



FIAF Announces 2020 Animation First Festival

The Only US Festival Dedicated to French Animation

Highlights include:

- Premieres of 18 films, including *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily*, *Hello World!*, *Marona's Fantastic Tale*, *Notre Dame de Paris*, *The Age of Builders*, and *The Prince's Voyage*
- Filmmaker Jean-François Laguionie celebrated as Guest of Honor
- Special Work-in-Progress presentations of *Mars Express* and *Brazen*
- Editor Benjamin Massoubre goes Behind the Scenes of *I Lost My Body*
- Spotlight Panel on Women in Animation
- This year's César-nominated films and the Best Shorts of the Annecy International Animation Film Festival highlight the finest in animation
- Free exhibits illuminate worlds of Lorenzo Mattotti, virtual and augmented reality, and video games

New York, NY (UPDATED January 16, 2020)—Celebrating France's rich tradition as a pioneer of animation, the **French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF)** presents the **2020 Animation First Festival**, showcasing the vast history, enduring ingenuity, and diversity of France's renowned animation studios and schools. Benefitting from a burgeoning animation field poised to enter a historic awards season, this year's schedule includes 16 premieres, award-winning features and shorts, immersive exhibits, virtual reality and video game demonstrations, insightful panels with filmmakers, and more. The Festival runs from **Friday, February 7 to Sunday, February 9**. Tickets are available at fiaf.org/animation.

Animation First opens with the US Premiere of *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily* (2019) by noted illustrator **Lorenzo Mattotti** on Friday, February 7. This adaptation of the beloved 1945 Italian children's book by Dino Buzzati marks the debut feature film by Mattotti, who is known for his celebrated *New Yorker* covers and graphic novels. Later that evening, the **Best of Annecy** brings highlights from the 2019 Annecy International Animation Film Festival, including two Oscar-nominated shorts—"Daughter" ("Dcema") and "Mémorable."

Jean-François Laguionie honored

The Festival continues on Saturday, February 8, with the US Premiere of *The Prince's Voyage* (2019), the most recent film by legendary director **Jean-François Laguionie**, this year's guest of honor, as well as his *Louise by the Shore* (2016). Laguionie is one of the most important contemporary animation filmmakers, and he has been fittingly celebrated with awards, retrospectives, exhibitions, and restorations of his early works. On Sunday, February 9, FIAF will present a newly restored print of his debut feature *Gwen and the Book of Sand* (1982), and a program of his shorts including his breakthrough "Rowing Across the Atlantic" (1978) which received a Palme d'Or at Cannes. His acclaimed *The Painting* (2011), will be shown in two programs geared toward young audiences (Feb. 5 and Feb. 7), and the director himself will discuss his storied career and preview excerpts of his forthcoming film *Slocum* (Feb. 8). In conjunction with the Festival, Laguionie will conduct masterclasses with students at the Pratt Institute and the School of Visual Arts.

Notable Premieres

The US Premiere of *Hello World!*, a whimsical examination of a fragile ecosystem, highlights Saturday's schedule, while the NY Premiere of **Anca Damian's** *Marona's Fantastic Tale* (2019), nominated for Best Feature at the 2019 Annecy International Animated Film Festival, marks Sunday's lineup.

A special presentation of the critically hailed movie *The Swallows of Kabul* (2019), the debut film from Zabou Breitman and Eléa Gobbé-Mévellec, featuring a post-screening Q&A with Breitman, anchors Saturday's program. This adaptation of the eponymous novel by Yasmina Khadra was introduced to New York audiences during a Work-In-Progress presentation at the 2019 edition of Animation First. It will be followed by a late-night presentation of eclectic and irreverent shorts from Oscar-winning production company **Autour de Minuit**.

The festival will close with its annual presentation of the **2020 César-Nominated Short Animated films**, showcasing France's most notable achievements in this category over the past year.

In a special Monday presentation, Animation First partners with the French public institution in charge of conservation and restoration of the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris and the New York Institute of Technology to present the US premiere of *Notre Dame de Paris, The Age of the Builders* (2019), at Florence Gould Hall. This timely look at the grand cathedral traces its 850-year history up to the tragic fire on April 16, 2019.

Works-in-Progress, Behind-the-Scenes, Discussions

Building on its legacy of sharing sneak peaks of anticipated works and insider looks at noteworthy projects, Animation First will offer fascinating insights across several revealing programs. On Saturday,

Benjamin Massoubre, editor of the **Oscar-nominated *I Lost My Body*** (2019), will give a behind-the-scenes presentation into the creation of this film, following a free screening of the feature. Later that day, Laguionie will present excerpts of his next film, ***Slocum***, as part of a wide-ranging discussion, and directors **Phuong Mai Nguyen** and **Charlotte Cambon de Lavalette** will discuss the process of adapting Penelope Bagieu's best-selling graphic novel ***Brazen***, highlighting the lives of 30 extraordinary women.

On Sunday, Cambon de Lavalette and Nguyen will be joined by director Anca Damian, writer Anik Leray, and producer Valérie Schermann for a **Women in Animation** panel covering equal representation in the industry; Lorenzo Mattotti will discuss his debut feature film, *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily*, as well as his work as an illustrator with *New Yorker* art editor Françoise Mouly; and director Jérémie Périn (*Lastman*) will present clips from his debut feature film, sci-fi thriller ***Mars Express***, along with screenwriter Laurent Sarfati and producer Didier Crest.

Exhibitions, video games, virtual and augmented reality

An acclaimed illustrator, Lorenzo Mattotti has been known for his magazine work and graphic novels prior to output as a filmmaker. In conjunction with the US premiere of his first feature film, FIAF has collaborated with Mattotti to stage an exhibition showcasing 25 of his *New Yorker* covers in FIAF's Haskell Library from February 7 to March 7.

As in year's past, visitors to Animation First will be able to sample an array of new video games and virtual reality programs benefitting from France's prolific animation industry for free in the FIAF gallery. This year's exhibition includes the 14-minute documentary ***Accused #2, Walter Sisulu***, which takes you inside the trial of Walter Sisulu, an anti-apartheid activist in South Africa, using the restored audio recordings. Also on display is the interactive virtual reality puzzle, ***A Fisherman's Tale; Gloomy Eyes***, a virtual reality experience, voiced by Colin Farrell; immersive films that explore masterpieces by Monet, Gauguin, and Henri Rousseau; and much more. An augmented reality exhibit featuring work by students at the Ecole des Métiers du Cinéma d'Animation (EMCA) in Angoulême will take place in Tinker Auditorium.

From the Curators

"As we launch our third Animation First festival, we see this medium excel at sharing the untellable and depicting the unimaginable," said festival co-curators **Delphine Selles-Alvarez**, FIAF's Film Curator, and **Catherine Lamairesse**, Director of Special Projects at FIAF. "Jean-François Laguionie was a pioneer in pushing animation beyond children's stories. Meanwhile Zabou Breitman and Elea Gobbé-Mévellec find humanity in the depths of unthinkable cruelty through the ethereal *The Swallows of Kabul*. And this year we see the grandeur—before tragedy hit—of Paris's most beloved monument come to life through 3D technology in *Notre Dame du Paris, The Age of Builders*. Each work presents its own world with a unique aesthetic and memorable characters, and we are thrilled to share them with New York audiences."

About Animation First

Animation First is the only film festival in the United States dedicated to French animation. Today, France is Europe's largest producer and the world's third-largest exporter of animated film. Since its early beginnings in the late 19th century when Émile Reynaud projected his Pantomimes Lumineuses

at the Musée Grévin in Paris, the French animation industry has inspired filmmakers and artists. Their resulting experiments with puppets, cutouts, and stop motion, have been instrumental in inventing important techniques in cinema. Renowned for its stylistic innovation and an approach that integrates artisanal methods with technological ingenuity, French animation continues to garner awards worldwide and spans a diversity of genres. It is responsible for a variety of films from independent art-house successes such as Sylvain Chomet's *The Triplets of Belleville* and Michael Dudok de Wit's *The Red Turtle* to those for mature audiences like *Persepolis* and big-budget blockbusters, including *Ballerina* and the Franco-American *Despicable Me* franchise.

Beyond films, France has carved out an important space in animated TV programs, web series, video games, and the rapidly developing fields of virtual reality and new technologies.

Animation First is presented by FIAF whose mission is to create and offer New Yorkers innovative and unique programs in education and the arts that explore the evolving diversity and richness of French cultures. FIAF seeks to generate new ideas and promote cross cultural dialogue through partnerships and new platforms of expression.

All programs are subject to change. For the most up-to-date program information, visit fiaf.org/animation.

FESTIVAL PROGRAM

Listed chronologically within each section

Feature Films

Opening-Night Program & US Premiere: *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily*

Dir. Lorenzo Mattotti, 2019, 82 min

Introduction by Mattotti & post-screening reception

In French with English subtitles

All ages

Friday, February 7 at 7pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

Inspired by the 1945 classic Italian children's book by Dino Buzzati, acclaimed Italian illustrator Lorenzo Mattotti brings bold colors and a graphic eye to his first feature film, a tale about friendship, tolerance, and nature. When Tonio, a bear prince, is kidnapped by hunters in the mountains of Sicily, his father—the king—sends his subjects down to the plain, inhabited by men, to search for his son as well as food for the winter. Faced with the bears' invasion, the men fight back but are unable to overcome their tenacity, helped by a little bit of magic. Tonio is found, but decides to stay in the land of men where bears have to learn to coexist with human mores. Produced by the team behind *The Red Turtle*, adapted by award-winning screenwriter Thomas Bidegain (*A Prophet*), and voiced by such luminaries as Jean-Claude Carrière and Leïla Bekhti, *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily* "is classic animation at its best, clear and pleasing, calculated to charm children and adults alike," says *Variety*. Made in Paris and Angoulême. Presented in partnership with the Italian Cultural Institute.

Free Screening: *I Lost My Body*

Dir. Jérémy Clapin, 2019, 81 min

In French with English subtitles

Adults

Saturday, February 8 at 11am

Le Skyroom

In a Parisian laboratory, a severed hand escapes its unhappy fate and sets out to reconnect with its body. During a hair-raising escapade across the city, the extremity fends off pigeons and rats alike to reunite with pizza boy Naoufel. Its memories of Naoufel and his love for librarian Gabrielle may provide answers about what caused the hand's separation, and are a poetic backdrop for a possible reunion between the three. Based on Guillaume Laurant's novel *Happy Hand*, *I Lost My Body* is the first animated film to win the Nespresso Grand Prize awarded by the jury of the International Critics' Week at the Cannes Film Festival. The screening will be followed by a behind-the-scenes presentation by the film's editor, Benjamin Massoubre.

US Premiere: *Hello World! (Bonjour le Monde!)*

Dir. Anne-Lise Koehler & Éric Serre, 2019, 67 min

In French with English subtitles

All ages

Saturday, February 8 at 11:45am

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

Made with *papier-mâché* puppets animated in stop motion and hand-crafted sculptures set in beautifully painted backgrounds, this delightful and delicate film introduces all audiences to a fragile ecosystem through the lives of ten animals: a pike, a beaver, a bat, a fire salamander, a turtle, an emperor dragonfly, and four unforgettable birds. Together they illuminate the wonders of nature, shouting, "Hello world!" Made in Angoulême and Paris.

US Premiere: *The Prince's Voyage (Le Voyage du Prince)*

Dir. Jean-François Laguionie & Xavier Picard, 2019, 77 min

Introduction by Laguionie

In French with English subtitles

Ages 7 and up

Saturday, February 8 at 1:45pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

When an old monkey Prince washes up on a foreign shore, weakened and confused, he finds shelter and care from a young boy named Tom and his parents. The old Prince also discovers a fascinating new world where scientific knowledge is valued above all, and the Academy of Science rules with absolute convictions. However, the Prince's arrival at once threatens this strict society, and also opens a door towards acceptance and open-mindedness. A follow up to Laguionie's *A Monkey's Tale*, this beautifully hand-drawn film with nods to classic films, enchants children and adults with its philosophical themes and sumptuous images. Made in Paris and Angoulême.

Louise by the Shore (Louise en hiver)

Dir. Jean-François Laguionie, 2016, 75 min

Introduction by Laguionie

In French with English subtitles

Ages 13 and up
Saturday, February 8 at 5:30pm
FIAF Florence Gould Hall

On the last day of summer, Louise, who has been vacationing in a small seaside town, realizes that the last train has departed without her. She suddenly finds herself alone—a septuagenarian Robinson Crusoe—and forced to confront the oncoming winter alone. A novel reinvention of a desert island story, Laguionie's poignant and personal allegory for aging follows Louise as she scavenges food, finds her Friday in a canine companion (voiced by Laguionie himself), eschews rescue, and reflects on her life.

The Swallows of Kabul (Les Hirondelles de Kaboul)
Dir. Zabou Breitman and Eléa Gobbé-Mévellec, 2019, 81 min
Post-screening Q&A with Zabou Breitman
In French with English Subtitles
Adults
Saturday, February 8 at 7:30pm
FIAF Florence Gould Hall

Based on Yasmina Khadra's eponymous best-selling novel, *The Swallows of Kabul* is set in the summer of 1998 in the Afghan capital under Taliban rule. In the midst of a repressive and unforgiving regime, Zunaira and Mohsen are young and deeply in love, while Mussarat and her husband Atiq suffer terribly. One day, a foolish gesture causes life to take an irrevocable turn, upending the fates of these two Afghan couples. Critically embraced following its premiere at the Cannes Film festival the harrowing film brings this powerful story to life through shimmering watercolor-style animation that accentuates the region's sun-bathed landscapes and the brutality of life under the Taliban regime. Made in Paris.

NY Premiere: *Marona's Fantastic Tale (L'extraordinaire voyage de Marona)*
Dir. Anca Damian, 2019, 92 min
Post-screening Q&A with Damian
In French with English subtitles
Ages 8 and up
Sunday, February 9 at 1pm
FIAF Florence Gould Hall

After an accident, Marona, a small Labrador mix with a big heart, reflects on all the homes and humans that have welcomed her throughout her life. Brilliantly told through vibrant colors and dazzling animation, this charming tale follows Marona's adventures as she meets and is adopted by fascinating characters, including a circus acrobat and a sweet young girl with an eye patch. Director Anca Damian (*Crulic – The Path to Beyond*) breathes Marona's world into being, using an inventive mix of cut outs, 2D, and 3D animation techniques to impart the wisdom an average dog with an extraordinary life. Made in Paris and Bordeaux.

Gwen, the Book of Sand (Gwen, le livre de sable)
Dir. Jean-François Laguionie, 1985, 67 min
Introduction by Laguionie
In French with English subtitles
Ages 13 and up

Sunday, February 9 at 3:45pm
FIAF Florence Gould Hall

For his first feature film, Laguionie created a starkly beautiful post-apocalyptic desert where items from past civilizations drop out of the sky. When Gwen's friend is kidnapped—by those responsible for the dropped objects—she and the elder Roseline must trek across the dunes to the City of the Dead to find him. Recently restored to preserve Laguionie's lush, painterly images, this ecological parable casts two female characters as powerful instruments of change.

US Premiere: *Notre Dame de Paris, The Age of Builders (The L'Épreuve des siècles : Notre Dame de Paris)*

Dir. Emmanuel Blanchard, 2018, 100 min

In English

Ages 13 and up

Monday, February 10 at 7pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

For eight centuries, the Notre Dame of Paris has witnessed to the history of France, watching over its greatest triumphs and most challenging moments. This documentary, spanning 850 years, traces the story of the grand Cathedral from its visionary beginnings through the tragic fire on April 16, 2019. As France prepares for the considerable restoration project to repair damage from the fire, this documentary pays homage to the stonecutters, blacksmiths, glassmakers, architects, and leaders who contributed to this towering monument. Presented in collaboration with the French public institution in charge of conservation and restoration of the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris and New York Institute of Technology.

The Painting (Le Tableau)

See "Animation First Around Town," page 12.

Short Film Programs

Best of Annecy Shorts

Adults, 72 min

Friday, February 7 at 9:45pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

The Annecy International Animation Film Festival is the biggest animated film festival in the world and annually brings thousands of people to southeastern France to discover the latest animated gems, current and future trends, and meet filmmakers and creators. Straight from the 2019 edition, this program of films traverses the globe with a selection of notable shorts, including "Daughter" and "Memorable," which are nominated for the 2020 Academy Awards.

- "A Taste of Tokyo," Dir. L. Baille, M. Dunyach, B. Kleiman, Q. Rigaux, C. Sun; 2019; 49 sec
- "Don't Know What" Dir. Thomas Renoldner; 2019; 8 min 16 sec
- "Daughter" ("Dcera") Dir. Daria Kashcheeva; 2019; 14 min 43 sec
- "Rain" ("Deszcz") Dir. Piotr Milczarek ; 2019 ; 5 min

- **“Uncle Thomas: Accounting for the Days” (“Tio Tomas – A contabilidade dos dias”)**
Dir. Regina Pessoa; 2018: 13 min 4 sec
- **“Drive” (“Pulsion”)** Dir. Pedro Casavecchia; 2019; 6 min 57 sec
- **“Maestro”** Dir. Illogic; 2019; 1 min 33 sec
- **“Mémorable”** Dir. Bruno Collet ; 2019 ; 12 min 2 sec
- **“My Generation”** Dir. Ludovic Houplain; 2018; 8 min 4 sec
- **“Ramen”** Dir. E. Adsuara, G. Gérard, G. Legendre, M.L. Coumau, M. Geronimo; 2019; 49 sec

Student Shorts

Adult, 74 min

Saturday, February 8 at 7:45pm

Tinker Auditorium

This selection of notable student shorts from France’s top animation schools—Gobelins - School l’image, EMCA, ENSI, MoPA, and others—showcases the country’s emerging talent.

- **“Sous la glace”** Dir. M. Baulard, I. Berrahma, F. Dupont, L. Estampes, Q. Nory, H. Potin (ENSI); 2019; 6 min 50 sec
- **“Pool”** Dir. I.N. Lacosta, B. Michelet (EMCA); 2019; 4 min 40 sec
- **“Instinct”** Dir. A. Allender, M. Antoine, L. Belmonte, C. Guillermin, V. Kirsch, E. Thomasson of ArtFX; 2019; 4 min 37 sec
- **“Garden Party”** Dir. T. Dufresne, F. Babikian, G. Grapperon, L. Navarro, V. Bayoux, V. Claire (MoPA); 2016; 7 min 25 sec
- **“Poilus”** Dir. G. Auberval, L. Dozoul, S. Gomez, T. Hek, H. Lagrange, A. Laroye, D. Lashcari (ISART Digital); 2016; 4 min 32 sec
- **“Hors Course”** Dir. M. Burnod, A. Ensergueix, N. Lopez, C. Masson, J. Monti (ENSI); 2019; 5 min 56 sec
- **“Jubilé”** Dir. C. Soudet, C. Piogé, M. Duvert, Marie El Kadiri, A. Marmion (MoPA); 2016; 7 min 27 sec
- **“In Orbit”** Dir. S. Chakraborty, H. Chen, M. Joffily, J. Polley, J. Trouvé (Gobelins); 2019; 5 min 26 sec
- **“Résistance”** Dir. A. Chauvet, A Le Danois, Q. Foulon, F. Glasse, J. Jean, J. Narat (MoPA); 2016; 7 min 13 sec
- **“Grounded”** Dir. L. Durkheim (Gobelins/CalArts); 2016; 4 min 10 sec
- **“Preston”** Dir. G. Amar, L. Doucerain, J. Heu, W. Marcere, T. Tieu, M. Vaast (ISART Digital); 2016; 3 min 52 sec
- **“Sirocco”** Dir. A. Hug, L. Madec, K. Tarpinian, T. Lopez, R. Garcia (MoPA); 2016; 5 min 24 sec
- **“Hot Dog”** Dir. F. Burban, L. Cameron, N. Diaz, C. Raimondo, H. Valin (ENSI); 2019; 5 min 42 sec

Spotlight on Autour de Minuit

Adult, 75 min

Saturday, February 8 at 10pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

Founded in 2001, Paris-based production company Autour de Minuit has been responsible for some of the most imaginative and original animated and graphic projects over the past two decades, including 2018 Animation First favorite “Logorama” (2010 Academy Award, 2011 César). This eclectic program, organized by Autour de Minuit head of distribution Annabel Sebag, introduces audiences to some of the producer’s greatest hits from irreverent responses to current events to the absurd and politically incorrect adventures of tiny creatures called Babioles.

- **“Brexicated”** Dir. Chris Shepherd; 2018; 6 min
- **“Babioles”** Dir. Mathieu Auvray; 2010; 4 min 44 sec
- **“Metamorphosis”** Dir. Carla Periera, Juanfran Jacinto; 2019; 10 min 35 sec
- **“Sous le cartilage des côtes”** Dir. Bruno Tondeur; 2018; 13 min
- **“Reruns”** Dir. Rosto; 2018; 14 min 45 sec
- **“The Country Fair” (“La foire agricole”)** Dir. Vincent Patar & Stéphane Aubier; 2019; 26 min

The Imaginary World of Jean-François Laguionie

Introduction by Jean-François Laguionie

Ages 10 and up, 80 min

Sunday, February 9 at 5:30pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

Before he focused his career on feature films, Jean-François Laguionie was admired for his enchanting short animated films. Spanning works from 1964’s “The Lady and the Cellist” to 1978’s César Award–winning “Rowing Across the Atlantic,” this program delves into the singular imagination of a visionary filmmaker. All the films were recently restored and digitized by L’Agence du court métrage and are in French with English subtitles.

- **“The Actor” (“L’acteur”)**, 1975, 5 min 35 sec
- **“The Mask of the Devil” (“Le Masque du diable”)**, 1976, 12 min
- **“The Lady and the Cellist” (“La demoiselle et le violoncelliste”)**, 1964, 9 min
- **“A Bomb by Chance” (“Une Bombe par hasard ... ”)**, 1969, 9 min
- **“Potr and the Mermaid” (“Potr’ et la fille des eaux”)**, 1974, 11 min
- **“Noah’s Ark” (“L’arche de Noé”)**, 1967, 11 min
- **“Rowing Across the Atlantic” (“La Traversée de l’Atlantique à la rame”)**, 1978, 21 min

Closing-Night Program: César-Nominated Shorts

Adults

Sunday, February 9 at 7:45pm

FIAF Florence Gould Hall

This special closing-night program will celebrate some of the best short animated films from the past year. On January 29, the César Awards, France’s equivalent to the Oscars, will announce its 2020 nominees. Animation First will screen all the finalists in the Best Animated Short category, alongside other notable films, including “The Magnificent Cake!” (Winner, 2018 Toronto International Film Festival), “Memorable” (short list, 2020 Academy Awards), and “I’m Going Out for Cigarettes”

(nominee, 2020 Annie Awards). This is a rare opportunity for US audiences to see these acclaimed works on the big screen.

Works-in-Progress, Behind the Scenes, & Discussions

Behind the Scenes: *I Lost My Body*

Saturday, February 8 at 12:30pm
FIAF Le Skyroom

Winner of the 2019 New York Film Critics Circle Award for Best Animated Feature and a nominee for the 2020 Academy Award, *I Lost My Body* (2019) has been hailed for its originality and creativity. Film editor Benjamin Massoubre will discuss his collaboration with director Jérémy Clapin and his role in shaping this acclaimed feature, as well as the stakes in editing in the animation industry. Massoubre has been nominated for a 2020 Eddie by the American Cinema Editors for his work in *I Lost my Body*. He has edited several other features, including *The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales*, *Long Way North*, and the TV series *Iron Man: Armored Adventures*. This discussion will be preceded by a free screening of *I Lost My Body* in Le Skyroom at 11am.

Discussion: Jean-François Laguionie

Saturday, February 8 at 3:45pm
FIAF Le Skyroom

In this special conversation, Jean-François Laguionie, Animation First's Guest of Honor, will discuss his rich body of work as a visual artist, writer, and filmmaker over the course of his 50-year career. In the past year, Laguionie has received the Honorary Cristal at the Annecy Festival, restorations of his previous films, and career retrospectives. This program will explore his early influences working alongside animation luminaries Paul Grimault (*The King and the Mockingbird*) and Jacques Colombat (*Robinson & compagnie*); delve into the making of his latest feature, *The Prince's Voyage*; and preview his upcoming film *Slocum*.

Work-in-Progress: *Brazen (Les Culottées)*

Saturday, February 8 at 5:30pm
FIAF Le Skyroom

In *Brazen*, directors Phuong Mai Nguyen and Charlotte Cambon de Lavalette adapt the best-selling graphic novel by Penelope Bagieu, which shines light on 30 women—some well-known and others less so—whose determination, boldness, and strength changed the times and societies in which they lived. Both Nguyen and Camon de Lavalette will discuss the forthcoming television series that will illustrate the lives of an Apache warrior, a Hollywood star, a lighthouse keeper, a cosmonaut, an empress, and many other extraordinary women through animated shorts this spring.

Work-in-Progress: *Mars Express*

Sunday, February 9 at 1pm
FIAF Le Skyroom

Director Jérémie Périn (*Lastman*), screenwriter Laurent Sarfati, and producer Didier Crest present the process behind their forthcoming feature, *Mars Express*. This sci-fi thriller imagines an overcrowded

Earth plagued by war and poverty. A pair of detectives venture to a prosperous colony on Mars to track down a cybernetics student before she is found by deadly assassins.

Discussion: Lorenzo Mattotti with Françoise Mouly

Sunday, February 9 at 3:30pm
FIAF Le Skyroom

Before he set out to direct *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily*, Lorenzo Mattotti was best known for his eye-catching *New Yorker* covers and eclectic comic books. In this career-spanning discussion, Mattotti reflects on his work, from his iconic magazine illustrations to his transition to the silver screen with *New Yorker* art editor Françoise Mouly.

Discussion: Women in Animation

Sunday, February 9 at 5:15pm
FIAF Le Skyroom

As animation grows in popularity, so does the need to ensure that women are equally represented in the industry. This discussion will bring together women from a variety of perspectives, including producer Valerie Schermann (*The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily*), director Anca Damian (*Marona's Fantastic Tale*), writer Anik Leray (*The Prince's Voyage*, *The Painting*), and Phuong Mai Nguyen and Charlotte Cambon de Lavalette (both of *Brazen*), who are currently working in animation in Europe. They will discuss the state of the industry, what is currently at stake for women, and challenges that lie ahead.

Exhibitions & Workshops

***New Yorker* Covers by Lorenzo Mattotti**

Friday, February 7 through Saturday, March 7
Haskell Library

Before he made his first feature film, *The Bears's Famous Invasion of Sicily*, Italian illustrator and graphic novel author Lorenzo Mattotti was best known for his enchanting cover images that he has been creating for the *New Yorker* since 1995. During Animation First, FIAF will display approximately 25 of Mattotti's 32 covers in FIAF's second-floor Haskell Library, showcasing the artist's astute eye and virtuosic compositions. Mattotti prepares his cover images using oil paints in vibrant colors and imbues them with a wry sensibility. "Mattotti's covers lure us with their beauty," said his *New Yorker* editor Françoise Mouly, "then offer a greater understanding of the world with their wit."

Video Games and Virtual Reality

Ages 8 and up
Friday, February 7 to Sunday, February 9 11am–6pm
FIAF Gallery

Throughout the festival the FIAF Gallery will be open for free to the general public to experience virtual reality films and video games from French studios like Atlas V and CinéTivé, as well as distributors such as the Franco-German channel Arte. Visitors will be transported to South Africa to the trial of Walter Sisulu, who went to prison with Nelson Mandela in 1964, tour Notre Dame from its rose windows all the

way to top of its famous spire, go on a watery adventure as a devastating storm threatens, and discover masterpieces by Claude Monet, Henri Rousseau and Paul Gauguin anew.

Virtual Reality

- ***Accused #2, Walter Sisulu***, Dir. Nicolas Champeaux, Gilles Porte; 2018; 14 min
- ***Claude Monet—The Water Lily Obsession***, Nicolas Thépot; 2018; 6 min
- ***The Dreams of Henri Rousseau***, Dir. Nicolas Autheman; 2018; 7 min
- ***Gauguin's Inner Journey***, Dir. Hayoun Kwon; 2017; 3 min 47 sec
- ***Gloomy Eyes***, Fernando Maldonado, Jorge Tereso; 2020; 18 min
- ***Isle of the Dead***, Dir. Benjamin Nuel; 2018; 8 min
- ***The Scream***, Dir. Sandra Paugam, Charles Ayats; 2019; 15 min

Video Games/Interactive Experiences

- ***Notre-Dame: Assassin's Creed Interactive Tour***, Ubisoft; 2019
- ***A Fisherman's Tale*** Dir. Alexis Moroz, Balthazar Auxietre; 2019
- ***A Plague Tale: Innocence*** Dir. David Dedeine, Sebastian Wloch; 2018

Augmented Reality

Friday, February 7 to Sunday February 9 from 11am to 6pm
Tinker Auditorium

This exhibition presents the work of fourth-year students from Angoulême-based EMCA, one of the top animation schools in France. Each one of the 14 works that will be on display is a three-panel comic strip containing a hidden scenario. With the help of augmented reality app, Artivive, animations accompanied by soundtracks, will reveal themselves from within the artwork.

Virtual Reality Workshops

Saturday, February 8 and Sunday, February 9 from 11am to 6pm
First come first served
FIAF Gallery

Create a VR film during 45-minute hands-on workshops in which participants will use the latest technology, ranging from room scale to 360-degree imaging, to create their own VR tours. New York Institute of Technology professors and staff will lead participants through all the steps of production, including design, development, asset creation, and production. Special thanks to New York Institute of Technology.

Animation First Around Town

The Painting (Le Tableau)

Dir. Jean-François Laguionie, 2011, 76 min

In French with English subtitles

Ages 9 and up

Wednesday, February 5 at 6:30pm

Lycée Français de New York

In this charming movie animated in sumptuous style, the world is an unfinished canvas populated by characters who go in search of their creator. For mysterious reasons, the Painter has left his work incomplete—causing conflict between the Toupins (Allduns), who are entirely painted, the Pafinis (Halfies), who lack a few colors, and the Reufs (Sketchies), who are barely outlined. Three friends, one of each class, go on a quest to find the artist so he can finish the piece and hopefully unite the characters. This briskly paced French production takes the viewer through landscapes reminiscent of Monet, Matisse, Bonnard, and others as it tackles themes of identity and creativity. This film will also be presented to school groups as part of FIAF's Young Audience Program on Friday, February 7 at 11am. More information is available at fiaf.org/yap.

Merci!

Lead sponsors of Animation First are Atari, Bordeaux Métropole, Pôle Image Magelis (Angoulême), and Ville de Paris.

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