



FORUM CARTOON SANTIAGO DI COMPOSTELLA TO BELIEVE IN EUROPEAN ANIMATION

The CARTOON FORUM will take place from 22 to 25th September in Santiago de Compostela (Galicia/Spain). Organised by CARTOON (AEFA), with the support of MEDIA Programme of the European Union, the Xunta de Galicia and Xacobeo 2004 and Caixa Galicia, this "co-production forum", which is dedicated to the financing of European animation programmes for television, is 15 years old.

During 15 years we had the privilege to discover before anyone else the best European producers, the broadcasters playing risky business to finance the more innovative authors and directors, the best licences sold over the world, and finally structure a real European industry, stronger and creative. This year again, 69 new series or TV specials (representing 246 million Euros) will thus be presented by European producers to some 700 participants, potential partners or investors : co-producers, broadcasters, distributors, video publishers or licensing agents.

This year, 69 projects from 15 European countries, including 2 new member countries, Poland and Slovenia, will be presented, representing 461 hours of programming. 68% of the projects presented originate from the 5 largest European Union countries, and 32% from the 10 other countries attending this year. Spain is bringing 11 projects (15% of the total being presented) - an excellent rate.

It is important to note that 16 projects are being presented in association with new member states of the European Union: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania. 32 projects will be presented in collaboration with countries that are geographically or linguistically limited such as Belgium, Luxemburg, Greece, Portugal, Denmark, Ireland, Austria, Netherlands and Finland.

So participants from 24 countries will come together in one of the cities birth of Europeanism.

The 15th Cartoon Forum is being held again in Spain, for the third time.

It was in Lanzarote, that the very first Cartoon Forum was held in 1990. What a lot has happened since this year! European animation was then in its early stages: a hundred of hours produced each year, virtually no European co-productions, and Japanese and American programming dominated our television screens, with only about 25% of airtime given to European productions. The 10th edition of the Forum was held in Cordoba.

This 15th edition will take place during Holy Year in the town of Santiago de Compostela, capital of Galicia. Santiago de Compostela, is a wonderful small town known throughout the world. Its great cathedral has welcomed many pilgrims over the centuries. The partners of this Spanish edition are : Consorcio Audiovisual de Galicia, TVG (television de Galicia), ICAA, Concello de Santiago, CGAI and Auditorio de Galicia.

The 2004 CARTOON D'OR Ceremony will be organised before the closing party, awarding the best European animated short film, giving opportunity to young directors to make another film with the money of the award.

So, with the support of the Media Programme of the European Union, Cartoon can claim to have contributed to the successful creation of an European animation network and cultural industry.

15 YEARS !

Barcelona, end of March 1989 : Cartoon invite a few producers to create a working group that would look at how relations between producers and broadcasters could be improved. Instead of meeting potential broadcasters one after the other at markets, why not bring them all together round one table and speed up the financing process. The following decisive event which led to the creation of the CARTOON FORUM took place at the Villa Medici in Rome at the end of November 1989.

During the two days spent at the Villa Medici with twenty broadcasters and twenty producers, it became obvious that there was a huge void between broadcasters and producers. The producers were reluctant to talk in front of the broadcasters who appeared to have a right of life or death when accepting or rejecting the projects presented by the producers. The other gap that became evident was the differences between the various countries - cultural, economic and linguistic. The broadcasters did not know each other, and only co-produced within their own countries. The large European market played little role in their strategies - even when buying completed animation. Marc Vandeweyer and Corinne Jenart decided to take the offensive, supported only by the European Union Media Programme. Meanwhile the broadcasters were giving their agreement to the idea. The session resumed, and the idea having

been accepted, producers and broadcasters talked happily together. The Cartoon Forum was born.

Now everything has to be invented for this new concept : How should the meeting rooms be arranged? With whom ? How long ? How many people could attend ? In how many languages ? How many sessions per day ? And last but not least : where ? A light shone in the eyes of Mr. Dimas Martin, then Mayor of Teguise with whom we happened to have a meeting on another subject. He insisted that the first Cartoon Forum should be held in Lanzarote. It was a very emotional moment when we watched all the principal players in European animation coming down from the plane bringing them from Madrid to Lanzarote. The Cartoon Forum was taking shape (200 participants, 45 investors, 60 projects. Lanzarote over, it was decided to change every year the guest country in order involved the governments, the key players, the investors and even the public to give producers a chance to be known.

In the end it took three more Cartoon Forums to reach its final and current structure. After Lanzarote, Saint-Malo and Florence, it was in Inverness (1993 - 350 participants, 101 investors, 60 projects) that all the elements necessary for the success of the Forum finally fell into place : then came The Azores, Finland, Galway, Arles, Syros, Cordoba, Sweden, Bayern, Wales (770 participants, 247 investors) and Varese. In any case with a beautiful blue sky we use to call : Cartoon Weather ...

It is undeniable that Spain has played an important role in the life of the Forum. Our first meeting was in Barcelona, the first Forum was in Lanzarote, the tenth anniversary took place in Córdoba and this year we celebrate our fifteenth birthday in Santiago de Compostela. Feliz cumpleaños! Happy Birthday!

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