



26th Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film:

First programme highlights confirmed!

Press Release, Stuttgart, February 19, 2019

Cinematic discoveries, an unusual supporting programme, and festival atmosphere all over the city: during the 26th International Festival of Animated Film (ITFS) from April 30 to May 5, 2019, Stuttgart will turn into a centre of the world of animation again. Audiences and professional visitors can look forward to a European focus, a curated programme linking science and animation, and two days of music featuring concerts and workshops.

Even before the Festival, the high quality of the programme is predictable: With almost 60 feature films submitted for the AniMovie competition this year, the Festival sees a new record. The range of animated films of high artistic quality in the International Competition, the Festival's centrepiece, surpasses previous years too. For the first time, there will thus be six instead of five short film programmes this year. And the films in the opening programme include another Oscar hopeful: "Animal Behaviour" by Alison Snowden and David Fine. Along with the Berlinale and the Oberhausen and Leipzig film festivals, ITFS is one of the four German Oscar-qualifying festivals for winners of their Grand Prix. A total of around 2,000 films and projects were submitted for the various competitions.

This year too, more than 100,000 visitors will marvel at the best animated films from around the world. The 2,500 industry professionals expected to attend include producers, curators, purchasers, sales agents, representatives of TV channels and the media, and filmmakers. With more than 200 events and 1,000 films, the ITFS offers a multitude of interesting and extraordinary programmes. Together with its partners, the ITFS provides a unique platform: The leading industry events Animation Production Days and FMX – Conference on Animation, Effects, Games and Immersive Media take place at the same time, attracting an additional 4,000 industry attendees.

Focus on Europe

The Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film (ITFS) has been supported by the European Commission (MEDIA/Creative Europe) since 1994, which resulted in a variety of Festival activities. The European idea was and is a key aspect of ITFS. Therefore, the upcoming festival will be opened by the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Evelyn Gebhardt. The "Trickfilm für Europa" competition in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and European Affairs Baden-Württemberg called for entries last year. The winning film "Ode" by Shadi Adib (production: Studio Soi) will be presented in the Festival opening this year.

Further activities include the hackathon “**Hack for Europe**” in cooperation with the Institut français Stuttgart and the Heinrich Böll Foundation, a selection of animated films from countries such as Portugal and Poland in the “**Animation Around Europe**” programme, as well as the satirical short film programme curated by Chris Shepherd: “**Brexicuted – Bye, bye Britain**”.

Premieres and Presentations

Numerous **world and German premieres** such as “**Mister Link**” (Laika/Entertainment One), “**Der kleine Rabe Socke 3 – Suche nach dem verlorenen Schatz**” (Akkord Film/Universum), and “**Bayala – The Movie**” (Ulysses/Universum) will attract festival audiences to the cinemas and the large screen on Schlossplatz again this year. The country focus is on **Hong Kong** this time: In addition to a film programme, artists from Hong Kong will give VJ performances and present VR dance installations in cooperation with the Hong Kong Arts Centre. And this year too, ITFS will host a film screening together with FMX – Conference on Animation, Effects, Games and Immersive Media: The **ITFMX Screening** presenting the spectacular Marvel film “**Avengers 4: Endgame**”. Director **Lino DiSalvo** will provide insight into a major film production in a master class on “**Playmobil – The Movie**” (On Animation Studios/Concorde).

For the sake of industry representatives and anyone interested in what goes on behind the scenes in the world of animation, representatives of studios and schools as well as animators will answer questions in front of audiences. The **Studio Presentations** introduce companies of worldwide renown as well as upcoming companies, such as Sublimation (Japan), Normal (France), Tumblehead (Denmark), MackMedia/Europapark Rust (Germany) and Studio Filmbilder (Germany). Among the participants in this year’s **School Presentations** are Gobelins (France), Lodz Film School (Poland), Creative Media School (Hong Kong) and Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg (Germany). The **In Persona** programme will showcase and give insight into the work of outstanding animation artists such as Jonathan Hodgson (UK) and Ulu Braun (Germany). **Screenplay Workshops** on topics including comic adaptation, animated documentary, animation and the toy industry, and games with a social impact complement the programme offered to professional visitors.

Science, Games and Animation

Another theme-based and globally unique programme, titled “**She Blinded Me With Science – Science, Games and Animation**”, illustrates the **links between natural science and games/animation**: The programme curated by natural scientists as well as animation and games experts will present film screenings, games exhibitions, symposia and panel talks (in cooperation with the University of Tübingen, the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore, and Heidelberg University).



Music & Animation

With numerous concerts, ITFS has already proven in the past that music and animation are a perfect match. This year, the I/P/D [immersion][popculture][distraction] – Conference on pop culture & Immersive Media, Animation and Video Games Culture will take place for the first time. In cooperation with Popbüro Stuttgart, talks, panels and showcases on the topics of virtual reality and the digital distribution of music and animation will be presented in the domed hall of Kunstgebäude Stuttgart on May 4. The panels will be complemented by master classes and concerts. **Electronic pop band “Der Plan”** (Düsseldorf/Berlin), one of the pioneers of Neue Deutsche Welle, will perform concerts on May 3 and May 4.

GameZone

Game fans will be attracted to the GameZone with its central location at Kunstgebäude, the same venue as in 2017. Computer games, VR experiences and interactive installations on 2,000 square metres promise sheer fun to gamers. Games to be played include those nominated for the “Animated Games Award Germany”, while further experiences will be offered by selected schools, hackathons, and the curated section on the topic of “Science & Games”.

Further programme highlights to follow!

Accreditation for industry professionals and festival passes are available at discounted early bird rates until March 7 at www.ITFS.de/en/tickets

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