

**ITFS**  
MAY 04–09, 2021



28. INTERNATIONALES  
TRICKFILM FESTIVAL  
FESTIVAL OF ANIMATED FILM  
STUTT GART



28th Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film (ITFS)

Zeitgeist, Diversity, Internationality:

Here are the highlights of the first hybrid ITFS!

Press release, Stuttgart, March 17<sup>th</sup> 2021

New chances and discourses on content: The 28th ITFS will take place for the first time in a hybrid format from May 9 to 4, 2021 and address current social and political topics with its programme: With new film programmes on "Creating\* Diversity" and "Pandemic Animation" as well as the established competition categories for short and feature-length films, ITFS will showcase artistically high-quality animated films and innovative interactive and transmedia works. ITFS attracts audiences and industry representatives from all over the world to the centre of animated film, both with onsite events in Stuttgart and online.

#### Highlights from the film programmes (Onsite & Online)

A productive year - despite or even because of the pandemic: A total of almost 2,000 films from over 80 countries were submitted in all competition categories. The International Competition, the heart of the Festival, features some of the best animated short films from around the world; in addition, prize money totalling 60,000 EUR will be awarded in the various competitions this year.

The International Competition for short films is dominated by themes such as exclusion and loneliness, interpersonal relationships and diversity, age and care, but also war and death. The high quality of films by international female directors is also evident. Newly discovered Liesbet van Loon's "Monachopsis" (07/2020, Belgium) shows the feeling of exclusion, of not belonging, until the protagonist meets a woman with whom she feels a strong connection. Or Sandra Desmazières with her film about two sisters who were separated by the Vietnam War and exchange letters over 20 years in "Comme une Fleuve" ("Flowing Home", 11/2020, France). But well-known Festival greats are also in the programme, such as Joana Priestley with her current film "Jung&Restless" (2021, USA), which takes the audience into a mythopoetic realm through lush mandalas and dream images that are meant to point to hidden traumas.

Emmy winner (for "Outstanding Individual Achievement in Animation") Joanna Quinn & screenwriter Les Mills celebrate a German premiere with their continuation of the character "Beryl" from the award-winning animated short film "Family Ties". The new work "Affairs of the Art" (2021, Canada) shows the eccentric but endearing obsessions of a family in artistic, hand-drawn images.

Syrian animation artist Jalal Maghout presents his disturbing graduation film "Have a Nice Dog!" (09/2020, Germany, Syria) about a lonely man in the middle of the war in Damascus. The German-Lebanese film project "How my grandmother became a Chair" by Nicolas Fattouh (03/2020, Germany, Lebanon, Qatar), the script of which won the Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the ITFS Arab Animation Project in 2018, will be presented and celebrated in a special screening.

Film fans can look forward to highlights and premieres in the AniMovie feature film competition. The OSCAR nominated and multi-award-winning film by Tomm Moore and Ross Stewart "Wolfwalkers" (2020, Ireland, Luxembourg, USA) tells the story of the girl Robyn Goodfellowe, who travels to Ireland with her father to wipe out the last wolves. Her friendship with Mebh, a member of a mysterious tribe, makes her set out on the trail of the wolfwalkers herself. The mystical adventure film and Apple+ original was most recently nominated for the Annie Awards and at the 2021 Golden Globes in the Best Animated Film category.

The Japanese feature film "Josee, the Tiger and the Fish" (Koutarou Tamura, Japan, 2020) will celebrate its German premiere. It is about Josee, who has been in a wheelchair all her life, immersed in her fantasy world. Protected from the outside world by her grandmother, she falls down a slope one day. She receives help from

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student Tsuneo, who, fascinated by her, begins to show her a way into the world outside her own walls. With "Strike" (Trevor Hardy, United Kingdom, 2019), another feature-length film celebrates its German premiere at the ITFS. The film is about Mungo Morrison, a young mole who is sent to work in the legendary gold mine in his hometown. Secretly, he dreams of becoming a professional footballer.

Diverse, pandemic & experimental: New film programmes on current social issues (Onsite)

True to its motto "Creating\*Diversity", ITFS focuses on diversity, asking: how do animation, games and digital media represent and generate diversity? Diversity is evident at ITFS in the different intercultural and international programmes, competition entries from more than 80 countries and not least because of the guests, visitors, and participants themselves. The new film programme "Creating\*Diversity" takes up current social issues: transgender and sexual orientation, migration and religious as well as cultural diversity. It shows the inner struggle and turmoil of different personas combined with the fear of exclusion, encouraging reflection. This is apparent in animated short films such as "All Those Sensations in My Belly" by Croatian animator Marko Djaska (09/2020, Croatia/Portugal), the Iranian work "Anima" (Mahboobeh Mohammadzaki, 11/2020, Iran) and also "A stone in the shoe" (Eric Montchaud, 11/2020 France).

For over a year we have been living in and with the coronavirus pandemic – this is also reflected in animated films. The first-time short-film compilation programme "Pandemic Animation" shows films about isolation in everyday life, dystopias, diseases, and environmental scenarios to technology and science.

Further new film programme compilations on "Animation of the Extreme" and "XPRMTL Animation" enrich the supporting programme with exciting thematic worlds and experimental techniques. Among them is the story "Revolvykus" by Victor Orozco Ramirez (2020, Germany, Mexico), who emigrated from Mexico to Germany. He uses various animation techniques to tell his migration story - spatially integrated into his new domestic environment. Or the so different single images and drawings on paper in "30 Days of Shoegazing" by Pei-Hsin Cho (2019, United Kingdom).

#### Focus: Wonderwomen – Women in Games & Animation (Onsite)

Based on the "Women in Animation" programme curated by Jayne Pilling at ITFS 1996, ITFS 2021 – 25 years later! – presents new and historical positions in female animated film. This year's focus on "Wonderwomen – Women in Games & Animation" not only shows innovative animation art by women, but also, for the first time, presents an exhibition dedicated to computer games in the realisation of which women played a key role. Three short film programmes curated by Waltraud Grausgruber (festival director of Tricky Women, Vienna) present the diversity of the international female animation scene. Two more film programmes are curated by Gerben Schermer (former director of the Holland Animation Film Festival), with a focus on Chinese female filmmakers. In the ITFS GameZone, which brings the connection between games and animation to life, ITFS will also present a curated exhibition (curators: Stephan Schwingeler, Judith Ackermann) of the diversified work of female game designers from the beginnings of games culture to the present day.

Retrospectives of Great Filmmakers (Onsite)

Outstanding filmmakers present themselves and their work in the In Persona series, including a three-part retrospective of works by Jochen Kuhn, who has shaped the next generation of filmmakers for almost 30 years as a professor of film design at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. His award-winning short films are highly acclaimed by international festivals and by audiences. French director and animator Jean-Charles Mbotti Malolo, whose film "Make it Soul" was nominated for a César in 2020 and who already won the ITFS Grand Prix in 2015 with the short film "Le sense du toucher", will be presented, as will Monique Renault – a French-born pioneer of the

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European animation industry: She tackled themes of eroticism and gender roles early on and helped bring the possibilities and seriousness of animated film to a wider audience. In addition, another strong female filmmaker will have her say: Portuguese animator Regina Pessoa, whose work "Tragic Story with a Happy ending" is one of the Portuguese films with the most awards ever.

#### Focus Country France

In 2021, ITFS will also focus on France with "Copines!", which has developed a diverse and successful animation scene, especially in the last thirty years. Selected filmmakers, studios and institutes of higher education present themselves, not only in the In Persona programmes. Renowned French animation studios introduce themselves in the ITFS Studio Presentations, including Folimage (Jacques-Rémy Girerd), H5 (Ludovic Houplain, Federico Materazzo), and Sacrebleu Productions (Ron Dyens). The animation school La Poudrière, among others, will also be showing the best works of its students.

#### Tricks for Kids: The ITFS Children's Film Festival

The Tricks for Kids children's film festival is put together by curator Iris Loos (vhs Stuttgart "Treffpunkt Kinder"). The imaginative programme consists of current short films from all over the world, the latest international animation series, and international feature-length animated films. They let young and old immerse themselves in fantastic worlds.

For the first time on a Stuttgart screen, the feature-length film: "DIE OLCHIS - Willkommen in Schmuddelfing" (Jens Møller, Toby Genkel, Germany, 2020) will be shown as an AniMovie Special on May 5. In their great cinema adventure, the "Olchi" children must save their new home together with their friends Max and Lotta and prove themselves against a nasty building contractor – fun for the whole family.

#### GameZone (Onsite & Online): Talks, Exhibition and Presentations

The GameZone is the digital playground of the ITFS and dedicated to different formats. In 2021, the GameZone will take place onsite at Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and Jugendhaus Mitte as well as online, with various formats in the free section of OnlineFestival.ITFS.de. Here, too, the motto "Creating\* Diversity" is a common thread running through the programme, including a panel talk on May 5 at 11:00 a.m., which will be streamed online. The focus topic "Wonderwomen – Women in Games and Animation" will also be examined in a talk format (May 7) and online only. In addition, around 13 games by important female game designers and developers will be shown onsite in the exhibition of the same title at Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (April 30 to May 9), including, among others, Tracy Fullerton ("Walden"), Carmen Johann ("Super Old Alfonso"), Nina Freeman ("Cibele" & "How Do You Do it"), Kim Swift ("Narbacular Drop") and Accidental Queens ("Another Lost Phone"). Under GameZone Talents (online), national and international institutes of higher education introduce themselves and present the latest games by students. Among others: Stuttgart Media University (HdM), Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), VIA University College Denmark. Regional games studios introduce themselves under the heading Local Heroes - Kokolores & Friends and present their latest games.

#### Focus on EDUTAIN ME 7.0

Digitisation and gamification in school education has moved into the political, social, and economic spotlight, not least because of the coronavirus pandemic. More topical than ever, May 6 at GameZone is all about education. In the Edutain Me 7.0 panel, developers, publishers, representatives from higher education and training as well as politicians and a student will discuss how games can be used purposefully in school lessons, what criteria should be considered and in what form the introduction of digital media makes sense for the design of lessons. The panel will take place live via Zoom and will afterwards be available as a VOD on the GameZone website. In addition, the

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GameZone webpage on Edutain Me will provide exemplary games for the classroom as well as around ten serious games selected by the Edutain Me 6.0 panellists.

#### GameZone Kids (Onsite & Online): Workshops for Kids & Teens

Children and teenagers between the ages of 6 and 14 can experience the world of gaming and discover games suitable for children together with friends, parents, and relatives in the GameZone Kids. In cooperation with the ComputerSpielSchule of the Landesmedienzentrum Baden-Württemberg, the Stuttgarter Jugendhaus Gesellschaft, the Merz Akademie and the Mobile Medienschule Stuttgart Ost, various workshops will be offered both onsite and online: for example, a do-it-yourself video on how children and young people can create an animated film with their mobile phones, or various video game workshops in which they can learn how to design and programme their own game.

#### ITFS Concept and Tickets

The planned onsite events are dependent on the development of the pandemic. As of now, cinema screenings and events such as workshops and presentations are planned to take place at Innenstadtkinos, at Hospitalhof, on Schlossplatz and at other venues. Part of the GameZone, including the games exhibition "Wonderwomen - Women in Games & Animation at Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and GameZone Kids at Jugendhaus Mitte are also to take place onsite – with supplementary online activities in the free section of OnlineFestival.ITFS.de. In addition, most of the ITFS 2020 competition entries that could only be shown online last year are to be screened in cinemas in 2021.

For all those who cannot be onsite or prefer to access the ITFS programme from home: Free live streaming is planned on the already established OnlineFestival.ITFS.de platform, to bring the Festival atmosphere on Schlossplatz to the web. Opportunities for families, children and film enthusiasts complete the OnlineFestival Free programme.

With the fee-based ONLINE+ access, live streams or on-demand viewing of current competition films and a supporting programme will be available. Personal filmmaker statements provide insights into the ideas and stories behind the films.

ONLINE PRO at OnlineFestival.ITFS.de offers professionals, in addition to onsite school and studio presentations, the opportunity to participate online in live workshops and presentations by renowned studios as well as exciting projects like "Extinct", the new feature film by Simpsons creator David Silverman. The fee-based access includes the entire ONLINE+ film programme.

Tickets can be purchased at [www.itfs.de/en/tickets](http://www.itfs.de/en/tickets) For the public, there is the festival pass HYBRID, ONSITE or ONLINE+. For the industry, the ITFS offers accreditation for HYBRID and ONLINE PRO.

The full programme will be announced on our homepage shortly.

#### Picture Credits:

Monachopsis (©Liesbet van Loon, 2020, Belgium)

Wolfwalkers (©Tomm Moore und Ross Stewart, 2020, Ireland, Luxemburg, USA)

Affairs of the Art (©Joanna Quinn & Les Mills, 2021, Canada)

More Pictures available at: [www.itfs.de/en/downloads](http://www.itfs.de/en/downloads)

Registration for press accreditation (hybrid or online) will be available from mid-February at <https://www.itfs.de/en/press-pr/pressaccreditation/>



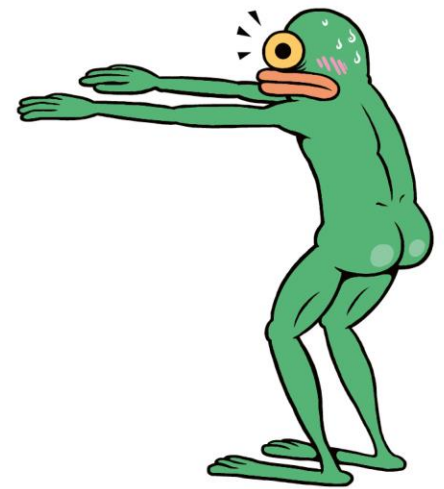
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#### About ITFS

Established in 1982, ITFS is one of the world's largest and most important festivals for animated film. The Festival presents the entire spectrum of current animation filmmaking and its intersections with visual effects, architecture, art, design, games, and music. In 2019, around 80,000 visitors came to Stuttgart to see about 1,000 films at the Open-Air cinema and at Innenstadtkinos Stuttgart. FMX takes place in parallel with ITFS. As Europe's largest conference on animation, effects, games, and immersive media, FMX organises together with ITFS the business platform Animation Production Days, the only co-production and financing market in Germany specialising in animation projects.

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

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