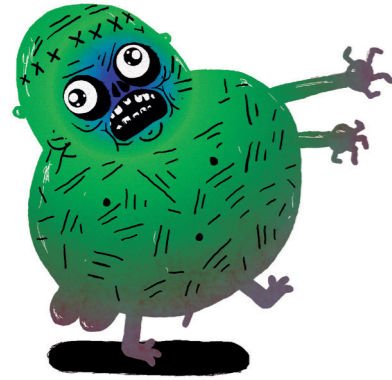


Viktoria Cherniaha
Filmako – thirteenth
juror of ANIFILM



Third member of the ANIFILM jury for VR films is Viktoria Cherniaha Filmako. Viktoria is an independent animation director from Ukraine. She holds a Master degree in Architecture and has graduated from the British Higher School of Art and Design at Film School as an Art director and Production designer. After working for several years in the field of architecture and cinema she felt the need to realize herself in the world of animation. As Stas Santimov unfortunately cannot join the jury for this category, Viktoria will judge **VR films** together with Lars Rummel and Tereza Stehliková.



Get delicious discounts with your festival pass

We have partnered up with a number of restaurants all over Liberec, so you can turn your stay at Anifilm into a film-food-fest!

If you are wondering where to grab something to eat and refresh yourself between screenings, we recommend visiting any of the thirty restaurants, cafés, and bars (and one ice cream shop) that we have partnered up with this year to arrange attractive discounts and benefits for all Anifilm's visitors with festival passes. You can find the full list of these places on our website, and we have also marked all of them for you in our festival map. For example, you can present your festival pass to get a 30% discount on any dish on the menu at Pivovarský dvůr (Papírenská Street), a free dessert with a tortilla at the VEGway snack bar (Revoluční Street), a 15% discount or a tasting platter for CZK 99 at the Fresh Cantine salad bar and fresh bistro (Zámečnická Street), or large chips (made from Czech potatoes) for the prices of small ones at FÄNCY FRIES (Široká Street). And that's just a taste!

Festival Tram Ticket

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 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...

Festival daily

Published by Anifilm on the occasion of Anifilm 2022 – International Festival of Animated Films.

Texts Malvína Balvínová
Interviews Natalia Kozáková
Translation Lukáš Wicha
Design Jan Šimsa



ANIFILM

LIBEREC 2022

**FESTIVAL
DAILY
FRIDAY
13. 5. 2022**



Editing before the digital age

11.00, Grandhotel Zlatý Lev

Today, Jiřina Pěčová, who received Anifilm's Lifetime Achievement Award for Animation this year, will give her masterclass, where she will talk about what editor's work was like before digital technologies became ubiquitous. The insights that this experienced editor and lecturer will share can be inspiring even for those who do editing today, when editing tables have been replaced with computers and sound recordings are not kept on tapes and stored in drawers any more. Jiřina Pěčová edited animated films for the Bratři v triku studio for two decades, worked with many prominent directors, and it was her, to whom many cult Czech (Czechoslovak) series, bedtime series but also auteur films owe their final look.

What should an editor know about working with a director, how is sound added to film and how editors work with film music, what are the pitfalls of different language versions, and what is MEZ-MIX? You can learn about all of this and much more today at her masterclass, at which Jiřina Pěčová will also answer questions from the audience.



(photo: René Volfík)

Tips for today

Where is Anne Frank?
12.30, Cinema City 1

Ari Folman, who has won renown for his powerful animated documentary *Waltz with Bashir*, is currently probably the best-known Israeli director. This year, we are screening his new film, an original take on *The Diary of Anne Frank* set in the present, as part of our feature film competition programme.

Bill Plympton: Masterclass
17.00, Kino Varšava

Masterclasses by American independent director Bill Plympton are much celebrated and sought after, but not everyone has had the chance to visit world-class festivals, where he usually gives them, to see (and hear) for themselves. Now you have the opportunity to attend one - to see some of his work and learn how he approaches hand-drawn animation, which he uses to make even feature-length films all by himself.

Frank & Wendy
19.00, TUL – Aula G

We would never dream of leaving out Estonian animated films from our *Animation & Humour*-themed selection as that would mean we would deprive our visitors of their uninhibitedly absurd and sometimes even disturbingly morbid humour. Tonight, you can enjoy the distinctive qualities of Estonian animation to the full as we will be screening the feature film *Frank & Wendy*, which was co-directed by Kaspar Jancis, Ülo Pikkov and Priit Tender.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT		HOSTS		GENERAL PARTNER		MAIN PARTNER			
GENERAL MEDIA PARTNER		MAIN MEDIA PARTNER		IMPORTANT PARTNERS				OFFICIAL CAR	
IMPORTANT MEDIA PARTNERS				MEDIA PARTNERS					

Bill Plympton: Keep your film short, make it cheap and make it funny!

Most people in the industry call you "the king of independent animation". Did you ever consider working with a large studio?

In fact, I dreamt of working for Disney at first, so it wasn't really a choice for me to become independent. I just wanted to be an artist and make cartoons, that's all. So as soon as I started making short films and went to different film festivals I met other people who were also making short films and were actually doing well and making good money. So at that point I realized that I didn't have to work for a big studio, but I could just do everything by myself and make a good living. However, later on I have been offered to work on tv series and feature films made by somebody else and quite frankly I was up for it. Sometimes it feels good to try something different. I have done some projects for the Cartoon Network, for example a Christmas Special, and I have done short series for MTV, but they didn't take off and that is why I remained independent. But it's nice being able to retain ownership to all of my films. I like it because these films keep selling to different countries and in that sense they are a great investment.

What drew you to a hand drawn pencil illustration and animation and how do you feel your style has evolved throughout your career?

I remember falling in love with illustration very distinctly. I was about ten years old and I didn't have any paper, so my mum gave me butcher paper from a grocery store and I started drawing on it with my ballpoint pen. It all looked kind of scratchy, almost impressionistic. I remember drawing a house that looked very sketchy, but I found it cool. I don't know exactly where I got this idea, maybe I saw it in a magazine or just bumped into it somewhere else, but I decided to keep that style. When I started making illustrations for magazines and

This year, the jury that will pick the best feature film competing at Anifilm is joined by legendary director and the king of independent American animation Bill Plympton, whose distinctive style is recognizable at a first glance. His films have reaped successes at festivals all over the world, and two of his films, *Your Face* and *Guard Dog*, were even nominated for an Academy Award. Today, he will give his masterclass in Kino Varšava at 17.00, where he will talk about those of his films he personally likes the most, and at 20.30, we will be screening a selection of his short films. In the interview below, you can read about the development of his artistic style, provocative topics, and his upcoming feature film.

newspapers, I still retained it, because it was a very quick, unique, fun and pleasant way to draw, there was no hassle about it. Once I got into animation I adapted that technique, because it was fast and easy, and I still keep using it nowadays. Occasionally I did do something different, like with the film *The Tune*, where I used paint and outline, which is more traditional and more similar to Disney style, but the more feature films I did, the more I came back to that sketchy impressionistic look, that I've always loved doing.

You switched from celluloid to digital format in 2005. How easy or difficult was it for you and what is your take on "traditional" or hand made animation nowadays? Do you think it would be useful or relevant to go back to celluloid?

No way. It was so difficult to work with celluloid, and expensive, too. You needed so many cells to handle and if you made a mistake, you needed to shoot it all again, then take them to the lab, then get an answer print, a check print and a negative print - all of which were so pricey, as well as the editing. You also needed to hire a whole room of editing machines, which was a nightmare. And you needed to work on the sound too, which was no better. All of this technology ended up taking about 75% of my budget. So when I moved to digital, it was great, I'm so thankful for it. The budget for technology now is about only 10%, the rest of it is colouring etc. I know that some people like Tarantino swear by the traditional film, but I don't have the budget Tarantino has...

In your films you manage to mix the playfulness and humour with very straightforward scenes showing violence, sex, but at the same time you often portray serious or ambiguous topics and complex interpersonal

relationships. Can you describe your creative process – what is usually the first thing that comes to your mind when you want to make a new film?

For example the film I am currently working on is called *Slide* and it is a slow-burn comedy musical. The inspiration for that came from growing up in Oregon, which is very mountainous and full of trees. When I was young I used to listen to a lot of country music like Hank Williams and Patsy Clein. So I wanted to put all of this together and make a western comedy, because I have never made a western before, but I love this genre very much. I actually grew up pretending to be a cowboy. But I also get inspired by the directors that I really love, such as Frank Capra, Ilya Kazan or Billy Wilder. And these guys would put a little bit of consciousness into their movies – they would show us that there was something wrong with our society and that we've got to fix it. But they would always mix this consciousness with comedy – and that is something I really look up to. I want to comment on social injustice, but I don't want to make it a political film, I want to make it a comedy. By mixing these two fractions I want to make films that are interesting, maybe a little educational, but mostly entertaining. I think that the best way to make a powerful message is to make people laugh.

You also often focus on curiosity and you ask symbolic questions in your films, often asking "why is this the way it is?". Do you feel like your films have given you answers on the issues that you tried to explore?

Most of the topics I am curious about are linked to relationships, especially male and female interaction. And I am still very curious about how females see the world, because I don't know how they think, what kind of emotions they go through – I wish I knew, but obviously I can never know fully... So that's what

I like to explore, to me it's very entertaining. I think a lot of people agree with me when I say that it's interesting to observe how people fall in love, or out of love or how they are unable to live together. For example in my film *Cheatin'* we follow a couple, who love each other passionately, but for some reason they become jealous and they try to kill each other. Of course there is an exaggeration, because it's a cartoon, but personal relationships are something that I am deeply interested in. And in general, curiosity that you mentioned is an extremely important ability, especially for young filmmakers, or any filmmakers, honestly. You have to be curious about the world, about how people react, why politics is the way it is or even about nature.

How important is, in your opinion, reflecting on political issues in animation, even if it is "just" a comedy? Do you feel that animated films can be effective in expressing the core of such problematics?

It definitely can, in a limited way, though. I don't like to make films about politicians, even though I did make a series about Trump and that was very effective, I offended a lot of people by that. (laughs) But generally speaking I want to stay away from people, particular personalities, simply because animation is a kind of art form that lasts thirty or forty years and maybe in that length of time no one will even remember who these politicians were. However I did work on projects that were in some ways political, such as *Demi's Panic*, a short film about COVID, and then I did a mockumentary about Hitler... (laughs) So I do focus on politics occasionally, just for the fun of it – to do something crazy, but most of the time I try to keep my films portraying personal relationships or broader issues like the environment or corruption.

We often see exaggeration and physical transformations in your films, but also dealing with everyday life of ordinary people. Can you describe how important it is for you to stay in touch with reality?

As you know, early in my career I started working as an illustrator. I was doing work for magazines and newspapers from all over the world for about fifteen years. The way to make an illustration interesting is to draw from surrealism. I really got hooked on surrealism at the time and I was really inspired by Eugène Ionesco, Roland Topor etc. So

when I moved to animation, the first thing I did was *Your Face*, which was the ultimate surrealist film of mine. So, in my opinion, the trick to get the audience really into your films, is to use natural realism that later devolves or transforms into surrealism. It's so cool and fun to watch. In that sense, animation is the only good way to do it. With live action, you have one or two images and you are limited by the actors not wanting to squish their faces, but with animation you have time and you can honestly do whatever you want with your characters. So to me it is a perfect art form for the surrealism I want to create, whilst still partially referring to real life.

What was the most challenging and also your favourite film to work on so far and why?

I think that the most challenging would be *Slide*, the film I'm making now. I always used to rush with my previous works and tried to finish them in two years, but with *Slide* it's different. I have been working on it for about five years now and I really want to make it my epic, so I have spent a long time on it, working on detailed drawings etc. And then COVID came along and it really stopped everything, because previously I had been earning decent money by touring and screen appearances, which obviously stopped. I ran out of money and I couldn't get the workers to help me because of the COVID isolation, so the last two years have been really difficult. Fortunately I just did a Simpson's spot and some advertising, but even though now I have some budget to spend I still have a long way to go – paint the cells, do some voiceovers and the editing is still very rough.



The most fun project I did was my first film *Your Face*, because there was no pressure. Back then nobody knew who Bill Plympton was. And that's why I could do anything I wanted – and I did, I let myself loose with this film. One of the best parts about it was when they started screening it and the audience went nuts for it. People were laughing, applauding and offering money to buy the film and the drawings. It was a real eye-opener for me, because I had spent so much time as an illustrator just to



find out that animation is not that hard. I made a two-minute film and all of a sudden I was nominated for an Oscar and everyone wanted to be my friend, so that was a delightful experience.

Can you tell me a little bit more about your upcoming project *Slide*, apart from what you previously mentioned?

Sure, like I said, I was inspired by the nature in Oregon and the country music to which my dad and I used to listen to when I was young. In the film I want to expose the corruption of a small town – we follow these two fat corrupted twin guys, who abuse everyone and just do really bad things. I wanted to make it a musical, so I asked my friend Maureen McElheron, who also loves country music, (she wrote music to some of my films and whom I used to play in Country Western Band in), to join me. I also wanted to create this mythical western star, an animated Clint Eastwood kind of a character, who travels around with his slide guitar, which is a typical country western instrument. He goes to this town and he cleans up the corruption – that's the basic plot of the film. The film is a bit crazy and wild, it contains a whole lot of violence and sex – a lot of action takes place in a whore house, there will be chainsaws, decapitation of heads and arms etc., so it's definitely not for kids, but I think it's something that people would like to see (laughs). There is a wonderful film called *Destry Rides Again* starring Marlene Dietrich and Jimmy Stewart, who plays a sheriff that doesn't like violence, yet he tames this really corrupt town and deals with some bad guys using his brain. I think I was subconsciously influenced by this film when working on *Slide*.

[Read the full interview at www.anifilm.cz](http://www.anifilm.cz)