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Crew & Credits

Executive Director: **Nag Vladermersky**

Co-Director: **Malcolm Turner**

Programmers: **Nag Vladermersky & Malcolm Turner**

Programmers (Animated Women UK):

Anna Gregory and Oana Nechifor

Programmer (Edge of Frame): **Edwin Rostron**

Producer: **Mandy Smith**

Digital Compiling: **Claude Trollope**

Website: **Mandy Smith & Matt Smith**

Catalogue design: **Anne Stagg**

Other design work: **Mandy Smith**

Catalogue notes: **Malcolm Turner &**

Nag Vladermersky

Festival Trailers: **Ed Bulmer and Sam**

Gainsborough (National Film and TV School)

Festival Judges/International competition:

Mark Collington, Carla MacKinnon,

Edwin Rostron

Festival Judges/Abstract showcase:

Richard Wright, Martin Pickles

Festival Judges/Childrens screening:

Lilith Silver

Cinema Co-ordinator (Barbican):

Tamara Anderson

Marketing (Barbican): **Daniela Fetta**

Publicity (Barbican): **Sarah Harvey,**

Hayley Willis

And all the amazing LIAF volunteers.

Special Thanks

Simon Oatley (The Film and Video Workshop),

Andrew Partridge, Kerry Kasim and Jeremy

Graves (All the Anime), **Junko Takekawa**

(Japan Foundation), **Garth Burkhard and April**

Mcilroy (Disney), **Roger and Tai** (The Horse

Hospital), **Robert Bradbrook** (the National

Film and TV School), **Chris Shepherd, Ann**

Marie Fleming, Michael Dudok de Wit,

Bill Plympton, John Holderried, Mark

Collington, Lindsay Watson (Animated

Women UK), **Simon Phetter** (MMBF), **Phil**

Davies (The Elf Factory), **Desideria Mastriaco**

(Toon Boom), **Danielle Viau** (National Film

Board Canada), **Autour de Minuit, Nuku Film.**

And everybody who gave their time or ideas, shared their work or their expertise. So many people have helped LIAF 16 come together. Thank you all!!!

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Programme Schedule

Thu 1 Dec	18:30		Narrative Contexts in Animation and Architecture
Fri 2 Dec	18:30		Opening Night Gala: The warped, wonderful and terrifying world of Chris Shepherd + Q&A
	21:00		British Showcase
Sat 3 Dec	11:00		Barbican Framed Film Club: Amazing Animations
	14:00		Classic Disney Shorts
	17:00		Abstract Showcase
	19:00		International Competition Programme 1: From Absurd to Zany
	21:00		International Competition Programme 2: Being Human
Sun 4 Dec	15:00		Marvellous Animations
	17:00		International Competition Programme 3: Looking For Answers
	19:00		Momotaro - Sacred Sailors
	21:00		International Competition Programme 4: New Japanese Shorts
Mon 5 Dec	19:00		International Competition Programme 5: Into the Dark
	21:00		International Competition Programme 6: Below the Surface
Tue 6 Dec	21:00		International Competition Programme 7: Long Shorts
	20:00		Ultra Secret Feature! BRITISH PREMIERE
Wed 7 Dec	21.30		Late Night Bizarre
	14:00		Edge of Frame: Edges - An Animation Seminar
	20:00		Celebrating Women in Animation + Q&A
Fri 9 Dec	20:00		Edge of Frame: Elemental Animation
Sat 10 Dec	11:30		Edge of Frame: Journeys into Experimental Animation 1
	13:30		International Competition Programme 8: Animated Documentaries
	14:15		Edge of Frame: Journeys into Experimental Animation 2
	16:00		Closing Gala - The Best of the Fest
	16:30		Edge of Frame: Journeys into Experimental Animation 3
Sun 11 Dec	14:00		The Longing of Michael Dudok de Wit
	16:00		Window Horses
	18:00		Closing Gala - The Best of the Fest REPEAT
	20:00		Edge of Frame: Push & Pull - Films by Lilli Carré & Alexander Stewart

Directors Message

Some might balk at the phrase ‘National Treasure’ especially in a year when we’ve seen it apply to the suspected child-abuser/celebrity comedian as performed by the superb Robbie Coltrane in the outstanding TV series of the same name on Channel 4 earlier this year. But I do believe we have a national treasure in our midst on the opening night of LIAF 2016 – so ladies and gentlemen I hope you will extend a warm welcome to Mr. Chris Shepherd....

Chris’s work can veer from the terrifying (*Dad’s Dead*, *Johnno’s Dead*) to the hilarious (*The World Stare-Out championship*, *Anatole’s Island*, *Who I Am and What I Want*) and everything in between, hence the title of our opening gala session ‘The Warped, Wonderful and Terrifying World of Chris Shepherd’ but as far as I know no-one has a bad word to say about Chris. He is genuinely one of the warmest people working in this industry and certainly one of the funniest.

Witness last years pre-recorded video message which we projected at the Horse Hospital as a substitute for Chris’s non-appearance due to illness which held the packed audience spellbound for 30 minutes. We also have very fond memories of Chris’s last onstage appearance at LIAF in 2013 for our joint celebration of the tenth anniversary of LIAF and the tenth anniversary of ‘*Dad’s Dead*’. In fact if my memory serves me correctly Chris first mentioned then about working on the follow-up sequel. And so here we have it. Flash forward three years and we are extremely proud to be hosting the world premiere of ‘*Johnno’s Dead*’. We wait with baited breath, but do be aware this film is definitely not one for the kids.

On the subject of ‘national treasure’ I have heard similar things said about one of our other guests at this years festival. Flying in to London all the way from Montreal is the Director of one of this year’s feature films ‘*Window Horses*’. We’ve screened several of Ann-Marie’s short films over the years and it’s wonderful to be able to see her make the step up to feature filmmaking – and with such a heartwarming, witty and poetic film too. We’ll be looking forward to seeing what Ann-Marie has to say about her film onstage at the Barbican on closing night, Sunday December 11.

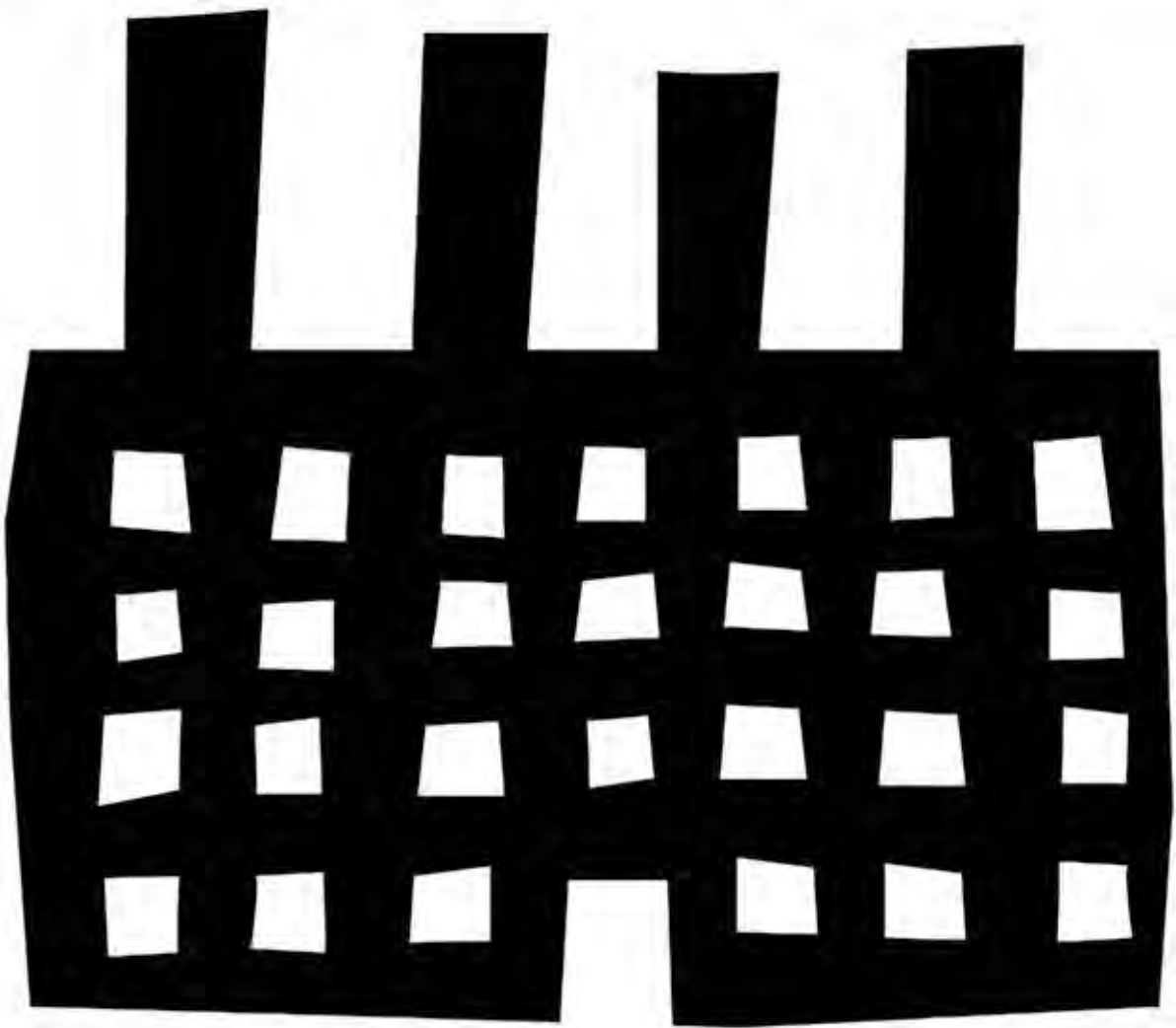
The animation world is a relatively small community (but perfectly formed) so it’s great to see so many veteran filmmakers returning to the fold. We’re really glad to welcome back these masters of animation with their new films this year –Liz Hobbs, Koji Yamamura, Preet Tender, Ulo Pikkov, Vladimir Leschiov, Igor Kovalov, Tom Schroeder, Theo Ushev, Patrick Jenkins, Claude Cloutier, Uri and Michelle Kranot, Izabela Plucinska, Jonas Odell, Lei Lei, Phil Mulloy and Steven Subotnick – and we’re looking forward to seeing them screened side-by-side with many newcomers to the scene. It’s a vintage year and we’ve got a bumper crop of films for you.

Onwards and upwards!

Nag Vladermersky

London International Animation Festival
November 18 2016

to all the filmmakers at LIAF 2016!
Good luck!

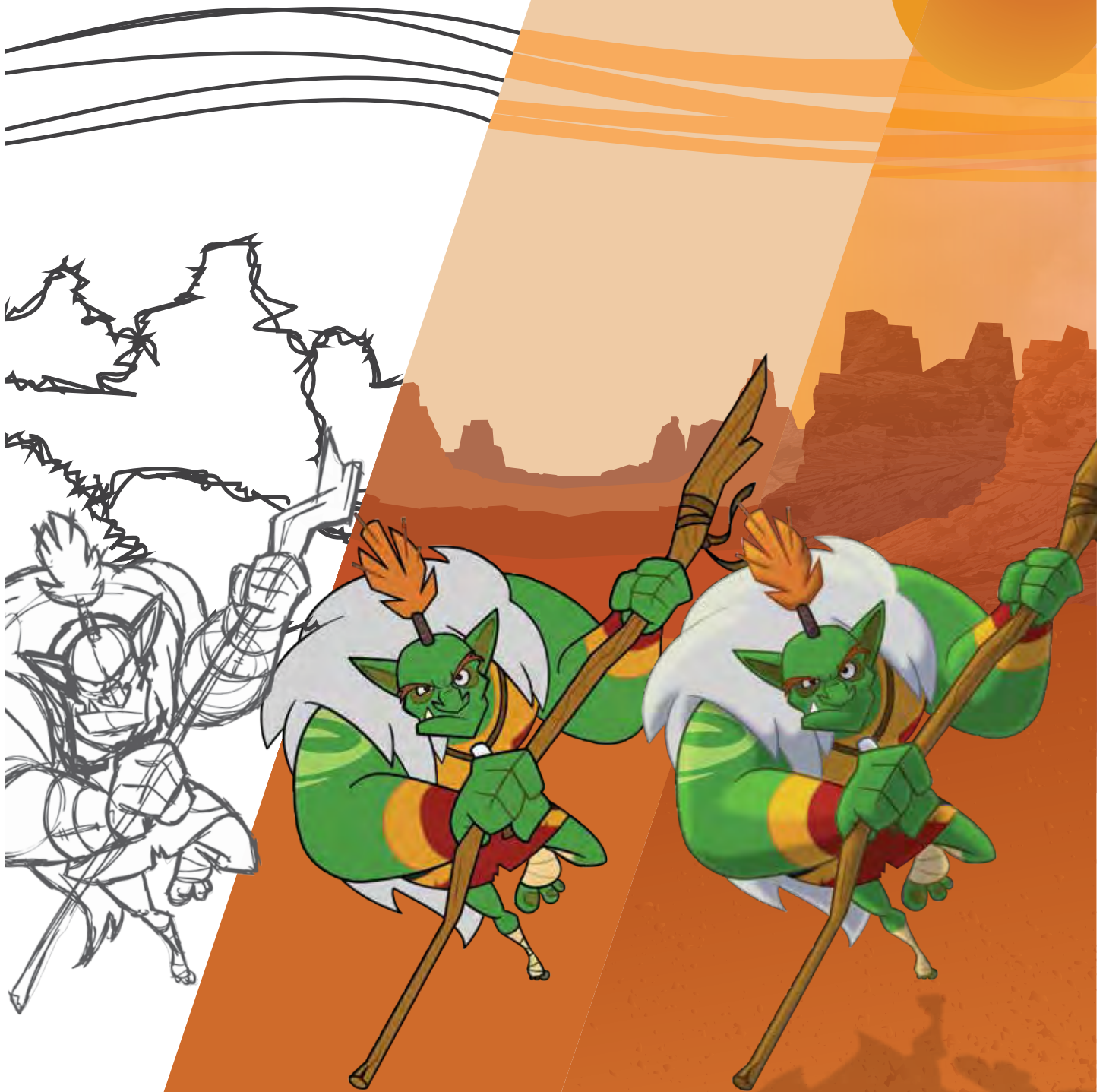


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International **1** (15) Competition Programme: From Absurd to Zany

at Barbican Sat 3 Dec 19:00

A grand welcome – one and all – to LIAF 2016. Absurd To Zany seemed as good a way to trigger this annual animation avalanche as any. Abseiling the absurd and unzipping the zany are all just another day at the office for the good crew LIAF.

Proceedings start in style with *The Noise of the Grey* (Stephane Aubier, Vincent Patar), the latest offering from ultra-cult series *A Town Called Panic*. The sheer, crazy-brave concept behind using the simplest off-the-shelf tiny plastic toys to create hyper-caffeinated dramas of manic intensity shows no signs of losing even a smidgen of its mojo. A steeply building crescendo of chaos, colour, free-jazz and colossal artistic vandalism launch a semi-co-ordinated attack on the grey – an attack that can only be countered with explosive fire power.

Steven Subotnick is an animator whose creative output is stylistically varied – to say the least! His films range from surreal lullabies (*Jelly Fishers*, 2009) to dreamlike documentaries (*Glass Crow*, 2004) to purely abstract works (*Line*, 2014). His latest creation is a bizarre and often hilarious treatise on pigs called, oddly enough, *Pig*.

Subotnick rarely storyboards his films, relying instead on his instincts to create images that will inspire him to continue. With *Pig* the starting point was little more than a series of singular, partially formed images of pigs slipping in and out of the focus of his mind's eye.

Creating the soundtrack, however, must have been quite an experience. Little more than a torrent of squealing pig sounds, this one-of-a-kind job fell to Joel Frenzer whose brief basically instructed him to imagine chasing a pig. A pre-emptive conversation with his landlord preceded Frenzer spending the best (or at least the most interesting) part of an afternoon screaming at full volume like a pig into a microphone rigged in his apartment. The landlord apparently let it slide although there is no word on the reactions of neighbours nor the local constabulary.

The sheer contorted surrealism that is the creative blood-pump of Estonian animated narratives is something that has waxed and waned a little in the period that has bridged a change of generations in that country's animation community. To some degree much of the pure socio-political impetus that drove those early storylines slowly simmered away in the steam as Estonian society emerged from Russian control and Estonian's resumed domain over their own stories. But as the cultural waves settle and a new generation gets a chance to stretch its wings and craft a view of the horizons it sees, the essence of what makes Estonian animation so unique proves too powerful an essence to be left behind or homogenised. Two films in this programme profoundly floodlight the unique arena in which these films are imagined and created.

Velodrool by Sander Joon makes this point in every way that counts. *Velodrool* is pure, unadulterated meta-narrative. It is certainly not abstract, nor is it surreal in so far as the actions of every character can be described with each one of those individual scenes making some sort of sense as a stand-alone act. But collectively the sum of all of these moving parts simply defies an attempt to create a coherent whole sufficient to pass on to somebody who has not seen it. And yet.... to see a film like *Velodrool* is to have experienced a story of sorts. Absorbing this kind of narrative is done more with the raw ends of our visual antennae rather than the consolidated power of our minds which are often pre-set with a need to seek clarity and definition. No other art form is better suited for expressing these kinds of imaginings than animation.

The second Estonian film in the programme is an equally compelling marker of the robust health of Estonian animation. We have been screening films by Chintis Lundgren since she was an animation student in Tallinn. Drawn, colourful and always quirky tracks of knotted and twisting narrative, her films are just a delight. And they are getting better, stranger, more complex and confident.

Her latest film, *Life With Herman H. Rott*, is a deliciously semi-violent little psycho drama in which Lundgren seems to relish playing cat 'n' mouse with the audience as much as with the two leading protagonists. A strange and warped take on the old 'odd couple' set-up, these two characters seem intent on encouraging each other to destroy their own lives. For the most part it's hilarious to watch play out but there is an underlying tauntness to this steady trickle of serially co-induced emotional immolation that probably strikes a chord with the dark angel that sits patiently on each of our shoulders waiting for just the right moment to make a malevolent gesture into an otherwise tranquil life.

A fascinating kind of hi-tech primitivism permeates the core of *Roger Ballen's Theatre Of Apparitions*, animated by Emma Calder and Ged Haney and commissioned and produced by Ballen himself.

Internationally recognised as a photographer, Ballen's work inhabits a space that blends a kind of abstracted documentary approach to capturing images with something approaching a compulsion to place that imagery in alternative, often warped and self-defining environments. These environments have borders but those borders tend to be viscerally felt rather than clearly seen and there is a lot to feel in this film. To create the raw images he handed to Calder and Haney to animate, Ballen inhaled the ghostly remnant handiwork scratched, carved and drawn into the fabric of an abandoned women's prison. Processing it as if through some sort of softy acidic fossilising filter, these images have been animatedly crafted into one of the most unusually compelling films you are likely to see for quite some time.

Frenetic is definitely the word that comes to mind when Grant Kolton's film *By The Name Of Boston* starts rolling. Two and a half minutes of barely constrained narrative mayhem mirror the creative process that Kolton favours when making a film.

"This film was initially just a short bit of writing I did and later I thought it could make a good

animation,” he said when we first invited his film. “I wrote it all in one go in my usual stream of consciousness (or lazy-man’s) technique where I don’t edit and try to let my hands play catch up to my brain. I wanted the animation to play out in a similar fashion so it would feel like it was always moving. The visuals are supposed to be either literal representations of the story or are visual interpretations of the meaning.”

It works like a charm but it’s a near-impossible challenge to keep up with the ride. Sure, a gag about how nicknames are only for people called Nick makes a certain bent sense but how that immediately implies a forbidden door you can’t get access to is anybody’s guess. Best not to overthink and just focus on hanging on for the full ride – that’s our advice.

We close our first international programme the best way we know how – with a brilliant British film. *The Wrong End Of The Stick* animated by Terri Matthews at the National Film & Television School (NFTS) is proof positive that the future of British animation is assured. It is pretty hard to talk in detail about the film without frontloading the explanation with spoilers. We will let the film talk for itself but as you take in a beautifully crafted story that veers from the poignant to the delicately macabre, set aside some bandwidth to marvel at the incredible skill with which Matthews has intertwined the animated with the real. A name to watch!



The Noise of The Grey

France/Belgium 2016, 3'00

Horse, Cowboy and Indian invite some crazy friends over to help them liven up their dull grey house by adding some splashes of colour. Chaos ensues!

Directors Stephane Aubier & Vincent Patar



Panic

The Netherlands 2015, 6'00

In the car Marja has a sudden rush of panic: did she turn off the gas? Did she leave the water running?

Directors Joost Lieuwma & Daan Velsink



Pig

USA 2015, 3'00

A pig is everything. An experimental riff on a hundred things that PIG might mean.

Director Steven Subotnick



Velodrool

Estonia 2015, 6'00

A nicotine addicted cyclist in a race against time finds the pathway to the finish line littered with a plethora of peculiar obstacles.

Director Sander Joon



No Offense

Belgium 2016, 7'00

Cartoonists are being put on trial with the death penalty being the ultimate fate.

Director Kris Borghs



The Bald Future

France 2016, 6'00

Being a bald man sucks. Knowing you’ll become one is even worse.

Director Paul Cabon



Roger Ballen's Theatre of Apparitions

UK/South Africa 2016, 5'00

An animated theatre of dismembered people, beasts and ghosts, dance, tumble, make love and tear themselves apart.

Directors Emma Calder & Ged Haney



The Noise of Licking

Hungary 2016, 9'00

A mysterious woman, a curious cat, some exotic plants and a perverse ritual.

Director Nadja Andrasev



In One Drag

Germany 2016, 3'00

Late in the evening when all the cigarette butts in the city become alive.

Director Alireza Hashempour



By the Name of Boston

USA 2015, 2'00

William Boston lives in the desert caring only for the finer things and his friend Chester the scorpion.

Director Grant Kolton



Wolf Games

Croatia 2015, 5'00

It's late afternoon in the wolves' house and the three little wolves are as boisterous as ever, and always hungry!

Director Jelena Oroz



Life with Herman H Rott

Estonia 2015, 11'00

Hermann is a rat with a penchant for binge drinking, distorted guitars and chess. To his mind, any form of cleanliness would disturb his cosy flat.

Director Chintis Lundgren



Balcony

Hungary 2015, 6'00

Everybody does what they want to but some people are not yet sure what they want to do.

Director David Dell' Edera



Panic Attack!

USA 2016, 3'00

The internalised journey from wondering if the coffee machine was left on to sharing a cell with the Manson girls can be a short one indeed.

Director Eileen O'Meara



The Wrong End of the Stick

UK 2016, 10'00

A neurotic teacher lost in a dull marriage to his wife of twenty years faces an all-consuming identity crisis, and he is forced to express a deep, hidden desire.

Director Terri Matthews

International ⁽¹⁵⁾ 2 Competition Programme: Being Human

at Barbican Sat 3 Dec 21:00

There is a certain simple but quite specific charm that underpins the films that regularly emerge from the small Dutch studio of Job, Joris & Marieke. Their latest film (*Otto*) continues the alluring momentum of this young studio. The real essence of the Job, Joris & Marieke magic is their apparently effortless ability to disarmingly blend what could, in the hands of others, be a sad and sorrowful story into something completely the opposite, all the time retaining the unassuming poignancy that beats at its centre giving it its substance.

Inner voices can be interesting companions. In the primordial privacy that exists inside our heads, our minds riff on some uninvited kernel of an idea, taking it at lightning-speed to a singularly strange place which only that split-second alignment of our inner, silent, neurological wiring could assemble. These are conceptual vignettes we neither plan nor control.

Elements of all of this might be part of the creative fuel that so convincingly propels *Trial And Error* along. At heart, it is a pretty simple premise. An overcoat has lost a button and that button needs to be replaced. But in the hands of director Antje Heyn, this simple act is transformed into a kind of imaginary rubber ball bouncing wildly and erratically from one highly implausible solution to another. For added measure, Heyn springs occasional narrative detours upon us creating a wobbly, pseudo-interpretive reflection of life's myriad hurdles and micro-urgencies.

A beautifully hand-drawn style, a wry, snappy script and a dry, laconic, pitch-perfect narration make *Trial And Error* shine. But the deliberate creative decision to never show the face of the protagonist is what lifts it to a higher and unique plane. Without the emotional cues we could garner from facial expressions, the focus settles more heavily on the gyrating pathway(s) defined by the narration and seconded by the drawing.

Here at LIAF we have always been big fans of the films of Latvian animator Vladimír

Leschióv. All his films stand as sumptuous works of art with a depth, complexity and compelling fascination to the journey each of his films take us on. Leschióv's latest film *Waiting For The New Year* fairly aches with these sub-sentient, emotive blends. The nuclei that spins at its convergent centre where hope and fear cross paths is a persistent, though low volume, undercurrent of the film. These are the cocktail ingredients that life pours into all of us in varying ratios and Leschióv is a master at harnessing that universal sense of recognition and using it as a kind of ambient velcro to which his film sticks reminders – large and small – of life's uncertainties and unquantifiable optimisms.

Cowboyland pops up in the programme just in time to remind us that having a sense of humour is also an important part of being human. An audience favourite everywhere it screens, it is a western like no other and gets much of its rawness, humour and historical quirkiness from the particular style of black and white drawing employed in making it.

"For me it was matter of inspiration and authenticity of genre," says Slovakian animator and director David Stumpf, who is currently completing his masters at FAMU in Prague. "I was trying to do the artwork in colour, but finally I decided on the black and white look, because it's a better fit for the western," he continues. "Also, colour combinations are trendy for a short time and then they are replaced with a different trendy combination but black and white remains the same."

This programme contains three co-produced films with the National Film Board of Canada.

The first of them is *In Deep Waters* by Sarah Van Den Boom who is part of the French collective known as Papy3D. Formed in 2006, Papy3D have made very few films, but every single film to date has clearly been an uncompromisingly auteur project.

Van Den Boom has a particular talent for capturing the internal psyches of her characters. Marshalling a variety of textures and techniques, she slow-builds a subtle yet vivid portrait of those she populates

her films with. Doing this takes a profound understanding of human nature and a willingness to live with these characters as their sense of humanity gradually takes a more and more certain form in the mind of the artist. Translating that to the visual, moving medium of animation is at least as hard as it sounds – and Van Den Boom seems to be getting better and better at it.

The second of these co-productions saw the NFB teaming up with another French studio, Folimage to create *Mamie* by Janice Nadeau. Folimage has produced a plethora of sublimely crafted short films, more than 250 TV programmes and five features. In 1999 it founded the La Poudriere animation school. Brim-full of clever morphs and the kind of perspectives that really only make sense in an animated film, it is vintage Folimage and textbook NFB.

The programme closes with the third of the NFB co-productions, *Sexy Laundry* by Polish animator Izabela Plucinska. Her small independent studio, Clay Traces, was formed in 2006 as a vehicle to showcase Plucinska's astonishing talent animating with coloured clay. The best claymation displays a wonderful sense of handcrafted texture and dimension to the screen that drawings or even 3D computerised animation simply do not possess. By using variations of multi-plane sets, Plucinska was able to construct a sense of depth in her animated worlds that made her films stand out.

With *Sexy Laundry* she has brought a truly tactile sense of touch and fluidity to the characters in her film. These people feel alive, they have weight and many of us will feel a quiet, personal affinity to the imperfections of their physicalities as they each wrestle with the ravages and slow-burn negligence that create sub-ideal versions of ourselves as the years slip by and our gazes are focused elsewhere.

These characters stop being bits of clay very early on – they become all but human.



Otto

The Netherlands 2015, 10'00

Unable to have children, a woman resorts to stealing the imaginary friend of a small girl – a plan that must surely unravel somehow.

Director Job, Joris & Marieke



Trial and Error

Germany 2016, 6'00

An account of a lost shirt button, perfectionist aunts, busy cats, startled parrots – and a long-lost friend.

Directors Alexander Isert & Antje Heyn

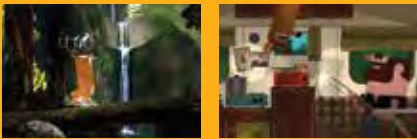


In Deep Waters

Canada/France 2015, 12'00

A contemplative exploration of the phenomenon that occurs when one twin dies in the womb, leaving the surviving twin with a sense of grief that may last a lifetime.

Director Sarah Van Den Boom

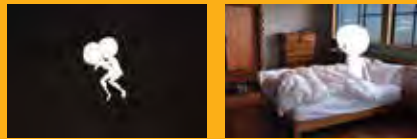


Spring Jam

New Zealand 2016, 6'00

A young stag, lacking impressive antlers, knows he needs to improvise sweet music if he's to have any chance during the mating season.

Director Ned Wenlock



The Great Escape

Singapore 2016, 6'00

Two men move with the passing of time, encountering their sanctuary at the olive tree.

Director Wei Keong



How's Your Prostate?

France 2016, 4'00

What do you chatter about at the pool with your girlfriend? Your father's prostate, his erectile function, and his nighttime fantasies.

Directors Jeanne Paturle & Cécile Rousset



Mamie

France/Canada 2016, 6'00

Mamie lives in a seaside home. When her cloistered world crumbles, her granddaughter starts to question the lack of real ties between them.

Director Janice Nadeau



Haircut

Italy 2016, 8'00

A teacher and student, an empty classroom and a strange confrontation.

Director Virginia Mori



Waiting For the New Year

Latvia 2016, 8'00

A lonely woman writes a letter. Years pass, times change but everything is really just the same. Then a letter arrives: it signals a new year and a new life.

Director Vladimir Leschiov



Afternoon Class

South Korea 2015, 4'00

Every schoolboy knows the gargantuan battle it takes to simply stay awake through the afternoon class.

Director Seoro Oh

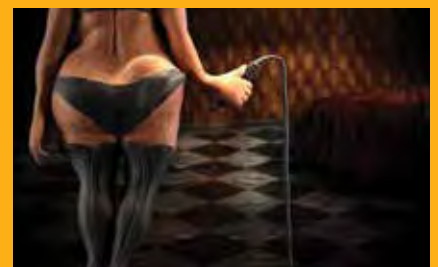


Cowboyland

Slovakia 2015, 5'00

A drunk sheriff isn't much use in this lawless town – and neither is his wooden horse. Luckily the chicken is keeping an eye on things.

Director Dávid Štumpf



Sexy Laundry

Germany/Canada/Poland 2015, 12'00

How can the flames of desire be rekindled after 25 years of married life? This erotic comedy delves into the private lives of a couple in their fifties numbed by routine.

Director Izabela Plucinska

International Competition Programme: **3** (15) Looking For Answers

at Barbican Sun 4 Dec 17:00

Life is a more or less constant trek involving looking for answers of various kinds. For the most part we know where to look or who to ask for most of the answers to the simpler but persistent questions that engulf our daily lives. Many of us get paid to sit around and wait for somebody to give us answers so we can get on with our work, a few of us get paid to make up those answers (usually as we go along). We seem to be building a world which throws up more and more ways to access answers to small, routine questions and for many people this pretty much represents the horizon of life's Q&A session.

This burgeoning welter of queries that we absorb into our psyches can have the effect of crowding our space to unroll the larger tapestry of less focused and more complex inquiries we have of the universe. At the same time the sheer volume and density of this inquisitorial cacophony feeds into the ether a demand that the answers be faster, swifter and simpler to grasp. What is the meaning of 'friend'? Oh look, I have exactly 152 of them right here!

As the cohesion, diversity and depth (not to mention civility) of our shared communal social discourse crashes and burns around us, artists of various stripes will be among those who hold fast to the desire – the need – to search out and describe the parts of us and our societies that are in the gravest need of some provocative illumination. In truth, this has always been one of the core parts of the artists' job description.

Animation might be a newer tool in the artist's arsenal than that but it harbours some very special properties that help searchers bring focus to some of the most abstract and contorted recesses of our inner selves. This wonderful ability to 'deep-reach' into some otherwise hazy element of our humanness means that many of the answers these sorts of films provide do so without the question they are addressing being specifically or categorically formed.

The opening film, *Blind Vaysha* is Theodore

Ushev's latest and is a perfect example of the kind of complex, indefinable human inquiry animators can subject a character to and reflect those inquiries onto us as a challenge to look deeper, think harder and search the margins of our own senses of self.

Blind Vaysha was completed so quickly that his previous film, *Blood Manifesto*, (which we have also included in this programme) was still only part way through its festival run. It was the easiest of all films to select. We were lucky enough to have Marc Bertrand, Ushev's long-term producer, take us aside for a screening when we were in the National Film Board of Canada's office last year. It works from the first frame and the story is one of such affecting simplicity that just the relating of its synopsis brings about an immediate connection with the prospective audience.

Husband and wife team Uri and Michelle Kranot are chroniclers of a completely different order. Their new film *How Long Not Long* confronts us with what is – at heart – a fairly simple question. Why can we not fix what we know is wrong with our societies, particularly when we know where the answers lie? The bold, beautifully expressive and painterly artwork of this film pulls us into a sprinting and urgent collection of juxtapositions and a vividly portrayed catalogue of social and environmental tipping points that we are sleepwalking towards.

The film draws its title directly from the powerful and enduring library of quotes gifted to all of us by Martin Luther King whose call to arms was to lay down arms. King's message – in part – was that what was needed was not the establishment of a new and alien social order but rather to actually begin living by the one we claim is already in place.

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed" King said in his legendary Lincoln Memorial speech in 1963. By overlaying the ethos of what drove King on to our contemporary world that promises so

much but still manages to deliver IS, human trafficking, climate change, the need for an Eric Snowden and symbolically ridiculous Pussy Riot institutional over-reactions, the question is How Long do we go before we do what we know needs to be done. Hopefully, Not Long.

Other than Edgar Allan Poe there is probably no other literary figure that has inspired more animation than the irascible Charles Bukowski. And why not? Much of his work shudders with a pained anger and resignation that resonated outwards from his often savage personal conception of life. His was a soul that filled the air with a tarry dew that coated everything it touched when he spoke and that residue is proving difficult to clean off more than 20 years on from his death. He had more questions than most of us and no one can say he didn't take himself well out onto the furthest limbs looking for the answers.

Bukowski was a true ambassador of the notion that alcohol stood as the cause of, and solution to, many of life's problems. Pouring alcohol in the roiling cauldron of a mind like Bukowski's produced as much bitter treacle as it did sweet solutions. But, as they say, every journey starts with a single step and the stunning Nerdo Creative Studio's new film, titled simply *Beer*, provides a sublimely crafted insight into the alcoholic logic of one of the greatest journey-takers of modern literature - Heinrich Karl Bukowski.

Serial LIAF alumni and occasional Toronto go-to-guy, Patrick Jenkins takes a more classical approach to searching for answers. A superb example of paint-on-glass animation, his new film *Phantom City* is not his first film in this technique but it is his longest, most complex and most detailed. One measure of a paint-on-glass animation is to try and grasp how many brushstrokes any given frame would have taken to complete. An ever-increasing number of brushstrokes does not simply increase the amount of work required to complete it, it also exponentially increases the complexity of making these images appear to move fluidly and with the required continuity.

Phantom City works on pretty much every level. It is a wonderful piece of noir(ish) cinema; classic, laconic and a bit tongue-in-cheek all at the same time. It's a coherent and rollicking piece of narrative. And it has to be made up of about a million brushstrokes! The level of detail portrayed in every frame – within the characters, all the moving elements and the static background scenery – borders on the astonishing. The fact that it moves so beautifully makes it easy to simply stop thinking about all the work it must have taken to make.

And in *G-AAAH* this programme comes to a joyously, unrepentantly analogue conclusion courtesy of the latest hand-made creation from the splendid Elizabeth Hobbs. *G-AAAH* is rendered in an animated technique so – apparently – simple that only an artist with the soaring creative output of Hobbs could have harnessed it. In what presumably would have been a marathon of fingertip numbing typing and a self-inflicted private masterclass of trial and error she has managed to channel the daring-do, searching spirit of pioneer aviatrix Amy Johnson.

It stands as an apt way to wrap up a programme about searching for answers. Johnson's life story is a rich trove of challenges sought and met while her death and ultimate resting place is part of a complex riddle that is still being unwoven.



Blind Vaysha

Canada 2016, 9'00

Simply gorgeous! Vaysha can see only the future with one eye and the past with the other.

Director Theodore Ushev



Jukai

France 2015, 9'00

A young woman follows a trail of coloured threads leading deep into a forest, hoping to find the answers to her lingering fears.

Director Gabrielle Lissot



It Was Mine

Norway 2015, 8'00

A playful and offbeat reflection on the surprising moments where you get the feeling that everything is somehow connected. Based on a short story by Paul Auster.

Director Kajsa Naess



How Long Not Long

Denmark 2016, 6'00

Xenophobia, nationalism and intolerance are a daily occurrence. The world is divided among warring creeds and cultures, but it doesn't have to be that way.

Directors Uri & Michelle Kranot



Beer

Italy 2016, 2'00

An ode to alcohol by the great anti-poet Charles Bukowski.

Director Nerdo Creative Studio



Carface

Canada 2015, 5'00

What will be, will be.... especially if we keep drilling for the black gold to power the vehicles taking us there.

Director Claude Cloutier



Black Out

Hungary 2016, 9'00

In a big city much like any other, a fox working a white-collar job tries to break out of his monotone life and escape from the pressure of society.

Directors Borbála Mészáros & Zsuzsanna Rádóczy



Phantom City

Canada 2015, 7'00

A woman with a mysterious suitcase and a man in pursuit – a noir-tinged tale in the Phantom City.

Director Patrick Jenkins



Made in China

France 2015, 3'00

Wooden toys strive to act like humans, despite their physical limitations.

Director Vincent Tsui



This is Not an Animation

Canada/Mexico 2016, 5'00

A group of pretentious animators attempt to create the ultimate animated film. But do they really have the skills to back up their claims?

Director Federico Kempke

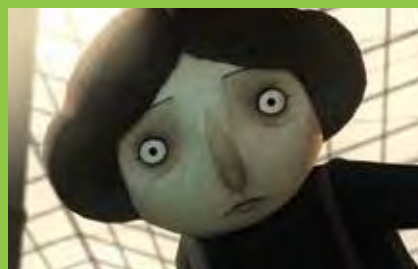


Peter's Forest

Croatia 2016, 8'00

A universal parable about differences. A story about the natural and the excluded, the normal and the uncommon.

Director Martina Mestrovic



The Head Vanishes

France 2016, 9'00

An elderly woman living with degenerative dementia, her confused mind leaves her open to danger.

Director Franck Dion



Blood Manifesto

Canada 2015, 2'00

A personal manifesto driven by a near-boundless creative vision and animated with the blood of the filmmaker.

Director Theodore Ushev



G-AAAH

UK 2016, 1'00

A celebration of Amy Johnson's record-breaking solo flight from London to Australia in 1930 created with an Underwood 315 typewriter.

Director Elizabeth Hobbs

International ⁽¹⁵⁾ 4 Competition Programme: New Japanese Shorts – Beyond Anime

at Barbican Sun 4 Dec 21:00

Annually we here at LIAF view well in excess of 2,500 films and the flow shows no signs of ebbing. And yet this trove of extraordinary imaginative imagery is completely unknown to probably more than 95% of the population. Completely unknown.

Sit it beside what people do tend to recognise as animation – an annual disgorge of 30 or 40 mostly 2-star formulaic kids feature films and two or three hundred TV shows of wildly varying creative and emotional substance – and a picture of sorts emerges of a very fractured knowledge and understanding of what animation is.

Anime easily gets bound up in this discussion. The fact that it is animation is self-evident and as an art form it has more than earned its huge legions of fans and deserves the academic and pan-cultural attention it has garnered. It is a vibrant, complex and compelling form of filmmaking replete with a century-long roster of masters, cult characters and a fascinating history and development.

However, from a perspective that seeks to encompass the entire 'animation' canon, anime is but one branch of that canon. And yet it has increasingly come to almost generically mean 'animation from Japan'.

Definitions of what constitutes anime vary to some extent, and have been splintered further by the wider, easier and more rapid dissemination of all forms of moving image art to an increasingly international audience. The picture is also made a little murkier by the fact that in Japan the term 'anime' simply means 'animation' which – for example – sees collections of Tom & Jerry cartoons referred to as 'overseas anime'.

It is probably fair to say that the general perception of what constituted an anime film revolved, to a great extent, around its visual style and the particular narrative parameters that contained the films. The most obvious stylistic elements included the large, highly definitive eyes and the brightly coloured, starkly designed hair of the characters. The storylines also tended towards fantastical,

though fairly linear, narratives which had a strong sense that they were infused with the feel of comic books brought to life.

The Japanese audience simply took anime to its heart as a part of its own, diverse cultural smorgasbord. But as the appeal and availability of anime to a larger western audience spread, that audience saw it as a more niche and specialised product. They also tended to see it as an alternative – in fact, the ONLY alternative – to mainstream animation. Largely bereft of any inkling of the existence of a vast catalogue of complex, diverse and highly artistic animation made in their very midst, this audience began to assume that anime was simply any animation from Japan. Thus 'anime' became 'animation' when contrasted to the various and established tropes of live-action cinema. And because anime seemed so different than the extremely narrow thread of mainstream animation known at the time and because it was from Japan, 'anime' as a term was diluted once again to that of an assumptive misnomer for animation made in Japan.

In truth, Japan produces much animation that has little or no particular association with what is broadly considered anime. Certainly, in a place in which anime is such a powerful and recognised element of the local culture, traces and flavours can tinge the elemental weave of some of the auteur animation made there. But much Japanese animation has a lot in common with that created by the broader international animation community.

This programme is but a taste of that. As a competition programme all of these films are recent releases and cumulatively speak to the diversity of genres, styles, techniques and aesthetics of the animation emerging from anywhere, but in this case created solely in Japan.

For example, *Don't Tell Mum* by Kawako Sabuki continues her jaw-dropping ability to get away with animating subject material that could only be described as a kind of hilariously demented, pornographic piece of stream of consciousness – in vivid technicolour. Presenting anything in this film

live-action would be out of the question, as much for the physically impossible demands it would make upon the most flexible and adventurous of actors as for fear of having nothing left after the censor had finished the scissor work. Classic anime has plenty of instances in which characters are sexualised to some extent but fully expressive, full frontal and explicitly depicted sexual content and activity is normally out of bounds.

Abstraction is also not something anime tackles. However in *Mirai Mizue* the world of animation has one its more accomplished and prolific exponents. To keep up with that output we have had to include two of his latest films in this programme – there were more on offer. *Age Of Obscure* is perhaps more organic and a little less geometrical and mathematical than his earlier films, but its pace, complexity and sheer visual beauty is spectacular. *Retro Future* is all straight lines and moving Escheresque perspective puzzles but, interestingly, carries a soundtrack by Matsuo Ohno, a legendary musician, composer and soundtrack artist.

Likewise, the latest 'light-painting' extravaganza from Japanese collective Tochka, titled *Track*, is a kind of pixilation/ stop-motion blend that would never be categorised as anime. Continuing the point, this programme features sand animation and independent films that have a beautifully pastel painterly quality to their look and a reflective/contemplative pacing to their narrative.

Rounding out the case, we have included several films from Japan's two main animation courses at Tokyo University of the Arts and the Tama Art University in this line-up. The films that emerge from these courses are as diverse as the people who made them. But they reinforce Japan's status as a powerhouse of stylistically diverse and creatively artistic animation.

And great anime too..... but that's a different story.



Don't Tell Mom

Japan 2015, 3'00

The secret joys of bike-riding and much more – but don't tell Mom, whatever you do!

Director Kawako Sabuki



Age of Obscure

Japan 2015, 4'00

A glorious collision of freaky visual music and mesmerising impressionistic illustrations, featuring music by Twoth.

Director Mirai Mizue



At the Mouth of Summer

Japan 2016, 6'00

At a packed Chinese beach, people are enjoying the summer holidays, until a thunderstorm ensues.

Director Xinxin Liu



Track

Japan 2016, 4'00

Tochka's signature style of flashlight animation and mind-blowing temporary graffiti.

Director Tochka



Feed

Japan 2016, 7'00

Two large, gentle beings plant trees; a goat is fed; meatballs are cooked – slow, mysterious, beautiful.

Director Eri Okazaki



Hairy Heaven

Japan 2015, 6'00

I love you. I hate you. I love you. I hate you. Aaaaaah!

Director Minori Yamada



Goodbye Tears

Japan 2015, 5'00

If managing life is about managing chaos then tears are the prisms that afford the widest views of the terrain.

Director Shoko Matsumura



Solitarium

Japan 2016, 6'30

Naked people run around in a forest, brides and grooms twirl and dance, a severed brain gets whipped, the hypnotising rhythms of another world.

Director Sumito Sakakibara



I Can't Breathe

Japan 2015, 6'00

What happens when you drown your friend by mistake?

Director Sayaka Kihata



Retro Future

Japan 2015, 7'00

A futuristic but strangely retro look at childhood featuring a sound design by the legendary Matsuo Ohno, sound artist from 'Astro Boy'.

Director Mirai Mizue

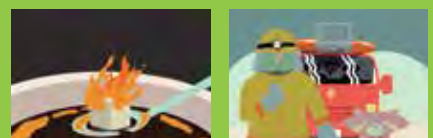


Radio Wave

Japan 2016, 3'00

During the Cold War a boy tunes the radio and discovers a world of hidden codes.

Director Miyajima Ryotaro



Sugar Lump

Japan 2016, 14'00

An adolescent boy lives in a burning house with his parents. A darkly comic tale of black coffee and sugar lumps.

Director Ryo Okawara

International **5**⁽¹⁵⁾ Competition Programme: Into The Dark

at Barbican **Mon 5 Dec 19:00**

Animation has always harboured a dark heart. The earliest animation enthusiastically gave vision to nightmares that people had never before seen move except in their imaginations. The happiest animation is happier than the happiest film but the darkest animation plunges to depths that could be described as more or less post-imagination. Left unfettered and unchallenged, most imaginations descend to these darker recesses. Unleashed and left bereft of signposts those visions fracture, fracture and fracture again until only fragments of the original narrative remain, often reforming into a kind of volatile, surrealist doppelganger of the original source.

We have all experienced this within the private confines of our minds. Often we will never share – nor can we properly explain – these visions whose genesis we cannot control.

But animators thrive in this deep, dark forest. It is their life-blood. They know how to form these thoughts into a short, single whole that we can sit and watch beginning-to-end.

This programme takes you into a realm of animation that has existed since people started dragging dark visions from the amorphous shadows of the purely imaginary and started plastering them up on screens as moving embodiments of the depths that the human imagination can expand (or contract) to. There are few happy endings here and some of these films have the potential to shock or offend. But such is the truth of dealing with ideas that have been freed of their binds.

Chris Shepherd's new film *Johnno's Dead* is a towering incarnation of how these dark visions can solidify into a fearsome, stained narrative. The notion of a kind of irreducible human evil brought to life, given limbs and some form of free will enabling it to walk among us as a functioning psychopath sat at the core of Shepherd's earlier film, *Dad's Dead*. *Johnno's Dead* returns to the story twelve years on from where *Dad's Dead*

concluded. The narrator, framed and jailed in hell for more than a decade for a crime committed by Johnno, finds himself free and has to somehow come to grips with a society he barely recognises - all the while with the contagion of pathological hatred coursing through every vein and sinew of his being. Unfortunately for all concerned, in Johnno he had the ultimate inspiration.

Using animals as avatars is nothing new in the animation realm. *Decorado* by Alberto Vazquez exploits this phenomena with a ruthless efficiency, cataloguing horrors and emotional firewall breaches so numerous they need indexing.

Inherent in these violent vignettes sits a kind of interpretive map of some of the deepest fears we have hardwired into our being. They may not all be the colossal fears of the death variety but more the betrayals that lurk behind the bolted cellar door of every relationship or our unspoken sense of the fragility of the grasp we have on 'normal'. Watching this film is a little like taking your psyche for a walk through a violent, haunted house and having it prodded and piked at every corner.

Suspicion, fear and mistrust rise up in an altogether more colourful way in Shaun Clark's *Neck And Neck*. Drawing deep from Othello, one of the most poisoned wells in literary history, Clark creates a kind of pictorial malaise depicting the savage, treacherous shifting sands that fortify its intensity. The tale of Othello stands as an exemplar for the notion that the happiest minds can be turned against themselves and that darkness can blanket light almost at the whim of whoever or whatever chooses to unleash it.

Pieter Coudijzer is a master of the macabre. His characters are present as mutant escapees from a lab long hidden from sight. His environments glow and shimmer with a grim and pulsating luminescence. An aura of looming, ill-defined menace hangs in the air as they screen. His new film *Beast!* brings this bizarre and foreboding universe to the screen, finding a narrative dissection point between interspecies connection and soul-

crushing loss. Odd and discordant as it may sound, it has a happy ending – more or less.

Also living in the shadows is *A Coat Made Dark* by Ireland's Jack O'Shea. This is a film in which the textures and a veil of living gloom conspire to ensure we are drawn inextricably into an all-enveloping world of foreboding, more insinuated than declared. Once inside, the door disappears behind us and we can almost feel the same obstacles and absorb the same apprehensions the lead characters are struggling to navigate. It's a wonderful experience and one that only lives its real life on a cinema screen.

The programme closes with a darkly enchanting story. *Wake Me Up* by Croatian Dea Jagic uses real world spaces as stepping off points and takes us on unsettling journeys through and beyond them. The film begins in an enclosed, apparently abandoned place and Jagic imposes ever-morphing characters into the space which inhale its sinister claustrophobia and exhale a restless, furtive energy that cries out for escape and freedom.

Obtaining freedom turns out to be the simple part. Fear of the dark openness beyond the certainty of the confined enclosure left behind soon sets in. With no walls, there is nothing but space in every direction. But no space is truly empty and much of the dark matter from the cellar seems to have leaked out with the escapee, making the outside less of a haven and avenue to freedom and more a frightening, uncertain zoo of fugitives from a fevered and troubled imagination.

Wake Me Up drip feeds a repressed fear that – in reality – there really is no reliable sanctuary in life, and that our inner sense of perceptual safety is a balm-stone of sand wrapped in the filmsiest of gauze.

Now... what was that about animation being only for kids??



Johnno's Dead

UK/France 2016, 9'00

Serving twelve years behind bars for a crime you didn't commit focuses the mind. A terrifying and twisted tale of obsession, destruction and revenge.

Director Chris Shepherd



Decorado

France/Spain 2016, 11'00

Is this bizarre dystopian landscape real? Or are we all just living through set pieces in some strange movie?

Director Alberto Vazquez

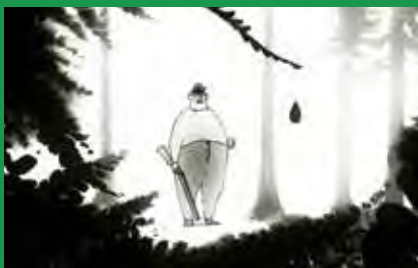


Neck & Neck

UK 2016, 5'00

Behind the marital bed curtains Othello and Desdemona are disturbed by the poisonous words from Iago leading to detrimental consequences for the lovers.

Director Shaun Clark

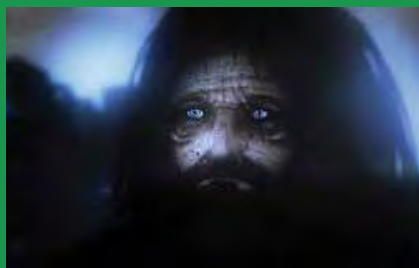


Happy End

Czech Republic 2015, 9'00

A black comedy about death with a happy ending featuring hunters, a tractor driver, a disco boy and a corpse.

Director Jan Saska



Beast!

Belgium 2016, 20'00

The life of a scruffy, banished homeless man is enlightened by the arrival of a very unexpected visitor.

Director Pieter Coudijzer



Ruben Leaves

Switzerland 2015, 5'00

Ruben is just trying to get to work but his mind has other ideas, filling his horizon with increasingly weird and wild scenarios.

Director Frederic Siegel



A Coat Made Dark

Ireland 2015, 9'00

Navigating a twilight world with few clear markers, a man follows the orders of a dog to wear a mysterious coat with impossible pockets.

Director Jack O'Shea



Bird Flu

Estonia 2016, 10'00

A man, a snake, a drunk penguin and the disappearance of birds. Paradise and being expelled from it.

Director Prit Tender



Wake Me Up

Croatia 2015, 9'00

After waking up in a strange place, a boy embarks upon an unsettling journey on his way to a home that has changed forever.

Director Dea Jagic

International **6** (15) Competition Programme: Below the Surface

at Barbican **Mon 5 Dec 21:00**

Surfaces. The concept is one of the simplest to grasp and one of the first learned by new-borns. We stand on a footpath, our dinner sits on top of a table, a movie is projected onto a screen, a large sheet of glass stops (most of) us from simply climbing into a jewellery shop and helping ourselves. Breaching a surface to find out what lies beneath normally takes implements, effort and a certain will driven by a specific reason. Breaching a surface by accident often brings inconvenience, confusion or pain. Crashing into a surface can bring death.

Our relationship with surfaces is so fundamentally simple and so universally understood that we seldom stop to notice it. We live by their rules. Live-action filmmakers understand surfaces extremely well. Surfaces can reflect or absorb light, they can define boundaries, or act as backdrops. But generally they have to play by the rules – surfaces are surfaces and they need to behave as such to be taken seriously.

Well.... welcome to the world of animation! Those rules and assumptions need not, and often do not apply. Animation is an art form gifted us as the ultimate tool for delving into places of which only an ample and amplified imagination can conceive. Animation renders those rules not so much petulantly invalid as delightfully defunct. Anything can be anything and once it is anything it can go anywhere.

We open this programme with Exhibit A, *Ghost Cell* by Antoine Delacharley, yet another stunning example of extraordinary animation to emerge from *Autour de Minuit* in Paris. *Ghost Cell* could best be described as a sensory journey INTO surfaces. The astonishing digital detail in which all the imagery of this film is etched is so absorbing that we can overlook the fact that really nothing in the frame has a surface. The skin – the surface – of virtually everything depicted has been dissolved away exposing a man-made organism of staggering, virtually biological complexity. One of the many delights in experiencing this film is to realise how quickly and easily we have

abandoned our intellectual adherence to the rules and how readily and fully we adopt the alternative paradigm that gives *Ghost Cell* so much of its power.

We have been watching the films of David Buob grow bigger, more epic and stranger for the last few years. *The House* (2011) was a sweet, endearingly odd tale about a little girl apparently stuck in a dream. *Uto* (2014) was a different creation altogether. Almost surreal visually, it took the audience on a churning carnival ride, twisting and turning without let up. Buob's latest, *Me By You*, is more of the same – a LOT more of the same. It virtually spasms with a kind of unrestrained energy driving it relentlessly down and down and down some more. This seems to be Buob's emerging style.

David Delafuente is an interdisciplinary artist with interests in the moving image, aesthetic theory, and graphic design. Delafuente's student film *UUUUUU* made an immediate impression. Stylish and elegant, it harnesses many of the unique properties of animation to create a film with a 'personality' that reveals the majority of its message through what it hides and suggests. "This film is sort of a breakup film," explains Delafuente. "I made it following the dissolution of a relationship that I really cared about. I didn't see colour in my work during this time; it was a reflection of my thoughts at 3:00am which were dark and nocturnal."

Much of this slow-reveal show-and-tell is achieved through an intricately woven interlacing of black and white design and the clever use of surfaces to obscure or expose the film's more subtle messages. And – for the record – it was all hand-drawn onto paper; it took more than 4,000 drawings to produce this engagingly moody and intriguing film.

Mr Sand by Soetkin Verstegen veers this programme off on a sudden aesthetic course change. Raw, stylistically diverse and possessed of a generously proportioned narrative ambition this film operates on multiple levels. At heart it is a lavish, uncompromising 'meta-cinema' visual essay. In its DNA resides twisting strands of clues

illuminating the very nature of early cinema and the social and cultural relationship early audiences collectively built with this new medium as they tried to fathom its uses and potentials. Scattered throughout are random and often potent reminders of what pieces of complex cinematic animation look like and what goes into making them. A recurrent thread intermittently reminds us that fire was a consistent risk of using flammable nitrate filmstock to entertain hundreds of people in dark, enclosed rooms. This is a film to be absorbed and experienced rather than critiqued in any linear fashion. Crammed to bursting with images, ideas and challenges, it none-the-less wastes not a single frame.

And perhaps of interest to quiet connoisseurs of animated film detail, the sound on *Mr Sand* was done by Andrea Martignoni, a name that has been cropping up on more and more of the films we screen in recent years. The self-described unofficial ambassador of Italian animation, Martignoni's skill, creativity and expertise in creating soundtracks for auteur animation is something that spans back some time. The regularity with which we are seeing his name strapped into the credit roll of more and more of these films those is worth pointing out. Great soundtracks do not happen by accident.

The programme concludes with what must surely be one of the most charming films in the entire LIAF competition line-up. *Once Upon A Line* by Alicja Jasina is a sweet conveyor belt treat for the eyes – the exact way we feel like sending you out into the night. As the title insinuates, much of film relies on an ability to wrangle the humble line into a rollicking concoction of images with a flow and oscillating narrative of sorts. The almost super-human imaginative complexity involved in creating this film is shyly masked by the apparently simple and clean lines of the finished product. It is an act of creative gymnastics only the fittest of the form would set out to execute. Try it – if you don't tie yourself in knots, send in the results, we might screen them next year.

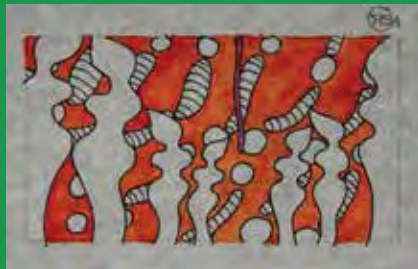


Ghost Cell

France 2014, 6'00

A truly stunning, breathtakingly intricate re-imagining of Paris as a massive, thriving organism of a billion pieces.

Director Antoine Delacharley



Me By You

Germany 2015, 8'00

Life's like an animated film, a never-ending chain of changes.

Director David Buob



Soil is Alive

Italy 2016, 8'00

A dark tale without heroes, looking for something that might not be there.

Director Beatrice Pucci



Otto

Italy 2015, 2'00

The switch from 2D to 3D is a turn of events Otto hadn't anticipated at the beginning of his day.

Directors Salvatore Murgia & Dario Imbrogno



Uuuuuu

USA 2015, 4'00

Sometimes the best thoughts come to you at 3am. Against the black of night, simple white lines push those thoughts into bright relief.

Director David Delafuente



Mr. Sand

Denmark/Belgium 2016, 8'00

Is Mr. Sand real or imaginary? A dreamy bedtime story about early cinema.

Director Soetkin Versteegen



Ariadne's Thread

Switzerland 2016, 13'00

Ariadne loses the ball she was playing with, along with her childhood.

Director Claude Luyet



Slow Wave

USA 2016, 3'00

Sleep disturbances from outside and within.

Director Andy Kennedy



The Lighthouse

The Netherlands 2016, 11'00

A lighthouse keeper's surprising discovery pulls him out of his monotonous, daily routine and takes him onto a journey into uncharted territory.

Director Simon Schreiber



He and Sea

Belgium 2016, 8'00

A man, born of the sea is in search of his origins. The closer he gets to his goal, the more he loses of himself.

Directors Kris Genijn & Pieter Vanluffelen



Noevus

France 2016, 8'00

Fragments of porcelain, enamels and rust—a metamorphing mystery.

Director Samuel Yal



Once Upon A Line

Poland/USA 2016, 7'00

Stunning! A man lives a boring life until he meets somebody and his world turns upside down.

Director Alicja Jasina

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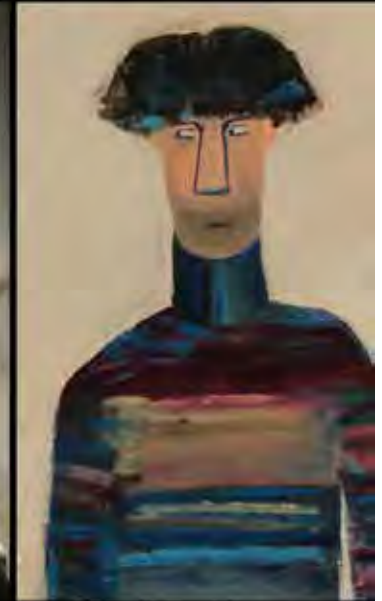
Man-O-Man



Sleeping with the Fishes



Edmond



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International Competition Programme: **7** (15) Long Shorts

at Barbican Tue 6 Dec 21:00

This may be one of the finest single collections of animation we have ever screened at LIAF. Animation is an art form that often demands much of its audience. Watching good animated films can be a demanding, energy-intensive exercise. Images move rapidly, characters and scenery morph dramatically and a lot of concentration can be needed to keep up with and make sense of what is happening. Messages, where they exist, can be buried deep and require a surprisingly complex level of decoding to unpack.

This programme opens with *The Sparrow's Flight* by Tom Schroeder which spiritually, aesthetically and narratively is really more akin to several different films all running simultaneously. It is as close to deserving the designation 'masterpiece' as any film we have seen in a good long while.

Schroeder is an accomplished animator and teacher based in Minneapolis, a town hardly known for its animation. A genuinely lovely guy, he masks his passion for quiet, patiently tenacious observation behind what many take to be a reserved nature. A gifted artist, his secret sauce is actually taking however long it takes to get to the very core of his characters, his story or the environment he is creating within the worlds his films bring to life.

This is all the more remarkable for the fact that Schroeder is, to all intents and purposes, a self-taught animator. Starting in the 1980s, he and best friend, Dave Herr, taught themselves how to animate more or less from the ground up. Without ready access to independent animation to watch, classes from which to learn the skills and techniques or a pool of teachers and mentors, the two 're-invented' many already established animation techniques and played with them until they got them down. They even hand-made some of the equipment needed to craft their experimental films, resulting in a collectively hewn pure instinct for animating as much as any definitive skillset.

This tightly interwoven duo was shattered when Herr suffered an incapacitating brain tumour that would ultimately lead to his death in 2009. Left behind was an immense collection of clips, experiments, semi-films and animated ideas committed to film and computer drives spanning the developing years of digital technologies. Weaving through this was a reasonably well-formed idea for a specific film – an idea brought to a pause with Herr's passing.

In hindsight this film was always going to be made – but it needed the perspective that only time can bring. Apart from an emotional rebalancing, it gave Schroeder time to sluice through that archive and recreate the physical film-set that he and Herr had envisaged as a backdrop for their opus. Schroeder built that set – a suspended surrealist piece of sculptural artwork in its own right – and sutured together a collection of the animated imagery he and Herr created over the years. He then carefully stirred in the story of their personal and creative journey.

In doing so, he has fashioned a film that contains a beautifully poised equilibrium balancing the story of this great friendship, a 'fly-on-the-wall' journey through a lifetime of creative invention and an encyclopaedic masterclass of animation styles and techniques.

We first caught wind of *Sunday Lunch* when we visited the Parisian studio Scarebleu whilst researching our 3 Days in Paris programme for LIAF 14. For the entire time we have been running LIAF we have been happily screening films from Scarebleu. Every year we call for entries and, like some quietly colourful animated songbird, a small package of their latest releases seems to arrive on the migratory winds from across the channel.

Sunday Lunch has all the visual trademarks of a Scarebleu work – beautifully hand-made artwork, flawless and fluid animation and a deft hand applied to character design and the way

those characters move and morph. It maintains its grip on our attention via the slow-burn release of information and the steady building of the humanity of the character at the centre of the drama. In the end, it is less about the story and more about letting the audience build their own appreciation of the trials and tribulations these players face.

Koji Yamamura is widely – and rightly – regarded as one of the living masters of animation. Born in 1964, he is a graduate of the Tokyo Zokei University and was inspired to begin a career in animation after seeing an Ishu Patel retrospective screened at the inaugural Hiroshima International Animation Festival.

Each of his films has chased after very different metaphorical quarry. They substantially vary stylistically and cross genres effortlessly, all the while expressing an understated confidence in their integrity as individual works of art. There is a lush, chic freneticism to his latest film *Saties Parade* which displays Yamamura's command of fine line drawing, colour and frame arrangement. It's a beguilingly ingenious blend of decontextualised quotes pulled from some essays written by influential French composer Erik Satie set to a 100-year-old piece of music called *Parade* all visually expressed in a 'realist ballet' by a collective of performers and managers. It is art as spectacle and – most definitely – vice versa.

It is no exaggeration to suggest that Igor Kovalyov stands in a class of his own in the world of animation. In one of the more fascinating juxtapositions between the commercial and auteur worlds across which many animators regularly commute, Kovalyov is reasonably well known to a larger, mainstream Western audience for his guiding hand in creating *The Rugrats Movies* and the *Aaargh!!! Real Monsters* TV series. His personal films, however, are among the most challenging, rewarding and interpretive ever made. Intensely personal, they mine depths of Kovalyov's psyche that few artists understand how to

even access let alone express.

Kovalyov's films tug and strain at the meaning of existence and the oscillating grasp many of us have on our inner, mentally constructed worlds and senses of self. His characters are often anatomically fascinating hybrids of human, animal and insect. Confusion and self-doubt undulate dis-rhythmically with uncertainty, absurd over-confidence and inner turmoils that are allowed to play out overtly or – alternatively - are quashed and relegated to the sidelines of voyeurism, despair and shame. These are films that pose neither definitive questions nor offer graspable answers. Rather, they are highly imaginative animated extended pictographs either dredged worried and silent from the deepest trenches of the human spirit or writ large and colourful in full view. They offer colourfully opaque blueprints for structures of abstracted truth – be those structures soaring towers that reach high into obscuring clouds or cellars that descend uncertain stairwells.

In his latest film, *Before Love*, Kovalyov plays a kind of emotional roulette with the often contradictory shards that protrude from the inner core of love as people express and experience it. It would be all too easy to simply explain much of *Before Love* as bleak and fatalistic; a view that love is often fatally intersected by infidelity or all too easily builds a platform from which to fall. But much of this is a preamble to broader glimpses of hope, renewal, second chances and a reason to live.

We have waited the best part of a decade for a new Kovalyov film. *Before Love* rewards our patience with a purely unique and exquisitely inner-visionary work that is testament a-plenty to the abundant power of animation as an art form.



The Sparrow's Flight

USA 2016, 14'00

Beautiful and moving – the director's final collaboration with his late friend Dave Herr, who died of a brain tumour. Animating Dave's designs to form an experimental piece, this is a fitting and personal expression of friendship.

Director Tom Schroeder

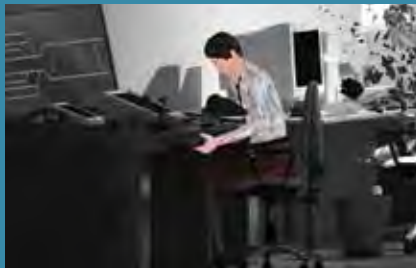


Sunday Lunch

France 2015, 14'00

The constantly shifting sands of the family Sunday lunch dynamic, cruelly exposing hairline fractures and smudging unspoken truths.

Director Celine Devaux



Planemo

Croatia 2015, 13'00

Planemo is a solitary wanderer, a sentinel of the galaxy booted from its solar system by the chaos of planetary migration.

Director Veljko Popovic



Under Your Fingers

France 2015, 3'00

The day of the cremation of her grandmother, Emilie, a young Asian girl, buries herself in her memories. Between dance, anger and traditional rituals, Emilie learns to accept her heritage.

Director Marie-Christine Courtes



Satie's "Parade"

Japan 2016, 14'00

A playful and joyous take on masterful French composer Erik Satie's essays on the music he composed for the 1916 ballet "Parade".

Director Koji Yamamura



Before Love

Russia 2016, 19'00

Everybody is looking for love. But what is true love? A typically dramatic tale of human shortcomings from the acclaimed Russian filmmaker Igor Kovalyov.

Director Igor Kovalyov

Abstract (15) Showcase

at Barbican Sat 3 Dec 17:00

Abstract animation plays a vital role in underpinning the core and purest elements of what animation in general is capable of expressing. In turn, this allows animators to produce incredibly interpretative and challenging imagery. These types of films remind us that, at heart, it all comes down to having something significant to convey and the ability to articulate that using the most nakedly fundamental tools available in the moving image maker's toolkit.

Abstract or experimental animation is a near-limitless trove from which to draw. It is released from the shackles of building coherent characters and the specific logic of a created world. Although the dissolving of these demands frees the imagination to depict the simplest and most complex thoughts of the artist, it also removes all the distractions and camouflage that a lesser expresser might be able, willing or compelled to hide behind.

Under these terms, abstract animation can be a depiction of just about anything that can nip at the very edges of imagination. These films are born of a near infinite roster of inspirations and they are made with a diverse range of tools and techniques. They can be provocateurs of specific memories, dreams and thoughts or they can prowl the perimeter fence of our imaginations, prodding us to think harder and look deeper into our scrambled, semi-formed thoughts. And they can be fun!

How much abstract animated fun can we have in one minute? We're about to find out. *Jazz Orgie* by Irina Rubina is an irresistible one-minute wonder. It packs a lot into its minute of glory. It has eye-popping design melding perfectly with textbook animation; it moves, sways, swivels and flies without missing a beat. The soundtrack was devised especially for the film by Emanuel Hauptmann, leader of jazz quintet Blofish using sketches from the filmmaker as inspiration and guidance for the final recording. In turn, the music was translated into dance by a

professional dancer which was filmed by Rubina - and this live-action dance piece became the base for what has turned out to be a remarkable piece of abstract animation.

Australian based animator and teacher Paul Fletcher has a typically low-key, yet forthright, explanation for both the inspiration and method behind his film *Summer Streets*.

"The all care and no responsibility luxury of simply responding to a given theme and structure provided by Tatonic's music," he says. "Some or any, apparent, complexity in the film emerges from simple iterative processes and software based on maths that I personally have no hope in hell of understanding and yet this makes me appreciate patterns found in nature even more."

This programme includes a number of films by filmmakers well known to LIAF audiences over the years. Mirai Mizue's work is also an essential inclusion in our programme focusing on new Japanese animation and the prolific Chinese animator Lei Lei has gifted us *Books On Books* which, quite apart from anything else, is a visual megaphone announcing the increasing complexity of his filmmaking and a maturing visual styling that is tending away from his earlier rapidly hand-drawn look to one that beautifully blends a cool sophistication with an appealing retro feel.

Malcolm Sutherland and Joanna Priestley are another two familiar names. Sutherland has quietly and methodically crafted an outstanding body of work over the years which veers from the near-narrative to the transcendently abstract. His new film *This* continues Sutherland's fascination with animating ethereal visualisations inspired entirely by specific sounds, in this case those of chanting Buddhist monks. Portrayed in a gently pulsating, stylishly understated black and white palette, *This* is a beautiful realised visual conversation between picture and sound.

By contrast, Priestley turns the colour dial way up and opts for the most crowded and condensed of frames. Her new film *Bottle Neck* takes a number of classical painting tropes and works them hard to express a much more contemporary conglomeration of images that can best be described as a restless, constantly moving puzzle made up of a veritable forest of everyday items.

Robert Seidel's new film *Vitreous* started life as a massive outdoor CGI projection. By the organic interplay of various structural, spatial and temporal concepts, he creates a continuously evolving complexity with what he brings to the screen. *Vitreous* looks for all the world like the bursting forth of a new life form viewed at micro-level. Its original screening as a 4 metre tall, 14 metre wide projection onto the very top levels of the German Filmmuseum in Frankfurt last year would have been an addition to the skyline of that city like no other.

But in many ways, one of the more striking messages that could be taken from the line-up of films selected for this year's Abstract Showcase is the rise of 'direct-to-film' animation. Literally half of the films in the programme are either purely direct-to-film animation or those which draw heavily from the rules and aesthetics of the form. It flies in the face of contemporary orthodoxy that animation is created via the use of complex, sophisticated and expensive technology driven more by professional-level skill than any sense of artistic creativity.

Direct-to-film animation goes back almost to the beginnings of filmmaking as a technology. It speaks to a desire by some filmmakers to manually work with a physical material; to make their marks directly on to the physical medium that will transmit their visions. That motivation, passion and need is something any painter or sculptor would easily relate to.

Canadian filmmaker Judith Poirer comes at direct-to-film animation from

a completely different direction. Much of her work to date explores her fascination with typography and the iconography of the offset printing process. Her latest film, *Setting West*, is a continuation and an expansion of that fascination.

Setting West was made using original printing materials from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Printed directly onto 35mm film stock and drawing raw material from a bevy of eminent North American letterpress studios, the selection of pure type and stereotypes of “Cowboys and Indians”, trains and bison employed in the making of the film produces a unique texture on screen, all set to an original soundtrack. In doing so, it actually reinterprets a classic cinematic genre while exploring a formative period in the history of typography and printing.

Oerd Van Cuijlenborg has realised some of the most accomplished abstract, direct-to-film animations created in recent times. A filmmaker with an astounding natural sense of timing, his films are almost visual depictions of sound in three dimensions. *Youpla* and *Sai Gon* both qualified for competition and we just couldn't choose between them. In both films we see Van Cuijlenborg seamlessly harnessing the tools of modern filmmaking to create the intricate, endlessly varying textures of purely abstract direct-to-film images that date back to the very beginnings of the form.

Likewise, Gina Kamentsky also has two films in this programme. Her films are more crowded and press a wider range of mediums into service, replying on semi-representational graphic elements and an anti-narrative (kind of) extracted from a sliced'n'diced found soundtrack to present a full sensory experience that is difficult to take in – or describe – after just a single viewing.

The programme closes with a clever, perhaps irreverent take on one of the most important direct-to-film works of all times.... *Begone Dull Care*, the 1949 classic by Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambart. Paul Johnson's 2015 'update' was simply too delicious a conundrum to pass up. His Vimeo handle – “8bit_Paul” gives you a fairly good hint at where this might be going. What rolls out is an amazing pixel art chiptune animation created from an impossibly tiny amount of raw material and technology. It's as lo-fi technically as it is complex conceptually. Hand-on-heart homage with an inescapable tinge of pointless escapist fun, it is the perfect way to close out this wide-angle view of the varied and brim-full world of abstract animating.



Jazz Orgie

Germany 2016, 1'00

A total explosion of dots, lines, planes and forms drowning in a jazz-filled choreographic world.

Director Irina Rubina



If You Say Something, See Something

USA 2016, 2'00

Subtitles can be fun! The latest flurry of stream-of-consciousness madness from LIAF regular Gina Kamentsky.

Director Gina Kamentsky



Youpla

France 2015, 4'00

A playfully vibrant film exploring the abstractions and imagination of children's worlds.

Director Oerd van Cuijlenborg



Setting West

Canada 2015, 5'00

A visual essay on the history of typography and printing using original 19th and 20th century printing materials.

Director Judith Poirier



This

Canada 2016, 6'00

A soothing meditative visualisation of Tibetan Buddhist Monks chanting.

Director Malcolm Sutherland



Retro Future

Japan 2015, 7'00

A futuristic world imagined in childhood – what will the buildings look like?

Director Mirai Mizue

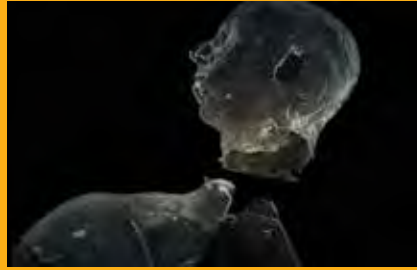


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South Korea 2016, 4'00

The passage of time and the creation of the universe.

Director Erick Oh

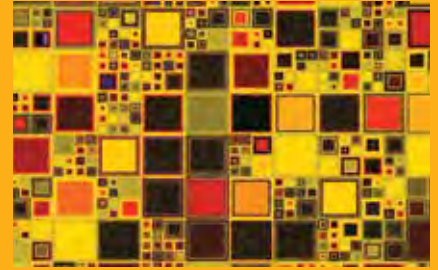


Squame

Canada 2016, 4'00

The sensitive shell of the body, the skin. A fragile landscape made with sugar casts.

Director Nicolas Brault



Summer Streets

Australia 2015, 3'00

A smooth and elegant abstraction based on the music of Tatic.

Director Paul Fletcher



Books on Books

China 2016, 7'00

An eye-opening graphic cutup and collage of Eastern and Western secondhand book covers through the years.

Director Lei Lei



A 4363's Trip

France 2014, 3'00

A delightfully punchy and playful abstract riff on the power and presence of the circle in animated art.

Director Valentine Dumez



Detour

Belgium 2015, 6'00

An illusory procession of wiped, scratched and painted imagery delivered in two tones.

Director Jasmijn Cedee



Bottle Neck

USA 2015, 3'00

A luminous crush of still life silhouettes, abstract shapes and complex, interlocking patterns.

Director Joanna Priestley



Sai Gon

France 2015, 5'00

The hustle and bustle of the city, the incessant rain in the jungle – impressions based on several trips to Vietnam between 2007 and 2014.

Director Oerd van Cuijlenborg



Tracheal Shave

USA 2016, 2'00

"Think of a small dot in space." More glorious fun! Ink and paint on found 35mm film trailers.

Director Gina Kamensky



Vitreous

Germany 2015, 3'00

A riotously coloured nine-piece virtual sculpture resembling a Rorschach test on acid.

Director Robert Seidel



Begone Dull Care 2015

Canada 2015, 4'00

A re-imagining of the original 1949 NFB short by Norman McLaren – dizzying callisthenics dancing in time to an '80s videogame soundscape.

Director Paul Johnson

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The online magazine for lovers of offbeat, left-field and cult cinema

Late Night Bizarre ⁽¹⁸⁾

at The Horse Hospital **Wed 7 Dec 21:30**

Animation is such an unbridled art form and it unleashes some of the most unleashable imaginations on the planet. The temptation to 'go wide' is played out time and time again by animators as they push to bring to the screen barely imaginable scenarios, crazy battling juxtapositions and boil-your-eyes imagery.

The films that go through the red line in this particular meter deserve their own programme, a place where they can scratch and paw their way onto the big screen in the good company of like-minded visions concocted by fingers attached to the hands on the arms powered by the minds of anima-pyrotechnicians that pushed them into this world. And so, welcome to the annual LIAF collection of 'Late Night Bizarre'.

What is there to say? Here is LIAF's annual screaming tribute to body fluids, mutilation, dodgy sex, sub-legal practices and inappropriate touching - all of which will burst forth from the screen into your lap for 65 glorious minutes. This year we can promise Japanese sex-education, terrifying bugs, satanic babes and the misuse of bingo balls!

It is pretty hard to summarise this programme in any logical way. It is definitely an ultra-fun programme to put together and - in truth - most of the films kind of select themselves. They come from a variety of sources. Certainly they come through the general submissions process and have a happy habit of arriving in the midst of a generally gray day, lifting the mood considerably when they hit the hard drive.

But over the years my ears have become more finely tuned to 'pass-by' chatter at festivals, production houses and - let's be honest - bars around the world. Phrases like "I would never get away with programming that", "I can't believe they come up with that" or "Holy shit, did you see dot dot dot" trip a switch and send me into the metaphoric burning building everybody else is running out of. Sometimes there is nothing but charred wreckage in there, but every once in a while I help drag out a wounded survivor that nobody else thought was worth saving.

When you run a festival the size of LIAF, it's all about context and I think we all understand what that context means in this context.

As long as you keep coming, we'll keep putting it on.



Don't Tell Mom

Japan 2015, 3'25

A Japanese sex-education film about the secret joys of bike riding. No kidding.

Director Kawako Sabuki



Father's Son

USA 2015, 6'10

Just another day in the desert for two lo-fi dudes who have to decide if an encounter with satanic babes is going to be worth the risk.

Director Kevin Bailey



Bingo

Netherlands 2015, 2'00

It doesn't matter how desperate, you can't shove a bingo ball into THERE!!

Director Patrick Schoenmaker



House Party

Hungary 2015, 4'30

One of the strangest parties and weirdest feasts you'll ever get to witness.

Director Daniel Barany



RRRING RRRING!

Germany 2015, 6'00

This man thinks he's boring – but phoning all your strange friends to find out what they're doing might not be the answer to his problems.

Director Thomas Kneffel



Ivan's Need

Switzerland 2015, 6'20

They say man cannot live by bread alone but this teenage boy looks like he'd be happy to give it a try.

Directors Veronica Montano, Manuela Leuenburger & Lukas Suter



Insect Bite

USA 2015, 2'30

It's not that bugs don't have free will, it's just they don't really know how to exercise it properly.

Director Grace Nayoony Rhee



It's A Date

USA 2016, 7'10

The worst blind date since 'When Harry Met Sally'.

Director Zachary Zezima



Datamine

Canada 2016, 5'10

In a world of industrial decay the plugged-in masses fail to notice a sinister agent who watches and controls them.

Director Tim Tracey



Batfish Soup

USA 2016, 4'30

Wacky relatives give way to mounting tensions with broken dolls, boiling stew and a bang.

Director Amanda Boniauto



The Laughing Spider

Japan 2016, 7'25

A nightmarish psychedelic fantasmagoria from Japan's greatest veteran animator, based on childhood memories of air-raids.

Director Keiichi Tanaami



Senior's Choice

Estonia 2015, 9'05

An alternative path to losing your mind – set to a catchy jingle to help you keep up.

Director Ave Taavet

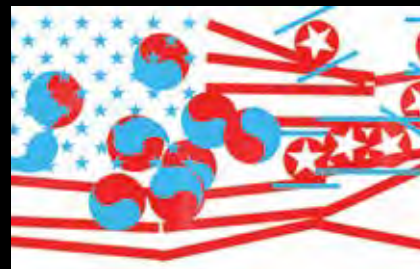
Animated Documentaries ⁽¹⁵⁾

at Barbican Sat 10 Dec 13:30

Persuasive, illustrative and able to get over abstract details in attractive and compelling ways, animation is the perfect instrument to document someone's vision of the truth. It is used increasingly to recreate elements of a story that the camera either could not or did not capture. Animation has a long history of being utilised for this; a history that goes back to at least 1918 when Winsor McCay released "The Sinking Of The Lusitania" recreating an infamous sinking of a passenger ship which resulted in massive loss of life.

Computer generated (CGI) animation is now a more or less ubiquitous supplementary tool in the documentary field recreating everything from plane crashes to the interactions of the tiniest particles in our world. Rarer though is a documentary that is entirely animated and which parades its pure animation credentials as prominently as the story it is trying to tell.

This group of films form a persuasive argument that animation can help the documentary approach push boundaries and pose a network of challenging, existential questions. The subject matter is as diverse as the inner workings of an East German womens' slave labour camp, a study of computer game addiction, the history of skateboarding and the lack of female pleasure in modern day society amongst several others.



A Brief History of Skateboarding

Brazil 2015, 5'00

Surfing on the street? Might be just a crazy enough idea to catch on. The sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll version of the history.

Director Antonio Vicentini



I Was A Winner

Sweden 2016, 14'00

Three very different stories on the subject of computer game addiction.

Director Jonas Odell



Micki

Germany 2014, 6'00

The story of Marienetta Jirkowsky, who was shot at the age of 18 in an attempt to escape over the Berlin Wall.

Directors Izabela Plucinska & Alexander Lahl



Of Slaves and Robots

Serbia 2016, 2'00

Combining drawings, embroidery, found objects and paper collage to a speech from the Institute of Mathematics in Belgrade, about how not to be a slave or a robot.

Director Milos Tomic



Sophie's Story

UK 2016, 7'00

An incredible and harrowing life journey from domestic abuse and troubled adolescence to adulthood. An exploration of addiction from a users perspective.

Director Christos Hatjoulis



Tough

UK 5'00

Some things can only be understood with maturity. New light is shed on childhood cultural misunderstandings when a Chinese mother and her British born daughter speak as adults for the first time.

Director Jennifer Zheng

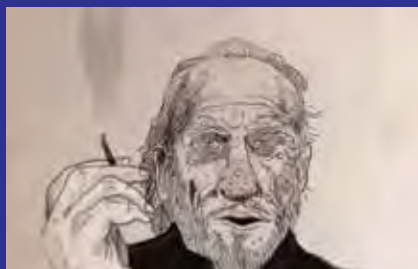


The Empty Space

Estonia 2016, 10,00

A past memory, an apartment that once existed, and a small girl playing there. A reconstruction of a vision of the anxieties in the 1950s Soviet Union.

Director Ülo Pikkov



Charles Bukowski – Uncensored and Animated

USA 2014, 3'00

Other than – perhaps – Goethe no other poet has provoked as much animation as Bukowski and this no-holds-barred piece shows why.

Director Drew Christie



Eye for an Eye

Germany 2016, 4'00

In his own words, a double murderer speaks of his crimes and his belief that execution is all that he deserves for what he has done.

Directors Steve Bache, Mahyar Goudarzi & Louise Peter

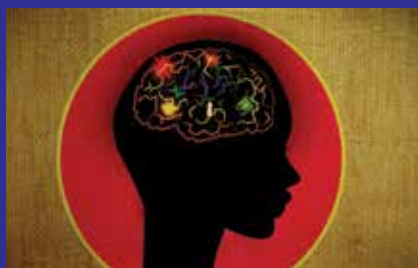


Loop

UK 6'00

The complex and secret world of septin cytoskeleton dynamics. What can be seen and what cannot?

Director Samantha Moore



Little Elephant

UK 2016 5'00

What does love mean to a British South Asian family in the West Midlands in contemporary Britain?

Director Kate Jessop



Twiddly Things

UK 2016, 4'00

Polly is suffering from Alzheimer's. She explains how dementia has affected her and how she feels about the disease.

Director Adara Todd



Broken – The Women's Prison at Hoheneck

Germany 2016, 7'00

Extraordinary and poignant depiction of the lives of women in an East German jail forced to make consumer goods for sale in the West.

Directors Volker Schlecht & Alexander Lahl



Private Parts

UK 2016, 4'00

Shedding some light on the lack of female pleasure in modern day society.

Director Anna Ginsburg

Amazing ^(U) Animations Children's Programme 0-7 years

at Barbican Sat 3 Dec 11:00

Animation, like childhood, can be full of wonder with the biggest pleasures being the simplest ones. This programme carefully chosen for our littlest and most special audience strips away all the soft-sell toy ads and the over-the-top blockbuster-style special effects and delivers up a selection of wonderful films full of joy. There'll be talking animals, seriously fun adventures and tales that spark all those little imaginations. Adults are allowed in if they have permission from their kids. Animation is the most imaginative and engaging of all art forms and is the perfect platform to enthrall and inspire the wide-open visions of kids. Suitable for 0-7 years.

We would like to thank The Elf Factory (makers of 'Peppa Pig' and 'Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom') for their generous sponsorship of £500 to go to the best childrens' film in this programme.

LIAF curates a year-round rolling programme of childrens' animated films that screen at Picturehouse Cinemas Kids Club across the UK every two months. Please see www.liaf.org.uk/picturehouse-kids-club for more details.



Rain or Shine

UK 2016, 6'00

Ella is keen to show off her swishy new sunglasses, only to be dogged by a persistent raincloud whenever she puts them on.

Director Felix Massie



The Little Seed

Switzerland 2015, 10'00

To make herself some pretty dresses, a young girl traps flower patterns with a magical sheet.

Director Chaitane Conversat



Bat Time

Germany 2015, 4'00

The problem with being a bat is that everybody else is asleep when you want to come out and play.

Director Elena Walf



Lili Has A Guest

Denmark/UK 2015, 4'00

Lili is expecting a friend. Not just anyone – it's her best friend, Molly!

Director Siri Melchoir



Neighbourhood

Germany 2016, 4'00

An ambitious owl's scientific endeavours are disrupted by a pesky woodpecker.

Directors Eddy Hohf, Flynne Grosse-Bley & Patrik Knittel



Some Thing

Germany 2016, 7'00

Is it really that bad to have something strange inside of you?

Director Elena Walf

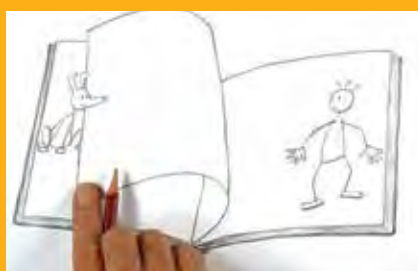


I Am Not a Mouse

UK 2016, 2'00

Every time Lucy is called "Mouse" by her mum, she turns into a real mouse! What is Lucy going to do?

Director Evgenia Golubeva



Cats and Dogs

Switzerland/Germany 2015, 6'00

An argument between a cat and a dog escalates into an emergency. Thankfully, the animator intervenes to save the day.

Directors Jesús Pérez & Gerd Gockell



Greedy Germ

Taiwan 2015, 5'00

In a tiny world seen through a microscope, a group of friendly and timid citizens live together happily.

Directors Fang Yu Hsu & Cheng Hao Chen



The Teeny Weeny Fox

France 2016, 8'00

In the middle of a luxuriant garden, a tiny fox meets a daring little girl who grows giant plants.

Directors Aline Quertain & Sylwia Szkiladz



Hey Deer

Hungary 2015, 6'00

An adorable, cocoa-drinking deer is eager to tidy up the front of his house.

Director Ors Barczy



Junction

Lithuania/Canada/Australia 2016, 7'00

The Face Changers have always made the clay tokens that control the winds and alter their faces. But it's time for a special journey.

Director Nathan Jurevicius



Eagle Blue

UK 2016, 3'00

Eagle Blue lives high on a mountaintop above a sleepy town below.

Director Will Rose

Marvellous ^(PG)

Animations 8-15 years

at Barbican Sun 4 Dec 15:00

This is one of the most charming kids programmes LIAF has presented in years, twelve films that lift this screening from merely entertaining to an elevated realm that aims to inspire, intrigue, engage and challenge the audience. These captivating films include a nutty trapeze act in an even nuttier circus, a superhero whose superglasses give life to a terrifying monster, a scarecrow with a broken leg, a young stag dealing with the mating season, the abduction of an imaginary friend, an insecure weathercock, the meaning of pig in three minutes and much, much more.

Several of these films are also screening in the international competition and as so will appeal as much to those who are over 15 as under 15. Some would say the best films are the ones that appeal to all ages and who are we to disagree.



Spring Jam

New Zealand 2016, 6'00

A young stag, lacking impressive antlers, knows he needs to improvise sweet music if he's to have any chance during the mating season.

Director Ned Wenlock



Trial and Error

Germany 2016, 6'00

An account of a lost shirt button, perfectionist aunts, busy cats, startled parrots – and a long-lost friend.

Directors Alexander Iserl & Antje Heyn



(Otto)

The Netherlands 2015, 10'00

Unable to have children, a woman resorts to stealing the imaginary friend of a small girl – a plan that must surely unravel somehow.

Directors Job, Joris & Marieke



In A Cage

France 2015, 6'00

A caged bear who can't sing meets a little bird who can't fly but who can sing beautifully.

Director Loic Bruyere



Blue Honey

France 2016, 5'00

A small bee allergic to pollen discovers an extraordinary product that dramatically impacts the live of the hive.

Directors Constance Joliff, Daphne Durocher & Fanny Lhotellier



About a Mother

Russia 2015, 7'00

When a mother seems to have nothing left, life grants her new opportunities.

Director Dina Velikovskaya



Captain 3D

France 2015, 3'00

When Captain 3D puts on his glasses he discovers a new world of scary monsters and a damsel in distress.

Director Victor Haegelin



Au Revoir Balthazar

Switzerland 2015, 10'00

A scarecrow, a storm, a broken leg. The resonant sound of a seashell. Looking back. Leaving forever.

Director Rafael Sommerhalder



Pig

USA 2015, 3'00

A pig is everything. An experimental riff on a hundred things that PIG might mean.

Director Steven Subotnick



Ballone di Cannone

The Netherlands 2015, 9'00

The zany escapades of Eduardo and vertigo-suffering Loet, performing daredevilish stunts in the circus.

Director Frodo Kuipers



Voltaire

The Netherlands 2015, 12'00

An insecure weathercock, living on a chapel, moves to a faraway cathedral after a lightning strike. But he's not the only one there.

Director Jan Snoekx



The Noise of Grey

France/Belgium 2016, 3'00

Horse, Cowboy and Indian invite some crazy friends over to help them liven up their dull grey house by adding some splashes of colour. Chaos ensues!

Directors Stephane Aubier & Vincent Patar

barbican

British⁽¹⁵⁾ Showcase

at the Barbican **Fri 2 Dec 21:00**

Welcome to our annual British showcase which builds on previous years to pull out all the stops and bring as much new British animation to the big screen as possible. This is an exceptional opportunity to see what British animators are doing, how they're doing it and how the art form is travelling.

As ever we've a mix of the best graduate filmmakers alongside some veterans who continue to swim against the tide. They all show a tenacity and steely resolve to get their stories on screen and out to an audience. For many, this is the start of their festival lives – and good luck to them as they set off to voyage around the world. For others it is a continuation of a journey they set off on several years ago.

In this programme we are very proud to present the latest barb from someone who needs no introduction to our audiences, we like to call him “the godfather of British animation” even though he'll probably clobber me for calling him that – it's Mr. Phil Mulloy and

this time he's presenting us with a sci-fi film no less. But of course it's a sci-film done the Mulloy way. Wait and see!

We also have the first film (and hopefully the first of many) by young gun Roxannah Rio Linklater - a searingly honest look at childhood sexuality, made at the Goldsmiths Media and Communications Course, and in between there are another sixteen gems, all with their own stories to tell, their own messages to impart.

The British Showcase is one of our most beloved sessions at LIAF. It gives us the chance to see ourselves on screen and to see how we think. We get to see who has been active in the last year or so and see how we compare with the films made by our international counterparts. This is without a doubt one of the most eclectic screenings of British animation we have seen at LIAF in years. A good reason to feel excited.



A Little Grey

UK 2016, 5'00

One man's search takes him through bars, churches, doctors surgeries, tattoo parlours and beyond, but will he find what he's looking for?

Directors Steve Smith & Simon Hewitt



Love in Idleness

UK 2016, 5'00

An exploration of the fleeting delusional love affair between Titania and Bottom, from William Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Nights Dream'.

Director Kim Noce



Lemon Tree

UK 2016, 5'00

A fictional character whose body is assembled from memories embedded in an abandoned space.

Director Joana Silva



Steve runs Beakus animation studio in London. He is a producer

and director, has won a BAFTA and British Animation Award and his commercial clients include Nickelodeon, Google, Kindle, RED, McCann Erickson, BBC, and The Science Museum.

What made you make the film?

Simon - I work in the advertising industry and have spent the last 14 years helping bring ideas to life, but as I work in the Client Services team it was always someone else's idea. So I figured it was about time I made something of my own.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

Steve - We worked with a Mexican animation studio, so there was a lot of data flowing back and forth because we couldn't be in the same room! Getting the colour right was hardest of all - we wanted the people to look a little luminous but not alien in any way.

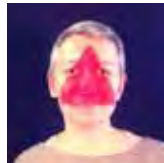
Where do you get your ideas from?

Simon - 'A Little Grey' came from the notion that we can all be defined by a colour, which I guess is a reflection of who we are, our soul perhaps. And in life it's easy to lose your way and maybe lose who you are, but something as big and life altering as parenthood can help you rediscover yourself.

What are you working on now or nning on working next?

Simon - I'm working on another short film, which follows the same basic principle as 'A Little Grey' in that it looks at everyday life but from quite a leftfield alternative perspective.

Steve - I'm directing and producing a CBeebies series due out in February 2017.



Kim Noce is an Italian artist & filmmaker resident in UK. Her work has been broadcasted and screened in more

than 200 international film festivals and art galleries, and she has won several prizes worldwide.

What made you make the film?

To make "love in Idleness" I collaborated with Sally Barden with the aim to create work responding to past visual interpretation of the Shakespeare play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Apart the fabulous PHD research provided by Sally my work was purely based on a personal emotional response as a contemporary woman reading the play today, reflecting on the role of Titania as Woman, Lover and Mother.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I collaborated with the composer to create the wonderful narrative and soundtrack before starting the animation and I then followed the sound. The film is made with charcoal on paper, the images are a series of drawings constantly erased and retraced.

Where do you get your ideas from?

I always liked to think I got "Ideas" from research and careful planning, but I am coming to the conclusion they, the ideas, actually own capture and push me. Hence I entirely blame them for everything!

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am working on short film about identity, but actually I am always terrified that if I speak about a project it will disappear.



Joana is a Portuguese visual artist and filmmaker. She finds stories in little things: cracks; branches; drawers. She

graduated in Animation from the Royal College of Art.

What made you make this film?

This film came from my dissertation on the 'Multiform discourse in the work of Krzysztof Kieslowski'. I needed to explore the idea through film. The Lemon Tree came from the notion of building up a character from scattered fragments. By making this person exist not through her physicality but through objects and surfaces, this film intends to be an exorcism of a character that is both present and absent in an abandoned space.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

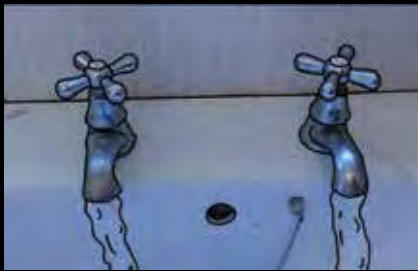
It was a challenge to work with a small scale set and animate with tweezers, also interesting seeing the set 'aging' every time I had to destroy and reconstruct it for each shot. The objects were often unintentionally broken when moving them and the layers of paint on the walls would naturally crack and peel off.

Where do you get your ideas from?

I've always written since I was a child. Most of the things I write find their inspiration within my surroundings and day to day objects such as bricks, trees, old shoes or even somewhat twisted versions of personal memories.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I'm developing a cross-disciplinary animation short that involves performance, live projection and music. It's an experimental project that intends to visually respond to sound and architecture in an improvisational way.



School Days

UK 2016, 3'00

A raw, searing honest look at childhood sexuality and how young people -primarily girls – discover their own bodies.

Director Roxannah Rio Linklater



Boats on the Grassland

UK 2016, 4'00

A man arrives from foreign shores in a broken old boat.

Director Noriko Ishibe



The Power of Privacy

UK 2016, 4'00

Can privacy really still exist in a world where we are continuously connected to the internet? A film made for the Guardian's documentary series.

Directors Callum Cooper & Matthias Hoegg



Roxannah grew up in York, studied Media and Communications at Goldsmiths University of London, specialising in

animation and hopes to continue to work in stop-motion and digital animation in the coming future.

What made you make the film?

I made this film after reading theories of embodiment at university, which got me thinking about how individuals discover their bodies in a sexual way and at what age (if at all). As a woman, gender also played a large role - the differences in how boys and girls may discover their bodies and how accepted these different approaches are within society.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

After creating an anonymous blog on tumblr to allow people to send me their own experiences of sexual discovery, I took photographs of imagery that linked in with these narratives. I traced over these within Photoshop and created the flow of movement within After Effects.

Where do you get your ideas from?

I think I am generally inspired by things I have read - be that academic texts or poems, short stories etc. I enjoy taking an existing idea and presenting it in a completely new way - such as the theories of embodiment I used to make this film, or the existing poetry of friends used in my previous films.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am at the beginning of a new collaborative project using the poetry of Jazmine Linklater. I am very excited to start this new project, focussing on all that is Middlesbrough.



Noriko is a Japanese-born filmmaker and animator who draws on her own personal experiences, developing these

ideas by using various experimental methods. She has just graduated in BA (Hons) Animation at the University for the Creative Arts, Farnham.

What made you make the film?

My films are based on my own personal experiences and the things that surround me, and I want to make animations as a communication tool without words to share what I think or feel.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I researched some locations that I wanted to use as the backgrounds of the animation. I also did a lot of sketches and made a plan for the entire animation including script and sound design.

Where do you get your ideas from?

It is my own personal experience of coming to the UK for the first time, and how feelings of alienation and culture shock impacted upon my own sense of self. The two characters; the man from a foreign land who washes ashore and the baby who is accustomed to the land he lives on are representative of myself and my infant niece, born shortly after my arrival.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am interested in making a film related to the diversity of people's relationships, for example between man and woman, man and man etc. It is a deep and complex topic, but I hope to talk with as many people as possible and make the animation once I have listened to and understood their perspectives.



Matthias is a London based Animation Director, ADC Young Gun, BAFTA nominee and British Animation Award

Winner represented by Not To Scale. His approach to Animation is led by distinctive design and succinct storytelling.

What made you make the film?

The version of The Power of Privacy that will be showing at LIAF is composed of excerpts from the explanatory animations for the Guardian. Callum Cooper, the series director, approached me about creating some animated inserts for the interview based series that provide a historical context of the issue of privacy today.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

We discussed some visual ideas to illustrate and condense the script. I fleshed out the animation from my studio, while Callum travelled around the world to film experts on privacy in various locations. It was a collaborative and fast process, thanks to mutual trust and a very short deadline.

Where do you get your ideas from?

We looked at cross section infographics illustrations, such as Fritz Kahn's "The human body as an industrial palace" - the cross section view seemed to reflect the idea of exposing your entire life to the general public.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I'm currently directing adverts for American Express and Ford, as well as location specific animation for John Lewis. I'm also developing a short film for a medical charity.



The Waves

UK 2016, 5'00

An artist returns from hospital after suffering a mental breakdown.

Director Oscar Lewis



Chronemics

UK 2015, 6'00

In a world of distinct contrasts light and darkness compete for dominance.

Director Ed Barrett/Animade



Race

UK 2016, 3'00

Medicine, shower, eat, sleep, repeat. A daughter races to tend to her elderly mother's daily needs.

Director Yan Dan Wong



Oscar graduated from a BA in painting at Falmouth University in 2013, and made short animated films in his final year. He

graduated from the RCA animation course this year. **The Waves** is his graduate film.

What made you make the film?

I wanted to make a film about mental illness after some dark patches in my own life. Something I hoped I would never have to explain to anyone. Art and film have always been my mode of expression, and so I made this film as a way of reflecting what was happening to me at the time.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I work best when I completely immerse myself. For 12-14 hours a day I was painting and animating. The structure of the film sort of sculpted itself as the months passed.

Where do you get your ideas from?

I think ideas and inspiration are entwined, and I was inspired by a lot of exhibitions while making this film - most notably Frank Auerbach's retrospective at Tate Britain. Painting always meant a lot to me. It became clear that I wanted to make a film that expressed that.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am crossing my fingers that I will get an artist residency in Shanghai for 6 months. There I plan on making a short animated film about observations in a new environment and being a stranger in a new place.



Having trained at the Royal College of Art for his MA in Animation, Ed Barrett's focus on stripped-back design

and well-timed, characterful motion helped form the backbone of Animade's core design and animation principles.

What made you make the film?

We were approached to create a series of animated clips for a short film festival, broadcast on the French-German channel ARTE. The vignettes had to create an overall narrative but also work as stand-alone pieces. After the programme aired, we felt inspired to re-visit the shorts and edit them into a film, adding tiny transitions to make the piece flow better.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

Originally we wanted to draw the entire animation, but time constraints meant we had to figure out a faster production process. As a result, we utilised scripts and effects to generate a more drawn aesthetic. The entire process was truly a collaborative effort, with every member of our animation team getting involved. Everyone had their part to play, and it came together beautifully!

Where do you get your ideas from?

Meetings and discussions both in and out of the studio, puns and wordplay, bedtime, the pub, the toilet; anywhere there's a bit of time for thinking freely!

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

As a studio, we always aim to be honing our skills and innovating through internal projects, like our web experiment Party Pooper and animations for things like Guy Fawkes night.



Yan Dan Wong is a Malaysian animator graduated from Kingston University of London. She uses animation as a

medium to create stories drawn from everyday life. Her work probes serious sociological issues that are often neglected.

What made you make the film?

I hope that my film can remind people that love and care is a never ending loop. I also hope that people realise through it that it is normal to find yourself frustrated in a situation even when dealing with your loved ones. The main thing is what you do after that frustration, will you give up or will you make the best out of a bad situation?

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

There was a voice over at first but it didn't feel right for me and I decided to drop it. The subtitle turns out to be more powerful because it keeps the experience universal. Viewers can interact with the words, especially the word: 'mother' because everyone has their own way of calling their mother.

Where do you get your ideas from?

My personal experience of seeing my mother taking care of my grandmother inspires me a lot. And my flatmate's post-it-note on the fridge that says 'waking up late is like starting a race that started without you' also inspires me - the idea of waking up on a racetrack and racing to complete the daily repetitive housework.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am currently working as a freelance animator but I hope to work on a new short film soon.

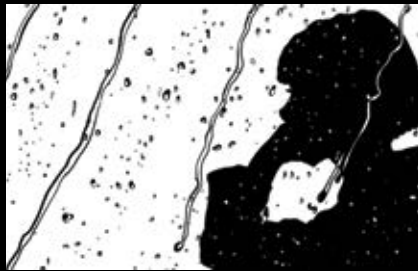


The Woman Who Owns the Sun

UK 2015, 6'00

The strange but true case of Angeles Duran, who in 2010 was declared 'the owner of the sun, a star of spectral type G2, located at the centre of the solar system'.

Director Jo Lawrence



The Journey Never Starts. The Journey Never Ends

UK 2016, 3'00

An endless train journey through the mysteries of time. Always moving, always changing, one thought leads to another.

Director Michelle Brand



The Greeting of 10,000 Things

UK 2015, 5'00

A marching band of six soldiers gathered on an empty beach. Armed with brass and drums, they are waiting to greet the unknown guests.

Director Huan Luo



Jo's films integrate stop-motion animation, puppets and pixilation and have been broadcast, and

screened internationally at festivals and galleries including Tate Britain. Residencies include the V&A, National Media Museum and Four Corners with commissions from Channel 4, NMM and Animate Projects.

What made you make the film?

The news story in 2010 about Angeles Duran's audacious claim of her official ownership of the sun immediately inspired some intriguing visual images. Duran used a loophole in the law to get around the United Nations Outer Space Treaty. It was the perfect subject for experimentation during my animation residency at Four Corners (2015). I was fascinated by the notion that we can ever think we really own anything.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

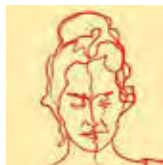
The film integrates pixilated footage of dancer, Marta Ammendola (as Angeles Duran), filmed using an overhead camera and composited with animation of objects.

Where do you get your ideas from?

The absurdities of real life throw up brilliant starting points. News stories, books, podcasts and random events which chime with various longstanding involuntary pre-occupations, particularly science, mortality and anything odd or uncanny.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

Puppet making experiments and I'm looking for funding to support production of a film about death.



Michelle has worked in Germany, Austria and the UK on various animation projects. She is currently a student at the

University for the Creative Arts.

What made you make the film?

Most imagery originates from a small sketchbook I keep with me in which I capture moments or thoughts. I wanted to give these thoughts visual movement, underlining the idea of how thoughts lead to each other, at the same time recognising that each single thought is only momentary and passes quickly away.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

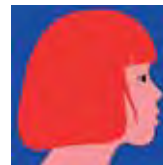
The most interesting and challenging part of the production was the order of scenes. On small pieces of paper, I shuffled the scenes back and forth, looking for a connection in image or content. I was trying to link thoughts together, so that a certain order, or a certain transition, would give the thoughts a new meaning.

Where do you get your ideas from?

Usually some observation from life triggers a spark of an idea, which then takes a long time to develop. I start off with a broad thought, and then need to find a way to simplify and visualise it.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am working now on my graduation film, which will be a traditional animation using acrylics. Through the film, I will explore the philosophical concept of time, change and movement and their relation in animation.



Huan is a Chinese animator and illustrator currently living and working in London. After graduating from the

Guangzhou Academy of fine art, she completed an MA in animation at the Royal College of Art in 2015. She is currently freelancing on projects for Channel 4, Google and MTV.

What made you make the film?

I made this film on the Animation course in the Royal College of Art.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I wanted to make imagery suggesting a massive space with a quite graphic and abstract look. The process was all about making simple elements, some times drawing texture and print texture, to blend with lines in a fun way. The fun bit was the sea waves hitting the beach, I made a pattern and made it move in a strange way to insert the surreal feeling into the scene.

Where do you get your ideas from?

When I saw the Guard of Honour standing still while the rest of the world is moving crazily, it fascinated me. And I've always wanted to make the background move rather than the characters.

What are you working on now and planning on working next?

I'm collaborating with Nicolas Menard to make a MTV ident animation, in which every frame will be hand painted with gouache. In doing this, my love towards analogue texture and Renaissance's way of observing and depicting came back to life, I'm planning on revisited my drawing skills, and to experiment on combining graphic and drawing in a unique way.



Illusions

UK 2016, 5'00

Two characters meet because of an accident, each in their own limbo. To get out, they need to win a game with only one rule: the next level is just a step down.

Director Dominica Harrison



Aftermath

UK 2016, 3'00

An adaptation of a war poem by Siegfried Sassoon. "Aftermath" was broadcast on every Armistice Day for many years after the war.

Director Layla Atkinson



The Big Push

UK 2016, 4'00

An evocative paint-on-glass film commemorating the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme with original verse by renowned Scottish Poet John Glenday.

Directors Laurie Harris & Xin Li



Originally from Moscow, Dominica now lives and works in London. Her practice ranges from animation to

printmaking. Her work is exhibited in shows in Moscow and Edinburgh, and her animated films are shown in the festivals around the world.

What made you make the film?

'Illusions' is my graduation film that I made during my last year at the Edinburgh College of Art.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

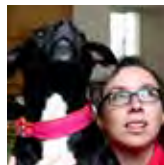
The film is based on a short story 'Goats eyes' by a Russian fiction author Max Frei. It is done entirely in the screen-printing technique, all the frames were drawn by hand, turned into colour separations and screen printed on A3 sheets of paper. Prints were then scanned and combined into an animated sequence using software. More than 400 screen prints were created while making the film, most of which were exhibited in Edinburgh in May 2016. This is the longest existing animation done in this technique.

Where do you get your ideas from?

I think I was always strongly drawn to everything that can't be explained by words or numbers – dreams and myths, folklore and fairytales. Human mind as well – with all its dark and twisted ideas and concepts.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I am in Poland working on an animated feature film 'Loving Vincent' directed by Dorota Kobiela. Then I come back to London to complete a residency with East London Printmakers and Jealous Studio.



Layla is a graduate of the Royal College of Art and a founder of Trunk Animation.

What made you make the film?

This was initially a pitch for a project that never went ahead. I was really pleased with the imagery I'd created so decided to just carry on and make it anyway. It was a great chance to create something without having to answer to a client.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I worked sporadically on this over three years, fitting in a bit here and there between projects. It was always fun to come back to it as there was usually something in there that I'd forgotten I'd done.

Where do you get your ideas from?

From messing about with pencils and bits of paper and talking to people.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I've just finished a music video so I'm recovering from that and waiting to hear on a pitch.



Laurie Harris did a degree in History and a Masters in Documentary Film. Since then he has worked on animated

documentaries as a Creative Producer as well as live action films for the BBC and the Wellcome Trust amongst others.

What made you make the film?

We were interested in exploring war and memory through the medium of paint on glass animation. We used the 1916 painting 'The Eve of the Battle of the Somme' and John Glenday's poem as a jumping off point - creating an animation centred on the story of a man who is in a shell-hole during the battle and is reflecting on his life.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I wrote a detailed visual script which formed the basis for the narrative and the images. Xin set to work bringing it to life.

Where do you get your ideas from?

Things I'm interested in. Whether that be a big thing like the First World War or a little thing like watching someone get irate on the tube as they are forced to share their personal space with someone with loud headphones. Conflict is inherently interesting and being exposed to it leads to ideas.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

A series of audio tours/walking documentaries about London. I'm also writing and filming a comedy short. I have an idea for an animation series but it's nothing like the Big Push - it's a comedy.



The Alan Dimension

UK 2016, 9'00

Alan Brown uses divine powers of precognition to foresee the fate of mankind...and breakfast.

Director Jac Clinch



Rain or Shine

UK 2016, 6'00

Ella is keen to show off her swishy new sunglasses, only to be dogged by a persistent raincloud whenever she puts them on.

Director Felix Massie



The

UK 2016, 2'00

What does this mean? Does anyone know? The latest missive from the Godfather of independent British animation.

Director Phil Mulloy



After completing a degree in Illustration Animation at Kingston University Jac was selected for MA Directing Animation

at the National Film and Television School. His debut animated short, **The Alan Dimension**, was selected for the 69th Cannes Film Festival, in the Cinefondation competition.

What made you make the film?

The character of Alan came from my experiences of very strong déjà vu. Part of me wondered 'what if this was a vision of the future come to pass?' However the prophesized events are usually phenomenally mundane. I enjoyed the idea of a character bestowed with such divine powers and using them for trivial endeavours.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

First we shot a stop-motion model set, which involved a fantastic day at Aardman, using their motion-control cameras. Next, we used a technique called photogrammetry to create photo-realistic replicas of the set, which the VFX team could then rip and dissolve apart for Alan's miraculous visions. Finally the 2D characters were animated in Flash and composited in.

Where do you get your ideas from?

I have a keen interest in science: time, space, evolution. At the moment, I'm obsessed with paleo-anthropology and the history of humanity as a species. I enjoy colliding these lofty theories with observations from my own upbringing in the British countryside and the trivialities of middle-class England.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

Since graduating, I have written and directed my first live-action short for Channel 4's Random Acts.



Felix is an award winning animation director and published children's book author based at Nexus studios in

London. His films have been screened in over 100 festivals worldwide and most recently directed a 360 VR film for Google Spotlight Stories called "Rain or Shine".

What made you make the film?

Google approached Nexus (where I work) with an opportunity to make a 360 VR film. This is what we made!

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

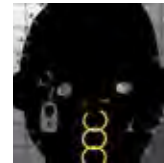
It is possible to watch the film in 360 using a headset or just your phone!

Where do you get your ideas from?

I got the idea for this film because I thought it would be fun to, just through the very act of watching a film, ruin the character's day. A bit of a Schrödinger's film perhaps.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

I'm working on more VR film ideas, children's books, and of course other traditional short films.



Phil Mulloy's visual style is distinctive in its use of primitive, often skeletal figures and minimalist backgrounds. Mulloy

has made over 30 animated films many of which are in themed groupings based on Hollywood genres. Mulloy has won many international awards for his work and has conducted several workshops for young animators.

What made you make the film?

In early 2015 I began making a series of short films intending to use different software for each film. This was the last of that series.

Is there something you can tell us about the production process?

I had no preconceived idea about where the film was going or what it was about. I just began making marks to see where those marks led me.

Where do you get your ideas from?

A theme developed based on the science fiction films of my childhood.

What are you working on now or planning on working next?

The short films, I made, were a bridge, a kind of loosening up process, that would lead me towards making a longer film about being alive in Britain today, about my hopes and my fears.

Features

Momotaro - Sacred Sailors (PG)

at Barbican Sun 4 Dec 19:00

Once upon a time, a monkey, a dog, a pheasant and a bear joined the Navy. Back from their adventures, the jungle's many animals flocked to hear them recount their exploits, and thus began the tale of *Momotaro – Sacred Sailors*, Japan's very first anime feature. A landmark propaganda film offering a very loose retelling of the Pacific War by way of anthropomorphic animal sing-song, kawaii hyper-violence, gorgeous cell animation and many more surprises, including unauthorized cameos by the likes of Popeye bringing shame to the West!

Presumed lost until the mid-'80s, *Momotaro* resurfaced on VHS in Japan (and was only available in the West on rare bootlegs). Now freshly restored in a 4K scan of the original 35mm negatives, Mitsuyo Seo's classic lives again – looking not a day older than when it screened in 1945.

Seo's film was an incredible accomplishment, made under wartime deprivations, lacking resources and skilled workers. He resorted to washing his own animation cels with acid to reuse them, destroying the original artwork even as the film was created, and leading to increasingly murky frames

as the materials became grubby and cels buckled. Despite restrictions on budget and time, Seo somehow found the time to evoke the poetic imagery of paratroopers as falling dandelions, threw in a song to make it educational and uncompromising silhouette animation for his why-we-fight briefing scene. He also drew on the real world, not only in a pastiche of the surrender of Singapore, but in strikingly realistic depictions of the technology and tensions of a parachute drop.

Momotaro remains – propagandistic material notwithstanding – a timeless achievement in worldwide animation. It's nothing less than the birth of anime as we know it – carrying in its every fibre the promise of generations of filmmakers to come. Be it the development of Osamu Tezuka's cartoon style or that of Hayao Miyazaki's (decidedly healthier) military fetish, it's all here, in this rare chance to see a lost masterpiece on the big screen!



Director Mitsuyo Seo
Japan, 1945, 17'00

Supported by:



Spider and Tulip
Japan 1943, 16'00

Voted the fourth best anime short of all time by Japanese magazine Animage. A spider tries to trap a young ladybird but she isn't fooled by his cunning ploys.

Director Kenzo Masaoka

Window Horses (PG)

at Barbican Sun 11 Dec 16:00

Rosie is a young Canadian poet of Chinese and Persian descent. She lives in Vancouver with her overprotective but loving Chinese grandparents and dreams of an artistic and glamorous life abroad. An invitation to a poetry festival in Shiraz, Iran, rocks her boat, and though she has never travelled on her own, she decides to embark on the trip that will change her life.

In Iran, she meets fellow artists from around the world and locals who open her eyes to the nature of art. They become guides to Rosie's own personal narrative as they offer new perspectives on the story of a father she thought had abandoned her. Her time in Shiraz will be a transformative one during which she will learn to ground herself by connecting with her own roots, both far and near.

The film seamlessly integrates different animation styles to express Rosie's diverse experiences; an extraordinary tale of art, history, and family.

Ann Marie Fleming is an independent Asian-Canadian filmmaker, writer, and visual artist. She was born in Okinawa, Japan, in 1962 and is of Chinese and Australian parentage. She has made many award-winning short animated and documentary films and graphic novels. Her film work incorporates various techniques: animation, documentary, experimental, dramatic, and primarily deals with themes of family, history and memory. She has her own animation company, Sleepy Dog Films, and 'Window Horses' is her first feature.

We are very pleased that Ann Marie Fleming will be a guest at LIAF 2016.



Director Ann Marie Fleming
Canada 2016, 88'00



barbican

British Premiere

The Longing of Michael Dudok de Wit (15)

at Barbican Sun 11 Dec 14:00

A documentary portrait of the Oscar-winning Dutch animator and director Michael Dudok de Wit who's debut feature *The Red Turtle* made its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2016 and won the Special Jury Prize, and is about to hit the big screen all over the world.

Fifteen years ago, Michael Dudok de Wit won the Academy Award for short animation for his deceptively simple but quietly shattering story, *Father & Daughter*. In it, a young girl sees her father off at the water's edge and his subsequent absence casts a shadow over the rest of her life. The film went on to achieve a sort of cult status, and is studied in film schools as a classic example of articulating 'longing' on screen.

In 2016 Studio Ghibli, Japan's legendary anime company, invited Dudok de Wit to make his first animated feature; their first-ever international co-production *The Red Turtle*, another silent masterpiece. The film highlights the Dutch filmmaker's light touch with deep feelings, and with its connection to the magical aspects of the natural world.

Maarten Schmidt and Thomas Doebele followed Michael and his team for more than two years, during the complex creative process of making this film. Dudok de Wit is a perfectionist and always used to create his hand-drawn animated films himself. For this new feature, he was assisted by a team of 30 animators from all over Europe. Dudok de Wit was faced with a huge challenge: he not only had to retain his personal perfectionism, but also involve his entire team in implementing his ingenious approach to colour, light and shadow.



Directors Maarten Schmidt & Thomas Doebele
The Netherlands 2016, 54'00



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Special Programmes

barbican

Classic Disney Shorts The Magic of Disney (PG)

at Barbican Sat 3 Dec 14:00

The classic animation that poured from the Walt Disney Studio during the 1930s and 1940s defined the very history of animation. Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy and other Disney characters endure to this day and the way Disney made them move was a revelation to audiences of all ages. These characters and the films they starred in will never be forgotten.

LIAF is proud to be able to present an incredibly rare opportunity to experience this beautiful magic on the big screen. These films have been painstakingly restored to their full and original glory and will be projected from 35mm prints. There can be only one screening of these films and it will be a unique experience to behold.

LIAF is extremely grateful for the assistance extended by Walt Disney Studios and in particular Garth Burkhard and April Mcilroy for their patience and support over the more than two years of planning that has made this screening possible.



The Flying Mouse

USA 1934, 9'00

Dreaming of being able to fly, a little mouse is granted his wish by a fairy he rescues from an evil spider. Finally – wings!

Director David Hand



The Band Concert

USA 1935, 9'00

Mickey's attempts at conducting his orchestra fall into hilarious disarray when Donald decides he wants to join in with his flute.

Directors Walt Disney & Wilfred Jackson



Music Land

USA 1935, 10'00

One of the greatest cartoons ever made! The Land of Symphony and the Isle of Jazz must reach out across the Sea of Discord to find harmony.

Director Wilfred Jackson



Clock Cleaners

USA 1937, 8'00

A fiesta of classic cartoon gags. Mickey, Donald and Goofy take on the job of cleaning a giant clock at the top of a very tall tower.

Director Ben Sharpsteen



Brave Little Tailor

USA 1938, 9'00

Mickey, the brave little tailor, recounts his heroic, single-handed, blow-by-blow battle with a marauding giant.

Director Bill Roberts



The Little Whirlwind

USA 1941, 9'00

Mickey strikes a deal with Minnie to clean her yard in exchange for a piece of freshly iced cake. But it's never that easy.

Director Riley Thomson



Bone Trouble

USA 1940, 9'00

Pluto needs all the magic of the carnival to outwit his neighbour Butch and steal his bone.

Director Jack Kinney



Duck Pimples

USA 1945, 8'00

Donald gets completely immersed in a 'whodunnit' mystery fuelled entirely by his own imagination.

Director Jack Kinney

The Warped, Wonderful and Terrifying World of Chris Shepherd

at Barbican Fri 2 Dec 18:30



Chris Shepherd

Chris Shepherd is one of the most cherished names in the UK independent animation scene and a frequent contributor to LIAF. Chris's work fuses comedy with commentary on the darker side of human nature and he has made numerous award-winning short films that have screened to universal acclaim around the world. We are extremely proud to present the World Premiere of Chris's live-action/animation hybrid short film 'Johnno's Dead', several years in the making and the sequel to the multi-awarded 'Dad's Dead', along with several of his other short films in this mini-retrospective.

After the screening Chris will grace the stage of the Barbican along with members of the cast and crew to discuss his work and the making of these momentous work of pure cinema.

LIAF: Let's start at the beginning - how did you come to work in the wonderful world of film and animation?

CS: Everybody in Liverpool either played music or football. I hated football so I had no option but to try to express myself by song, but I never really got anywhere with music. So my other big hobby was drawing pictures - cartoons and writing stories. I used to make cartoon strips for my fellow classmates. I wanted to make a film but I didn't know any actors so I made my actors out of plasticine. I didn't know what I was doing which is always the best way because it's more exciting. Out of the chaos came a film called Safari and it got me into art college.

I came to London and got a job in Speedy films. Then from there I went on to be commissioned by Channel 4 and began producing and directing. I wouldn't describe myself as an animator, I think I'm more of a storyteller. The story is always the thing that interests me the most. Some people say that

they are born to be animators but I feel that I was born to be a storyteller.

Your birthplace Liverpool is obviously very important in shaping a lot of your narratives (The Ringer, Silence is Golden, Dad's Dead, Johnno's Dead) - what is it about this town that is such a rich source of inspiration for your films?

I grew in Liverpool in the 1970s and 1980s. There were a lot of creative people in the city. This was a creative hub where I met incredible people. I guess that creativity rubbed off on me. Musicians, artists, photographers and the odd bullshit artist. I was always influenced by the likes of the Liverpool playwrights Alan Bleasdale and Willie Russell. They told stories which fused humour with drama. That's very much the nature of the city and the humour. If the situation is bad you take the piss out of it. It makes life more bearable. So as Liverpool is my hometown I can't help but use it as inspiration.

'Dad's Dead' came out in 2003 and proceeded to blow everyone away who saw it. Can you talk us through the history of making 'Dad's Dead' and also the sequel 'Johnno's Dead', made 12 years later. Where did the idea originate from? Are the characters based on people you know?

I started making it in 1999. I recorded the voice-over early on with Ian Hart. After recording the voice-over I proceeded to put it in the cupboard, forgetting about it. I guess I was scared of it because it was dark. It wasn't until Animate! gave me some money in 2002 that it went into production. I made the film like a painting - building up the picture in layers which is very exciting.

The idea itself is fiction, but it is inspired by lots of stories that I've been told - little snapshots of moments that I had witnessed. But the whole thing basically is fiction. I

wanted to recreate my walk to school. I visited my Primary School which had closed down. The kids had set fire to it and I climbed inside to take a look. It was like the end of the world - the building was destroyed and everything I remembered from being a child, the rules, the doctrines were all laid waste. The experience stayed with me and I wanted to capture the feeling that I felt when I was in the building and make it into a film. The result was *Dad's Dead*.

As for the sequel, *Johnno's Dead*, I had promised Autour De Minuit, the production house, that I would make a sequel to *Dad's Dead*, but the idea mutated into a film called *The Ringer* which was about missing your father for the first time. This became a very different story. 13 years passed since directing the original and then I realised what would happen to the main character from *Dad's Dead*. It's like I had to live a life before it came to me.

Dad's Dead was produced by one of the true masters of the animation world - Dick Arnall, who sadly passed away a few years later. He is sorely missed by everyone who knew him in the animation world, not least all of us at LIAF. What was your relationship with Dick Arnall like? Why do you think he was so revered by so many people lucky enough to come into contact with him?

I dedicated the film to Dick Arnall, mainly because he was such a fan of the original. He used to say to me "you don't understand what you've done by making this film do you"? I'd laugh about it with him but he was really the biggest fan of the film. He used to say to me you have to do things while you have the energy. This comment stuck with me and I've made many films as I'm able to. I wish Dick would have seen the film and I still miss him. He was such an inspiration.

Your work is incredibly eclectic - many different styles, techniques, genres etc.

- and often within one film. This makes me think you must take inspiration from several different areas, not just film. Is this true and who have you been inspired by or impressed by in recent years?

When I was younger I used to watch a lot of television. I would be really inspired by the likes of Dennis Potter and things like Play For Today. I don't have a very vivid imagination - when I think of an idea it's normally about a man going somewhere quite mundane - like the supermarket. By nature I don't think of fantastic ideas but I like to look at the real world then make that fantastic in my films. Find the epic moments in something very small that seems unimportant. Why can't magical animation appear in the middle of a council estate? I use both live action and animation to tell my stories. My main inspiration is from films like *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Midnight Cowboy*, and the films of Lindsey Anderson. The bitter-sweet stories with flights of fancy, daydreams and nightmares.

I am quite eclectic with my technique. I think watching films for me is like listening to music. There is so much good stuff out there you become a product of it all. I like all films - the good ones and the bad ones. Everything has its merits.

You set up and ran Slinky Pictures with Maria Manton from 2000 until 2010 which from the outside seemed to be a great model of a successful studio - you worked commercially (TV ads, title sequences, music videos, corporate work etc.) as well as making several award-winning short films and you had a roster of several amazing animators - but then in 2010 you shut up shop. What happened?

We just came to the end of the life of Slinky pictures after 10 years and everyone wanted to do different things. The Beatles stopped after 10 years and I guess so did we at Slinky pictures. I've kept going making films. In a sense I've just continued along my creative journey.

Humour runs through a lot of your work - in the early days you made the minimalist masterpiece 'Stare-Out championship' for Big Train, also your collaboration with humourist David Shrigley for the short 'Who I Am and What I Want'. For me, the type of humour you serve up gives me an uncomfortable feeling i.e. equal measures laugh out loud and squirm in your seat stuff. There's also a rich vein of this type of work in much short independent animation - I'm thinking of the work of other great animators such as Phil Mulloy, Joseph Pierce, David O'Reilly, Don Hertzfeldt and a whole host of others. It's like a cruel humour. What does humour mean to you and how important is it?

Yeah humour means a lot to me. Life is a joke - look across the water right now and you will see the new President. What else can you do about that but laugh? I love hearing the audience laugh. It's a very honest thing. If you say something funny and get a laugh you've succeeded. Laughter is also a good way of engaging the audience and getting under the skin.

I'm curious about your work for Chris Morris/Charlie Brooker TV series 'Nathan Barley', I think a very under-rated series and well ahead of its time. The madness of the animation seems to complement the insanity of the storylines. Did they give you carte-blanche to do what you wanted with the animation or did you have specific instructions.

Yeah Nathan Barley was way ahead of its time. We had a studio in Brick Lane and that summer we were in Nathan central. I remember my wife saying to me "people don't ride around on little bikes and scooters" - but they did on Brick Lane. The series was scripted but working with Chris was also about some improvisation. If you could think of a funny idea he would use it. We made Nathan's films and the interfaces of the website in the film. I'm in one episode as a cameraman in a party. I had to film the shows fictional animator Pingu, played by Ben Wishaw, as he was beaten up by the other characters. It was totally art imitating life.

You've also worked as a curator in recent years - commissioning many shorts for Random Acts on Channel 4 and you're also part of the team who put on the 'Bad Shorts' animation screenings in London. Is that something you enjoy doing?

I love watching other peoples' films much more than watching my own. Seeing how people create films and what they come up with is a real buzz. I loved curating and producing as there is nothing more exciting than helping people achieve. I curated and produced 64 films for Lupus Films which was one of the highlights of my career.

Is there anything you can tell us about the feature film projects you have in development? Anything a bit more solid that could come to fruition in the next few years?

I've written three feature films over the last 10 years. But they've never happened. But I've just written a script about me leaving home which is very exciting. It's a coming-of-age story which deals with racism in the 1980s. I'm hoping to get somewhere with this and have been writing it as a graphic novel as well. There's another feature project which looks like it is getting close to happening. I'm sworn to secrecy on it but it is an amazing script. Hopefully I will have more to tell you about this soon.

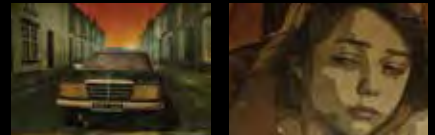


Silence is Golden

UK, 2006, 14'00

Set in 1970s Britain, the story of a 10-year-old boy's obsession with his seemingly simple-minded neighbour Dennis.

Director Chris Shepherd

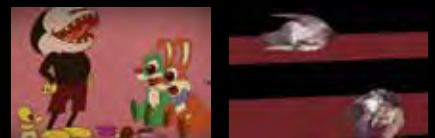


The Ringer

UK, 2013, 17'00

A son is reunited with his long lost father for the first time. You might imagine it's time to discover everything about where he's come from and where he's going. But he's about to get a surprise...

Director Chris Shepherd



Dad's Dead

UK, 2002, 6'30

A compelling story of friendship and denial, told through a story of ghostly reminiscences and visual flashbacks of a young man's fragmented memories of the past.

Director Chris Shepherd

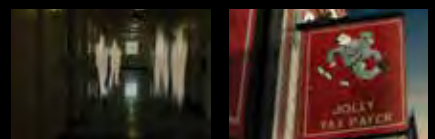


Who I Am and What I Want

UK, 2005, 7'30

Some may say this film is a snapshot of the human condition. Others might think Pete is just plain weird. Either way the film is an experience you won't forget.

Directors Chris Shepherd and David Shrigley



Johnno's Dead

UK, 2016, 9'00

Serving twelve years behind bars for a crime you didn't commit focuses the mind. A terrifying and twisted tale of obsession, destruction and revenge.

Director Chris Shepherd



Celebrating Women in Animation

In partnership with Animated Women UK (AWUK)

at the Horse Hospital **Fri 9 Dec 20:00**

LIAF is very proud to partner with Animated Women UK on this special event to celebrate women in animation and VFX as part of LIAF 2016. 50% of the films selected for competition this year were either made by women or have women in major roles attached to them. LIAF handed over these films to a select panel from AWUK who spent several days deliberating over them and eventually choosing this screening of the best, most recent films screening in competition at this years LIAF. Expect to see a dazzling array of styles, techniques, genres and stories made by the world's best female animators working in the industry today.

After the screening four of the UK's most talented filmmakers, Liz Hobbs, Layla Atkinson, Jennifer Zheng and Anna Ginsburg will take to the stage to take part in a roundtable discussion with AWUK chairperson Lindsay Watson.



The Noise of the Grey

France 2016, 3'00

Horse, Cowboy and Indian invite some crazy friends over to help them liven up their dull grey house by adding some splashes of colour. Chaos ensues!

Director Stephane Aubier & Vincent Patar



Life With Herman H Rott

Estonia 2015, 11'00

Hermann is a rat with a penchant for binge drinking, distorted guitars and chess. To his mind, any form of cleanliness would disturb his cosy flat.

Director Chintis Lundgren



How's Your Prostate?

France 2016, 4'00

What do you chatter about at the pool with your girlfriend? Your father's prostate, his erectile function, and his nighttime fantasies.

Directors Jeanne Paturle & Cécile Rousset



G-AAH

UK 2016, 1'00

A celebration of Amy Johnson's record-breaking solo flight from London to Australia in 1930 created with an Underwood 315 typewriter.

Director Elizabeth Hobbs



Aftermath

UK 2016, 3'00

An adaptation of a war poem by Siegfried Sassoon. "Aftermath" was broadcast on every Armistice Day for many years after the war.

Director Layla Atkinson



Tough

UK 2016, 5'00

Some things can only be understood with maturity. New light is shed on childhood cultural misunderstandings when a Chinese mother and her British born daughter speak as adults for the first time.

Director Jennifer Zheng



Sunday Lunch

France 2015, 14'00

The constantly shifting sands of the family Sunday lunch dynamic, cruelly exposing hairline fractures and smudging unspoken truths.

Director Celine Devaux



Bottle Neck

USA 2015, 3'00

A luminous crush of still life silhouettes, abstract shapes and complex, interlocking patterns.

Director Joanna Priestley

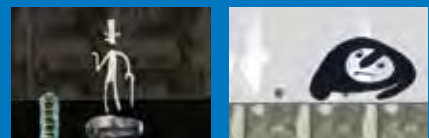


Little Elephant

UK 2016, 5'00

What does love mean to a British South Asian family in the West Midlands in contemporary Britain?

Director Kate Jessop



If You Say Something, See Something

USA 2016, 2'00

Subtitles can be fun! The latest flurry of stream-of-consciousness madness from LIAF regular Gina Kamentsky.

Director Gina Kamentsky



Eye For An Eye

Germany 2016, 4'00

In his own words, a double murderer speaks of his crimes and his belief that execution is all that he deserves for what he has done.

Directors Steve Bache, Mahyar Goudarzi & Louise Peter



Panic Attack!

USA 2016, 3'00

The internalised journey from wondering if the coffee machine was left on to sharing a cell with the Manson girls can be a short one indeed.

Director Eileen O'Meara



Private Parts

UK 2016, 4'00

Shedding some light on the lack of female pleasure in modern day society.

Director Anna Ginsburg



Mamie

France/Canada 2016, 6'00

Mamie lives in a seaside home. When her cloistered world crumbles, her granddaughter starts to question the lack of real ties between them.

Director Janice Nadeau

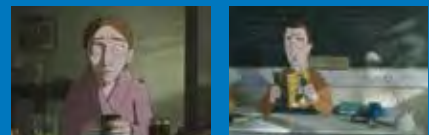


Jazz Orgie

Germany 2016, 1'00

A total explosion of dots, lines, planes and forms drowning in a jazz-filled choreographic world.

Director Irina Rubina



The Wrong End of the Stick

UK 2016, 10'00

A neurotic teacher lost in a dull marriage to his wife of twenty years faces an all-consuming identity crisis, and he is forced to express a deep, hidden desire.

Director Terri Matthews

Edge of Frame Weekend

Curated by Edge of Frame and Animate Projects

at Whitechapel Gallery and Close-Up Cinema **Fri 9 Dec , Sat 10 Dec, Sun 11 Dec**

LIAF 2016 is very proud to partner with Edwin Rostron and Animate Projects on 6 expansive screenings and seminars devoted to championing experimental animation for 'The Edge of Frame weekend'. From bold personal visions to intricate and visually stunning formal experiments, the programme mixes contemporary animation by British and international artists with classic and rarely seen historical works, and a guest-curated programme from Chicago's Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation.

The Edge of Frame Weekend is a celebration of the vibrant art of experimental animation, bringing together many varied and extraordinary films, from bold personal visions to intricate and visually stunning formal experiments, mixing contemporary works with classic and rarely screened masterpieces, from over 50 British and international artists, spanning the last 50 years.

I have curated the Weekend in partnership with Gary Thomas of Animate Projects, who leads the opening event, *Edges: An Animation Seminar*¹. Artists, curators, academics and writers will address questions of where experimental animation practice sits, in relation to independent animation, visual arts, histories and institutions. Speakers include Deputy Director of LUX Maria Palacios Cruz, artist Alan Warburton, writer and curator Adam

Pugh, and Head of Animation at the Royal College of Art Birgitta Hosea.

Following the seminar are five screening programmes spread across the weekend, taking place at Whitechapel Gallery and Close-Up Film Centre, including a guest-curated programme from Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation. Works range from pencil-drawn to collage animation, from scratching on film to cutting-edge CGI technology. Films from historical visionaries like Robert Breer, Jeff Keen and Margaret Tait show alongside those of contemporary pioneers such as Caleb Wood, Jodie Mack and Peter Burr. The broad scope of the programme reveals connections and threads running through the many forms of independent and experimental animation.

I have curated three programmes for the Weekend, and each is built around a different thread. The first, entitled *Elemental Animation*², presents work by artists engaging physically with the material of film itself. Many of these use the filmstrip as a canvas, on which to print, draw or paint, to fix material to or to scratch into. Others subject the film to decay and decomposition, to chemical reactions, hand-processing or double exposure. These works share ideas about process and material in relation to animation, yet their extraordinary variety shows the boundless possibilities of such techniques. Many of the works will be shown on 16mm and 35mm, and several of the filmmakers will be present at the screening to discuss their work.

In *Journey One*, part of the special day-long screening event *Journeys into Experimental Animation*³, I have selected works which chart the multi-layered spaces we exist within, social, psychological and geographical, at once inside our heads and outside our bodies. Films include Jonathan Hodgson's beautifully drawn early work *Nightclub* (1983) depicting social rituals of Liverpool drinking clubs, and Laura Harrison's new film *Little Red Giant*, *The Monster That I Was* (2016) a vivid and poignant portrayal of an unhinged artist.

In *Journey Three* I have brought together work addressing different kinds of systems, from structures of oppression and control, to modes of classification and categorisation. It features a brand new offering from Peter Millard, *Six God Alphabet Peter* (2016), and Kelly Gallagher's latest, *More Dangerous Than a Thousand Rioters* (2016), plus a rare chance to see *Easyout* (1971) by the groundbreaking American experimental filmmaker and master of the optical printer, Pat O'Neill. Again, several of the filmmakers will be in attendance to introduce and discuss their work.

In between these two programmes is *Journey Two*, curated by Lilli Carré and Alexander Stewart, co-directors of Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation. Running annually since its inception in Chicago in 2010, Eyeworks now also runs in Los Angeles where the couple have recently relocated. Eyeworks focuses on abstract animation and unconventional character

animation, drawing on the lineage of avant-garde cinema as well as the tradition of classic character animation and cartooning. *Journey Two* features films from previous Eyeworks festivals, including rarely screened gems such as *1984 Music for Modern Americans* (1984) by Susan Young and Emma Calder, based on the drawings of Eduardo Paolozzi, and Larry Cuba's pioneering computer animation *Two Space* (1979). The programme is introduced by Alexander Stewart, with Susan Young and Emma Calder also present to introduce their film.

Alexander Stewart also presents the final screening programme of the *Weekend, Push and Pull: Films by Lilli Carré and Alexander Stewart*⁴. Both the Eyeworks curators are acclaimed artists and animators in their own right, and their artistic practices underpin their pioneering curatorial approach. Working individually and collaboratively, they share a particular fascination with the history, processes and artefacts of animation, and this screening programme presents a selection of their moving image works on video and 16mm.

The Edge of Frame Weekend reveals shared themes and processes between works, but less visible connections also run through the programme.

Geographical links, affiliations with certain institutions and organisations, friendships made at festivals and online, and crucially, knowledge and assistance transferred from teacher to student, connect and inform many of the exhibiting artists.

Such connections can be fleeting or they have a huge impact. Both my curatorial partners in the Edge of Frame Weekend, Animate Projects and Eyeworks Festival, have exhibited, supported, funded or inspired many of the artists showing in the programme. Both organisations have also had a highly significant impact on my own development as an animator and more recently as a curator. The significance of these two organisations in the field of experimental animation is testament to their vision and abilities, and each has specialised in the area without seeking to rigidly define or restrict ideas of what it might be, rather they have understood its hybrid and boundary-crossing nature, and celebrated its great diversity. For me their success also highlights the desperate lack of other organisations focusing specifically on experimental animation. It was this perception of the difference they were making, but also how necessary it was to have more organisations like them, which drove me to begin Edge of Frame.

I started Edge of Frame as a blog in 2013, to provide an online space devoted to experimental animation. As an artist and animator I was frustrated with the way work in this area was often marginalised or misunderstood, frequently exhibited or contextualised by people without knowledge of its histories and discourses, and seen by many as simply a 'weirder' variant of narrative, studio-made animation. Through the blog, and its development into screening events earlier this year, I have tried to address this marginal status and the need to increase the visibility of artists working with animation. The Edge of Frame Weekend, taking place as part of London International Animation Festival, during a William Kentridge exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery, provides an ideal focal point for varied, overlapping audiences, practitioners, organisations and educators to come together and develop our common understanding of this often overlooked area of practice.

Edwin Rostron, November 2016

- 1 *Edges: an Animation Seminar, Whitechapel Gallery, Friday 9th December, 2pm to 5pm.***
- 2 *Elemental Animation, Close-Up Film Centre, Friday 9th December, 8pm.***
- 3 *Journeys into Experimental Animation, Whitechapel Gallery, Saturday 10th December, 11.30am to 6pm.***
- 4 *Push and Pull: Films by Lilli Carré and Alexander Stewart, Close-Up Film Centre, Sunday 11th December, 8pm.***



Deep Red Netherlands 2012, 7'00
Director Esther Urlus



Mind Frame USA 2016, 1'00
Director Jake Fried



Untitled Germany 2014-2015, 6'00
Director Oliver Laric



Second Sun Canada 2014, 3'10
Director Leslie Supnet



Monkey China 2015, 5'09
Director Shen Jie

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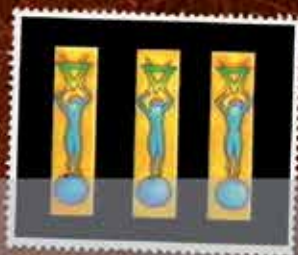
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