosnia, etc. Furthermore Camera-etc facilitates professional art-house creation. The studio recently produced films like 'L'enveloppe Jaune' and 'Pois' (Delphine Hermans), 'Orgestuculanismus' and 'Le Labyrinthe' (Mathieu Labaye) and 'La Boite de Sardines' (Louise-Marie Colon).



Encouraging its audience to master and disseminate audiovisual language, Camera-etc promotes individual creative expression, organises development training, produces and distributes films, builds awareness and stimulates the exercise of responsible citizenship. By joining forces with resource partners specialized in the subjects being dealt with, the production content gains extra quality and films then can be used as awareness tools for a wide audience, from filmgoers to people directly involved with the subject.

(Sarah Martin)

Contact Camera-etc: Director Jean-Luc Slock, info@camera-etc.be, www.camera-etc.be.

ECFA AWARDS

Titles recently listed for the ECFA Award 2014:

- European Youth Film Festival (Antwerp / Bruges, Belgium): MOTHER, I LOVE YOU (Janis Nords, Latvia).
- BUFF International Children & Youth Film Festival (Malmö, Sweden): KICK IT! (Katarina Launing, Norway).
- Ciné-Jeune Festival de l'Aisne (Saint-Quentin, France): JACK AND THE CUCKOO-CLOCK HEART (Mathias Malzieu & Stéphane Berla, France / Belgium).



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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):

ECFA
European Children's Film Association
Phone: +32 (0)2 242 54 09
E-mail: ecfa@jekino.be
www.ecfaweb.org

The European Children's Film Distribution Network:

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 FOCUS

Jiri Madl's TO SEE THE SEA

12 year old Tomas wants to become a film director. His first career move: capturing everyday life with a small camera. His best friend Haris lends him a helping hand. While filming their own modest tribulations with first love and harmless mischief, the camera also registers some darker family secrets. A frolicsome video diary slowly turns into a document of betrayal and deception. For popular Czech actor Jiri Madl, TO SEE THE SEA was his debut as scriptwriter and director.

It's hard to talk about the film without discussing the specific format: you present it as a video diary shot by a young boy. Where did the idea come from?

Jiri Madl: I found my inspiration in the book 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' by Mark Haddon, which starts in a way as if it was written by a child. Only throughout the book Haddon sharpens the language and narrative. This concept I wanted to translate in a movie. When I saw my younger brother filming and editing rudimentary clips with his mobile phone, I knew it could be done. I'm not sure if I was the first to work in such a format, but I had never heard of anyone else doing it before.



The film looks as if it was the work of a child. How big was the input of the young actors?

Madl: They learned how to manipulate a camera, only to make the acting look real. There was no improvising; they had to study loads of dialogue. During rehearsals, they sometimes commented on specific words and phrases. I had a clear idea on how I wanted it to be. As an actor I totally hate it when a director plays a scene for me. Unfortunately, this is the first thing I did on the set: playing every scene for the actors. I did it all the time, and luckily they didn't mind.

What did you do cinematographically to make it look as if the scenes were really shot by children?

Madl: We couldn't shake the camera too much. Only in two scenes (intense moments of violence and escape) we didn't put any limitations. All the other blurry, out of focus moments, we created them artificially. That felt pretty odd: destroying my film in the editing room and make it look worse.

The film contains some scenes showing harsh domestic violence. Why are they there? How did you decide about the appropriate, delicate, way to put them on screen?

Madl: They are there because I have a certain experience with it. The film is true to the BLAIR WITCH PROJECT principle: you always fear what you don't see but only hear. All the time you think with the

children, and they're the ones getting scared the most. That's what triggers them to actually do something about it.

The combination of harmless family scenes and a few violent, cruel moments makes it hard to precisely define the target age. Madl: TO SEE THE SEA works for a broad family audience. Mostly the film simply shows 'life as it is', but from time to time it discloses adult secrets through the eyes of children. We all recognise those difficult situations when children ask their parents 'what does this mean?' at a wrong moment. It's these sort of moments the film is based on.

How did you sell your idea to Czech television?

Madl: It was very hard to push through the idea. When we explained about our format and the consistent children's point of view, we ended up with 4 "no's": from the TV channel, the producer, the Czech Film Fund and the distributor. I asked them: give me one camera and one week. Together with a friend I locked myself up in a mountain cottage where we made a pilot version of the movie's first 20 minutes, acting out everything ourselves. Presenting the result, all 4 partners said "yes".

The format requires a particular way of natural acting. Moreover the boys are in literally every scene. That must have been very demanding.

Madl: The shooting started off pretty tough and after 3 days Petr collapsed. I saw a major catastrophe lurking around the corner. But we gave him one day to rest, and afterwards everything went smoothly. Actually I was the one about to collapse. All the time I couldn't sleep. I never directed a movie before and suddenly felt like I was taking a big risk.



How do the boys look back upon the job?

Madl: They still haven't seen the film, but Jan Marsal (playing Haris) is an experienced TV-actor and he said this was his best shooting ever. Petr keeps visiting me and we've all been in touch, so I guess they don't hate me. (GH)

Contact Info: Bio Illusion, Pavla Krečmerová, ++420-272-650-336, pavla@bioillusion.com; www.bioillusion.com.