



PRESS REPORT, May 04, 2010

## Animation visits Stuttgart

Stuttgart – Today the 17th Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film opened its doors. That means six exciting days full of animation with hot topics, colourful worlds and strange figures. The crème de la crème of the international animated film industry were all present at the opening gala which was held at the city's largest cinema and completely sold-out. Public interest is huge and as a result many of the other events such as the world premiere of "The Sandman – Adventure in the Land of Dreams", the big Äffle & Pferdle Birthday Gala and the five International Competition programmes are almost sold-out too.

The Festival's two directors, **Ulrich Wegenast** and **Dittmar Lumpp** were optimistic that they could put on a Festival comparable with the previous year's, despite a difficult economic situation. The event started with prominent speakers, international guests and the best animated films worldwide. **Dr. Susanne Eisenmann**, Stuttgart's Mayoress for Culture, Education and Sport and **Mr. Helmut Rau**, Minister in the Ministry of State for Baden-Wuerttemberg both made a point of being present at the opening of the 17th Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film and greeted the international guests. Television presenter **Markus Brock** compered the evening with his usual aplomb.

This was followed by the first part of the popular International Competition for which the best films from all over the world are again nominated.

This included the **Oscar-winner 2010** in the category "best animated short film" - "*Logorama*" by François Alaux, Hervé de Crécy and Ludovic Houplain. In this animated film, critical of globalisation, little Michelin men hunt down Ronald McDonald whilst the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lion escapes from the zoo with the Linux penguins.

In the burlesque "*The Lady and the Reaper*", also nominated for an Oscar and produced by **Antonio Banderas**, a god in white argues with the Grim Reaper about the life of a not so young lady.

Dustin Grella's film "*Prayers for Peace*" is not just a topical film, but a very personal drama which tells of the tragic death of Grella's younger brother in the Iraq war and which erects a cinematic memorial in honour of all the others who have also been killed.

Fascinating works are also produced here in the region. "*Love&Theft*", the newest film from internationally famous filmmaker **Andreas Hykade**, took its viewers on a psychedelic journey through (animated) history.

**Director Javier Recio Gracia** ("*The Lady and the Reaper*"), **Dustin Grella** ("*Prayers for Peace*"), **Joseph Pierce** ("*A Family Portrait*") and **Andreas Hykade** ("*Love&Theft*") presented their films personally.

At 10.00 pm the evening continued with the **Opening Party** in the Festival Café, where Festival organisers, animated filmmakers and guests were able to exchange views in a relaxed atmosphere.

And all those who were not able to get tickets, had a great time at Stuttgart's Schlossplatz at the **open air cinema** where they watched the **German premiere** of the newest episodes of the popular series "*The Penguins of Madagascar*" and the film "*Madagascar*".

More information is available at [www.ifs.de](http://www.ifs.de). We would be delighted to send further image and text material on request.

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*The Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film (ITFS), May 04 – May 09, 2010, was founded in 1982 and is one of the largest and most important festivals for animated film worldwide. Prize money totalling 56,000 Euros is awarded in seven competition categories. The Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film works closely with the FMX 2010, the 15th Conference on Animation, Effects, Games and Interactive Media, Europe's largest expert conference for animation, effects, games and digital media. Together with the FMX and Michael Schmetz Media Consult the Festival holds the business platform Animation Production Day (May 04 – May 05, 2010).*