

Czech works at the Annecy IAFF & Mifa 2022

Annecy International Animation Film Festival 2022 selected 4 Czech works for its official selection. One Czech and two minority co-production animated shorts - *At the Spiral's End*, *Scale* and *Paolo's Happiness* will celebrate premiere in France. The festival will also screen *Anifilm Trailer 2021*. In addition, the feature length animated project *Igi*, developed as a Czech-Georgian co-production, will be presented among carefully selected feature film projects at Mifa Pitches 2022.

Czech animated short documentary film *At Spiral's End* by FAMU student Eliška Kerbachová will premiere internationally at this year's Annecy IAFF in the Graduation Short Films in Competition. A 2D computer animated film, aimed at teens and young adults, is based on authentic recordings and deals with the question of what does it take to turn the downward spiral of substance abuse upside down.

Annecy's Official Selection also includes two Czech minority co-production short films, produced by prominent Czech producers and supported by the Czech Film Fund.

French-British-Czech-Belgian short *Scale* is selected to world-premiere in the prestigious Short Films competition. Focusing on the dark subject of drugs, the film follows Will as he drives down the highway and loses his sense of scale. As his crippling drug addiction deepens, he struggles to unpick the sequence of events that led to his predicament before he's lost forever.

Scale's director Joseph Pierce is an experienced short film maker and animator who caught international attention with another short *A Family Portrait* (2009), for which he won two prizes at the Clermont-Ferrand ISFF and was nominated at Cinekid festival or Chicago IFF. On *Scale*, Pierce co-worked with producer H el ene Mitjavile of Melocoton Films (France) and co-production partners: Bridge Way (Great Britain), Czech producer Jiří Konečný of endorfilm (who stood behind Golden Bear-winning *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn*) and Oz  Productions (Belgium). The Czech Film Fund supported the film with EUR 49 000 for production in 2020.

Paolo's Happiness is German-Swiss-Czech co-operation, which will compete in Young Audience Short Films section. The film tells a story of Paolo, a lonely yet happy man, who can cry. He cries at stories with a sad ending but also at happy endings, and his tears make people around him happy. They can pick his tears as flowers. But they can't keep them...

Thorsten Droessler's puppet-animated short came as result of co-operation between Grit Wiskirchen of FilmVermoegen and MotionWorks (both Germany), Dschoint Ventschr Filmproduktions (Switzerland) and Martin Vandas & Alena Vandasov a of MAUR film. Czech production company, which stood behind Oscar-nominated *Daughter*, was backed by the CFF with EUR 22 000.

Furthermore, Commissioned Films selection of this year's Annecy festival will also screen *Anifilm trailer*, which was created for the 2021 edition of this Czech festival by Eliška Oz and Lee Oz and produced by Pavel Hor a ek of Ob ansk e sdruţen ı pro podporu animovan eho filmu.

But Czech works will also be part of the industry section of the Annecy festival. A Czech-Georgian feature film *Igi* will be presented to international audience of professionals among carefully selected feature film projects at Mifa Pitches 2022.

Mifa Pitches is a presentation of upcoming animated projects. Divided in 4 categories – Feature Films, Short Films, TV Series & Specials or Digital Experiences, the Mifa Pitches are designed to reveal the best original animation film projects in development. With an international dimension, the Mifa Pitches make room for diversity and offer an eclectic selection, whether geographical, artistic, or technical. The selected authors present their projects to an audience of professionals and enthusiasts, in the hope of receiving future support.

Igi is set in Prehistoric times, where a primitive tribe still walks on all fours. Igi is a young man, who's outward appearance is like the others, but he has very different inner thoughts and feelings. He is the one who straightens himself up, and huge changes begin in his mind, and between him and society.

Based on Jemal Karchkhadze's novel of the same name, *Igi* is being developed as a Czech-Georgian co-production, directed by Natia Natishvili, who also serves together with Vladimer Katcharava as co-producers (20 Steps Productions, Georgia), while on the Czech side the film is helmed by Sarka Cimbalova of Prague based Marlene Film Production.

“*Igi* is a timeless story set in a fantastical world which will appeal to adults and children alike” says director Natia Nikolashvili the director. “We follow Igi’s journey as the young prehistoric boy confronts immense changes in his creative thoughts and emotions, which lead him to challenge the rest of his society. This resonates profoundly with the world today”.

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