

PRESS RELEASE

Bristol
Encounters
17th International Film Festival
16 – 20 November 2011



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SPOTLIGHT ON IRISH ANIMATION

At Bristol Encounters International Film Festival

Bristol Encounters International Film Festival (16 – 20 November) celebrates new Irish animation talent in partnership with the **Irish Film Board**.

Irish animation continues to leave its mark on the international stage in 2011 with award wins and a strong presence at major events and festivals. Bristol Encounters International Film Festival celebrates this fact with a special focus on Irish animation talent at this year's **Animated Encounters**, the strand dedicated to all things animated in partnership with the Irish Film Board.

In response to the on-going success of the Irish animation industry, Animated Encounters and the Irish Film Board joined forces for the first time last year, to host a major celebration of new and established Irish animated film talent. The festival is delighted to showcase a fresh slate of Irish animations this year both in competition and as part of a special programme of animated short films from Ireland presented by the Irish Film Board.

Spotlight on Ireland – New Irish Animation programme will showcase the work of a selection of talented animators who have made significant progress and impact on the festival circuit this year, including the work of two new animation companies, **Giant Creative** and **Lovely Productions**.

Giant Creative, is a recent start-up company by Ballyfermot College of Further Education graduates. Their film **The Last Train** was made as part of The Animation Hub, a 3 month project that ran during the summer of 2011 in which the new company collaborated with animation and computer science students to create a one minute animated short fusing motion capture techniques with naturalistic 3D character animation.

The programme also features three films from Lovely Productions, including **Fluffy McCloud**, which participated in last year's Animated Encounters competition to much acclaim.

James Hickey, Chief Executive at the Irish Film Board said "The Irish animation industry is a hotbed of talent and creativity, and this special focus at the Animated Encounters Festival will provide a real insight into the diversity of the work being produced in Ireland right now. The focus ranges from our established animators, with a spotlight on the Oscar® nominated company Cartoon Saloon, to a special screening on new emerging talent which will highlight the up and coming companies including Giant Creative and Lovely Productions."

The festival also sees a number of Irish animated films in competition at the festival this year, including **Paperman** by Richard Kelly, which has already won awards from the Canadian International Film Festival, the Novora Cine and Irishfilmfesta film festival in Italy. **Nana's Strawberry Preserve** by Aoife Doyle, a recent graduate from Ballyfermot College of Further

Education, and ***The Fisherman***, a graduation film by Ferg Brennan, also feature in competition this year.

Each of these animations are eligible for one of Animated Encounters prestigious awards, including the Grand Prix award for best Animation which includes an Academy Award® short film nomination; the European New Talent award for first time directors or graduation films, and the Best of British and South West awards. The films are also eligible for the UK Cartoon d'Or nomination, of which the 2011 winner *The Little Boy and the Beast* by Johannes Weiland and Uwe Heidschötter received its nomination at Encounters last year.

On this year's Spotlight on Ireland – New Irish Animation, **Kieran Argo, Animation Programme Manager** said "We are delighted to welcome back another exciting and diverse programme of Irish short animated films, which demonstrate the strength of creative talent being fostered in Ireland and shows us in the UK how production companies can gain critical success on the international stage given the right levels of support.

A special thanks must go to the Irish Film Board for their continuing support of the festival and dedication to their home-grown animation talent."

Animated Encounters also celebrates the work of established artists. Last year the festival hosted a special studio focus on award winning company **Brown Bag Films** with Co-founder Cathal Gaffney.

This year, the festival highlights the work of **Cartoon Saloon**, with Creative Director and Co-Founder **Tomm Moore**. Famous for *The Secret of Kells* which received a nomination for Best Animated feature at the Academy Awards® in 2010, the studio is currently developing and producing a number feature film and TV projects including the award winning children's series *Skunk Fu!*

The full festival programme, Delegate registration and online tickets sales are available now. For more information visit www.encounters-festival.org.uk.

Join the discussion and find us on Facebook and Twitter @EncountersSFF #ENC2011

EDITOR'S NOTES

Bristol Encounters International Film Festival is the umbrella festival for Animated Encounters and Brief Encounters which together presents one of the world's best-known showcases and meeting points for new and established international short and animated film talent. The longest running competitive short film and animation festival in the UK, the leading UK gateway to the world's most prestigious short film and animation awards (Academy Awards®, BAFTA, European Film Awards, Cartoon d'Or) and one of Bristol's leading cultural events, Encounters seeks to promote the importance of short film as a means to develop and progress the next generation of creative talent. The 2011 festival will be held in Bristol, UK, between 16 – 20 November. The festival is funded by the British Film Institute, Bristol City Council, Creative England and South West Screen. Encounters Festivals Ltd operates as an independent company and is a registered charity. For more details log on to: www.encounters-festival.org.uk

Irish Film Board

Bord Scannán na hÉireann/the Irish Film Board (IFB) is the national development agency for the Irish film industry investing in talent, creativity and enterprise. The agency supports and promotes the Irish film industry and the use of Ireland as a location for international production. www.irishfilmboard.ie

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