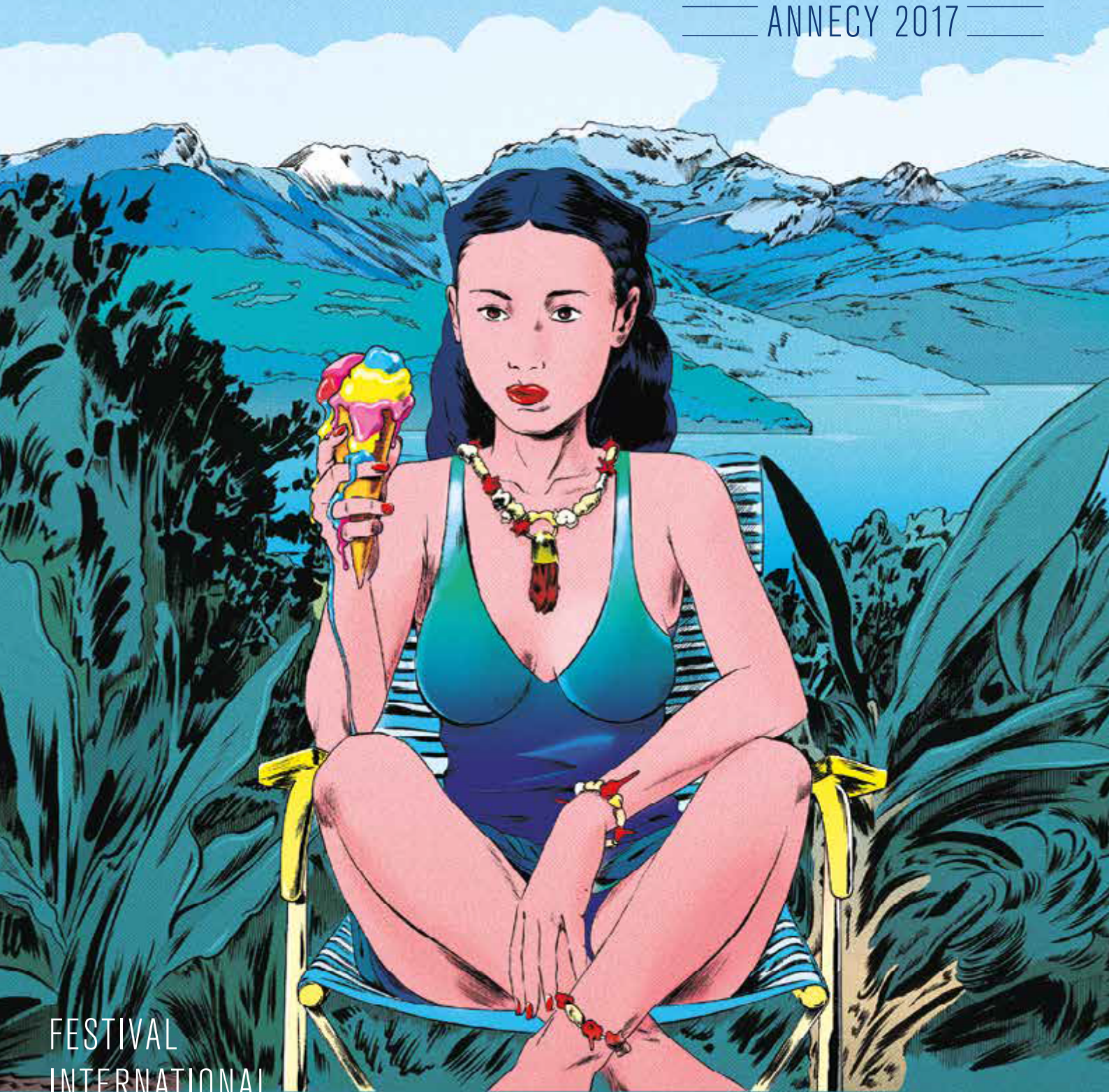


EXTRAITS 2017

REVUE DE PRESSE

ANNECY 2017



FESTIVAL
INTERNATIONAL
DU FILM
D'ANIMATION

ANNECY by 
festival mifa

MEDIA COVERAGE 2017

BILAN DE COUVERTURE MEDIATIQUE 2017

The 41th Annecy International Animation Film Festival welcomed 400 journalists from all over the world. To date, we have bought together over 1,500 publications, TV and radio broadcasts and reports. A few figures for 2017:

- > Around **400 articles** published in the French press
- > Over **550 online publications** on French internet sites and blogs
- > **20 news reports** from French press agencies
- > Over **35 broadcasts and reports** shown on national TV and daily regional reports : FRANCE 2, ARTE, M6, LCI, CANAL +, CNEWS, BFMTV, FRANCE 3...
- > Around **80 radio broadcasts** : FRANCE INTER, FRANCE INFO, FRANCE CULTURE, EUROPE 1, RTL, FRANCE BLEU, ODS...
- > Around **400 publications and coverage abroad**: VARIETY, Animation World Network, Cartoon Brew, Screen day...

Pour sa 41^e édition, le Festival international du film d'animation d'Annecy a accueilli près de 400 journalistes en provenance du monde entier. A ce jour, nous avons rassemblé plus de 1 500 parutions en France comme à l'étranger, tous supports confondus.

Quelques chiffres concernant l'édition 2017 :

- > Près de **400 articles** publiés en presse écrite
- > Plus de **550 sujets en ligne** sur des sites internet et blogs français
- > **20 dépêches** d'agences de presse française
- > Plus de **35 sujets d'annonce** ou reportages diffusés sur les chaînes de télévision nationales et régionales : FRANCE 2, ARTE, M6, LCI, CANAL +, CNEWS, BFMTV, FRANCE 3...
- > Environ **80 passages radio** : FRANCE INTER, FRANCE INFO, FRANCE CULTURE, EUROPE 1, RTL, FRANCE BLEU, ODS...
- > Près de **400 parutions** à l'international : VARIETY, Animation World Network, Cartoon Brew, Screen day...

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PRESSE INTERNATIONALE

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Breaking News

 **Annecy Unveils Full Lineup Of 23 Animated Features**
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 **TUTORIAL: How To Animate A Cube In Houdini**
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 **'Transformers: The Last Knight' Behind Bumblebee's New Trick**
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 **FIRST LOOK: 'Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero' [Teaser]**
6 days ago





FEATURE FILM | FESTIVALS

Annecy Unveils Full Lineup Of 23 Animated Features

By [Amid Amidi](#) | 04/24/2017 6:04 pm | [13 Comments](#)

The Annecy International Animated Film Festival announced today that its opening night film will be **Zombillenium** by Arthur de Pins.

De Pins' film will kick off screenings of 23 animated features, 10 of which will be screened in competition and 13 of which will screen out-of-competition.

The festival is placing a significant emphasis on Asian films this year: 10 of the 23 films are from China, Japan, and South Korea, including some buzzed-about projects like Jian Liu's [Have A Nice Day](#) and Masaaki Yuasa's [Lu Over the Wall](#). (pictured above)

The only American film that made the cut is Tony Bancroft and Scott Christian Sava's [Animal Crackers](#).

A diversity of techniques will be on display. At least nine of the films incorporate 2D hand-drawn animation, while the rest us a diversity of techniques, among them cgi, rotoscoping, and puppets.

Here is the festival line-up:

Feature films in competition at Annecy 2017

- *Animal Crackers* by Tony Bancroft and C Scott Sava (USA)
- *A Silent Voice* by Noako Yamada (Japan)
- *Big Fish & Begonia* by Xuan Liang and Chun Zhang (China)
- *In This Corner of the World* by Sunao Katabuchi (Japan)
- *Ethel and Ernest* by Roger Mainwood (United Kingdom)
- *Have a Nice Day* by Jian Liu (China)
- *Lu Over the Wall* by Masaaki Yuasa (Japan)
- *Loving Vincent* by Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman (Poland, United Kingdom)
- *Tehran Taboo* by Ali Soozandeh (Austria, Germany)
- *Zombillenium* by Arthur de Pins (France)

Feature films out of competition at Annecy 2017

- *1917 – The Real October* by Katrin Rothe (Germany)
- *Ancien and the Magic Tablet* by Kunihiko Yuyama and Kenji Kamiyana (Japan)
- *Ana y Bruno* by Carlos Carrera (Mexico)
- *Deep* by Julio Soto (Spain)
- *In the Forest of Huckybicky* by Rasmus A. Sivertsen (Norway)
- *I'll Just Live in Bando* by Yong Sun Lee (South Korea)
- *Lost in the Moonlight* by Hyun-Joo Kim (South Korea)
- *Little Heroes* by Juan Pablo Buscarini (Venezuela)
- *Richard the Stork* by Reza Memari and Toby Genkel (Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway)
- *Rudolph the Black Cat* by Kunihiko Yuyama and Motonori Sakakibara (Japan)
- *Tad, the Lost Explorer, and the Secret of King Midas* by Enrique Gato Borregan and David Alonso (Spain)
- *Tea Pets* by Gary Wang (China)
- *The Man Who Knew 75 Languages* by Anne Magnussen and Pawel Debski (Norway)

In addition to the films in the festival line-up, Annecy will also present screenings of numerous other new features, including *Captain Underpants*, *Despicable Me 3*, *Blame!*, *Mazinger Z*, *Mutafukaz*, *The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales*, and *The Jungle Bunch*.

The festival has previously announced shorts films, commissioned projects, and tv series that will be screening in competition. The entire festival line-up can be found on the [festival website](#).



Annecy unveils 2017 line-up

25 April, 2017 | By Melanie Goodfellow



Zombillenium announced as opener; China named as guest country, Guillermo del Toro to return.

French animator and illustrator Arthur de Pin's [child-friendly comedy-horror tale](#) *Zombillenium* (pictured) - set against the backdrop of an amusement-terror park where the staff are a motley crew of vampires, zombies and werewolves - will open this year's edition of the Annecy International Animated Film Festival, running June 12-17 this year.

It is among nine special event screenings including Pixar's *Cars 3*, which will be preceded by a presentation of footage from Mexico-set, Day of the Dead-inspired drama *Coco* in the presence of director Lee Unkrich, producer Darla K. Anderson and co-director Adrian Molina; *Despicable Me 3* and *The Big Bad Fox And Other Animals*.

Zombillenium will also compete in the 10-title feature film competition.

Other contenders for Annecy's Cristal for best feature film include Iranian director Ali Soozandeh's *Tehran Taboo*, exploring sexuality in the Iranian capital, which is due to premiere in [Cannes Directors' Fortnight](#); Jian Liu's small-town China crime caper *Have A Nice Day*, which made its debut at the Berlinale; UK film-maker Roger Mainwood's *Ethel And Ernest* and *Loving Vincent*, capturing the life of the tortured artist through animation in the style of his artwork.

Another 13 features will be showcased Out of Competition including anime fantasy *Ancien And The Magic Tablet*, the latest picture by Japanese *Ghost In The Shell* creator Kenji Kamiyama, and German director Katrin Rothe's animated documentary *1917 - The Real October capturing events in St Petersburg* during the Russian Revolution.

Work in Progress

The Work in Progress selection, one of the biggest draws for professionals and the large contingent of animation students which attends every year - will give sneak peaks of a dozen feature and TV projects including Nora Twomey's [Angeline Jolie-executive produced](#) *The Breadwinner*, about a girl living under the Taliban in Afghanistan, [Joann Sfar's](#) *Little Vampire* and Jorge Guitierrez's *Kung Fu Space Punch*.

China Focus

This year's guest country is China. The territory focus will explore its long history with animation dating back to the pioneering Wan Brothers, who made 30-odd shorts, melding the aesthetics of traditional artwork with the American cartoons they saw in Shanghai, in the 1920s and 30s and then made China's first feature-length animation feature *Princess Iron Fan* in 1941. It will be among 85 Chinese titles screening in the programme, spanning from the 1920s up until to today.

The country has also reserved a 183 sq m space in Annecy's MIFA market to mark the focus.

MIFA Expansion

In other MIFA news, the market will also be expanding in duration and size with the addition of a fourth day, so it will run Jun 13-16, as well as an extra 1,000 sq m of exhibition space.

The market is also launching a one-day event called Mifa Campus aimed at connecting young creatives with established professionals. Annecy habitué Guillermo del Toro will return as a patron for the inaugural edition and spill the beans on his own early career trajectory in a "Conversation with" event aimed at the participants.

In 2016, there were some 2,800 badge-holders, 1,200 companies and 370 buyers, distributors and investors at the market.

Guest Speakers

Other industry speakers in other sections of the programme will include Sony Pictures Animation president Kristine Belson; veteran Disney director and animator Glen Kleane and Disney Television Animation top executive Eric Coleman.

Chris Lavis and Maciek Szczerbowski, co-founders of Clyde Henry Productions in Montreal, will give a masterclass touching on their works such as *Madame Tutli-Putli*, *Higglety Pigglety Pop!*, *There Must Be More to Life* and the most recent *Cochemare*.

Other Focuses

There will also be a focus on immersive animation experiences dotted throughout the programme, including a screening of Jaime Hewlett's music video *Saturn Barz* for Gorillaz; Sundance title *Dear Angelica* and the National Film Board of Canada's *Blind Vaysha*.

The programme also includes a late night screenings devoted animated erotica and featuring titles such as Tex Avery's *Little Tinker*, Raoul Servais' *Nocturnal Butterflies* and Hefang Wei's *The Banquet Of The Concubine*.

Annecy 2017 line-up:

COMPETITION

- **In This Corner of the World**, Sunao Katabuchi (Japan)
- **Ethel and Ernest**, Roger Mainwood (UK)
- **Big Fish & Begonia**, Xuan Liang, Chun Zhang (China)
- **Have a Nice Day**, Jian Liu (China)
- **Loving Vincent**, Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman (Poland, UK)
- **A Silent Voice**, Naoko Yamada (Japan)
- **Lu Over the Wall**, Masaaki Yuasa (Japan)
- **Zombillennium**, Arthur de Pins, Alexis Ducord (Belgium, France)
- **Animal Crackers**, Tony Bancroft, Scott Christian Sava, Jaime Maestro (US)
- **Tehran Taboo**, Ali Soozandeh (Germany)

OUT OF COMPETITION

- **Ana y Bruno**, Carlos Carrera (Mexico)
- **Little Heroes**, Juan Pablo Buscarini (Venezuela)
- **1917 – The Real October**, Katrin Rothe (Germany)
- **The Man Who Knew 75 Languages**, Anne Magnussen, Pawel Debski (Norway)
- **Tea Pets**, Gary Wang (China)
- **Lost In The Moonlight**, Hyun-joo Kim (South Korea)
- **Richard The Stork**, Reza Memari, Toby Genkel, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway
- **In The Forest Of Huckybucky**, Rasmus A. Sivertsen (Norway)
- **Ancien And The Magic Tablet**, Kenji Kamiyama (Japan)
- **Rudolph The Black Cat**, Kunihiko Yuyama, Motonori Sakakibara (Japan)
- **I'll Just Live In Bando**, Yong Sun Lee (South Korea)
- **Deep**, Julio Soto (Spain)
- **Tad, The Lost Explorer, And The Secret Of King Midas**, Enrique Gato Borregán, David Alonso (Spain)

WORK IN PROGRESS (Features)

- **The Breadwinner**, Nora Twomey (Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg)
- **Little Vampire**, Joann Sfar (France)
- **Godzilla**, Kobun Shizuno and Hiroyuki Seshita (Japan)
- **Wish Dragon**, Chris Appelhans and Michelle Staphylas (China)
- **Kung Fu Space Punch**, Jorge Guitierrez (US)
- **Captain Morten and the Spider Queen** (Estonia, Ireland, Belgium)
- **Tito and the Birds** *Gabriel Bitar, André Catoto Dias and Gustavo Steinberg (Brazil)*
- **Zero Impunity**, Nicolas Blies, Stéphane Huber-Blies (Luxembourg)

First English trailer for Annecy opener 'Zombillénium'

22 May, 2017 | By [Orlando Parfitt](#)



EXCLUSIVE: \$15m animation is inspired by *Night Of The Living Dead* and *The Office*.

The first English-language trailer for French animator and illustrator Arthur de Pin's child-friendly comedy-horror tale 'Zombillénium' has been released.

Watch it below or on YouTube [HERE](#).

It is the director's first feature-length work after a series of animation shorts including *The Crab Revolution*, which won the audience award at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival, and *Geraldine*.

The story – featuring a gallery of monsters, zombies, vampires and werewolves — is based on a trio of comic books by de Pins which have sold more than 300,000 copies worldwide and been translated into nine languages.

It will open this year's edition of the [Annecy International Animated Film Festival](#), running June 12-17.

Urban Distribution International has acquired world sales rights to the film.

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ANNECY SPOTLIGHT: A CHAT WITH MARCEL JEAN

AnneCY's artistic director discusses the importance of providing a showcase for the entire landscape of animation.

After serving as a guest programmer at AnneCY (and many other festivals) throughout the early 2000s, in June 2012, Marcel Jean was appointed AnneCY's artistic director, succeeding longtime director Serge Bromberg. From the start, Jean sought to shake things up, giving the festival a more international orientation, programming more live events, and hosting more world premieres. Jean spoke to AWN publisher and editor-in-chief Dan Sarto about his tenure, the state of world animation, and how the 2017 festival will offer yet more innovations.


Dan Sarto: So how are you enjoying being AnneCY's artistic director?

Marcel Jean: I have a lot of fun. When I was appointed five years ago, the first thing that was important for me was to find a place for films that were at the edge of animation. So one of my first moves was to create the "Off-Limits" section. I'm very proud of that. I'm very happy that we will have this competitive category for our fourth year.

Another move that we made at the very beginning was to create an annual Honorary Cristal. I think it's important to give a recognition to important people in the world of animation that didn't have the opportunity to be in competition or to receive the Cristal.

This year we arrive with two big moves. I abolished the "Out-of-Competition" section for short films because I thought it was not prestigious enough. This allowed me to create two new categories. The first is a section of films for a young public. Festival programmers from all over the world and people who work with young audiences wanted to see these films. We noticed that there were more and more films being produced for this kind of public, so we created this category.

The other section that we created for this year is the "Perspectives" section. "Perspectives" will give us the opportunity to show films from countries that don't have a professional production structure, where filmmakers are pioneering animation production. These films were very rarely selected in



I think every film that is selected for AnneCY must have a spotlight on it."

competition before, so now they will have the opportunity to be awarded.

I think every film that is selected for AnneCY must have a spotlight on it. We will continue to work this way.

DS: For me, one of the main focuses of AnneCY has always been the incredible selection of short films. Yet there has been this growing emphasis, internationally as well as with the festival, on independent animated features. What are your thoughts on this?

MJ: As the artistic director of a festival like AnneCY, I feel that I must try to see the complete landscape of animation and try to give the most accurate and the most inclusive portrait of the situation. The independent feature world is growing and every year we receive independent features from new countries. This year we received features from Venezuela and Algeria.

Fifteen years ago, the feature selection was maybe the poorest part of animation festivals because the big studios don't really need and don't really want to be in competition. What we realized recently is that there is important feature production in a lot of countries, including Korea, China, Spain, Scandinavia... What we also noticed recently is that, because of technological evolution, it's possible for a film-

PHOTO BY LOU SCRAMBLE

MARCEL JEAN

Continued from page 6

maker who was considered a short-film maker to arrive with a feature film. This is the reason why there is more and more place in a festival like Annecy for features.

At the same time, it's very important for me to preserve the place for shorts in Annecy. I'm proud of the fact that the big studios are here to premiere films or do special presentations or master classes. But we're also screening more experimental shorts than ever before. My first priority I would say is to keep a balance. I think it's important for us to be present where the animation is and to give the most complete portrait of the situation.

DS: With regard to the presence and participation of the big international studios, what do you think are the main reasons they feel they need to be in Annecy? What do they get from attending?

MJ: I don't think there is a simple answer to that. Some of the studios are present in Annecy because recruitment is crucial for them. Recently, we had 2,500 students in Annecy—not only French students, but students from all over the world. They can meet students from the Rhode Island School of Design or from UCLA. It's certainly an important reason.

I think the press is another reason. There are more and more journalists at Annecy. Every year the coverage is more important than it was the year before. And it is certainly linked to the fact that there is a real evolution and a real development in the independent feature world. The mainstream press is still totally involved in the feature industry, because it's the films that will be released theatrically. There is more and more coverage, and it's important.

Another factor is, I think, that when some important people are present, you want to be there, too. You want to be in the club, basically. And I would not underestimate the growing importance of the Conference and Work in Progress and Masterclass events. There are exclusive presentations in Annecy, and this exclusive content is very important.

DS: The last thing that I wanted to touch on is China. What's exciting to you about the focus this year? What are some of the highlights?

MJ: When we decided to put the focus on China this year, the most important thing for me was to show the variety and the complexity of production in China. Because for most of the people in the industry, when they think about China, they think about hands to work in a very efficient and economical way on 3D feature projects. But what I noticed, just regarding feature production in China, was a constant improvement every year.

The 3D animated film we received from China in 2013, my first year, was at a certain level. The year after, it was better. In 2015 it was even better, and last year it was better again. This year it is still better. It's important to show that films are being made that are very, very well crafted, well designed, and with very good storytelling. *Tea Pets* and *Little Door Gods* by Gary Wang are two examples of these.

Another important thing is that there are some very strong, very singular, very creative animators who work on the side of contemporary art. If you visit certain galleries and museums, you will see extraordinary animation films—very creative, very provocative sometimes—that were made by Chinese artists. Sun Xun, in my eyes, is as important as William Kentridge in South Africa. In the area of contemporary art, there are a lot of animators like him.

There are also more classical filmmakers who do excellent work—directors like Xi Chen and Xu Han, who will have retrospectives this year. And, historically, the Shanghai Studio was very, very important. What I wanted to present in the China focus is a sense of the diversity of Chinese animation, from the Shanghai Studio, to the development of the 3D industry in China, to the contemporary art world. This is what we are trying to do. 🌐

CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS: THE FIRST EPIC MOVIE

DreamWorks Animation's zany new CG feature brings Dav Pilkey's beloved children's book series to glorious life.

BY SCOTT LEHANE

What happens when two imaginative elementary school students, George Beard (Kevin Hart) and Harold Hutchins (Thomas Middleditch), hypnotize their school principal, Mr. Krupp (Ed Helms), into thinking he is the dim-witted superhero known as Captain Underpants? Why, the three of them set out to stop mad scientist Professor Poopyants (Nick Kroll), the Turbo Toilet 2000 and tattletale Melvin Sneedly (Jordan Peele) from taking over the world, of course.

Directed by David Soren and in theaters starting June 2, DreamWorks Animation's *Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie* brings to life the beloved children's book series by American author and illustrator Dav Pilkey. Soren explains that *Captain Underpants* was a hot property in L.A. for years, but Pilkey wasn't quite ready to make a deal.

"So when DreamWorks finally managed to team up with him, it was a major coup and the studio was incredibly excited," he says. "When they approached me, I had just finished directing *Turbo*, and I was also developing an original idea. But I had been very aware of the books for a long time, so I jumped at the chance."

Soren, a DreamWorks veteran who directed two "Madagascar" shorts, *Merry Madagascar* and *Madly Madagascar*, in addition to the 2013 *Turbo* (2013), and served as a story artist on *Shrek*, *Shark Tale* and *Over the Hedge*, has fond memories of the first time he came across Pilkey's books. "It was 20 years ago. I had just moved to Los Angeles, and I discovered the first *Captain Underpants* book at a local bookstore. I picked it up and read half



of it right there in the aisle," he recalls. "Years later, once I had kids of my own, we read it again together, then the next book, and the next, until we'd devoured the entire series and were sore from laughter."

THE FRENCH-CANADIAN CONNECTION

While DreamWorks was eager to get going on a film, the company already had *Boss Baby* and *Trollhunters* in the pipeline for 2017 and lacked the in-house resources to take on another movie.

"After searching around for a little bit, they came across Mikros Image in Montreal, which was making *Little*

Prince, and had done *Asterix: The Land of the Gods*," says Soren. "They submitted an animation test as part of their bid, and everybody was blown away."

Soren visited the studio in Montreal frequently and was in constant contact with them, but in the interests of efficiency, he mostly worked remotely from L.A.

"I really had to spend the bulk of my time here," he says. "All of the front-end of the movie was made here. That means all of the designs, all the art, the storyboarding, the editing process and layout was all handled in L.A. The recording of the actors was primarily done here, too."

BRINGS WACKY HIJINKS TO THE BIG SCREEN



The artists dug through classic cartoons for inspiration, but ultimately Pilkey's original artwork drove the animation style."

"But our production designer, Nate Wragg, and co-head of animation Rune Bennicke spent many months up there with them, making sure that we were making the movie in the best possible way."

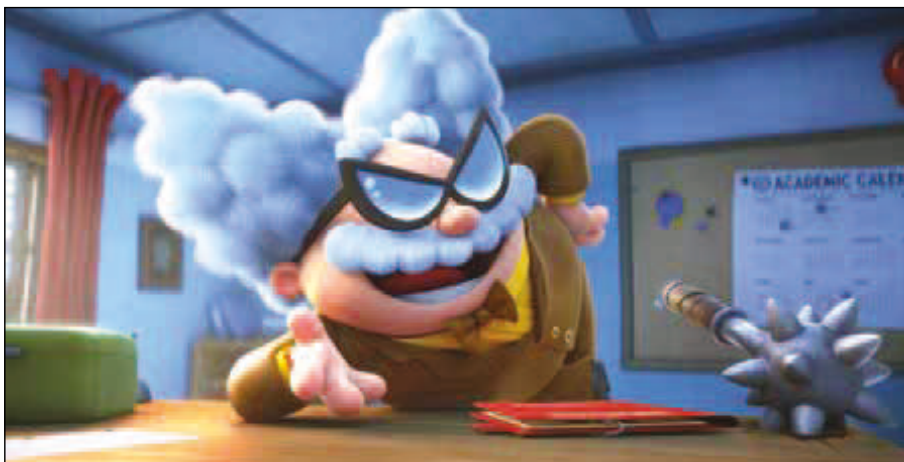
For inspiration, the artists dug through classic Warner Bros and Hanna-Barbera cartoons, including works by Chuck Jones and Tex Avery, but ultimately Pilkey's original artwork drove the animation style.

"The books are so fun and so lively, it really seemed like a given that it should be a very cartoony look and animation style," he says. "Rune Bennicke, who's a terrific 2D animator, designed the characters, based on the drawings in the books. Some of his early line tests really were instrumental in defining what the animation style would be. So he worked very closely with the animators at Mikros, and the other co-head of animation, Sebastien Bruneau, to translate that style to CG."

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

While Soren acknowledges that any animated movie depends on the cumulative contributions of the entire crew, he singles out Wragg, Bennicke, and head of layout Damon O'Beirne as being primarily responsible for the film's level of quality, as well as the sheer fun involved in making it.

"Nate was on right at the beginning of the development process, and had such a passion for finding the best way to adapt Pilkey's work," he says. "He analyzed almost every drawing and did a lot of experimenting to find the right look. The movie had a ton of different



IMAGES © DREAMWORKS ANIMATION/20TH CENTURY FOX

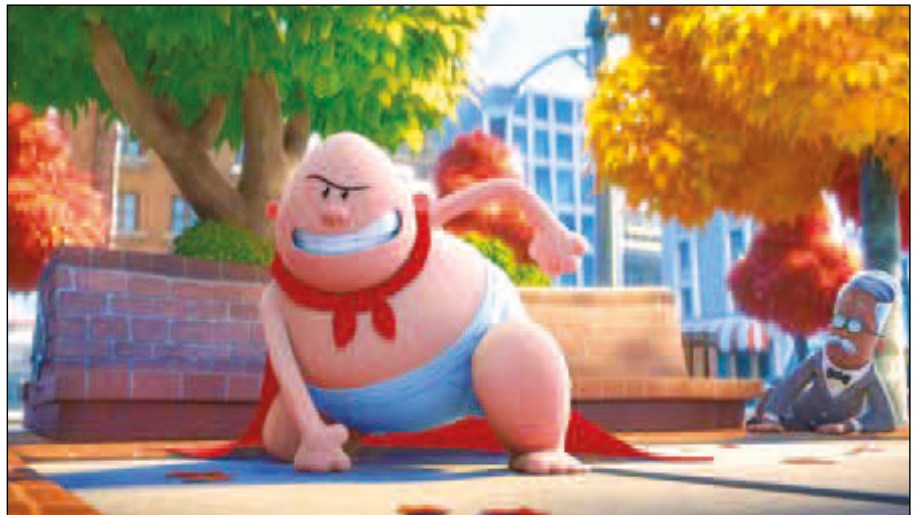
Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie captures the wacky humor and bonhomie of Dav Pilkey's popular children's book series.

“It’s just so lovely to see a creative friendship being celebrated in a movie.”

mixed-media elements in it, and Nate was great at finding a style that made it feel cohesive, and also made it feel like it was created by the two boys who created Captain Underpants.”

Soren credits Bennicke with helping the animators understand the principles of classical animation and how to translate that into CG by thinking more graphically and considering elements that are not inherent in typical CG processes.

Finally, about Damon O’Beirne, Soren says, “He was just a huge asset to the movie. He’s a DreamWorks veteran who was head of layout on all the *Kung Fu Panda* movies. He’s both creatively brilliant and also technically savvy, and he was able to help us combine the pipelines at DreamWorks and Mikros into one seamless system. He also helped simplify the layout process, putting the emphasis on the things that layout really should be doing, which is composition and camera.”



Overall, Soren stressed that the biggest creative and technical challenge was the time constraint. “It was a lot like driving a car that’s going above capacity, and it’s shaking like crazy and the doors seem like they’re going to go fly off, and you’re just trying to hold everything together and arrive at your destination safely.”

Not surprisingly, Soren is eager for people to see the movie, as much for the

relationships as the humor and technical accomplishments. “The protagonists are two very creative boys, and there’s a really warm friendship between them. It’s just so lovely to see a creative friendship being celebrated in a movie, whether it be animated or otherwise. And that allowed us to really lens the movie through their eyes, and have it feel like it was their movie and their creativity behind every choice that we made.”

DREAMWORKS ANNECY 2017

ANIMATION SKG



THURSDAY, JUNE 15

16:00 - 17:30

Bonlieu Grande Salle

(followed by a filmmaker Q&A)

18:00 - 19:00

Signing Session

David Soren, Mark Swift, Nate Wragg

Bonlieu Boutique Festival

@bdfugue



TUESDAY, JUNE 13

Guillermo del Toro

MIFA Campus Conversation

14:00 - 15:30

Impérial Palace

THURSDAY, JUNE 15

10:30 - 12:00

Signing Session

Guillermo del Toro, Rodrigo Blaas,

Marc Guggenheim, Chad Hammes

Bonlieu Boutique Festival

@bdfugue

Screening

TROLLHUNTERS “Becoming, Part 1”

TV Films in Competition 4

(Please check festival guide for details.)
















THURSDAY, JUNE 15

Open-air Screening

22:15 - 23:59

La Pâquier

Breaking News

-  **Chinese Embarrassment: Government Forces Annecy To Remove 'Have A Nice Day' From Competition**
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-  **'Effervescing Elephant' by Yoann Hervé**
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FEATURE FILM FESTIVALS IDEAS/COMMENTARY

Chinese Embarrassment: Government Forces Annecy To Remove 'Have A Nice Day' From Competition

By Amid Amidi | 06/07/2017 8:04 am | 14 Comments

This year Chinese animation was supposed to be the star of the show at the [Annecy International Animated Film Festival](#). Instead, on the eve of the festival, the Chinese government has embarrassed itself with a straight out act of political censorship, revealing the deep schism that exists between its official authorities and the country's most innovative artists.

China had been [selected by the Annecy organizers](#) as the guest country for its 2017 edition, with a wide range of programming devoted to China's national animation scene including a major exhibition at the Château d'Annecy museum and a dozen retrospective screenings.



See Also: 'Have A Nice Day' Is First Chinese Animated Feature To Compete At Berlin Film Festival

Unrelated to the guest country focus is the festival's selection of shorts and feature films, and the problems began when Annecy selected Liu Jian's feature film *Have A Nice Day* (*Hao ji le*) for official competition.

The film, a black comedy set in modern-day China, delivers unflinching social commentary on Chinese society's newfound obsessions over money, and characters in the film explicitly equate freedom with buying power. Its gritty and unvarnished portrait of contemporary China apparently crossed a line for government censors.

According to a [report by journalist Stéphane Dreyfus](#) in the French paper *La Croix*, Chinese authorities have been concerned about the film appearing at Annecy for many months.

“Even before we announced its selection, the Chinese authorities were worried about whether we intended to program it,” Patrick Eveno, managing director of the Annecy festival, told *La Croix*. After it was selected, the Chinese government refused to grant an exit visa for the film and repeatedly asked the festival to withdraw the film, which Annecy refused to do.

In late May, however, the producer of *Have A Nice Day* personally requested Annecy to withdraw the film. At that point, Eveno said, they had no choice.

The festival felt it did “not have the right to endanger the film team,” a valid concern that takes into account China’s recent history of turning artists into political prisoners, the most famous example being Ai Weiwei.

On May 30th, Annecy confirmed the removal of the film from competition with a terse statement on its website:

We must remove one of the feature films selected in competition at Annecy 2017, Liu Jian’s *Have a Nice Day*, from our programme following a decision that has been imposed upon us.










We’re disappointed about the official pressures that have prevented us from presenting this remarkable film this year and we hope that international audiences will soon have the possibility to see it.



Despite the film’s lack of presence at Annecy, Jian’s film has been screened at other international venues. Earlier this year, *Have A Nice Day* became the [first Chinese animated feature](#) to screen in competition at the Berlin Film Festival.

Last March, it also screened at the Holland Animation Film Festival, and this week it is screening at Animafest in Zagreb.

With multiple French media outlets picking up the story about the film’s censorship at Annecy and the [Streisand effect](#) now set into full motion, the Chinese government appears to have overplayed its hand and unintentionally driven more attention to Jian’s film than it would have otherwise received.

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FEATURE FILM FESTIVALS

Annecy 2017: 'Mutafukaz' English Trailer Released

By Amid Amidi | 06/12/2017 9:14 pm | 11 Comments

Among the more anticipated feature screenings at [Annecy](#) this year is the world premiere of *Mutafukaz*, which will take place on Tuesday evening.

An English-subbed trailer for the film was released today:



Based on the work of French comic artist Guillaume Renard (aka Run), the hyperviolent sci-fi dystopia marks a unique collaboration between France's Ankama (*Wakfu*, *Dofus*) and Japan's Studio4°C (*Batman: Gotham Knight*, *Animatrix*, *Tekkonkinkreet*).

Run co-directed the film with Shoujiro Nishimi, the latter of whom also served as the film's lead animator. Both Run and Nishimi will attend Tuesday evening's screening in Annecy.

Mutafukaz takes place in Dark Meat City (DMC), which Run has described as "a condensed exaggeration of Los Angeles' varied strengths and weaknesses." The story follows DMC resident Angelino, a deadbeat who starts experiencing violent headaches and monstrous hallucinations after a scooter accident.

In a director's statement, Run described some of the film's themes and influences:

Through this animated film, which resolutely focuses on action, I try to address deeper issues: the search for identity, each person's place in society, friendship, and, of course, love. I played around with all the pre-conceived ideas conveyed by pop culture, with many nods to this American imagery that struck my French teenager imagination. From masked luchadores to Latino and African-American gangs (directly inspired from the war between Bloods and Crips that shook South Los Angeles in the '90s), including *Men in Black* directly inspired by ufology myths.

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HOMEFILMFESTIVALS

Folivari, Studiocanal Link on 'Ernest & Celestine' Sequel 'Samsam' (EXCLUSIVE)

John Hopewell

Chief International Correspondent
@john_hopewell

JUNE 11, 2017 | 11:00PM PT



Wild Bunch boards 'Summit of the Gods,' from Julianne Films and Folivari COPYRIGHT: FOLIVARI

ANNECY, France — [Didier Brunner's Folivari](#) and [Studiocanal](#), two of Europe's major animation forces, have signed a joint development deal for a sequel to the Academy Award nominated "Ernest & Celestine," as Studiocanal has also boarded "Samsam, the Smallest of the Great Heroes," produced by Dandeloo and Folivari.

Both deals would see the titles, when they move into production, being sold internationally and distributed domestically in France by Studiocanal, a Folivari-Studiocanal arrangement already in place for the anticipated "The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales," an anticipated animated feature that world premieres at this year's Annecy Festival.

In a separate move for Brunner whose movies — which take in "The Secret of Kells," Michel Ocelot's "Kirikou" trilogy and "BelleVue Rendez-Vous" — have scored five Academy nominations — Wild Bunch has boarded "The Summit of the Gods," handling international sales and domestic distribution in France. Adapting a celebrated manga series illustrated by Jiro Taniguchi, the big climb animated feature which looks to expand the boundaries of animation, is lead-produced by Jean-Charles Ostorero's Julianne Films in co-production with Folivari.

With six animated features in development, production or co-production, and a parallel TV production line which includes "Ernest & Celestine, The Collection," "Samsam" and now "Stinky Dog," the Brunners — Didier and son Damien — have built up Paris-based Folivari in the space of three years into a formidable force on the upscale European animation scene.

In an animation business where it costs money, huge effort and success to create a brand new but well-known intellectual property, a second “Ernest & Celestine” movie sees Folivari and Studiocanal effectively enter the franchise business with Ernest, a gruff but golden-hearted bear, and his best friend, Celestine, a spirited mouse.

The development also marks a further strengthening of the relationship between Studiocanal and another key animation company in Europe as the Vivendi company pursues its “Paddington” franchise with David Heyman and production alliance with Aardman Animations.

Lit by the warm glow of a bias-breaking relationship and its 2D aquarelle style palette, the original 2012 “Ernest & Celestine,” saw the two creatures brave the wrath of local bear and mice communities alike with their friendship.

Scoring a 96% positive critics’ rating on Rotten Tomatoes, it notched up 1.3 million cinema-theater ticket sales in France – about \$9.4 million in gross box office, very good box office for a non-3D CGI animation movie, Brunner commented. It was also very successful on DVD, he added.

In the second movie, Celestine becomes curious about Ernest’s origins. Together, Ernest and Celestine set off for Charabia, where Ernest grew up, visit his oldest, childhood friend and have an adventure in Ernest’s homeland.

The new film will have the same techniques as the TV series, Brunner said: Character modeling in 3D and rendering in 2D animation.

“Samsam, The Smallest of the Great Heroes,” on which Folivari is in negotiations for Studiocanal to also co-produce the feature, already enjoys the popularity of two TV seasons broadcast on French TV channel Gulli. Introduced at 2016’s Cartoon Movie and targeting tiny tots, the movie turns on the same character, Samsam, a weeny superhero who battles to rescue his pen-friend Daisy, who gets kidnapped, and convert the maudlin Gloomies into Grinnies. Directed by Tanguy de Kermeil, with animation provided by Mac Guff, “Samsam” is written by Jean Regnaud, who penned “Ernest & Celestine, The Collection.” Production will commence before the end of the year, with the aim of delivery in late 2019, Brunner said. The movie will be made in parallel with a Season 3 of the TV series, produced by Bayard and Folivari, he added.

Turning on two Japanese climbers who attempt the impossible, to scale Everest in winter without oxygen, “The Summit of the Gods” adapts a celebrated manga series written by Baku Yumemakura and illustrated by Japan’s Jiro Taniguchi who died this February, causing Guillermo del Toro to tweet that “Taniguchi was a manga poet. The Kieslowski of the page. A serene, profound observer of the world.”

Brunner said that, to celebrate Taniguchi, “The Summit of the Gods’ would be “really in 2D, the closest to his design.”

Conrad Anker, who scaled Meru, a Himalayan peak thought impossible to climb, as recorded in the Sundance-prized documentary “Meru,” is willing to act as a technical consultant on “The Summit of the Gods.”

Animated comedy TV series “Stinky Dog,” now in development, turns on two street dogs and a flat cat. “The stinky dog is a little stupid, but always right in his premonitions. He has great instinct, if little intelligence,” Brunner observed. Headed by Jean-Baptiste Wery, Emmanuelle Petry Sirvin and Cedric Babouche, Dandeloo, which already distributed the 26-part “Ernest & Celestine: The Collection,” will lead-produce with Folivari and France Televisions. They are currently making a teaser, six scripts and a graphic bible. Jean Regnaud (“Ernest & Celestine, The Collection”) and Vincent Patar and Stéphane Aubier, directors of “Ernest & Celestine,” are writing.

“Co-production is a way of making many productions and sharing the work, making it lighter,” Brunner said. Folivari’s ambition is to make one animated feature a year, and to work on “singular or original” TV productions, such as “Stinky Dog,” or “Ernest & Celestine, The Collection,” he added.

His ambition remains, as at Les Armateurs, which he ran from 1994 to 2014, to make “high-quality films and TV with directors who bring an auteurist direction,” he went on.

World premiering Thursday as a special event at Annecy, “The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales,” on which word is good, marks Benjamin Renner’s follow-up to “Ernest & Celestine,” adapting his comic-books: “The Big Bad Fox,” “A Baby To Deliver” and “Saving Christmas,” featuring a weedy fox, a cack-handed rabbit, a naive duck and a eminently practical pig.

t “It’s a very, very funny film. It’s like candies, great entertainment. I’m sure it will work with children,” Brunner said.

In other news, Haut et Court, the prestigious French producer-distributor, has boarded "Pachamama" and will distribute the film in France, where, among animation titles, it has released "Song of the Sea" and "Yellowbird." Simon Crowe's SC Films has acquired international sales rights to the Inca-period set adventure, "the first animation film ever made about the Conquest of America, as seen from the point of view of the natives," said its director, Argentina's Juan Antin ("Mercano").

Producers are now Folivari, O2B Films, Doghouse Films (Luxembourg) and Canada's Kaïbou Productions, which co-produced "The Little Prince," and Blue Spirit Studio and Haut Et Court Distribution.

The awaited "My Family and the Wolf," to be directed by Adrian Garcia from Headless, which handled the animation sequences on J.A. Bayona's "A Monster Calls," is now casting. An 85%-90% live-action feature, with the wolf in CGI, it is scheduled to go into production in the summer of 2018, produced by Christine Ponzevera's Paris-based Nectarious Films and Folivari. It is backed by avance sur recettes seed money from France's CNC film agency. The cast will most probably be mainly French, Brunner said. The producers are also carrying out location work for a coast-set shoot.

At Bordeaux's Cartoon Movie in March, Folivari presented "The Nazis, My Father and Me," which now has a completed screenplay and trailer and aims to initiate production first half 2018.

China Blog

Have A Nice Day, Chinese gangster animation, blocked in France

By Stephen McDonnell
BBC News, Beijing

14 June 2017



Share



The makers of a cutting-edge Chinese film that was pulled from the world's premier animation festival following government pressure from Beijing say they still hope the movie will get a run in cinemas at home later this year.

One of the organisers of the Annecy International Animated Film Festival in France, Patrick Eveno, told French newspaper La Croix, that *Have A Nice Day* had to be withdrawn because they "did not have the right to endanger the film's team".

The makers of **the grungy, underworld, black comedy** - called *Hao Ji Le* in Mandarin - reportedly lacked official clearance from Chinese officials to have their work shown internationally.

Producer Yang Cheng told the BBC that the piece was "about people's desire and fate".

He said that "the Chinese movie industry should be proud of it," adding "it has nothing to do with politics".

He confirmed that it was his team that had asked the Annecy festival organisers to pull the film.



Despite the pressure being brought to bear from Chinese government officials to stop the movie being shown in France, Yang Cheng said he was still optimistic that Chinese audiences would get to see it.

"We hope it will be shown in Chinese cinemas in the second half of this year," he said.

Recently the Chinese government has taken a harder line on the appearance of films overseas. It requires any work being shown in an international festival to gain approval from the authorities here.

An official from the Movie Bureau within the State Administration of Radio Film and Television (SARFT) told the BBC it would not comment on the matter. Calls to the administration's press office went unanswered.

Have A Nice Day was described in *Variety* as having a "witty animation style" and as a "gangster caper that literally follows the money".

The work, by Chinese director Liu Jian, is seen as being at the forefront of a new wave of arthouse animation coming out of China.

In one scene a hit man is sent to collect money owed to his boss or inflict an appropriately violent level of punishment.

However, as he pushes a meat cleaver on to the face of his younger target who hasn't paid back what he owes, the two get into a conversation.

The man with the cleaver cutting into his cheek says he always wanted to get a job like that of his assailant, but that his "balls are too small".














Within a short period of time they proceed to speak about girlfriends and plastic surgery; the pressure to get married in China; and loyalty to one's parents.

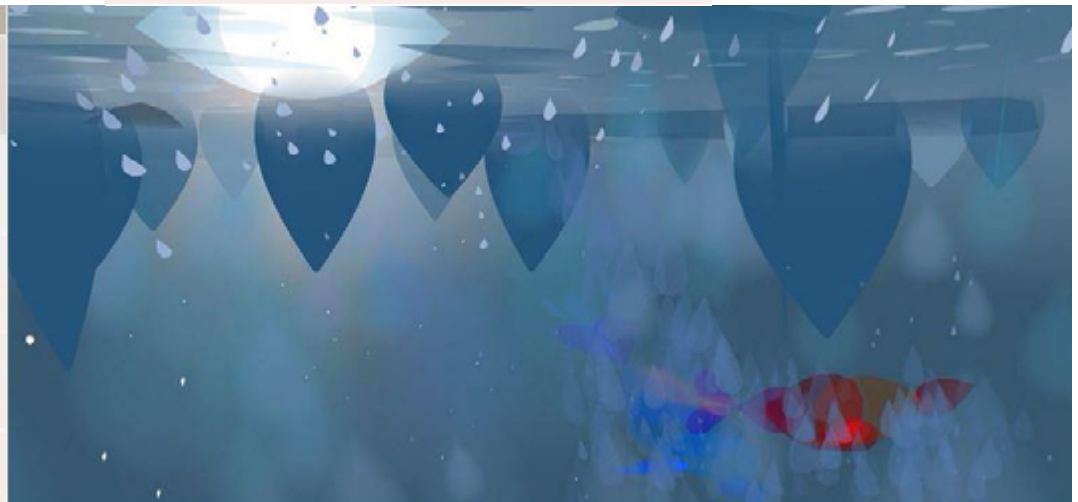
The dark, funny treatment of these subjects would ring true for a Chinese audience.

An official statement from the Annecy festival organisers said that the decision to withdraw *Have A Nice Day* had been "imposed upon us".

It goes on: "We're disappointed about the official pressures that have prevented us from presenting this remarkable film this year and we hope that international audiences will soon have the possibility to see it".


Breaking News

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INTERACTIVE VR

ANNECY 2017: Google Spotlight Stories Debuts 'Sonaria' Teaser [Exclusive]

By Amid Amidi | 06/14/2017 10:28 pm |  0 Comments

Google Spotlight Stories, the experimental unit of Google ATAP that explores immersive and interactive 360 storytelling, previewed a trailer earlier today at the Annecy film festival in France for its upcoming project *Sonaria*.

Cartoon Brew offers the exclusive online debut of the project teaser, which is described by the Spotlight Stories team as its first experimental animated film:

Sonaria follows two ever-changing creatures as they flow from one life form to another in an immersive tale of sound and light. The project is co-directed by Scot Stafford and Los Angeles based animation studio Chromosphere. Camille Cellucci, a veteran of the vfx industry, is producing.

Stafford has been the creative director of music and sound for the entire Spotlight Stories project, and has composed the music for previous Spotlight Stories including *Windy Day*, *Buggy Night*, *Duet*, *On Ice*, *Special Delivery*, and the Oscar-nominated *Pearl*. Stafford and his music collective, Pollen Music Group, developed new techniques for spherical and spatial audio on 360 mobile for Justin Lin's Google Spotlight Story, *Help*.

Chromosphere, the boutique shop founded by Kevin Dart (*Steven Universe*, *The Mr. Peabody and Sherman Show*), recently made an impact with its brand storytelling short *June*, commissioned by Lyft.

Like the previous projects in the Spotlight Stories series, *Sonaria* will be made available for mobile and vr platforms. A release date has not yet been announced.

'Despicable Me 3': Film Review | Annecy 2017



3:07 PM PDT 6/14/2017 by Jordan Mintzer



THE BOTTOM LINE

A familiar package scores a hat-trick. [🐦](#)

Gru and the Minions are back in the third installment of Illumination's popular franchise, which world-premiered at the Annecy Film Festival.

Repeating a formula that worked like gangbusters in the last installment, which became the most profitable film in Universal history, *Despicable Me 3* offers up more of the same: more Gru —

actually Gru times two if you count his twin brother, Dru; more Minions (though thankfully less than in their own exhausting 2015 spinoff); more Looney Tunes-esque sight gags; more pop culture references, with an emphasis on the 1980s this time; and more catchy Pharrell Williams songs on the soundtrack.

It's an if-it-ain't-broke-then-don't-fix-it approach that works just fine if you're simply looking to take another ride on the rollercoaster, with Steve Carell and Kristen Wiig returning to voice a pair of lovey-dovey superspy parents out to rid the world of evil yet again. Indeed, the original film's enticing premise, about a bad guy who can't help turning good, has been somewhat forgotten, even if series creator Pierre Coffin (working here with Kyle Balda and co-director Eric Guillon) tries to insert a bit of pathos and family matters into the action. Otherwise, this rather clever, breakneck-paced cartoon gives fans exactly what they want: Like the new nemesis voiced by Trey Parker, it shoots multiple machine gun bursts of bubblegum at the audience, asking them to chew and enjoy. Expect them to do so when the film hits theaters June 30.

When we last left Gru (Carell) and Lucy (Wiig), they had forged a happy home with the three girls (Miranda Cosgrove, Dana Gaier, Nev Scharrel) the big bad softie wound up with in the first movie. When this one starts, their livelihood is quickly threatened when their Anti-Villain League's new boss (Jenny Slate) fires the couple after they fail to apprehend an arch villain named Balthazar Bratt (Parker) — a former '80s child TV star who has gone all *Different Strokes* and turned to a life of crime.



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['Despicable Me 3,' 'Animal Crackers' to Debut at Annecy Fest](#)

The opening reel offers up a slew of Tex Avery-style stunts, music cues ranging from Michael Jackson to Van Halen to A-ha, and enough of the Minions to keep the kids happy. There's a lot thrown at the screen at once, yet Carell and Wiig manage to anchor the action with characters that can seem both outlandish and emotionally real, trying to keep their couple afloat amid the chaos that surrounds them.

Coffin and his fellow directors — working with returning scribes Cinco Paul and Ken Daurio — keep several balls in the air at once, kicking off the second act by introducing Dru (Carell again, though with a less pronounced Slavic accent), a long-lost twin brother who seems to be everything Gru isn't, all the way down to a swath of blond hair that Donald Trump could only dream of implanting. But things are not necessarily what they seem, and the brotherly love turns into

something else as we learn more about Gru's family history, including a brief cameo from his mother (Julie Andrews), who looks like she's caught in a pool scene from a softcore Italian porno.

There are plenty of other outlandish jokes here, such as a French character that's a spitting image of Gerard Depardieu, a rather outré depiction of a fictional European island (whose inhabitants include lots of cheese-eating kids, a bunch of drunks and a somewhat offensively rendered woman with major facial hair) and, in what may be the film's piece de resistance, two laugh-out-loud Minion sketches: one that may be a direct reference to the song-and-dance number in Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, and a prison sequence scored to Pharrell's hit "Freedom."



READ MORE

['Despicable Me 3' Trailer: Gru Meets His Match](#)

The filmmakers seem to be having a blast, sometimes at our expense but most of the time in a lively and bonkers enough way that forces you to clap along (to quote Pharrell's hit from the last movie). With a running time of only 96 minutes, not including credits for all 550 crew members, the pacing is so fast that there's barely room to breathe — although Coffin puts just enough emphasis on Gru's "issues" and just enough throwaway gags (cue up another Minion) to keep the movie grounded.

Things of course wind up leading to a big-bang final battle where the notion of Hollywood excess literally comes home to roost. One could perhaps see such an ending as a form of industry self-mockery in the way that, say, the Lego movies like to poke fun at their own existence. But the *Despicable Me* franchise, which has grossed \$1.5 billion and counting thus far, hardly needs to look deep into its soul for further meaning. It has its recipe perfectly down pat by now, and with further installments likely on the horizon, it only asks that we laugh with it all the way to the bank.

Production companies: Universal Studios, Illumination Entertainment

Distributor: Universal

Cast: Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig, Trey Parker, Miranda Cosgrove, Steve Coogan, Jenny Slate, Dana Gaier, Nev Scharrel, Julie Andrews, Pierre Coffin

Directors: Pierre Coffin, Kyle Balda

Co-director: Eric Guillon

Screenwriters: Cinco Paul, Ken Daurio

Producers: Chris Meledandri, Janet Healy

Executive producer: Chris Renaud

Art director: Olivier Adam

Annecy Fest Surges in Size Yet Again, as ‘Despicable Me 3,’ ‘Loving Vincent,’ ‘The Big Bad Fox’ Premiere at Event

[John Hopewell](#)

Chief International Correspondent [@john_hopewell](#)



Courtesy of Universal Pictures
June 11, 2017 | 11:02PM PT

Embraced by Hollywood, the world’s premier animation festival still builds as animation becomes a worldwide production phenomenon

Illumination Mac Guff’s “[Despicable Me 3](#),” China, Disney-Pixar’s “Coco” and “The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales” look set to figure among highlights at this week’s edition of France’s thriving Annecy Intl. Animation Film Festival, a Mecca for animation companies and creatives from Hollywood and the world over, which just doesn’t stop growing.

In just one sign, its International Animation Film Market (MIFA) will add an extra day, kicking in June 13 and moving from three to four days. MIFA accredited delegate numbers were tracking at 2,900 by last Friday, already up on the final 2016 tally to 2,850, said MIFA head Mickael Marin, who added that he hoped final participation would pass 3,000 for the first time ever. Extending ever more towards Annecy’s lake, exhibition floor space is also up 16%, vs. 2016.

Driven by the increase in animation output in most parts of the world, including Africa, Marin said, delegate numbers have now grown 13 years in a row, since 2005, casting MIFA as a metaphor for the international animation scene at large and one of the most robustly-growing industry events in Europe.

Patrick Eveno, CEO of the Annecy Festival's Citia organization, added that he expected 5% to 10% growth in Annecy Festival accreditation.

Announced by the Annecy Festival as a world premiere, "Despicable Me 3" continues Chris Meledandri's close relationship with the French festival which has hosted the bows of the first two parts of the franchise and "Minions" – to a \$2.7 billion worldwide box office to date.

Director Lee Unkrich and producer Darla K. Anderson, who previously teamed on "Toy Story 3," will present, along with co-director Adrian Molina, footage from "Coco" – after its new trailer last week, one question is what new footage they might show – while director Dave Mullins and producer Dana Murray will talk up Pixar short "Lost & fOUnd," which bowed at March's SXSW Festival.

"Cars 3" will screen at Annecy on Friday June 16, the same day as its commercial bow in the U.S. Guillermo del Toro hosts Annecy's inaugural Mifa Campus, and delivers a keynote, as will Eric Coleman, VP at Disney Television Animation, vet Disney director-animator Glen Keane. Japan's Go Nagai will present "Mazinger Z," a new animated feature from the Manga series.

The real sign of Hollywood's raised ambitions and production volume in animation may be seen most clearly in another keynote, by Kristine Belson, president of Sony Pictures Animation, as well as a studio focus presentation by Allison Abbate, EVP Theatrical Animation at Warner Animation Group.

Showcasing presentations of features and TV shows anywhere from development to near completion, Annecy's Work in Progress section looks particularly rich this year, with Nora Twomey taking an audience through "The Breadwinner," the latest from Ireland's Cartoon Saloon ("The Book of Kells," which Twomey co-directed; "The Song of the Sea"). Jorge R. Gutierrez, director of the vibrant "The Book of Life," an eye popping celebration of Mexico's Day of the Dead and its core beliefs which grossed \$100 million worldwide, introduces narrative beats and design from his latest toon feature project, "Kung Fu Space Punch," produced by Dallas-based Reel FX Animation Studios as part of a longterm deal between Gutierrez and Reel FX.

Annecy opens this year with French-Belgian title "Zombillennium," already seen at Cannes, a comedic horror movie set in a Halloween theme park staffed by real monsters, adapted by Arthur Pins and Alexis Ducord from Pins' own raved-about comic book series.

That forms just part, however, of one of the most substantial roll-outs of French animation at Annecy in recent years, with Studiocanal, Folivari, ON Animation Studios. Les Armateurs and Ankama all at the festival with new titles.

One of Europe's animation drivers, Studiocanal is distributing and selling two titles at Annecy: the awaited, three-part "The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales," produced by Didier Brunner's Folivari and co-directed by Benjamin Renner, one of the directors on the Academy

Award-nominated “Ernest & Celestine”; and “Petit Vampire,” from Joann Sfar (“Gainsbourg”), produced by Autochenille, which Sfar will present as a Work in Progress.

Looney Toons meets Miyazaki, featuring the adventures of a daffy duck, cack-handed rabbit, weedy fox and very sensible pig, not that it does him much good, “The Big Bad Fox” hits Annecy for a one-off special event screening as one of the most buzzed-up of its premieres.

There is also good word-of-mouth on the Celluloid Dreams-sold “Mutafukaz,” another French world premiere and flagship feature from Ankama, the Gallic gaming-comic-book company best known for MMORPGs “Wakfu” and “Dofus” franchises. Co-produced by Japan’s 4°C Studios, and adapting comic-books from France’s Guillaume “Run” Renard, who helms with Japan’s Shoujirou Nishimi, a trailer suggests the movie channels the aesthetics of Nishimi’s “Batman: Gotham Knight” and 4°C Studios “Tekkon Kinkreet” into a sci-fi action movie with current social point and a mash-up of three teen deadbeats in a Latino barrio of Dark Meat City, a dystopic version of L.A. populated by monstrous men in black, Shakespeare-quoting street gang leaders and messianic Mexican wrestlers.

Also new is “Tall Tales: The Magical Garden of Antoon Krings,” the latest animated feature from French animation leader ON Animation Studios (“The Little Prince,” “Playmobil”) headed by Aton Soumache and Dimitri Rassam. A classic French animation company, Les Armateurs will present in WIP TV “Un Homme est mort,” set in 1950 France as a man is killed during industrial action, which is set to air on prestigious TV network Arte France.

France’s CNC film-TV board reported this month that French animated feature production rose from three films in 2015 to 10 in 2016, thanks to new CNC incentives which also encouraged producers to relocate their production to France. France’s Animated Feature Producers Union (SPFA) reported that animation sector employees’ total income will rise 30% in the next few years – one indication of growth in a key international market which for the last 20 years has helped drive growth in the sector in Europe.

This year’s Annecy Fest should, however, have belonged to China, Annecy’s 2017 guest country and, as such, the subject of a major multi-part retrospective and exhibition as the biggest Chinese delegation ever hits Annecy’s MIFA market and Chinese companies, once peripheral players on the animation scene, are now boarding animated features as major co-producers or paying good-to-top dollar for rights to China.

The guest country tribute will inevitably be shadowed by the Annecy Festival’s being forced to pull Chinese competition title “Have a New Day,” Liu Jian’s stylish hitman movie, at its producer’s request, and after Chinese authorities refused to grant the film an exit visa. Why a title which played in competition at the 2017 Berlinale should be barred from competing at Annecy is a moot and unanswered question.

There will be large curiosity to see the progress made by Chris Appelhans on “Wish Dragon,” which is fully-funded by Chris Bremble’s Beijing-based VFX house Base FX.

Annecy’s Works in Progress section and ever-more consolidated MIFA Pitching Sessions promise other delights such as TV series “Ella, Oscar & Hoo,” created by Oscar-winning Michael Dudok de Wit, and half-hour movie “The Tales of the Hedgehog,” mixing a social-issue background and exquisite sets, from Academy Award nominated Alain Gagnol and Jean-Loup Felicoli (“A Cat in Paris”).

One U.S. title, Blue Dream Studios' "Animal Crackers" – directed by Scott Christian Sava, Tony Bancroft and Jaime Maestro – plays in Annecy Competition, as does British animated feature "Ethel & Ernest," from Roger Mainwood, based on the latest Raymond Briggs story, here about his parents, voiced by Jim Broadbent and Brenda Blethyn.

Another Annecy competition title, Naoko Yamada's "My Silent Voice," turns about a man who sets out to atone for bullying other students when a child. It has been appreciated on foreign release for its full-blown sentiment.

Also from Japan are "Lu Over the Wall," turning on a middle-school student who meets a mermaid, that marks the first animated film based on an original story from Masaaki Yuasa ("Ping Pong"); and "In This Corner of the World," from Japan's Sunao Katabuchi ("Mai Mai Miracle"), released last November in Japan.

Selected for Cannes Critics' Week, Ali Soozandeh's "Tehran Taboo" delivers a politically trenchant look at contemporary Tehran life and, especially, the lack of freedom suffered by women. Also making the Annecy competition cut, "Big Fish & Begoña" is a Chinese fantasy film directed by Liang Xuan and Zhang Chun.

Some competition titles, such as "In This Corner of the World" which *Variety* called "beguiling anime," have had a critical reception. Many titles, especially out of competition, such as Mexico's "Ana and Bruno," hit Annecy brand new.

The most talked about of Annecy titles may well be "Loving Vincent," from Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman, which Edward Noeltner's CMG has pre-sold fulsomely, partly because of its technique – it's fully painted in the style of Van Gogh, and also its focus: an investigation into the painter's suicide. Sparking multiple special events which play out over Annecy, "Loving Vincent's" multiple screenings sold out rapidly when tickets went online last week.

The fact that "Tadeo Jones 2, and the Secret of King Midas" is tipped to become one of if not the highest-grossing film release in Spain this year is another sign of how animation around the world is no longer a local production afterthought.

The Annecy Intl. Animation Film Festival runs June 12-17.

OFFICIAL COMPETITION

"Animal Crackers," (Tony Bancroft, Scott Christian Sava, Jaime Maestro, U.S., Spain, China)

"A Silent Voice," (Naoko Yamada, Japan)

"Big Fish & Begoña," (Xuan Liang, Chun Zhang, China)

"Ethel and Ernest," (Roger Mainwood, U.K.)

"In This Corner of the World," (Sunao Katabuchi, Japan)

"Loving Vincent," (Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman, Poland, U.K.)

“Lu Over the Wall,” (Masaaki Yuasa, Japan)

“Tehran Taboo,” (Ali Soozandeh, Germany)

“Zombillenium,” (Arthur de Pins, Alexis Ducord, Belgium, France)

OUT OF COMPETITION

“1917 – The Real October,” (Katrin Rothe, Germany)

“Ana y Bruno,” (Carlos Carrera, Mexico)

“Ancien and the Magic Tablet,” (Kenji Kamiyama, Japan)

“Deep,” (Julio Soto, Spain)

“I’ll Just Live in Bando,” (Yong Sun Lee, South Korea)

“In the Forest of Huckybucky,” (Rasmus A. Sivertsen, Norway)

“Little Heroes,” (Juan Pablo Buscarini, Venezuela)

“Lost in the Moonlight,” (Hyun-joo Kim, South Korea)

“Richard the Stork,” (Reza Memari, Toby Genkel, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway)

“Rudolph the Black Cat,” (Kunihiko Yuyama, Motonori Sakakibara, Japan)

“Tadeo Jones 2, and the Secret of King Midas,” (Enrique Gato Borregán, David Alonso, Spain)

“Tea Pets,” (Gary Wang, China)

“The Man Who Knew 75 Languages,” (Anne Magnussen, Pawel Debski, Norway)

ANNECY INTL. ANIMATION FESTIVAL, MIFA MARKET, JUNE 12-17, 2017: SOME HIGHLIGHTS

The 2017 Annecy Festival is by far, in terms of the number of events staged, is busiest ever. Just some, and certainly not all, of the events, screenings, panels and keynotes which, on paper, could prove highlights:

MONDAY, JUNE 12

9:30 am Julie Ann Crommett, VP, multicultural strategies, Walt Disney Studios, kicks off a first-ever Women in Animation World Summit at Annecy, taking one bull by the horns: Unconscious bias.

10.30 am WIA World Summit: How Are We Getting There?

3:00 pm European Animation Awards press conference: An update on 2017's first ever Emile Awards, announcing its date, place, and categories.

3:00 pm What's cutting edge from young Chinese animators? Find out at a special program, Guest Country China: The Best Shorts From Schools

8:30 pm Arthur de Pins and Alexis Ducord's horror theme-park themed "Zombillenium," sold by UDI, opens the 2017 Annecy Intl. Animation Festival.

10:15 pm Nickelodeon offers Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles short "Strike Hard."

TUESDAY, JUNE 13

9.00 am Stalwart "Ice Age" director-producer Carlos Saldanha, director of upcoming "Ferdinand," is interviewed by *Variety's* chief film critic Peter Debruge as Annecy's MIFA Campus kicks into gear.

9:30 Work in Progress sneak peek of "The Breadwinner," the first solo feature of Nora Twomey ("The Secret of Kells"), lead-produced by Cartoon Saloon, exec produced by Angelina Jolie, distributed in the U.S. by Gkids, and one of the most awaited of animation art films of 2017-18.

10.30 Andimation: A come-meet for young Andes-country animation talent.

11.00 Annecy Asia Festival in Seoul announcement.

11.15 Base FX's China-set "Aladdin" update "Wish Dragon," a key U.S.-China animation movie unveiled at a Work in Progress by director Chris Appelhans.

12:00 noon Official presentation of the exhibition, An Animated Tour de France: Spotlight on Sacrebleu Productions. A profile of the Paris animation studio which has moved from Annecy ("Man on the Chair") and Cesar-prized ("Sunday Lunch") shorts to Rémi Chayé's "Long Way North," an Annecy Audience Award winner in 2015.

2: 00 pm The great Guillermo del Toro converses about DreamWorks Animation's "Trollhunters," inter alia, with *Variety's* Peter Debruge.

4:00 pm Directed by Dorota Kobiela ("Little Postman") and Hugh Welchman, producer of "Peter and the Wolf," "Loving Vincent" world premieres at Annecy.

4:00 pm TeamTo announces a new – and inspiring – affirmative action animation school.

6:00 pm World premiere of sequel "Tadeo Jones 2, and the Secret of King Midas," distributed worldwide by Paramount, backed by Telecinco Cinema and Telefonica, and one of Spain's biggest toon bows for 2017.

6:45 pm Disney Television Animation's inaugural Annecy press conference, with Eric Coleman, Helene Etzi and Orion Ross talking DTA's industry philosophy and upcoming slate.

7:00 pm Walt Disney Feature animation vet Glen Keane talks about how animation has evolved in keynote speech *Thinking Like a Child: Embracing Change in an Ever-Evolving Art Form*, and showcases “Dear Basketball,” made with Kobe Bryant and John Williams.

8:30 pm France’s Ankama and Japan’s Studio 4°C world premiere “Mutafukaz,” adapting the cult comic book by

Guillaume “Run” Renard.

8:15 pm: Mifa & Variety’s Animation Personality of the Year Award presented to Gkids’ Eric Beckman and Gebeka’s Marc Bonny.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14

9:30 am Clash of the Titans: Japanese mega-studio Toho’s take on “Godzilla,” its first run at the beast, as revealed by first footage directed by Kobun Shizuno and Hiroyuki Seshita.

10:00 am VR demo unveil of Jorge Gutierrez’s “Son of Jaguar,” part of Google Stories.

11.00 am Mifa Pitches: Feature Films Six animated feature projects, two from France, one a piece from Colombia, U.K., Russia and Portugal, whose themes – child soldiers, broken families, breast cancer, British imperialism – suggest that world cinema animation these days in anything but escapist entertainment.

11.00 Illumination MacGuff CEO Jacques Bled reviews current productions.

11.15 am French director Joann Sfar (“The Rabbi’s Cat”) and producer Antoine Delesvaux introduce “Little Vampire,” an Annecy WIP.

2:00 pm “A Man is Dead” Classic French animation house Les Armateurs unveils in *Work in Progress* its TV movie, “A Man is Dead,” a take on industry action in the port of Brest in 1950, where police shoot at demonstrators and one man dies. An original enterprise.

2:30 Setting the Course for a European Animation Plan European producers discuss a way forward for the sector.

4:00 pm Anatomy of a Studio: Mikros Image French animation studio sets out its plans for the future

4:30 pm Oriental DreamWorks and Light Chaser Animation Studios execs debate opportunities and challenges of china’s animation market.

6:00 pm The latest from “The Little Prince” producer On Pictures, “Tall Tales from the Magical Garden of Antoon Krings,” a tiny-tots targeting adventure.

6:30 Walt Disney Television Animation’s SVP Eric Coleman delivers a keynote speech

6:45 pm France Televisions presents its 2017-18 lineup.

8:30 pm The big one, the world premiere with creator-director Pierre Coffin in tow, of Universal's "Despicable Me 3," from Illumination MacGuff, at Annecy, where the first installment was unveiled in 2010, launching a (to date) \$2.7 billion theatrical franchise.

THURSDAY, JUNE 15

9:30 am "Kung Fu Space Punch," in Work in Progress, from Reel FX and Jorge R. Gutierrez, who broke out with "The Book of Life." A "funny mash-up of '90s Kung Fu films, Spaghetti Westerns of the '60s, and the epic space adventures of the '70s, '80s and today, according to Gutierrez. Awaiting.

9:30 am Canary Islands: The Next Hotspot for Animation? No part of Spain offers more advantageous tax breaks for international shoots. Six animation studios discuss how to leverage them to work with the Canaries.

10.00 am Mifa Pitches: TV Specials and Series, featuring the exquisite "The Tales of the Hedgehog."

11.15 Work in Progress: "Tito and the Birds." Brazilian animation topped Annecy two years in a row, with 2012's "Rio 2096 – A Story of Love and Fury" and "The Boy and the World." In line with the latter, "Tito and the Birds" features impressionistic animation and social relevance, here media fear-mongering.

11.45 am France's Lagardere Active details new Gulli, Canal J and TiJi projects, and investment policy for its youth channels.

4:00 pm "Captain Underpants – The First Epic Movie" DreamWork Animation's latest play, which grossed a \$23.5 million opening weekend from June 4, playing overwhelmingly to 7-12s, low for DWA, but not so bad given the relatively low budget.

6:00 pm Canal Plus Family outlines new programs.

6:30 pm Kristine Belson, president of Sony Pictures Animation, shares her vision for the studio as it ramps up production

8:30 pm World premiere with directors Benjamin Renner and Patrick Isbert in attendance, of "The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales," the latest from Didier Brunner's Folivari, which from the trailers at least, looks like painterly, upscale animal fable fun.

FRIDAY, JUNE 16

10.00 am Annecy's now traditional Disney-Pixar unveil. Daria K. Anderson and Adrian Molina screen "exclusive footage," the Annecy Festival has announced, from Pixar's "Coco," one of its two bows in 2017, while Dave Mullins and producer Dave Murray present "LOU," which premiered at South by Southwest.

10.00 am MIFA Pitches: Transmedia France and Spain dominate with two projects each, including philosophy themed "Philo 3000" and "Dino Games," from "Memoirs of a Man in Pajamas" Carlos Fernandez

11.15 Paris-based sales company Indie Sales handled “My Life as a Courgette.” Now it’s alighted on “Zero Impunity,” a research/activist animated documentary to end impunity for sexual violence in armed conflicts,” presented in Annecy’s WIP strand.

4:00 pm Warner Animation Group made its first big splash at Annecy last year, sneak peeking its fast-building slate. Now WAG is back, with EVP Alison Abbate offering a special look at “The Lego Ninjago Movie” and WAG’s upcoming production.

4:30 pm Nickelodeon creators Joe Murray (“Rocko’s Modern Life”) and Robert Scull (“Bubble Guppies”) team to discuss their artistic journeys. Sneak peek of “Rocko’s Modern Life.”

SATURDAY, JUNE 17

8:30 pm Closing ceremony with 2017 Annecy Fest prizes announcement and the world premiere of Genndy Tartakovsky’s “Hotel Transylvania“ short film spinoff “Puppy!”” Swiss animator George Schwizegebel receives an Annecy Honorary Cristal.

'The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales': Film Review | Annecy 2017

12:50 PM PDT 6/15/2017 by Jordan Mintzer



Courtesy of Folivant/Panique/StudioCanal/RTBF (Television Belge)-OUFtv/VVOO/Be TV

THE BOTTOM LINE

Fox & friends you can actually enjoy. [🐦](#)

'Ernest and Celestine' director Benjamin Renner and chief animator Patrick Imbert unveiled their new feature adaptation at the Annecy International

A lively trio of cartoons that are wacky, heartwarming and wise, *The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales* (*grand méchant renard et autres contes*) showcases an animal farm like no other: The titular fox is less cunning than he is both kind and nurturing, a duck has no idea how to actually swim, a lizard shows up out of nowhere and starts speaking Mandarin and a stork is far too lazy to deliver the baby in its beak.

Those are just some of the characters populating this second feature from director Benjamin Renner (working here with animator Patrick Imbert), whose *Ernest & Celestine* was one of the most memorable animated movies to come out of France a few years back, earning a Cesar Award and an Oscar nomination. This time the source material is different, with Renner adapting his own best-selling comic book in a tone that's equal parts Tex Avery and Dr. Seuss, with a bit of Adult Swim thrown into the mix. The result is lots of fun, if less compelling and cohesive than the last film, which should make it a shoo-in with Gallic tykes as they head into the summer vacation.

Co-written by Jean Regnaud, all three stories feature animals that have a hard time fulfilling their traditional roles, whether it's on the farm or in the forest. They could all also probably use a dose of Ritalin, so much do they seem constantly agitated and incapable of chilling out for as much as a second.

In the first tale ("A Baby to Deliver"), a feckless stork leaves a baby in the hands of a rabbit, a pig and a duck, urging them to make the delivery in his place. The second and longest story ("The Big Bad Fox"), based on Renner's comic, follows a fox scrounging around for food and winding up — not unlike Seuss' *Horton Hatches an Egg* — with a set of baby chicks to take care of, proving he may be a better at child-rearing than at hunting. In the third section ("The Perfect Christmas"), the animals mistakenly think they've killed Santa Claus and try their awful best to replace him.

Each part offers an array of slapstick gags, snappy dialogue and winks at pop — including a possible reference to *Fargo* in the Christmas story — though behind all the chaos lies a rather sentimental core, especially in the fable where the hungry fox is constantly tempted to eat the very infants he's falling in love with. Renner and Imbert spend more time dishing out jokes than they do weaving the kind of meaningful narrative that made *Ernest & Celestine* so special, yet while *Fox* is more of a slaphappy romp than a morality play, there's still a method to the madness.

Like the last film, the old-school 2D animation is especially impressive and sticks very close to Renner's original drawings. Characters' features only seem to be partially rendered at times, as if we're watching a cartoonist's sketchpad in motion, and the effect creates a whirligig of nonstop action from start to finish. Keeping the pace is a playful score by Robert Marcel Lepage (Cesar winner *Fatima*), while a clever stage setting is used to introduce each story — as well as providing a quick encore in which the major players all take a bow before the show must inevitably go on.

Production companies: Folivari, Panique!, StudioCanal

Cast: Celine Ronte, Boris Rehlinger, Guillaume Bouchede, Guillaume Darnault, Magali Rosenzweig, Elise Noiraud, Jules Blenvenu

Directors: Benjamin Renner, Patrick Imbert

Screenwriters: Benjamin Renner, Jean Regnaud, based on the comic book by Benjamin Renner

Producers: Didier Brunner, Vincent Tavier

Production designers: Zyk, Zaza

Editor: Benjamin Massoubre

Composer: Robert Marcel Lepage

Casting director: Celine Ronte

Animation director: Patrick Imbert

Venue: Annecy Film Festival (Screening Events)

Sales: StudioCanal

In French

80 minutes

'Loving Vincent': Film Review | Annecy 2017

1:44 AM PDT 6/15/2017 by Jordan Mintzer



Courtesy of Annecy Film Festival

THE BOTTOM LINE

A Post-Impressionistic potboiler. [🐦](#)

Directors Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman worked for 7 years on this entirely hand-painted film, which played in competition at Annecy.

There have already been quite a few films about Vincent van Gogh, ranging from the heroic (*Lust for Life*) to the dramatic (*Vincent & Theo*) to the enigmatic (Maurice Pialat's masterly *Van Gogh*). All of them offer up their own interpretations of the artist's brief and tumultuous life, which ended abruptly from suicide at the age of 37, after he had completed roughly 800 paintings in the span of less than 10 years.

While such movies attempted to portray the painter through his actions and words, none have quite been able to reveal the man through his work. Such is the unique feat of Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman's hand-painted biopic *Loving Vincent*, a film that uses van Gogh's canvases as both form and function, animating them into a saga tracing his last days in Arles, where he made his greatest artist breakthroughs, to his stay in Auvers-sur-Oise, where he died in 1890 after shooting himself in the torso.

Or so goes the story. In this Polish-U.K. co-production, which took nearly seven years to complete, the death of van Gogh (played by Polish theater actor Robert Gulaczyk) turns into a murder mystery that revisits his suicide from multiple angles, with a young man named Armand Roulin (Douglas Booth), who was the subject of several portraits by the artist, serving as both detective and narrator. It's a plot device that keeps the suspense afloat but can also feel somewhat manufactured, if not downright hammy, at times, turning the allusive van Gogh into the protagonist of a garden-variety crime novel.



READ MORE

['Despicable Me 3': Film Review | Annecy 2017](#)

Still, there are enough traces of the artist himself in the movie, from his many paintings to the famous letters he wrote to his brother and benefactor Theo, to please both experts and newbies, who should enjoy watching his work come to life onscreen. Well-received by audiences for its Annecy world premiere, *Loving Vincent* has already racked up enough foreign pre-sales to guarantee steady exhibition after its fest run.

Employing many of the tools of a standard TV thriller, from flashbacks to reenactments to scenes viewed from van Gogh's troubled POV, the script (by the directors and Jacek Dehnel) has Roulin *filis* traveling from Arles to Auvers at the request of his father, postmaster Joseph Roulin (Chris O'Dowd), to deliver a last letter to Theo. But when Armand arrives up north, he finds that Theo is dead as well, having succumbed to the effects of syphilis after being crushed by his brother's demise.

Piqued by a curiosity that doesn't always seem justified, Armand decides to stay in town to find out what really happened to Vincent. He receives different versions of the story from various subjects of van Gogh paintings, from legendary Impressionist art supplier Pere Tanguy (John Sessions) to Adeline Ravoux (Eleanor Tomlinson), whose family ran the local inn where van Gogh stayed and eventually died, to Marguerite Gachet (Saoirse Ronan) and her father, Dr. Gachet (Jerome Flynn), who treated the artist during his turbulent final months, all the way up to his deathbed.



READ MORE

[Annecy: Guillermo del Toro Talks Creative Freedom With Netflix, the Future of 'Hellboy'](#)

Each character has a diverging opinion of the painter and what may have happened to him, and in that sense *Loving Vincent* does offer up a fairly complex portrait of a man whose more inexplicable acts — the film kicks off with the infamous ear incident in Arles — will never be fully understood. But there's also a feeling that the filmmakers have concocted their whodunit narrative simply as a means to an end, with that end being to showcase van Gogh's oeuvre in a way that has never been done before.

To that extent, the painstaking work done by Kobiela and Welchman to turn some of the artist's most prized canvases into animated scenes can be impressive to behold. Paintings such as *The Night Cafe*, *Wheatfield with Crows*, *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* and *Starry Night Over the Rhone* were reproduced by a team of animators over a two-year period, using live-action sequences captured in front of green screens and then transforming them during postproduction into van Gogh's living, breathing subjects, like zombies coming back to haunt us from a Post-Impressionistic past.

Purists of art history may take issue with such a technique of transmutation, as well as with the movie's potboiler of a plot, but there's no doubt that the directors have taken their subject to heart. In that sense, *Loving Vincent*, which is a title inspired by the way van Gogh signed his letters to Theo, is appropriate enough for an artistic homage (or is it hodgepodge?) that admirably tries to resurrect the painter through the glorious work he left behind.

Production companies: Breakthru Films, Trademark Films

Cast: Douglas Booth, Jerome Flynn, Robert Gulaczyk, Helen McCrory, Chris O'Dowd, Saoirse Ronan

Directors: Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman

Screenwriters: Dorota Kobiela, Hugh Welchman, Jacek Dehnel

Producers: Hugh Welchman, Ivan MacTaggart, Sean Bobbit

Executive producers: Claudia Bluemhuber, Gerd Schepers, Ian Hutchinson, Charlotte Ubben, Laurie Ubben, Edward Noeltner, David Parfit

Cinematographers: Tristan Oliver, Lukasz Zal

Production designer: Matthew Button

Costume designer: Dorota Roqueplo

Editors: Justyna Wiersynska, Dorota Kobiela

Composer: Clint Mansell

Casting director: Jenny Duffy

Head of Painting: Piotr Dominak

VFX supervisor: Lukasz Mackiewicz

Venue: Annecy Film Festival (Competition)

Sales: Cinema Management Group

88 minutes




Reviews Box Office Heat Vision

'A Silent Voice' ('Koe no katachi'): Film Review | Annecy 2017

8:30 AM PDT 6/15/2017 by Jordan Mintzer



Courtesy of Annecy Film Festival

THE BOTTOM LINE
Has a lot to say. 

Naoko Yamada's adaptation of Yoshitoki Oima's best-selling manga series played the main competition at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival.

The ripple effects of bullying come back to haunt a high school student years later — and over the course of two ambitiously overstuffed hours — in *A Silent Voice* (*Koe no katachi*), which was adapted from the popular manga series by Yoshitoki Oima.

Packed with drama, laughter, tears and at least two suicide attempts, this third animated feature from director Naoko Yamada (*Tamako Love Story*) does its best to condense a seven-volume series into one feature-length film, though it tends to suffer under the weight of so much material. Already a hit in Japan, where it grossed close to \$20 million last year, *Silent Voice* has been released in several other territories (including the U.K.) and should embark across Europe after playing competition at Annecy.

Impressive in the way it takes a single incident and shows how it can damage both the victims and the perpetrators for a long time to come, the story (written for the screen by Reiko Yoshida) follows Shoya Ishida, a taciturn teenage boy who tries to jump off the bridge at the start of the film. Soon after, we learn that when he was back in sixth grade, Shoya terrorized a new classmate named Shoko Nishimiya, a deaf-mute girl who couldn't be more gentle and kind, even when she's the brunt of everyone's jokes.



READ MORE

[Annecy: Guillermo del Toro Talks Creative Freedom With Netflix, the Future of 'Hellboy'](#)

A decade later, Shoya has never managed to shed the bully label of his youth, becoming an outcast in his own right who's now shunned by the rest of his school. He tracks down Shoko, who he hasn't seen since they were kids, in the hopes that she will pardon his terrible behavior. Their very long and awkward friendship — or courtship, if you can call it that — occupies the majority of the film, with the two damaged souls searching for some kind of solace in each other's company. But communication between them is not that simple, even if Shoya tries to learn sign language, while the lasting effects of their trauma seem to leave permanent wounds.

Like a very dark and twisted *Mean Girls*, *Silent Voice* chronicles the cruelty and isolation of Shoya, Shoko and their friends or frenemies in ways that can sometimes grow exhausting, with several moments of major drama — and a few hair-raising stunts — punctuating the narrative. These are definitely some highly emotional adolescents, melting under the sinister looks of others or hurling themselves into a local river without warning. A few stabs at humor involving Shoya's newfound buddy, Tomohiro Nagatsuka, help to lighten the overall tone, but while the film has lots of qualities, subtlety definitely isn't one of them.



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[Annecy Asia Animation Festival to Launch in 2019](#)

Where director Yamada excels is in depicting the interior worlds of the two main characters, paying particular attention to details, whether visual or sonic, that seem to place a constant divide between Shoya and Shoko. In one sequence, he creeps up behind her and she only realizes he's there when a bunch of pigeons suddenly fly away. In another, he places his hand on a railing, and the reverberations signal his presence to a waiting Shoko. And when Shoya becomes the school loser himself, he sees everyone else with a big "X" across their face, as if they've become abstract manifestations of his own rejection.

Alongside the rich animation work by Futoshi Nishiya, the sound design by Yota Tsuruoka and Hiromune Kurahashi uses lots of ambiance to contrast the audible life of Shoya with the silent one of Shoko. It's such a chasm that seems to keep them apart, while their shared positions as teenage pariahs — not to mention the fact that neither of them seems to have a father figure in their life — is what ultimately may unite them.

Production companies: A Silent Voice - The Movie Production Committee, Kyoto Animation, Pony Canyon, ABC Animation, Quaras, Shochiku Co. Ltd., Kodansha Ltd.

Director: Naoko Yamada

Screenwriter: Reiko Yoshida, adapted from the manga series A Silent Voice by Yoshitoki Oima

Cinematographer: Kazuya Takao

Art direction: Mutsuo Shinohara

Editor: Kengo Shigemura

Composer: Kensuke Ushio

Casting director: Jenny Duffy

Animation: Futoshi Nishiya, Kyoto Animation

Graphic design: Mutsuo Shinohara

Venue: Annecy Film Festival (Competition)

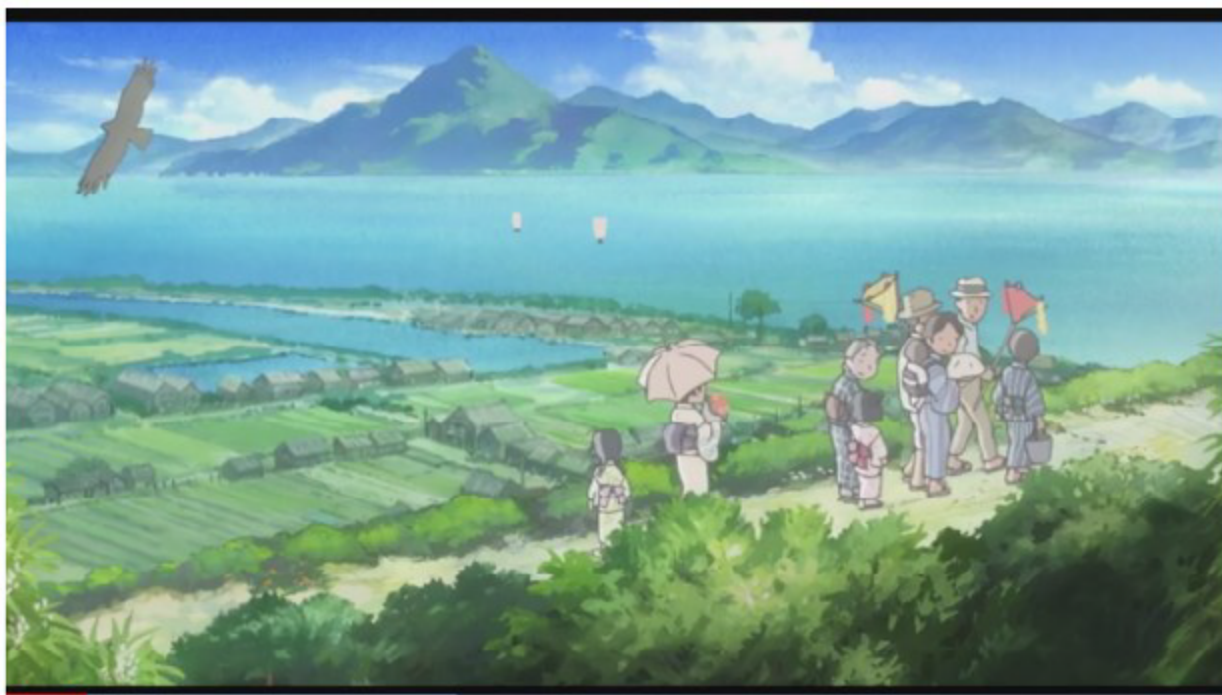
Sales: Viz Media Europe

In Japanese

129 minutes

[Reviews](#) [Box Office](#) [Heat Vision](#)

'In This Corner of the World': Film Review | Annecy 2017



11:28 AM PDT 6/16/2017 by Jordan Mintzer



THE BOTTOM LINE

An intimate account of life during wartime. [🐦](#)

This Japanese Academy Award winner from writer-director Sunao Katabuchi ('Princess Arete,' 'Mai Mai Miracle') played the main competition at Annecy.

The quotidian hardships and horrors of WWII are seen from the perspective of a young Japanese woman living close to Hiroshima *In This Corner of the World* (*Kono sekai no katasumi ni*), a

compelling third feature from anime writer-director Sunao Katabuchi (*Princess Arete, Mai Mai Miracle*).

Adapted from Fumiyo Kono's manga, this impressionistic chronicle of the war is, at first, more concerned with household chores and family matters than it is with soldiers on the battlefield, but its harrowing third act reveals what can happen when civilians become targets as well. Winner of multiple prizes, including Best Animation Film at the Japanese Academy Awards, *World* grossed nearly \$20 million at home when it was released in late 2016. It will debut stateside at the L.A. Film Festival before being rolled out theatrically by Shout! Factory and Funimation Films.

Starting in 1933, with budding young artist Suzu (voiced by Non) living with her parents and little sister, Sumi (Megumi Han) in a seaside cottage outside Hiroshima, the story follows her all the way to early August 1945, when the atomic bomb would decimate much of her family, friends and hometown.



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["The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales": Film Review | Annecy 2017](#)

At that point, Suzu is already in her late teens and has been living for over a year in the naval port city of Kure — about an hour's train ride from Hiroshima at the time — where she's staying at the house of her shy new husband Shusaku (Yoshimasa Hosoya), who asked for her hand in marriage even though the two hardly knew each other.

Following Suzu's life as a married woman from month to month, Katabuchi initially focuses on the daily grind of a housewife living in rural Japan, with much time devoted to cooking, fetching water, sewing kimonos and trying to be a presentable homemaker — which is especially difficult for the artistic minded Suzu, who often has her head in the clouds. Her irate sister-in-law, Keiko (Minori Omi) doesn't necessarily make things easier, although Suzu soon becomes the favorite of Keiko's little daughter, Harumi (Natsuki Inaba), who accompanies her on walks through town or through the surrounding fields.

If the first part of the film yields few moments of drama — despite some misgivings, Suzu warms up to the kindhearted Shusaku and seems to accept her position in his home — once the war kicks in Suzu's peaceful existence becomes severely threatened. Food grows scarce, the men of the house are either wounded or away working for the Imperial Japanese Army and, when the Americans launch a vicious bombing campaign on Kure (whose large port housed Japan's major battleships), all hell breaks loose.



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['Loving Vincent': Film Review | Annecy 2017](#)

Those sequences are certainly the movie's most memorable, with Katabuchi, who worked at the start of his career with Hayao Miyazaki (whose *The Wind Rises* comes to mind here), recreating the punishing effects of daily air raids – including a firebombing attack that levels half of the city. All of this is seen from Suzu's innocent perspective, and the young woman seems as taken by the aesthetic beauties of bombs bursting in the air as she is by the desire to save her own skin.

Tragedy will eventually strike Suzu and her clan before the finale, although not necessarily in the way that one expects. And while the narrative structure of the film provides a countdown to the Hiroshima bombing of August 6, that event is only experienced from a distance and for a brief moment, before we see its aftermath later on. Such a decision may frustrate viewers looking for a broader historic portrait of WWII, but Katabuchi is much more concerned with showing how the conflict affects Suzu and women like her (the men are pretty much absent throughout) than he is with presenting facts and figures.

On the other hand, the director and his team clearly put lots of research into the realistic renderings of wartime Kuru and Hiroshima, with particular emphasis on decors, costumes and props — including the many dishes Suzu serves up to her in-laws, even if it's just a bowl of white rice that they've been craving for months. *In This Corner of the World* is ultimately more about details such as those than it is about the big picture. But in the end, such details convincingly reveal how, whether you're a soldier or a housewife, war can ruin your life in a flash.

Production companies: Mappa Co., Genco

Director: Sunao Katabuchi

Screenwriter: Sunao Katabuchi, based on the manga by Fumiyo Kono

Producers: Taro Maki, Masao Maruyama

Composer: Kotoringo

Character designer: Hidenori Matsubara

Venue: Annecy Film Festival (Competition)

Sales: Animatsu Entertainment

In Japanese

129 minutes

VARIETY

Annecy Asia Intl. Animated Film Festival to Launch in Seoul in 2019

John Hopewell

Chief International Correspondent
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JUNE 13, 2017 | 05:50AM PT



France's Annecy Fest organizer CITIA teams with Seoul Animation Center and SK Broadband

PHOTO: LORENA JARAMILLO

ANNECY, France — France's Annecy Festival is rolling out its brand abroad. In a first move, leveraging the event's prestige, CITIA Image et Industries Créatives, the organizers of the Annecy Festival, announced Tuesday at the 2017 event that it will launch an inaugural Annecy Asia Intl. Animated Film Festival in Seoul in September 2019, in cooperation with South Korea's Seoul Animation Center (SBA) and SK Broadband, one of South Korea's biggest broadband suppliers.

A framework partnership deal was signed on Tuesday morning at Annecy by Citia CEO Patrick Eveno, SBA president Hyungchul Joo and Harry (Sang Chul) Yoon, SK Broadband chief content officer.

The partners plan for the Annecy Asia Festival to take place at the Digital Media City (DMC), Created in 2002 on a former landfill, this high-tech center is dedicated to new digital technologies occupying 570,000 square-meters with offices, exhibition space and conference rooms.

Still in early development, precise details of the festival will be developed over the next two years. The Festival will be primarily designed for the general public, Eveno said at a presentation of the new partnership.

"But the partners do envisage such elements such as conferences and masterclasses, involving European professionals visiting Seoul," he added.

The presence of Annecy in Seoul will inevitably have a market knock-on, however.

“Annecy offers opportunities for Korean animation to join the international market,” said Yoon. “Most Asian countries have good animation but they lack international markets, limiting productions to one market.” So one question would be how Asian films could be promoted in the Annecy Festival, Yoon added.

The Annecy Asia Festival will be open to films from around the world, Eveno said.

“We are an international festival, not just an Asian festival,” he said. Some elements of June’s Annecy event, such as retrospectives, may repeat from one event to the other, he went on.

“This is a great opportunity to spread the Annecy trademark abroad,” Mickaël Marin, CITIA managing director.

He went on: “We are certain that this international dynamic will enrich all parties involved collectively.”

Rolling out its brand outside Annecy, the world’s biggest animation meet, the event is following a major market trend for Festivals. It has for the last two years organized Annecy Goes To Cannes, a showcase of about five animation titles in development or production which are screened or pitched in a single session at Cannes Film Market.



Annecy Asia Animation Festival to Launch in 2019

4:56 AM PDT 6/13/2017 by Rhonda Richford



Corbis

Annecy, France

The French animated film festival will "leverage its brand" to launch a new event in Seoul.

Seoul will get animated with a new Annecy-branded festival to launch in September 2019.

The French animation festival will partner with South Korea's SBA Animation Center and SK Broadband to create the new Annecy Asia Animated Film Festival.

The event will be held at the capital's Digital Media City, where most South Korean networks are located, organizers said Tuesday in Paris.

The organizers were light on details, noting they are just in the early planning stages of the festival. For example, it remains to be seen if there will be a competition section.

"It's an opportunity to deploy our brand and our vision of animation to another continent," said Patrick Eveno, managing director of festival organizer CITIA. "Annecy is now an international label." The Seoul festival will be "largely designated" for the general audience, Eveno added.

The dates are yet to be determined and will be arranged to be synergistic with the country's largest K-Pop festival, organizers added.

"Most of the Asian countries have been good in the animation market, but there is not an international market that focuses on creativity and their productions in one spot, and that is why we leveraged the brand name of Annecy and their festival with Asia together," said Hyung Chul, president of SBA Animation.

Eveno added that conferences and master classes are envisioned as part of the program that will be unique to Annecy Asia, "particularly European professionals going to Seoul," he said.

If there are special content programs, such as this year's roundtable on Women in Animation, the content may be exported. However, "we also think we will have general and original content for the festival," Eveno said.



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['Despicable Me 3,' 'Animal Crackers' to Debut at Annecy Fest](#)



RHONDA RICHFORD

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ALL GENRES

Japan animation film wins top award in France



The Yomiuri Shimbun
Masaaki Yuasa, right

7:47 pm, June 19, 2017

Jiji Press

PARIS (Jiji Press) — Japanese animation movie “Yoake Tsugeru Lu no Uta” (Lu Over the Wall) won the top Cristal award for a feature film at the annual Anecy international animation movie festival on Saturday.

The work, directed by Masaaki Yuasa, is the first Japanese animation feature film that has been given the top award since 1995, when the prize went to Isao Takahata’s “Heisei Tanuki Gassen Pompoko.”

This year, Sunao Katabuchi’s “Kono Sekai no Katasumi ni” (In This Corner of the World), also received the Jury award, the second highest for a feature film.

Yuasa’s work is a story of a music-loving boy in a fishing village who becomes a friend of Lu, a mermaid, and tries hard to save his town from a crisis.

The other film is about the life of a young woman who married a man in Kure, Hiroshima Prefecture, during World War II. 🗣️

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人民日报 2017年06月19日 星期一

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人民日报图文数据库 (1946-2017)

作为主宾国全程参与法国阿讷西国际动画电影节 中国影片惊艳“动画界奥斯卡”

本报驻法国记者 王远 李永群

《人民日报》(2017年06月19日 03版)



6月的阿讷西骄阳似火，湖水如镜。12日至17日，第四十一届阿讷西国际动画电影节在这座与日内瓦隔山相望的法国小城举行，吸引了世界的目光。创立于1960年的阿讷西国际动画电影节是目前全球规模最大、水准最高的国际动画节，享有“动画界奥斯卡”的美誉。

走进电影主会场邦留影院，红色的灯笼、金色的飞龙、憨态可掬的熊猫装点着大厅，“欢迎来到阿讷西”的中文横幅悬挂空中。今年，中国作为电影节主宾国全程参与，不仅国产动画电影《大鱼海棠》入围了主竞赛长片单元，而且还组织了多场主题丰富的特别活动。

上海美术电影制片厂为本届电影节带来了包括《神笔马良》《猪八戒吃西瓜》《小狐狸》在内的16部经典动画影片，出品时间横跨上世纪50年代到90年代，绝大部分从未在法国发行。其中的水墨片、折纸片、水墨拉毛剪纸动画，出色地展现了中国经典动画独有的技巧，令人印象深刻。在致敬中国的特别展映活动中，中国动画先驱万籁天兄弟导演的中国第一部长篇有声立体卡通片《铁扇公主》也被搬到了大屏幕上，吸引了不少观众。

来自瑞士的动画专业学生们在看完《铁扇公主》后激动地交流着心得，名叫瓦尔的学生对本报记者表示，之前没有看过《西游记》，对其中的故事很感兴趣，《铁扇公主》是中国早期的动画片，可以想见此片的发行在当时是具有重要时代意义的。

在阿讷西城堡湖山博物馆，一场以“中国，生动的艺术”为主题的大型展览清晰展现了中国动画影片的演进过程。观众不仅可以认识中国经典的动画形象三毛、美猴王、哪吒等，还可以了解水墨动画的绘制过程。

记者在现场看到，前来参观的游客对中国动画表现出浓厚的兴趣，很多人认真做着笔记或者进行现场临摹。来自德国的动画专业人士娜嘉·拉德马赫对记者说，自己在展映环节看了中国上世纪五六十年代的经典影片，发现其中的动画技法非常独特。“我惊喜地发现中国动画片中与传统和历史密不可分的联系，其中饱含诗意，这让我大受启发。如果有机会，我非常愿意把中国动画的技艺介绍到德国去。”

此外，电影节期间还举办了“聚焦中国”发展论坛、中法高层论坛等，在展现中国动画电影发展的同时促进了动画电影的国际合作。在17日晚举行的颁奖典礼暨闭幕式上，中国导演杨志刚的动画短片《白鸟谷》斩获青年评委会短片奖。评审团成员、北京电影学院教师黄颖在接受本报记者采访时表示，今年中国动画影片入围各单元的数量创下新高。中国影片能够在这样的国际舞台上亮相，非常可喜，这将促进中国动画行业的发展。黄颖说，外国同行与观众既对中国上世纪的经典动画电影赞赏不已，也高度评价《大鱼海棠》等近年新作。法国同行对《大鱼海棠》中出现的“神之围楼”非常着迷，当他们得知中国福建省现在还保存着这样美妙的土围楼时，无不赞叹。

阿讷西电影节艺术代表马塞尔·让表示，中国是一个电影大国，动画影片丰富多彩。在本届电影节上，组委会希望勾勒出中国动画电影的全貌，既回顾历史经典影片，也介绍新一代独立艺术家的作品。他表示，希望电影节期间关于中国的内容可以让人们对快速发展的电影工业有一个全面的认识。

（本报阿讷西6月18日电）

世界最大のアニメ映画祭で22年ぶりの快挙! (06/19 09:56)



f シェア B! | [使い方は?](#)

湯浅政
明監督の

アニメ映画「夜明け告げるルーのうた」(公開中)が現地時間17日、フランスで行われていた「アヌシー国際アニメーション映画祭」の長編部門でグランプリにあたるクリスタル賞を受賞した。同部門での日本作品の受賞は、1995年の「平成狸合戦ぽんぽこ」以来22年ぶり。

同映画祭はザグレブ、オタワ、広島と並ぶ世界4大アニメーション映画祭の1つ。60年にカンヌ映画祭からアニメ部門を独立して設立され、世界最大にして最も歴史の古いアニメ映画祭。湯浅監督は「スタッフキャストの皆さまおめでとう!!応援してくださった方々もありがとうございます。良かった!!」と喜びをコメントしている。同作は寂れた漁港の町を舞台に、心を閉ざした中学生の少年カイと人魚の少女・ルーの交流を描いた物語。子役の谷花音さん(13)が人魚の声を務めている。

なお同映画祭では、片渕須直監督の「この世界の片隅に」が審査員賞に選ばれた。

CHINA ANIMATED FILM 'HAVE A NICE DAY' SCORES RAFT OF GLOBAL DEALS

BY FERGUS RYAN / JUN 29, 2017

The animated black comedy may have been blocked from screening in France, but it has still managed to secure a number of global deals.



Fresh from being blocked from screening at the French animated film festival Annecy, Chinese animated black comedy *Have A Nice Day* has secured a number of deals that will see the film go to multiple western territories, [reports ScreenDaily](#).

The film has sold to La Aventura for Spain, Fu Works for Benelux, Outside the Box for Switzerland, Seven Films for Greece, Bir Film for Turkey, Megacom for Former Yugoslavia, Cirko for Hungary, and for in-flight distribution via Encore.

The film's producers are even holding out hope that the film, which follows a set of characters chasing a bag of money in a small Chinese town, will still be able to secure a screening in China, despite officials putting pressure on Annecy organizers to drop it from its program.

RECOMMENDED READING

[Annecy Festival Drops Chinese Film After Chinese Government Pressure](#)
By Fergus Ryan



Have a Nice Day, by Chinese director Liu Jian, was dropped from the world's biggest animation festival after repeated requests from Chinese officials "in an increasingly firm tone," according to the organizers.

The film's release throughout Asia will be handled by MFI and Hong Kong's Edko Films, while the US rights have already been picked up by Strand Releasing, which is planning to release the film in the fall. MUBI has acquired the film for theatrical and VOD release in the UK and Ireland.

Before being dropped from the Annecy Film Festival, *Have A Nice Day* already screened as the first Chinese animated feature ever to compete in the Berlin Film Festival. It also screened at the Holland Animation Film Festival, Animafest Zagreb, Seattle, and Neuchatel film festivals.