

The CEE Animation Industry Is Uniting into a Single Market

This year the European Commission developed an Animation Plan, which aims to invigorate the animation industry in the entire EU. The Central and Eastern European region contains great potential that has yet to be tapped. A new initiative titled the CEE Animation Workshop is striving to capture this potential by bringing together independent animated film producers from a total of eighteen countries and showing producers from the CEE region the latest international animation industry trends. The event will be held from 2 to 6 December, 2017 in Ljubljana.

The initial idea to connect independent animated film producers from the CEE region (Central and Eastern Europe) emerged in autumn 2016. The need for joint events and more intensive collaboration is the motto of the **Visegrad Animation Forum**, an international platform that has been connecting producers for the past several years. The primary aim of this initiative is to help grow the industry and lay the groundwork to enable development of successful co-productions which will be competitive internationally. The shared cultural and historical heritage of the CEE countries, the economic similarities and the parallels between forms of expression and language are ideal prerequisites for the creation of strong unity and a strong market. CEE Animation could become a distinctive trademark as well as an excellent export commodity from the participating countries.

The idea to organize this one-off event, which would welcome producers from over half of the countries in Europe and set a firm foundation for future collaboration, was immediately accepted by Creative Europe Desk (CED) representatives. The Creative Europe – MEDIA Programme strengthens the European audiovisual market and tries to enhance the international competitiveness of the market as a whole. The head of the Czech CED Pavlína Kalandrová points out that collaboration between European countries is essential and adds: *“The CEE Animation Workshop is intended to facilitate development of the necessary linkages within our market and encourage collaboration within our region, while also helping our market become an adequate partner for Western Europe – whether in the animated work production phase, through co-productions or subsequent distribution.”*

The engagement of a total of **nineteen national Creative Europe Desks – MEDIA offices** (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Georgia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine) is a huge benefit. *“We are convinced that through better use of the potential for collaboration between producers in our region, our applicants will be more successful in Creative Europe MEDIA EU programme. That is one of the reasons why so many Creative Europe – MEDIA Desks are taking part in the project,”* says Sabina Briški Karlič, the head of the Slovenian CED, adding: *“Our mission is not only to put collaborative efforts for the workshop to happen. We are above all working together to identify issues in each of the countries that are part of the CEE Animation Workshop to be able to reach expected workshop outcomes and promote its results at the very moment of European strategy for animation sector being set.”*

The head of studies of the workshop is Linda Beath, who has provided film advisory services and trained film producers across Europe for many years. The lecturers, who will spend five days of intensive work with the participants, include five renowned film experts. Experienced Irish producer **Siun Ni Raghallaigh**, who has over thirty years of experience in the media industry, is the CEO of Ardmore Studios and one of the founders of Troy Studios. A second lecturer is **Moe Honan**, CEO of Moetion Films Ltd. Her studio was recognized as the 2016 Producer of the Year at Cartoon Movie and has co-produced many animated films, including award-winning full length feature films such as *Two By Two – Oops! The Ark Has Gone (aka Oops! Noah Is Gone)*. A third tutor is renowned film marketing expert **Mathias Noschis**. With his company Alphapanda, he has developed online PR and social media campaigns for numerous Hollywood titles, such as: *Lego Ninjago, Kung Fu Panda 3, Ice*

Age: Collision Course, Toy Story 3 and Rango. Mathias is currently working on a Polish film titled *Another Day of Life*. The fourth is **Richard Rowe**, Director of International Acquisitions and Co-productions at DHX Media. Having spent the first 12 years of his career at Turner Broadcasting, he recently founded Rowe Media to provide consultancy services to the children's television industry. This group will also join **Maciej Chmiel**, Vice Head of Sales & Acquisitions Department of TVP (Polish National Broadcaster).

Twenty-six producers from a total of eighteen countries were selected to participate in the first edition of the workshop: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Georgia, Kosovo, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia and Ukraine. The main workshop topics will include international co-productions, financing, legal issues, marketing, sales, work with TV broadcasters and digital distribution.

An important part of the Ljubljana workshop will be a **panel discussion on co-production conditions in Central and Eastern Europe**. The meeting will be attended by over thirty film professionals who will try to formulate a joint statement to cinematographic funds and representatives of TV broadcasters calling for greater support of the animation industry. This document, titled the **Ljubljana Accord** will include a description of the specific conditions for production of animated works in the CEE region and draft improvement strategies aimed at developing a competitive animated film industry – both nationally and internationally.

The CEE Animation Workshop will be held from 2 to 6 December, 2017 at the **Animateka International Animated Film Festival** taking place in Ljubljana from 4 to 10 December, 2017. More information about the CEE Animation Workshop find at ceeanimation.eu.

Accompanying programme:

The CEE Animation Workshop is being organized in co-operation with the **Animateka International Animated Film Festival** which will be held in Ljubljana from 4 to 10 December, 2017. The accompanying programme will feature workshop lecturers Moe Honan and Siun Ni Raghallaigh. There will be a general public screening of the animated feature comedy ***Ooops! Noah Is Gone...*** In their case study, the two producers will unveil the feature film development process, starting from the search for possible financing and co-production partners to subsequent distribution of the animated work. The Irish-German-Luxembourg-Belgian co-production, known in the USA as ***All Creatures Big and Small*** and in the UK and Ireland as ***Two by Two – Ooops! The Ark Has Gone...***, won the 2016 Producer of the Year award at Cartoon Movie. The worldwide success of the film is underscored by sales in more than 120 countries, including cinema distribution in China, and a significant response from online platforms, including Netflix sales. The event will be held on 5 December.

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The organizers of the CEE Animation Workshop are:

Creative Europe – MEDIA Desks from 19 countries

Creative Europe is the EU programme supporting audiovisual industry and the cultural and creative sectors in the period 2014–2020. The programme aims to create a single framework for financing projects in the performing arts, visual arts, literature and publishing, film, television, music, interdisciplinary arts, cultural heritage and video games, and to leverage synergies between different sectors, increasing the effectiveness of the support provided.

→ <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/>

Visegrad Animation Forum

The Visegrad Animation Forum (VAF) is a platform intended to strengthen the animation industry in the Central and Eastern European region. The main objective is to create opportunities for meetings of producers, studios, TV broadcasters and film distributors leading to co-operation on animation projects. The core of the VAF agenda is a pitching competition with two categories: short film and series/TV specials. Participants have a unique opportunity to attract foreign producers, facilitating further development of the project and momentum towards realization. The competitive part is accompanied by professional workshops on topics relating to the financing of development, production and distribution of animated films and series.

→ <http://visegradanimation.com/>

Slovenian Animated Film Association

Slovenian Animated Film Association (:D'SAF!) unites professionals (producers, directors, animators, designers, screenwriters, festival programmers, etc.) working in animated film, as well as experts in related fields, public and private organizations, students and enthusiasts. Its primary goals are to further the development and recognition of the art of animated film nationally and internationally.

→ <http://cargocollective.com/animirani-film/ABOUT-D-SAF/>

Motovila Institute

Motovila, Centre for the Promotion of Cooperation in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (Motovila Institute) is a non-governmental and non-profit institute based in Ljubljana. It focuses on encouraging international collaboration in the cultural and creative sectors and related complementary sectors. Its aim is to facilitate international connections of cultural and creative operators as well as to equip them with skills necessary for a successful access to cooperation opportunities available within the EU and other international mechanisms. As part of those activities, Motovila runs the Creative Europe Desk (CED) in Slovenia, a national info point for the promotion of the Creative Europe Programme, with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Commission.

→ <http://ced-slovenia.eu/en/motovila-institute/>

Animateka International Animated Film Festival

Animateka, a week-long international festival of animated film, takes place every year in Ljubljana's Kinodvor and Slovenian Cinematheque. It focuses primarily on the most recent Eastern and Central European short film productions. European student films and International children's films will also be presented in competition programmes. The festival, supported by the Creative Europe MEDIA Programme, includes a wide range of historical and thematic programmes offering audiences insight into the inception and development of animation and giving them an overview of the best contemporary short and feature animated films on a worldwide scale.

→ <http://www.animateka.si/2017/en/>