

# FANTOCHE

INTERNATIONALES FESTIVAL FÜR ANIMATIONSFILM  
BADEN/SCHWEIZ

Press release  
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## **Tales of fossils, fish people and fantastical gardens: latest feature films at Fantoche 2025**

***From 2 to 7 September, the Fantoche International Animation Film Festival will be showing 16 current feature films from all over the world, from Canada to Australia, Mexico to Japan. There are also two contributions representing Switzerland. The opening film of the 23rd edition will be the French coming-of-age story 'Amélie et la métaphysique des tubes', introduced in person by director Mailys Vallade.***

Animated feature films with Swiss involvement were a rarity for a long time, but this has changed noticeably in recent years. After showing three Swiss coproductions at the festival in 2024, this year's event will feature another two such entries. One of them is *Mary Anning* (CH/BE 2025), the first feature film by renowned Ticino animator Marcel Barelli. In a family-friendly way, the work tells the story of the early childhood of the pioneering eponymous British palaeontologist, communicating historical facts in an entertaining, accessible and contemporary way.

*Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake* (ES/FR/BE/CL/CH 2025) was also produced with Swiss involvement. The Catalan-French-Belgian-Chilean-Swiss film directed by Irene Iborra Rizo is about the young Olivia, who has to move to a new neighbourhood with her mother and brother due to financial difficulties. Thanks to carefully designed stop-motion animations and impactful vocal interludes, the film remains life-affirming despite its difficult theme.

### **Looking forward... and back**

We live in a time of great social upheaval. Rapid technological advancement, the increasing consequences of climate change and the strengthening of authoritarian forces in various regions of the world raise the question of where we are heading in the near future. As a result, it is not surprising that this year many animated films are turning to the science fiction genre.

They include *Arco* by Ugo Bienvenu (FR 2025), the story of a time travelling boy and his friendship with a girl from the past, which won top prize at the Annecy Animation Film Festival, the fast-paced *ChaO* by Yasuhiro Aoki (JP 2025), in which a princess from the mermaid kingdom falls in love with an office worker, and the crazy CGI comedy *Night of the Zoopocalypse* by Ricardo Curtis and Rodrigo Perez-Castro (CA/BE/FR 2024), in which a mysterious meteorite turns peace-loving zoo animals into nasty zombies. It also gets futuristic in the inter-gay-lactic comedy *Lesbian Space Princess* by Emma Hough Hobbs and Leela Varghese (AU 2024), in which a shy princess has to free her ex-girlfriend from the clutches of the 'Straight White Malians'. The two directors will explain how they came up with their bizarre ideas during an accompanying making-of event.

Major upheavals are always an opportunity to look back and learn from the past. This is what Iraqi-French journalist Feurat Alani and director Léonard Cohen do in the fascinating documentary *Le parfum d'Irak* (FR/BE 2024), which critically examines the recent history of Iraq. Léonard Cohen will

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explain more about the making of the film during an accompanying session. *The Great History of Western Philosophy* (MX 2025), lovingly staged by experimental filmmaker Aria Covamonas, who sadly died shortly after completion, also deals with history but in a much less serious way. In surreal stop-motion animations, she weaves pop culture and philosophy into a crazy satire.

## The search for yourself

In a rapidly changing society, the individual search for your place in life is becoming increasingly important. Various feature films at this year's Fantoche deal with our personal values and goals. These include classic coming-of-age stories such as Oscar winner Adam Elliot's quirky stop-motion tragicomedy *Memoir of a Snail* (AU 2024) and Julian Glander's colourful *Boys Go to Jupiter* (US 2024) about a teenager who wants to venture into the world of work.

Things get darker in *La mort n'existe pas* by Félix Dufour-Laperrière (CA/FR 2025), in which activist Hélène wanders through the forest after a failed assassination attempt on a wealthy family plagued by guilt and self-doubt, and in *Jinsei* (JP 2025), which portrays the rise and fall of a pop star with socially critical undertones. The latter was created by director Ryuya Suzuki completely single-handedly over a period of 18 months. The journey of self-discovery is addressed in Wenyu Li's *A Story About Fire* (CN 2025) inspired by a Chinese folk legend, in which the monkey Ran Bi sets out in search of the secret of fire.

## Films for the whole family

Family films have a long tradition at Fantoche and prove that entertainment for children does not have to come across as infantile or paternalistic, but can approach them on an equal footing. This can be seen particularly well in the opening film *Amélie et la métaphysique des tubes* by Mailys Vallade and Liane-Cho Han Jin Kuang (FR 2025), in which we experience the world from the perspective of two-year-old Amélie, who grew up in Japan as the daughter of a Belgian diplomat and thus absorbs both cultures.

In addition to *Amélie* and the previously mentioned Swiss coproductions *Mary Anning* and *Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake*, this year's young audiences will also be thrilled by *Hola Frida* by Karine Vézina and André Kadi (FR/CA 2024) and *Tales from the Magic Garden* by Patrik Pašš Jr., Jean-Claude Rozec, David Súpup and Leon Vidmar (CZ/SK/SI/FR 2025). The former tells of the childhood of the great Mexican artist Frida Kahlo and her fight against polio. In the latter, four different directors weave fairytale stories into a magic garden, celebrating the unifying power of the imagination.

You can find the full programme at: [fantoche.ch/programme](https://fantoche.ch/programme)

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