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EDITORIAL

PIPPI GOES WRONG

Pippi was very wrong. For which she once was praised. Pippi didn't care about anything. Pippi had no respect for authority. Pippi put the established order upside down, causing a storm of controversy and indignation: "A child eating a whole pie is not a good example for our youth." Children are anything but politically correct - that's a role in which they're gradually forced... And you can't force Pippi! Nevertheless in several European nations she was recently called to order due to some scenes with a racist undertone.

For 25 years ECFA has advocated for children's rights to their own stories. So yes, we appreciate if cultural productions for children nowadays are carefully searched for un-befitting elements. Even though the current witch hunt (Smurfs are Stalinist, anti-Semites?) and the fear to confront children with mankind's darker issues is beyond our standards. Luckily many ECFA members are not blinded by tendentious criteria and set their own standards.

We all appreciate a bit of controversy from time to time. Just as children do, we carefully search the boundaries of admissibility. Norms might change; even Astrid Lindgren's heroes can't escape from that. But Pippi's naughty spirit came out unharmed, still as subversive and anarchic as she always was. As the icon of the freethinking, spontaneous child, she is still standing strong on her pedestal. Although now wearing a politically correct hat. (GH)

DOXSPOT



Inspired by the seminar in Cologne, ECFA hopes to take on its responsibility in supporting documentaries for young people, which you will notice in the ECFA Journal. Our new rubric DoxSpot (see p. 3) promotes recent documentaries that we recommend to a young audience. This we will do with the help of Doxs!, the German documentary festival for children organised in Duisburg. With the help of these experts we want to spur you to give documentaries for young people the place they rightfully claim: on the big screen!

'CHILDREN'S FILM FIRST SEMINAR' IN CHEMNITZ

At the basis of the Children's Film First project, currently commissioned by ECFA with the support of the Creative Europe funding program, are local initiatives: three seminars (in Chemnitz, Bari and St. Quentin) to provide inspiration for a final conference in Brussels in September 2015. The first seminar was held in October in Chemnitz. How a session with local teachers grew into a project with European relevance

Eisenstein won't help you much

Film publicist Klaus-Dieter Felsmann spoke with the teachers about the impact of film and the changing visions on education. Nowadays, for students with their technical mastery, making a film is no longer a challenge. But the question 'what more could you accomplish with film?' is still relevant. Film can serve as an orientation model in social consciousness, even in a rapidly changing reality. The problems of Kurdish people outlined in BEFORE SNOWFALL can't be compared with the current post-Syria-situation, but still film can open new worlds and offer chances to compare your experiences with those of other spectators.

Successful blockbusters shouldn't be ignored. Such films can equally launch serious questions in the minds of young people. Like WHEN INGE DANCES, in Germany a successful film in which young people tend to recognise themselves. But this film also speaks about the generation gap, love, forgiveness, ecology, lust for life etc.

Realistic HUNGER GAMES



The Hunger Games

Stefan Linze of the FSK (Freiwilliges Selbst Kontrol, a German film censorship committee) presented 'Body, Gender & Social Identity', the final chapter in a study on the impact of feature films on young people aged 12-14. In this research 600 students were interrogated on four recent films: CHRONICLE, THE HUNGER GAMES (pretty violent, but in a critical social context), DIRTY GIRL (about homosexuality) and COMBAT GIRLS (about a young Nazi girl befriending an Afghan refugee). All findings were compiled in a brochure and DVD (to be downloaded on <http://www.fsk.de/?seiteid=2742&tid=23>).

You could say for every film that the message did reach out to the target audience, causing an intensified sense of 'global citizenship', a broadened view on life and reduced feelings of nationalism, as proved in plain statistical figures. For instance, THE HUNGER GAMES led to reduced figures for sexism, because of the way the movie breaks with traditional gender roles. (GH)

Find the complete seminar report on <http://cff.ecfaweb.org>.

Children's Film First:
What's in it for you?

The Children's Film First project will prove itself useful for all ECFA members.

- Reports and conclusions of all local seminars will be published on the ECFA website.
- During the final seminar in Brussels in September 2015 we hope to meet as many of our members.
- Within this project a database with short films for children will be added.
- Soon you will find on the ECFA website an overview of the study guides that are produced by various European media educational institutions.

GREETINGS FROM GERMANY

We're putting Germany in the spotlight through a variety of events: a short film, a festival organised by young people, an honorary award and a festival exchange project.

A SHORT FILM

BAHAR IN WONDERLAND

"Close your eyes, think of another place and you'll become invisible"



Where do you hide from danger, when there is nowhere to run to? Kurdish girl Bahar, escaping from Syria to Germany with her father, believes she has found a way. In order to protect herself from danger, Bahar believes she becomes invisible when closing her eyes. "I came to Germany as a refugee at the age of 6," says director Behrooz Karamizade, "and I always felt safe because my father was there, protecting us."

When arriving in a big, dark German city - which doesn't look at all like the land of dreams - Bahar loses contact with her father, when he gets caught by the police. War images on TV-screens exposed in a shop make her run away in fear. But even when being all alone and lost, Bahar never cries. When writing the screenplay Karamizade focused on the question that he, as a boy, constantly had in mind: "What if my father wasn't here?" Or converted to Bahar's situation: "What if a little girl finds herself all on her own in a foreign world?" The expressive young actress was found after an intensive casting process. "I needed a girl who was able to 'be' that refugee child, seeing everything in this country for the very first time. All girls we met grew up in Germany. Finally we found Kani Mohammadi, a sensitive and intelligent girl able to transpose this feeling of being a total stranger."

'Bahar in Wonderland' participated in over 75 film festivals and won several awards, including 'Best Short Film' in the Int. Film Festival for Children & Young Adults in Isfahan, Iran. (Eva Schwarzwald)
Contact: Behrooz Karamizade, +49-177-580-333-9; karamizade@jpp-film.com.

AN HONORARY AWARD EHRENSCHLINGEL FOR AREND AGTHE

At this year's Schlingel festival the honorary, 'The Ehrenschlingel', award was given to German director Arend Agthe for his achievements in children's film. He started a career in children's television, working for 'Sesame Street', 'The Sandman' etc. Making his first feature film for a young audience in 1983: HEN IN A BOAT, about four confident children, a chicken and an exciting boat-chase. Making dreams come true, trying out skills, and growing with challenges are the topics recurring in Agthe's films, such as THE SUMMER OF THE FALCON (1987) and KARAKUM (1993). After that, for 20 years Arend Agthe mainly worked for adult audiences. But what is he doing in the autumn of 2014? Agthe is finishing the post-production of a new children's film! RETTET RAFFI ('Save Raffi') will certainly offer young audiences another exciting movie adventure.



A FESTIVAL LITTLE BIG FILMS (Nuremberg)

A festival planned, organised and executed by children for children



For half a year, 13 young (8-13) girls and boys from Nuremberg have been busy preparing the first edition of 'Little Big Films'. To get a better understanding, they took part in seminars about several aspects of film. Then they started prospecting films and visiting festivals, experiencing first-hand how a festival can be organised and what happens behind the scenes: Q & A's with actors and directors and foreign language films with voice-overs. At the Munich Children's Film Festival they presented the project in a BJJ seminar (BJJ = German ECFA member Bundesverband Jugend und Film), causing such enthusiasm amongst the participants that members of the Little Big Films crew were asked to introduce a film in the cinema. The absolute highlight was inviting Audience Award winner Neele Leana Vollmar (THE PASTA DETECTIVES) personally to Nuremberg.

The long-list of titles had been growing and before the summer holidays choices had to be made. On a score sheet they wrote how they liked the films and added personal notes. In parallel, a name for the festival had to be found. When finally choosing for Little Big Films, a logo had to be developed and used on all print products (flyers, posters, advertisements). Finally 7 movies were discussed, argued and selected on a democratic basis. Then came the editorial work: searching stills, writing texts, preparing a press conference and meeting with the media (printed media and radio).

On October 17th the children jointly opened the film festival, welcomed the audience in every screening, justified their choices and interviewed guests: Anton Petzold (THE PASTA DETECTIVES), Tadeusz Ranisch and Axel Ranisch (ROBBERS) and Veit Helmer, (FIDDLESTICKS). Considering the great success of the first edition, it's impossible not to come up with a follow-up next year. (Kinga Fueleop)

AN EXCHANGE PROJECT Young Nordic Film Makers

On Sunday October 26th, during a workshop, they learned about the basics of documentary film-



making: interviewing, camera technique, editing... In small groups with mixed nationalities they started planning their own films. One week later 4 (!) documentaries were presented: a director's portrait, films about the Lübeck puppet museum and 'jazz music in the former GDR' and a documentary about the meaning of sex in today's society. An impressive result. The films will also be screened in festivals in Oulu and Kristiansand and on the website of Station Next. You'll also find them on www.youtube.com/user/nordischefilmtag. "We wanted to give young people a chance to meet creative peers with a mutual passion, with the festival as a platform for networking," says YNFM-initiator Franziska Kremser-Klinkertz.

Furthermore the young participants met with professional filmmakers like Bent Hamer, Ulrika Bengst, Stian Kristiansen and Christian E. Christiansen. The project was organised by the Nordic Film Days Lübeck, partnering with FestUNG Kristiansand, Oulu Film Festival and Station Next. After the successful first edition, all partners are hoping to continue the Young Nordic Film Makers in 2015. (Franziska Kremser-Klinkertz)

ECFA EVENTS

NEW MEMBER

DUFF – DUBROVNIK FILM FESTIVAL FOR THE CHILDREN & YOUTH OF MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES



Last October Dubrovnik welcomed the 3rd edition of DUFF (Dubrovnik Film Festival for the Children & Youth of the Mediterranean countries). In the city of Dubrovnik, the word “festa” (festival) evokes an old tradition of the celebration of life. Dubrovnik celebrates its patron Saint Blaise, drama and music so then why not celebrate film? The 1st DUFF edition was held in 2012.

The festival screens films made by young authors (<15 and 16-20) living in a Mediterranean country. Conceived to give young people from 20 Mediterranean countries the opportunity to showcase their thoughts and works to international peers and experts, DUFF encourages their film and video creation. The idea for a youth festival arose from the desire to bring out the anonymous endeavors of enthusiast young filmmakers, to offer a helping hand to individuals, schools and youth associations working with media culture.

The Mediterranean is the cradle of Western European civilization. Europe recognises this, often emphasising the Greek and Roman heritage, and overlooking the roots of Mediterranean

multiculturalism which has evolved on the shores of Africa and Asia Minor. All these cultures, their interaction and the common cultural conflicts between them, have forged Mediterranean history. It is in this Mediterranean multiculturalism that we all recognise ourselves and that we find the core of this festival. George Bernard Shaw once wrote that those who seek paradise on earth must come to Dubrovnik, with its city walls (protected by UNESCO) encircling an unbroken ring of culture and history. Dubrovnik, the ‘Pearl of the Adriatic’, is situated in the far South of Croatia and fosters an ancient heritage of craftsmen, architects and artists.



This year’s selection (73 films from 13 countries) included films in several categories: animation, documentary, fiction and an open category. Four film workshops for students were led by eminent Croatian and European educators. In 2014 DUFF also hosted the Youth Cinema Network conference. YCN is a European network of festivals, organisations and teachers dedicated to youth cinema.

The organisers of DUFF are the Cinematographers of Dubrovnik, the Luža Association for promoting media culture and the Šipan Film Summer School. Contact: Dube Mikulic, dube@kinematografi.org; www.duff.kinematografi.org

CHILDREN’S FILM FIRST IN BARI



The first local seminar under the ‘Children’s Film First’ flag took place in Chemnitz. Meanwhile Il Nuovo Fantarca successfully organised the second seminar in October in Bari, Italy. You’ll find a detailed report on the event in the February 2015 issue of the ECFA Journal.

MICE WANTS YOUR FILMS!

The Valencia-based children’s film festival MiCe is preparing its 2015 edition.



Festival director Josep Arbiol is ambitious: “MiCe is growing rapidly into a film and educational project with a global reach. When we started MiCe, we never expected the project would have such a great impact. This we want to consolidate in the future. Therefore we’re establishing some new festival sections: 4 competitive sections for professional films, with a special interest in animation and fiction. In 2015 we’ll have a retrospective of films from the USA, like we had last year with South Korea. Furthermore we’ll be involved in a roundtable on media literacy, under the auspices of the University of Valencia, where we’ll invite international specialists in media education. And of course we’ll continue our screenings of films made by children and youngsters. Please, send us your movies! We’re on the ‘Filmfreeway’ platform: <https://filmfreeway.com/festival/MiCe>.”

ADJUSTING THE ECFA AWARD?

After the Schlingel Festival, ECFA’s General Secretary Felix Vanginderhuyzen addressed a letter to all board members, reminding them of the official ECFA Award regulations: “Participating films must aim at a children or young people’s audience. There is not an exact age, but the main target group of the film should be under 16.” Slightly alarmed by yet another ‘young adult movie’ winning an ECFA Award, the board is currently considering if ECFA should adjust its regulations in favour of the specific

‘quality films for children’, and therefore should specify the main target group of participating films as ‘under 14’. This will surely be discussed in the forthcoming AGM.



Girlhood

ECFA AGM

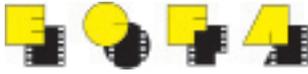
Please note that ECFA’s Annual General Meeting in Berlin will take place on February 7th. Again ECFA members will gather in Thüringer Staatskanzlei, Mohrenstraße 64. The ECFA board is currently working on a concept to make this event an even better occasion for professional networking and informal gathering.

ECFA Awards

Titles recently listed for the ECFA Award 2014:

- Lucas Int. Children’s Film Festival (Frankfurt am Main, Germany): SCRAPWOOD WAR (Marien Rogaar, The Netherlands).
- Schlingel – Int. Film Festival for Children & Young Audience (Chemnitz, Germany): GIRLHOOD (Céline Sciamma, France).

Soon all ECFA members will be contacted regarding the voting for the final ECFA Award 2014.



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 European Children's Film Association
 Rue du Pavillon 3
 B-1030 Bruxelles
 Phone: +32 (0)2 242 54 09
 Fax: +32 (0)2 242 74 27
 E-mail: ecfa@jekino.be
www.ecfaweb.org

Please send press releases, advertisements, questions & information to Jekino - Gert Hermans
 See address above
 E-mail: gerth@jekino.be

Contributors to this issue:
 Adam Graham, Reinhold Schöffel, Felix Vanginderhuysen, Julia Niessen, Gudrun Sommer, Christin Franz, Marcus Seibert, Mathis Hanspach, Petra L. Schmitz, Sailesh P. Shrestha, Mischa Kamp, Viola Gabrielli, Juliette Jansen, Harro van Staverden, Stina Mikkelsen, Martin Grund, Debbie Maturi, Behrooz Karamizade, Eva Schwarzwald, Franziska Kremser-Klinkertz, Kinga Fueloep, Dube Mikulic, Josep Arbiol and Ainhoa Berástegui.

Proofreading: Adam Graham
 Design: Sam Geuens & Marc Henneco
 ECFA website: Udo Lange

ECFA's goal is to support cinema for children and youth in its cultural, economical, aesthetic, social, political and educational aspects. Since 1988 ECFA brings together a wide range of European film professionals and associations, producers, directors, distributors. ECFA aims to set up a working structure in every European country for films for children and young people, a structure adapted to Europe's multicultural interests.

For more information and memberships (€ 200 per year):
 ECFA

European Children's Film Association
 Phone: +32 (0)2 242 54 09
 E-mail: ecfa@jekino.be
www.ecfaweb.org

The European Children's Film Distribution Network:

www.ecfaweb.org/network.htm

Databases on children's film festivals, sales agents, distributors and TV-programmers interested in European films for children.

FILM IN FOCUS

DENNIS BOTS' SECRETS OF WAR

"I want to make the most beautiful film ever"

1943. Twelve year old Tuur and Lambert are inseparable friends. The nearby caves and woods offer them a stage for endless summer fun. Until war rages fiercely over their idyllic village and puts their friendship to the test: Tuur's parents join the resistance while Lambert belongs to a pro-German family. Then Maartje enters the scene, carrying with her a secret she only shares with Tuur. Driving a wedge between both boys finally brings Maartje's life in danger and forces Tuur to put everything at stake.

Dennis Bots: "I had never expected myself to make a war movie, but in SECRETS OF WAR the war is not more than the arena in which the action takes place, stirring up the tension. The opening scene is proof of the pure and unconditional friendship between two boys. For them it all seems but one big adventure: passing aircrafts, marching soldiers... Until war closes in and the friction between friendship and betrayal changes the bond between them.

Suddenly the village is ruled by suspicion.

Bots: Speaking with the older locals, author Jacques Vriens made an interesting discovery: the isolated villages near the German border were divided among themselves during wartime. Half the population collaborated with the Nazis, the other half were in the resistance. Nobody could be trusted, your dearest neighbour could now suddenly become your worst enemy.

Love is yet another battlefield. To intensify the triangle relationship with Tuur and Lambert you needed a powerful actress to play Maartje.

Bots: Maas Bronkhuyzen was very convincing as the main actor and also Joes Brauers (Lambert) was quickly found. We needed a tough girl – one of the boys – to put them under pressure. When Pippa Allen (TAKING CHANCES) walked in, I immediately felt a tension between them and I knew it would work.



The film has a strong rural feel.

Bots: At first I doubted whether I could add something to the war movie genre. Most war movies are dark and claustrophobic. But the pleasant village life opened up new possibilities. Out in the wild, adventures are up for grabs. As in STAND BY ME, one of my favorite movies. The audience feels like taking part in that small communion, living in the shadow of the church tower. Nowadays, all villages in The Netherlands are paved and renovated, but in the south of Belgium I found my ideal location: a village on the hill with cobblestone roads and

power lines still above ground. Over the fields you see the church in the distance.

The downed plane in the forest also came as a coincidence?

Bots: That was a brilliant move of our producer. We knew a Dakota was stored in a Dutch warehouse since it was used on a musical set. We put the 12 meter long colossus on a truck and drove it all the way to Luxembourg and back. When you have such a visual trump card in your hands, you can't use it too obtrusively. The plane only appears in two shots, but those are masterful shots, leaving a lasting impression.

What was for you the most difficult scene to shoot?

Bots: The most difficult scene actually looks rather easy: Tuur and Maartje telling each other their secrets in the attic. Nothing but two children sitting on a bed. But the scene takes 6 minutes and has a deep dramatic stratification. It is not easy to make the tension happen between two young actors. Therefore, it is my favorite scene.



For Bijker Films you also made COOL KIDS DON'T CRY and there are more plans for the near future (see page 5). A permanent engagement?

Bots: We have a very nice collaboration: open and honest. Together we dare to always go one step further. And we want to make the most beautiful film ever.

In what way is SECRETS OF WAR internationally relevant?

Bots: Friendship is a timeless and universal theme and helps children to understand the impact and consequences of war. The generation that survived World War II is getting old; that page from the history book is about to be turned and we're not going to let that happen.

SECRETS OF WAR makes a very professional impression. Thanks to the budget?

Bots: Our budget wasn't that big! My international colleagues couldn't understand it was made for so little money. It is mainly a matter of making the right choices: on what will we spend our money? What are the priorities? And how do we build up the storyline? (GH)