

FANTOCHE

INTERNATIONALES FESTIVAL FÜR ANIMATIONSFILM
BADEN/SCHWEIZ

Press release
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For Professional Audiences: Think bigger, grow bigger

‘Think Outside the Frame’ – disrupting familiar formats and thinking bigger about animation – is the motto of the 11th Industry Day, which takes place this year on THURSDAY 4 September. The highlight of the day will be the presentation of the 8th Swiss Animation Industry Award (SAIA). Beyond Industry Day, Fantoche International Animation Film Festival (2–7 September 2025) will also offer a variety of platforms for filmmakers from all over the world to come together and share ideas, including workshops and talks.

Industry Day: learn new things, network and win

Under the motto ‘Think Outside the Frame’, bold visions will be shared at Industry Day. Spaces will be created to break away from what is familiar together and ultimately think bigger about (Swiss) animation.

International co-productions will be the focus of a discussion with producer Clémence Pun (Hélium Films), director Marjolaine Perreten (Nadasdy Film) and Corinna Marschall (MEDIA Desk Suisse). Afterwards, another panel will focus on the question of how personal vision and one’s own style can be successfully incorporated into commercial projects. This will be explored by Dani Bordelon (Golden Wolf/Doodles), Katie Menzies (Cabeza Patata) and director Nino Christen (‘L’Île noir’).

The series ‘Arcane’ by the French studio Fortiche was a huge success. Simon Magnan – Environment 3D Supervisor at Fortiche – gives a glimpse behind the scenes of his work on ‘Arcane’. Another highlight of the day is the visit by award-winning Estonian animation filmmaker Sander Joon (‘Sierra,’ ‘Velodrool,’ ‘Sounds Good’). In the ‘Artist Talk’, which takes place in cooperation with the Eesti Filmi Institute, he talks about his working methods and upcoming projects. Estonia will also be a focus country beyond Industry Day – with short films and the ‘Let’s Talk’ about the Estonian scene on Friday.

Experienced story consultant Paul Tyler (Handling Ideas) shares his knowledge in an interactive workshop on pitching stories with a focus on story principles. Industry Day concludes with the presentation of the SAIA Award by the Swiss jury. In cooperation with the Swissfilm Association, Fantoche will present the award for the best commissioned animated film in Switzerland.

Behind the scenes, talks and workshops

In addition to Industry Day, Fantoche will be hosting numerous events for animation filmmakers and interested visitors from 2 to 7 September.

Three ‘Making-of’ sessions offer exclusive insights this year: On Friday, 5 September, director Léonard Cohen will show how animation and documentary blend together in his feature film ‘Le Parfum d’Irak’, perfectly demonstrating the transition from information to emotion. Australian directors Emma Hough Hobbs and Leela Varghese will also talk on Friday about their feature debut ‘Lesbian

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'Space Princess' – an exuberant homage to queer life with great cult potential. On Thursday (4 September), game director Onat Hekimoglu will present the award-winning stop-motion game 'Harold Halibut'.

The game about a caretaker in a spaceship will also be available to gaming fans in the 'Refresh X Fantoche #4' exhibition. In games, video works and interactive installations, the international group show explores the theme of work in the post-digital age, picking up the festival's focus topic of '9 to 5'. Various other workshops and talks will examine the interface between game design and animation – such as the talk (Sat, 6 September) on the game about a stalker, 'Tom the Postgirl' (Oopsie Daisies Studio, Zurich).

'Meet the Artist' sessions will be held with animators Lucija Mrzljak (Thu, 4 September), David Szauder (Fri, 5 September) and Nina Gantz (Sat, 6 September). Nina Gantz combines stop-motion, puppetry and live action and has won BAFTA awards and an Oscar nomination for her films. Lucija Mrzljak, Oscar-nominated animation filmmaker, is considered a subversive and important representative of Estonian animation. David Szauder explores the creative interplay between art and AI.

The 'Retrospective' is dedicated to Bolivian-Swiss animator Jesús Pérez (Wed, 3 September and Fri, 5 September). He acquired the art of animation autodidactically and developed a lively, visually poetic style of animation. As a long-standing lecturer at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Pérez helped to shape countless animation students.

This year's Focal Workshop (Mon–Tue, 1–2 September) is dedicated to the adaptation of novels, illustrated books and comics for animated films. Directors Amandine Fredon ('Le petit Nicolas'), Nora Twomey ('My Father's Dragon'/'The Breadwinner'), Benjamin Renner ('Ernest aet Célestine') and Mailys Vallade ('Amélie aet la métaphysique des tubes') will give an insight into their work in the workshop.

One established fixture is the annual Artists' Brunch where filmmakers from the competitions talk about their work. This year, the 'Peer2Beer' networking platform organised by the GSFA (Groupement Suisse du Film d'Animation) will take place for the first time as part of Fantoche: on Friday, 5 September, animators and illustrators will compete against each other in a group game and network in a fun setting.

The complete programme will be published on 12 August, when pre-sales (including accreditations) begin.

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