



European Children's
Film Association

Association Européenne du Cinéma
pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse

interviews

Summer Rebels

The Pack

H is for Happiness

The House of Us

**Meet the Mentors:
Rock Demers**



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Photo: Summer Rebels

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3 SUMMER REBELS
Interview

5 THE PACK
Interview

7 THE LITTLE BIRD
Short Cut

8 BARADAR
Interview

9 AÏCHA
DoxSpot

10 H IS FOR HAPPINESS
Interview

13 Survey on Dutch Youth Films
Information Celebration

15 Wales Youth Festival Network
Youngsters make films

16 FILMS ON THE HORIZON

18 Rock Demers
Meet the Mentors

21 THE HOUSE OF US
Interview

24 Short Film Festival Oberhausen & LUCAS
Festivals

26 SPECIAL CINEMA CHAPTER

For a coffee with the legends

Webinars and seminars, training and trajectories, there's plenty of options for professionals to delve into recent findings and tendencies. But in children's film, where state-of-the-art marketing strategies must be combined with pedagogical insights and a strong empathy for the world of children, some expertise remains untouchable. Xiaojuan Zhou (Attraction Distribution) is a key player in the world of film sales, but her confidence in the insights from the founding fathers of the children's film industry is unshakable.

That makes her the perfect personality behind a series of articles launched in this issue. In "Meet the Mentors" (*see page 18*), Xiaojuan Zhou interviews a number of children's film pioneers that have crossed her path, with the aim of preserving their knowledge for future use.

Xiaojuan Zhou: "It has been quite some time that I wanted to interview people who have dedicated their life to artistically and commercially viable children's cinema. Some of them have mentored me and made me who I am professionally. Others may be behind the movies that I worked on or appreciate. Years ago I had the pleasure of having coffee for three hours with legendary Czech fairy tale filmmaker Vaclav Vorlicek and thought that I would include him in my interviews. Vojtech Jasny would be another Czech candidate whom I met a few times when he lived in NY. Both these good men passed away in 2019. This year we said farewell to Mme Yu

Lan who, at age 60, set up a studio in China to make films only for children. The longer I wait, the more people I may lose. It will not only be a personal loss, but a collective loss of our cultural heritage. What are their times and lives, in their own words? What legacy will they leave us? I have so many questions to ask, but not to overburden I use a Q & A to keep the essence of their thoughts. During the Covid-19 confinement of 2020, my list of questions was finalised. My first interviewee is Rock Demers who is unquestionably, in my eyes – together with Burny Bos – the godfather of independent children's film and who happens to be my personal mentor too."

One of the pioneers' viewpoints that remain intact is that movies come into their own best in cinemas. The European Commission still approves this idea with support programmes, with a ringing endorsement from ECFA's partner KIDS Regio. We conducted a small survey among five European film theatres (in the Netherlands, Austria, Slovenia, Belgium and Italy) that stand out for their consistent strategies for young audiences. Later this year KIDS Regio plans two conference panels to delve further into this topic. In a special chapter in this ECFA Journal we offer you the chance to get inspired by the work of your European colleagues.

–
Gert Hermans

Don't forget about the KIDS Regio petition on film culture for young people in Europe. Find it here www.kids-regio.org/petition-2020, read it, sign it!

Martina Sakova about SUMMER REBELS

"A big head on a big screen"

The poster of SUMMER REBELS shows young Jonas biting a watermelon. A perfect illustration for a film that is like a watermelon in itself, summery, sweet and in bright colours, but with a few feisty pits to crack. This German-Slovak co-production, directed by Martina Sakova, was pitched in Zlin and Warsaw, and will now have its European festival premiere in the Zlin Film Festival.

11 year old Jonas expects lots of fun and action for the summer holidays, visiting grandpa Bernard in Slovakia, like they always used to do when dad was still alive. When mum decides to scrap that plan, Jonas is stunned. He promptly packs his bags and sets off on his own, from his German hometown all the way to Slovakia. But grandpa Bernard is not in the best of moods, and Jonas is pretty much left to his fate. Teaming up with his new friend Alex, together they develop a series of criminally good ideas... and

end up with the police at their heels.

What is this special bond between children and grandparents?

Martina Sakova: Often in summer children will spend two weeks at their grandparents place, for the first time away from their parents. These are the days when their personality evolves. Since grandparents – different from parents – don't try to keep control over their grandchildren, they can feel what freedom is about. This special moment we wanted to capture in the film.

Do you have specific memories of spending the holidays with your grandparents?

Sakova: Beautiful memories! For an entire month we stayed in an unknown town, playing with new friends on the streets or around my grandparents house. It was great! Many memories from co-author Sülke Schulz and me are incorporated in the story.



Sülke's grandfather was like grandpa Bernard, while the road trip comes from my memories.

Tell us about Jonas' position in his family.

Sakova: His father died less than two years ago, and ever since a conflict has been growing in the family. Jonas has accepted his father's death, but he can't accept his family splitting up, especially not since this deprives him of spending the summer holidays with his granddad. Now life is full of obstacles, only because of the adults not being able to deal with a great loss. Travelling to his granddad is also about bringing the family back together. Mum is not exactly a sweet,

loving woman at first sight, but imagine being a single mum, struggling all the time with two little boys, and then one of them decides to travel 600 kilometres to Slovakia... How would you react?

There is this crucial thing that Jonas says to Alex: "Do you also feel sometimes like you don't belong here?"

Sakova: When two outsiders meet, they will recognise each other as such and connect. What Jonas and Alex have in common is growing up with their mothers, without fathers. Which makes you feel unusual somehow, because you permanently realise that something is missing. My father died when I was 11, while Sülke's father



fled to West Germany, leaving behind his family.

Jonas is often alone, and that is how you frame him in long, lonesome scenes.

Sakova: We combined character drama with comedy elements, mixing feelings of sadness and anger with pure fun. Which requires a special way of acting. Main actor Eliáš Vyskocil was often very central in the picture. Bringing him closer to the audience – a big head on a big screen – he needed to create all emotions on his face.

SUMMER REBELS has a kind of rural charm, small-scaled and close to nature.

Sakova: We wanted the story to be set in a small city with a strong countryside appeal, like the place where my grandparents used to live. In Handlova you'll find all these small houses with huge backyards where people meet in a family atmosphere. Behind the gardens, the forest begins. In the city centre, you can feel nature being very nearby. We had a wonderful time, living together with the crew for almost two months in this small town where there were only two hotels.

Talking about nature... What is so



Director Martina Sakova on the set.

special about being in a boat on the water?

Sakova: All children love water! If you say summer, I say water. In a film about summer holidays, water can't be but a super important element. And the water is meaningful in each and every of Jonas's relationships. Alex, his father and his granddad... water connects them all.

Another element of summer are the colours catching the sunlight beautifully.

Sakova: Due to the combining of many different elements, like the scenography, for which we choose particular

colours, some of them matching very well together, others rather contrasting. There was a huge car full of lighting equipment! We shot with sunlight, which isn't always stable. The main purpose of all that equipment was to stabilise the sunlight. The sun was the most important light source but sometimes it wasn't enough. There were the camera optics, creating depth in those images and making you feel part of it. There was the colour grading, which took us two weeks in post-production, struggling with different colour combinations, searching for this brightness that fits with the nature and the season. And then there was our DoP Jieun Yi from South Korea to whom I'm super grateful for making these wonderful pictures.

There is so much music in the film!

Sakova: I always use a lot of songs in my films, I'm a big lover of songs. For an adult audience, it might feel too much, but the children in the test screenings loved it. Guitar driven music is not an obvious choice for a children's film, but it turned out the best way to capture all the different moods: sad, angry and funny.

How was the co-production frame-

work organised?

Sakova: I myself am some kind of co-production – a Slovak woman living in Berlin for 17 years – I recommend co-productions for many reasons. SUMMER REBELS was set up very clearly. The story is divided over two countries, we shot in both countries and did post-production in both countries. The camera crew was German, the other technicians were Slovak, and the actors were mixed, with main actors Eliáš Vyskocil and Pavel Nový (granddad) both being Czech.

There is this sentence in the film: who doesn't conquer his fears will never live life to the fullest.

Sakova: If you want to achieve something you need to trust yourself, you need to trust others, and you need to go straight-forward. That is granddad's credo, and Jonas made it his own. He is going straight-forward!

–
Gert Hermans

→ watch trailer

Tomas Polensky about THE PACK

What goes on in the locker room, stays in the locker room

If there ever was a film that needed to have its *moment de gloire* in the Zlin Film Festival, it is definitely **THE PACK**, by Czech director Tomas Polensky. The story is set in Zlin and even the very first image of the opening scene looks very “Zlin-ish”. Coming from a country with a particular children’s film tradition, making a tough film for a young teenage audience was an achievement in itself for the 8heads production company and debut director Tomas Polensky.

When his family moves to Zlín, David joins the local hockey team, The Wolves, with only one dream on his mind: becoming the team’s number one goalie. Even if that forces him to compete with Miky, one of the team’s ringleaders, and that is only one of David’s many problems. Recently diagnosed with diabetes, he sees his hockey future in jeopardy. Pressure is put upon him by two parents with opposite opinions. And then there’s

girls... Some of them are after the team’s most popular player, but there are others who can see right through the macho hockey façade.

For a foreign audience this might be hard to measure... How big is ice hockey in the Czech Republic?

Tomas Polensky: Very big! It is the most popular sport around here, with world famous players like Jaromir Jagr or Dominik “Dominator” Hašek, who was my role model as a kid. All my schoolmates fanatically watched the Nagano Olympic Games in 1998 when the Czech national team won the gold medal.

You had difficulties securing “time on the ice” for your crew, with all hockey fields permanently in use.

Polensky: The only moment we could film on the ice was during one week in August. Scheduling all the ice scenes in one week was extremely difficult.



With all these fast movements around a small puck, ice hockey seems not the easiest game to capture on camera.

Polensky: Capturing the hockey scenes was tricky, considering the little time we had. My reference was **MIRACLE** (2004), a film by Gavin O'Connor, that I watched several times with my fantastic DoP Andrejs Rudzats. We realised we couldn't make it within the given time. Therefore we decided to use three cameras. Believe me, I hate multiple camera settings – when all cameras are rolling I feel like I'm watching a tennis game on three different monitors. We prepared different camera setups for each scene, for example one for the fans in the stadium, one for the

players on the bench, one for the ice etc... But none of them seemed to work well. Until Andrejs suggested using a TV camera with long lenses, to capture the action. On the ice we did handheld shooting to get the audience closer. The other problem was that our main actors weren't exactly the best skaters. First we filmed the body doubles, and then the actors for close ups. I'm so grateful for Andrejs, he was the best DoP I could ever wish for.

At the same time you were perfectly able to capture the authentic locker room atmosphere. We can almost smell the sweat!

Polensky: I know this environment through and through. I grew up on ice



hockey ever since I was two years old, only quitting at the age of 18. Only in the main roles we casted actors, all other roles were played by members of the local hockey team. Rehearsals were crucial to bring actors and athletes closer together. We organised a camp where the actors taught the athletes how to perform in front of a camera. And the hockey players instructed the actors about the locker room, how to put on gear, etc. Also with the extras – all of them real hockey players – we created extra authenticity and a realistic background to which we added some narrative details.

The whole ice hockey scene looks very alpha-male to an outsider like me.

Polensky: In the world that we depict, being different (like having diabetes) is a stigma. It makes you a loser, an outsider, which I experienced my-

self throughout my ice hockey years. I worked with co-writer Irena Koci, script supervisor Steven Goldsmith and young screenwriter Adam Hobzik. Thanks to him we found an ending to the story that carries out the right message: stand up for yourself! Nobody can help you, not even your parents (who will often make things even worse). In our story it is a girl, Lenny, showing David the right way, helping him to find out who he really is.

Being a coach isn't easy either, as THE PACK demonstrates.

Polensky: I realised that when I coached a team of six year old players. There are several approaches. You can be tough and aggressive, like the coach in THE PACK, provoking players to try harder and push their limits. Hockey is an aggressive sport but within the boundaries of fair play. When crossing that line, things get out of hand. For the coach it is diffi-

cult to recognise the difference between standard hockey behaviour and bullying. You can't blame him for not knowing what goes on in the locker room. His biggest mistake is answering to the mother's complaint with a public tribunal.

There is a certain lethargy about David, as if he is waiting for problems to solve themselves.

Polensky: Teenagers are nearly adults. They should be able to solve problems on their own. Only this way can they grow up as conscious human beings. When a problem seems too big to cope with, you might hope somebody else will solve it for you. But when you stand up for yourself, you might realise the problem isn't that big after all. Only your fear made it seem so big.

These dancing classes are as weird to me as the ice hockey scenes. Is this a Czech tradition?

Polensky: When becoming 16, most teenagers attend dancing courses. Because their parents insist, or because they secretly hope to find a girl or boyfriend there. It is not only about dancing but about etiquette in general. I remember myself quite enjoying it.

The city of Zlin is very recognisable, from the very first opening shot to the nightly panorama's.

Polensky: Zlin has an old arena with a unique atmosphere. I love that brick façade. I started my film studies at the Zlin Film School and I like this irresistible red colour in the local architecture. The film was shot here, the story is located here... This is where the film belongs!

–

Gert Hermans



watch trailer

Empty Nest / Full Pond



Along with the youngest cinema-goers we have been following **THE LITTLE BIRD** on its adventures in all the four seasons since 2012. With **THE LITTLE BIRD AND THE BEES** (Switzerland, 2020) Lena von Döhren's successful and beloved series has now come to an end. The premiere took place as planned at the Berlinale. Afterwards the flight of the little bird was slowed down by circumstances. But those who are familiar with the little fellow know that he cannot be stopped so easily. Even when things don't go as planned.

Lena von Döhren: It was absolutely great that the Berlinale has welcomed all the "bird films"! This year it was the only festival that I could physically attend - all other festivals have gone digital since. It is a pity that the at-

mosphere of the screenings changed so drastically: it is such a great experience to watch children's films in a cinema full of four year olds.

With THE LITTLE BIRD AND THE BEES you handled all the seasons, and your series has come to an end. What now?

von Döhren: Together with a colleague I am currently working on a film about a small fish that is washed into a tidal pond by the tide, where it is confronted with the pond's long established inhabitants.

How did you spend the last few months?

von Döhren: I've celebrated summer on a small island in Brittany. There I spent the holidays with my children and got inspiration for my new film.

The pandemic didn't exactly have an impact on my planned projects, but I would have liked it so much better to go around to introduce and present **THE LITTLE BIRD AND THE BEES**. Unfortunately, until the end of the year, almost all festivals will go online.

Do you think that animated filmmakers are affected differently than feature or documentary film directors? One often imagines the animation work as a process taking place in isolation...

von Döhren: It is a lonesome job indeed. I work with a small team of maximum four people: editing, sound design and additional animation. I always show an incomplete film to my friends, which helps me to gain a certain distance. Often they will make suggestions that I can easily imple-

ment without consuming too much time, thanks to my working method (12fps, 2d digital).

MO & FRIESE

The Short Cut column is published with the help of the [Mo&Friese KinderKurzFilmFestival](#) dedicated to short films. As a part of the Hamburg Short Film Agency the festival aims to present documentaries and experimental films in addition to animation and short films as well as to arouse the curiosity of children and to stimulate their imagination.

Beppe Tufarulo about BARADAR

Two brothers, one dream and the sea in-between



When they are forced to separate, 10 year old Ali and his older brother Mohammed have already been travelling for a long time. Three years earlier, a bomb destroyed their home in Kabul and killed their parents. Alone and homeless, Ali and Mohammed crossed Afghanistan hidden on the roof of a van; spent nearly two years in Iran, and finally, without ever losing faith in human kindness, made their way to Turkey. Now only a stretch of sea separates them from Greece, but the only way to get there is in a rubber dinghy.

Two brothers are carrying a raft

through the narrow streets of Istanbul, as if they're just going to the sea to have some fun. Soon we realise the truth. Mohammed is going to cross the sea in a couple of days on that tiny raft, and there is little time left to teach Ali everything he deems necessary to survive on his own. Yet, there is one thing that Mohammed doesn't have the courage to tell his brother: what to do in case he never makes it to the other side?

Beppe Tufarulo is a young Italian director with several documentaries on his filmography. How did he ap-

proach this story about hope?

Beppe Tufarulo: My friend and author Francesco Casolo had been trying to adapt the real story of a boy named Ali Ehsani into a book. Ali was born in a country at war, grew up without running water or electricity, lost both his parents and then left home with his brother. This portrait of a 'new' European citizen has all the strong assets: two brothers, one dramatic journey and proof that dreams indeed can come true. It is also a story about an amazing strength to keep going. As we wanted to make Ali's story known to the broadest possible audience in the fastest possible way, we decided to focus on one tiny part of his long journey and make it into a short film.

What visual approach could be most appropriate to adapt such a story?

Tufarulo: I firmly believe in the power of the cinematic language. It has been vital to give BARADAR (Brother) a profoundly intimate dimension, by using a basic style of directing. The camera seamlessly observes the brothers spending their last days together, and tackles the most dramatic scenes with simplicity. I wanted to stay true to real life, bringing out the intensity and authenticity of the protagonists.

That is why you chose to work with non-professional actors?

Tufarulo: Nawid and Danosh are two brothers coming from the same Afghan region as Ali and Mohammed. Their energy and unpredictability added a profound truthfulness to the film and created a subtle balance between reality and fiction. Throughout dozens of personal meetings and calls, I began to realise that what we were writing was not just the story of Ali, but a way to honour those who didn't make it and to give strength to those who have reached Europe but are struggling to build a future.

Did Ali and his brother come together again in real life?

Tufarulo: They did. He crossed several borders all on his own, always fearing to be sent back. At the age of 12 he finally reached Italy hidden under a truck.

—
Eva Schwarzwald

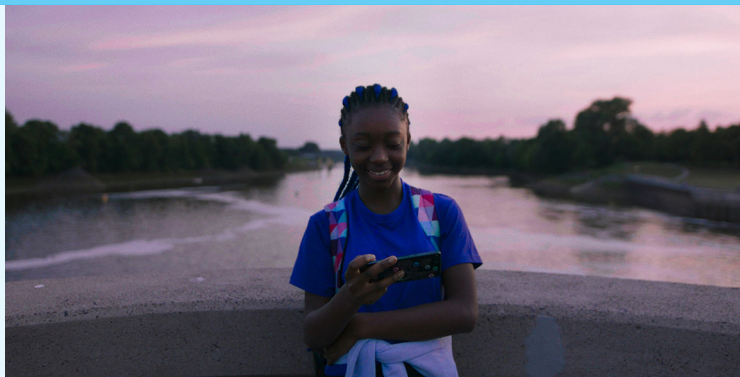
Contact: beppe@tapelessfilm.com;
premierefilmdistribution@gmail.com

→ watch trailer

AÏCHA

"There's a mistake in my name. There's something missing," Aïcha realises, frowning her eyebrows. The 11 year old does not understand why on her citizenship certificate her name is suddenly written differently than the way she has been writing it all her life. The second dot on the ï is missing! Upset with her mother and public authorities, the young Afro-German girl embarks on a search for what has been erased.

As we accompany the curious girl trying to make sense of bureaucracy and experiencing administrative barriers, the film is intermittent with scenes of a group of young adults reflecting on Aïcha's situation and their own experiences with the matter. We see Aïcha and the group as they engage in fairytale like settings. They fool around in a swimming pool pretending to be mermaids, stage an interview with questions granted by a fortune cookie and film a fictional announcement by the German chancellor. The group's comments take up room with imagination and intellect. Their efforts validate Aïcha's wishes, supporting her



along the way.

The two directors, Laura Bleck and Faraz Shariat, opted to keep the narrative light by pointing a camera on the group of girls as they sit in a park, giving way to the natural flow of their conversation, full of reflection and encouragement. Using a rather unconventional docufiction format, the directors accomplished a refreshing improvised style. Bleck and Shariat manage to pour a stream of visually appealing close-ups into their narrative, drifting organically with the current between dream and consciousness, fiction and reality. This ambiguity and the film's transparent and collective approach contribute to the quality of the directors storytelling.

However, while partly documenting a group project, AÏCHA is - in a wider framework - addressing connections of name and identity. Despite the problem she is facing sounding miniscule, it tackles a much larger issue immigrants are faced with when trying to integrate into a foreign culture. Names are laced with meaning and history. They are unique markers of heritage and birthplace. How far can we alter and bend them, without severing the connection? Aïcha - a name that was given to her by her parents with intent. The second dot is not redundant, but a linguistic expression of her cultural identity, something that irrevocably belongs to her. Consequently, the story transcends a young girl's disdain over a missing dot and becomes a call against uniformity.

AÏCHA will be screened this year in the doxs! opening ceremony, on 2nd November in Gelsenkirchen. The film is nominated for the GROSSE KLAPPE Documentary Award at the doxs! festival in Duisburg. Additionally, a web-documentary about the film will be made available. Visit the doxs! website www.do-xs.de for more information.

Director & producer: Laura Bleck & Faraz Shariat; production & sales: Jünglinge Film, juenglinge-film.de, Germany, 2020, 21'

The Doxspot column is published with the help of the **doxs! festival** for children & youth documentaries in Duisburg and other cities in the Ruh Area.



John Sheedy about H IS FOR HAPPINESS

“Oh she is annoying!”

H IS FOR HAPPINESS, a feel good film for all ages, tells the story of two young outsiders... and a miniature horse. The film watches the world through the eyes of a quirky girl, in a joyous celebration of all things slightly odd. After the international premiere at the Berlinale 2020, the Kplus children's jury (who gave the film a Special Mention) described H IS FOR HAPPINESS as “a motivating film from start to finish... humorous and at the same time profound.”

I have been involved with the arts since I was a child,” says John Sheedy, “*acting in stage productions and TV spots. After my studies and my post grad in directing, I ran a theatre company that created works for young people and family audiences.*” Thus it is no surprise that in Sheedy's feature film debut young people are taking the lead. In H IS FOR HAPPINESS, Candice Phee is determined to spark happiness in the lives of others, and becomes a peacemaker in her quarrelsome, grief ridden family. Her new schoolmate, Douglas Benson turns out to be an

unexpected ally.

In Candice's opinion the secret of happiness seems to be in solving other people's problems.

John Sheedy: I think happiness needs to be found within ourselves first and once we have found it we can pass it onto others which ultimately will make you even more happy because they're happy.

Enthusiasm can be tiring. Would you define Candice's enthusiasm as contagious or annoying?

Sheedy: Oh she is annoying! Charmingly annoying! But we forgive her because it always comes from such a good place and her vulnerability is never too far away.

Why did you consider this the right story for your feature debut?

Sheedy: I have always enjoyed authors like Cormac McCarthy, Will Self, Virginia Wolf and anything Shaun Tan does. In cinema I admire the works of directors like John Hughes, Pedro Almodovar and Wes Anderson that



hold a fine balance of humour and pathos. Save for Baz Luhrmann, we don't really do romance on Australian screens. Nor do we have many films with a sharp and witty 12 year old female lead. There's something wonderful about dipping into the world of children and their perspective. As for them everything is slightly heightened and exaggerated, you are allowed to have more fun and the imagination can go wild.

Was it you who found the story, or did the story find you?

Sheedy: The script was already written by the time I came on board. Lisa

Hoppe had done a wonderful job of adapting it from the novel by Barry Jonsberg. With producer Julie Ryan at the helm of an all female producing team, I knew the project was in exceptional hands. We then assembled the cast, including our outstanding lead protagonist Daisy Axon and Wesley Pattern as Douglas Benson From Another Dimension. These two young actors both had a different approach to their performances, Daisy always leads with her head and thinks things through methodically, while Wesley leads straight from gut instinct, he is a natural clown.

Candice's face is like an open book. Was that in Daisy Axon's acting, or in the camera work, or maybe just in me getting carried away by this wonderful creature?

Sheedy: I think you're definitely you getting carried away. But I have to say it is all down to Daisy Axon's insight into the character. Daisy is Candice Phee!

What is it exactly that Douglas sets in motion when entering Candice's life?

Sheedy: She certainly wasn't expecting love to enter her world, but how can you not fall in love with Douglas Benson from *Another Dimension*? He is super charming. Adding a whole new set of complications for Candice, he is definitely the catalyst for the unfolding events throughout the film. Yankee Doodle, our miniature horse, might also have something to do with it.

Between the two of them, their gestures seem strictly choreographed, like a strange ballet scene.

Sheedy: This is something I was very conscious of bringing into the world. The dialogue is so particular and deliberate that I wanted the physicality of the characters to compliment it.

The actors worked on their physicality's quite a bit in rehearsals and on set. You will find the same physical quirks in Rich Uncle Brian and all of the extras throughout the film. It's a deliberate inclusion to make the world a little cooky and awkward as it is all told through Candice's eyes.



Not to forget Miriam Margolyes, known as Professor Sprout from the Harry Potter films, and the outstanding Richard Roxburgh as Candice's father.

Sheedy: Richard and I studied at the same drama school. He is one of the best actors we have in this country. I knew that he would bring a certain

sensitivity, heartbreak and comedy to the role. Myriam was always Miss Bamford for me, right from the beginning, that was a no brainer.

How did you create Miss Bamford's exceptionally busy lazy eye?

Sheedy: Myriam was quite nervous

The basis for this film is the perfect balance you found between grief and fun.

Sheedy: When dealing with a younger audience in particular it is important not to water down the tougher themes and trust that young people will be able to emotionally navigate their way through. Equally important is to allow them to step out of the darker moments and laugh at the mess we sometimes make as humans. It is a fine balancing act but ultimately you need to put trust in the young audience!

What enabled you to tell a story, combining so many difficult emotional moments in the lives of children?

Sheedy: As artists we always end up applying personal moments in our lives into our work. I unfortunately lost my younger sister a few years ago so I could certainly apply my experience of grief to that of the Phee family.

You know how to use colours to create that slightly aberrant universe. Walking through town with Candice is like entering another world.

Sheedy: We created three worlds across the film all through the per-

spective of Candice. There is her home which is a house of grief and silence. Then there is her school, a heightened world of colourful characters and strange assignments. And then there is the town which is full of quirky eccentric locals that all have something special about them. Creating theatre for families. I have always enjoyed the challenge of how to tackle tough issues in the storytelling, how to make it accessible to a young audience whilst also making them feel safe and allowing them to laugh... A lot. I drew on this experience in sensing how to grant the audience the space to sit-in on the more heart-breaking moments while navigating Candice's emotional ups and downs; to be able to laugh and be entertained by entering a world that is so visually appealing.

That is why you went to the picture postcard seaside town of Albany.

Sheedy: This town was the perfect hit, projecting a sense of old world charm in its architecture and landscape, the beautiful bay, the quirky hills and boulders. Albany has such a cinematic feel to it and no matter where I pointed the camera, I knew I was going to be able to frame the moment beautifully. I didn't want it to be geographically specific because it had to



be a setting that could be anywhere in the world. A world where children and adults alike would both feel an instant familiarity to, as though it were a seaside town not too far from home.

Did it bring back personal memories for you?

Sheedy: Not in that sense. But I did put a little of my German heritage into the film. My mother comes from Fulda, my grandmother from Bad Neuenahr. After WWII the whole family moved to Australia, started a new life and became florists. So as a little nod to them I popped a little florists shop in the film called 'Schatzis'. I also created the character of Mr. Wiegard

who is always watering his garden, and named him after my grandfather. Naturally I had to play his voice. I consider Germany my second home and love returning there to visit relatives. The colour palette throughout the film reminds me of my origins: the green takes me to the beautiful forests of Europe, and the warmer red tones feed into the emotional landscape of our characters. When combining these two colours, it takes me to Christmas in Germany! Needless to say I was very honoured to have the film premiere at the Berlinale.

All this takes the film to the 'edge of magic'. How much magic did you

allow?

Sheedy: Not much, I wanted to keep the themes of the film grounded, especially as we are dealing with such things as grief. The visual world around them is heightened enough so if there is any hint of magic, it would be in the forest with a miniature horse and its disappearing acts.

The story is equally 'placeless' as timeless.

Sheedy: Whilst there are specific references to contemporary technology and in the vocabulary of the younger characters, it still needed to have a timeless feel to it. All this required some extra efforts from the costume department and set designers. They went above and beyond to create this colourful and quirky world. Like the best of Disney, I never want H IS FOR HAPPINESS to have an 'expiry date.' I hope that the children who watch it now will engage in a story that doesn't feel dated and then be able to relive that memory again sometime in the future with their own children.

—
Uta Beth

→ watch trailer

Seen & being seen

A survey on the distribution and exploitation of Dutch youth films

NL FILM
FONDS

On behalf of the Netherlands Film Fund, a survey was conducted in 2019 on the distribution and exploitation of Dutch youth films in cinemas from 2011 to 2018. For almost two decades, youth films have been one of the trademarks of the Dutch film industry, both in cinemas and on other platforms, at international festivals and in international sales. In recent years, however, this has come under severe pressure due to market changes. The main conclusion of the survey is that a joined effort by all parties involved is needed to regain success.

Around the turn of the century, Dutch feature films for young audiences flourished in the cinemas with titles such as *THE FLYING LIFTBOY* (1989), *LITTLE CRUMB* (1999), *MISS MINOES* (2001), *WINTER IN WARTIME* (2008) and *DIK TROM* (2010). Between 2003-2013, of all visitors going to see a Dutch film in the cinema, almost 45% went to see a youth film.

Nowadays youth films are still reg-

ularly in the top 10, but the market share has fallen sharply. The film landscape has changed radically, partly due to digitization, and the distribution and screening of Dutch youth films is under considerable pressure due to the competition with popular international titles.

Infrastructure

In the Netherlands 16 distributors have been releasing Dutch youth films, some are "experts" who have released several titles, others only occasionally worked with youth content. Besides cinemas and film theatres, film festivals, schools and online platforms offer an important stage to Dutch youth films. In theatres and cinemas, they are screened almost everywhere, but the programming and screening frequency for Dutch youth films differ greatly.

95 Dutch feature films for a young audience have been released between 2011 and 2018, an average of 12 films



DIK TROM

per year, which makes 23% of the total amount of Dutch live action films released, and 29% of all young audience features released. More than half of them were released on 100+ copies, which is a slight rise. For a long time quality films for a young audience were only released on a small number of copies.

Other numbers regarding Dutch youth cinema have fallen sharply over the last few years. The total attendance to Dutch youth films fell from 2.3 million in 2014 to 0.9 million in 2018, the box office receipts dropped from €16.1 million to €7.1 million, and the share of Dutch youth films compared to all Dutch features decreased from 30% to 23% over this period.

Competition

More and more international youth films are released per year: the total number of youth films released in the Netherlands increased from 39 in 2011 to 48 in 2018. The scale of the releases (in terms of prints and campaign) also rises annually. The market, increasingly dominated by foreign distributors and exploitation chains, is mainly focused on achieving commercial targets.

The range of American and European family films is an important factor in the declining results of Dutch cinema for youth. There is stiff competition in how exhibitors do their programming and promotion. Distributors and exhibitors emphasise the need for a more diverse range of films and a better planning of Dutch youth film releases with larger marketing budgets.



THE FLYING LIFT BOY



WINTER IN WARTIME

Dutch youth films suffer from this reduced visibility, both in terms of promotion (in the media and in the theatres) and cinema programming (time slots, number of screenings). This is exacerbated by the poor spreading of film releases throughout the year with a high concentration in autumn. In addition to the unequal battle that Dutch films are facing in cinemas due to substantially lower marketing budgets, it is also more risky for a distributor to step in if these films are not based on an existing “brand”. Some distributors are clear about that: *“We are no longer able or willing to do so.”*

Recommendations

The survey concludes with five recommendations for all parties involved

in the distribution and exploitation chain, to reinforce the position of Dutch youth cinema:

- Intensify the collaboration between distributors and exhibitors by working together on strategies and on selecting artistic quality films for youth. Film theatres in particular are in need of a continuous feed throughout the year, not only during the holiday periods.
- Marketing budgets for Dutch youth films are often insufficient to compete with foreign commercial titles and must be increased. More often alternative and innovative marketing techniques should be used, such as preliminary branding and a better use of ‘intrinsic domestic’ advantages, such as interviews, set reports and meetings with cast & crew to distinguish local produc-

tion from foreign competitors.

- Improve the timing of Dutch releases in order to compete with the international film market, and to downsize the competition among Dutch titles. In general, more than half of all Dutch youth films are released between October and December, while hardly any can be seen during the summer months.
- Making better use of film education can contribute to creating a new, young audience. Good cooperation between all parties involved is paramount.
- Improve the visibility for Dutch young audience features by making them available on different platforms, even simultaneously, as viewing habits are changing under an explosive growth of digital platforms and titles.

Follow up

In the wake of this survey, the Netherlands Film Festival (NFF), Eye and the Netherlands Film Fund met with various experts to discuss how visibility for Dutch youth film can be improved. Currently research is being conducted into the feasibility and the support base within the sector for a joint promotion campaign and/or event for Dutch youth film. The idea is to join forces as much as possible with the aim of improving the visibility, the experience and ticket sales of Dutch youth film. The results of the study should be known soon.

–

Esther Schmidt

The “See and be seen” study by Peter Bosma and Esther Schmidt was partly funded by the Netherlands Film Fund. On the basis of this study, since 2019 the Fund has begun charting the box-office performance of the Dutch youth film in its annual [Film Facts & Figures of the Netherlands](#).

[Here you'll find an English summary of the report, with conclusions and recommendations.](#)

Wales Youth Festival Network (WYFN)

The Youth Cinema Network (YCN) connects around 50 youth film festivals, organisations and film & media educators, developing inspiring projects with the aim of supporting youth filmmaking ([more info](#)). One of them is the Wales Youth Festival Network (WYFN).

WYFN is an informal network, founded in 2020, supporting Welsh organisations screening films for young audiences, or addressing young people as filmmakers. WYFN aims to increase the number of British and international titles screened in Wales. Membership is open to any festival, organisation, venue, pop up etc. that works with young audiences and film. Member meetings take place in different locations around Wales and includes guest speakers, hands-on sessions and networking opportunities.

The aims of the WYFN, a joint initiative by Film Hub Wales, Wicked Wales Int'l Film Festival and other key festivals in the region, are simple:

- to widely market, both to partners and external audiences, films and film programmes for young people that



are being programmed by festivals and venues in Wales.

- to inform members about screenings and programmes suitable for young audiences and available for booking.
- to encourage filmmaking throughout the region by developing a festival submission plan that encourages young filmmakers to submit their films to Welsh festivals.

The motor behind the network is the Wicked Wales Film Festival, an international youth film festival in the small town of Prestatyn, that celebrates its 5th edition this year in October. The group of volunteers of all generations also takes care of a local pop up cinema. Festival director Rhianon Hughes: "It is important that local young people have the same training opportunities and access to jobs as young people in other parts of the UK. Our long term aim of making the creative industries the vehicle for local regeneration has a new sense of urgency and we are grateful to the Little Theatre for giving us access to such a wonderful building for our screenings and training."

In response to the Covid pandemic the WYFN and Wicked Wales engaged in the "Three Films Festival" project. "As network members couldn't meet face to face, we decided that an online showcase of films screened in several member festivals, would make for the perfect event to bring the festivals together in difficult times. The festival consisted of short film screenings and a small industry programme and took



place over three days from 31 July – 2 August. We have had some wonderful feedback from festivals and filmmakers and we were delighted with the viewing figures, 1,800 views is great for a small event," says WYFN Coordinator, Lorraine Mahoney. For more info visit the [WYFN YouTube channel](#) or the [Wicked Wales website](#).

The Youngsters Making Film column is curated by YCN (Youth Cinema Network), a worldwide network of youth film festivals, organisations and film & media educators. YCN focusses on films made by young people, using their right to express themselves through moving images. For more info about Youth Cinema Network, check www.youthcinemanetwork.org.

Always Amber

Documentary, Sweden 2020

Directors: Hannah Reinikainen Bergenman & Lia Hietala

Prod.: Story AB

World Sales: Wide House

Phone: ++33-6-83-22-18-06

ac@widehouse.org

www.widehouse.org



Angel

Feature Film, The Netherlands, 2020

Directors: Dennis Bots

Prod. & World Sales: Incredible Film

Phone: ++31-6-53-94-89-86

danielle@incrediblefilm.nl

www.engelfilm.nl



Bear-Like

Documentary, Switzerland 2019

Director: Roman Droux

Prod. & World Sales: Memox

Phone: ++41-31-552-05-53

info@memox.ch

www.memox.ch

www.derbaerinmir.ch

Faunutland and the Lost Magic

Feature Film, Sweden, 2020

Director: Marcus Ovnell

Prod.: Phelecan

World Sales: LevelK

Phone: ++45-48-44-30-72

tine.klint@levelk.dk

www.levelk.dk



Hello World

Animation, France, 2019

Directors: Anne-Lise Koelher & Éric Serre

Prod. & World Sales: Normaal Animation

Phone: ++33-1-43-20-03-07

contact@normaal.fr

www.normaal.fr

The Innocence

Feature Film, Spain, 2019

Director: Lucia Alemany

Prod.: Lagarto Films, Movistar+, Televisió de Catalunya

World Sales: Filmax Int'l

Phone: ++34-933-36-85-55

filmaxint@filmax.com

www.filmaxinternational.com

Into the Beat

Feature Film, Germany, 2020

Director: Stefan Westerwelle

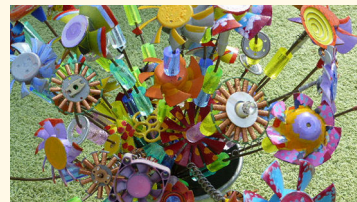
Prod.: Lieblingsfilm, Senator Film Prod., ZDF, ...

World Sales: Lieblingsfilm

Phone: ++49-89-89-05-78-30

office@lieblingsfilm.biz

www.lieblingsfilm.biz



Last Days of Spring

Docu-fiction, The Netherlands, Spain, 2020

Director: Isabel Lamberti

Prod.: IJswater Films, Tourmalet Films

World Sales: Loco Films

Phone: ++ 33-7-62- 99-49-19

info@loco-films.com

www.loco-films.com

Lene and the Spirits of the Forest

Documentary, Germany, 2019

Director: Dieter Schumann

Prod. & World Sales: Basthorster Filmmanufaktur

dieter-schumann@web.de

www.dieter-schumann.com

Lola

Feature Film, Belgium, France, 2019

Director: Laurent Micheli

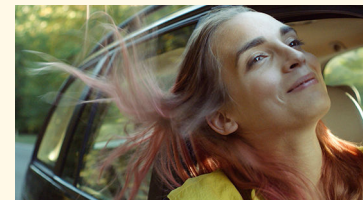
Prod.: Wrong Men, 10:15! Prod.

World Sales: Les Films du Losange

Phone: ++33-1-44-43-87-10

sales@filmsdulosange.fr

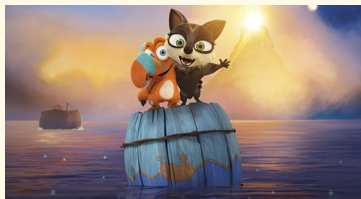
www.filmsdulosange.fr



Ooops! The Adventure Continues ...

Animation, Germany, Luxembourg, Ireland, 2020

Directors: Toby Genkel & Sean McCor-
mack
Prod.: Ulysses, Fabrique d'images,
Moetion Films, ...
World Sales: Global Screen
Phone: ++49-89-24-41-29-55-00
info@globalscreen.de
www.globalscreen.de



Ordinary Justice

Feature Film, Italy, Switzerland, 2020

Director: Chiara Bellosi
Prod.: Tempesta, Cinédokké, Rai Cin-
ema

World Sales: Vision Distribution
Phone: ++39-06-99-58-51
catia.rossi@visiondistribution.it
www.visiondistribution.it



The Pack

Feature Film, Czech Republic, Slova-
kia, Latvia, 2020

Director: Tomas Polensky
Prod.: 8Heads Productions, Furia Film,
Ego Media

World Sales: LevelK
See address above
[www.8heads.com/films-and-projects/
pack/](http://www.8heads.com/films-and-projects/pack/)

Pelle No-Tail

Animation, Sweden, 2020

Director: Christian Ryltenius
Prod.: SF Studios, SVT, Sluggerfilm
World Sales: Reinvent

sales@reinvent.dk
www.reinvent.dk

The Pirates Down the Street

Feature Film, The Netherlands, 2020

Director: Pim van Hoeve
Prod. & World Sales: Nijenhuis & Co
Phone: ++31-20-760-19-60

info@nijenhuisenco.nl
www.nijenhuisenco.nl



Pullman

Feature Film, Spain, 2019

Director: Toni Bestard
Prod. & World Sales: Singular Audio-
visual

Phone: ++34-65-94-64-989
diana@singularaudiovisual.com
www.singularaudiovisual.com

Triple Trouble

Feature Film, Poland, 2020

Director: Marta Karwowska
Prod.: Koi Studio, Piramida Film, DI
Factory, ...

World Sales: Beta Cinema
Phone: ++49-89-67-34-69-80
beta@betacinema.com
www.betacinema.com

Festival contact:
Renate Zylla, RZylla@arcor.de

Twigson and the Sea Mon- ster

Feature Film, Norway, 2020

Director: Tove Undheim
Prod. & World Sales: Paradox
Phone: ++47-23-22-71-50
firmapost@paradox.no
www.paradox.no

Wolfwalkers

Animation, Ireland, Luxembourg,
2020

Directors: Tomm Moore & Ross Stew-

art

Prod.: Melusine Prod., Cartoon Sa-
loon, Dentsu, ...

World Sales: Cartoon Saloon
Phone: ++35-35-67-76-44-81
info@cartoonsaloon.ie
www.cartoonsaloon.ie



Zero Impunity

Animated Documentary, France, Lux-
embourg, 2019

Directors: Stéphane Hueber-Blies &
Nicolas Blies & Denis Lambert
Prod.: a_BAHN, WebSpider Prod.,
Camera Talk Prod., ...
World Sales: Indie Sales
Phone: ++33-144-83-02-27

info@indiesales.eu
www.indiesales.eu

More information on all these
films you will find on our web-
site:

[www.ecfaweb.org/european-child-
rens-film-network/feature-films](http://www.ecfaweb.org/european-child-
rens-film-network/feature-films)

ROCK DEMERS (Quebec, Canada)



Personal impression by Xiaojuan Zhou

I've known Rock my entire professional life. It was in the summer of 1992 in Beijing, China - my country of origin - that we first met in person, even though we had been faxing each other for two years. I was a buyer at China Film, he was a Quebec producer specialising in family movies. For many years, these were the only Canadian films imported by China Film. At that time Rock was in his fifties, with a few hits under his belt. His first film *THE DOG WHO STOPPED THE WAR* became a Canadian classic, theatrically released by Miramax in the USA as an English dub. A Norwegian producer told me that it was thanks to seeing this film as a child that she decided to make movies later on.

Rock had a clear action plan when transforming himself from a distributor into a produc-

er in the mid-80s. "My first film," he said, "would be a Quebec film in French. My second would be a Canadian film in English, and my third an international co-production." All under the umbrella name "Tales for All". Well, that is exactly what happened.

After I finished my studies in Canada, Rock made me part of his international sales team, responsible for China, Asia and soon my "territories of influence" exploded. I travelled with him extensively and listened to his philosophy and his colourful personal trajectory. How he left for Europe alone in his 20s with a few bucks in his pocket and came back two years later with a wife and baby. How travelling made him open to other cultures and people. Rock to me was my client, boss and always a friend throughout almost 30

years. In children's cinema, he is definitely my #1 mentor for which I am eternally grateful. A man who adeptly marries arts with business, who artfully accompanies everybody on the chain of his films, from the first writer, director, cast and crew all the way to sales and distribution. From a little boy born on a small Quebec farm to a man of the world who dared to dance on the moon. A boy of humble origin who became a great man with many honours (including Order of Canada) he so deserves. With a white beard and charismatic smile, he looks like an all season Santa who's got his bagful of cinematic gifts ready for children everywhere.

THE 'MEET THE MENTORS' Q&A

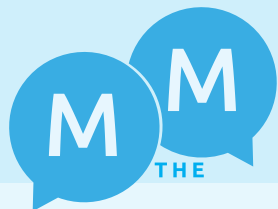
Let's start with the end. What do you wish to be written on your tombstone?

Rock Demers: My tomb is waiting for me, under a tree at the Côte des Neiges Cemetery in Montreal. On the tomb's monument, over my name is written: I HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO LIVE.

You are highly respected in children's cinema. How did it all start?

Demers: One day in January 1958, after I had lunch in a Prague restaurant with a friend, the painter Vaclav Sivko, a young man approached our table: "I am sorry to bother you, please excuse me. I can see that you are a foreigner. I am a filmmaker. I have made a feature for children. I would like so much for somebody from a foreign country to tell me what he thinks of it but I am not allowed to travel. Would you agree to see it? I could organise a screening for you if you have time?" I of course said yes. The title of the film was *ADVENTURE IN THE GOLDEN BAY* and it has been a revelation for me, since I was totally unaware that real talented filmmakers would make films for children. That young man was Bretislav Pojar, who became my best friend and with whom I stayed in touch, up to the very end of his life in 2015. In the mid 90's, 40 years after





we first met, he directed *THE FLYING SNEAKER*. A few years later he did the amazing animation sequences for *DANCING ON THE MOON*.

Who inspired you in children's cinema?

Demers: I have seen excellent films coming from all five continents but for me the most inspiring country in that field is the Czech Republic, from the end of the 40s up to the 90s, with great filmmakers like Plivova, Trnka, Pinkava, Tyrlova, Pojar, Zeman, Zendl, Vorlicek, Hoffman, and so many others.

If you had the chance to relive your life, would you make the same choices?

Demers: I would like to have the chance to re-walk my life along the



same pathways. Exactly the same.

To the young generations who are facing many difficulties, what do you wish to say through the films you make?

Demers: "Whoever you are, you should know that life is difficult but worthwhile."

What do you want other film professionals, especially the next generations aspiring to produce good children's films, to learn from you?

Demers: That they are working for the most important audience: the children ... who are much the same all over the world.

What is your biggest professional



failure and what lessons can others draw from it?

Demers: I have not succeeded to produce the film I was considering essential to complete my collection of 27 Tales for All. That film would have been one of my 4 or 5 most important titles. I had an outstanding script, an excellent director, the film was inexpensive (compared to standard budgets) and had a worldwide potential. I didn't succeed in raising enough money due to prejudices, ignorance, and bureaucratic changes in the two main Canadian bodies involved in film financing. I faced the same problem 37 years ago, with *THE DOG WHO STOPPED THE WAR*, my first Tales for All. Fortunately I was younger back then ... and finally found a way to fi-

nance it.

What are the guiding principles in your pursuit of quality children's cinema?

Demers: Based on my life experience, on my studies in children's psychology, on international researches in the 50s and 60s concerning "the effect of films on children", I decided that the basic principles sustaining the films I wanted to produce would be the following:

- a) an entertaining contemporary story (no science fiction, no history).
- b) leading roles for a child under 13 years old, alternating between boys and girls.
- c) the story's dramatic tension should never be based on a conflict between good and evil characters.
- d) the story would contain a lot of good humour and avoid gratuitous violence.
- e) the presence of nature would be essential (snow or wind, water, sun, forests etc.)
- f) an important role would be played by an animal (a dog, a cat, a lama, a monkey, a bear, a whale etc.)
- g) an alternate between realistic and fantasy films.
- h) no story would unfold in a rich people's environment.
- i) original stories (no book adaptations, no matter how famous they





THE DOG WHO STOPPED THE WAR

would be).

j) a “film for children” that is good for children only, is not a good film for children.

k) always, deep underneath each story, the idea that “life is difficult but worthwhile”.

How important is international co-operation in this area?

Demers: International cooperation has been essential for me. It felt important and enriching to have people both behind and in front of the camera coming from different countries and cultural backgrounds... Which led me to co-produce films with Iceland, Romania, Argentina, Hungary, England, Poland, France, China, India, Czech Republic, New Zealand, the Netherlands... Though each film, in or-

der to be universal, should be deeply rooted in one specific culture.

What elements have helped you most in your career, or would you bring it all back to simply good genes?

Demers: What has helped me is who I am (and I have no merit for that), my studies, my travels, the people I met along the way... Plus the fact that before starting production I already had 15 years of experience in film distribution.

Can you name a few things on your bucket list and how you wish to accomplish them?

Demers: I have a bucket list full enough to keep me busy for the next 10 years (though I am 86) with both

fiction and documentary projects.

How would you rate your career on a scale from 1-10? Looking at a photo of yourself as a 10 year old, what would you tell the kid in the picture?

Demers: I would rate myself 8 out of 10. I consider myself very lucky for having been able to accomplish all that I did. I can say to the boy I once was: “I just can’t believe you had the opportunity to achieve what you did, especially producing 26 fiction features, shot all over the world”.

Self Portrait: Could you describe yourself in max. 200 words: who are you and what have you accomplished in life, especially in children's cinema?

Demers: I have been involved in many facets of film making. In the 50s I co-founded the film revue Images and organised film clubs. In 1958, after my studies in Paris at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Saint Cloud, I travelled through Europe, the Middle East and Asia for two years. Upon my return to Canada in 1960, I joined the team that had just founded the Montreal Int’l Film Festival of which I was director from 1962–1968, also programming for them a section of films for children. In 1963, I co-founded the Cinematheque Quebecoise. In

1965, I founded Faroun Films, a distribution company aimed primarily at quality films for children. In 1970, I got involved (as distributor and partly as producer) in THE CHRISTMAS MARTIAN, the first Canadian feature film for children. In 1980 I founded Production La Fête with the initial goal of producing an anthology of 9 films for children, the so called Tales for All. The first title in that collection THE DOG WHO STOPPED THE WAR was released in 1984 with such critical acclaim and box office success that the anthology now comprises 26 films which garnered over the years some 235 awards. Over the same period La Fête also produced another 40 projects (feature films for adults, documentaries and TV series).

–
Rock Demers
May 2020



Born in 1933 on a farm in a small Québec village

Select Filmography:
THE DOG WHO STOPPED THE WAR
BACH AND BROCCOLI
TADPOLE AND THE WHALE
PEANUT BUTTER SOLUTION
VINCENT AND ME
DANIEL AND THE SUPERDOGS

Ga-eun Yoon about THE HOUSE OF US

“My gift to all girls taking charge of their own lives”

Like her heart-melting feature debut THE WORLD OF US, Ga-eun Yoon's second film once again stands very close to her own reality. Again the universe she created is delicate, tender and restrained. In Ga-eun's films, it seems like the world is turning slower, the sky colours softer, and the most crucial words are spoken in a whispering tone. On the occasion of the film's presence in the Zlin Film Festival, we spoke with the director about THE HOUSE OF US.

This summer, Hana has but one wish: to go on a family trip, like in the good old days before mum and dad were fighting all the time. But the more she tries to keep the family together, the more they seem to fall apart. Until one day Hana makes new friends. Yoo-mi and her sister Yoo-jin are living on their own, their parents are always out of town. With the sisters struggling to secure their home from the landlord, Hana helps them to forget their worries, considerate as always.

There is so much tenderness in this

movie, so much caring for others. Is that what life is all about for Hana?

Ga-eun Yoon: Hana, carefully observing the world, has this special gift to be on standby at any time to lend everybody a helping hand. She takes up her family's problems as if it were her own, just like she takes care for her friends. That is one of life's crucial and noble abilities, although nowadays people might tend to judge it as “useless and meddlesome”. Of course we shouldn't mingle all the time in other people's business but I believe we would all be more relaxed and less lonely under the good, loving care of others. Some might pity Hana for carrying a too heavy weight upon her shoulders. But she shouldn't be pitied, she should be praised for her precious qualities. That kind of compliment is what I have been wishing for as a child. Such compliments can help Hana to become more confident as a person, and more balanced in her own life. That is the essence of what I wanted the audience to reflect upon.

It is a disturbing thought that one

day Hana will grow up, as in your film all tenderness is with the children.

Ga-eun: Maybe she will grow up to become an even softer and more adorable adult. But sometimes it makes me sad to realise how ‘growing up’ might mean giving up the flexibility, kindness and simple straightforward thinking you once had as a child. In my childhood days, I rarely thought about what it would be like to become an adult, I wasn't able to look that far into the future as I was so immersed by living every single moment. I vaguely assumed that “I'll be able to handle a lot more when I grow up”. Rather not, apparently, the older I get the more difficult it is to keep my focus and concentration, making me even more afraid of not being able to live every moment to the fullest.

Hana's parents seem incapable to behave responsibly.

Ga-eun: Children and adults are reacting totally differently to the film. Children are excited about Hana's adventures, while parents often feel



tortured or guilty. That surprises me, as throughout the making of the film I was only focussed on the children and how they are dealing with the situation.

You were not aware that the audience would consider the parents behaviour as problematic?

Ga-eun: Why should Hana's parents score so badly? I think they rather should be praised as “good parents struggling hard”, taking care of the children even in the toughest of times,

now that they are going through the most painful period in their life.

Did recent Covid quarantines make your film even more compelling? We are all afraid of what might happen behind closed doors during lockdowns.

Ga-eun: So many conditions in life are rapidly changing, making even adults feel confused. I hardly dare to imagine how much fear and anxiety this might cause among children. What about children having to bear all family problems by themselves? It makes me feel terribly sad. If it was like now, Hana could not even have gone outside, she would have felt even more lonesome.

How is it to work with an actress that resembles so much your own personality? Is it like seeing the child you once were coming to live again?

Ga-eun: In the project's early script-writing stage I looked back upon my childhood as profoundly as I could, embedding my feelings and worries from those days into the story. Simply recalling the past made me feel like reliving it. However, after meeting the actresses my focus shifted completely towards them. They are the ones now going through these phas-



es, they might understand the characters far better than I do. I questioned them about situations and emotions, and through improvisations and discussions we tried to find out how they would react. Through this process I could correct the mistakes in my adult perspective. It wasn't easy to include the actresses' visions while staying true to the intentional topics and storyline. Luckily their ideas mainly corresponded with mine, making the whole process much more fun. I felt so lucky!

As we remember from THE WORLD OF US, you are a master in directing 'spontaneous acting'. Again in THE



HOUSE OF US all dialogues sound so natural. What is your secret?

Ga-eun: There is none. I can only help them to fully understand the characters and situations, and stimulate

them to freely express their feelings. But even when they understand and feel a certain scene with their heart, this must become visible on their faces. There has to be this moment that I can feel an emotion coming to live, as true and clear as almost tangible. We also need the courage to throw away the parts that actresses can't fully understand. Preparing THE HOUSE OF US, for two months we did improv sessions. I simply described a scene and a context, and then the actresses spontaneously acted out and created

the scene. Then we talked, revised... Time-consuming as they are, these sessions for me are the best part of the entire filmmaking process. I often regret that I can't fully capture scenes

in the film as remarkable as they were in the first rehearsals.

The girls go on a trip together. Is that based on another of your childhood memories?

Ga-eun: I never ran away from home impulsively, nor have I ever been on a trip with friends. I craved it many times, but probably wasn't as brave as Hana. I wrote those scenes, sending Hana on a trip on my behalf, doing the things I desperately wished to do back then. The world is much more harsh for girls, there are so many things that we have learned to consider as risky or dangerous. I wanted to show that it is possible for girls to go on an expedition at their own conditions, it doesn't have to be dangerous and they can finish the trip safely, with some 'miraculous help'. This trip is my gift to all those girls trying hard – and succeeding – to take charge of their own lives.

The film drags the audience into its own universe, with its own colour scale. I've seldom seen a film with such delicate, well-matching colours.

Ga-eun: I always carefully choose a colour scale for my film. For grown-ups it might be painful to see the hardships these children are going

through, but when putting yourself in their shoes, life isn't a total tragedy. Every day again they give their very best to keep their lives going, which is the source of their sparkling vitality and energy. I wanted the colour palette of this film to convey a cinematic reality, which is somewhat different from the actual reality. That is why we picked pastel colours with a summery tone. Up to the post-production phase, my DoP Kim Ji-Hyun kept on working on colour details. Creating this special universe was the result of a true collaboration with the entire crew.

Soft and tender music is another tool in shaping that world.

Ga-eun: Ever since I started making short films, I have always been working with Yonrimog as music director. She is a great musician and a dear friend of mine. In fact, from all the films we did together, there is none that contains as much input from her as THE HOUSE OF US. Usually my films contain only a tiny bit of music, but this time it was like the entire film, and some scenes in particular, needed extra rhythm and vitality. This is how we worked: Yonrimog interpreted the scenes and made a score. I tried to feel the impact of the music and emailed her my feedback. Of



Director Ga-eun Yoon

course we could have met or called, but emailing helped us to organise our thoughts when explaining meticulously the transition of emotions from the characters to the score. It kept us broad-minded towards each other's interpretations.

The title of your film seems like a variation to THE WORLD OF US. Is that part of a bigger plan?

Ga-eun: Not at all! I made THE HOUSE OF US as a totally different movie. We shot both films in the same town and some actors from THE WORLD OF US made a cameo. But only after finishing THE HOUSE OF US I realised the

film could be perceived as a sequel in its broadest context. Actually, it seems like the Korean titles are gradually growing bigger, from "US" to "our HOME". Some said my next film should be about "our SCHOOL" or "our COUNTRY". On the other hand, the English titles seem to grow gradually smaller, from "THE WORLD" to "THE HOUSE". I imagine how then the next title should be "THE TWO OF US".

–
Gert Hermans

→ watch trailer

FROM ANALOGUE TO ONLINE IN TWO MONTHS

Have times ever before been so challenging for international film festivals? We found two candidates to testify how they've been facing difficulties and came up with creative solutions. One of them can look back upon a successful festival edition, the other one still has something to look forward to.

The Int'l Short Film Festival Oberhausen

By mid-March the Short Film Festival Oberhausen (13–18 May 2020), like many other festivals, had to face the fact that 'going ahead as planned' was simply unthinkable. The Children's and Youth Film Competition had just completed its previews and put together a wonderful programme of 39 films; the other competitions and sections were at a similar stage. The initial shock seamlessly made place for a determination that all these films still must be seen... Online. We had two months left to transform an analogue into an online festival, a process

that required a host of new solutions and work processes for everyone involved.

The Children's & Youth Cinema was facing a few extra challenges. How to make international films understandable even to a very young audience without a voice-over translation in the cinema? How to involve schools? And above all, how to enable the all-important interaction with the young audience? Most of all, we are grateful that all filmmakers in this competition gave us permission to present their films within the framework of an online festival. All programmes were subtitled in English. Additional German subtitles for the hearing impaired were added to the youth programmes (ages 12 and up), as has been customary at the festival for several years. The programmes for children, on the other hand, were screened with German voice-over. The online audience could then decide which version they preferred.

Video interviews with filmmakers were pre-recorded and made available online, as an essential component



of the children and youth programmes to enable a better understanding of the films and their creators. The different language versions, as well as the interviews, are usually live on-the-spot parts of a cinema screening, that now carefully had to be prepared and modified online. The same goes for the moderation, a crucial component for the youngest age groups, +3 and +6, that should not be omitted. Moderations were pre-recorded at the spot where the festival should have taken place: the cinema.

The Oberhausen Children's and Youth

Cinema has always given special attention to film education, which this year happened in the form of two online workshops, offering children an opportunity to explore films in joint discussions and activities. Password protected, private screening rooms were set up for schools and teachers and used by over 30 classes. An online training course for teachers offered opportunities for exchange and engaged more than twice as many participants than the usual analogue version. Such additional projects created a festival feeling, even in this very

special edition. At the same time they demonstrated that online film education is possible and can and must be much more than simply making films available everywhere. The success and extremely positive feedback from teachers clearly show: the need for cultural education was great even in times of lockdown and going online was the right decision.

–
Franziska Ferdinand

LUCAS

Keywords for this year are: 24 September – 1 October | back in local cinemas and online nationwide | online VOD offer in partnership with Golden Sparrow Festival | Cross-European panel: Film education online

Film culture for all! As Germany's longest standing film festival for young audiences, LUCAS will open its doors to high quality filmmaking for the 43rd time. In addition to authentic cinema experiences in Frankfurt and Wiesbaden, large parts of the competition programme this year are also available online via video-on-demand. LUCAS Festival director Julia Fleißig's aim is to make international film culture accessible to all young people

in times of ongoing restrictions: *"We have made every effort to ensure that LUCAS can take place this year, despite all restrictions. Our mission is to open young people's eyes to the diversity of the film medium and create access to a rich cinema culture that is worth discovering. I am therefore very pleased that we can offer our programme in cinemas, but also reach out to young audiences that cannot come to visit LUCAS this year."*

For its nationwide online program, LUCAS – Int'l Festival for Young Film Lovers is teaming up with the Erfurt based Kinder Medien Festival Golden Sparrow, which changed its festival dates to a better matching period in time. In a brand new partnership involving the up and coming German streaming service Pantaflix, both festivals are making the major part of their competition programme available online, resulting in a joined record offer of 12 days of national and international film culture for young audiences all over Germany.

At LUCAS alone, more than 40 short and long fiction, documentary and animation films will compete for highly endowed prizes, including more than 30 German premieres. A total of 59 films comprise special side sections.



In film talks with international guests in the cinema and online, the LUCAS motto is once again "Get involved!" And there is more: peers engage in the festival events as presenters, film critics or film patrons, jury members or curators – online and offline. The best films of the year will be awarded during the award ceremony on 1 October, that will be accessible through online streaming.

LUCAS, a project of DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum, Frankfurt, addresses families, schools, cinephiles of all ages, film educators and industry members alike. Various panels will tackle current questions on film culture and film literacy.

Cross-European panel: Film education online (29 September 2 pm via ZOOM)

On Tuesday, 29 September, LUCAS is opening a digital, European exchange on new online film education offers with keynotes by Taartrovers (Amsterdam), Cineteca di Bologna and DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum (Frankfurt). Free registration via lucas-welcome@dff.film.

Find out more at www.lucas-filmfestival.de, Facebook and Instagram @LUCASfestival

–
Jenni Ellwanger

CINEMA AS A PLACE FOR DISCOVERY

The cinema is a place for fantasy and escape. Cinema is also a place for culture with social and political significance. On top of that the cinema is a key link in the film industry's value chain and a core location for film education. In short, cinema is great - we love the cinema!

However, even before the pandemic struck there were cinemas with many empty seats. The common perception states that cinemas are only full when Hollywood blockbusters are screened and sometimes, but really only occasionally, when a big hit from another country other than the USA hits our screens.

Let's work with the hypothesis that there is one other parameter for cinemas to be in high demand, apart from films. Let's say when a team is adventurous, with innovative approaches and collaborations, then it is smoothly leveraging new audiences. And let's assume that this is the case even more so when leveraging audiences begins with the youngest viewers.

Especially for a children's audience it is high time to make European film more widely available and visible – to promote children's film far from Disney as a meaningful cultural asset. How can we connect the young audience with film before, while and after they watched it? How can we again have cinema perceived as an original cultural space – as a discovery space cinema? How can we help the young audience to develop a desire to get involved in unknown and extraordinary films?

As with all things in this world there are colleagues to provide us with marvellous ideas, projects that inspire us to do better. We asked 7 questions to 5 outstanding cinema programmers for us to learn more about their cinemato-magic.

—
Anne Schultka
KIDS Regio

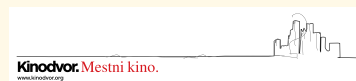
kids  regio

INTRODUCING 5 remarkable cinema theatres:

**FILMHUIS
DEN HAAG**

Filmhuis The Hague (the Netherlands), re-presented by Josien Buijs

Filmhuis The Hague offers a broad range of children's films (for ages 4-12) on a weekly basis. During school holidays we screen several films per day and organise workshops (e.g. make your own animation or soundtrack) or a festival, together with local partners. The film programme is conceived through combined expertise in programming, marketing and education. Programmes are created from different perspectives, for instance films selected for school screenings are also part of the regular programme and vice versa.



Kinodvor (Ljubljana, Slovenia), represented by Živa Jurančič

More than just a cinema theatre,

city cinema Kinodvor in Ljubljana is part of our national and global dialogue around cinema culture. Our programme for young audiences is a tree with many branches. One is First Timers, designed for small children (2+) who visit our cinema for the very first time to watch a short programme with gentle stories, usually without dialogues. For this occasion, our Caffè is turned into a playground providing different activities for creatively exploring films. Later they can swing to the next branch, Kinobalon (5+), presenting more complex content. Growing independent as teenagers, the need grows bigger for a programme of their own, that they can actively co-create. They become Kinotripers, curators of a Kinotrip for and by youngsters (15+).

BUDA
KUNSTENCENTRUM

Art Centre BUDA (Kortrijk, Belgium), represented by Eef de Lombaerde

We organise activities to please

our current audience, and others to broaden it by targeting younger age groups - children (under 12), youngsters (12-18) and students (18-24) - with activities inside or outside our venue. These projects combine educational purposes with the purpose towards young people's leisure time, simply enjoying a movie. Among our many activities for young families are the cineMAATjes, children's movies on Sundays, with film knick-knacks to guarantee them a warm family getaway. These cinema outings are also provided for socially vulnerable groups.



Cineteca di Bologna (Italy), represented by Elisa Giovannelli

Schermi e Lavagne – the Educational Department at the Cineteca di Bologna – works with schools (from kindergarten to University) and family audiences. We want them to acknowledge the social and cultural value of the cinema theatre, where watching films is about sharing emotions. For our school programme, focus groups with teachers select titles from cinema history. For families, we present

classic films, previews and second runs. Our 'Il Cinema Ritrovato' festival has a special section for kids. In the 2020 edition in August, the film rouge was 'the circus', on the occasion of Fellini's 100th anniversary.



Institute Pitanga & the Int'l Children's Film Festival (Vienna, Austria), represented by Martina Lassacher

As an outsider in this survey, Pitanga doesn't have its own cinema. We organise a festival in Vienna and Graz, and we have a year-round school project travelling all around Austria, from Burgenland to Vorarlberg. This KinderKinoWelten (Children's Cinema Worlds) project includes around 130 screenings and 300 film classes per year. We go on site to screen a film and teach film analysis in small class units. We work in all types of cinema theatres, from arthouse to multiplex, and visit remote places with a beamer and portable screen, showing films on-the-spot in schools. With only this project, we reach around 12,000 participants per year.

Q&A

Does your programming follow the cinema release calendar?

De Lombaerde (BUDA): We do, except for thematic events such as Winter Wonderland or the Spanish Film Week cineMÁS.

Jurančič (Kinodvor): We conceive our programme in a close relationship with Slovenian distributors, occasionally organising temporary imports on our own.

Buijs (Filmhuis): Children's film releases in the Netherlands are not very well spread throughout the year. That is why sometimes we add classic titles to our programme. During that sum-

mer when multiplexes screened THE BIG FRIENDLY GIANT, simultaneously we programmed Roald Dahl classics like MATILDA and JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH. For parents these titles brought back sweet memories.

Lassacher (Pitanga): We have a stock of films that we consider as the right material to teach how film works.

Giovannella (Cineteca): We have long-standing relationships with several distributors, offering us previews, educational material and even special guests.



Filmhuis The Hague

What efforts are you making in film education or other accompanying programmes?

Jurančič (Kinodvor): No matter which tree branch, all are rooted in our understanding of quality film education. All our film education activities spark creativity and curiosity, encourage reflection and promote open dialogue, making Kinodvor a lively meeting place for all generations.

Lassacher (Pitanga): We do not use films to address social topics, we insist on teaching film and cinema culture. What children can learn from watching and talking about films, is developing an opinion of their own, the courage to utter it and the ability to make themselves understood by others. Therefore, educational projects are important – even more important than festivals, I think.

Giovannella (Cineteca): We also often get requests from teachers for a thematic approach, but prefer to highlight film as an art and language in itself. The Educational Department of the Cineteca has 5 people employed full time. This substantial increase of staff and budget over the years, partly thanks to the National Programme for Cinema at School signed in 2018, allows us to launch school initiatives and teacher training sessions at a national level. We provide educational



Kinodvor

material for retrospectives and exhibitions organised at the Cineteca.

De Lombaerde (BUDA): We work closely together with JEF, our contact point for quality films for youth, enabling us to present films for all age groups: kindergarten, primary and secondary school. JEF provides schools with study guides and on-screen introduction clips (often with cast or crew). A screening can be combined with two simultaneous workshops for small groups, one focusing on movie-making and acting, the other one on stop-motion. We have now launched two new workshops, both resulting in mini-movies.

Buijs (Filmhuis): We believe that in

today's society children should learn how to watch and make films, just as they learn to read and write. Every year we welcome more than 18,000 students (aged 4-24) in school screenings (with teaching materials) and workshops (stop-motion, live action or documentary film), conducted by young film professionals. Afterwards, kids can watch their own film on the big screen. Because of a growing demand from outside The Hague, last year we started a regional 'film education hub' called 'Beeldung'. This network, supported by the Dutch Film Fund, connects schools with film education providers, cultural mediators and film theatres in order to offer

equal film education opportunities to all students in the province. We often visit smaller municipalities where no infrastructure is available. Film education is a great way to create a future audience!

How is the cinema infrastructure adapted to the needs of a young audience?

De Lombaerde (BUDA): We remodelled our foyer to a child-friendly environment with low tables, seats and benches for children to work at. Due to the flexible furniture, this space in no time can be reset again into a more adult setting. There's two especially designed installations called the 'cinéMammoet', interactive play-studios for kids combining different functionalities, like a small museum setting with optical devices, crafting material, colouring pages etc. Educational games for different age groups can be played on iPads, attached to the cinéMammoet at different heights. There is a shadow theatre and a stop-motion table. Kids can celebrate their birthday at cineMAATjes with personalised invitations, goody boxes, a birthday basket and a 'golden cinema seat'.

Giovannella (Cineteca): One of our three theatres has 64 seats and is the perfect place for little kids to enjoy

their first time at the cinema. Next to it is a big space perfectly equipped for welcoming kids aged 3+: special furniture, wall drawings, pre-cinema devices etc. In this “kids realm” they can watch shadow theatre shows or create their own mini-films.

Buijs (Filmhuis): The most obvious things are often not the first thoughts: carefully observe your audience, not only regarding content, but regarding avoidance of practical barriers:

- providing food & drinks that are popular with children
- taking care of the parents, good coffee is essential!
- no screenings during toddlers' nap time
- provide material for playing or crafting
- free short films while waiting before or after the screening
- explaining to our colleagues that welcoming kids in our theatre is fun if you interact with them, and that they are the audience of the future (and not just noisy).

Lassacher (Pitanga): There are only a few cinemas in Austria with a main aim to work with children. One of them is the Cinemagic in Vienna, with Elisabeth Lichtkoppler (who is a member of our festival team) as general manager.

Do you have a participation policy to broaden your audience and make it more diverse?

Giovannella (Cineteca): Cooperation is the key. The Cineteca, located near the city centre, can easily be reached by public transport, but for many schools and families even a short distance makes a difference. That is why we make our services available also for people living in the suburbs. Last year we cooperated with an association for families with housing problems, in order to organise screenings for kids in the public garden near their building.

Buijs (Filmhuis): Our collaboration with a public library in two suburbs with a very diverse population (Turkish, Kurdish, Moroccan) resulted in two successful projects:

- *Books to look forward to: After reading a book together in the library, kids visit our cinema to watch the adaptation.*
- *Festival Anatolia: A kids programme with shorts and workshops, embedded in a festival with films from the Anatolia region, programmed with Turkish and Kurdish communities in The Hague.*

De Lombaerde (BUDA): The road to participation isn't a one way street. It is not about people attending one loose activity, but about a puzzle of



Buda - CinéMammoet Film installation (c) Jonas Verbeke

all activities together, and cooperation with many partners. An integrated approach, approved by the entire organisation for a maximum, sustainable effect. The last thing you want is to keep doing the same things with the same target groups in one time visits that never establish a more permanent bonding.

How BUDA made this participation policy their trademark, you'll read in the separate column. (see next page)

Jurančič (Kinodvor): As financial accessibility is not enough for social and cultural inclusiveness, we developed strong relationships with schools,

youth organisations, cultural and social agencies. There is no such thing as one homogenous young audience. If we want cinema to be relevant for them, we must understand their needs and put them at the heart of our work, by actively engaging teens in creating and promoting programmes. We represent diverse gender, age, family, social and cultural backgrounds in our film content, as we believe that film has the power to help us understand who we are and the world we live in.

BUDA'S PARTICIPATION POLICY

Audience development has two goals: broadening your audience (bigger and more diverse), and intensifying their experience. To increase participation, different activities need to be developed on different participative levels: encouragement & information, outreach, mediation, giving a voice to the audience, co-creation and at the highest level of participation is ownership.

Our focus is on engaging with younger and underprivileged audiences. Our audience is mainly well-educated, middle-aged and Caucasian, which doesn't reflect the city we live in. If we want things to change, we need to understand WHY? Changing your environment requires a change in yourself. We had to give up parts of what we believed was our identity, for example by being open to audience suggestions. Only then we could move on to the question: HOW?

We developed a range of actions, addressing different target groups with different levels of participation, often in cooperation with social or cultural organisations, district teams, street workers, schools... An exclusive social rate should reduce thresholds. We address underprivileged children with

an adapted flyer and promotion tours along social agencies. Ultimately, we had to meet them in their own neighbourhoods. In one suburb we co-organise a "play factory" every three months, inviting kids to come and have a good time for free, working on – alongside other things – stop-motion movies or special effects.

For teenagers (14+) we created a movie club, where they get to programme films and make it a big event. Everything is in their hands, from communication to decoration. Via a rehabilitation centre we try to get youngsters in socially vulnerable positions on board. Reaching out to students, we collaborate with fraternities and a local student radio station.

Together with all our partners in Kortrijk we created Club Cultuur. Its main goal is to make the entire local cultural landscape accessible to people in socially vulnerable positions. Once per month they get a free invitation to a cultural place, with a welcome drink and guided tour. The ultimate goal is to offer them tools to visit places on their own, and get familiar with the location and with the people working there.

The main message behind our quest for participation is simply to be authentic, to be patient (not everything will work out the way you want it, or might not work at all), to get the team involved and knowing why you do it. There's still a lot of people we haven't reached so far, but the ones we did made it all worthwhile.



Pitanga - Children's film in Cinemagic, Vienna

Cinema as a place for discovery, is that the future role for cinema theatres?

De Lombaerde (BUDA): Yes, but it should also be a safe space to all, an open house, welcoming everyone to discover movies and meet people. A place to grow, to break with daily routines, to mentally travel and see new places, to leave your kids... A place for, but also by the community. Cinema is a very accessible medium to most. Even with alternative platforms rapidly increasing, the big screen stands strong in creating added value, the immersive experience of sound and vision.

Lassacher (Pitanga): That would be lovely. But most cinemas are designed



Cineteca

for making money. Cinema as a form of art is - after nearly 130 years - still a minority programme.

Jurančić (Kinodvor): The cinema experience is at the heart of film culture. It is a challenge how to secure that shared experience in the new reality that has shaken the entire cinema landscape. Welcoming school groups will be extra challenging. However, we strongly believe that moving to the digital world is just part of a possible solution. After re-opening our cinema, the main feedback, even from teens, was that they had missed the community feeling. Therefore, we must find ways to keep providing quality cinema and film education for film lovers of today and tomorrow.

Giovannella (Cineteca): This collective dimension will have to be rebuilt after the pandemic. Movies never have the same impact as when watching them on the big screen. Getting to know about other people's lives and backgrounds in a shared space makes (young) audiences discover different realities. This is essential for making that necessary step towards other people, whatever their origin, way of life or dreams may be.

How can cinema contribute to developing a European identity?

Giovannella (Cineteca): Films from different European countries and different eras represent a richness in terms of content, tendencies and person-

alities, that has to be preserved for young audiences as a common cultural heritage.

What project or screening were you particularly proud of?

Giovannella (Cineteca): In 2019 for our DILILI IN PARIS event, Michel Ocelot came to Bologna to present the film at the Piazza Maggiore and give a masterclass.

De Lombaerde (BUDA): Our BUDAmbassadors, because children's participation is of the utmost importance (and of course they are super cute). We recruit ambassadors (age 5-12) and get them involved. We watch a movie together and prepare the introduction, we practice together, and then they manage everything with great confidence. They co-assist in workshops, do Q&A's with actors and directors and now we're planning to get them involved with film programming.

Lassacher (Pitanga): I am quite proud of our work for which there is few sensibility in Austria. But entering our festival opening in a packed Gartenbaukino (730 places), hearing the overwhelming silence of all these children practically hypnotised, or hearing their laughter, makes me very happy.

TALKING CINEMA - EVENTS

Two events are coming up that tackle the topic of cinemas as dedicated spaces for young audiences. You are warmly invited to join the 2 day on-line conference "Children & Youth – The Importance of Dedicated Spaces for Children" hosted from Rijeka on 17 & 18 September. Another opportunity will be the Vision Kino Congress on 26 November. KIDS Regio will host the 'Discovery Space Cinema – Now more than ever!' panel, followed by a table talk on cinema and the future of film education. Find more info here or contact schultka@kids-regio.org.





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ECFA's goal is to support cinema for children and youth in its cultural, economic, aesthetic, social, political and educational aspects. Since 1988 ECFA brings together a wide range of European film professionals and associations, producers, directors, distributors. ECFA aims to set up a working structure in every European country for films for children and young people, a structure adapted to Europe's multicultural interests.

For more information and memberships (€ 250 per year):

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The European Children's Film Distribution Network:

www.ecfaweb.org/european-childrens-film-network/network

Databases on children's film festivals, sales agents, distributors and TV-programmers interested in European films for children.

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