



## PRESS RELEASE CARTOON MOVIE 2006

### **ASTERIX AND THE VIKINGS: PREVIEW AT CARTOON MOVIE 2006**

The 8th edition of Cartoon Movie will open with a preview screening of “Asterix and the Vikings”, by Stefan Fjeldmark and Jesper Møller, made by M6 Studio (Production: M6 Studio / 2d/3D Animations / A.Film A/S).

Cartoon Movie will take place 9 to 11 March at the Babelsberg Studio in Potsdam, near Berlin, with the support of the Media Programme of the European Union, the Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, the Ministry of Economy of the Land Brandenburg, the Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, the German Federal Film Board and the ILB amongst others

#### **NOMINEES FOR THE 2006 CARTOON MOVIE TRIBUTES**

Every year, the animation professionals present at Potsdam for Cartoon Movie offer their tribute to three personalities or companies in the animation world: producers, directors or distributors who have worked for the development and increased prestige of European animated film.

This ceremony is a tribute by professionals to professionals. For 2006, 12 nominees are proposed. Three of them (one of each category) will be chosen by vote at Cartoon Movie on Saturday 11 March in Potsdam.

Please find attached the list of the 12 nominees.

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# Nominees for the Best European Director of the year

## Áron Gauder

for "The District!"

Áron Gauder started his computer animation career at Kosmo Studio. He graduated from the Hungarian Academy of Applied Arts (MIE) animation department in 1999.

After that, Áron began his career working on several feature film projects as CG visual effects director, most notably on the much praised «Hukkle» by György Pálfi. In this period he also created an interactive animation for the Hungarian National Museum, took part in various international animated short film projects in Germany, and came out with his first documentary short.

He created "The District" first as a mini-series for TV2 Hungary in 2003, where it was broadcast – with great success – within a programme called "The Lucifer Show". His first feature film, "The District!", was completed and premiered in December 2004. He won the Best Animation Feature Award at Annecy 2005, the Audience Award of the international animation festival ANIMA 2005 (Brussels) and the Grand Prix of the Kecskemét International Animation Festival 2005.

## Jørgen Lerdam and Anders Sørensen

for "Pettson and Findus: The Tomte Machine"

The characters Pettson and Findus, created by the Swedish writer Sven Nordqvist, were already the subjects of several books and two feature films.

For the two Danish directors Jørgen Lerdam and Anders Sørensen, this third film was a major challenge. The design of the characters and their delicate world required exceptionally high-quality animation and, despite the current vogue for 3D computer animation, hand-crafted 2D turned out to be indispensable for this project.

Jørgen Lerdam has been in animation since 1979. He has worked as animator or director on many productions, such as "The Princess and the Goblin", "Ferngully", "Asterix in America" and "Help! I'm a Fish", among others.

Anders Sørensen came into the profession in 1969. He worked with Jannik Hastrup and John Halas and worked as either animator or director on many TV specials, feature films and series, including "The World History", "Jungo", "The Invisible Baby" and many others.



## Michel Ocelot and Bénédictte Galup

for "Kirikou and the Wild Beasts"

The second Kirikou adventure, which has been a great success in France (with over 1.6 million admissions), was directed by a team: Michel Ocelot, director of the first "Kirikou", and Bénédictte Galup, animator on the feature film "Princes et Princesses" and studio manager on the first "Kirikou" and on "BelleVille Rendez-Vous".

Michel Ocelot spent his childhood in Guinea and still feels a deep love for Africa, its legends and its soul. "Kirikou" is his homage to the culture and music of that continent.

Bénédictte grew up beside the Mediterranean and worked for many years at the studio La Fabrique, at Saint Laurent le Minier, where she discovered a passion for animation. It is a passion which has never left her.





## Nick Park and Steve Box

for "Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit"

After the success of the three medium-length Wallace and Gromit films, the Aardman studio got down to making this feature-length vehicle for their two plasticine heroes. It is a team of two directors that made this film the success we've seen: Nick Park and Steve Box.

After the massive success of his short film "Creature Comforts" (an Oscar and a Cartoon d'Or in 1990), Nick Park created the duo of Wallace and Gromit, for which he won a Hollywood Oscar and the 1994 Cartoon d'Or. Nick Park also co-directed "Chicken Run" – another worldwide hit – with Peter Lord.

Steve Box started his career at the CMTB studio, where he made the TV series "Trap Door", which has since become a cult. He then joined Aardman as an animator and has played a part in all their major productions since then.



## Nominees for the Best European Distributor of the year

### Folkets Bio

Folkets Bio was founded in 1973 by filmmakers and film students. The main office is located in Stockholm, Sweden. Folkets Bio distributes domestic and foreign features, documentaries and shorts.

Folkets Bio has 16 cinemas, located across the whole of Sweden, and its own video label, Cinemagi.

Folkets Bio has handled many animated films, including "Urpo and Turpo", "Strings", "The Boy who Wanted to Be a Bear", "Kirikou and the Witch", "How Dinosaurs Learned to Fly", "Le trop petit prince" (Pipsqueak Prince), "Aria", "The Fourth King" and "Otto".

### Gebeka Films

Marc Bonny is co-director of the distribution company Gebeka Films, which he set up in 1997 to specialise in the distribution of quality films for a young audience.

Since its first big success in distribution in France with Michel Ocelot's «Kirikou and the Witch», Gebeka has handled over 30 films including Enzo d'Alò's «The Blue Arrow».

Following the success of these films the company also took on "My Neighbour Totoro", "Corto Maltese", "The Boy who Wanted to Be a Bear", "Black Mor's Treasure", "The Old Man and the Sea", "Princes et Princesses", "Choo Choo 3" and "Kie" among others.

This year Gebeka released "Kirikou and the Wild Beasts", which achieved phenomenal success in France with over 1.6 million admissions. Gebeka, which releases 6 to 8 new films a year, will soon be releasing "U", "Nocturna" and "Little Polar Bear 2".

## Mikado Film

The policy of the Italian company Mikado Film regarding animated feature films has always been based on quality: the quality of both the artistic and technical content, of both the story and the production.

Mikado first took on distribution of "The Blue Arrow" and "Kirikou" and then "Johan Padan", written by Dario Fo. But since 2003, Mikado has moved into top gear with Miyazaki's "Spirited Away", Sylvain Chomet's "BelleVille Rendez-Vous", Philippe Leclerc's "The Rain Children", Francis Nielsen's "The Dog, the General and the Birds" and Enzo d'Alò's "Opopomoz". And, of course, in 2005 Mikado released the new "Kirikou", confirming its determination to forge a long-lasting relationship with the best creative talents of animated cinema.

## Mont-Blanc Distribution

Mont-Blanc Distribution has set up a massive network for the promotion of animated film in Switzerland and now boasts a reputation as one of the top specialists in this area.

As Mont-Blanc is dependent on a cinema release in France and Germany, it has up to now distributed its animated films in French-speaking Switzerland only, because these films have not been sold to Germany and thus have no German version.

Yet the list of animated films distributed in French-speaking Switzerland is nevertheless impressive:

"The Three Wise Men", "T'Choupi", "Black Mor's Treasure", "The Rain Children", "Prop and Berta", "Mari Iyagi", "The Boy who Wanted to Be a Bear", "Corto Maltese", "Sindbad", "Tristan et Iseult" (Tristan and the Princess of Irelandis), "Bécassine" and "A Monkey's Tale".

Mont-Blanc Distribution will soon be releasing "Asterix and the Vikings" and "The Ugly Duckling and Me".



## Nominees for the Best European Producer of the year

### Aardman Animations

for "Wallace and Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit"

The Aardman studio, set up in 1972 by Peter Lord and David Sproxton, has built its reputation on the high-quality of its productions. It has become the yardstick for plasticine animation.

Having garnered large numbers of prizes in festivals everywhere for their short films, Aardman launched into the feature film area with a partner of considerable substance, DreamWorks. The success of the first film, "Chicken Run", saw no let-up in the Aardman producers' insistence on quality work and artistic independence. The success of Wallace and Gromit, in their three half-hour specials, led quite naturally to Nick Park and Steve Box directing the feature film which has met with such tremendous success in Europe. The partnership of Aardman and DreamWorks has enabled this British studio to assume, rapidly, an international scale while still preserving its European originality.

## Dygra Films

### for "Midsummer Dream"

Dygra Films, based in Spain, is the innovative film production company which made "The Living Forest", one of the first CGI animated films made in Europe and the biggest box-office hit in the history of Spanish animated films. Dygra has 17 years' experience in the world of communication and audiovisual production. Dygra has made another film in CGI, «Midsummer Dream» (winner of the Goya Award for Best Animation Film 2006), and is now completing production on "The Spirit of the Forest". Dygra has in development "Holy Night" and "Gold Donkey".

The Dygra Film studio is capable of producing a 3D film from start to finish, and its R & D & I investments have enabled it to devise its own, in-house working model.

## M6 Studio

### for "Asterix and the Vikings"

Founded in 2003, M6 Studio (a subsidiary of the M6 Group) is dedicated to the development and production of animated feature films. Its first challenge was the production of "Asterix and the Vikings", in co-production with 2d3D Animations and Mandarin SAS, together with the Danish studio A.Film.

With a budget of 22 million Euros, it was an ambitious step, under the leadership of Natalie Altmann, who has 14 years' experience in animation and now runs the operational side of M6 Studio, having worked at Saban International and in M6 youth programming.

"Asterix and the Vikings" will be released in France on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

## TV-Loonland and Happy Life Animation

### for co-producing the three "Pettson and Findus" films

The Pettson & Findus films resulted from a collaboration between producers who shared the same will to develop high-quality projects.

TV-Loonland is a leading international producer and distributor of children's animation and family entertainment. With its own development, production and distribution teams in continental Europe, Great Britain (with Telemagination) and the U.S.A., TV-Loonland is now one of the major players in the industry.

Co-producing with Happy Life Animation AB (AB Svensk Filmindustri's successful animation studio) and combining the strong Swedish tradition of top quality animation with TV-Loonland's equally high standards was an obvious way to make successful animation programmes.

The outstanding success of the three Pettson & Findus features and TV series crown the long and stable ties between the two production houses. By adding Denmark's most successful animation company, A.Film, to the mix, we have now successfully co-produced the third feature, "Pettson and Findus: The Tomte Machine" which has opened to tremendous success in Scandinavian cinemas.

