

FANTOCHE

INTERNATIONALES FESTIVAL FÜR ANIMATIONSFILM
BADEN/SCHWEIZ

Press release
Baden, 23 June 2026

For Professional Audiences: frame by frame for hope

'Hope is a word with 24 fps' – with the motto of its 12th Industry Day, the 24th Fantoche International Animation Film Festival, which is taking place from 1 to 6 September 2026, seeks to provide a counterpoint to the hopelessness in times of crisis, war and AI developments. Despite the manifold threats, it is the works of artists that provide unconventional insights into other worlds and new ways of thinking, trigger discussions and touch people's hearts. Beyond Industry Day, a special programme for Professional Audiences offers a diverse and inspiring platform for sharing ideas.

Thinking beyond the frame on Industry Day

Centred around the theme of "Beyond the Screen", animation artists Michael Frei, François Chalet and Lea Vidakovic will discuss how the medium of animation can be conceived outside of the traditional cinema format and how alternative approaches to broadcasting, promoting and contextualising can be used.

In another panel entitled "Falling Apart is not an Option", Tariq Ali (Founder & Director, Zanad, Cairo), Jadwiga Kowalska (Director, CH) and Joanna Quinn (Director, GB) will discuss resilience, humour and the desire to create surprising and artistically outstanding works despite all odds. In doing so, they'll pick up on the festival's focus on "Calling Planet Earth", which sheds light on the fragile interplay between humans, technology and nature. Both talks will be moderated by Swiss comedian Jane Mumford.

With his background in graphic design and wide-ranging experience in the animation industry, in his workshop, Daniel Harisberger of Team Tumult (TED-ED "Neanderthals") will teach the basics of typography and layout for designing aesthetic film graphics.

The internationally award-winning British director Joanna Quinn will talk about her career, the importance of humour and her future projects.

Representatives from different studios will give feedback on portfolios and possible jobs in the industry in short speed dating sessions.

The Industry Day will conclude with the presentation of the SAIA Award, which, in cooperation with the Swissfilm Association, honours the best animated commissioned film in Switzerland. The **call for entries for entries is open until 5 July 2026**. Find all the information on fantoche.ch.

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Fantoche: the meeting place for animation filmmakers

During the festival from 1 to 6 September 2026, Fantoche will host a wide range of events for professionals and interested audiences in addition to Industry Day.

Due to the huge popularity of the “**Artists’ Brunch**” (Thu, Fri and Sat mornings), which sees competition filmmakers provide information about their work, this year’s “**Artists’ Coffee & Cake**” series will take place on two festival afternoons. Interested audiences are invited to talks with directors whose feature films will be shown in this year’s programme. Both series of talks will be moderated by Olivier Samter.

This year, two “**Making-of**” sessions will offer exclusive insights into the creation of two unique films: Japanese director Momoko Seto will present her enchanting film **Dandelion’s Odyssey**, in which viewers follow four dandelion seeds that travel to an unknown planet after a nuclear explosion on Earth. Magical film moments are created through the combination of 3D animation and time-lapse photography.

The French-Lebanese director Zaven Najjar offers a glimpse into the creation of “**Allah Is Not Obligated**”, a film adaptation of the novel of the same name by the Ivorian writer Ahmadou Kourouma, one of Africa’s best-known contemporary authors. Among other things, the animation serves to subjectively depict traumatic experiences such as child soldiers and colonisation.

The following artists will be attending a “**Meet the Artist**” event:

- Taiwanese director and animation artist **Cheng-Hsu Chung**, known for his surrealist and queer films
- **Sarah Cox**, director and Executive Creative Director at Aardman Animations (GB), the creators of Wallace & Gromit
- In addition to her talk at Industry Day, well-known British animation artist **Joanna Quinn** will also be attending a “Meet the Artist” event to present her latest book.

The “Retrospective” is dedicated to **Isabelle Favez**, whose first animated film of 1993 was shown in the first edition of Fantoche in 1995. Stylistically, Isabelle Favez combines hand-drawn animation with calm, emotional stories and a fairytale atmosphere, which at second glance often seems more gloomy or melancholic than one might expect.

Fred Guillaume will lead this year’s **Focal Workshop** on “Producing low-budget feature films in Europe”. Registration opens at the beginning of July on focal.ch.

“**Find a Producer**”: this year, filmmakers will once again have the opportunity to present their projects to potential producers. Registration opens at the end of August on swissanimation.ch.

This year’s thematic focus is “**Calling Planet Earth**”, and the country focus is on **Egypt**. The complete programme will be released on 11 August 2026, when pre-sales will also begin.

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