



Anifilm's competition to include the very best

At the end of January, selection committee of the International Film Festival Anifilm convened to go through almost 1300 hundred films and chose films for all six festival competition categories. The committee spent dozens of hours watching various films and eventually shortlisted 128 of them (roughly a 10 % extract of the most interesting films). The Třeboň audiences will have a chance to see films by world-renowned authors such as Adam Elliot, Theodor Ushev and Igor Kovalyov and the music videos competition will boast music videos by Keith Richards, David Gilmour and The Prodigy. Anifilm will also screen premiers of films by promising talents waiting to be discovered. Czech Republic has in total 15 irons in the fire.

„Being in this year's selection committee turned out to be a very enlightening and horizon-broadening experience. Surprisingly enough, the world of animation is not entirely dominated by 3D technology, although it has its fair share of representatives, but authors and students in particular often return to manual techniques. Some of them even choose atypical techniques such as light animation. As for the topics, many authors are trying to comment on current issues and reflect upon e.g. the immigration crisis,“ said graphic designer and director, member of the selection committee, Kristina Dufková.

Czech premieres of six competition films in a category dominated by France.

This year's Anifilm main competition section is bound to include Charlie Kaufman's excursion to the world of animation **Anomalisa** which he co-directed with Duke Johnson. But the award can also go to the Spanish surprise **Psiconautas, the Forgotten Children** by Pedro Rivero and Alberto Vázquez. The category is however dominated by the traditional animation power. Six out of ten competing films are produced and co-produced in France. They include the film **April and the Extraordinary World** inspired by the world of the renowned French comics artist Jacques Tardi. Tardi himself served as a graphic creator and consultant of the film showing a historical utopian world stuck in the century of

steam. Apart from Tardi's "retro sci-fi," Anifilm will screen the Czech premiere of ***Phantom Boy*** and ***Long Way North*** – films representing typical graphically refined style of French animation. Another film included in our competition is Anca Darmian's collage docudrama ***Magic Mountain*** depicting the extraordinary story of a Pole called Adam J. Winkler who fought alongside the Afghan Mujahedeen against the Soviet Union in the 1980's. The film received a Jury Special Mention at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Two of the competition films take place during the World War I. ***Cafard***, inspired by real events, shows a Belgian wrestling champion who joins the fight against Germany and ***Adama*** takes us to the battlefield with a young African boy who sets off across Europe in search of his older brother. Czech animation is represented by Jan Bubeníček who addresses the theme of death and uses it to connect three separate stories in his film ***Murderous Tales***. And last but not least, a representative of Japanese anime, a film by Mamoru Hosoda ***The Boy and the Beast***.

Short and student films competitions geographically and technologically varied, include classics of world animation

Our short films competition includes in total 34 films offering the best of the world of animation from last year. Our selection boasts such names as the director of the feature film ***Mary and Max*** Adam Elliot with his latest film ***Ernie Biscuit***, Igor Kovalyov and his ***Before Love***, Kovalyov's directorial comeback after ten years, classic of Hungarian animation Marcell Jankovics and the world premiere of his ***Imago***, the master of suggestive animation **Georges Schwizgebel**, the renowned French duo **Alain Gagnol & Jean-Loup Felicioli** and their new short film and famous Estonian animators **Priit Tender** and **Kaspar Jancis**. The selection will also screen two films from the famous Canadian agency **National Film Board of Canada (Carface, Sexy Laundry)**. Also Czech authors have been selected to compete – ***Sunrise*** by **Vít Pancíř** will have its world premiere in Třeboň and the competition will also include **Lucie Sunková's *The Tree***, made with a very demanding paint-on-glass technique. The audiences will have a chance to see various techniques – hand-drawn and CGI animation, puppet and clay animation and also 3D animation. Another three blocks are formed by student films which serve as a proof that schools all around the world are breeding grounds for talents producing varied and inventive films so professional that they could to some extent compete with our short films competition entries. We are pleased that this year's selection includes an unusually high number of Czech contributions by film schools in Zlín, Písek, Academy of Arts and Design in Prague, the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and also the Animation and Interactive Art programme of the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. Let us mention **Marek Berger** who introduces an interesting take on the legendary hero in his film ***The Spring Man of Prague: Shadow over Prague***. **Lenka Ivančíková** shows her animal puppets animation skills in her debut ***First Snow***. But the list of interesting Czech contributions to the student films competition is far from over.

In general the selection proves that contemporary authors are capable of creating mesmerising fantasy worlds as well as, contrary to our expectation, remain earthly and informal while focusing on ordinary things.

Visual music not only in music videos

Two newest Anifilm competition categories have in short time become an inseparable part of the festival competition. A proof of the quality of submitted films is that this year, there will be two showcases focusing on boundary forms of animation. In the selection, we can observe an interesting phenomenon – videos reminding of urban symphonies. **Matyáš Trnka** focuses on our capital city in his film ***Prague!*** and Estonian directors **Hardi Volmer** and **Urmas Jõemees** have chosen a number of cities which they transform in their detailed animation exploration ***Urbanimatio***. Our non-narrative

animation category traditionally offers space to works using tempo and rhythm as means of expression, often transforming into visual music. Also the popularity of a classic film stock and techniques such as scratching into its surface is still high. Among our competition entries are famous filmmakers such as **Paul Bush**, **Mirai Mizue**, **Max Hattler**, **Theodor Ushev** and **Nikki Schuster** who was included in our last year's street animation showcase.

Legendary musicians using animation

Keith Richards, **The Prodigy**, **Jana Kirschner** and **David Gilmour** – those are just some of the artists who used all-powerful animation in visualising their music. The music videos competition selection offers a wide range of music styles and graphic designs. This is, of course, reflected by the included genres – we will move from fantastic abstract images to complicated and dynamic realistic stories.