

A group of children are shown in a joyful outdoor setting, likely a festival. In the foreground, a young girl with curly hair is smiling and looking upwards, her right arm raised. Behind her, other children are also visible, some with their arms raised. The background is slightly blurred, showing more people and greenery under a bright sky. The overall mood is festive and energetic.

CINEKID

FESTIVAL

CINEKID

**FOR
PROFESSIONALS
2026**

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FOREWORD



Welcome, everyone!

This year, Cinekid celebrates its 40th edition under the theme *Celebrating Together*. And what better way to celebrate than by gathering around the passion and joy of making kids' cinema and media?

Cinekid for Professionals (CfP) brings together around 400 international professionals from across the audiovisual sector to explore emerging trends, share knowledge, and spark new collaborations. This year, we're also exploring the importance of community and shared experience and, well, having some fun!

The **Industry Forum** opens with three keynotes revolving around community, playfulness, and finding human connection through creativity and film in a rapidly changing world. Eight dynamic roundtable discussions follow, tackling some of the sector's most pressing issues, with the hope of inspiring and offering fresh perspectives.

The **Junior Co-production Market** returns with 18 projects from 20 countries, including Nigeria, Colombia, Mexico, France, and the Netherlands. Their teams will pitch to industry professionals.

Alongside these well-established sections, the 2026 programme expands to offer even more value opportunities for participating professionals. New this year are the **Expert Sessions**, in which local and international experts (funders, talent initiatives, festival programmers, and more) share their experience and offer guidance. Held in small groups, these sessions are a chance to exchange ideas, meet decision-makers, and get advice on current and new projects. Bring your questions, including the ones you've been meaning to ask for ages.

ScreeningClub, the festival's video library, also comes to life as **ScreeningClub Live**. These industry screenings showcase new and promising projects, including premieres and work-in-progress series, in a cosy setting.

Finally, we're shining a spotlight on the local industry, with an inspiration day organised in collaboration with the Youth Film Alliance (De Jeugdalliantie) and a presentation by the Netherlands Film Fund (NL Filmfonds) on the development of Dutch feature-length youth films.

We hope you leave Cinekid with fresh ideas, new connections, and perhaps the beginnings of your next project. Until then, enjoy the films, join the conversations, and leave a little room for unexpected encounters.

Have a great Cinekid!

Niv Fux
Cinekid for Professionals Coordinator
On behalf of the entire Cinekid for Professionals team

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Tuesday 13 October

09:30 - 12:30	Dutch Industry Morning	Pathé 7
12:00 - 13:30	Industry Lunch	Cinekantine / Market27
13:30 - 14:30	Industry Forum Opening	Pathé 8
14:45 - 17:30	Expert Sessions	Pathé 7
14:45 - 17:30	Industry Forum Roundtables	Pathé 1
16:30 - 17:30	Netherlands Film Fund Presentation - Youth Film Sector	Pathé 2
17:30 - 19:30	Jubilee Drinks CfP & MediaLab	Cinekantine

Wednesday 14 October

9:30 - 13:00	JCM Pitches	Pathé 8
11:30 - 14:00	Industry Lunch	Cinekantine / Market27
14:00 - 17:30	JCM 1-on-1 Meetings	Pathé 1
15:00 - 16:00	ScreeningClub Live - WIP Series	Pathé 2
16:00 - 17:00	ScreeningClub Live - Dutch Shorts	Pathé 2
19:30 - 23:00	Industry Party + Awards	Cinekantine

Thursday 15 October

9:30 - 13:00	JCM 1-on-1 Meetings	Pathé 1
11:30 - 14:00	Industry Lunch	Cinekantine / Market27





INDUSTRY FORUM

Cinekid Industry Forum 2026 invites the professionals from film and digital media to engage with discussions around the festival's theme. On October 13, expert speakers from different countries will share their insights on the children's media industry in the form of a keynote and thematic roundtables. The interactive format welcomes knowledge exchange, inspiration and meaningful connections between the makers, innovators, researchers, educators and the wide range of creatives attending Cinekid for Professionals.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

13:30 Industry Forum Opening Keynotes

14:45 Industry Forum Roundtables

14:45 Thematic tables: round 1

15:45 Thematic tables: round 2

16:45 Thematic tables: round 3

17:30 End of the programme

OPENING KEYNOTE



Linda Duits

Glue – the magic of fun explained

Fun seems self-evident: everybody has it, everyone enjoys it. But there's more to fun than meets the eye. Fun is constitutive of communities. When fun is shared, something special happens. In this talk, Linda Duits explores the basics of fun from a sociological perspective: what it is, how it works, and why it is so important. But be careful: fun cannot be instrumentalised as a means to obtain your goals, nor can it be summoned on demand. Linda will show why fun & film go so well together, and how you can set-up the conditions for fun to thrive.

Biography

Linda Duits is a social scientist specializing in popular culture, particularly in the areas of gender and sexuality. She teaches, among other subjects, Media & Culture at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and is affiliated as a researcher with the Institute for Cultural Inquiry at Utrecht University. Duits is a podcast pioneer (Onder Mediadoctoren has been running since 2012) and regularly publishes in media outlets such as Het Parool and NRC Handelsblad. She has written several books, including *Eindelijk weten wat seks is* and *Dolle mythes: feminisme toen en nu*. Her most recent book is *Leuk! Pleidooi voor plezier*.

OPENING KEYNOTE

Samya Hafsaoui

Finding (online)community with your storytelling power

Between AI-content, bot accounts and paid ads, the internet may seem like a far away place for human connection. In her talk, screenwriter and content creator Samya Hafsaoui argues that it's still possible to find profound human connection. Sharing your story as a creator, your creative process (even as early as the development stage) may just be the key to unlocking an engaged and enthusiastic audience. And by doing so, gaining a stronger foundation when marketing, selling and distributing your work.

Biography

Samya Hafsaoui (32) is a Dutch content creator, actress, screenwriter, and journalist. Her work spans all the way from Eurovision to various Dutch tv productions and newspaper articles. Her Tiktok has over 180k followers with more than 7 million likes. Samya is currently working on writing and directing her first feature film.



OPENING KEYNOTE

Pablo Núñez Palma

Instructions for unwinding a Chatbot: making AI ours



Sixty years before ChatGPT, writer Julio Cortázar observed that when someone gives you a watch, it is really the other way round: you are the gift, handed over to the watch. AI is a gift of that kind. We think we use it, yet it changes how we relate to the world and to each other: we keep it going with our questions, trust its answers, and turn to it before we turn to each other. Pablo Núñez Palma looks for other ways of using it through small examples from his practice: a robot filmmaker, an archive re-edited by its visitors, and a group writing game. Each one feeds the machine shared material and treats what comes out not as an answer for one person, but as something a group can sort, argue over or rewrite. So how do you unwind an AI and make it yours?

Biography

Pablo Núñez Palma is an audiovisual director, a practice-based researcher, and a PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam, working with cultural archives and exploring their storytelling potential. He is a research fellow at the Netherlands Film Academy, where he works on AI Greenhouse, a project that organises workshops, lectures, and events on the creative use of AI in film and audiovisual work. His projects include Jan Bot, a robot filmmaker for Eye Filmmuseum, and MAFI, a Chilean documentary collective he co-founded.



THEMATIC ROUNDTABLES

The interactive part of the Industry Forum allows participants to create their own, unique schedules, combining between the Thematic Roundtables and the Expert Sessions. Every table features three rounds of talks, presenting three different perspectives on each theme. Participants can sign up on the website, or decide on the day for which table they will join.

Roundtable 1: Celebrating Together: Continuing the Keynote Conversation

Get the chance to sit down closely with the Industry Forum keynote speakers, as they expand on their talks and share deeper insight into their work.

Roundtable 2: The Potential of Cross Media Experience

Youth culture no longer moves in straight lines. A teenager might discover music inside a game, pick up history from a meme, or stumble into philosophy through a YouTube fan edit. Cultural meaning now takes shape across different media, industries, and points of contact. Understanding it requires tools built to follow, decode, and act on that movement.

Roundtable 3: Immersive Experience for Beginners

Makers, researchers, and experts will introduce the guiding principles and ideas behind designing immersive experiences — from XR to VR and beyond. Whether you're a maker, curator, or educator looking to create your first immersive project — this is the place to start!

Roundtable 4: Creating a shared language: Inclusive Film & Media

Join voices at the forefront of inclusive storytelling, redefining what it means to create for all audiences — spanning art made with young Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities, film that centers underrepresented experiences, and immersive new media that invites audiences into entirely new worlds.

Roundtable 5: How Sustainable Is the Future? New Practices for Makers and Festivals

What do we mean when we talk about sustainability? How can festivals and cultural organisations improve their sustainability practices — and what can others learn from that work? This roundtable brings together sustainability experts and producers to discuss best practices, challenges, how they're being addressed, and what takeaways other organisers and makers can apply to their own work.

Roundtable 6: From Story to Universe: New Financing & Audience Paths for Kids IP

This session explores new approaches to financing and audience-building for kids' and youth content — from strategic thinking on IP and universe-building, to a real-world look at the opportunities and lessons that come with turning a series into an IP.

Roundtable 7: Making an Impact Beyond the Cinema

How can we use film as a tool for social impact — to educate and inspire kids outside of the cinema? Professionals from educational fields will share their insights on their work.

Roundtable 8: Rethinking What Young Audiences Want: Content, Platforms and the Assumptions Behind Them

Children's media has long operated on a set of unwritten rules — about what's too dark, what's too disruptive to established habits, and what a "good" story should look like. This roundtable brings together voices questioning those rules from different angles — content, platform and narrative structure — and asks: how should we go about reshaping content, habits and the assumptions behind them?

We are thankful to the Industry Forum Partners hosting the roundtables: Creative Europe Desk NL, SEE NL, IDFA, NAPA, Network Film Education.



EXPERT SESSIONS

Alongside the public conference programme, we have a new addition to the programme this year: Expert Sessions! Where local and international experts from different fields – funders, talent initiatives, festival programmers, sales agents – will share their experience and offer guidance in their respective areas.

Each session consists of several small-group Expert Tables focusing on a specific market segment, such as distribution, festivals, sales or production. Facilitated by national and international organisations, the tables offer space to share new ideas and projects and to build new collaborations.

Participants are welcome to mix and match Expert Sessions and Thematic Roundtables to build their own schedule, and can sign up for both via the website.

When & where
Tuesday, 13 October
14:45 – 17:30 – Pathe 7

Session 1 - 14:45 - 15:30

- ◆ Rosan Boersma and Anna de Beus (Cinemind)
- ◆ Aneta Ozorek (Kaboom)
- ◆ Zoeteke Lugthart and Lotte Bronshoff (Filmfonds)

Session 2 - 15:45 - 16:30

- ◆ Jana Mol (QISSA)
- ◆ Vincent Forster (Berlinale Generation)
- ◆ Sara Moeniralam (NPO Zapp/Zappelin)

Session 3 - 16:45 - 17:30

- ◆ Rikke Flodin (Will & The Agency)
- ◆ Laura van Erp (Filmforward)

Tuesday, 13 October

Session 1 14:45 – 15:30



Anna de Beus – CINEMIND

Anna de Beus is a film professional, coach and trainer. She studied Production Design at the Netherlands Film Academy and has worked as an art director, producer and agent within the film and television industry. Drawing on her extensive experience in the field, she now supports film professionals and students in their personal and professional development, collaboration and leadership. Anna teaches and coaches at the Netherlands Film Academy. In 2024, she co-founded CINEMIND with Rosan Boersma, focusing on mental health and social sustainability within the film and television industry.



Rosan Boersma – CINEMIND

Rosan Boersma is a coach, trainer and former film and television producer. With extensive experience in the creative industry, she supports professionals and emerging filmmakers in personal and professional development, communication and mental resilience. She teaches Personal Development and Communication at the Netherlands Film Academy, where she works with students on their development as both filmmakers and individuals. In 2024, she co-founded CINEMIND with Anna de Beus, bringing together their shared experience and commitment to a healthier and more sustainable working culture in the film industry.

About CINEMIND

CINEMIND is an organisation dedicated to mental wellbeing and personal development within the Dutch film and television industry. Founded by Anna de Beus and Rosan Boersma, CINEMIND combines hands-on industry experience with expertise in coaching and education. Through coaching, training, workshops, talks and project guidance, CINEMIND creates space for reflection, development and open conversations about mental health on and around the film set. CINEMIND works closely with FilmForward and other sector partners to support a healthier and more sustainable creative industry. On 1 November, CINEMIND will launch the first research study into mental wellbeing in the Dutch film industry, together with Prof. Dr. Mark Deuze of the University of Amsterdam (UvA).



Aneta Ozorek – Kaboom Animation Festival

Aneta Ozorek (PL | NL) is Artistic Director of Kaboom Animation Festival in Utrecht and Amsterdam. She is an experienced curator, organizer, tutor and consultant, working across film festivals, education and animation development in Europe and beyond. She heads the Short section of CEE Animation Pitching Forum and serves on the boards of REX Animation Festival, Animela and the Emile European Animation Awards. Aneta has worked with international industry platforms and institutions including TAICCA, New Producers Academy and HKU University of the Arts Utrecht. She loves bikes, graphic novels and mosh pits.

About Kaboom Animation Festival

Kaboom Animation Festival is the Netherlands' leading animation festival, taking place March 12–21 in Utrecht, Amsterdam and online. Welcoming around 36,000 visits, Kaboom presents over 300 animated shorts and features alongside industry sessions, talks, panels, VR, games, installations and exhibitions. A key part of the festival is the Kaboom Industry Days, dedicated to strengthening the Dutch animation industry and its international connections. The program creates opportunities for international exchange, networking, inspiration and talent development, offering a platform for emerging and established professionals to meet, share knowledge and develop new projects.

Lotte Bronshoff – Filmconsultant

At the age of fourteen Lotte (1985) was interviewing filmmakers and actors for Cinekid. This fully ignited her love for film, that resulted in a Bachelor's degree in Film Studies at the University of Amsterdam and her studies at the Film Academy (production, 2013).

After graduating, Lotte was a committee member at the Netherlands Film Festival for documentaries and went on to work for Lemming Film (2013–2019) with a focus on the development of projects. Lotte continued her education through courses in script writing. In 2020, Lotte worked as a program manager for the 'Created By' workshop by FilmForward in collaboration with Netflix, worked temporarily as project coordinator for producer Studio Ruba and as a script coach for various Dutch filmmakers. In 2021 Lotte started her five year term as the filmconsultant for children's film at the Netherlands Filmfund. She focused on the productions for young audiences assessing the grant applications for films and advising filmmakers on projects.



Zoeteke Lugthart – Netherlands Film Fund

With over twenty years of experience in film and television, Zoeteke Lugthart is an accomplished screenwriter, casting director, and creator. Driven by a deep affinity for children's and family cinema, her work unites story, talent, and audience. She champions stories with a distinctive voice and imaginative power—tales that remain unconventional in tone while effortlessly resonating with a broad audience. Within the Netherlands Film Fund, Zoeteke focuses on applications for children's and family films across all runtimes and stages. Her core funding schemes include Feature Film and Feature-Length Animation for both Development and Production.

About The Netherlands Film Fund

The Netherlands Film Fund finances films that contribute to a diverse and distinctive selection of Dutch cinema for a wide audience. We support productions with varied stories for all generations—from dedicated cinephiles to casual moviegoers—across every region, from Maastricht to Texel, and Groningen to Bonaire. Driven by our cultural mission, we stimulate film culture in its broadest sense: from features to VR, experimental projects to family films, and documentaries to regional hubs. We support established filmmakers while actively fostering emerging talent and new, unheard voices.



Tuesday, 13 October

Session 2 15.45 – 16.30



Jana Mol - QISSA

Jana Mol is programme maker at QISSA, where she develops and curates programmes for emerging talent in film and literature. She is responsible for QISSA's audiovisual programmes, including and the literary development programme Next Chapter. Across her programmes, Jana focuses on scouting new voices, creating space for artistic development and facilitating meaningful connections between emerging talent and the professional creative industry.

About QISSA

QISSA is a talent development platform for emerging storytellers and artists working across film, literature, theatre, art and design. We scout new voices and ideas and create programmes that give emerging makers the space, guidance and connections to develop their artistic practice. QISSA brings makers together with experienced professionals and peers, fostering an artistic community in which they can exchange ideas, experiment and grow. From film and literature to theatre, art and design, QISSA supports the development of new talent and creates opportunities for new perspectives and stories to reach the professional field.



Vincent Förster - Berlinale Generation

Vincent Förster is a film worker from Berlin, and Programme Manager Short Films at Berlinale Generation, the festival's section dedicated to young audiences. His studies in International Relations, Arabic, and Documentary Film Directing took him to Scotland, Egypt, Morocco, and Sudan, where he worked in cultural and educational institutions while developing film projects. He is a consultant for Short Films at Documentary Association of Europe (DAE) and has served on the selection committees of Filmfest Dresden and Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, where he has also curated film programmes.

About Berlinale Generation

Berlinale Generation is the festival's section dedicated to young audiences, screening state-of-the-art international cinema, for young audiences and everyone else. Generation Kplus and Generation 14plus are the two competition programmes, complemented by Generation Premieres, a non-competitive strand featuring four to six films with strong audience appeal, and Generation Shorts, which comprises around 20 short films tailored to different age groups. The selection focuses on films that, in their narratives and cinematic languages, take young people seriously, and tell stories through the eyes of their young protagonists making their worlds tangible.



Sara Moeniralam - NPO

My name is Sara Moeniralam and I am a content coordinator for Zapp/Zappelin. I studied Media & Culture (BA) and Film Studies (MA) at the University of Amsterdam. After graduating I started working for MTV & Nickelodeon as an editor/writer/researcher and created local online content for these brands. After a couple of years, I switched from a commercial broadcaster to public broadcasters where I worked as an editor for a children's television show and a talk show. At NPO I started of as content coordinator for 3LAB, which focuses on young talent. At my current job I am responsible for coordinating non-fiction and documentaries projects for VOD, online, television, podcasts, for our target audience. My goal is to make every child be seen and heard. My bigger goal in life is to make 'invisible' people visible.

About NPO Zapp/Zappelin

Zapp and Zappelin are the Dutch public media brands for children, offering high-quality content that informs, inspires, entertains, and helps young audiences grow.

Zappelin is designed for younger children ages 3–6, providing a safe and stimulating environment where they can discover the world through play. Through stories, games, music, and educational content, children are encouraged to explore, recognize, participate, imagine, and learn while enjoying moments of relaxation.

Zapp is aimed at older children and pre-teens ages 6–12, offering content they take seriously: stories, topics, and experiences that reflect their lives, spark their curiosity, and broaden their horizons. Zapp creates meaningful entertainment that resonates with young audiences, helps them understand themselves and the world around them, and encourages them to learn, participate, and develop their own views.

Tuesday, 13 October

Session 3 16.45 – 17.30



Rikke Flodin - Will & Agency

Rikke Flodin is Partner and Head of Audience Insights at Will & Agency: she leads our audience research across projects, translating what we learn from real audiences into practical insight for creatives and key stakeholders. Over the last years, she has specialised in reaching young audiences, using digital tools and anthropological methods to facilitate direct conversations with them. She holds an MSc in Anthropology.

About Will & Agency

Will & Agency is a Copenhagen-based research and strategy agency working at the intersection of anthropology, data and AI, and PUBLIKUM is our audience initiative for the European creative and cultural sector, with a particular focus on film and TV today. PUBLIKUM was born out of a simple question: how do we bring real audience voices into the creative process from script and story development all the way through to positioning and release?

Since PUBLIKUM launched in 2021, we've combined anthropological fieldwork with AI-supported analysis to help creatives, producers and funders understand how audiences actually feel about their stories, and how they engage with them. We like to say that we use AI to support anthropology, not the other way around. Today we've worked on 200+ projects across 15 countries in film, TV, streaming, gaming, museums and sport, drawing on a global panel of more than 8,000 active cinemagoers. Most recently, our work has grown into XAVAGE, a new development project taking PUBLIKUM's approach beyond film and TV into the wider youth culture space.



Laura van Erp - FilmForward

Laura van Erp is programme coordinator at Filmforward, where she develops and supports educational programmes and creates opportunities for film professionals to grow their careers. She previously worked on the programmes team at World Press Photo and each year advises graduate students at the University of Amsterdam on their theses and films. Alongside this work, she is a documentary filmmaker with a background in anthropology.

About FilmForward

FilmForward is committed to the professional development of working film and audiovisual professionals. We offer a wide range of workshops, masterclasses, and talent development programmes. In developing these programmes, we work closely with professionals and sector organisations, like trade unions and talent hubs. FilmForward was founded with support from the Netherlands Film Fund, with the aim of strengthening and connecting the existing field within the entire sector. The organisation focuses on professionals from various disciplines, regions, and experience levels. With a future-oriented and inclusive vision, FilmForward offers hundreds of professionals from different disciplines the opportunity to deepen their professional practice and learn from one another.

Films from The Netherlands

Cinekid 2026

Scan for the SEE NL
Children's & Youth
Film Catalogue 2026

[SEE-NL.COM](https://see-nl.com)



SEENL

STAY IN TOUCH

see-nl.com



JUNIOR CO- PRODUCTION MARKET

18 international projects in both feature and episodic categories were selected to participate in the Junior Co-Production Market during Cinekid for Professionals on 14–15 October 2026. The market allows distributors, commissioning editors, and producers to discover the latest children's films and series in development and post-production. The market opens with pitches from all projects, followed by one-on-one meetings between project teams and potential partners. Selected projects are eligible for a Eurimages Award.

A distinctive element of the market is **Junior Critics** (formerly Ask Your Audience), a renewed presentation of Cinekid's long-running audience feedback format, connecting creators directly with children from their target audience.



JURY AND AWARDS

During the market three prizes will be awarded to projects from the selection:

Eurimages Co-production Development Award

This amount of €20,000 will be awarded to the best feature film project. Eligible projects must target theatrical release and must be designed as a European co-production between at least two Eurimages Fund member states for other than purely financial reasons. The award has been created to support international co-productions and promote European films for young audiences.

eurimages



PUBLIKUM /
will&agency

Publikum Audience Awareness Award

All feature films and series selected for the Junior Co-production Market are eligible for this €9,000 award. The award money is paid in the form of services by the Danish business consultancy Will & Agency, who hands out the award. Will & Agency blends anthropology, data, and IT to analyse audience responses during the screenwriting process, helping filmmakers create a deeper connection with their viewers.

Filmmore Post-production Award

This €5,000 award, paid in the form of services by post-production facility Filmmore, goes to a live-action project at the Junior Co-production Market. Filmmore invests in long-term collaborations, offering full-service post-production, editing, and visual effects support for professional filmmakers who are developing live-action projects.

FILMMORE
VISUAL EFFECTS & POST PRODUCTION



Eurimages Jury

Ilse Ronteltap

Ilse Ronteltap is Head of International Affairs at the Netherlands Film Fund, focusing on international co-productions and collaborative projects. She is involved in the Thuthuka development scheme with South Africa, partnerships with the Hubert Bals Fund and IDFA Bertha Fund, and collaborations with Indonesia, Suriname, and the Benelux countries. She is also responsible for funding international filmfestival activities, collaborations with film labs, and initiatives including the Netherlands Film Commission, NL Wave, and New Dawn. Ilse is the Netherlands Film Fund's contact person for Eurimages and participates in board meetings. Previously, she worked as a line producer and is an EAVE Graduate



Sigrid Ekbaum

Sigrid Ekbaum is the Head of Outreach and Audience Engagement at the Estonian Film Institute (EFI), where she oversees the international promotional activities and partnerships, consults in the field of marketing, distribution and festival strategy and serves as an expert for various EFI allocation rounds. She has a BA in Audiovisual Media and MA in Strategic Public and Political Marketing. She is also a graduate of EAVE Marketing and Torino Audience Design programs and has worked in film sales in Sweden and Germany. Her passion? Audiences! To apply audience centric approach on films and find the best



Vincent Förster

Vincent Förster is a film worker from Berlin, and Programme Manager Short Films at Berlinale Generation, the festival's section dedicated to young audiences. His studies in International Relations, Arabic, and Documentary Film Directing took him to Scotland, Egypt, Morocco, and Sudan, where he worked in cultural and educational institutions while developing film projects. He is a consultant for Short Films at Documentary Association of Europe (DAE) and has served on the selection committees of Filmfest Dresden and Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, where he has also curated film programmes.



FILM PROJECTS

A Fantastic Tale	19
A Girl Named Zeus	21
Astronaut	23
Rise of Ying Ge	25
Once Upon an Egg	27
Oriana	29
Fingerthief	31
It's the Moon!	33
Summer of Ghost Island	35
Island of Nose	37
Meis	39





A FANTASTIC TALE

Sweetie, an eccentric 12-year-old leads a motley crew of misfit friends to refurbish an abandoned boat and set sail on a quest to find a magical pink fish.

Director Vincho Nchogu

Screenwriter Vincho Nchogu

Producer Josh Olaoluwa

Production companies Moving Slates, Kilastory

Production Countries Kenya and Nigeria

Spoken language English, Yoruba

Target audience 11+

Duration 80

Genre Adventure, Family

Type Feature

Total budget €1,200,000

Financing in place €200,000

Synopsis

Twelve-year-old SWEETIE is devastated when his beloved sister, FOLAKE—the closest thing he has to a mother—announces her marriage and plans to leave their village. In Sweetie's eyes, it's not Folake's fiancé to blame, but the legendary PINK FISH, said to bring luck wherever it appears. The fish's last sighting was in Folake's new village, and Sweetie, determined to fix things, hatches a plan. He'll repair an old boat, cross the Epe Lagoon, catch the Pink Fish, and use its luck to bring Folake home. To pull this off, He recruits his brother OLAMIDE and best friend MADUKA. To get an engine, they have to let TOCHI, the mechanic's daughter, join their crew, even though the boys aren't sure about having a girl on board. Through trial, error, and teamwork, they finally fix up the boat and set sail. Back in the village, the parents discover the children are missing and quickly piece together what the children are up to. As a storm brews over the lagoon. Sweetie pushes the engine to full throttle. CLICK. It sputters and capsizes. UTTER STILLNESS. Then, one by one, the kids resurface. Shaken, but alive. They drift, defeated, and THUD! Something lands at their feet. It's the Pink Fish, radiant and real. Sweetie raises his hand to strike, but hesitates at the fish's pleading eyes. Moved, he lets the fish go. As the fish swims away, their parents arrive in a rescue boat. The crew finally returns home to a hero's welcome and an eager audience for their Fantastic Tale.

Director's statement

December 2020, my nieces and nephews and I waited out the pandemic in our village in Western Kenya. To pass time, I regaled them with my adventures growing up. From churning butter to repairing old radios with an older cousin. Together, we built toys from found material. My niece remarked that none of the TV shows they watch featured adventures similar to mine or theirs. The following year, I relocated from New York to work in Nigeria. I spend most of my weekends filming a YouTube short documentary series featuring different African Knowledge Systems. While filming one of the episodes, I discovered Epe, a small town in the outskirts of Lagos that feels frozen in time. I engaged locals, asking questions about the town. It was established in the mid-18th century as a chief port (slaves, agriculture and cloth). In my discovery process, a canoe woman hustled me for a ride into the mangroves. It was on her canoe that I learned about the Pink Fish, its value, and the lengths to which people go to catch it. The canoe woman's story, the children in my life and my childhood led to this story. This story is long overdue. There aren't that many stories that showcase the joys of an African childhood. The stories that centre African children are about their childhood being robbed and therefore can't be watched by children. The ones that are for kids have animals as central characters and/or are animated. The best time to make this film was decades ago. The next best time is now.

Director's biography

Vincho Nchogu is a Kenyan filmmaker, producer, writer, and multimedia storyteller known for her work across Africa, the United States, and international film festivals. She has built a reputation for telling African stories through film, documentaries, podcasts, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems archiving. She wrote and Directed 'One Woman One Bra' which premiered at Venice, and won the BFI Sutherland Award for Best First Feature Film. She is currently working on her sophomore feature film 'A Fantastic Tale'. She is a Fellow of Film Independent, Torino Lab and the Gotham Institute.

Company profile

Josh Olaoluwa is the Founder of Conceptified Media, an award-winning Nigerian film producer and showrunner recognized for developing compelling African stories for global audiences. With experience spanning film, television, and documentaries, he has produced acclaimed projects for major platforms including Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, such as 'Grind', 'A Sunday Affair', and 'Oloture 2'. His work has earned international recognition through programs including Film Independent Project Involve, Red Sea Labs, and TorinoFilmLab. He most recently produced the critically film 'One Woman One Bra' which premiered at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival and won the 2026 Audience Award at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Representatives at JCM

Josh Olaoluwa, producer

Vincho Nchogu, writer & director

Contact details

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A GIRL NAMED ZEUS

Zeus, a rebellious city girl who loves heavy metal, journeys to the rugged mountains of Crete in search of a mythical lyre, hoping its magical sound will bring her parents back together.

Director Nikos Dayandas

Screenwriter Nikos Dayandas

Producer Konstantinos Koukoulis & Marina Andree kop

Production companies J[LANKTON Films, PomPom Film

Production Countries Greece, Croatia

Spoken language Greek

Target audience 8+

Duration 90 minutes

Genre Family, Comedy, Adventure

Type Feature

Total budget €1,750,000

Financing in place €1,142,000

Synopsis

12-year-old Zeus lives in Athens, listens to black metal, and dreams of singing like her father, Babis Uranus, frontman of The Titans. But her voice is too thin. When her parents' marriage collapses, Zeus is forced to go with her mother to Tartarus, a Cretan mountain village. There, she meets the Uranus family and her stern grandfather, Uranoyorgis, who hasn't spoken to Babis in 20 years, after trying to make him a traditional lyre player. Babis, a born metalhead, rebelled by destroying the Thunderlyre, a legendary family heirloom said to resonate magically with its player's voice. Hoping to bond, Uranoyorgis takes Zeus into the mountains, where they meet Lyrena, a cave-dwelling hermit who crafts lyres. Believing Lyrena has fixed the Thunderlyre and finding it will reunite her family, Zeus sneaks back to the cave. Lyrena reveals she was exiled because women are forbidden from playing the lyre. Zeus discovers her voice can harmonize with the instrument, creating magical sounds. She finds the restored lyre and vows to protect it. But when Zeus tells Babis, she learns her mother is divorcing him. Desperate to save the family, she reveals the lyre. Uranoyorgis wants to give it to a museum, but Zeus refuses. She wants to learn to play. Furious, Babis and his band crash a village baptism just as Zeus takes the stage. Heavy metal and Cretan folk collide, until Zeus unleashes her voice through the Thunderlyre, revealing her sound: an electrifying fusion of metal and tradition.

Director's statement

A Girl Named Zeus is a coming-of-age dramedy for children 8+, youth and adults: a family film that aims to entertain, move and inspire. Set in a heightened reality seen through a child's eyes, its key influence is Taika Waititi's Boy, with its honest, humorous portrayal of childhood, alongside the adventurous spirit of The Goonies and School of Rock. The film is inspired by my childhood in Crete, a place where a modern surface coexists with an ancient, often patriarchal soul. There, wild mountains meet postcard beaches, isolated villages border tourist resorts, and conservative parents raise modern children. This constant friction between past and present, family loyalty and individual freedom often produces both comedy and heartbreak. At its heart, the film asks a question that feels deeply relevant today: what do we do with tradition? Do we reject it or submit to it? A Girl Named Zeus explores a third path. Reimagining the myth of the Cretan-born Zeus and the Titanomachy through heavy metal, Cretan folklore and childhood fantasy, it follows a fearless but kind girl who breaks the cycle of generational conflict and reshapes her inheritance into something entirely new. She is the kind of heroine contemporary audiences need, making space for past and future to coexist. Through Zeus's journey, I hope to create a funny and emotionally rich family film that empowers girls to find their own voice while inviting audiences of all ages to reflect on family, heritage and change.

Director's biography

Nikos Dayandas was born in Crete in 1975. He studied Classical Archaeology (BA) at University College London and Documentary Research (MA) at the University of the Arts London. Since 2004, he has directed several international documentaries for National Geographic, ARTE, ZDF, AVROTROS, ERT, the National Film Board of Canada, and other broadcasters and institutions. He has also directed numerous historical documentaries, such as The Journey of Food, Venizelos, the Struggle for Asia Minor, and the series 1821. In 2019, he collaborated with migrant children in Athens to create the short fiction film Enter the Otter, which had its world premiere at the International Competition of the 37th Chicago International Children's Film Festival, one of the world's leading festivals for children and family cinema. Dayandas is an alumnus of Documentary Campus and First Films First Directors Academy. He was also the first Greek filmmaker selected by the Cinekid Writers LAB and the Kids Kino Lab with his live-action feature project, A Girl Named Zeus.

Company profile

Set on the island of Lesbos, J[LANKTON Films is a boutique production company. Our team brings bold stories to life across all formats, from live-action and animation to immersive experiences and beyond. Founded by EAVE-awarded producer Konstantinos Koukoulis, J[LANKTON has provided production services to broadcasters like BBC, ARTE, ZDF, CANAL+, VICE, and HBO. Our films have been showcased at major international festivals, reflecting our passion for director-driven projects that connect with audiences worldwide. Producer Elias Katsoufis brings extensive experience in international co-productions and creative development, having contributed to projects such as Athina Rachel Tsangari's Harvest (Golden Lion nominee). With a focus on sustainability and inclusivity, we combine strong production skills with artistic integrity to tell stories that resonate.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

Our goal is to connect with co-producers, sales agents, distributors and broadcasters who can help complete the financing, strengthen the film's international positioning, and support a clear path to young audiences across Europe while preserving the project's Greek identity and Cretan soul.

Representatives at JCM

Konstantinos Koukoulis producer
Nikos Dayandas director

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ASTRONAUT

In a desperate attempt to bring joy back to his family, Timian decides to do the impossible: travel beyond the stars

Director Mikal Hovland
Screenwriter Trond Morten Venaasen
Producer Nichilas Sando
Production company Filmbin AS
Production Country Norway
Spoken language Norwegian

Target audience 7+
Duration 85
Genre Family, Comedy
Type Feature
Total budget € 2,000,000
Financing in place € 125,000

Synopsis

Seven-year-old TIMIAN lives with his parents and his little brother OSKAR — his best friend, co-pilot in almost every adventure, and the only one who truly believes in Timian's wild inventions. Together, the brothers dream of building a spaceship that can take them beyond the stars. When Oskar suddenly dies, Timian's world falls apart. As his parents disappear into grief, Timian refuses to believe his brother is gone forever. When his grandmother tells him that the dead travel to the universe beyond the stars, Timian becomes convinced that Oskar is still out there — waiting to be brought back home. Together with Luna and other friends, Timian launches a reckless and fantastical mission to reach heaven itself. Using homemade inventions, stolen materials, and impossible optimism, he pushes both his imagination and the forces of nature to the limit. What begins as a child's wild rescue mission gradually becomes something deeper: a moving journey through grief, hope, and the unbreakable love between brothers. After a near-fatal accident, Timian is finally forced to confront the truth that Oskar is never coming back. But he also discovers that love does not disappear with death — and that the people we lose can continue to live on in memory, imagination, and in those left behind. Astronaut is a warm, funny and visually imaginative family adventure about loss, healing, and the power of never letting go of wonder.

Director's statement

Children have a much larger emotional register and a greater thematic capacity than we think. They tolerate tackling big ideas. They tolerate complexity and they deserve to be challenged. And unlike us adults, they can approach difficult themes with a completely different openness, wonder and curiosity. We want to show children how death and life go hand in hand, and how philosophizing about things provide greater human value than having the answer to everything. Because Timian's ability to use play, wonder and dreams in his efforts to grasp the most intangible things that exist, tells us something damnable about being a child and being human. This is a film that will celebrate childhood, imagination and contemplation. It will celebrate life itself, and our ability to transform loss into something beautiful, and to never give up. The film will leave room for wonder, the incomprehensible and the poetic, while at the same time telling the story at eye level with children and engaging on their terms. Despite its difficult subject matter, I want the film to cultivate playfulness, wonder, absurdity and madness. The film will elevate this contrast and juxtapose the humorous with the tragic, the dreamy with reality, the playful with the sad, and the creative with the hard subject matter of death. With this film we would like Timian; celebrate everything that exists - whether it is between the sky and the sea, under or above the earth, far beyond, or deep, deep inside the heart.

Director's biography

Mikal Hovland graduated from The Norwegian Film School in 2012. He has previously studied Film Science at Lillehammer University College (2001), Cinematography (BA) at The Arts Institute at Bournemouth (2004) and has 5 years' experience in the film industry in South Africa. His graduation film at the Norwegian Film School, «Strange Fish», participated in Nordisk Panorama, Palm Springs International Shortfest, California Independent Film Festival, International Student Film Festival in Tel Aviv, and has been sold to TV channels in both France and Italy. In 2013, Mikal was nominated for the Young Director Award in Cannes for the commercial film «Crime Scene», and his short film «The Navigator» (2017) premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. Since the Norwegian Film School, he has directed numerous ads for TV and the web, as well as 5 episodes of the TV series «Helium» for Fabelaktiv and NRK Super (2018), Seasons 2 and 3 of the drama series «Blank» for NRK (2019), 3 episodes of «Fjols til Fjells» for Discovery+ (2020), and 2 seasons of the comedy series «Kongsvika» for Seefood and TVNorge (2021). Mikal's first feature film «Christmas in Cobbler's Street» (Nordisk Film Production, Filmbin), premiered on 10th of November 2023 and was #1 for seven weeks at the box office in Norway with more than 400.000 admissions, and was the most seen Norwegian film of 2023. Mikal is currently in production of Season 4 of the hit series «Helt Ramme Sporter» for NRK.

Company profile

Filmbin is dedicated entirely to making films for kids and youngsters. The company is based in Lillehammer, Norway and consists of four owners and co-workers: producer Nicholas Sando, director Christian Lo, editor/scriptwriter Arild Tryggestad and Trine Aadalen Lo. Filmbin has produced Christian Lo's four original and award winning live-action feature films; RAFIKI (Bestevenner, 2009), THE TOUGH GUYS (De tøffeste gutta, 2013) and LOS BANDO (2018) as well as the Swedish co-production MINI ZLATAN AND UNCLE DARLING. We have also produced several award-winning children's short films as well as co-produced 3 features and a TV series. We think children and youth are a fantastic audience. Our mantra is to make quality films FOR children. We are driven by the wish to excite the young audiences and give them unforgettable film experiences – that feel relevant and contemporary in their eyes. We try to tell our stories in the eye-height of kids and youngsters. We address subject matters that we think are important. We want to make wonderful and meaningful films, films that kids and youngsters can relate to - and that reflect the society they live in today.

Goals at the JCM

Primarily to attach a Dutch or German co-producer and initiate dialogue with potential sales agents and financing partners. We also aim to build international visibility for the project and establish relationships for future collaboration and distribution.

Representatives at JCM

Nicholas Sando producer

Mikal Hovland director

Trond Morten Venaasen writer

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RISE OF YING GE

After nine years apart, 14-year-old Lucie travels to China for her grandfather's funeral. There, she discovers Ying Ge dance and embarks on a fantastical journey to uncover the legacy he left behind

Director Denis Do

Screenwriter Dennis Do

Producer Sebastien Onomo

Production company Special Touch Studios

Production Countries France, China

Spoken language French

Target audience 7+

Est. duration 8

Genre Family, Adventure, Comedy

Type Feature

Total budget €6,772,880

Financing in place €425,000

Synopsis

Lucie (14 years old) follows her parents to China to attend the funeral of her grandfather, whom she hasn't seen in nine years. There, she discovers her family's culture and develops a passion for Ying Ge dance, of which her grandfather was a master. Following in his footsteps, Lucie will be drawn into a fantastical world where she meets supernatural beings who help her uncover the true essence of this art, the legacy her grandfather left behind.

Director's statement

Rise of Ying Ge was born from my discovery of the Chaoshan region while producing The Forest of Miss Tang in 2023. There, I discovered Ying Ge Wu, a traditional martial dance blending martial arts and Teochew opera. After returning to study the dance and founding the first Ying Ge troupe in France, I felt the need to tell a story inspired by this unique cultural heritage. Through Lucie, the film explores universal themes of grief, family, cultural identity, transmission and coming of age. Inspired by the 49-day Chinese mourning ritual, the story blends reality with a fantastical Spirit World, where Lucie reconnects with her grandfather's legacy while learning the values of friendship, solidarity and teamwork. Designed for family audiences, Rise of Ying Ge combines action, humour, mythology and emotion to introduce viewers to the living heritage of Chaoshan culture. With vibrant visuals inspired by southern China and a contemporary soundtrack mixing electronic music with traditional percussion, the film celebrates cultural transmission while building a bridge between Chinese traditions and international audiences.

Director's biography

Denis Do was born in Paris in 1985 and a graduate of Gobelins, l'École de l'Image in 2009, his first animated feature film, Funan, won the Cristal for Best Feature Film at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival in 2018. His second film, The Forest of Miss Tang, was nominated in 2024 for the César Award for Best Animated Short Film. His work is shaped by his threefold cultural heritage : Chinese, Cambodian, and French. He explores themes related to identity and memory, striving through his projects to strengthen the representation of minorities. Denis is also actively involved in community life and is the founder of the first Ying Ge dance troupe in France.

Company profile

Special Touch Studios is a production company whose ambition is to renew the imagination by proposing other views on the world. An editorial line focused on Africa, the Caribbean, Asia, the Middle East and the Urban Cultures and the emergence of talents carrying strong stories with a universal dimension.

Goals at the JCM

We are looking for international co-producers, broadcasters, sales agents, distributors and financing partners. We are also looking to expand our network of strategic partners for the project's long-term development.

Representatives at JCM

Sébastien Onomo producer

Denis Do director

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ONCE UPON AN EGG

ONCE UPON AN EGG

When their nest and only egg are destroyed, two city pigeons befriend a young ring-necked parakeet and discover an abandoned egg, creating an unexpected family in a changing Amsterdam.

Director Nina Gantz

Screenwriter Robert Alberdingk Thijm

Producer Derk-Jan Warrink, Koji Nelissen

Production company Keplerfilm

Production Countries The Netherlands

Spoken language Dutch

Target audience 6+

Duration 85

Genre Family

Type Feature

Total budget €8,969,319

Financing in place €2,038,501

Synopsis

Molly and Mick are two ordinary, grey city pigeons who have struck it lucky with their nest on top of a fry stand in the heart of Amsterdam. One day, everything changes when a cleaning crew washes away their nest, and with it, their only egg. Heartbroken, they set off in search of a new home and a new sense of purpose. Along the way, they befriend a young ring-necked parakeet named Brutti and eventually find an abandoned egg. While caring for the egg and each other, they learn that only by adapting to the changing city can they build a new life — and a family — of their own. ONCE UPON AN EGG is a musical stop-motion animation film by two-time BAFTA-winning director Nina Gantz and Emmy-winning scriptwriter Robert Alberdingk Thijm. The film combines the beauty of handcrafted animation with sets built from recycled materials, painted backdrops, and choral harmonies inspired by classic Disney scores. We follow two city pigeons, Molly and Mick, and a young ring-necked parakeet named Brutti, seeing the city of Amsterdam through their eyes and discovering the hidden corners they've made their own. Aimed at a broad audience, with a primary focus on children aged five and up, the film offers humour, warmth, and adventure for the whole family.

Director's statement

ONCE UPON AN EGG is about a changing society and two ageing city pigeons who slowly begin to lose their place in it. As their familiar Amsterdam changes around them, they feel there is no longer room for them. The film explores what it means to find a sense of belonging in a changing city, and how home is ultimately something you create together. With ONCE UPON AN EGG, I want to create a stop-motion film with a distinctly handmade feel. I love the visible human touch that stop-motion brings, and I want to combine the charm of classic Eastern European animation with the refinement and cinematography of contemporary stop-motion. Amsterdam will be built in miniature, with painted backdrops, false perspectives and skies made of soft wool. I want to show the city from the birds' perspective: its famous landmarks, but also the places we usually overlook. The exhaust of a fries stand, a nest made of plastic floating through the canals, rooftops, bridges and piles of rubbish can all become beautiful if you look at them differently. I want to find beauty in this dirt. Furthermore, music will play a central role. Rather than simply moving the story forward, the songs should deepen character, celebrate the different birds that inhabit the city and bring them together.

Director's biography

Nina Gantz is one of today's most acclaimed animation directors. She studied at the St. Joost School of Art & Design before completing a Master's in Animation Direction at the UK's National Film and Television School. Her stop-motion graduation film Edmond won 38 international awards, including a BAFTA, a BIFA and the Sundance Jury Prize. Her latest short film, Wander to Wonder, premiered at the 2023 Venice Film Festival and went on to become one of the most celebrated animated shorts of recent years. The film won numerous international awards, including the BAFTA for Best British Short Animation, was nominated for the Academy Award® for Best Animated Short Film, and screened at festivals around the world. The success of Wander to Wonder established Gantz as one of the leading voices in contemporary stop-motion animation. Nina manages to visually convey complicated emotions with subtle design and restrained performances. Alongside her work as a freelance director and her collaboration with London-based production company BlinkInk, she is currently developing her first stop-motion feature film, Once Upon an Egg, continuing to explore new ways of combining craftsmanship, storytelling and innovative animation techniques.

Company profile

Founded in 2016 by producers and longtime friends Derk-Jan Warrink and Koji Nelissen, Keplerfilm works with great ambition on high-quality international feature films and short films. Among others, Keplerfilm produced the Dutch Oscar entry BULADÓ (Eché Janga), Tribeca Special Mention winner PINK MOON (Floor van der Meulen), box-office hit HOTEL SINISTRA (Michiel ten Horn), Netflix Original and Cinekid jury winner CAPTAIN NOVA (Maurice Trouwborst), OUR GIRLS (Academy Award winning Mike van Diem) with over 300.000 admissions and Prix Jeunesse and Rose d'Or-winning TV production TALKING HEADS (Menno Otten) which format has been sold to several countries. Keplerfilm is run by producers Derk-Jan Warrink and Koji Nelissen – both members of ACE, EFA and alumni of EAVE – with Derk-Jan focusing on the creative side and Koji more concerned with the business side of producing. Derk-Jan and Koji gathered a motivated team around them, each with their own specialism in different areas such as script development, marketing, and financial, legal and production coordination. In 2022, Keplerfilm was selected as one of THE EURO 75 by Screen International, highlighting Europe's leading independent producers.

Goals at the JCM

We are looking to meet possible coproduction partners and distribution partners such as sales agent, television broadcasters and research equity possibilities.

Representatives at JCM

Derk-Jan Warrink producer

Nina Gantz director

Contact details

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ORIANA

Oriana, a 10-year-old girl, convinces her friends to escape their dull, grey neighborhood in search of an adventure in a forest where imagination and reality intertwine.

Directors Fernanda Polacow, João Nuno Pinto

Screenwriter Nuno Soler

Producer Andreia Nunes

Production companies Wonder Maria Filmes, Albolina Film

Production Countries Portugal, Italy

Spoken language Portuguese

Target audience 8+

Est. duration 90

Genre Adventure

Type Feature

Total budget €2,300,000

Financing in place €727,500

Synopsis

Oriana is a loose adaptation of the book *A Fada Oriana*. Our story respects the work of Sophia de Mello Breyner, who masterfully dealt with the weight of responsibility on women, but creatively elevates it to contemporary issues. Children of today are growing up protected from the outside world by the walls of their homes. Outside, they are constantly supervised by adults. Oriana is an ode for children's liberation. We also feel that children are growing up terrified by the idea that climate change is irreversible and the future is dangerous. But it is imperative to dream and have hope. For us, the most important message is that of reconnection with nature. Just as the English have managed, with great success, to create their own aesthetic, such as in the films *Matilda Musical* or in the series *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, we want to create a Latin, southern European aesthetic, with its own cultural traits. We also take as references for innovative and bold aesthetics current films that navigate with elegance and subtlety within the universe of the fantastic natural world, such as *Border*, by Ali Abbasa, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, by Benh Zeitlin or *Onkja*, by Bong Joon-ho. Oriana is an ode to the natural world, in all its power of fear and richness, of shadow and hope. This story is for our children and yours, but it is, above all, a way of understanding and guiding them in this new world.

Director's statement

Oriana is a loose adaptation of the book A Fada Oriana. Our story respects the work of Sophia de Mello Breyner, who masterfully dealt with the weight of responsibility on women, but creatively elevates it to contemporary issues. Children of today are growing up protected from the outside world by the walls of their homes. Outside, they are constantly supervised by adults. Oriana is an ode for children's liberation. We also feel that children are growing up terrified by the idea that climate change is irreversible and the future is dangerous. But it is imperative to dream and have hope. For us, the most important message is that of reconnection with nature. Just as the English have managed, with great success, to create their own aesthetic, such as in the films *Matilda Musical* or in the series *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, we want to create a Latin, southern European aesthetic, with its own cultural traits. We also take as references for innovative and bold aesthetics current films that navigate with elegance and subtlety within the universe of the fantastic natural world, such as *Border*, by Ali Abbasa, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, by Benh Zeitlin or *Onkja*, by Bong Joon-ho. Oriana is an ode to the natural world, in all its power of fear and richness, of shadow and hope. This story is for our children and yours, but it is, above all, a way of understanding and guiding them in this new world.

Director's biography

Fernanda Polacow is a Brazilian writer, script consultant, and creative producer with over 20 years of experience across film, television, and streaming platforms, including Amazon Prime Video, HBO, Netflix, Globo, NHK, and Al Jazeera. She wrote the screenplays for *Mosquito* (opening film of the International Film Festival Rotterdam 2020 and winner of the Critics' Prize at the São Paulo International Film Festival 2020) and *18 Holes to Paradise*. She also directed *Big Bang Henda*. Fernanda has served as a script mentor for the Torino Film Lab, IndieLisboa Lab, PLOT, and Pitch Me! She is also the co-founder of MUTIM, the first association of women working in cinema in Portugal. João Nuno Pinto is a director born in Mozambique who trained at the New York Film Academy and Judith Weston's Studio in Los Angeles. His filmography includes *América* (premiered at the Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival in 2010; Best Director at the Sofia International Film Festival; Best Cinematography at IndieLisboa), *Causa Própria* (broadcast on RTP1 and HBO Portugal/Spain; winner of the Sophia Award for Best Portuguese Series), and *Mosquito* (opening film of the International Film Festival Rotterdam 2020; winner of the Critics' Prize at the São Paulo International Film Festival 2020; recipient of six Sophia Awards from thirteen nominations). His third feature film, *18 Holes to Paradise*, is currently touring the international festival circuit throughout 2025 and 2026.

Company profile

Wonder Maria is an independent production company founded in Lisbon in 2020, dedicated to internationally oriented auteur cinema and audiovisual productions. Its work focuses on fiction and documentary feature films, with a strong emphasis on projects of distinctive artistic vision, international co-productions, and circulation through leading film festivals and markets. Over the past five years, the company has established a strong track record in international development programmes and funding initiatives, including the Berlinale Script Station, Torino Film Lab, EAVE Producers Workshop, and EURODOC. It has also commercially released films in Portugal and internationally, with worldwide sales handled by leading sales agents such as Alpha Violet and Minerva Pictures International. Wonder Maria is also the first Portuguese production company to produce a Portuguese feature film certified by Green Film.

Goals at the JCM

To meet co-producers from beyond the Mediterranean region, as we already have a Portugal–Italy co-production in place, along with sales agents and people who share our love of fairies.

Representatives at JCM

Andreia Nunes producer

Fernanda Polacow director

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FINGERTHIEF

THE GIRL (13), a competitive gymnast, runs away from her abusive parents-coaches to takes refuge on rooftops of Athens and with a dramatic leap atop a crane, exorcises her past.

Director Harry Patramanis

Screenwriter Harry Patramanis

Producers Vicky Miha and Eleni Asvesta

Production companies asterisk*, Shampoo Films

Production Countries Greece

Spoken language No dialogue

Target audience 11+

Duration 80 minutes

Type Feature

Total budget €2,096,621

Financing in place €398,621

Financiers Creative Europe Media, EKOME

Synopsis

A young gymnast runs away from her parents' apartment after years of emotional abuse, incredible pressure to succeed, and bullying. Bruised and battered from a recent injury, she escapes to the rooftops of Athens, becoming invisible. Her resilience and what's left of her gift as a champion gymnast are all she has to heal through the chaos of unsheltered life as she learns how to survive her pain and fully experience it, as well as the full spectrum of feelings — including bliss. Through video clips of the GIRL'S career, we see her parents cared more about the medals she brought home than her well-being. Their callous approach to her is chilling. Undoubtedly, the GIRL is a spectacular gymnast—and her love for the sport runs deep. But her parents' ambitions and the pressure to succeed become too much. The thin line between coaching and abuse is crossed too many times. The consequence is tragic. When injured in a terrible accident during a routine, the GIRL first wants to disappear. Then, the city of Athens becomes her gymnasium, its inhabitants her unknowing audience. She develops an obsession with a massive construction crane. We don't know why until the end, but this crane is where she will attempt to complete the routine cut short by her injury—to execute the perfect backflip with a half twist high above the city. She will prove she is better than any trophy or medal. She will find herself and return back to the ground, healed and in control of her own life.

Director's statement

Fingerthief pushes the boundaries of action films. It is a fantastical story of self-discovery, full of suspense, twists, and emotional moments. It is aimed at teenagers searching for their true identity in a world full of suffocation, oppression, and heightened expectations. The hope and goal is for teenage viewers to identify with the GIRL. To fly with her. To fear with her. To celebrate with her. To feel with her. Having invested emotionally and morally in this topic, I want to expand on it and discuss the unhealthy pressure exerted on young children and teenagers by their parents, not to fulfill the child's dream but the parents' unfulfilled dream. As Alice said in *Through the Looking-Glass*, "I don't like belonging to another person's dream." Furthermore, Fingerthief serves as a commentary and counterbalance to social media and its destructive (and in countless cases, even deadly) impact on the lives and mental well-being of adolescents. It is no coincidence that, in order for our heroine to enter a reality—to truly live—she first leaves her smartphone behind. Fingerthief is a tangible, real film—real both in terms of the authenticity of the emotions it explores and in terms of the analog way in which it is staged and shot, standing in direct contrast to the artificiality of the digital world. An integral part of this flesh-and-blood reality, in the end, the GIRL achieves the most incredible feat.

Director's biography

Harry Patramanis is an award-winning Greek director, writer, cinematographer and video artist. Born in Athens, he studied film at the Munich Film School (HFF). He is represented in the US by Company Films and is a member of the DGA and the ICG. He produced his first feature film, *Fynbos* (2012), through his US production company, A Four Letter Word. *FYNBOS* was shot entirely in South Africa. The film premiered at the 2012 Berlinale and won the Kodak Vision Award at the Slamdance Film Festival. It was also screened at the Durban International Film Festival and is currently available to stream on FilmDoo and Amazon Prime.

Company profile

Founded in 2019 by producer Vicky Miha, asterisk* brings together production, consulting, and post-production under one umbrella. Our films have premiered at festivals such as Venice, Berlinale, Locarno, TIFF and Tallinn and have all been structured as international coproductions. From the outset, the company has pursued a dual mission: co-producing ambitious projects with strong international potential, while providing consulting services that increase the viability and visibility of projects across Europe and beyond. This hybrid model has enabled asterisk* to build an extensive international network of producers, sales agents, distributors, and financiers, while accumulating deep expertise in contemporary European production practices.

Shampoo is led by the producer / director team Eleni Asvesta and Harry Patramanis. They have traveled the world extensively and for more than 20 years making visionary projects for commercials and film. Their extensive advertising work has received nods at the Cannes Lions, Epica Awards, London International Awards, and the New York Festivals Advertising Awards, among others.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

We are looking for creative and financial contributors to strengthen the project's eligibility for European funding. We would like to meet with international sales agents, distributors and festival representatives at an early stage to discuss film positioning and distribution strategy.

Representatives at JCM

Vicky Miha producer

Eleni Asvesta producer

Haris Patramanis writer/director

JP Danko writers

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IT'S THE MOON!

After studying his parents' constant arguments, a nine-year-old boy concludes the Moon is turning them into werewolves and recruits his best friends to help him destroy it.

Director Jorge Alberto Vega Rivera
Screenwriters Jorge Alberto Vega Rivera
and José Andrés Riascos Sandoval
Producer Angela Maria Revelo Castro
Production companies La Valiente, Hobby
Production Countries Colombia, Mexico
Spoken language Spanish

Target audience 7+
Est. duration 72
Genre Adventure, Family
Type Feature
Total budget €1,938,576
Financing in place €152,019

Synopsis

Joan (9) is worried because his parents argue more every day, but no one will tell him what's wrong. After carefully studying their behavior, he concludes the Moon is turning his parents into werewolves. His theory gains strength when the mysterious Claudeville Circus arrives in town, advertising the world's only real werewolf. He shares his discovery with his friends Helen and Camilo, who realize their own parents are acting strangely too. The evidence seems undeniable: adults are transforming into werewolves. The three friends form the "Lunatic Circle" to stop the werewolf outbreak before the coming Blood Moon, which coincides with the circus's opening night. Their wacky experiments all fail until they discover an unlikely projectile at school to hit the Moon. On the night of the Blood Moon, as the Claudeville Circus opens and the whole town gathers under the big top, the Lunatic Circle launches its homemade rocket, convinced it's the only way to save their parents, and every other adult in town.

Director's statement

When Andrés Riascos, our co-writer, was a child, his parents took him to the circus, where he came face to face with a werewolf in a tent. The encounter terrified him so deeply that he ran away, even though his parents insisted it was only a video. He carried that memory for years until we began writing this story about a boy trying to understand the adult world when it lies beyond his comprehension. What if a child concluded that his parents' erratic behavior was caused by the Moon turning them into werewolves? Looking at family conflict through the lens of werewolf mythology became a powerful creative engine for everyone involved in this project. Many people of my generation grew up with divorced parents. Before anyone explained what was happening, we witnessed quiet tensions, explosive arguments at home. For a child, those moments become fertile ground for imagination, where science and fantasy merge in an attempt to make sense of the unknown. That is the story I want to tell: a child who invents an impossible mission because it is easier to fight the Moon than to accept that love alone cannot solve every problem. I believe stop-motion animation is the perfect medium to bring that emotional world to life. Its handcrafted nature transforms ordinary objects into living characters. Together with talented puppet makers and animators, I want to create an epic adventure that celebrates the extraordinary lengths children will go to in order to keep their families together.

Director's biography

Jorge Alberto Vega is an audiovisual designer, animator, and storyteller working across animation, video games, and immersive media. He holds a Master's degree in Audiovisual Communication from Argentina and an MFA in Digital Animation and Interactive Media from the United States. As Creative Director of La Valiente Studio, he has led projects for children's audiences, including the award-winning short film *The Cubicbird* (2019), recipient of the Quirino Award for Best Ibero-American Animated Short Film; the educational video game *Oi Marimbí*; and the feature film in development *It's the Moon!*. He is also a design professor and researcher at the Laboratory of Narrative and Transmedia Image at the University of Cauca, where he develops projects exploring the relationship between local cultural identity and global narratives.

Company profile

Hobby Creative Studio is a 2D and 3D animation studio specializing in stop motion and the combination of all these techniques. In our 15 years in the market, we are proud to say that HOBBY has established itself as one of the best stop-motion studios in Mexico. We work with national and international clients on advertising and associated productions. Among our standout IPs are *La Canción del Lago* (2023), *The Doors - Paris Blues* (2022), *The Replacements-Johnny's Gonna Die* (2021), and *Ya Tseen - Knives Ft. Portugal. The Man* (2020).

Goals at the JCM

Our goal at the JCM is to secure partners for our film, *It's the Moon!*, to leverage its production, post, and distribution. We see Cinekid as a premier hub to connect with international industry experts and producers, seeking valuable feedback and collaboration for our project.

Representatives at JCM

Angela Maria Revelo Castro producer
Jorge Alberto Vega Rivera director

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A photograph of four children in a dark forest at night. One child in the center holds a flashlight, illuminating their face and the surrounding trees. The other children look on with expressions of curiosity and concern.

SUMMER OF GHOST ISLAND

Sent to summer camp on a ghost-haunted island, where myths and reality become hard to tell apart, a group of 10-year-olds must find the courage to face their deepest fear: to be alone.

Director Line Hatland

Screenwriter Line Hatland

Producers Hanne Myren, Mari Monrad Vistven

Production company Medieoperatørene

Production Country Norway

Spoken language Norwegian

Target audience 8+

Duration 80 minutes

Genre Family, Comedy, Adventure

Type Feature

Total budget €460,835

Financing in place €133,475

Synopsis

Summer at Ghost Island is a spooky documentary about a group of children who, over twelve days one Nordic summer, become an inseparable gang, with just enough courage and imagination to face down ghosts, and their own inner demons. A film about saltwater, bright summer days, and the power of free play uninterrupted. For many of the children, this is their first real goodbye to their parents. They arrive on an island full of strangers and must rely on their own resources to confront their greatest fear: that they won't make friends, and will end up alone. They are met by grown-ups introducing them to the myths on the island. The paint is peeling off the island's old wooden buildings, which already look like haunted houses. Because they are. There are rumours of a lonely ghost who licks blood from wounds in the night. The adults insist the children must never go into the forest alone. Hudøy has been a beloved institution for Oslo's children for 108 years. Around 4,000 children apply every summer, spread across eleven colonies over four two-week periods, and fewer than half of them get a place. Where the camp once focused on physical fostering, healthy food and fresh air, today one of its central goals is simply to let children play outside, away from screens. The setting is deliberately old-fashioned, outhouses instead of bathrooms, shared dormitories instead of private rooms, a hundred-year-old tradition that hasn't changed all that much, and isn't trying to.

Director's statement

The idea came to me after a short holiday. My youngest niece told me, beaming, about her best summer memory: all the friends she'd made on the island, the giant badger, the ghosts. The ghosts had given her nightmares for years — and still, she talked about the place with pure joy. 'I was completely free,' she said. She could be whoever she wanted to be. Children are a heartless audience, they show no mercy if they're not engaged. And yet I believe they're the most important audience of all. Our films need to matter to them if they're going to carry the torch forward. Rather than make a moralizing film about screens and social media, I want to explore the opposite: play itself. What do children get out of play and imagination? How does it build friendship? Is it true that courage expands the world? Our claim is that within safe, predictable boundaries, free play lets children forget themselves a little. Surrounded by new friends, nobody has already decided who they are. We want the whole of free play, not just the sweet, well-behaved version. If play is truly free, it has to include the dark side too: the shrieking, the power struggles, a little mischief. Childishness, imagination and energy can be superpowers. We just have to explore what free play actually gives children, on their own terms.

Director's biography

Line has directed creative documentaries for 25 years. Selected works: Kids Cup (Bortebane), 2021, 89 min. Produced by Medieoperatørene. Nominated for best youth documentary at Idfa 2021, premiered at Giffoni 2021, at Nordic Panorama 2022, opening film at Children's Film Festival, Kristiansand Norway 2021, New York and Chicago International Children's Film Festival, Tiny Tempo 2021, Sweden, Docville, Belgium, Millenium Docs Against Gravity, Busan international Children's Film Festival, Europe on Screen, Jakarta, Indonesia, Taiwan International Children's Film Festival, Kino Dzieci, Poland, Mon Premier Festival, Paris, Oulu International Children's Film Festival and many more. Winner of Best Feature Film at Children's Film Festival, Seattle, 2022, winner of Best European Documentary for a Young Audience, Zlin Film Fest 2021, winner of Best Feature Documentary, Olympia Children's Film Festival, Greece 2021, Winner of Best editing, Golden Panda, Chengdu, China, 2023. Nominated European Children's Film Association for Best Documentary for a Young Audience 2021. Nominated to Amanda 2021 and the Norwegian TV-award Gullruten for Best photography 2023. Wrote and co-directed 20 episodes of Dear Mum, about raising kids. Nominated for the national TV award Gullruten 2016.

Company profile

At Medieoperatørene, we have spent the past ten years expanding audiences for documentary films aimed at children and young people. Titles such as Tongue Cutters (2017), Kids Cup (2021), Warriors (2022), and the ECFA award-winning Todd & Super-Stella (2024) have reached audiences through theatrical releases in Norway, major international festivals including CPH:DOX, Hot Docs, Sundance and IDFA, as well as extensive school and youth screenings. We are also proud that The Remarkable Life of Ibelin received the European Film Academy Award for Best Youth Film in 2024, competing across both documentary and fiction categories. With Summer at Ghost Island, we aim to further expand our reach within the international family audience.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

Our main goal is seeking international financing and co-production partners in Europe. Attending forums like this also gives great insight into how the film is fitting into today's rapidly changing market.

Representatives at JCM

Line Hatland director
Hanne Myren producer
Mari Monrad Vistven producer

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ISLAND OF NOSE

Tom Tippelaar is teased for his unusually large ears. But when he's sent on a mission to save the Island of Nose from a mysterious crisis, he must learn to trust on his extraordinary hearing.

Director Noël Loozen

Screenwriter Saar Ponsioen

Producer Layla Meijman & Maarten van der Ven

Production company Studio Ruba

Production Countries The Netherlands

Spoken language Dutch

Target audience 6+

Duration 70 minutes

Genre Adventure

Type Feature

Total budget €3,000,000

Financing in place €167,000

Synopsis

Tom Tippelaar (11) is teased for his large ears and dreads spending summer at home. On the last day of school, his bullies stick a note on his back: CRAZY FLOPPY EARS. Devastated, Tom hides under his blanket, vowing to stay there all summer. But then he receives an unexpected letter from Uncle Horace, who lives on the magical Island of Nose, shaped like a giant nose, where the seasons live as real characters. The islanders have voted to send Autumn, Spring and Winter away so it is summer forever. It has been sweltering for months. According to Uncle Horace, only Tom can help. Preferring adventure to bullies, Tom sets off on his own. His parents wave him off, hiding their concern. And his ears, always a source of embarrassment, soon prove to be his most important compass. Tom has to learn to trust his ears in this fairy-tale adventure full of enchanting music, odd characters, and unexpected courage.

Director's statement

The Island of Nose started with a feeling most of us know: wanting to hide away, while longing to be seen. Seen just as you are, precisely with the things that make you different. For me, self-acceptance isn't a destination you reach, but something you are always working on.

Tom is a sweet, sensitive boy who loves nature and has big ears he is ashamed of. He doesn't trust children; they've only ever brought him grief, so he avoids them. Through his adventure with the seasons, he discovers he's more resilient than he thought, learns to trust himself, and comes to see his ears as a strength rather than a burden. It is not about finding your perfect place, but about being allowed to search, to doubt, and to discover where you can be yourself.

Tom wants to belong, but not at his own expense. Summer wants to be admired; Winter does not want to be forgotten. The bullies and the antagonist Cloverick show what happens when that desire turns into exclusion and control. An island that banishes everything different and keeps only what feels pleasant slowly begins to wither: a quiet echo of how fragile the balance of our own climate is.

I want to make this a live-action film in which the magical simply exists, and the landscape grows with what Tom feels inside. The drawings in the illustrated book the film is based on are the blueprint for our live-action world. Children are often surprisingly philosophical; their vulnerability and imagination are closely intertwined. They are not a 'small audience', but people with enormous sensitivity. The Dutch artist Spinvis sings about inheriting the way your child sees the world. With this film, I want to look through those eyes for a moment. For children, for parents, and for everyone who has ever felt different, or was lost for a while, and found something valuable in it.

Director's biography

Noël Loozen (1983) is a Dutch film director and visual artist known for his distinctive, poetic style that often blends the absurd and the magical with the everyday. He holds a BA in Photography from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and an MA in Film from the Netherlands Film Academy. Loozen has created a range of acclaimed short films, including *BOTANICA* (2018) and *SPOETNIK* (2015), the latter of which premiered at the Berlinale and was selected for the Generation 14plus program. His recent work spans music videos and television commercials, as well as two seasons of the VPRO children's series about art, *MOONRIDERS*, which was twice nominated for Best Television Program at the Cinekid Awards. He has also created film installations such as *DE DIJK*(2025) and *OBSTACLE COURSE 2.0* (2018), which are exhibited in public spaces and in collections including that of the Schiphol International Airport art collection. Currently, Noël is completing his debut feature film, *TOUTES DIRECTIONS*, which will premiere in early 2026. In addition, he is developing several films and series aimed at younger and family audiences, reflecting his focus on the next generation

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Writer's biography

Saar Ponsioen (1991) is a Dutch screenwriter. In 2016, she graduated from the Netherlands Film Academy in Amsterdam with the short film *WHEN GREY IS A COLOUR* (directed by Marit Weerheijm), which won several awards, including a Student Academy Award in Los Angeles. In 2018, she co-wrote the television drama *FREE FIGHT* with director Sven Bresser, which was nominated for two Dutch Academy Awards. In March 2020, she was featured in NRC Handelsblad's list of '101 New Talents'. In 2021, she wrote the short film *HOW LIGHT GETS IN* (directed by Marit Weerheijm), which was nominated for a Dutch Academy Award for Best Short Film at the Netherlands Film Festival that same year.

In 2022, she created and developed *HET HERRIEHOFJE*, a joyful preschool series for KRO-NCRV. As part of a writers' room, she recently contributed to *NEMESIS*, the first Dutch drama series for Disney+. She is currently working on various film and television projects for both children and adults, such as *DREAMSCAPE*, which was presented at the Cinekid Co-Production Market in 2025.

Company profile

Layla Meijman and **Maarten van der Ven** founded the boutique production company Studio Ruba in 2019. Driven by a strong belief in the power of collaboration and a hands-on approach, they develop and produce cinematic films and creative documentaries in close partnership with a select group of filmmakers. This has led to several standout films for both national and international audiences, including *KIDDO* (Zara Dwinger, Berlinale Generation 2023) and *TO A LAND UNKNOWN* (Mahdi Fleifel, Quinzaine des Cinéastes/ TIFF 2024). The life-affirming mosaic drama *IDYLLIC* by Aaron Rookus premiered in the Big Screen Competition at IFFR 2025, and most recently, the debut film *SUGAR* by Amira Duynhouwer has become a box office hit in Dutch cinemas.

Drawing on the strong relationships they have cultivated with filmmakers over the years, they are currently shooting *THE POSSESSED* by Ena Sendijarević in Spain. Studio Ruba is also developing *KITTENS* by Laura and Nova van Dijk, which was presented at the Cinekid Co-Production Market 2024; *WHAT'S WRONG WITH SYLVESTER* by Zara Dwinger; and *THE ISLAND OF NOSE* by Noël Loozen and writer Saar Ponsioen, based on Annie M.G. Schmidt's beloved children's book and selected for the talent development programme Talentscope 2025.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

Present *The Island of Nose* to co-producers, funds potential partners, sales and distribution.

Representatives at JCM

Layla Meijman producer
Noel Loozen director
Saar Ponsioen writer



MEIS

Meis (9) builds a spaceship to travel to the future and find a cure for her sick mother. But her journey takes an unexpected turn. Is she brave enough to face her true mission?

Director Boudewijn Koole

Screenwriter Boudewijn Koole and Jakop Ahlbom

Producer Julia van Schieveen

Production company WIT Film

Co-production companies UMedia

Production Countries The Netherlands, Belgium

Spoken language No dialogue

Target audience 6+

Duration 80 minutes

Type Feature

Total budget €3,716,509

Financing in place €1,733,081

Synopsis

Meis dreams of becoming an astronaut. From her bedroom, she gazes at the stars through a crooked skylight. Her mother Iris, a renowned dancer, has MS but refuses to let it define her. Her dad Dimitri, a former boxer with a heart of gold, runs an online business and cares for the household. The family is a chaotic trio, overflowing with love. When Dimitri installs a computer in Meis's bedroom, she discovers it can talk. The computer, PC, helps her build a spaceship to travel into the future in search of a cure for Iris. Meanwhile, using a home-built mobile structure, Iris prepares for one final dance performance. As Iris's health deteriorates, Meis clashes with Dimitri and leaves in her spaceship. Among the stars, she learns that letting go can be the greatest act of love. Back on Earth, Meis finally lets Iris go. When she discovers that PC was Dimitri all along, she realises she was never alone. Meis and Dimitri continue their daily rituals through grief, with even more chaos and love.

Director's statement

'Meis' is about a young girl's quest to save her terminally ill mother. It is a film without dialogue, not because there is nothing to say, but because some emotions are better expressed through movement and music than through words. Inspired by the classic slapstick films of Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, 'Meis' retains the heart, humour and humanity of traditional silent comedy, and infuses it with a colourful, upbeat and modern style. The characters never speak, but they breathe, laugh, cry and communicate through movement. The only voice we hear is Meis's talking computer, PC, a modern take on the title cards of classic silent films. At its heart, Meis is about love. Not romantic love, but the love between parent and child, which ultimately means learning to let go. Meis and her father discover that letting go is the greatest act of love. Another important theme is the power of imagination. Meis builds a spaceship to travel into the future, and through this imaginary journey she finds the strength to face reality and say goodbye to her mother. 'Meis' explores love, grief and resilience with lightness, humour and imagination, making these themes accessible to young audiences without losing their emotional depth. The physical comedy brings laughter, while the fantasy adventure helps children understand difficult emotions. We hope audiences leave the cinema smiling, moved and comforted by a film that celebrates imagination, resilience and the enduring power of love

Director's biography

Boudewijn Koole (1965) studied at Delft University of Technology and began his career as a documentary filmmaker. Since 2012, he has written and directed acclaimed feature films. His debut feature **KAUWBOY** (**LITTLE BIRD**) won over 30 awards internationally, including the Berlinale Best First Feature, Berlinale Grand Prix Award for Best Youth Film, and the FIPRESCI Prize for European Discovery of the Year. **KAUWBOY** was the Dutch Oscar entry. His second film, **BEYOND SLEEP**, opened the International Film Festival Rotterdam and earned him the Dutch Academy Award for Best Director. **DISSAPPEARANCE** premiered at TIFF and won, among others, the Cineuropa Award. His adaptation **HOKWERDA'S CHILD**, based on the novel by Oek de Jong, premiered at the Eye Film Museum and was released in Dutch cinemas. Koole is (Emmy Award-winning) creative producer at Witfilm and mentors filmmakers throughout the creative process.

Company profile

Witfilm is an award-winning independent production company. Led by producer Iris Lammertsma and creative producer/director Boudewijn Koole, Witfilm focuses on high-quality & artistically driven fiction features, avant-garde films for young audiences, and creative & socially engaged documentaries. Witfilm (co-)produces both nationally and internationally. Many of its films have won prizes such as the International Emmy Award, FIPRESCI, Prix Europa, IDFA Awards, Prix Italia, and the Dutch Academy Awards, and have been nominated for awards including the Rose d'Or, BAFTA and Tiger Award (IFFR).

Representatives at JCM

Boudewijn Koole writer/director

Julia van Schieveen producer

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INSTAGAFFE

A clumsy, enthusiastic mother follows online influencers to solve family life, but every perfect tip turns into a spectacular comic disaster for her and her daughter.

Directors Roberto Grasso and Sara Irace

Screenwriter Roberto Grasso

Producer Sara Irace

Production companies Res Animata Studio

Production Countries Italy

Spoken language Italian, English

Target audience 7+

Estimated duration per episode 11 minutes

Genre Family, Comedy

Type Episodic

Total budget €5,500,000

Instagaffe was officially selected for the prestigious MIFA Pitches in the TV Series & Specials category during Annecy. It won the prestigious Cinekid for Professionals Prize and was therefore automatically selected to participate in Cinekid's 2026 Junior Co-Production Market (JCM).

Synopsis

INSTAGAFFE is a kids & family comedy series about Sara, a loving but impulsive mother who believes every online tutorial, trend and influencer promise can improve her family life. In each episode, she follows a new "perfect" tip — how to organise the house, cook better, become healthier, look cooler, relax or parent better — and turns it into a chain of increasingly absurd physical disasters. Her daughter, smarter and more grounded, usually sees the trap before anyone else and tries to contain the chaos. The series uses slapstick, stop-motion energy and a contemporary digital layer to talk about influence, image, failure and everyday family pressure. Social media is not presented as something children should use, but as a comic mirror of adult behaviour: the child audience can recognise the mechanisms behind online perfection from a safe distance. At its heart, INSTAGAFFE is a warm mother-daughter comedy about trying too hard, failing spectacularly and learning that real life is funnier, messier and more human than any online promise.

Director's statement

INSTAGAFFE was born from the gap between the perfect life promised online and the chaotic reality of everyday family life. I wanted to turn this tension into physical comedy: a mother who tries very hard to do the right thing, follows every tip with total enthusiasm, and fails in the most spectacular and human way possible. For me, the series is not about encouraging children towards social media. It is almost the opposite: it uses comedy to help them recognise the mechanisms behind online influence, perfection and performance before they encounter them more directly. The emotional core is the relationship between a mother and a daughter. The daughter often understands the world better than the adult, but the mother's failures are never cruel. They are funny, loving and relatable. I see INSTAGAFFE as a handmade, energetic and warm series: visually playful, physically comic and emotionally close to families.

Director's biography

Roberto Grasso is an Italian animation director, visual artist and co-founder of Res Animata Studio. His work combines stop motion, handmade visual worlds, illustration, motion design and hybrid animation, with a focus on physical comedy, visual storytelling and character-driven ideas. He directed Lovorphosis, his first stop-motion short, in 2016, followed by several animation and mixed-media projects. In 2022, he directed Premise, an animated short film, with original music by Alessandro Cortini from Nine Inch Nails. His upcoming short Da Capo al Fine, developed around Down syndrome and music, is currently in production. Roberto also illustrated "Maestra! Gli orologi si sono sciolti!", a children's book created with AnnaLaura Cantone and supported by the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, and authored Mekhane, a storytelling board game distributed internationally. He teaches animation, stop motion and visual storytelling at NABA, IED and Brera. INSTAGAFFE is his first original kids & family series as creator, writer and director

Company profile

Res Animata Studio is an Italian animation studio founded by Roberto Grasso and Sara Irace. The studio develops and produces stop motion, hybrid animation, motion design and handmade visual worlds for original projects, cultural institutions, brands and educational contexts. Its work combines physical materials, miniature sets, illustration, digital compositing and character animation. Res Animata focuses on projects with a strong visual identity, a tactile approach to animation and a clear emotional or comic core. INSTAGAFFE is the studio's main original kids & family series currently in international development.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

We are looking for co-producers, broadcasters and distributors to support the next development stage and help shape an international financing and production strategy for INSTAGAFFE.

Representatives at JCM

Roberto Grasso director

Sara Irace producer

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MATEY

When Ties (11) is sent to Hope House to become “normal,” he and his fellow outsiders embark on a wild adventure to save his imaginary best friend Gozert (14)—and themselves.

Director Arne Toonen

Screenwriters Bodil Matheeuwsen and Rik van den Bos

Producer Jacqueline de Goeij

Production company Fiction Valley

Co-production companies Dingle

Production Countries The Netherlands, Belgium

Spoken language Dutch

Target audience 8+

Estimated duration per episode 150'

Number of episodes 6

Genre Family, Adventure

Type Episodic

Total budget €3,360,000

Financing in place €2,832,000

Synopsis

11-year-old Ties has a problem—or at least... that's what most people think. Ties doesn't see it that way: after all, he has the very best friend; Gozert. The coolest, funniest, toughest, and most awesome friend you can imagine. The only problem is that Ties is the only one who can see and hear Gozert. Gozert is wild, colorful, and drags Ties into dangerous adventures like hunting trolls and putting out fires. Because this often gets Ties into trouble, his parents decide to step in and seek help. They send him to a special facility (House of Hope) to “get better,” so that Gozert will disappear from his mind. But Ties doesn't want to get rid of Gozert at all. What should he do? The children at House of Hope have their own problems, but they come to Ties and Gozert's rescue. Will they manage to save Gozert?

Director's statement

Gozert resonates with me on a deeply personal level, both emotionally and thematically. As the parent of a child with ADHD/ADD, I strongly identify with Ties and his parents. I have seen how difficult it can be for a child to fit into a predetermined mould, and how resistance and isolation can grow when their behaviour is primarily seen as difficult. Listening without judgement, truly hearing, understanding and believing him ultimately proved to be the key. Gozert embodies everything I have always wanted my son to know: being different does not mean there is something wrong with you, imagination is not a shortcoming, and a child can only truly develop when they feel seen and believed. I want to create a series for children and adults alike, full of fun and with an emotionally truthful heart, in which imagination is celebrated without restraint. Children deserve complex stories that take them seriously. By experiencing the world through Ties's eyes, we want to create empathy rather than distance and rekindle children's imaginations. Artistically, the challenge lies in finding the precise balance between realism and fantasy. I want to create a tangible, cinematic world with a distinctive identity, in which performance, production design, cinematography, editing, sound and VFX shape Ties's subjective experience. In this way, Gozert will become both a celebration of imagination and a story with emotional and social resonance.

Director's biography

Arne Toonen is a director and screenwriter. He graduated in Fiction Directing from the Netherlands Film Academy in 2003, after studying Fine Art at the Arnhem Academy of Art and Design. His feature film debut *Dik Trom* (2010) attracted 487,000 cinema admissions and won several awards at children's film festivals in Chemnitz and Lünen. *De Boskamp's* (2015) attracted 200,000 admissions, was selected for the Sundance Film Festival and won both the Jury Award and Audience Award at Cinekid, as well as numerous international children's jury and audience awards. Toonen's other directing credits include *Black Out*, *Baantjer het Begin*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Van der Valk* and *Safe Harbor*. He also directed four episodes of the second season of the VPRO series *Hein*. His work combines accessible entertainment with visual energy, humour and emotional depth. Children's and family fiction provides him with the freedom to create distinctive worlds in which imagination, vulnerability and unconventional characters come together. With *Gozert*, he builds on this experience in an adventurous series that inseparably connects childhood imagination with social urgency.

Company profile

Fiction Valley is a Dutch production company specialising in high-quality films and drama series. Since 2016, the company has developed and produced distinctive, accessible stories that reflect contemporary society and offer space for new perspectives. Fiction Valley works closely with public broadcasters, streaming platforms and national and international co-production partners. Its productions include successful films and series such as *Mocro Maffia*, *Dirty Lines*, *Sleepers*, *Sihame*, *Zussen*, *Crypto Boy* and *The Takeover*. Fiction Valley also has considerable experience in high-quality children's and family productions. The company produced the youth series *AAP* and the family film *Taiki*, and co-produced *Jackie & Oopjen*, winner of the Cinekid Golden Lion for Best Dutch Children's Film and several international children's film awards. Lead producer Jacqueline de Goeij was also closely involved in successful family films such as *Dolfje Weerwolfje* and *Wiplala*. Fiction Valley combines creative and cinematic ambition with extensive experience in developing, financing and producing complex projects. As part of Fremantle, the company benefits from a broad international network and expertise in co-production, financing and global distribution. With *Gozert*, Fiction Valley builds on this experience to create a distinctive and imaginative children's series for a broad family audience.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

Our goal at the Cinekid Co-Production Market is to find international co-producers, sales agents and financing partners who share our ambition and can help us close the remaining financing gap.

Representatives at JCM

Jacqueline de Goeij producer

Arne Toonen director

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VALENTINO THE DREAM SHEEP

In a world where white sheep bring sleep, one black sheep dares to jump into nightmares, helping children face their fears with laughter and heart.

Director Samir Arabzadeh

Screenwriters Samir Arabzadeh & Fredrik Andersson

Producer Liselotte Persson

Production company Sideways Studios

Production Countries Sweden

Spoken language Swedish

Target audience 4+

Estimated duration per episode 7'

Number of episodes 6

Genre Comedy, Adventure

Type Episodic

Total budget €916,000

Financing in place €96,000

Synopsis

In the magical world of Sheepland, white sheep do what sheep do best: jump fences so children can count them and fall asleep. Again and again, in a soft, dreamy loop. But Valentino, the only black sheep, is different. He is restless, curious and far too playful to simply jump in line. Unlike the other sheep, Valentino has a rare gift: he can enter children's dreams. And whenever a child has a nightmare, Valentino cannot help but follow. In each episode, a child's fear opens the door to a wildly imaginative adventure. Everyday fears grow into funny, surreal and fantastical worlds. Aida's fear of the dentist becomes a land of candy and sugar bugs. Sam's fear of dogs turns into an enormous barking monster. Lily's fear of the dark fills her room with impossible creatures. And Byssan the cat panics when being petted becomes far too much. With humor, warmth and plenty of chaos, Valentino helps each child, or animal, face their fear. Through his spontaneous clumsiness and playful curiosity, he helps them find their own way to face it. Every child wakes up a little braver. Each episode begins and ends in Sheepland, where Valentino lives among white sheep who do not quite understand him. Across the series, Valentino keeps trying to connect with them, and little by little, his presence begins to change Sheepland. Soon enough, he is no longer only the odd sheep on the outside. He has found a way into the flock.

Director's statement

With Valentino the Dream Sheep, I want to create a warm, funny and visually soft comedy-adventure series that takes children's fears seriously without ever becoming heavy. For a child, fear does not become small just because it is ordinary. Something simple can feel enormous at bedtime. I want the series to respect that emotional truth, while approaching it through imagination, humor and play. The world of Valentino grew from the familiar idea of counting sheep to fall asleep. It is a simple image, but it immediately opens a door. Where do those sheep live? What do they do when children count them? And what happens if one sheep is too restless and curious to keep jumping in line forever? That question became Valentino. He wants fun, snacks, friends and attention. He is impulsive, dramatic and often wrong about what is going on. He is not a grown-up voice explaining fear from above, but a clumsy companion who enters the dream with the child. Sometimes he makes things worse. Often he gets distracted. But through his chaos, he creates space for the child to laugh, play and approach the fear in their own way. At its heart, the series is about playing with fear without dismissing it. The children do not wake up fearless, but with a little more courage. And Valentino slowly finds what he has been looking for all along: connection.

Director's biography

Samir is an award-winning filmmaker born in Iran and raised in Sweden. In 2010, he graduated with a degree in Film and Screen Production from Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia. Moving seamlessly between live-action and animation, and fiction and documentary, Samir has directed several films that have won awards at festivals around the world. He notably directed and co-produced "Märta Proppmätt", a 3D animated movie that had a nationwide cinema release in Sweden in September 2018. His documentary "Powernapper's Paradise" had its international premiere at Hot Docs and went on to screen at more than 40 festivals, including FIPADOC and Palm Springs. Most recently, Samir co-produced the animation "Rukeli" by the renowned Italian director Alessandro Rak, which had its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival in 2025. Samir is currently in production with the short animation "Snot Shine" and the feature-length documentary "Till Death Do Us Part".

Company profile

Sideways Studios is an independent creative production company based in Sweden, dedicated to developing and producing high-quality, character-driven visual storytelling for global audiences. Moving seamlessly across live-action, animation, and documentary formats, the studio focuses on powerful, imaginative narratives with deep emotional resonance, heart, and universal appeal. With a strong footprint in the Nordic region and a growing network of international co-production partners, Sideways Studios prioritizes artistic integrity, inclusive collaboration, and innovative pipelines. The company is currently driving the development and production of original IPs, including the highly anticipated animated preschool series Valentino the Dream Sheep.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

Our goals are to secure European co-producers, international pre-sales, and broadcast partners to complete our €916,000 budget for a 2028 release. We also want to connect with global sales agents and distributors drawn to high-quality, heartfelt preschool animation.

Representatives at JCM

Liselotte Persson producer

Samir Arabzadeh director

Contact details

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TALES OF THE COSMO - THE SOLAR SYSTEM

A brave, clumsy Earth and her shy Moon explore a living Solar System, while a vengeful comet returns to threaten the birth of life.

Director Davide Veca

Screenwriters Vincenzo Cascone and Ubaldo Giusti

Producers Ubaldo Giusti and Samuele Zangara

Production companies Keep Digging Production

Production Countries Italy

Spoken language Italian

Target audience 6+

Estimated duration per episode 286'

Number of episodes 26

Genre Family, Comedy, Adventure

Type Episodic

Total budget €3,200,000

Financing in place €640,050

Synopsis

Imagine looking up at the sky and discovering that stars and planets are alive: they have voices, emotions, desires and fears. What if Earth were a curious, energetic planet, always ready for adventure, and Moon were her shy, sensitive best friend, with a rather... moody personality? Tales of the Cosmo is a magical animated series set in a living Solar System, where natural phenomena become playful adventures and emotional challenges. Earth and Moon explore the universe together with Sun, a luminous and protective guide who tries to keep order, Pluto, a meditative guardian living at the margins, Mars, a brilliant inventor of strange machines, and a whole community of planets, asteroids and comets. Each episode turns a real scientific phenomenon — from eclipses, gravity and tides to atmosphere, magnetic fields, asteroids and meteorites — into a visual, comedic and emotional story. Science is not explained as a lesson: it happens through the characters' bodies, mistakes, relationships and transformations. But beyond the wonders of the Solar System, something is moving in deep space. A cold-hearted Comet, surrounded by aggressive asteroids, begins to threaten the balance of this cosmic family. To face her, Earth, Moon and the other planets will have to learn that growing up means changing, making mistakes, protecting one another and finding one's place in a much larger universe.

Director's statement

Direction in Tales of the Cosmo will portray a living Solar System where each celestial body has its own personality. The series will use a hybrid technique: 3D bodies developed in Maya and Blender, CGI effects, 2D expressions and 2D backgrounds, combining comic-book appeal and clarity. The characters will have no legs: they will move through orbits, rotations, slides and suspended bounces. Arms and hands will appear only when needed to emphasise gestures or emotional choices. Each character will have distinct traits: Earth's clouds express her mood; Mars has technological glasses and inventor tools; Venus elegant earrings; Pluto a mystical light/shield; Mercury is small, nervous and the fastest in the system. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune form the gas giants: larger, theatrical, each with an ego disorder linked to their size. Jupiter sees himself as the Solar System's superhero and often takes credit for little Pluto's achievements. Materials reinforce these differences: Sun has a warm, glossy, honey-candy texture; planets feel soft and clay-like; satellites, lacking atmosphere, are rockier, drier and more irregular. Music and sound will portray an interconnected universe of vibrating matter, resonance and dissonance. Wide shots will express the beauty and scale of space in musical sequences; dialogue scenes will focus on acting through cinematic framing and close-ups. The rhythm will be softer in dialogue, faster in adventure, with around 150 shots per episode.

Director's biography

Davide Veca is an Italian storyboard artist, director and visual storyteller with more than 30 years of experience in the animation industry. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with internationally renowned studios including Walt Disney Television Animation Australia, Brown Bag Films, Boulder Media, Rainbow, Studio Bozzetto, Lanterna Magica, Atlantica Entertainment, Dream Logic Studio and several others. His credit include Layout Artist on The Jungle Book 2, The Lion King 1½, Peter Pan: Return to Never Land, Tarzan & Jane, Storyboard Artist on La gabbianella e il gatto, Momo, Robogobo, Ridley Jones, Chico Bon Bon, Transformer Cyberverse, Stinky and Dirty, Huntik, Winx and many other productions. Storyboard Supervisor on Tip the Mouse, The Adventures of Pinocchio and My Little Pony: Tell Your Tale 2. Co-Director for Geronimo Stilton Season 3 and Director on the teaser "No Pets".

Company profile

Keep Digging SRL is an Italian production company founded in 2019 with a clear mission: to tell stories that inspire people to embark on an inner journey and reconnect with their true selves. Based in Emilia-Romagna, the company develops and produces films, documentaries, animation, branded content, digital projects, novels and graphic novels, with a strong focus on transmedia entertainment. Since its foundation, Keep Digging has built a diverse slate ranging from socially engaged documentaries and short films to animation and international co-productions. Its works include Eclissi, part of the transmedia universe Tales of the Cosmo; Cicciolina Pocket, presented at Torino Film Festival and awarded at Sediciorto; The Space Between Us, finalist at the NASA CineSpace Short Film Competition; La Riqueza del Mundo, awarded at IFFI Goa; and Strade Interrotte, winner of several documentary and social film awards. Keep Digging supports multicultural creators and projects that combine accessible storytelling with emotional, social and spiritual depth. Its ambition is not only to produce individual works, but to build narrative worlds capable of growing across formats, audiences and platforms. At the heart of the company is the belief that changing one's inner world can transform the way we relate to reality, others and the world around us.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

We are looking for international co-producers, broadcasters and distributors to support the production path of Tales of the Cosmo and strengthen its transmedia identity, international positioning and audience reach.

Representatives at JCM

Ubaldo Giusti producer

Davide Veca director

Contact details

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WORK IN PROGRESS

Braided

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Millie and the Secret of the Crocodile

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The Queen of England Stole My Parents

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BRAIDED

Two teenage basketball prodigies in Athens, born to African immigrant families but denied citizenship, chase their dreams of going pro while navigating friendship and the struggle to belong.

Director Elpida Nikou and Rodrigo Hernandez

Screenwriters Elpida Nikou and Rodrigo Hernandez

Producer Rea Apostolides and Yuri Averof

Production companies ANEMON, BIND, Arthouse and SGV

Production Countries Greece, Netherlands and Bulgaria

Spoken language Greek

Target audience 11+

Duration 96 minutes

Genre Family

Type Feature

Total budget €451,459

Financing in place €371,559

Synopsis

Braided follows two 16 yr old Miriam and Gloria, over four transformative years as they grow up in the multicultural neighborhood of Kypseli, Athens, and pursue an unlikely dream: becoming professional basketball players. Born in Greece to African immigrant families, they are the star players of a grassroots girls' basketball team led by the dedicated yet contradictory Coach Michalis. While basketball offers purpose and hope, the girls must navigate discrimination and the absence of citizenship rights despite having known no other home. Miriam is confident and charismatic, balancing training with work and caring for her younger siblings. Gloria is quieter and introspective, drawing strength from her friendship with Miriam. Their bond is tested as their paths begin to diverge. The film follows their emotional and political awakening through moments of triumph, disappointment, and resilience. When a foreign scout offers them the chance to play professionally abroad, their dreams are shattered by bureaucratic barriers that prevent them from leaving Greece. As Gloria struggles under the weight of uncertainty, Miriam gradually lets go of basketball and rebuilds her future on her own terms. A lyrical portrait of friendship, identity, and belonging, revealing the quiet courage required to build a future when the rules of the game are never equal.

Director's statement

We first met Miriam and Gloria in our neighborhood of Kypseli. At a rundown basketball court, our attention was caught by what appeared to be a girls' team of African origins, trained by an overweight Greek coach, whose approach was intense and unconventional. We began to follow the team, but from the beginning, it was Gloria and Miriam who grabbed our attention. We began to film them, while seeking to establish a level of trust. The challenges were daunting. Convincing the club president and their coach was not easy. During this period, we witnessed the extreme challenges the two girls had to face, their difficult family circumstances, as well as the evolution of their friendship. We became increasingly compelled to tell their story. Getting to know Miriam and Gloria profoundly reshaped our perspectives on the world. And while we were both innately sensitive and empathetic to migrants' struggles, this film has gradually opened our eyes to the deeper issues of statelessness. Over time, our relationship with the girls has shifted, while the trust they've placed in us has also reshaped the way we approach the camera itself: always close, never distant — turning it from a passive observer into a present witness. For us, the film is not only about documenting their lives, but bearing witness to their resilience and taking responsibility for amplifying their voices into the world.

Director's biography

Elpida Nikou and Rodrigo Hernandez are documentary filmmakers based in Athens whose work explores human rights, migration, and social justice through character-driven storytelling. Rodrigo, a Mexican filmmaker and director of photography raised between Mexico and Spain, began his career reporting from more than 60 countries across Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. His work has appeared in The New York Times, National Geographic, BBC, and other international media, covering conflict, migration, organized crime, and climate change. Elpida is a Greek journalist and filmmaker whose work is rooted in grassroots activism. She co-founded the Global Network of Independent Media Centres (Indymedia) and spent two years living in Zapatista communities in Mexico, documenting indigenous struggles and social movements. In 2012, they co-founded Zungu, producing documentaries and reportages for Al Jazeera, The New York Times, National Geographic, Telesur, and others. Their feature documentary *Shooting (Disparos)* became the most widely exhibited documentary in Mexican cinemas in 2019. Their short *Blood On Our Side* won the Jury Award for Best Documentary Short at the 2020 Austin Film Festival and qualified for the 2021 Academy Awards. In 2024, they co-directed *Serigne*, nominated for an International Emmy Award for Best Documentary.

Company profile

At BIND, we tell stories about the world of today and tomorrow. Personal stories with relevant themes. Funny, moving, sobering, enlightening or bewildering, but always outspoken and unifying.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

To meet sales agents, festival representatives as well as outreach and distribution partners. We are also interested to explore TV pre-sales, especially for the 52' minute version.

Representatives at JCM

Rea Apostolides & Yuri Averof producers

Contact details

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MILLIE AND THE SECRET OF THE CROCODILE

Real friendship takes courage.

Director Esben Toft Jacobsen

Screenwriter Esben Toft Jacobsen

Producer Petter Lindblad

Production company Snowcloud Films

Production Countries Sweden, The Netherlands, Denmark

Spoken language Swedish

Target audience 5+

Duration 76'

Genre Family, Adventure

Type Feature

Total budget €3,025,523

Financing in place €3,025,523

Synopsis

The mouse Millie is afraid of everything. She has grown up in a loving family of hedgehogs, and when her best friend Morten falls into the river, she has to overcome her fears to save him. Along the way she meets a frog, Archimedes, that helps her, until she realizes he wants to become part of the crocodile's army. The adventure leads to the crocodile island, where she discovers that the secret of the crocodile is the fear of being alone. Millie helps the crocodile confront her fears, frees all imprisoned animals and in the end, everyone finds peace living together by the lake.

Director's statement

I have always loved animated films that felt special. Not films that simply aim to entertain, but stories that stay with you. As a child, I found that feeling in the Moomins, and later in films by Studio Ghibli and Cartoon Saloon. They made me laugh, but also created worlds I wanted to live in and characters whose struggles felt real. That is the kind of experience I hope to create. The story comes from a deeply personal place. One of my children struggled with anxiety and fear from an early age. Through supporting her, I saw how much courage it can take to do things that others consider small: joining a game, trying something new, or walking into an unfamiliar room. What touched me most was that her fears never lessened her desire for friendship, adventure, and play. She simply had to work harder to reach them. Watching her gradually overcome those challenges taught me that courage is not the absence of fear. It is something we practice. As a filmmaker, I have seen how children use stories to explore difficult emotions and grow stronger. Millie is a film about overcoming fear. It is about friendship, imagination, and the stories we tell ourselves. I want the film to feel like a genuine adventure—funny, charming, exciting, and emotionally honest. Above all, I want audiences to root for Millie, laugh with her, and celebrate when she succeeds. My ambition is to create a world audiences want to spend time in and a story that leaves them feeling a little braver than before.

Director's biography

Esben is a director, writer and animator working with feature film and series. A graduate from the Danish Film School 2006 he has created two animated features, two animated series and one live action series, Scandinavia's first Netflix Original series THE RAIN. Most recently the animated series FLORA & LARS that was released in all the Nordics.

Company profile

Swedish production company focusing on projects for children and youths, mainly animation. Specializing in low-cost, lean productions with high quality screen results. Own projects with Swedish directors as well as co-producing internationally. We also do consulting for other companies as a producer, in financing, production setup, technical supervision etc, as well as hold courses in production planning and budgeting.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

Finding distributors and festivals for when the film is completed.

Representatives at JCM

Petter Lindblad producer

Esben Toft Jacobsen writer & director

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THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND STOLE MY PARENTS

It is a story about an adopted girl who embarks on a journey to save her biological parents.

Director Ernestas Jankauskas

Screenwriters Gabija Siurbytė and Aleksandra Cmielewska

Producer Gabija Siurbytė, Viktorija Rimkutė

Production companies Dansu Films

Production Countries Lithuania, Poland

Spoken language Lithuanian, Polish, English

Target audience 7+

Duration 90 minutes

Genre Family, Adventure

Type Feature

Total budget €1,223,800

Financing in place €1,008,800

Synopsis

Smilte, a 10-year-old rebel with a vivid imagination, begins her new life with her soon-to-be adoptive parents. Trust isn't easy for her, so she sets out to create a chaos - after all, this isn't her first rodeo. Meanwhile, Viktorija and Tadas are determined to be the best parents they can be. Even if it means overdoing things. As bonds start to blossom, Smilte's quirky doll, a peculiar detective with a mind of its own, springs to life and whispers a fantastical secret: her biological parents didn't leave her; they were kidnapped by none other than the Queen of England! It's the only explanation that makes sense in Smilte's enchanting world. With a spark of determination, Smilte packs her belongings and sets off on a whimsical quest to rescue her parents. Her journey will take her on foot, by bus, boat, and even plane! At the same time her adoptive parents are chasing her, utilizing every means necessary even floating on a giant swan! As Smilte gets closer to the "truth," she must choose: cling to the doll's destructive promise, or face her fears and embrace the flawed, loving people in front of her. In a world of chaos and manipulation, what really defines a family and where does Smilte's heart truly belong?

Director's statement

A year ago I became a father through adoption, and my daughter opened my eyes to a reality I had only half-seen. This film grows from that experience. I want to take audiences inside the emotional world of a child who has been abandoned - her hopes, her fantasies, her imaginary friend, her ironclad logic, and her fierce sense of good and evil. Through Smilte's eyes, a chair can speak and anything can come alive. The adult world of her new foster parents is quieter, full of doubt and words they cannot find. I will hold these two worlds apart through space, distance and light, and let the distance shrink as they slowly learn to love each other. This is a film about love - the kind we all carry but don't always know how to express. It is also about the children we still call "difficult" or "untrustworthy," labels that say more about us than about them. In Lithuania alone, thousands of children are waiting to be wanted. Visually I am inspired by Amélie and Little Miss Sunshine, musically by Yann Tiersen, and by the rooftops of Vilnius Old Town, where Smilte's imagination takes refuge. I want viewers to begin in whimsy and end in truth - feeling what Smilte feels, and opening their hearts a little wider toward the children still waiting, and the families who choose to walk beside them.

Director's biography

Ernestas Jankauskas directed TV series "Troll Farm", that was first high drama TV series in Lithuania and was selected by Berlinale Series Market Selects, Transylvania IFF and Killer Series where it is shown in Main Competition. His first feature film "Sasha was here" premiered at POFF/ First Feature competition in Tallin and visited Shanghai, Les Arcs, Odessa film festivals among lots of others and was nominated for best film, best script and best actress awards in Lithuanian Film Awards. His second feature "I am fine thanks" was picked up by Warsaw IFF. His shorts film was awarded best Lithuanian short film award. He directed over 40 award winning commercials. He was 2nd unit director of Swedish TV series "Moscow Noir" (distributed by Studio Canal).

Company profile

Dansu Films was created in 2008 and now is one of the biggest Production Houses in Lithuania. The biggest projects include co-production of TV series "We Come In Peace" (for TV4 Sweden and ZDF), "Moscow Noir" (dir. by Academy nominated Mikael Halfstrom), "Agent Hamilton" (dir. by Erik Leijonborg) and feature film "Solomamma" (World premiere at Locarno Concorso Internazionale 2025), production of feature films "Sasha was here", "I am fine thanks", TV series "Troll Farm" (Berlinale Series Market Selects) and handful of awarded short films, and more than 100 commercials. The company provided service to films, like Berlinale Generation 14+ darling "The Crown Jewels" with Alicia Vikande and "Gentlemen" with David Dencik (premiered at TIFF) and recently to Netflix series "Clark" (dir. Jonas Akerlund). At this point company has several feature films and TV series in different stages.

Goals at the Junior Co-Production Market

We are looking for co-production partners, financing and a sales agent to bring Smilte's journey to young audiences across Europe. At Cinekid we hope to meet collaborators who share our belief that every child deserves to feel wanted.

Representatives at JCM

Gabija Siurbyte producer

Ernestas Jankauskas director

Contact details

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SCRIPT LAB

Cinekid Script LAB is a six-month training programme for scriptwriters with a children's film or series project in development. Writers work on their treatment or script under the guidance of a coach and a peer writer, following a tailor-made trajectory.

For the thirteenth edition, Cinekid is proud to present fourteen new projects in development and eighteen writers from ten countries who will be attending residencies during Cinekid for Professionals (Amsterdam, October 2026), and the Berlinale (Berlin, February 2027).

Two new institutes join our growing list of partners who nominate projects from their respective regions: Estonian Film Institute and Slovenian Film Centre. We continue to receive a high number of submissions (54) from a growing number of countries; this year 34 countries were represented in the application pool. All of the writers will be participating in the LAB for the first time, and we have a project from Taiwan in the selection for the first time.

The projects selected for the 2026-2027 edition of Script LAB are:

Bats & Bugs (film/animation) 3+

Participating writer: Lena von Döhren
Produced by: Catpics (Switzerland)

Cringe (film/ live action) 8+

Participating writer: Olga Ponjee
Produced by: Family Affair Films (The Netherlands)
Nominated by: Netherlands Film Fund

EMBROIDERIES (for the end of the world?!) (film/ animation) 8+

Participating writers: Georgia Zachari and Fokion Xenos
Produced by: Neda Film (Greece)
Nominated by: Athens International Childrens Film Festival

Finding Home (film/ animation) 7+

Participating writer: Anja Mánou Hellem
Produced by: LØV Film (Norway)

A Heaven in a Wild Flower (film/ live action) 10+

Participating writer: Zhuang Rong-Zuo
Produced by: inJECT Films (Taiwan) and Midpoint Films

Hesitation Step (film/ live action) 12+

Participating writer: Juri Krutii
Produced by: Wedia Productions (Estonia)
Nominated by: Estonian Film Institute

Kindlings (film/ live action) 7+

Participating writer: Álfheiður Marta Kjartansdóttir
Produced by: NRDR and Sviðin skógur (Iceland)
Nominated by: Icelandic Film Centre

Lisa's Ballet Battle (film/live action) 12+

Participating writer: Sarah Van Dale
Produced by: Movie Bank Productions (Belgium)
Nominated by: Flanders Audiovisual Fund

Morningbird and Marmelton on Fairytrail (film/ live action and animation) 3+

Participating writer: Annette Saugestad Helland
Produced by: Mikrofilm (Norway)
Nominated by: Norwegian Film Institute

Mozart, Dead Fish And Blind Black Ducks (film / live action) 7+

Participating writers: Barbara Zemljic and Nik Škrlec
Produced by: Filmservis (Slovenia)
Nominated by: Slovenian Film Centre

Mum is in puberty (film/animation) 7+

Participating writer: Ami-Ro Sköld
Produced by: Onoma Productions (Sweden)
Co-produced by Family Affair Films (Netherlands), Indyca (Italy) and Morph Film (Denmark)

Zanzara (film/ documentary) 9+

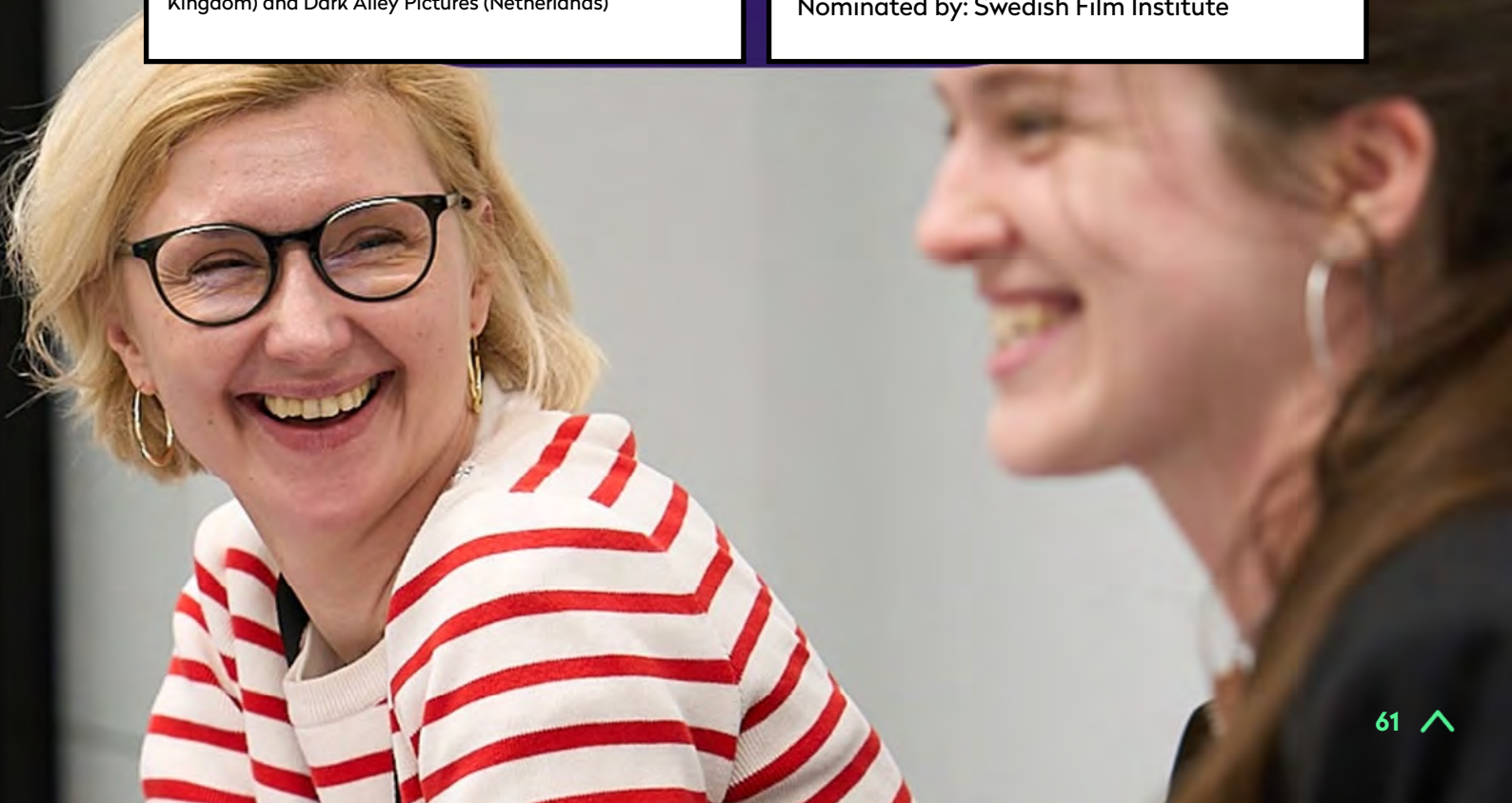
Participating writers: Lieza Röben and Liza Kemman
Produced by: BIND (Netherlands)

THE PASSED P4WN (film/ live action) 12+

Participating writer: Alexandros Tsilifonis
Produced by: Central Athens Film Productions (Greece)
Co-produced by: Mera Mera Films, Sweetdoh Films (United Kingdom) and Dark Alley Pictures (Netherlands)

1 2 3 - Action! (film/ live action) 7+

Participating writers: Anna Brodin and Victor Lindgren
Produced by: Lampray (Sweden)
Nominated by: Swedish Film Institute





DIRECTORS LAB

During Cinekid Directors LAB an international group of directors with a children's film or series project in advanced development focuses on the final steps before re-production, along with the specific skills required for working with child actors. The programme offers hands-on tailor-made coaching from experienced industry mentors.

The sixth edition of the Directors LAB took place in Amsterdam in April 2026 and included six projects from seven European countries.

The boy who loves the world (feature / live action / 9+)

Participating director Steven Wouterlood
Written by Mieke de Jong
Produced by Joram Willink and Maaïke Neve (BIND, The Netherlands)

Nella and the Wacky House on Magnus Street (feature / live action / 7+)

Participating director Karin Heberlein
Written by Julia Tal
Produced by Katrin Renz and Flora Grolitsch (tellfilm, Switzerland)
Co-producer Leitwolf Filmproduktion (Germany)

Pixie. The Brotherhood of Moss. (feature / live action / 9+)

Participating director Krzysztof Komander
Written by Krzysztof Komander
Produced by Dagmara Piasecka (Green Rat Production, Poland)
Co-producer Viktor Tauš (Heaven's Gate, Czech Republic) and Michal Sikora (Lonely Production, Czech Republic)

The Queen of England Stole My Parents (feature / live action / 9+)

Participating director Ernestas Jankauskas
Written by Gabija Siurbytė and Aleksandra Chmielewska
Produced by Gabija Siurbytė and Viktorija Rimkutė (Dansu Films, Lithuania)

Rise of the Water Fox (feature / live action / 9+)

Participating director Carlos E. Lesmes
Written by Elisabeth Kužovnik, Carlos E. Lesmes
Produced by Johanna Maria Tamm (Stellar Film, Estonia)

Sammy (feature / live action / 4+)

Participating director Elisabeth Hesemans
Written by Caya de Groot
Produced by Derk-Jan Warrink and Koji Nelissen (Keplerfilm, The Netherlands)



PRODUCERS LINK

Cinekid for Professionals and **Young Horizons Industry** jointly offer a programme that gives producers working in children's content access to essential workshops, key networking opportunities, and valuable feedback from experts. In this year's edition, 21 selected producers will engage in a series of sessions and workshops focused on audience development and audience awareness approaches, as well as pitch deck creation. The programme will also include case studies of successful European projects in collaboration with our partners. This edition we collaborate with three new partners: Finnish Film Foundation, Screen Ireland, and Swedish Film Institute.

The participants of Producers LINK 2026 are:

Manu Molin, Austria

Manu Molin is an Austrian writer & director specializing in animation and children's films, with a strong focus on stop-motion storytelling. She studied at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg and the Film School Zlín, developing her skills in puppet animation. Her work combines handcrafted techniques with emotionally resonant storytelling, exploring themes of identity, belonging and imagination. Her films include *Eiskarl* and *Emily Winter*. She is developing her debut feature *KAKAPO*, supported by Young Horizons Lab (formerly known as Kids Kino.Lab) and the Austrian Film Institute, as well as the animated short *FRIDA*. Based between Vienna and Berlin, she is expanding into producing.

Studio Nebra

Studio Nebra is a developing production initiative based in Austria, initiated by writer-director Manu Molin. It reflects her intention to expand into producing and create a framework for animated children's films with a strong artistic voice and international co-production potential. With an emphasis on stop-motion and visually distinctive storytelling, the initiative aims to create films that resonate with young audiences. Drawing on her experience as a writer-director & production background in the VR sector, 2 projects are currently in development: *KAKAPO* (feature film) and *FRIDA* (short film), both conceived as European co-productions.



[Manu Molin >](#)



Marta Bregeš, Croatia

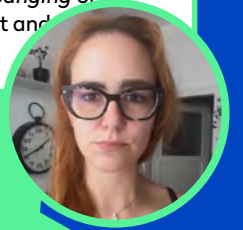
Marta Bregeš is an editor, producer and post-production supervisor who works on short and feature fiction and documentary films. Her films have been screened at international festivals, including Locarno, Rotterdam, Karlovy Vary, Tallinn Black Nights and Oberhausen, among others. She is currently developing several projects as a producer at Kinorama, including Chubby, a coming-of-age feature film for teenage audiences.

Kinorama

Kinorama, a Zagreb-based production company founded in 2003, has produced 40 feature films, four high-end TV series, and numerous short films over the past 23 years. Its major successes include *The High Sun* (Jury Prize at Cannes 2015), *Quit Staring At My Plate*, the series *The Last Socialist Artefact*, and the acclaimed co-productions *Bad Luck Banging or Looney Porn*, *Housekeeping for Beginners*, and *Lost Country*. Kinorama continuously develops emerging talent and is one of Croatia's most prolific production companies.



Kinorama >



Hynek Spurný, Czech Republic

Hynek Spurný is a Czech film producer and FAMU graduate based in Prague. As a producer at Eallin Production, he develops and produces original animation projects led by filmmakers with a distinctive creative voice and authentic visual style, working across diverse animation techniques. He is currently developing two animated feature films: *The Smallest Elephant in the World*, building on the beloved children's CGI series, and *Paradise on the Earth*, aimed at young adult audiences.

Eallin Production

Eallin Production is an animation studio built upon the rich experience of industry veterans. While we are a fresh name, we are certainly not novices in the field of animation. Our history is strongly connected with Eallin, an internationally operating animation company. Our core focus lies in the development and production of both feature-length, series and short animated films, bringing unique narratives and powerful visuals to the screen.



Eallin Production >



Thuy Linh Mai, Czech Republic

Linh is an emerging producer of children's media. Producer of *Biošortky*, an award-winning anidoc series for primary schools. She has 10+ years of experience in youth education and nearly 10 years as an audiovisual producer. Now as a parent, she is deepening her commitment to kids' content by founding a publishing house dedicated to high-quality children's books.

AZN kru

AZN kru is a Prague based production house rooted in the Czech-Vietnamese experience with 10+ years in the industry. Since our early shorts *Mat Goc* and *Bo Hai*, we expanded into global markets with our 2025 feature *Summer School*, 2001 (8 Czech Lion nominations). Today, we also focus on youth media, developing the anime series *Lost Kids* for Generation Alpha alongside the second season of our award-winning educational anidoc series for middle schoolers, *Biošortky*.



AZN kru >



Kirill Volkov, Estonia

Kirill Volkov is an Estonian film and commercial producer and founder of the production company Wedia. His portfolio spans branded content, narrative projects, and music videos. In 2024, he produced his first feature film, *Two of Me* (dir. EskoBros), in collaboration with Tallifornia. In 2025, *Rolling Papers* (dir. Meel Paliäle), produced by Volkov, was selected as Estonia's submission for the International Feature Film category at the 2026 Academy Awards

Wedia Productions

Wedia is an Estonia-based production house developing and producing bold narrative content alongside award-winning commercials and music videos. We collaborate with emerging and established filmmakers to tell emotionally driven stories that explore identity, human relationships and the life of youth in the 2020s. From development to post-production, we support projects that leave a lasting cultural impact.



[Wedia Productions >](#)



Pilvi Waltzer, Finland

A film and television producer with over ten years of experience in the industry. She holds an MA in Film and TV Producing from Aalto University and has worked in a production company BUFO since 2019. Her passion is to work with character-driven narratives set in distinctive and unconventional worlds. Among her recent credits is the near-future series *Next of Kin* (2022) and she is currently in post-production with Yle original series *The Crashing*, set for release in 2027 in eight countries.

Bufo

Helsinki based Bufo (2007) has produced several films of which many have received international recognition. The ambitious and thrill-seeking company concentrates on plot-driven and meaningful stories that can also entertain big audiences. Bufo's films all share the elements of clear artistic vision, innovation and high quality. Bufo has produced such films as Aki Kaurismäki's Golden Globe nominee *Fallen Leaves* (2023) and co-produced Tarik Saleh's *Eagles of the Republic* (Cannes main competition 2025).



[Bufo >](#)

Maria Kontogianni, Greece

Maria built her career on film sets since 2004. She then established the 1st IFF Patmos and supervised 18 awarded co-productions on the side of Twenty Twenty Vision, in Berlin. She then returned to Athens to establish Wild at Heart (2021), a film production company dedicated to author-driven stories of unique cinematic vision and to fostering long-lasting collaborations between world talents. She is a member of the European Film Academy, a Cannes' Producer on the Move and an EAVE alumna.

Wild At Heart

WILD AT HEART was founded in 2021 in Athens by producer Maria Kontogianni. The company specialises in international co-productions, always on the lookout for stories with a "wild heart" — daring, emotionally resonant, and culturally layered. Its creative focus is expanding on feature films for children (incl. animation), films from a female perspective and the black comedy genre. Recent releases: *Animal* (Locarno IFF) and *Black Stone* (TIFF).

In development: *Nine Lives Left*, *Pikeko*, *Cocrete Dreams*.



[Wild At Heart >](#)



Tamara Paréjné Czoborczy, Hungary

Tamara Czoborczy Paréjné is a Hungarian producer, production manager and researcher with over 10 years of experience in documentary and educational audiovisual production. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Theatre and Film Arts Budapest and focuses on the impact of service productions on the national film industry, as well as sustainability and audience development.

Yellow Cut

Yellow Cut is a Hungary-based production company focused on documentary and educational audiovisual content. Founded in 2018, it develops and produces culturally and socially relevant projects with strong audience and educational value. The company is also active in project development, production management, and funding strategy, and is increasingly engaged in children's and youth-oriented content.



Tamás Inczédy, Hungary

Tamás is a Budapest-based independent producer working across animation and film. He develops original IPs for children and young audiences, focusing on emotionally driven storytelling and internationally scalable story worlds.

He is the executive producer of *North*, an animated feature film that premiered in 2025, was acquired in more than 60 territories, and is currently being rolled out internationally.

Alongside his production work, he explores augmented and cross-platform storytelling formats, with a particular interest in new ways of engaging young audiences.

Huge fan of the Braintrust method...

Inczédy Tamás

Independent Creative Production. Tamás works as an independent producer, developing his own original projects alongside selected collaborations, operating as a sole proprietor.



Carla Mooney, Ireland

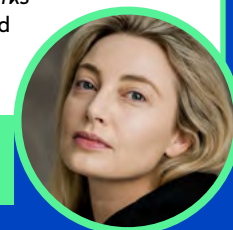
Carla Mooney is an Irish producer and co-founder of Cardel, working across live action, non-fiction and animation. Credits include *Cusp* (Sundance Jury Award 2021, Showtime), *The Sparks Brothers* (dir. Edgar Wright) and *Luto* (dir. Andrés Arochi, 2025). Supported by Screen Ireland, RTÉ and the BFI, she has participated in ACE Animation Producers, Screen Forever and Cannes Producers Network. She holds a BA in International Business and French and a certificate in Media, Entertainment and Arts from the Law Society of Ireland. She is a member of Screen Producers Ireland and the Irish Film and Television Academy.

Cardel Entertainment

Cardel is an award-winning Irish production company founded in 2011 by siblings Delwyn and Carla Mooney. Working across live action, non-fiction and animation, credits include *Cusp* (Sundance Jury Award 2021, Showtime), *The Sparks Brothers* (dir. Edgar Wright) and *Luto* (2025). Supported by Screen Ireland, RTÉ and the BFI, Cardel has earned multiple IFTA nominations and the RTS Award. Current slate highlights include *A Hairy Situation* and *The Wall Dogs* (Irish-German co-production), among others in development.



Cardel Entertainment >



Nuala Carr, Ireland

Producer with 20+ years' experience across drama and documentary, with the past five years shaping fresh, engaging stories for young audiences at Dyehouse Films. Developing and delivering projects supported by RTÉ, Coimisiún na Meán, Screen Ireland and Section 481 and collaborating with international co-producers and sales agents. Recent credits include *The Unreal*, *Glitch*, *This Is Art Club!*, *The Locals*, *Stories from the Street* and the RTS award-winning drama *Grace*.

Dyehouse Film

Dyehouse Films is an award-winning Irish company creating bold, thoughtful drama and documentary for young audiences. Founded by Bonnie Dempsey and David O'Sullivan in 2005, it's known for originality and warmth, with work for RTÉ and Coimisiún na Meán. Recent wins include the RTS Award for JourneyCam International. Its slate spans shorts, returning drama *The Unreal*, and factual youth content.



[Dyehouse Film >](#)



Federico Turani, Italy

Federico Turani graduated in Biology and then chose the artistic field, writing and directing several shorts and working in over 15 festivals. He co-founded IBRIDO while he was selected as a young talent producer for "Animation Sans Frontières" and attended many tutoring programs around Europe. He pitched projects in several markets (Cartoon Forum, Annecy, CEE Animation Forum, Torino SFM, MIA)

IBRIDO Studio

IBRIDO is an independent animation studio. Born from the encounter between different visual poetics, it has developed a hybrid language (2D/3D, stop motion and mixed techniques) with a strong focus on narrative and aesthetics. Our works range from short films to TV series, feature films, music videos, and VR, combining craftsmanship, research and authorial sensitivity, selected at international festival circuits (Annecy, Shanghai SIFF) and EU programs (ASF, CEE, ACE).

We aim to produce animation with international partners, share art and culture, and grow both as a company and as human beings.



[IBRIDO Studio >](#)



Viktorija Rimkutė, Lithuania

Viktorija Rimkutė is a Vilnius-based film and TV producer working at Dansu Films, one of Lithuania's leading production companies. Her credits include *Troll Farm*, the first high-end drama series from the Baltics selected for Berlinale Series Market Selects. Her latest co-production, *Solomamma*, premiered at the Locarno Film Festival 2025 in the Concorso Internazionale. Viktorija is currently in post-production of a feature film for children, developing several international projects from features to TV series. She holds a BA in Creative Communication from Vilnius University. She is a member of Independent producers association in Lithuania, AVAKA and EWA Network.

Dansu Films

Dansu Films was created in 2008 and now is one of the biggest production houses in Lithuania. Major projects include co-production of TV series: *We Come in Peace*, *Moscow Noir*, *Agent Hamilton*, *Clark* (Netflix), production of features *Sasha was Here*, *I am fine, thanks*, TV series *Troll Farm* (Berlinale Series Market Selects). Co-production *Solomamma* recently premiered at Locarno Concorso Internazionale.



[Dansu Films >](#)



Baran Sedighian, The Netherlands

Baran Sedighian is a producer and animation filmmaker from Iran with a deep passion for storytelling. She holds a Master's degree in Animation from St. Joost and was a fellow of the New Producer Academy 2024. Dedicated to supporting artists in realising their creative visions, she produced the animated short *Mind Your Step*. She currently works as a producer and animation line producer on several projects.

Baran Studio

Baran Studio is an independent production company based in the Netherlands, specialising in animation and creative storytelling. Founded by producer Baran Sedighian, the company develops and delivers high-quality animated projects from concept to completion. Recent work includes the short, animated film *Mind Your Step*, while *The Spaghetti Ladies* is currently in production.



Dwight Groot, The Netherlands

Dwight Groot is a creative producer and entrepreneur with over fifteen years of experience in film production. He has worked on commercials, series and feature films, always approaching projects from an artistic and cinematic perspective, with the intention of moving and engaging the audience.

He believes in an open and collaborative process in which different perspectives come together, both in front of and behind the camera. In recent years, he has supported emerging filmmakers in developing their artistic voices.

At Lemming Film, Dwight focuses on the development of films and series, as well as supporting filmmakers and their stories from the initial idea through to realisation.

Lemming Film

Lemming Film is a leading Dutch production company dedicated to developing and producing high quality films and television series for both national and international audiences. Founded in 1995, the company is driven by a commitment to distinctive, ambitious storytelling that reflects and engages with contemporary society.

Working with leading local and international talent, Lemming Film has built a strong international network and a track record of award winning productions, many of which have been supported by international financing and premiered at prestigious film festivals around the world.



[Lemming Film >](#)

Vittoria Røkke Passalacqua, Norway

Rome-born producer based in Oslo, working across European co-productions. With a background in motion graphics, television and feature films, Vittoria has line producer credits including *Gritt*, *Butterfly* and *Fjord*. In 2025 she co-founded Paradogma Pictures with director Andrea Eckerbom, where she focuses on early-stage development through close producer-director collaboration. She seeks out author-driven, character-led films with strong emotional clarity and international potential.

Paradogma Pictures

Paradogma Pictures is an Oslo-based production company founded in 2025 by producer Vittoria Røkke Passalacqua and director Andrea Eckerbom. Rooted in Italy, France and Scandinavia, we develop bold auteur-driven films shaped by a close producer-director collaboration. Our focus is on identity, belief and human relationships, told through emotionally precise, character-driven storytelling with a European outlook. We also work across shorts and are committed to sustainable production practices.



[Paradogma Pictures >](#)



Guro Strand Heum, Norway

Guro Strand Heum is a Norwegian film producer and CEO of Frozen Memories AS. She has produced several short films with national funding, and is currently working on developing longer formats in both animation and live action while still producing high quality short films. Guro has a BA in Animation and Production Management and has experience working as a freelancer in the Norwegian film- and tv industry with several different hats and in different stages of production and distribution.

Frozen Memories

Founded in 2021 by producer Guro Strand Heum and writer/director Petter Solberg Heum, Frozen Memories is a creative production company based in Oslo, Norway. We specialise in crafting stories that inspire, raise awareness and challenge audiences — regardless of format or genre.



Frozen Memories >



Dana Pohl, Poland

Dana Pohl has nearly 20 years of experience in the audiovisual industry. Since October 2024, has been working as a producer at MTL Maxfilm. She was an associate producer on *Believe in Santa 2* and a Polish line producer on a European co-production *Live a Little* (premiered Göteborg FF 2025). Previously, she worked with the Polish Producers Alliance and Film Commission Poland, an institution promoting the Polish film industry internationally. She studied Film and TV Production, and is a big fan of feel-good movies.

MTL Maxfilm

MTL Maxfilm. Founded In 1991. One of the biggest private film production company in Poland. MTL Maxfilm is creating films and TV series that combine production scale with audience appeal. The company's portfolio includes some of the most popular Polish comedies, dramas, and TV series which have consistently drawn wide audiences to cinemas and in front of the screen at home.



MTL Maxfilm >



Samir Arabzadeh, Sweden

Samir is an award-winning filmmaker born in Iran and raised in Sweden. Moving seamlessly between live-action, animation and documentary, he notably created the 3D film *Märta Proppmätt*, which had nation-wide cinema release in Sweden. His docu *Powernapper's Paradise* premiered at Hot Docs and screened at 40+ festivals. Most recently, Samir co-produced *Rukeli*, which premiered in Venice 2025.

Samir is currently in production with the animation *Snot Shine* and the docu *Till Death Do US Part*.

Sideways Studios

Sideways Studios is based in Gothenburg, Sweden and Cebu, the Philippines and works as both a film production company and animation studio, developing, financing and producing projects across fiction, documentary and animation. Sideways focuses on distinctive, director-driven storytelling with strong visual worlds, clear emotional stakes and international potential. The company works across different formats and audiences, from children's animation to adult drama, documentary and genre film.



Sideways Studios >



Flora Grolitsch, Switzerland

Flora Grolitsch studied English Literature and Film & TV in London, followed by Film Production at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg, where she produced short films, music videos and documentaries, graduating with a 90-minute feature film. She later worked as a producer for Millbrook Pictures in Zurich, as a freelance script consultant for Scriphouse in Berlin, Okofilm in Zurich and other companies. Since January 2022, she has been a producer at tellfilm.

tellfilm

tellfilm is a Zurich-based production company founded in 1997, renowned for its successful production of international fiction and documentary films. All of its films have celebrated their world premieres at A- or B-list festivals and have been sold worldwide. Recent festival highlights include *Ingeborg Bachmann* (Berlinale Competition 2023), *Gloria!* (Berlinale Competition 2024), *Mother's Baby* (Berlinale Competition 2025), and *You Believe in Angels, Mr Drowak?* (SIFF 2025).



tellfilm >



Anna Yatsenko, Ukraine

Anna Yatsenko is a Ukrainian producer and member of the European Film Academy, focused on internationally oriented auteur cinema. Her films include *Luxembourg, Luxembourg* by Antonio Lukich (Venice Orizzonti Extra, TIFF), *Reflection* by Valentyn Vasyanovych (Venice Competition), and *U Are the Universe* by Pavlo Ostrikov, which premiered at Toronto International Film Festival and was later awarded at major European genre festivals. She participated in TorinoFilmLab Next Comedy, EAVE Producers Workshop 2026, and Mediterranean Film Institute.

ForeFilms

ForeFilms is an independent Ukrainian production company working across local and European markets. The company develops and produces feature films in genres including sci-fi, drama, and comedy, collaborating with both emerging and established filmmakers. ForeFilms focuses on auteur-driven cinema with a strong emotional connection and international potential. The company's productions and co-productions have premiered at major international festivals, including Venice, Toronto, and Cannes. ForeFilms is currently expanding into children's and family films.



ForeFilms >



PROUD PARTNER OF **CINEKID**

Young audiences don't sit still for things that don't move them.

We combine anthropology and AI-assisted audience insight to help filmmakers, distributors and other cultural professionals reach young audiences.

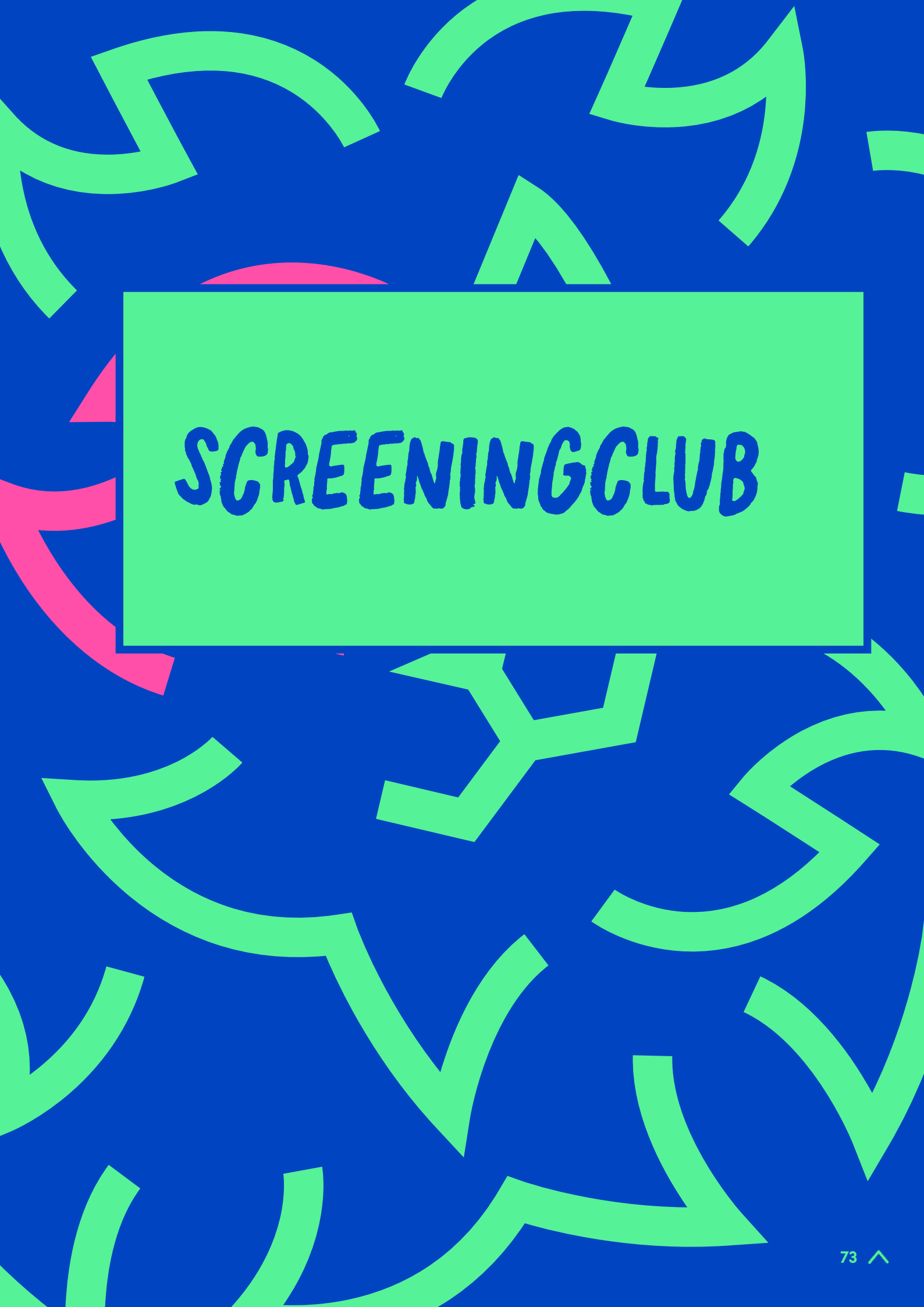
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SCREENINGCLUB

OVERVIEW SCREENINGCLUB

ScreeningClub Live

A fresh addition to the programme – the festival's video library come to real life. Industry screenings for professionals only will showcase new, exciting and unreleased titles of children and youth film and series.

- [International work in progress Series](#) 75
- [Dutch Shorts by emerging filmmakers](#) 82

ScreeningClub Online

An online video library screening more than 100 films from, and beyond, the festival's main selection. Screening Club Online will be accessible from October 13 to November 30, 2026.

- [ScreeningClub online](#) 89



INTERNATIONAL WORK IN PROGRESS SERIES

14 October
15:00 – 16:00 | Pathé 2

This screening offers a sneak peek at promising episodic projects in development from across the international market. Cinekid is proud to showcase two series and one special aimed at children in four age groups: young children (3-6), children (7-12) and teens (13+), giving a broad look at children's content for every age.



LUCE AND THE ROCK

Target audience
Preschool
(3-6 y.o.)

The colorful adventures of a child whose curiosity inspires those around her!

Luce and the Rock synopsis

Every morning, curious Luce opens her little bedroom window to see what's happening in the Lovely Land. Every day is a new adventure Luce shares with her best friend, a giant Rock! Together, they explore the unexpected, meet surprising creatures and discover other points of view. In a colorful and inventive universe, Luce gives a different outlook on her world!

Directors Britt Raes & Mathilde Prévost

Screenwriter Britt Raes

Producer Perrine Gauthier

Production companies La Cabane (FR) and Thuristar (BE)

Production year 2027

Estimated release date Spring 2027 (TBC)

Duration per episode 7' (credits included)

Distribution contact: CAKE Entertainment

Genres, Themes: Curiosity / Diversity / Friendship

Sales in France, Switzerland and Benelux

administration@lacabaneproductions.com

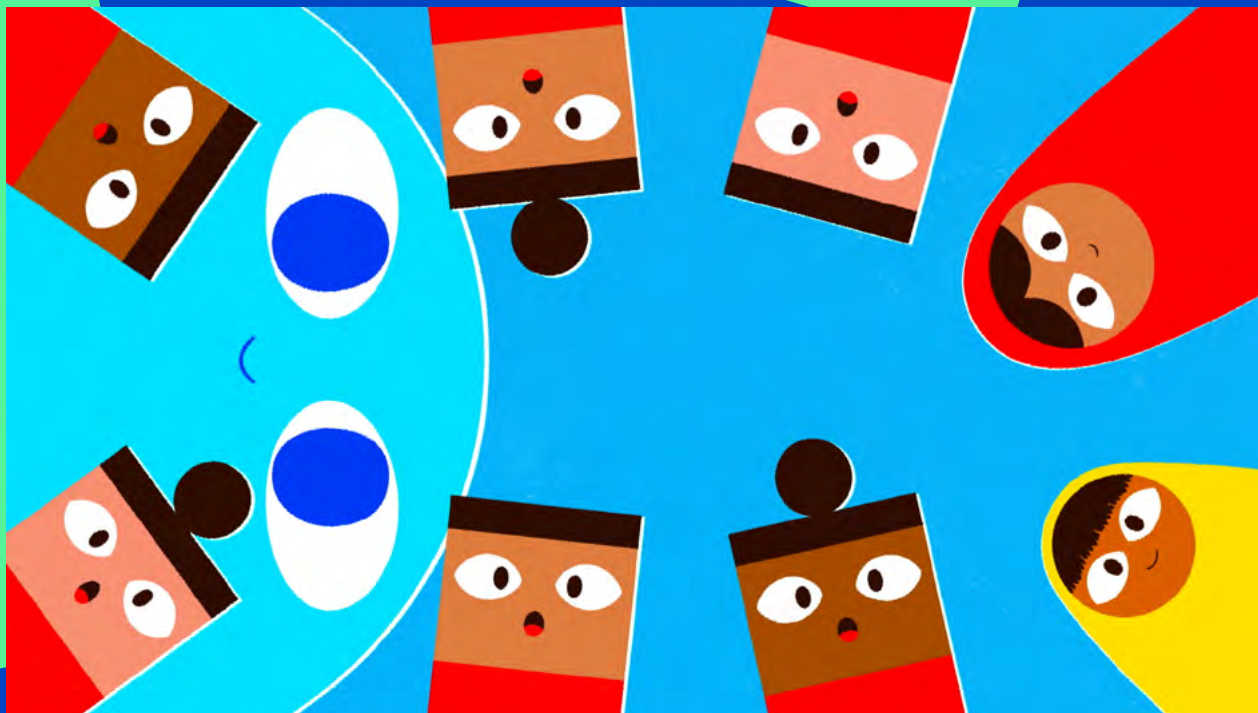
administration@thuristar.com

Sales in the Rest of the World

Sales@cakeentertainment.com

Festivals

events@lacabaneproductions.com





SUPER-LUCHA

Target audience
6+ years old

Ennio and his friends discover that becoming a member of the Super-Lucha is about much more than wearing the mask.

Directors Goulwen Merret, Agnès Lecreux & Suzie Le Texier

Producers Mathieu Courtois & Jean-François Le Corre

Screenwriters Goulwen Merret, Agnès Lecreux & Suzie Le Texier

Production companies Vivement Lundi ! (France), Nadasdy Film (Switzerland)

Production year 2026

Estimated release date 2027

Duration per episode 26'

Genres Action, Comedy, Adventure

Themes Family, Friendship, Super-Heros, Tradition

Distribution contact Wilmer MOYA - Autour de Minuit (France) - will@autourdeminuit.com

Super Lucha synopsis

Ennio, 10 yo, lives in Mexiquito, a small Mexican town set between desert plains and sun-drenched green hills. He's from a long line of Super-Luchadores, masked vigilantes who fight the forces of evil. Accompanied by his best friends Pablo and Lili and a newcomer Helena, Ennio will discover that becoming a member of the Super-Lucha is no easy task!





Royalty S02

Target audience
Primary 10-12
Secondary
13-15

When a viral mistake sends 14-year-old influencer Mette and her exclusive friend group to a digital detox camp, they're forced to navigate friendship, status, and identity without screens for the first time.

Director Elin Grönbloom

Screenwriters Vilja Keskimäki, Marjo Airisniemi

Producers Mia Oikarnen, Miira Karhula, Suvi Salokoski

Production companies Warner Bros. International Television Production Finland

Distribution contact Suvi Salokoski, suvi.salokoski@wbivp.fi

Production year 2026

Estimated release date 13.2.2027

Duration per episode 10 x 10 min

Genres, Themes Comedy; online bullying, social media pressure, friendship, first crushes and self-image

Project status S01 completed and available, S02 work in progress, S03 in Development.

Royalty S02 Synopsis

Season two of Royalty follows 14-year-old Mette and Royalty, the most exclusive friend group at school, as the summer before eighth grade comes to an end. While preparing for the year's biggest back-to-school party, Mette accidentally humiliates the event organizer, Farah, in a social media post that goes viral. As a result, Royalty loses their invitation, and Mette's mother sends them to a strict digital detox camp run by former influencer Fenix. Cut off from their phones for the first time, friendships begin to fracture as jealousy, crushes and power struggles rise to the surface — especially after Farah arrives at camp. Secret phones begin circulating among the teens, fueling tensions. When an AI-generated deepfake video turns Mette into the target of online hate, she becomes trapped in a toxic cycle of online bullying and drama. Forced to confront her own behavior and the cost of online validation, Mette must decide who she wants to be beyond the screen.

Featuring an additional micro-series!

Alongside the main series, Royalty expands through original micro-series created for the platforms young audiences use most. Season 1 featured a horror-comedy spin-off, while Season 2 introduces Pirkkelton — a 20 x 1.5-minute absurd soap-opera parody inspired by Bridgerton. In the world of Royalty S02, one of the characters lands her dream role in Pirkkelton, a fictional TV series that exists inside the main story. At the same time, Pirkkelton also comes to life as a real standalone micro-series for audiences to watch outside the show. The Pirkkelton micro-series also makes use of AI-generated imagery to create its Bridgerton-inspired back-grounds and help build its exaggerated period-drama world.



DUTCH SHORTS BY EMERGING FILMMAKERS

14 October
16:00 - 17:00 | Pathé 2

This section highlights work by recent film and art school graduates who operate at the intersection of children's content and auteur short film. The three films selected for this screening build imaginative worlds that invite children to step outside the mundane and enjoy colourful, eccentric and at times surreal adventures. Whether they expand their current concept into a longer project or build on the craftsmanship they used to create these worlds, the makers behind these shorts show potential for further development and collaboration.

The Little Hotel Detective

Genres, Themes:

*Detective, Adventure, Mystery,
Family, Divorced Parents.*

At the start of the holiday, eleven-year-old Billie is thrilled to finally spend some time with her mother, Estella, a busy hotel owner. But when a secret hotel inspector checks in, everything changes. Billie turns into a detective, determined to uncover the inspector's identity and win back her mother's attention.



Target audience 6+

Director Julia van Braak

Writers Wianda Rozendaal & Maud Coense

Producers Staas Nelis & Kes Raven

Production year 2025

Estimated release date 2025

Duration 21'

Distribution contact Staas Nelis

staasnelis@gmail.com



MORPHISM

Genres, Themes:

Absurdism, drama, family, friendship, identity

Eleven-year-old Kaat visits the Stavros family for the first time; a peculiar family of scientists where everyone, including the dog, suffers from a horrible wasp allergy. Blown away by the family, Kaat pushes her own boundaries further and further as an experimental subject.



Director Chagalle Pennink

Writers Chagalle Pennink & Rosa Kouwen

Producers Dyno Fanoy, Chagalle Pennink & Tonya Perevozova

Production companies HKU - University of the Arts Utrecht, The Netherlands

Production year 2026

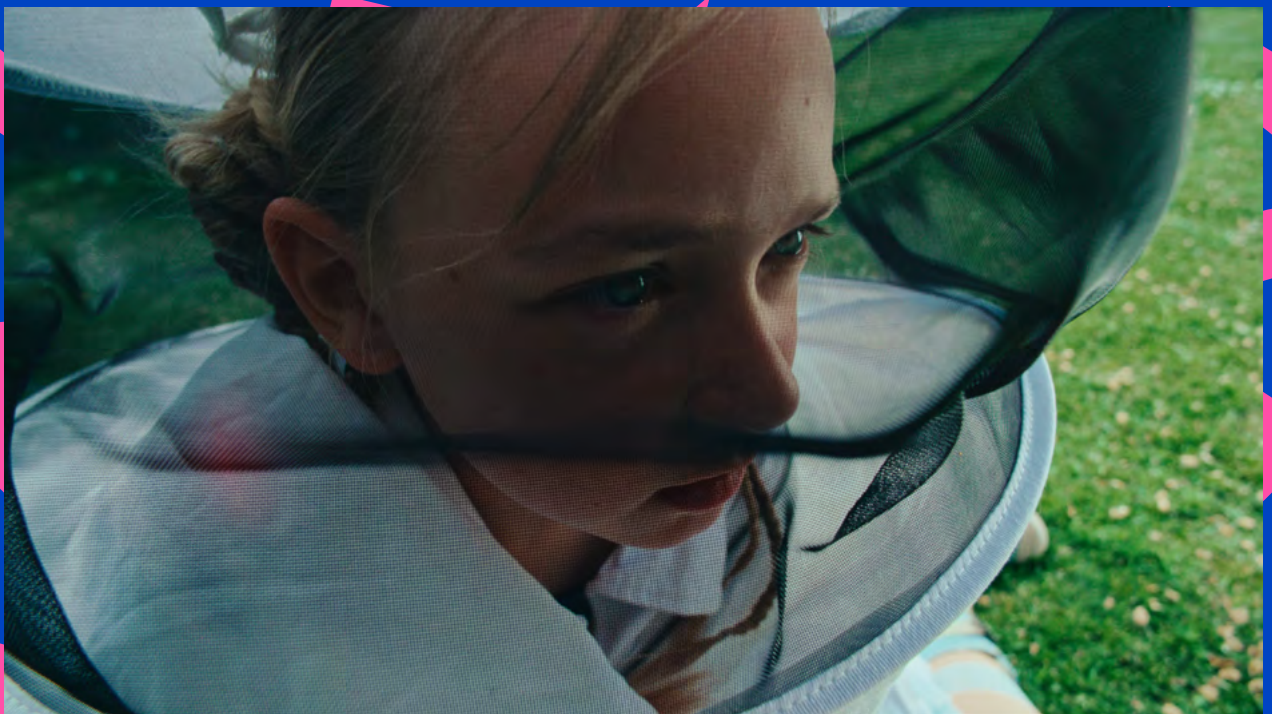
Duration 21'

Distribution contact Chagalle Pennink, chagallepennink@gmail.com

Target audience 10+

In this wild story, eleven-year-old, curious, and slightly rustic Kaat visits the Stavros family for the first time. This is a flamboyant and imposing family where everyone, including the dog, suffers from a terrible wasp allergy. Kaat is very impressed by the opulent house, the romantic parents Theodore and Dr. Stavros, and, above all, her sparkling friend Giselle, with whom she would gladly trade lives. But the family also has a very dark side. They are all too eager to use Kaat as an experimental subject for their research to keep wasps at bay.

Kaat searches for her balance between appreciation and self-acceptance, while the parents put more and more pressure on her. She slowly loses sight of her boundaries and becomes increasingly swallowed up in their world. How far will she go to win the recognition of the sparkling Stavros family?



THE ENDLESS VOYAGE

Genres, Themes:
*Satire, Fantasy, Journey,
Experimental*

A luxury ark flees a collapsing world, but the greed onboard proves heavier than the flood outside.



Directors Rada Skumova and Suzanne Lub
Writer Rada Skumova
Producer Umali Pattirua
Production country The Netherlands
Distribution contact radaskumovart@gmail.com
Production year 2026
Duration 9'20"

Target audience 10+

Synopsis: In a flooded world, a grand Ark drifts across endless waters, carrying a select group of wealthy elites who indulge in it's luxury. All other life that has successfully made it onto this "God-blessed Ark" is reduced to it's utility - mermaids become snacks, Pegasus are cattle used for transport, three-headed beasts turn into fashionable accessories, servants practice stealth awaiting demand and even divine presence itself cannot seem to turn heads when it flies by. Once the promised land appears on the horizon, it is revealed as just another property to be possessed. The sea shouts with anger and a large bird keeps flying past, growing increasingly hard to ignore as it carries larger and larger "twigs" of hope for redemption, but the privileged find new ways to drown out it's cries and continue their feasting. Laughter echoes. Applause for the ignorant. But when nothing is left to consume, it becomes clear that no voyage is ever truly endless.



SCREENINGCLUB ONLINE

An online video library screening more than 100 films and beyond the festival's main selection, including curated selection of non-dialogue titles. ScreeningClub Online will be accessible to accredited guests from October 13 to November 30, 2026.

SEE
NL

Dutch titles in the
ScreeningClub in
partnership with SEE NL

KLOTEN

Director	Roel Visser
Screenwriter	Rick Visser
Production year	2025
Production company	Fabel Film
Type	Short
Category	Live action
Duration	16'
Target audience	11+



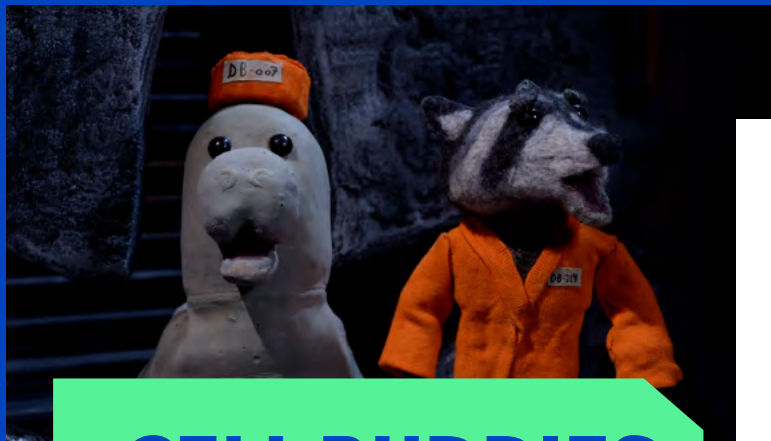
BALLS



BAMMETJE

Bammetje

Director	Kris van Melle
Screenwriters	Julia Buijs, Kris van Melle
Production year	2026
Type	Short
Category	Live-action
Duration	6'
Target audience	6+



CELL BUDDIES

Celmaatjes

Directors	Melle Windig, Hidde Alberts, Jurgen de Smit, Miguel Reyes, Arjen van der Plas
Production year	2025
Production company	Sint Joost School of Art & Design
Type	Short
Category	Animation
Duration	5'
Target audience	6+

LET'S PLAY

Director	Marzieh Rasekh
Screenwriter	Marzieh Rasekh
Production year	2024
Production company	Fabel Film
Type	Short
Category	Animation
Duration	5'
Target audience	6+



LET'S PLAY



CLIMATE FIGHTERS

De Klimaatstrijders

Directors	Hans de Jonge, Kuba Szutkowski
Screenwriters	Andy van den Dobbelsteen, Hans de Jonge
Production year	2026
Production company	Oculus Film
Type	Short
Category	Live-action
Duration	7'
Target audience	9+



THE MUSICAL

GEWOON SUPER

Director	Selma Boeke
Writer	Selma Boeke
Production year	2025
Type	Short
Category	Documentary
Duration	19'
Target audience	8+

Het kabinet voor onvolwassen zaken

Director	Charlotte Leliveld
Screenwriter	Charlotte Leliveld
Production year	2026
Production company	HKU
Type	Short
Category	Live action Animation
Duration	16'
Target audience	7+



THE GOVERNMENT FOR CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS



LEVEL UP

LEVEL UP

Director	Julia van Braak
Screenwriter	Jiajia Hu
Production year	2026
Production company	Fabuch
Type	Short
Category	Live action
Duration	13'
Target audience	9+



LOULOU

LOULOU

Director	Hanneke van der Linden
Writer	Rob de Barbanson
Production year	2025
Production company	seriousFilm, S.O.I.L. Productions
Type	Short
Category	Animation
Duration	11'
Target audience	6+

MISS MOXY

Directors	Vincent Bal, Wip Vernooij
Screenwriter	Maureen Versprille
Production year	2025
Production company	BosBros, Phanta Animation, Eyeworks Film & TV Drama BV, AVROTROS
Type	Film
Category	Animation
Duration	88'
Target audience	6+



MISS MOXY



MORFISM

MORFISM

Director	Chagalle Pennink
Screenwriters	Chagalle Pennink, Rosa Kouwen
Production year	2026
Production company	HKU - Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht
Type	Short
Category	Live-action
Duration	20'
Target audience	10+



NUCLEAR BOY

NUCLEAR BOY

Director	Joren Molter
Writer	Britt Snel
Production year	2026
Production company	Family Affair Films
Type	Short
Category	Live action
Duration	88'
Target audience	9+

PAPA OP DE VIJVER

Director	Liselotte Glerum
Screenwriter	Liselotte Glerum
Production year	2026
Production company	Tessa Wiegerink
Type	Short
Category	Live action
Duration	7'
Target audience	8+



PAPA OP DE VIJVER



UP TO GO

OP BOEVENPAD

Director	Eva Nijsten
Screenwriter	Eva Nijsten
Production year	2026
Production company	Oculus Film
Type	Short
Category	Documentary
Duration	15'
Target audience	10+



SUPERJUFFIE IN DE JUNGLE

SUPERJUFFIE IN DE JUNGLE

Director	Martijn Smits
Writers	Martijn Smits, Tijs van Marle
Production year	2026
Production company	Tom de Mol Productions
Type	Film
Category	Live action
Duration	82'
Target audience	6+

THE QUIET SHELL

Director	Saharnaz Sepandifard
Screenwriter	Saharnaz Sepandifard
Production year	2025
Production company	Fabel Film
Type	Short
Category	Animation
Duration	5'
Target audience	5+



THE QUIET SHELL



VUURDOOP

VUURDOOP

Directors	Jules Mathôt
Production year	2026
Production company	While we're here
Type	Short
Category	Documentary
Duration	16'
Target audience	9+

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CINEKID

CINEKID FOCUS ON ESTONIA

A piece of Estonia in Amsterdam

This year, Cinekid is proud to collaborate with the Estonian Film Institute on a special focus programme. Through a selection of films and a unique animation set, we invite you to discover Estonian film culture, because sometimes the best way to get to know a country is through the stories it tells.

At Cinekantine, the festival centre, you would be able to view the original set of the stop-motion animation film **A Serious Thought**, specially flown in from Estonia. Everything in this film was made by hand and animated frame by frame.

Screening times

*Lotte & the Lost Dragons**

11.10.2026, Hall 9, 15:30

15.10.2026, Hall 3, 09:45

16.10.2026, Hall 6, 15:30

The Sleeping Beast

14.10.2026, Hall 3, 14:30

Estonian Shorts

13.10.2026, Hall 3, 10:00

Interview with filmmaker Jonas Taul at RadioCinekid

13.10.2026, Cinekantine, 15:00



Estonian
Film
Institute

* Lotte & the Lost Dragons is also screening at more than eight locations across the Netherlands.

DUTCH INDUSTRY MORNING

13 October 2026
09:30-12:30 | Pathé 7

Alongside its well-established programme components, the 2026 edition expands its offer to further strengthen its value for the local industry, particularly by creating greater access to market opportunities for emerging Dutch filmmakers and through inspiring sessions with the newly established Youth Alliance (De Jeugdalliantie).

Cinekid for Professionals is partnering with The Youth Alliance (De Jeugdalliantie), a Dutch network bringing together makers, producers, distributors, broadcasters, platforms, festivals, and educational institutions to protect and strengthen the Netherlands' internationally recognised tradition of quality youth films, series, and documentaries. The initiative responds to current challenges within the sector, including declining visibility, shrinking budgets, and reduced investment from streamers. At Cinekid, this important new initiative will be introduced during an inspiration day titled Long live the youth sector! (Lang leve de jeugdsector!), featuring sessions that map the current challenges and opportunities within the industry.

The programme opens with the question of how to create continuity for filmmakers who focus on children and young people. It kicks off with a keynote by Eva Novrup Redvall, associate professor at the University of Copenhagen and a film scholar who has conducted extensive research into youth productions. Like the Netherlands, Denmark has a strong reputation for films and series aimed at the youngest audiences, and her keynote explores the insights that emerge when comparing these two European youth markets.

After the break, the focus shifts to the situation in the Netherlands. Through conversations with creators and a panel discussion, the session addresses a central question: what is needed to build a strong, sustainable ecosystem for Dutch youth productions?

FUNDS & PARTNERS

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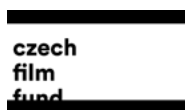
SWISS FILMS

**THE CHILDREN'S
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