

CARTOON MOVIE
SPECIAL p.16 >>

IMAGINE

www.imagineanimation.net > No23. MAR/APR 2009 £3.99

ISSN 1748-1244

The magazine for animation professionals



Contents

MAR/APR 2009 NUMBER 23

REGULARS

06 NEWS

Awards, reports, events and call for entries.

08 FESTIVAL REVIEW

A look back at the highlights of this year's Animex festival.

10 ONLINE

What is the relationship between animation and the internet? We ask our readers.

49 SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

Obtain regular copies of this remarkable magazine at a most attractive price.

50 SLICE OF LIFE

Animation educator and general hero Tammy Ellis on what makes her tick.



16

14 MO-CAP MAGIC

Heads-up on a new exhibition showing a beautiful and unexpected use of mo-cap.

16 CARTOON MOVIE SPECIAL

A special report on the European powerhouse of animated feature production.

22 RECRUITMENT

A look, in these troubled times, at the state of animation and gaming recruitment.

24 WHAT DO YOU DO?

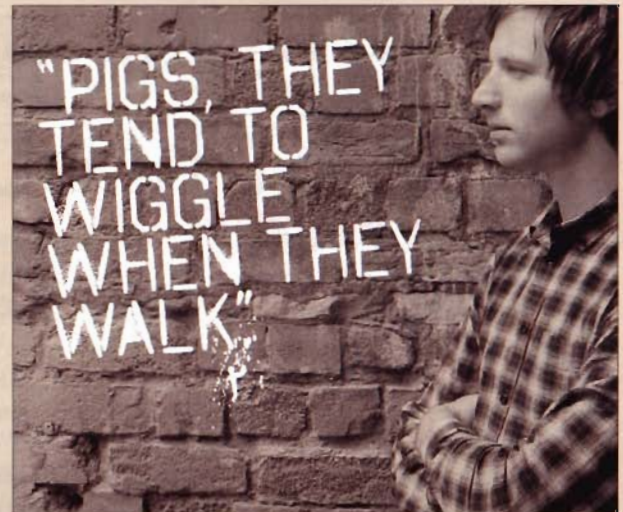
Our main story asks top animation professionals just what it is they do all day.

42 DESPEREAUX

The big story behind the little mouse. We speak to the Framestore team behind the fx.

46 SURVIVAL GUIDE REVIEWED

The most important animation resource ever made? Maybe.



YOU DO WHAT?

Cartoon Movie, this year taking place in Lyon, France, is a quite magical affair. Herds of European producers gather to pitch animated features. A lucky few get to witness the skin-of-your-teeth, nerve-jangling alchemy that is getting a movie off the ground. We interview the man behind this mighty event, as well as all of this year's UK project presenters.

In our main story we speak to ten professionals involved in animation, and ask, what is it exactly that you do?

Plus, Cinesite show us how they made their Booger Monster. Animation recruitment, Richard Williams' Masterclass DVD, the making of Desperaux and the graphic novel as a route to film. All that and we still have space to preview an upcoming exhibition that'll change the way you think about mo-cap.

Frank

FRANK GRIMSHAW, EDITOR

This magazine is published by

wildfire

Wildfire are committed to producing exceptional magazines and online communities

WILDFIRE COMMUNICATIONS LTD
Unit 2.4, Paintworks, Arnos Vale
Bristol, BS4 3EH
Tel: 0117 902 9977
Fax: 0117 902 9978
www.wildfirecomms.co.uk

Editor Frank Grimshaw
frank@imagineanimation.net
Publisher Gabrielle Kuzak
gabrielle@imagineanimation.net
Art Director Martin Davies
Sub Editor Hannah Hugh-Jones
Marketing Manager
Rebecca Spurr
Advertising & Sales Nicola Phibben
nicola@imagineanimation.net
Contributors
Andrew Osmond, Saint John,
Samantha Moore, Clare Snook.

IMAGINE

Note: copyright - all articles and features including illustrations and photos may not be reproduced, reprinted or posted on the internet, in part or whole without the express permission of Wildfire Communications Ltd

Printed in the UK.
ISSN 1748-1244. © 2009



Periodical Publishers Association



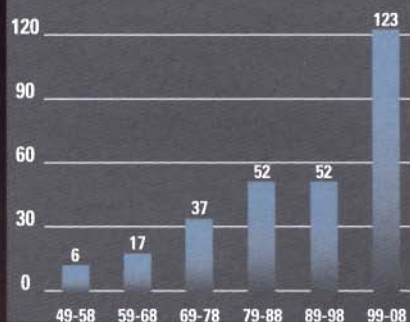
20

CARTOON MOVIE STATS:

➔ Ninety nine films that were present at Cartoon Movie have been released in the cinemas and 24 are currently in production. This is a total of **123 films financed for a budget of €800 million** since the start of this event. These figures are even more striking when compared to the fact that only 52 films were produced in the previous decade.

➔ Forty per cent of films presented find financing. When presented more than once in the Cartoon Movie procedure (project in concept, in development, film in production, and completed film), it has a **one-in-three chance of being financed**.

ANIMATION FEATURES PRODUCED IN EUROPE PER DECADE



NUMBER OF (CO) PRODUCTIONS PER COUNTRY (1999-2008)



After residing in Germany for the last decade, the 11th annual Cartoon Movie forum will be held in the French audio-visual hub of Lyon from the 4th to the 6th of March. Here we speak to Cartoon's general director and, over the next few pages, to the UK producers trying their luck this year.

MARC VANDEWEYER

GENERAL DIRECTOR OF CARTOON MOVIE

Q What is **Cartoon Movie**? It's a forum of co-productions for European animated feature films. About 500 European professionals participate at this important yearly rendez-vous to find co-producers, to finance their films and to sign agreements with distributors from across Europe. In total, there are over 130 investors and 70 distributors. This two-day forum for co-production works perfectly. The results are very impressive with over 130 animation films financed for a global budget of €800 million and with 20 animated films produced in Europe with a combined total of over one million admissions!

Thanks to Cartoon Movie, European animation films are now distributed on the big European market and not on the national level. This is the major goal achieved by Cartoon Movie: a better distribution all over Europe and a bigger offer proposed by Europe, with more films being produced and the European creativity attracting more viewers. There are now 25 million European admissions a year for European animated films! Who could believe this only 10 years ago? It is a huge success and the European animation industry can be proud to have succeeded this in just a decade!

Q What is new at this year's event?
Thanks to the fact that Lyon is part of the

European top three in the game industry and taking into consideration the fact that more and more animated films are produced and released with a video game linked to this feature, Cartoon Movie is building an economical bridge between the animation industry and the game industry. It is obvious that both industries use the same software, develop similar visuals and worlds, and their companies have almost the same size.

It is also obvious that both industries could build a win-win strategy with more visibility thanks to the feature films, and more revenues thanks to the video games. This year will be a first step in that direction but already a dozen game companies will attend Cartoon Movie and a first video game will be presented as a feature. This is completely new. Let's see how the market will react. I'm convinced that this cooperation between these two industries is an answer to the radical changes in the audience's viewing patterns; producers need to give a global answer on a multiplatform distribution.

Q How has the industry changed since **Cartoon started**? A lot! The technology has completely changed; it changes almost every two to three years in animation! Today, the producers have to integrate the stereoscopic 3D and three new projects are presented in

3D at the next Cartoon Movie. Next year there will be over 10 simply because it is the future! The producers have no alternative, certainly in animated features. I think that the animation producers are the most flexible producers because they are used to follow all the technological changes for the last 20 years.

Q What changes do you for the next few years? As I said, the stereoscopic 3D will become a must in order to find better release and to attract more viewers. The first European animated 3D was released last year (*Fly Me to the Moon* by Ben Stassen), American majors will announce that all new animation feature will be in 3D. No choice, it will be the future for animation productions.

Q What at this year's event are you most looking forward to? I think that the quality will be very good at the next Cartoon Movie. Quality and cultural diversity: traditional 2D films, CGI films, 3D stereoscopic films – TV series hits becoming features such as *Totally Spies* – a wonderful video game starting a new life in the cinema, young talent entering in the market. It all sounds very exciting, and I look forward to seeing how the market will react.

IAIN HARVEY

THE ILLUMINATED FILM COMPANY

➤ 'We have been working on *Not the End of the World* for over two years – first raising development finance, then commissioning a script and after developing that to a satisfactory stage commissioning Piet Kroon to prepare the storyboard and fully edited animatic. We are very near completing this process and the results are more exciting than we dared anticipate.

This stage is, for me – and the director – both the most critical and the most absorbing part of the development process. You are making

BELOW: The film is no straightforward rehash of Noah and his cuddly animals.



a movie without the concerns of budgetary restraint, testing ideas, finding what script elements don't work as anticipated and trying to ensure you have all the ingredients in place to not only finance the movie but also ensure it satisfies all the expectations you had placed on it when it first became a project.

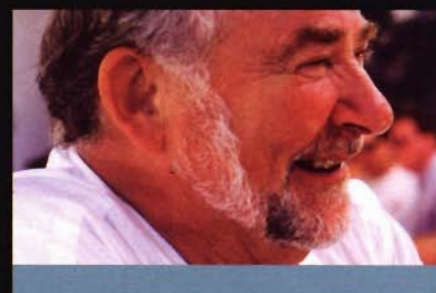
With a director like Piet the challenge is highly satisfying, as he is the type of director that doesn't allow preconceptions or egos to get in the way of a good movie. All this is especially important when one actually considers the subject matter of the movie: a familiar tale, known in one form or another in almost every

culture, re-told in a way that audiences would not expect – it should both hit them hard and make them laugh, without losing sight of the emotional arc upon which the audience travels. As Geraldine McCaughrean, author of the prize-winning novel upon which the film is based, observes: 'Warning: this is no straightforward rehash of Noah and his cuddly animals. It's a grown-up adventure story, a dark thriller with a plot, an ending you don't already know – and quite a lot besides.'

Presenting it at Cartoon Movie is both a very good way of testing the water, and getting a buzz going. I have absolute confidence in this movie and feel very privileged to work alongside a director with the talent of Piet. Cartoon Movie will hopefully highlight any elements that can be improved upon. Naturally I hope it meets with a good reaction, and I look forward to building up some possible co-production relationships.

The lack of other UK producers at Cartoon Movie is a factor, I think, of the failure to understand what makes a good animated movie amongst potential financing bodies in the UK – of which there are far fewer possibilities than fellow producers from some other countries enjoy. But I balance that financing reality alongside some of the advantages UK producers have, so I think it is also a reflection of the sheer toughness of the UK theatrical market. Understanding that is one of the most difficult elements to explain to potential partners.

Not the End of the World deals with some of the very issues that currently tear communities apart. The surprise is that it also gives uplifting answers. I hope that audiences will understand the resonances as well as love the film.' **IMAGINE**



JOHN COATES:

John Coates set up TVC in 1957. His notable productions since then include *The Yellow Submarine*, *The Snowman*, *When The Wind Blows*, *Wind In The Willows* and a lot of other very successful animation.

Q What are you doing at Cartoon Movie this year? I'm presenting a 90-minute animatic of Raymond Briggs' book *Ethel and Ernest*. The book was a bestseller and is reckoned to be Raymond's best. We have produced a very polished animatic with the voices of Brenda Blethyn and Jim Broadbent playing the main parts, with music of the period. The story is the life of his mum and dad, and covers the period of the 1920s through to the 1970s, which of course covers World War II and all the amazing inventions of the 20th Century.

Q What are your expectations? As always we are looking for finance, the budget being around £7 million. In the case of animated features, it is quite common to raise the budget from various different sources, and Cartoon Movie is of course the ideal place for this. Hopefully we will succeed and an actual production will take approximately two years.

Q Why are there so few UK projects? I didn't know there were so few UK projects, and to be honest I don't really know why. Raising finance in the UK is fraught with problems. Funding from television is particularly difficult at present. **IMAGINE**

Q Who are you and what do you do?
 Cake Entertainment is a producer, manager and distributor of children's television. So far we have specialised in animation but we're actively branching out into live action at the moment.

The majority of our focus is on television where we have made series such as *Skunk Fu!*, and we're distributing worldwide series such as *Total Drama Island*, which was the highest rating series on Cartoon Network in the US in 2008. Recently we have also been moving into television animation features.

Q What are you doing at Cartoon Movie this year? We're pitching alongside Cartoon Saloon who were creators of *Skunk Fu!*; we're in the process of developing it into a feature film. The series has done very well across the world, we've sold it into other countries, and we certainly expect to get positive feedback, particularly from distributors. It will be interesting to see if people can recognise it as a viable theatrical proposition.

Q Is it difficult to pitch in that environment?
 Ultimately I don't think it is particularly nerve wracking, especially as we are used to the television equivalent, the Cartoon Forum. It is interesting to get feedback from people who are active in the business. It will be helpful to get a new perspective and a reality check from them.

Q Do you have any tips for anyone who has to pitch in that environment? The one thing you want to do is communicate your passion for the show. You also need to get across what makes your project unique and compelling for your audience.

Q What do you enjoy most about the event? The chance to get a picture of where the European animation feature industry is at the moment, and also just to see what others are working on. It gives you a perspective of where your project is in the general scheme of things. It's very important that you take the time to actually be aware of what other people are doing, rather than only focusing on your own project.

Q There are so few UK projects this year. Why is this? That's a very good question! The simple answer would be that there are only a limited number of UK studios that work on feature films, and a few that we know have other networks that they use to get funding for their projects. Cartoon Movie is really set up for small to medium size independent studios and producers, and I think in the current climate there are not many of those in the United Kingdom. A lot of projects are also coming from countries where support structures are available. **IMAGINE**

"You need to get across what makes your project unique and compelling for your audience."

**TOM VAN
 WAVEREN.**
 CAKE ENTERTAINMENT