

Festival Centre Chateau Felberova 1/2

Accreditations, Festival Shop,
Info Point, Festival Café
8.30 – 20.00

Covid-19 testing facility
9.00 – 19.00

Exhibitions & Installations

„ani“ – 20 Years of the festival
of animated films
10.00 – 18.00

20 years of animation, 24 posters,
24 visual identities, 3 cities, 1 idea.

Where can you take your dog at Anifilm?

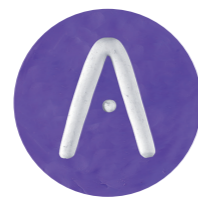
Some of our visitors come to Anifilm with their four-legged friends. If you're one of them, please be advised that dogs are not allowed in screening theatres or inside the Liberec Chateau (where the Festival Centre is located). On the other hand, you are free to take them with you to the Varšava Cinema café, the chateau gardens, the festival tent, and the open-air cinema in the Dr. E. Beneše Square.

Come to festival by tram!

Travel around the festival by tram and on lines 2 and 3, from Nádraží to Lidové sady route, take advantage of discounted festival fares: day ticket for 25 CZK, weekly ticket for 120 CZK. To be purchased at festival venues: Chateau, Dr. E. Beneš Square, Cinema Varšava, Lidové sady, Cinema City or at the Ticket Office at the DP terminal Fügnerova.

Festival App

Festival programme, film details with screening times and locations, festival map with navigation, festival news, ticket reservation, your screenings, your schedule...



Android



iOS



Oz animation:
Shapeable Visual Identity
10.00 – 18.00

Scraps of scenes that can be seen in our wild festival jingle created by Eliška and Lee Oz.

INITI – INVADERZ
10.00 – 18.00

INITI Playground is an interactive platform designed to integrate virtual reality games into the real world.

Alexandra Májová: VTIPinky
10.00 – 18.00

An exhibition of humorous pen-and-ink drawings from 2018–2021, inspired by different words.

Even Mice Belong to
an Exhibition
10.00 – 18.00

Puppets and spacious decorations from new Czech feature film *Even Mice Belong to Heaven* (directed by Denisa Grimmová and Jan Bubeníček).

Vojtěch Domlátil: Dawn
10.00 – 18.00

Spatial light meditation. Layers of selected abstract natural phases from the film *Morning*. Depth of layer, depth of reflection. Anifilm overhead projector gallery.

Game Zone
Infinite VR Exhibition
Brainz VR Cinema
10.00 – 18.00



Festival daily

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Texts	Malvína Balvínová, Natalia Neudačina
Translation	Lukáš Wicha
Design	Jan Šimsa



Dopravní podnik měst
Liberec a Jablonce n.N., a.s.



Anifilm 2021 LIBEREC



FESTIVAL
DAILY
SATURDAY
26. 6. 2021

Alexandra Májová: My films have a universal appeal

One of the jurors judging this year's International Competition of Short and Student Films is graphic artist, animator, and director Alexandra Májová, whose short film *Washing Machine* was awarded in the Czech Horizon national competition last year. In the following interview, you can read about the magic of animation, how the author regards her own films and how the successful animated series *Hungry Bear Tales* was produced.

You started studying graphic arts at secondary school - what was the initial impulse that led you to this field of study? Were you interested in graphic arts since you were little?

Yes, I took lessons at an art school from first through ninth grade of elementary school. And later, when I was deciding where to apply after elementary school, my art teacher told me I should go to a secondary art school. Initially, I didn't think I was up to it, and I was thinking of picking grammar school instead, but eventually, I decided to give it a go, and I applied to the private Secondary School of Graphic Arts in Jihlava, and I chose graphic design for advertising because they were taking on more

students into that programme. It was great that my parents supported me and weren't afraid to send me across half the country even though I was just fourteen. I wasn't that much into graphic design as such, but I did like graphics and printing techniques such as, for example, etching and lithography. In the later years, I and my schoolmates started experimenting with simple animations. Using movement in time allowed us to express ourselves in entirely new ways compared to static paintings and graphics. So when the time came to pick a college, I already knew I wanted to study animation. And then I got accepted to the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (FAMU).

You also studied at the Estonian Academy of Arts in Tallinn as an exchange student. What was it like, and what did the experience give you? Did it change the way you look at animation or graphic arts?

When I was studying at FAMU, I came across films by Priit Pärn, and I was fascinated. So when I found out he was teaching at the Estonian Academy of Arts, I decided I wanted to study there under the Erasmus programme. I went there in 2009 - I was probably the first student of FAMU who had studied there, but I enjoyed it very much. The way they taught at the academy was different. They had a lot of foreign guests, which was not very common at FAMU back

Interview continues >

Tips for today

Momoko Seto: Masterclass
15.00, Varšava Cinema

The international jury of this year's Anifilm includes well-known experimenter Momoko Seto renowned for her unconventional animated films exploring invisible processes that go on in the lives of plants and animals. Today, you'll have the opportunity to find out how Momoko makes her charming films. The director is Japanese by origin, but she lives and makes her films in France.

Tokyo Godfathers
17.30, Grandhotel Zlatý lev

The unconventionally narrated feature *Tokyo Godfathers* is one of only a handful of films made by the late director Satoshi Kon. This remarkable animated feature, in which heated and crazy situations and coincides play equally important parts, is included in the Queer Animation section. We are screening its newest, edited English-dubbed version (with Czech subtitles).

Cryptozoo
19.00, Varšava Cinema

One of the contenders for this year's Animorph for the best feature film. This quirky film by artist and director Dash Shaw, whose film *My Entire High School Sinking into the Sea* (2016) was awarded a Special Mention of the Jury at Anifilm 2017, will take us back to an alternative version of the "hippie" 1960s and tell the story of a group of women who establish a special zoo for cryptid-mythical animals and other (often dangerous) creatures.

then. Besides other things, I learned about different approaches to story structuring, and I got to try different animation techniques such as paint-on-glass or sand animation and experimental pixilation. And together with my friend from Croatia, we made and shot a short puppet film. It was a really refreshing experience. I stopped being afraid to experiment, I started believing in myself more, and I learned to stand my ground. I met a lot of wonderful and inspiring people, I enjoyed beautiful local environments and landscapes, and I look back at my time there fondly.

Throughout your carrier, you focused mainly on animation and illustrating for children. Which of the two appeals to you more at the moment?

I enjoy doing both, and it suits me that I can combine animation with illustrating or alternate between them. At the same time, I don't think I made my older films with the intention of focusing primarily on children. I still like to read children's secondary art school and watch series and films for kids, and it probably shows in my work. I like the kind of humour that both kids and grownups can enjoy, and I think that's why my films can have a universal appeal.

You frequently work with mythical characters that you situate in the modern world. As a result, in your films, fairy tale elements mingle with reality and imagination meets commonplaceness, which often leads to humorous situations and creates a sense of playfulness. What inspires you in this respect, and does this mixing of the two worlds have some deeper or symbolic meaning for you?

It depends. I'm definitely inspired by commonplaceness. When you take some thing or situation everyone is familiar with and you set it in a different, unusual context, something magical happens. After all, that's the overall principle of animation - thanks to animation, drawings magically come to life. I enjoy transforming familiar things and transposing them into new contexts because it produces unexpected and funny situations. That's also why I used well-known fairy-tale and mythological characters in my student films.

Your latest film *Washing Machine*, which successfully competed at numerous festivals, is quite different from the rest of your works. Can you tell us something about this short film and about how you made it?

The film was sort of inspired by our real old washing machine that always danced around the bathroom and made crazy sounds when it was turned on. In the morning, I'd put clothes in the washing machine, and when I came back, it would be waiting somewhere else completely. I remember that in connection with this, I wrote down this note: "Owner of a washing machine is nervous because his washing machine sighs like a woman." But I only got back to it three years later. After I graduated from FAMU, I struggled with one screenplay for a long time - up to the point that I was not enjoying it at all anymore, and I got depressed because I thought I'd never make another film ever again. So my husband told me to leave film be for the time being and make something just for fun and that I should check my sketchbooks for inspiration. I opened one of them, saw this note, and knew that was it - I would make a funny short film that would be so minimalistic that I could make it all by myself and I could start working on it straight away.

Another one of your successful projects is the animated bedtime series *Hungry Bear Tales*, which you co-directed with Kateřina Karhánková. Where did the idea come from and how was the series made?

We started working on *Hungry Bear Tales* with Kateřina virtually immediately after we graduated from FAMU. Back then, producer Vratislav Šlajer asked our common friend, producer Bára Příkladová, if she'd like to make some animated

project with the help of his production company Bionaut. When we were still studying at FAMU, I told her about the book *Malá medvědi knížka* by Zbyněk Černík and that it could be adapted into a nice bedtime series. We then all returned to the idea and came up with the overall concept.

We decided to base the series around the friendship of the two main bear protagonists, Ned and Mishka. We wanted to show how two completely different characters can pull together to solve any situation they encounter. We asked Filip Pošivač to be our graphic artist because we knew from the start that since we had no experience with directing a series, it would be best to leave the visuals to someone else, someone who could keep a little distance from the entire process. We trusted him right from the beginning because Kateřina had worked with him on her short film *The New Species*, and furthermore, apart from being an exceptional artist, Filip is also an animator and director so he knew straight away what he was getting into. We made the initial concept into the pilot *Blueberry Hunt*, based on which Czech Television confirmed they would collaborate on the project with us. From the start, we worked with Czech Television's dramaturge Kateřina Kačerovská. We also pitched the project at Cartoon Springboard, Anifilm's Cartoon Forum, and at the Cinekid Festival, where it was favourably received and attracted distributors from the French company Dandeloo. After *Blueberry Hunt*, I and Kateřina started writing storylines for the other

episodes. Based on these short summaries, screenwriters then wrote full scripts for all the individual episodes, I and Kateřina revised them, and then we sent them to Czech Television for approval. Once they were approved by all the parties, animatics were created, provisional dialogues and then final dialogues were recorded, layouts were created, music was recorded, and finally, the episodes were animated, edited, and sound was added to them. The first series was animated in the Czech Republic by the Kredenc studio in Prague, while the second series was animated by the Tree House Republic studio in Ireland.

What did your collaboration with Kateřina look like? Was each of you responsible for different aspects of the project or did you decide about everything together?

We decided about everything jointly - together with creative producer Bára Příkladová. During the production itself, I and Kateřina did everything together up to the preparation of storyboards. Then we divided up the tasks so that



Brigand Jurko

Two feature films and a selection of short films by the legendary Slovak director Viktor Kubal have been digitally restored by the Slovak Film Institute. This collection subsequently competed at Il Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna, the festival of restored and archival films. Anifilm will screen the iconic feature film *Brigand Jurko* from this collection. Director Viktor Kubal (1923-1997) was not only the founder of Slovak animated film, but starting in the mid-1960s, its leading figure. The visual form of the film is characterised by his caricature-like artistic style, which is the foundation of his humour (Kubal is one of the founders of modern caricature). *Brigand Jurko* is an original and ambitious film made using simple, accessible yet thorough animation. However dramatic, romantic and slightly pathetic it may seem, humour always prevails.

Kateřina was responsible for the layout, art, and music, while I was responsible for making sure animatics and the animating itself is done well and on time. And whenever we had any issue at any stage of the production, we discussed and consulted it together. The key thing was that we trusted each other, and we knew we could depend on one another.

Which of your projects are you proud of the most so far?

I don't think I could pick a single favourite project. Whenever I finish a project, I'm always thrilled by it, but at the same time, I can't watch it for a while because I've spent a lot of time working on it. But later on, this block disappears, and when I watch my previous films, I'm sometimes amused to find out that, for example, I animated something much better back then than now. I wonder how could that be, and I start to think that I'm slipping. I like all of my projects. All of them have their merits as well as flaws, but each of them is different in some way, and each of them helped me develop and progress. I'm also very interested in how viewers

Industry tip: masterclass by Milan Cais

Musician and visual artist Milan Cais, also known as a co-founder and member of the Tata bojs music band, not only composes music for film and theatre but also creates sculptures and installations, draws, performs, and makes videos. Today, you can attend his masterclass to learn more about how he creates his visual art. This all-round artist will talk about the creative and production processes behind his large-scale projects, such as the *Big Night Watchman* video installation on the cooling towers of the Temelin nuclear power plant, on which he collaborated with multiple other people, as well as behind his more intimate pieces, which he produces in his studio by himself. The masterclass begins at 11.00 in the Library

react to my films. The moment you finish a film and send it out into the world, it stops being yours to a certain degree, and every viewer can find something of their own in it, something you might have never even thought was there. And I enjoy observing these reactions.

What are your plans for the future?

For now, I have no plans set in stone. Together with my husband (Martin Máj), we recently founded our brand Májovi studio and just for fun started making short gifs, funny animations, and the occasional commissioned work. I do have an idea for another short film, but it's still in its very early stages. The only thing I know for sure is that its style and atmosphere would be based on drawings I made over the past three years, some of which were inspired by the annual Inktober challenge. You can see several of these drawings at my VtipINKY exhibition, which is on display in the Liberec Chateau for the duration of this year's Anifilm. And the rest is yet to be decided. It will be something a bit different again so I'm looking forward to it!

Made of crystal and perfectly imperfect

Animorphs, our festival awards, are again made of crystal glass and again original. The awards were all hand made by glass-makers at Preciosa - the biggest Czech producer of Bohemian crystal. Each of the Animorphs was shaped and handled by 23 different pairs of skilled hands before it was finished and prepared to be delivered to its winner. What are they like? You can tell straight away that our Animorphs are perfectly imperfect. All the trophies are different - just like the individual competition categories whose winners will receive them. Its colours once again match those of this year's visual identity of the festival and the crystal glass is a subtle reference to the place where it's held - the Crystal Valley.

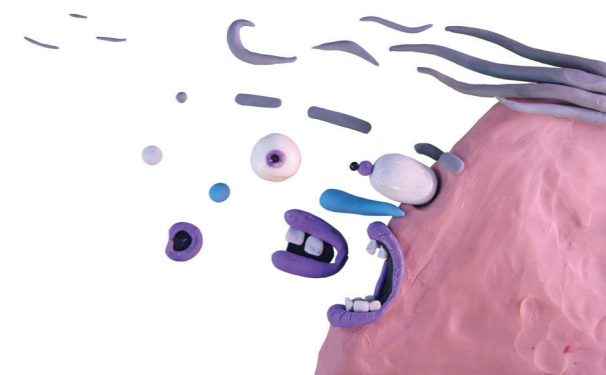


Photo: Eva Kořínková