

PRESS RELEASE  
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## CARTOON MOVIE SHAPES THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN ANIMATION WITH 50 NEW FEATURE FILM PROJECTS

The 50 animated feature film projects selected for the 28<sup>th</sup> edition of Cartoon Movie will have the chance to accelerate their financing and expand their international reach. Chosen from a record 150 submissions — representing a 22% increase over the previous edition —, the projects will be presented to co-producers, sales agents, distributors, streaming platform executives, publishers and investors, among other key players in the film industry. Considered one of the main events for co-production and pitching of European animation projects, Cartoon Movie will be held in the French city of Bordeaux on March 3 to 5.

Hailing from 21 European countries, the selected projects bear witness to the current strength of European animation. The line-up brings together emerging voices and renowned directors, auteur-driven and audience-oriented projects, and productions from independent studios alongside works from internationally acclaimed production companies.

Covering a wide range of themes, the projects are set both in realistic scenarios and fantastical universes, and span a variety of film genres, including adventure, action, comedy, drama, sci-fi and documentary, among others.

France leads the selection with 15 projects, followed by Germany with 6 and Spain with 5. Together, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Poland and Romania) account for a total of 11 projects, while the Nordic region — Denmark, Norway and Sweden — feature 4 projects. Belgium, Italy, Ireland and the Netherlands present 2 projects each, while Austria, Greece, Luxembourg and Ukraine wrap up the list with one film each.

Women continue to gain ground at the event: 37% of projects have at least one woman in a directing role, 52% are headed by a female producer, and nearly half feature a woman in the lead role. Additionally, 38% of the projects include diversity and inclusion as key elements of their narrative approach, revealing a growing awareness towards representation and plurality of perspectives in European animation.

With a total budget of €275.2 million, the average cost per film amounts to €5.5 million. Co-production remains one of the main drivers of financing for animated films in Europe: 29 of the projects (58%) are

co-productions involving both countries belonging to Creative Europe MEDIA and others outside this programme (Canada, Ivory Coast, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, Switzerland, and United Kingdom).

2D animation remains the most widely used technique with 54% of the selection, while those developed in 3D account for 30%.

### **One line-up, multiple voices**

Thirty projects are in development stage, representing 60% of the total, followed by 12 projects in concept (24%) and 7 in production (14%). The slate is rounded out by the sneak preview of “**Jim Queen**” by Marco Nguyen and Nicolas Athané (Bobbypills, France).

Among the experienced directors presenting their new projects are Tomm Moore with “**Kindred Spirits**” (Cartoon Saloon, Ireland), Anca Damian with “**Starseed**” (Aparte Film, Romania), and Patrick Imbert with “**Hakim's Odyssey**” (Folivari / Solab Films, both from France).

Regarding audience segmentation, 52% of the projects are aimed at families and children, while titles targeting young adults and adults remain on the rise with 38% of the selection (vs. 30% in 2025). The line-up also features two projects for pre-school audiences: “**Betty Balloon**” by Puk Grasten (Regner Grasten Filmproduktion, Denmark) and “**Onno & Ontje - Friends are the Best Gift**” by Eliza Plocieniak-Alvarez (Blaue Pampelmuse, Germany).

Eight of the projects selected this year at Cartoon Movie had previously participated in this event or in other CARTOON events in earlier stages of development, such as “**Aya in the desert**” by Julia Horrillo (Alhena Production, Spain) and “**Silence Sometimes**” by Álvaro Robles (Filmakers Monkeys, Spain). Both projects were already pitched at Cartoon Springboard, the pitching event for young talents of European animation schools.

Books and graphic novels remain one of the main sources of inspiration for European animation, as shown by the nine projects based on stories previously published in these formats, including “**Betty Balloon**” by Puk Grasten (Regner Grasten Filmproduktion, Denmark), “**Blaise**” by Dimitri Planchon & Jean-Paul Guigue (KG Productions, France), “**Cornebidouille**” by Mathias Varin (Les Armateurs, France), “**Igi**” by Natia Nikolashvili (20 Steps Animation, Georgia), “**Monster Mia**” by Verena Fels (arx anima animation studio, Austria), “**Nine Lives Left**” by Zacharias Mavroeidis (Wild At Heart, Greece), “**Pirate Mo and the Legend of the Red Ruby**” by Florian Westermann (Ulysses Filmproduktion, Germany), “**Onno & Ontje - Friends are the Best Gift**” by Eliza Plocieniak-Alvarez (Blaue Pampelmuse, Germany), and “**Sam and Julia**” (Submarine Animation, Netherlands).

Friendship, family, and value-based education are all key elements that run through the selection. Diversity is addressed in several works featuring people with different types of disabilities, such as “**Akira's Flying Wheelchair**” by Marco Balsamo (TeamTO Films, France), “**DREAMERS - The Hunt for Shadowclaw**” by Christopher Jenkins (parapictures Film Productions, Germany), and “**The Wild and the Tame**” by Tibor Bánóczki & Sarolta Szabó (Domestic Infelicity, Hungary).

The territory is represented by 8 projects. Five projects are supported by the **Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region**, and accompanied by **ALCA**: “**Blaise**” by Dimitri Planchon & Jean-Paul Guigue (KG Productions), “**Detective Kibbles**” by Benoît Delépine, Antoine Robert and Frédéric Felder (La Station

Animation and likely be produced in the Angoulême studios), “**Jim Queen**” by Marco Nguyen & Nicolas Athané (Bobbypills), “**Pangea**” by Simon Rouby (Miyu Productions) and “**Smecheria or the Confidences of a Cheat**” by Antoine Fontaine (Hutong Productions as a co-producer). In addition, “**Happy Hunting vs the Apocalypse**” by Boris Belghiti, Maxime Paccalet and Pierre Razetto is produced by **Bordeaux-based** Kawanimation and “**Firebird**” by Matej Podskalsky and Anna Podskalska is co-produced by **Nouvelle-Aquitaine based** Novanima Productions. Lastly, the regional co-writers and co-directors Chintis Lundgren & Draško Ivezic are involved in “**Saima: Scenes From a Midlife Crisis**” written and directed by Chintis Lundgren and Draško Ivezic, and “**Jim Queen**” is supported by the **Charente Department**.

The complete list of projects is available [here](#).

Besides the pitching sessions, the event will hold a new edition of **Cartoon Talks**, an initiative devoted to enhancing the synergies between animation and other industries like gaming and publishing. On March 3, three keynotes and a round of one-to-one meetings will be held, providing a unique opportunity for animation, gaming, and transmedia professionals to exchange ideas, explore potential collaborations, and build valuable industry connections.

Focused on sustainability, the two first keynotes are “Presentation of the Green Distribution Guide” by Christine Eloy (Europa Distribution) and “The Green Animation Guide” by Adrien Roche, representing Ecoprod (Ecoprod – CineRegio – Green Film). A panel on XR/VR (more information on the speakers coming soon) will also take place.

In addition to these keynotes CARTOON organises one-to-one meetings for animation professionals who wish to meet with video game companies, publishers, etc, of their interest.

### **Québec-Canada Land in Europe**

Together with the attendance of an important delegation of Québec and Canadian producers, distributors, sales agents, editors and broadcasters interested in establishing new partnerships in Europe, Cartoon Movie 2026 will host the launch of the initiative **Québec-Canada Land in Europe: A Space for Creation**, aimed at spotlighting a renewed commitment to international co-production. A selection of six projects (three from Quebec and three from other Canadian provinces) seeking European co-producers will be presented in a dedicated session organised in collaboration with SODEC and Telefilm Canada.

### **About Cartoon Movie**

Since its first edition in 1999, 504 films have been financially supported by Cartoon Movie with a total budget of €3.37 billion. Organised by CARTOON, Cartoon Movie is an annual forum aimed at strengthening the production and distribution of animated feature films in Europe. The event has the support of Creative Europe - MEDIA, CNC (Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée), Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Bordeaux Métropole, Magelis, Creative industries hub in Angoulême, and France Télévisions.

CARTOON – European Association of Animation Film is an international non-profit association based in Brussels that organises Cartoon Movie, together with Cartoon Forum, a co-production forum for animated TV series, and the training seminars Cartoon Springboard, CartoonNext, and Cartoon Business.

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