

Chateau – Felberova 1/2, Liberec

Accreditation, Ticketing, Festival shop
8³⁰ – 20⁰⁰

Game Zone & Brainz VR Cinema,
School of Animation, Chill-out Zone
9⁰⁰ – 18⁰⁰

Festival daily

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Exhibitions and Installations

Kōji Yamamura: *Four Flashing Figures*
Liberec Regional Gallery
10⁰⁰ – 17⁰⁰

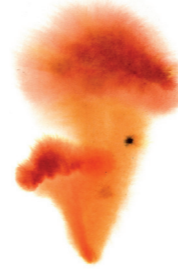
Filip Pošivač: *Anifilm 2023*
Chateau – Foyer
8³⁰ – 18⁰⁰

IOGI: *11 Stories from Everyday Life in Japan*
Chateau – Redern Wing
8³⁰ – 18⁰⁰

Darkening – VR installation
Liebig Villa
10⁰⁰ – 18⁰⁰

Festival Partner Businesses

A gastronomic heaven in Liberec! Here's a selection of partner festival bars and restaurants. When you present your festival pass, you will get a bonus or a discount on selected foods and beverages – coffee, pastry, main dishes, cocktails, beer and more. Let's get out and give it a try!



Festival daily
Tuesday — 2. 5. 2023

Anifilm returns to Liberec – this time with a Japanese flair

Today at 8.30 a.m., the newest edition of the Anifilm International Festival of Animated Films began in Liberec with its first morning screening. As always, visitors can count on getting a hefty dose of animation over the next six days, and on top of that, there will be workshops, exhibitions, performances, and concerts. In addition to all the goodies our visitors are already used to, we are also introducing some exciting new additions this year – and not just in terms of the programme.

One of them is the Czech Horizon pitching event supported by the PPF Foundation. Ten projects have advanced to the pitching competition, which will take place tomorrow, that is Wednesday, from

1 pm. The jury will allocate a total of CZK 1,000,000 among the competing projects.

Another new addition is the Liebig Villa, which has expanded the list of festival venues and where part of the industry programme will take place. Moreover, it also houses an installation accompanying the award-winning VR film *Darkening*. Furthermore, Anifilm has also moved into to the Naive Theatre this year, where children can have a great time in a kid-friendly environment.

And the third piece of news is that we have started cooperating with the Association for Film and Audiovisual Education, whose activities will be presented to teachers and other interested parties on Thursday.

On Friday, we will be organising aniSWAP – an exchange market for animation and art supplies, and comics, which will offer our visitors undoubtedly the best and most sustainable way to pass on unwanted items and get something new in return.

The theme of this year's festival is Japan, which means that we will be showcasing Japanese animation, both historical and contemporary, in the form of art films as well as famous anime. You will also have a chance to meet Japanese filmmakers, for example, Koji Yamamura, who has brought with him not just his films but also an exhibition, which you should definitely visit at the Lázně Gallery. The day packed the most with Japanese-themed events will be Saturday, when, in addition to screenings, our visitors will have the opportunity to experience an authentic Japanese theatre performance.

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- Pivovarský dvůr
- Stereo
- Výběp
- Switch Bar & Café
- Beer Warehouse
- Knihkupectví Fryč

Festivalová mapa / Festival Map

- 1 festivalové centrum
- 3 festivalové místo
- partner festival
- partner festival accommodation
- parkování
- terminál MHD
- autobusové nádraží
- veřejné toalety
- městské informační centrum
- nemocnice
- výhled na Ještěd
- tramvajová linka
- partner festival partner: food
- partner festival partner: ice cream
- partner festival partner: bar
- partner festival partner: káva
- partner festival partner: knihy



Tips for today

Signe Baumann's Love Affair
14³⁰ → Varšava Cinema

Seven years in the making, this long anticipated feature film by independent Latvian-American director Signe Baumann *My Love Affair with Marriage* was completed thanks to contributions from various cultural and grant institutions and almost 1,700 individual donors. The film premiered in New York in June 2022 and only a few days later, it was awarded Jury Distinction at the Annecy Festival.

Murakami on screen
17⁰⁰ → Varšava Cinema

The feature debut of graphic artist and composer Pierre Földes is an adaptation of several stories by popular Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, and so it perfectly fits the theme of this year's Anifilm. Földes aptly depicts the poetic nature of Murakami's worlds, which lie somewhere between dreams and ordinary life. His narrative style allows viewers to interpret the film in their own way.

The airship sails once again
20³⁰ → Nám. Dr. E. Beneše

Tonight at the Náměstí Dr. E. Beneše square, we are screening a wonderful Czechoslovak classic – *The Stolen Airship* by director Karel Zeman. And since we are screening a new digitally restored version of this timeless adventure film from 1967, the viewers are in for a real treat. We have included the film, for which Karel Zeman drew inspiration from Jules Verne's works, in the Classics Rebooted section of our programme.



Filip Pošivač: “As an illustrator, I work a lot with watercolour”

*The visual identity of this year's festival was created by the renowned director, illustrator, and art designer Filip Pošivač. He has made his mark not only as the co-author of the half-hour puppet film *Deep in Moss* (2015) and the director of the series *Live from Moss* and the short film *Overboard* (2019) but also as an art designer for *Hungry Bear Tales* (an animated series by Kateřina Karhánková and Alexandra Májová, which was nominated for a Czech Lion Award). In our interview, he talks of his passion for puppets and his upcoming feature-length debut *Tonda, Slávka and the Genius*.*

When and how did you get the idea to make puppet films?

I wasn't really interested in animation until I went to college. I was primarily interested in studying at the Academy of Arts Architecture & Design in Prague, or UMRUM for short, but I also knew that I wouldn't get into the illustration department, where I wanted to apply. So I joined the Film and Television Graphics Studio instead. In my first year, Milan Svatoš and I would go watch Jiří Barta film the movie *In the Attic or Who Has a Birthday Today?* at Barrandov. That was my very first contact with the making of a puppet film and also an incredibly powerful experience.

Can you elaborate?

Mr. Svatoš showed us around the studios in the building of Krátký film Praha. There were beautiful sets with a forest of lights all around them and the entire place was bustling because it was a big production project. We saw wonderful things being made in the workshops, and it seemed to me like an environment where I could pursue everything I had ever liked and enjoyed doing. It was then when I realised that I would like to work as a graphic artist on a film like

that – not as an animator, I didn't have the patience or the inner discipline for that, but I had always wanted to work in film as an art designer.

Did anyone motivate you at school as well?

Yes. The head of our studio, Jan Balej, who also made and is still making puppet films, supported me in this respect right from the beginning. When I told him that I would like to do an exercise focused on puppet animation, he took me to his studio, brought me a skeleton of a puppet, and called an acquaintance of his who was a composer to compose the music for me. I felt then that I had found an area that would really suit me.

Did any puppet films appeal to you when you were a child?

I never really watched them very much. Once, it was sometime around Christmas, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Jiří Trnka was on TV, and that was an extraordinary experience that has stuck with me since. I always found Trnka's puppets magical. But I didn't take any deep interest in puppet film, and when I went to study at UMRUM, of all the filmmakers I knew only



Jiří Trnka. It wasn't until later, during my studies, after I got into this place full of animators and met people who were also interested in the same thing, when it all started for me. I personally like all animation techniques. I like to watch 3D animation, for example. But I have to say that puppet films are special to me because you can actually feel the handiwork behind them.

Is that the reason why you make puppet films and not, say, cutout or hand-drawn films, which might be more up your alley since you are an illustrator? What is it about puppet animation that you enjoy?

What fascinates me about puppets is that although they are static objects – which is true of marionettes as well as of completely non-figural objects – they also have a dramatic energy, a sort of charge, and this charge manifests when you start to move them. It feels like magic to me, like something between heaven and earth. I can't describe it exactly, but I feel that puppets hold a great power. It's a thing handmade by man, and yet you can breathe life into it. And that's what makes it so captivating.

Would you like to try a different animation technique sometime?

I would. As an illustrator, I work a lot with watercolour, but in animation, I concentrated solely on puppets for a long time. I've incorporated a bit of 2D watercolour animation in the feature puppet film that we're making now. At one point, one of the main characters, Slávka, brings her imagination to life as she shines a torch on the wall. When we were touring foreign co-producer markets during the development stage, some producers found the puppets too “Eastern European”, too old-school, too stylized and incomprehensible to the Western world, but what often did appeal to them was 2D animation. And they all told me that they would be interested in a film animated using this technique. But I didn't take it seriously at the time.

And then?

A little later, together with Kateřina Karhánková and Alexandra Májová, we started working on the series *Hungry Bear Tales*. That's when I came into contact with 2D animation again. In our case, the cutouts are drawn by hand, scanned, and then animated on a computer. And since we've been working on it for a few years now, it has inspired me in some respects, and I already have an idea for a film that could be animated this way.

You make films intended for children...

That's definitely my intention. The way I approach my work is that I'm trying to create things that I would have liked as a kid or that remind me of what appealed to me when I was little. I think that people making audio-visual media for children often underestimate their audience – definitely here in the Czech Republic. They think that animation for children has to be in pastel colours, all the characters have to frolic around, and, most importantly, that there shouldn't be too much dialogue or double entendres and symbols because children wouldn't understand them. But children are the same creatures as we are. Moreover, unlike ours, their perception is unbiased because they don't know the behaviour patterns of adults, they don't have specific expectations, and they react spontaneously.

Kōji Yamamura – Four Flashing Figures

Kōji Yamamura is Japan's most significant contemporary animator. As this year's theme focuses on Japan and Yamamura himself will be present at the festival, Anifilm, in collaboration with the Regional Gallery Liberec, has decided to organise an exhibition titled *Four Flashing Figures*. The exhibition presents 40 original drawings – phases from his films made between 2002 and 2021. The drawings are taken from four acclaimed films: *Mt. Head* (2002), *Franz Kafka's A Country Doctor* (2007), *Muybridge's Strings* (2011) and *Dozens of Norths* (2021). The exhibition offers a unique insight into Yamamura's work in an ‘inanimate’ state. Visitors can compare it to its animated counterpart, which is also included in the exhibition. This is the first time that original artefacts from Yamamura's work can be seen in the Czech Republic. The exhibition is curated by David Kubec.

2. 5.– 7. 2023, Regional Gallery Liberec, Masarykova 723/14, Liberec

Open daily except Monday. Opening time 10.00 am to 6.00 pm, Thursdays to 8.00 pm. Free admission on Thursdays.

*You are currently working on your feature film *Tonda, Slávka and the Genius*.*

You came up with the idea for the film yourself – can you tell us a bit about it?

The motif I thought of initially was the character of a glowing boy named Tonda. I came up with him at UMRUM while working on an animation exercise. I was inspired by my brother, who was born with ginger hair and as a red-haired boy had difficult time in kindergarten and in the first grade of primary school. Other kids laughed at him for it, and I didn't understand why. Animation is great in that it allows you to cross the boundaries of reality. The character of Tonda originally only had glowing hair, but I kept expanding the glow until he was glowing all over. To me, it's a beautiful symbol of difference that one can associate with anything. This difference can be mental or physical, it doesn't really matter. Everyone can see whatever they want in the glow.

So you didn't consider adapting some other work at all?

I wanted the film to be completely original. One thing that I knew for sure was that since I wanted to make a puppet film and since the world of puppets is so magical, I really didn't want it to be an adaptation of a book. A book I can read. I find it more challenging to compose my own story and

bring it to life. Given my age, I wouldn't even dare to make an adaptation. I feel like that takes more life experience. For example, I like *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, but I think I would have to be older and wiser to even try to adapt it...

Did you want to make it into a feature straight away?

Yes. We agreed with Pavla Janoušková Kubečková, the producer with whom we made the half-hour film *Deep in Moss* and with whom we have a good working relationship, that we would continue working together, but that our next film would be a feature. Because by the time we finish it, we'll be forty... so let's make it worth it.

Did you write the script by yourself?

We wrote it with Jana Šrámková. The process of creating an original script is also magical because the characters that you and your co-writer come up with soon get under your skin, and you suddenly feel that you know them, that they are like some kind of relatives of yours. We first came up with several characters and then talked about them as if they were our acquaintances. Suddenly, the characters were alive, and that allowed us to create the world of our film with its own rules.

Full Interview at www.anifilm.cz/en.



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from tomorrow also on these pages!**

School of Animation powered by the PPF Foundation

Animation workshops use an entertaining form to introduce the process of making animated films to children. Under the tutelage of experienced lecturers, children can make their own animated films from scratch – including writing the script and animating. In the process, they will use many artistic techniques including cut-out animation, traditional animation, computer animation, sand animation, claymation, pixilation and stop-motion animation. Animation workshops take place in the Garden Wing of the Liberec Chateau.



Photo: nutprodukce (Nikola Remešová)