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[Home](#) » [Television](#)

## ***Rah Rah!, Gaston, Pok Please at Cartoon Forum***

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Reporting from Cartoon Forum 2008 which is held at the German city of Ludwigsburg, *Animation Magazine* president Jean Thoren tells us about some of the new European animated properties making waves at the annual event. Here's what she has to say about three of the standouts:

MacKinnon & Saunders Production brings us another winner with their very popular *Rah Rah!* Created by Curtis Jobling and developed by the award-winning team best known for *Frankenstein's Cat*, *Rah Rah!* brings together CCI's Arnie Zipursky and producers Jackie Edwards and Chris Bowden. The preschool show for kids 2-4 charmed the Cartoon audience with its fresh, simple design and unique, noisy concept. The series of 57 seven-minute episodes will be accompanied by an interactive website, and is sure to win many broadcasters' votes of

approval. *Tim Burton's Corpse Bride*, *The PeriWig-Maker*, *Little Robots*, *Bob the Builder* and *The Sandman* are some of MacKinnon & Saunders' other popular projects.

*Gaston* is an animated series developed by Andre Franquin, and directed by Alexis Lavillat, based on the well-loved French comic book. Producer Olivier Nomen of Normaal Animation notes, "The problem of putting a voice to a mythic character such as Gaston Lagaffe was daunting. Gaston is one of the few big comic book characters that has not had a film made about him." Author Franquin, who is also famous for *Marsupilami*, created the Gaston comic in 1957 for the magazine *Spirou*. He is very lazy, totally carefree character is representative of a stereotypical 1970s hippie rebel and the production team has decided to stay true to that period. In his presentation, Olivier remarked, "Gaston appeals to all ages, he loves all animals and often brings them to the office, inciting chaos and many episodes of crazy antics and resultant mishaps. Our hero is a very talented inventor of gadgets, but his colleagues call his inventions gaffs." The project is being developed with France 3, Marsu Prods. and Normaal. With 30 million books sold to date, we're sure this bestselling French comic will appeal to audiences of all ages worldwide.

Produced by Alphanim and Vivement Lundi!, *Pok & Mok* employs a very new and appealing style to present environmental messages through the adventures of a boy named Mok and his constant companion, Mok, along with their extended family. Pok is a gibbon who can bend and stretch like any true cartoony character. He is a trouble maker and not-so-honest game player who makes excuses for his faux pas but makes up for them using all available means to be environmentally friendly. Mok is a child who bends the rules and does not always consider the consequences of his actions, especially those that affect the environment. Ernest, Mok's dad, is obsessed with cleanliness and is somewhat childlike and immature. His mom, in contrast, is very calm, cool and collected. The grandpa practices intensive farming and tries to cook Pok because he believes animals are for eating. All in all, these characters are endearing and we think this series brings the message of environmental friendliness to the audience without the usual preachiness.



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## Reader Comments

There are no reader comments for this article.

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