

That Certain European Flair

The crème de la crème of the animation community gets together in Lyons, France, this month for another eclectic edition of Cartoon Movie.

A decidedly grown-up, CG-animated movie about a love triangle between a beer-loving goat, his master and his girlfriend; a hilarious outing featuring a disco-dancing worm and a beautifully animated adventure inspired by Irish history are some of the bold and original projects scheduled to unspool at the 11th edition of

Cartoon Movie (March 4-6). That's the beauty of this Euro-centric event, which will showcase feature-length toons from 16 different countries this year. As Forrest Gump used to say, "You never know what you're gonna get!"

In previous years, Cartoon Movie took place in the German town of Babelsberg, near Berlin. However, this year, the



show has moved to Lyons in France, perhaps to accentuate the growing role the animation industry is playing in that country. French animation studios such as Folimage, Les Armateurs, Gaumont and Millimages are producing or co-producing 26 films at the event. The city of Lyons is located in the Rhône-Alpes region of France—which is a spot rich with animation and visual effects studios and schools. The Annecy Market and Festival, Folimage, Project Images Films, Gebeka Films, La Poudrière, L'Équipée and the Emile Cohl School are a few of the region's toon-related organizations and companies.

Following right behind France are Germany and Belgium, which each have six projects in the works, with Spain and Denmark next in line with four pics each. Overall, the producers and the financiers of 49 projects will be attending—bringing the total budget number for the movies close to 312 million euros.

It's been 10 years since the first edition of Cartoon Movie took off in Germany, funded by the MEDIA Program of the European Union. Each year, producers, creative teams, investors and distributors meet, present and discuss their projects in various stages of development and production. The animation landscape in the continent has changed a lot over this important decade—and because of this unique event, 123 European-produced animated features have evolved from initial stages of development to the theatrical or DVD release stage. ■

For more info, visit www.cartoon-media.eu.

Ready to Roll

The following seven films will be presented in their entirety at the event:

Brendan and the Secret of Kells. Directed by Tomm Moore and Nora Twomey and produced by Irish studio Cartoon Saloon (*Skunk Fu!*), this beautifully designed and animated epic follows its 12-year-old hero on a thrilling adventure involving the ninth century illuminated manuscript. (Cartoon Saloon, Vivi Film, Les Armateurs)



Goat Story—The Old Prague Legends. Talented Czech newcomer Jan Tománek marries his country's classic animation traditions with a crisp CG style in this offbeat tale involving a young man, his girlfriend, his lovesick, beer-guzzling goat—and the devil. (Art and Animation Studio)



Jasper: Journey to the End of the World. Two adventurous penguin brothers retrieve the eggs of an endangered parrot from an evil doctor in this ecologically minded family outing, directed by Eckart Fingberg and Kay Delventhal. (Toons 'n' Tales, Dacodac Studio, Amuse Films)

Mia and the Migoo. We hear great things about French auteur Jacques-Rémy Girerd's (*Prophecy of the Frogs*) lovingly animated feature about a young girl's encounter with an unusual beast. The toon addresses grown-up issues such as mistreatment of workers, the destructive power of greed and our responsibility to protect the planet. (Folimage)



Sunshine Barry and the Disco Worms. Directed by Thomas Borch Nielsen, this hilarious Danish entry had everyone in stitches in previous editions of Cartoon Movie. Now it's finally wrapped and ready for the enjoyment of the masses! (Crone Film Prod., Disco Ormene/Sola Media)

The Missing Lynx. The protection of Spain's endangered flora and fauna is also on the mind of director Raul Garcia in this great-looking CG feature, produced by none other than actor Antonio Banderas. (Kandor Graphics, Perro Verde, Green Moon)

Journey to Saturn. When a crew of Danish misfits arrives on Saturn, they discover that the planet has already been colonized in this laugh riot produced by the talented Karsten Killeerich (*Terkel in Trouble, Ugly Duckling and Me*). (A.Film)

