

## No. 4 / 2016

NOVEMBER

## EDITORIAL

## GET ON THE BUS

The first ECFA AGM that I attended took place in the Wintergarten of the Savoy Hotel, with a maximum of 40 people gathering in a fancy salon. Everybody knew each other and tracing the lines of mutual communication and exchange wasn't exactly difficult.

In 10 years ECFA has almost tripled its membership numbers and the load of information circling among members has expanded exponentially. And still ECFA wants to support you all in sharing that information and wants to provide you with that same friendly and enthusiastic community feeling. That's why our absolute focus over the last year was: working towards a new communication strategy. This was a task too big to keep on doing in the wee hours after office time... That's why a deal was closed with ECFA member Jekino, making them responsible for the setup and execution of a new communication plan. Meaning this is your farewell to the ECFA Journal as you know it – in 2017 you will receive this e-zine in a new format, with a fresh look, compatible for all electronic devices.

Starting from January 2017 onwards, you will be receiving news flashes in a regular E-bulletin (that of course will be fed by your input) and the upgraded ECFA website will be launched, with new structures and a new design, all developed by the Designbüro Frankfurt, who also pimped the good old ECFA logo and corporate identity.

Moving towards such a new goal with a membership organisation is like taking classes of children on a school trip. You're only as fast as the slowest child, it might take a while until the last one is on the bus, and the driver might get a bit annoyed. But I hope we have everyone on board the bus now. The vehicle has just been cleaned, the driver feels refreshed, and we're heading towards an exciting destination. It's about time for the noisy kids in the last row to start singing loudly.

Gert Hermans  
ECFA's communication officer



Better get used to this, because soon you'll see it all over town... the new ECFA logo

© Designbüro Frankfurt

## LUCAS FESTIVAL BRINGS 'LIFE ON THE BORDER' PROTAGONISTS ON STAGE

The first edition of LUCAS (Frankfurt) under director Cathy de Haan did justice to the festival's new profile: more attention to the art of cinema in general (instead of national premieres) and to media education in particular. De Haan: *"Interesting things are happening in the world of cinema nowadays. The boundaries between feature films and documentaries are blurring, and there is a growing inclusion of video art and technology. We've been looking particularly for such 'hybrid productions' to broaden our horizon."* One of the events reflecting this philosophy was the screening of **LIFE ON THE BORDER**, a compilation of short documentary reports made by young refugees in the camps of Kobanê (Syria) and Shingal (Iraq) (see ECFA Journal 2/2016). Two of the young directors made their appearance on stage in Frankfurt.



Basmeh Soleiman, Shaho Nemat & Sami Hossein © LUCAS Int. Festival

In **A TIME FOR DRUNKEN HORSES** and **TURTLES CAN FLY**, Bahman Ghobadi pictured the lives of children in turbulent circumstances. Now he offered eight young refugees a chance to tell their own story. Stories testifying of a horror that is almost impossible to capture and a fate sealed by war, rape and suppression. Meanwhile, Basmeh Soleiman and Sami Hossein have arrived in Germany as refugees. Today, escorted by their former film mentor Shaho Nemat, for the first time they see their own work on the big screen.

For the two young filmmakers it's an uncomfortable step from the tents of Kobanê to a Frankfurt stage. Showered in applause, they can't forget about their true mission. Basmeh Soleiman: *"I'm isolated from my family, still living in that camp. Being here, I can't say my life is complete. It has gotten a little better, but it's not the life that I'd wish for all Yezidi people, whose complaints are still not being heard by international governments and aid organisations. If I want this film to be seen in every European country, it's only to get our voices heard."* Sami Hossein: *"Mothers and sisters, like mine, are still in the hands of IS. As long as the Yezidi are hunted, we have to keep supporting them by raising our voices."*

**LIFE ON THE BORDER** is a compilation of mainly staged documentaries: showing true events, but founded by an elaborate scenario. Hossein: *"My script was all driven by reality. The title of my film was 'Bread and Yoghurt', simply because this is the food that we get every day."* Mentors like Shaho Nemat served as consultants in the scripting process. *"Choosing the participants in the project was the most difficult part. For 5 or 6 months we lived with those children, finding a huge potential in every single one of them. If we would have had more resources, a multitude of children like Basmeh and Sami could have been involved. But that was impossible, even if Bahman Ghobadi tried to move every mountain. He called me the other day, telling that finally after determined negotiation, there is a chance that people in the camps soon will get to see the film."*

This screening and meeting was the kick off of the successful 'Film, Flucht und Interkultur' conference organised by LUCAS.

## TOGETHER BEYOND PREJUDICE

The project 'Together against discrimination and for the promotion of the right to education' promotes the integration of Roma people through a participative awareness campaign, co-designed and co-produced by Roma and non-Roma children and youngsters.

It also intends to strengthen local networks and disseminate best practices at a local, national and European level, through participatory research and the publication of methodological guidelines for gender-sensitive actions to promote the empowerment of Roma students.

The activities will be carried out by local teams in the cities of Milan, Rome and Bari, where we plan to actively involve 42 teens and 48 children, Roma and non-Roma, supported by media and theatre professionals for the creation of 3 videos and 3 theatrical performances.

### Objectives

1. To prevent discrimination in primary school, fighting prejudices against the Roma through a process of empowerment, which includes a theatrical workshop involving children aged 8-11.

2. To encourage Roma youngsters (aged 12-15) to continue their studies, through a process of empowerment (by understanding of their rights) and through a video workshop.

3. To involve civil society, at a national and European level, by disseminating the three videos produced and by launching the project's website. The audience reached through this campaign will be invited to express their opinion about the videos and their impact.

### The initiatives

1. **Theatre workshops:** Through a participatory process, 16 children in each city will create and perform a theatrical play to raise awareness among their peers, parents and teachers. The theatre play will then be performed in schools and public spaces.

2. **Video workshops:** Initial training sessions to strengthen participants' life skills, such as: self-awareness, empathy, emotion management, and problem-solving. The training sessions will challenge current stereotypes and share Roma success stories and 'role models'.

In a second phase, the participants will be involved in the co-production of the videos. The final product will be the re-

sult of a 'collective' creative process, during which each trainee will contribute his or her own point of view, to achieve a common goal. At the end of the process, the participants will conduct awareness workshops in schools, educational centres etc. using their videos as a tool to stimulate discussion on issues such as: racial and gender discrimination, stereotypes and opportunities.

3. **Online voting:** A campaign will be launched to disseminate the videos and to encourage a European audience to share its opinion through online public voting. You'll be informed about this enquiry through ECFA's channels.

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## 'A GOOD CHRISTIAN' WINS YOUTH CINEMA NETWORK AWARD

The Youth Cinema Network is a grouping of festivals, workshops, organisations and media educators promoting and improving filmmaking by young people. One tool to showcase young filmmakers and their stories to an international audience is the newly installed Youth Cinema Network Award, chosen among the winning titles of approx. 25 member festivals. The first edition of the prize goes to 'A Good Christian', a film made in a cooperation between the Belgian animation atelier



Kidscam and the German Young Dogs workshop.

'A Good Christian' depicts the odyssey of Friday Opabajo, a 16-year-old asylum seeker on a journey from Nigeria to Germany. Friday himself cooperated on this project with 2 German and 2 Belgian children. The film was made in a European exchange project between Kidscam & Young Dogs, and combines imaginative animation with documentary elements.

More info: <https://www.facebook.com/YouthCinemaNet/>.

## DOXSPOT

### MUSSA



**Mussa has not spoken for five years. He is one of the many illegal Ethiopian immigrants in Israel. One by one pupils in his class receive a warrant of deportation; those who stay in Israel try to communicate with their silent classmate. Director Anat Goren followed Mussa over the course of 3 years. After the LUCAS screening of MUSSA in Frankfurt, the audience,**

**with producer Daniela Sidi, invited Mussa for a Skype conversation.**

Marie Wolters (LUCAS): "Mussa is in Ethiopia now, and he doesn't have easy access to the internet. Finally we found him on his mother's phone. He is 14 now, he grew really tall, and we all were a bit shy. Daniela, who knows him better, told us Mussa was really nervous. The situation felt a bit weird, all of us being so moved, while he was there smiling all the time."

It was Daniela's daughter, who was in the same class with Mussa, who brought the boy under her attention. "We never found out why he didn't speak. Maybe it started before he could master the Hebrew language. Maybe he didn't feel like becoming 'a speaking boy' after having been silent for so long. After a year he

started talking to the film crew, but he never spoke to his classmates. That got my daughter really jealous! As soon as he arrived back in Ethiopia, he started speaking again. Immediately."

Then the Skype conversation took an unexpected turn. "We had two children in the group who spoke Amharic, Ethiopia's first language. Only then Mussa fully realised there were children in Germany who just watched his story and now could communicate with him in his own language. Then he said: 'Now I want to go out and play.' And that was it."

Director: Anat Goren  
Israel, 2015, 59'  
Language: Hebrew & English  
Producers: Daniela Sidi & Anat Goren  
Production Company: Drucker & Goren Media

## STORM - ON THE SET

The Dutch youth film **STORM** takes you to Antwerp (Belgium) in the age of Reformation and Inquisition. Storm is the 12-year-old son of a book printer who secretly prints forbidden lampoons. When the man gets caught, Storm gets involved in a hunt for a forbidden letter. Chased by the Inquisition and with the help of the orphan girl Marieke, Storm tries to save his father from the scaffold. Director Dennis Bots (**SECRETS OF WAR**) shot this ambitious adventure with a budget of approximately €6 million.

On an industrial site in the Antwerp harbor area a truthful version of a medieval city is set up with streets, squares and shops. The streets are crowded with pigs, geese and goats, and every now and then a bunch of soldiers come galloping through on horseback. Set designer Kurt Loyens: "In the inner city you can barely find usable set locations these days. All ground floors of historic buildings have been taken over by trade."



### Fake fur

The movie is set in 1521, when the evolution of printing led to major social changes: for the first time people were able to spread ideas on a large scale, similar to the current rise of social media. Producer Harro van Staverden (Phanta Vision): "In that era a number of human rights was fought for that are still essential to our democratic society: children's and women's rights and freedom of speech. The government responded with censorship, the burning books etc. Moreover, this is a story about refugees and about people misusing religion to claim power. But in the first place **STORM** is an exciting adventure movie."

Van Staverden: "30 people designed this set after ancient paintings and engravings. These lifelike streets look exciting, dirty and bustling with life. Perfect for a story that takes you not only underground, but even high above the city, thanks to a cable camera and two cranes. This set is 360° usable." And the

colour palette is well-over thought. Loyens: "I recently did the set design for the BBC series 'The White Queen'. For the British nobility I could lose myself in colourful splendor. But in **STORM**, situated in a poor urban environment, we mainly used sober colours."

Although, the costumes are beautiful. What if the young actors could take home one piece of clothing for everyday use? Davy Gomez (Storm): "My jacket is pretty cool." Juna de Leeuw (Marieke): "I would go for my fake fur collar, it's so soft. And the corset, though I wouldn't wear it all the time. This tank top too is really lovely, but Marieke has been wearing it for years, so it might be rather scruffy."



### Burn those books

In the Netherlands, **STORM** will gain extra attention through the '500 Years Reformation' celebration in 2017. Script writer Karen van Holst Pelekaan: "In the 16th century the Inquisition struck heavily over Belgium and Holland. Artists and intellectuals fled from Antwerp to Amsterdam, causing the brain drain to which Amsterdam – generally speaking – thanks its Golden Age. The Catholic Church took horrible reprisals, Spanish King Philip II wreaked a terrible bloodbath in Antwerp." "The art of printing was like the internet avant la lettre. Technology can help to overcome censorship: 500 years ago through printing, exactly like recently through the internet during the Arab Spring. Even when threatened with a death penalty, opinions were spread in printed form. The hunger for knowledge and innovation apparently is stronger



than fear."

Do even the young actors recognise the relevance of **STORM** for the youth of today? Juna de Leeuw: "It is important that you can say what you want without getting punished."

### Collect the rats

Marieke lives in the Antwerp sewers, that were re-built in a studio in Luxemburg, a gigantic set that was entirely flooded. For a whole week, the actors had to play knee-deep in water. De Leeuw: "When entering the studio, I was speechless. It was like a real sewer with rats running around everywhere, tame and super cute. After every scene a man had to collect the rats, but they ran in all directions." Did those scenes include any physical challenges? Gomez: "We had some fight scenes in a tiny room, lit with candles. Between the takes we had to cool down, the heat was unbearable. It was difficult to accept being beaten up by a girl, thrown to the ground and against a wall." De Leeuw: "There was a cold night shoot up to 4am in the pouring rain. Actually it was fun, with Davy standing in the rain all the time." Gomez: "Film rain is much worse than real rain. And I had to stumble into puddles and sewage."

Davy Gomez already played in several theatre musicals. "On stage you have to act 'big'. You're acting for the people on the last row. If I would do that in front of a camera it would look grotesque. The first few days I tried, but got called back immediately." (GH)



Meanwhile **STORM** is ready. All the efforts invested in creating a truthful

historic atmosphere have yielded solid results. The film takes you on a historical trip in which you can hear the streets bustle and smell the stench coming from the sewers.

The film takes its time to make you familiar with the historical context and asks quite some religiously tinted empathy from a secularised audience. But once the chase on Storm is opened the story takes momentum and sweeps you up in a fast-paced adventure.

Marieke's performance is particularly striking. The harmless looking orphan girl makes a big impression with her independent thoroughness. Juna de Leeuw acts as much with her piercing gaze as with her body and emerges as the true heroine of the film.

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## COPENHAGEN BOMBAY CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Entering the Copenhagen Bombay building is exactly what you could expect from a freewheeling, self-willed animation studio: a collection of horror attributes is lingering in a corner, animators are at work with a 'character line-up' pinned to a cardboard wall, and soon one of the guests is walking around with rabbit Johan's (BEYOND BEYOND) gigantic headpiece placed over his head. "Looking from the window, you'll often see us running around, picking up leaves and twigs, as all set pieces we're using are real," says Head of Sales Malene Iversen. It's remarkable how a relatively small animation studio has occupied its own space so determinedly over the course of 10 years.

As Iversen states in her anniversary speech: "We have been working hard to create fantastic, funny, intriguing and sometimes unbelievable stories for our favourite audience, and it has been a journey filled with equally intriguing, fantastic, funny and unbelievable events. We have experienced financial crises, flooded basements and server breakdowns, but we have also experienced amazing festival premieres, cinemas filled with kids applauding our films, parents acknowledging our work and an absolutely tremendous amount of encouragement from all those who have worked hard to bring our films, TV series, books, games and other projects to the audience. After 10 years we can truly say that these are the stories we hold on to."



With the celebration comes another film. GET SANTA is a Christmas story, but like all other Copenhagen Bombay produc-

tions, it's just a little different from what you could expect. The film, that will have its Danish premier in November, was directed by Jacob Ley. "This wasn't a surprising career path for him. Children's art has always been running in his family. His grandfather illustrated the first famous elf and Christmas stories, while his father was running a show for children and writing children's books."

But Ley did more than just surfing on the family tradition. For GET SANTA he developed a mixed technique, combining 2D and 3D, which was tested in his short film 'The Secret of the Ice Flower'. The procedure allows the making of a relatively 'low budget' animated film. "Characters are designed as clay models, that are used to make a mold in white-chocolate-look-alike foam. Then they're photographed and those pictures are used for a basic sort of cut-out animation. Pictures are taken from each part of the body, so that arms, legs, heads, etc. can be manipulated separately. Then extra layers are added to the image." The whole concept is explained in Jacob's elucidating sketch. "Other costs were minimised. With a small production budget, even the price of construction foam and cardboard should be taken in account."

Set pieces and props look absolutely



stunning. A little stable looks like the ultimate Christmas stable, there is a gingerbread man, the oldest tree in the forest (every tree was built separately) and we're mildly forced to taste how snow is made out of salt. "The set decoration is so beautiful that we're preparing a little extra for Danish cinemas: we'll load a van with props and sets and make a road trip to the cinemas. After the screening we'll organise short DIY sessions. In November and December, we'll make our material come to life in the cinemas, instead of storing it in the cellar."

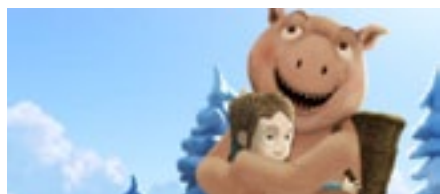
Copenhagen Bombay committed itself to continuously broadening their scale. They have an interest in documentaries, are permanently active on a platform where youngsters post their own short films, with The Treehouse App they have developed an instrument for educational sessions and workshops, and their catalogue is proof of great individuality.

Info: [www.copenhagenbombay.com](http://www.copenhagenbombay.com)

### AN OVERVIEW IN 5 TITLES

**THE NEW ONE: GET SANTA** (Jacob Ley)

Julius lives in an orphanage. Every year he looks forward to Christmas, when Santa comes to visit. But when the big boys claim that Santa is actually the school director in disguise, Julius loses his faith in everything that has to do with Christmas. Then a strange thing happens: through a magic box Julius ends up in Winterland...



**THE MOST SURPRISING ONE: THE GREAT BEAR** (Esben Toft Jacobsen)

Yes, it's a story about a bear, but not as you know it. More than any of their productions, this one brings you face to face with nature's primitive forces. The continuous battle between nature's beauty and the unpolished elements from Scandinavian legends became a Copenhagen Bombay trademark.

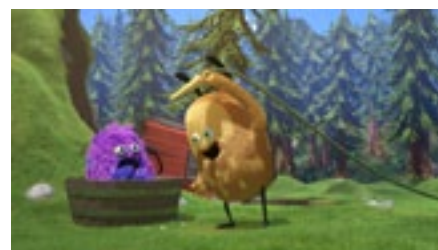
**THE MOST CHARMING ONE: TIGERS AND TATTOOS** (Karla von Bengtson)

This story has the weirdest of ingredients: a little girl, a tattoo shop, a sturdy uncle, a motorcycle gang and a tiger on the loose. The 43' format was hard to sell, but the film played in almost every festival. From all Copenhagen Bombay artists, Karla von Bengtson is the one with the most peculiar style.



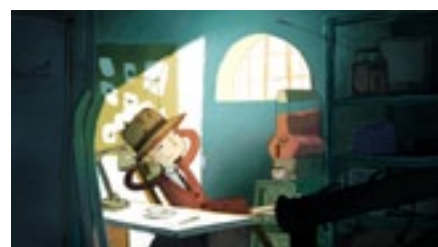
**THE MOST FUNNY ONE: KIWI & STRIT** (Esben Toft Jacobsen)

Director Esben Toft Jacobsen: "In my parents garden was a little hill where as a child I played with my cousin. Just like Kiwi & Strit we rode our bikes up and down the hill and took all kinds of mischief." Out of the 26 TV-episodes, a film compiling 8 episodes is now available and it's totally hilarious!



**THE NEXT ONE: NEXT DOOR SPY** (Karla von Bengtson)

Ten year old Agathe-Christine, or simply AC, fancies mysteries. In the basement of her building, she establishes a small detective agency. The art design for NEXT DOOR SPY looks stunning. The world premiere is planned for spring 2018. Meanwhile, also MONSTRIA (Rickard Söderström) is in the pipeline.



### HEART OF A TOWER

You might have heard about Slovakia's famous animated short film tradition, or about their successful TV bedtime stories for children (like *MIMI AND LISA*). But you have never heard about a Slovak animated feature for kids. The reason is, that the first one is just on its way now!

Slovak filmmaking went through very rough times between 1993 and 2000, with the rise of capitalism and consequently, the privatisation of the film industry. The Bratislava Film Studios, the main state producer of animated content, were closed overnight and left to rot. Nowadays, the situation has improved and Slovak animation gets plenty of recognition. Yes, we are a small country, but also the birthplace of many quality animated films and the feature *HEART OF A TOWER* will soon be one of them.

The director of *HEART OF A TOWER* is Peter Budinský, whose talent could be spotted in 'tWINS' and 'Bird of prey'. The producers are Barbora Budinská (Plutoon) and Eva Pa and Peter Badač (Bfilm). What convinced them was not only their eagerness to present Slovakia's first animated feature, or their strong belief in Budinský's talent, but also the quality of the script. *HEART OF A TOWER* comes with a thrilling story about a young boy finding his inner strength. This fairytale about a magical world full of adventures also helps children to deal with the modern world and its complications. Like, in this case, how to deal with a divorce.



Riki lives with his mother, but also needs his father. When tension at home is rising, Riki decides to pack his bag and leave. A strong wind lifts him up and takes him to a fantastic world called Yourland. Riki finds out that Yourland is in danger, and that he holds the key to save the country from an evil-hearted villain. Together with the young girl Emma, Riki embarks on a dangerous journey. Embedded in the thrilling story is a message for parents to understand that, whatever happens, children need the love of both of them. This is a global issue, and a reason why *HEART OF A TOWER* has the potential to engage audiences worldwide.

*HEART OF A TOWER*, expected for release in early 2020, is supported by the Slovak Audiovisual Fund, the Czech State Cinematography Fund and Creative Europe – Media. Meanwhile the producers are still looking for more co-production partners.

More info: Eva Pa, [eva@bfilm.sk](mailto:eva@bfilm.sk);  
Follow the project on [www.plutoon.sk/heart-of-a-tower](http://www.plutoon.sk/heart-of-a-tower); [www.facebook.com/heartofatower](http://www.facebook.com/heartofatower); [www.vimeo.com/plutoon](http://www.vimeo.com/plutoon)

### HAND IN HAND WINS CINEKID IN DEVELOPMENT AWARD

**"We're not in it to win festival awards, we're in it to communicate with young audiences," say Helene and Leif Mohlin. How paradoxical; later that day their company Mint will win the Eurimages Co-production Development Award, granted to the Best Film Project presented during Cinekid's Junior Co-production Market.**

Mint always had an interest in films for young people, like *DRAGONHEART* that is currently touring the festivals. *HAND IN HAND*, directed by Grethe Bøe-Waal (*OPERATION ARCTIC*) will be their flagship project for 2018.



© Cinekid

*HAND IN HAND* tells the story of two girls, outsiders with opposite characters, two lone wolves developing a special friendship. "Grethe Bøe-Waal simply loves fighting with nature's elements, so in this film there are piles of snow in a winter wilderness, horse-riding and other risky physical challenges. We'll really push it to the limit in that sense, towards an '11+' rating," states Leif Mohlin.

The shooting is scheduled from January till March 2018 and the film should be ready in December 2018. Bøe-Waal: "I've always longed to make a fast paced action film about girls who save the day. I'm dedicated to creating strong role models, busting stereotypes and inspiring boys and girls equally."

Special mentions were given to the morbidly funny and poetic *RASPBERRIES WITH MUSTARD* (by Ruth Olshan, Germany) and '16', a documentary about young gay teens having the courage to come out (by Kenneth Elvebakk, Norway).

### ISRA & THE MAGIC BOOK

*ISRA & THE MAGIC BOOK* is an independent Belgian fairytale film, for which the minimum budget is countered by the inventiveness of the crew and the enthusiasm of director R.Kan Albay. The entire production surfs on his sizzling energy. *ISRA & THE MAGIC BOOK* is a bit of a family affair. Nieces, nephews, sisters and spouses from the Albay clan are at work on the set. Albay: "A certain family feeling is preserved throughout the project. It's not just a job; it's something that really involves us all with heart and soul." Albay has Turkish roots and the film has the famous Turkish star Tamer Karadağlı on board. Releasing the film simultaneously for a domestic audience and (in Turkish version) a large group of immigrants is a fascinating experiment.

During a class trip to the library Isra vanishes into a magic book, that carries her through a turbulent journey to the Candy Castle. There she must save a little boy from the sweet clutches of The Castle Lady. For the shooting a real castle was packed with colourful sweets: pies, candy canes, chocolate eggs, and cupcakes. Main actress Isra Dela might probably be the first girl in the world to dive into a one tonne marsh-mellow mountain.



*ISRA & THE MAGIC BOOK* flirts with various fairy tale icons, like 'Alice in Wonderland', 'Charlie & The Chocolate Factory' and 'Hansel and Gretel'. Using a film to pay tribute to the world of books, isn't that a wolf in sheep's clothing? "The end justifies the means" according to scriptwriter Valerie Deridder.

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## KIDS Regio at MIA (Rome)

**On October 23rd MIA (Mercato Int. Audiovisivo) organised its first MIA Young Audience Spotlight in Rome. Two sessions were co-hosted by KIDS Regio and The Financing Forum for Kids Content.**

The session 'Building a Rockband', moderated by Viola Gabrielli (KIDS Regio), shed a light on children's film projects that have been fostered by national / international incentive structures. By presenting the steps in their development process speakers brought to discussion the challenges and opportunities that made their projects feasible. Speakers were Philipp Budweg (producer Lieblingsfilm, Germany) showcasing a first look at his German-Italian co-production ALPEN-BRENNEN, motivated by the German initiative Outstanding Films for Children; Nicholas Sando (producer Filmbin, Norway) presenting LOS BANDO IMMOR-



TALE, developed within the framework of the Norwegian Film Institute's Lab Junior; Froukje Tan (writer & director, The Netherlands) speaking about KUNG FU LION, realised within the framework of the Dutch-German Co-Development Fund;

Diana Mikita (Nafta Filmproduction, Estonia), with her family adventure SECRET SOCIETY OF SOUPTOWN, presented at The Financing Forum for Kids Content 2015; and Carlotta Calori (Indigo Film, Italy) talking about THE INVISIBLE BOY (by Gabriele Salvatores, winner of the European Film Academy Young Audience Award 2015).



*Secret Society of Souptown*

The session 'Winning Concepts' portrayed inspiring projects, some of which have been presented earlier at The Financing Forum for Kids Content 2016. Together with moderator Annette Brejner the professionals discussed questions such as: What makes a good children's film and how to develop one? Speakers were Anna Knochenhauer (producer Nice Drama, Sweden) about the science fiction ALONE IN SPACE; Elli Toivoniemi (producer Tuffi Films, Finland) introducing the unusual documentary HOBBY-HORSE REVOLUTION; Kai Nordberg (producer Making Movies, Finland), presenting the production steps of the touching drama LITTLE WING; and Sigrid Klausmann, director of the multimedia documentary NOT WITHOUT US (Germany, by Schneegans Productions).

In 2017 KIDS Regio and The Financing Forum for Kids Content will continue their close collaboration with cornerstone events like the KIDS Regio Berlinale Meeting Point and The Opening Industry Day during The Financing Forum for Kids Content in Malmö. There, a European co-production / co-financing children's content exchange hub was established where key issues can be discussed: How do we motivate a young audience for European cinema? The event offers a platform for keynotes and workshops by experts, demonstrating how content is disseminated and honed in respect to its target group and the market. In earlier editions The Opening Industry Day already tackled important issues like marketing & distribution strategies, branding, dubbing and co-design with children.

The Financing Forum for Kids Content is an annual three day co-production forum for children's screen media, held in March in Malmö, Sweden. Around 25 European projects in development are pitched for European broadcasters such as YLE, DR, NRK, SVT, Canal +, France Television, BBC, NDR etc. and experts from, for example, the Nordic film institutes as well as around 150 producers and distributors.

Deadline for application: December 8th, 2016.

Info: <http://www.thefinancingforum.com/>



## YOUNG EUROPEAN CREATION ON TOUR #4 A Festival Int. Ciné-Jeune de l'Aisne initiative

**YEC #4 (Young European Creation, edition 2016/2017) is back and makes European short animated films for children freely available for you!**

YEC is a series of 9 short films made by young independent or nearly graduated authors from the best European film schools, compiled by the Ciné-Jeune de l'Aisne Festival. This year you can discover the 'Best of European Digital Creation' from France, Germany, Slovakia, Switzerland, Belgium and Hungary! These short films of great quality and sensitivity will make you meet with the best creators of tomorrow, working in all styles and formats



*Astronaut-K*

In this year's collection you'll meet a lovely bunch of exotic animals, like:

- in 'Catch It!' (6 young directors from France) a group of meerkats takes care of its beloved and unique fruit supply, but a vulture intends to disturb their peace.
- in 'Astronaut-K' (Daniel Harisberger, Switzerland) a koala astronaut ventures into alien galaxies. Unfortunately, he is not only extremely clumsy, but also haunted by bad luck.



- 'Opossum' (Paul Cichon, Germany) offers a look inside a coffee machine, frequently used by office employees. Little do they know that inside the machine, in a tiny kitchen, an opossum is responsible for their daily coffee pleasures.



- in 'Hey, deer!' (Ors Barczy, Hungary) a deer is eager to shovel in front of his house every day. However, every night a bizarre earthquake causes more mess.

Other titles in this compilation are 'The Little shoe maker' (8 directors, France), 'Circus of red poppy' (Martin Smatana, Slovakia), 'Something' (Elena Walf, Germany), 'Akouo' (5 directors, France), and 'Hurry up!' (Margot Reumont, Belgium).

Practical info:

- Compilation's total duration: 47'25"
- 9 films without dialogue
- Target audience: 5 - 11 y.o.
- Program available from September 2016 - September 2017 on mpeg4
- NO screening fees!!
- Contact : Ciné-Jeune de l'Aisne; [contact.cinejeune02@free.fr](mailto:contact.cinejeune02@free.fr)

## 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/ecfnet/films.php](http://www.ecfaweb.org/ecfnet/films.php). Producers, distributors and sales agents are kindly invited to inform us of their new releases.

### Children of Chance

Feature Film, France, 2016  
Director: Malik Chibane  
Prod.: Les Films Manuel Munz  
World Sales: Other Angle Pictures, 39, Rue de Constantinople, 75008 Paris, France  
Phone: ++33 9 54 88 02 41  
[otheranglepics@gmail.com](mailto:otheranglepics@gmail.com)

### Come Along

Feature Film, Slovenia, 2016  
Director: Igor Sterk  
Prod.: A. A.C. Prod., Gustav Film, MB Grip  
World Sales: Slovenian Film Center  
Miklosiceva 38, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia  
Phone: ++386-1-4313175  
[info@film-center.si](mailto:info@film-center.si)  
[www.film-center.si](http://www.film-center.si)

### Dancing Hearts

Documentary, Norway, 2016  
Directors: Erlend E. Mo, Victor Kossakovsky, Hanne Heilborn  
Prod.: Sant & Usant  
World Sales: Outlook Filmsales, Spittelberggasse 3/14, 1070 Vienna, Austria  
Phone: ++43 -720 34 69 34  
[welcome@autlookfilms.com](mailto:welcome@autlookfilms.com)  
[www.autlookfilms.com](http://www.autlookfilms.com)

### Dragonheart

Feature Film, Sweden, 2016  
Director: Klas Karterud, Linda-Marie Birbeck  
Prod. & World Sales: Mint AB, Stora Varvsgatan 6a, 21119 Malmö, Sweden  
[www.mint-ab.se](http://www.mint-ab.se)

### Get Santa

Animation, Denmark, 2016  
Director: Jacob Ley  
Prod. & World Sales: Copenhagen Bombay, Refshalevej 147, 1st. Floor; 1432 Copenhagen, Denmark  
Phone: ++ 45 72 42 08 00  
[info@copenhagenbombay.com](mailto:info@copenhagenbombay.com)  
[www.copenhagenbombay.com](http://www.copenhagenbombay.com)

### The Girl Without Hands

Animation, France, 2016  
Director: Sébastien Laudenbach  
Prod.: Les Films Sauvages, Les Films Pelléas  
World Sales: Pyramide Int., 5 Rue du Chevalier de Saint-George, 75008 Paris, France  
Phone: ++33-1-42960220  
[sales@pyramidefilms.com](mailto:sales@pyramidefilms.com)  
[www.pyramidefilms.com](http://www.pyramidefilms.com)

### Heartstrings

Feature Film, France, 2016  
Director: Michel Boujenah  
Prod. & World Sales: Gaumont S. A.  
30, Avenue Charles de Gaulle  
92200 Neuilly-sur-Seine, France  
Phone: ++33-1-46432060  
[info@gaumont.com](mailto:info@gaumont.com)  
[www.gaumont.net](http://www.gaumont.net)

### Land of Light

Feature Film, Germany & Turkey, 2016  
Director: David Ruf  
Prod. & World Sales: Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, Akademiehof 10, 71638 Ludwigsburg, Germany  
Phone: ++49-7141 969 0  
[info@filmakademie.de](mailto:info@filmakademie.de); [www.filmakademie.de](http://www.filmakademie.de); [www.facebook.com/speaksyriafilm](http://www.facebook.com/speaksyriafilm)

### One-Two-Three Now!

Feature Film, Denmark, 2016  
Director: Barbara Topsøe-Rothenborg  
Prod. & World Sales: Regner Grasten Filmprod. c/o FilmGear, Gyngemose Parkvej 84, 2860 Søborg, Denmark  
Phone: ++45-39 63 44 24  
[regner@grasten.com](mailto:regner@grasten.com); [www.regnergrastentfilm.com](http://www.regnergrastentfilm.com); [www.facebook.com/entotrenu](http://www.facebook.com/entotrenu)

### The Red Turtle

Animation, France & Japan, 2016  
Director: Michael Dudok de Wit  
Prod.: Why Not Prod., Wild Bunch  
World Sales: Wild Bunch, 65 rue de Dunkerque, 75009 Paris, France  
Phone: ++33-1-43 13 22 54  
[fbeauville@wildbunch.eu](mailto:fbeauville@wildbunch.eu); [www.wildbunch.eu](http://www.wildbunch.eu); [www.sonyclassics.com/theredturtle](http://www.sonyclassics.com/theredturtle)

### Robby & Toby's Fantastic Voyager

Feature Film, Germany, 2016  
Director: Wolfgang Groos  
Prod.: Wüste Filmprod., Walking the Dog, Studiocanal Film  
World Sales: ARRI Media Int., Türkenstr. 89, 80799 München, Germany  
Phone: +49-89-38 09 12 88  
[aexacoustos@arri.de](mailto:aexacoustos@arri.de); [www.wuestefilm.de/filme/robby-tobbi-und-das-fliewatueuet](http://www.wuestefilm.de/filme/robby-tobbi-und-das-fliewatueuet)

### Sophie's Misfortunes

Feature Film, France, 2016  
Director: Christophe Honoré  
Prod.: Les Films Pelléas, France 3 Cinéma, Gaumont  
World Sales: Gaumont  
(see address above)

### The Whisperers

Documentary, Norway & Canada, 2016  
Director: David Kinsella  
Prod.: David Kinsella Prod., Buffalo Gal Pictures  
World Sales: Adler & Associates Ent.  
8721 Santa Monica Blvd 312  
West Hollywood, CA 90069, USA  
Phone: ++1-310 - 684-3545  
[www.davidkinsella.com](http://www.davidkinsella.com)

### Zip & Zap and the Captain's Island

Feature Film, Spain, 2016  
Director: Óskar Santos  
Production: Zeta Audiovisual, MOD Prod., Atresmedia Cine, Kowalski Films  
World Sales: Filmfactory Ent., C/Lincoln 11, 2º 4ª, 08006 Barcelona, Spain  
Phone: ++34 933 684 608  
[info@filmfactoryentertainment.com](mailto:info@filmfactoryentertainment.com)  
[www.filmfactory.es](http://www.filmfactory.es)



Get Santa



Girl Without Hands



Heartstrings



Land of Light



Robby & Toby's Fantastic Voyager



The Red Turtle

More information on all these films you will find on our website:  
[www.ecfaweb.org/ecfnet/films.php](http://www.ecfaweb.org/ecfnet/films.php)



**NEW MEMBER: IDFA**

**IDFA (Int. Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam) gets straight to the point: one day they sign up as a new ECFA member, the next day they organise another festival edition (16-27 November) with plenty of events for / about young audiences, including...**

- IDFA's Kids & Docs competition: a presentation of the best new children's documentaries. Prizes in cash and workshops for directors should promote the opportunity to keep on developing documentaries for young people. Find this year's complete Kids & Docs programme [here](#).
- IDFA Junior: the young audience is invited to the EYE Institute to watch this year's best Dutch documentaries and meet the directors.
- IDFA welcomes more than 10,000 students (a record!) in school screenings.
- Industry activities on 22 & 23 November: IDFA wants to encourage film professionals in the documentary industry to make films for a young audience. And vice versa, they'd like to invite professionals specialising in kids content to explore documentaries. Therefore, a two day programme was designed, with screenings (Dutch Docs, THE EAGLE HUNTRESS), pitches (taking you from Ukraine to Molenbeek), and one discussion to especially look forward to: in the RealYoung Thinktank, forces are joined to lift young audiences documentaries to a next level. Focusing on the challenges of (co)production and distribution, new practical models will be designed.

Needless to say that ECFA is very happy to welcome such an influential and renowned member, and hopes that IDFA will become a key player in reaching one of our goals: gaining more attention for the young audience documentary genre. Contact: IDFA, Meike Statema ([meike@idfa.nl](mailto:meike@idfa.nl)), [www.idfa.nl/industry.aspx](http://www.idfa.nl/industry.aspx).

**SANNETTE NAEYÉ'S DEPARTURE FROM CINEKID**



**After twenty years, managing director Sannette Naeyé has decided to bid farewell to Cinekid from 1 February 2017. Naeyé: "I leave Cinekid safely in the many hands that jointly turned Cinekid into the largest youth festival of its kind."**

Sannette Naeyé is responsible for Cinekid as we know it today: a powerful institution that is a fixture in the international cultural and educational landscape.

One that looks rather complete: Cinekid has an audience, an international professional appeal, and a progressive vision on cinema, new media and their place in society. A unique course, steered by Sannette Naeyé, for which she received a CIFEJ Lifetime Achievement Award, and gained respect from the entire children's film industry. In ECFA we got to know her as a person who understood better than anyone else the importance of the social and political landscape in which our industry is embedded, which made her a devoted lobbyist and advocate for our mission.

A few years ago she explained her vision in an extended ECFA Journal interview (read the complete version [here](#)) giving insight in her ambitions and her (too often one-dimensionalised) personality. Including this quote on the problems that our sector is facing: *"We have to make clear to governments and broadcasters how vulnerable we are. Football and news will always be the broadcaster's priorities, but the impact of youngster's television on society is much bigger than people can imagine. And if we don't proclaim that message any longer, then who will? Children's media has grown thanks to a European society that wanted to support common values, even financially. Nowadays other paths have been chosen. Complaining doesn't help and neither does shouting out even louder. Now cultural and economic routes have changed drastically, we have to find unexpected partnerships and challenge the industry."*

**ECFA Awards**

Titles recently listed for the ECFA Award 2016:

- Lucas Int. Children's Film Festival (Frankfurt am Main, Germany): **RAUF** (Baris Kaya & Soner Caner, Turkey).
- Int. Film Festival for Children & Young Audience (Chemnitz, Germany): **THE CHILDREN OF CHANCE** (Malik Chibane, France).

Rectification: different from announced in the last ECFA Journal, the ECFA Award in the Zlín Int. Film Festival went to **LEARN BY HEART** (Mathieu Vadepied, France).



*The Children of Chance*

**MR. FROG'S FROG TIPPIN' TIPS**

**We heard all kinds of interesting facts about the making of MR. FROG. But the most intriguing details we found in the stories about how to work with frogs...**

A most crucial element for the film were Jeroen Spitzenberger's transformations from a human teacher into a frog. "We only showed a part of the transformation process, the rest was left to the kids' fantasy. Some acts I physically performed myself, others were taken over by CGI. Bulging eyes or shrinking limbs, I can't deliver. But I did get a vocal sac!"

A mechanical frog was built in England, producer Burny Bos: "Remote-controlled! But we hardly used it because our frog coach had brought such amazing animals. There were lethargic and spry frogs, real jumpers and frogs that sat quietly. We

had 25 different frogs, each one with its own qualities, and frog expert Rogier van Rossem knew them all. Two year old Australian tree frogs for jumpy actions, four year olds for close-ups and even a twelve year old one for sitting quietly." Leading actress Yenthe Bos even had to kiss a frog: "12 times! The first time I found it exciting, but I got used to it after a while."

Also the stork was a living specimen. Bobby Vleuten (playing Dennis), "Storks actually rather eat chicks than frogs. Our stork was all the time rewarded with chicks whenever he was behaving well. That happened more or less secretly, because the kids found it too horrible. "





## ABULELE

### “The same guy in the same suit”

The screening of ABULELE in the Zlin Festival (where it won the audience award) was a magical moment, with the young audience getting totally overexcited. Kids simply couldn't curb their enthusiasm and kept on shouting. The ultimate compliment for director Jonathan Geva. “When watching my film, I'm constantly struggling with details that I wish I could have done better. Not today. This was the best screening we ever had.” In the Q&A questions kept on coming.

Adam is an outsider at school, neglected by his parents, who have a bigger grief to mourn about. But everything changes on the day he meets an Abulele. The Abulele are ancient monsters. Local legends qualify them as extremely dangerous, but in fact this Abulele turns out to be quite friendly and playful. In this friendship Adam finds strength and confidence, although hiding a bear-sized monster inside an apartment turns out quite a challenge. But when Special Forces march out to catch the creature, a farewell seems unavoidable.

Jonathan Geva: “Our budget was about 1 million dollars, of which 25% was spent on special effects. We had only 2 police cars and 10 soldiers, but kept on multiplying them on screen until it looked like we had 40. When working digitally, there is no limit to the amount of footage you can shoot. I told my crew: ‘always keep the camera rolling!’. Every day I went home with 3 or 4 hours of footage. The editor must have really hated me.”

“Most of the shooting was done in Jerusalem. A week before we started Makram Khoury, playing the old janitor, stepped on a rusty nail and we weren't sure if he could even do the job. In the film you'll never get to see his foot, as it was still wrapped in bandages.”

“Abulele is a legend in Jerusalem. As a kid my parents always told me: ‘if you come home after dark, the Abulele will come to get and eat you’. I was totally terrified. Now I wanted these monsters to revive in a more kind version.”

“My first idea was to give this Abulele a monstrous look, all purple and with 4 arms, but we didn't have the budget. So we made a puppet and choose for the



easiest colour to work with. That's why the Abulele is black. The costume is mainly made of synthetic fur, with spongy material on the inside, and aluminum arms. The arms are proportionally long, so we had a system for the actor inside the costume to operate the extendable arm section with his fingers. We only had money for one Abulele costume, so all the Abulele you see in the film, are always the same guy in the same suit.”

“Filming the school scenes, we paid tribute to the Israeli actor Eli Walach (THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY), who passed away one week before our shooting. Originally the school was named after a former prime minister, but we renamed it ‘The Eli Walach Institute.’ (GH)

## CHIDIYA

### “No matter how good or bad you are at singing and dancing”

Shanu (9) and Bua (7) live in Mumbai. Since their father died, mum is struggling hard to make enough money. That's why she asks her brother-in-law to find the kids a job. That's how they come to enter the film industry, serving chai on a Bollywood film set. But with the job also comes a new passion: playing ‘chidiya’ (badminton). This is a passion not easily cherished, as besides shuttles, a net and a court, you also need time to play. Shanu and Bua scramble vigorously to make that dream come true.



Filmmaker Mehran Amrohi does not only prove his talent for vibrant cinema with a touch of local charm, but proves himself equally qualified for a perfect Q & A. He chats away, adding funny anecdotes that refer to his childhood days and complementing the crowd on their clever questions. “I believe in destiny. It was my faith to be here: the reputation of the Zlin Festival

as one of the oldest and biggest children's film festivals in Europe is widely spread, and it was always my dream to come here one day. I've only made my first film and here I am already!”

### The film stays true to most conventions of Indian moviemaking.

Amrohi: There is a bit of singing and dancing in this movie, because there is singing and dancing in everything we do. Indian people celebrate a lot. It's a vital part of our film culture and our everyday life, no matter how good or bad you are at singing and dancing.

### CHIDIYA is about badminton, but not about becoming the best badminton player!

Amrohi: The main characters in Indian children's films often dream of becoming like someone else: their hero, their role-model. I never had those dreams. As a child my dreams were very simple: “this holiday I want to buy a remote controlled car”. And then I worked hard to make it happen. Like Shanu and Bua, they have no bigger goal, they just have a simple dream and will do anything to make it come true.

### How did you become a filmmaker?

Amrohi: It's what I always wanted to do. As a child I entered the bathroom with a knife under my arm, acting in front of the mirror as if I was dying. But in a poor country you first need to secure your future, so like many directors from my generation, I studied engineering. When I got my degree at the age of 24 I left every-

thing behind and went to Mumbai where, after eight years of trying, I finally made my first film. I had a hard time convincing my family and friends, until finally they understood this was really my big dream. My father was a writer, he knew about the importance of storytelling. I myself have always been writing stories as a child, just for the fun of it.

### With your father's approval?

Amrohi: With everyone sleeping in the same room, every night in bed I secretly tried to write my stories under the blanket, and I saved money to buy a torch. Until one night my mother found out. “What are you doing there?” – “Nothing, I'm just sleeping.” When finally she found my diary, she got very upset: “Why would you waste your time writing, while you should study mathematics?” But my father, in his bed at the other end of the room, simply mumbled: “That was a good story you wrote.” That moment was of a major importance to me. Later I started to copy stories from books, presenting them to my father as if they were my own. Until I found the confidence to write my own stories. Now there are masses of them. This film, and the next one that I'll start shooting in December, are all based upon stories that I collected throughout the years. (GH)

Read the full version of this interview on: [www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/Chidiya.htm](http://www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/Chidiya.htm).



## 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. Since 1988 ECFA brings together a wide range of European film professionals and associations, producers, directors, distributors. ECFA aims to set up a working structure in every European country for films for children and young people, a structure adapted to Europe's multicultural interests.

For more information and memberships (€ 200 per year):  
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[www.ecfaweb.org](http://www.ecfaweb.org)

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.



Cathy de Haan interviewing the RAUF crew

## FILM IN FOCUS

### SONER CANER & BARIS KAYA'S 'RAUF'

"First you're a child and then you're an adult"

Rauf, 9 years old, lives in a Kurdish mountain village in East-Turkey, where an unseen yet still unfinished war casts a dark shadow over the minds of people. Rauf quits school, becomes a carpenter's apprentice and witnesses the despair of the villagers, coming to order coffins for their fallen offspring. He gets a crush on Zana, the carpenter's daughter who has double his age. As a proof of his love, he promises to buy her a pink scarf. But the problem is that he's never actually seen the colour before. By the time he finds out, it might yet be too late... In the LUCAS Festival we met both directors Soner Caner & Baris Kaya, and the young main actor Alen Gursoy. "We made the film together, as one Turkish (me) and one Kurdish (Soner) director. If we can make a movie together, how can we not be able to live together?"

**There is a war going on in the Kars region, where the film was shot. You don't give much of an explanation about what exactly is going on there, because it wasn't needed?**

Baris Kaya: Our hero is living with war; it's a part of his everyday reality. Soner found a perfect solution to make that clear: he wrote a story about coffins. We didn't want to show the war directly, no images of soldiers, guerrillas, blood or guns. We simply show a problematic situation, seen through the eyes of a child. Masking this as a story about coffins was a brilliant idea.

**The war is fought 'in the mountains'.**

Baris: That's a Turkish saying. "He is going to the mountains" has nothing to do with hiking or skiing, it means: he is joining the guerrillas.

Soner Caner: Nobody goes into the mountains at the age of 30. They're going very young, 16 or 17 years old, and they live there all their life, until most of them die."

**Soner, you grew up in that village?**

Soner: RAUF is a personal story, shot in my native village in Kars, south-east Turkey, near the Armenian border. I lived there until the age of 13. Rauf is re-living my childhood years very realistically. His house used to be our home, the old woman is my grandmother.

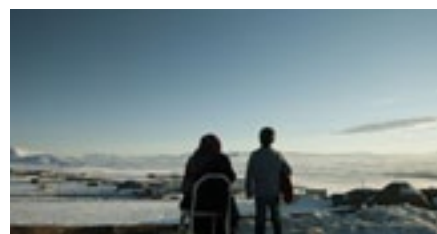
**Has life in the village changed a lot ever since?**

Soner: Not much. Changes only come slowly to the villages.

Baris: People there are living their lives the same like 100 years ago, except the coming of television. Now they can watch Kurdish channels on satellite TV. There isn't always water or electricity and it snows eight months per year.

**Are there particular details from your childhood that found their way into the movie?**

Soner: Selling fox skins to pay when the toy-seller came to the village. Making scarecrows to scare people, or burying dead animals with all ceremonial. In every bus, always some older person was sitting next to the driver, talking. The song in the bus was the one always played in my youth.



Baris: In those places, children grow old at an early age. They're considered adults. There are no teenagers in the village. First you're a child and then you're an adult, maybe at the age of 11. You have to grow up very fast.

**People in the villages don't speak much.**

Baris: There is a constant sadness, the pain about the losses is always there in the people's eyes. They're scared for what might come. Probably in five years Rauf will go to the mountains too. His mother already knows."

**It's impossible not to get struck by the beauty of the landscape and its dramatic colours.**

Baris: The location was amazing. A lonesome and forgotten place. Wherever you put the camera, the picture looks astonishing, like a painting, with wonderful, heroic sunlight. It's in every picture, while all the time the story is driven by those coffins. In my favourite scene, Rauf is measuring a mother in order to make a coffin for her son, who had the same size.

**How was it for an Istanbul boy to go to Kars?**

Baris: It was hard for him to even understand the villagers. They speak a very different type of Turkish. Alen lived for a month with those two local boys, just to pick up the language. At first they were fighting all the time, they considered Alen a silly city boy. Afterwards they became good friends. Every six months they come to Istanbul to see each other. For three days they're all staying in my house, they ruin the entire place, and then they go back. (GH)

Read the full version of this interview on [www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/Rauf.htm](http://www.ecfaweb.org/projects/filmmaking/Rauf.htm).