





From far left: *Mouk's World Tour*, *Culture Quest With Mr Otter*, *Paper Clips* and *Nail Polish*, *Plankton Invasion* and (below) *The Tumbles*



thinking about what website to build afterward. It feels now that they are more confident in the multiplatform space."

French producer Millimages' project *Mouk's World Tour* was the biggest hit at the Forum this year, and offered a lot in the way of new media content.

The 62x11mins or 30x1mins series follows a young bear named Mouk who travels the world, meeting his pen pals across every continent. In each episode, Mouk's grandmother asks him to help him solve a puzzle that tests her world knowledge, sending him on an adventure to find a specific cultural object that will satisfy the riddle. The project is designed to appeal to international audiences; Millimages is also developing a website that will feature local blogs in which viewers can share cultural information about their countries.

The show attracted a lot of positive feedback from the forum's participants. "I just think the project is so rich and lovely," Disney UK vice president of original programming and development, Beth Gardiner said after *Mouk's* screening.

Pii Berg, acquisition executive for Finnish public broadcaster YLE, said she was very interested in the project, particularly because it was available in short-

form. "In Scandinavia, children from four years old have mobile phones, so that's really important for YLE," she said.

Although two dimensional series were hot this year, the popularity of CGI series *Plankton Invasion*, aimed at all ages, demonstrated that there was still interest in three dimensional animation. The series is being developed by Belgian producers Tinkertrée and Nexus Factory with French broadcaster Canal+. Each seven-minute episode follows three anti-heroes in the form of miniscule sea creatures sent on a mission to take over the world by accelerating global warming, melting the polar ice caps, and eliminating dry land on Earth. Each year Cartoon Forum directors send a survey to delegates asking them to rank the projects according to appeal. Directors noted that although *Plankton Invasion* did not receive a high level of interest before the event, attendees flocked to the session after seeing the trailer presentation.

German producer Trikk 17 Animationsraum presented its series *Dr. Brumm*, based on the successful picture books by Daniel Napp, to some acclaim. The series targets children aged four to eight and has already received sponsorship from German public broadcaster ZDF. It follows the high jinks of a bear, Dr.

Otter, explores various cultural movements or inventions, and gives lessons on them in 90-second pantomimes. The 52x1'30mins series would fit well in TV-Loonland's growing portfolio of short form animation, Dumont said.

Most of the producer's presentations included multi-platform elements for their series, and about a fifth of the projects were developed solely for mobile phones, the Internet, or video games. Jesse Cleverly, head of coproduction and acquisition for CBBC, said he noticed a shift in content creators' attitudes toward multi-platform production this year.

"The producers are really starting to rise to the trend of multi-platform, and that's really exciting," he said. "The spirit of those spaces is really starting to enthuse creators. They are moving away from building the show first, and then



*Dr Brumm, Just a Thought and Huhu*

to other markets. Magma has produced a German version of the series' pilot, which is about relationships. "The kids may have said different things, but the animation still looked appropriate in a different context," she said.

Bella Stjerne, head of acquisitions at Swedish public broadcaster SVT, said she is hoping to bring the series to Sweden.

"I'm very interested in it. I'd buy it today, but I have to make sure that our production team will be able to do the interviews with the kids," she said. "I always think we need philosophical programmes like this."

French producers dominated the lineup again this year, representing 20 projects, including five coproductions. Germany and the UK were the second and third most represented countries, showing 11 and 10 projects respectively.

Cartoon Forum General Director Marc Vandeweyer had hoped to see more Eastern European companies present, given that several countries have been experiencing a boom in their television sectors. Despite this, Hungary was the only Eastern European country that participated in the forum. Hungarian producer Studio Beaestart presented a series *Huhu*, sponsored by Nickelodeon UK and Chellomedia-owned kids channel Minimax. The series, aimed at 10 to 13 year-olds, follows a flock of owls, as they travel to different places to make their home. Meanwhile, one of the few adult-skewing projects at the forum, *Paper Clips and Nail Polish*, was presented by Hungarian studio Casa Magica and has already received sponsorship from Hungarian public broadcaster MTV.

Vandeweyer wants to host the event in an Eastern European country as soon as possible to encourage producers from the region to submit projects, he said. The 20<sup>th</sup> Cartoon Forum will be held in Stavanger, Norway next year, but directors are pushing to host the event in an Eastern European country as soon as possible. "I'm trying to do this for 2010. I think it is important to show support for these developing regions. Nothing is set, but there is strong interest," he said. **TBI**



Brumm, and his goldfish friend Pottwal who lives with him in a secluded cottage in the mountains.

Miles Bullough, head of broadcast and development at UK studio Aardman Animations, liked the series' unique stop-motion animation, but thought Trikk 17

needed to target a narrower age group. "They need to get their age group worked out," he said, adding "I think that's one of the biggest mistakes producers can make."

As usual, many of the kids shows aimed to educate while entertaining. Irish producer Magma Films' project *Just a Thought* took an original approach to learning. The 26x5mins series was created by recording interviews with children as they discussed their understanding of heady, abstract topics such as poverty or love. The studio then illustrated the recordings with childlike animations. The series was inspired by the short film *When Life Departs*, which was nominated for an Oscar in 1997, that asked children about their thoughts on death.

Moe Honan, head of animation production at Magma, said she was surprised at how easily the animation was adaptable