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Press Release, Stuttgart, 8 May 2015

## **Animation Production Day 2015 – The Success Story Continues**

### **For the first time a contract for a European co-production has been signed directly at APD**

**The biggest yet Animation Production Day (APD) came to an end in Stuttgart this evening. Around 120 participants from 12 different countries negotiated cooperations for the 37 selected animation projects showcased in this year's APD in Stuttgart's L-Bank in over 450 one-to-one meetings. The total production volume of these projects is around 130 million Euros. APD is the most important German coproduction and cofinancing market dedicated to animation and this was already the ninth time the event has taken place as part of FMX and ITFS.**

Nine feature film projects, 13 series, three game/app projects and 13 crossmedia or transmedia projects were presented at APD – 16 from Germany as well as projects from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Spain, France, Belgium, Croatia, Poland, England and Egypt. During two highly focused, meticulously planned days, APD offers the opportunity for efficient discussions between producers, distributors, broadcasters and funders.

The growing importance of APD is underlined by a success message: On May 8 a contract was concretely signed at APD. Jan Bonath (Scopas Medien AG, Germany) and Mark Mertens (Grid Animation, Belgium) signed a coproduction agreement for the project "Marnie's World". Jan Bonath said: *"We're really delighted to have signed this contract at APD. We began the negotiations here last year and now the financing is complete and the project is going into production."* Mark Mertens added: *"It could never have happened so quickly without APD."*

Many projects appearing at APD in previous years have now been successfully produced. The Swedish-Danish production "Beyond Beyond" was presented at APD in 2012, was screened at the Berlinale in 2014 and now is presented in the feature film competition at ITFS. Ulysses Film's and Studio Rakete's project "Two by Two" (Germany/Ireland/Belgium/Luxembourg), now selling very successfully internationally, was presented at APD in 2008; and even the 2015 Oscar-nominated Irish production "Song of the Sea" (Ireland/Denmark/Belgium/Luxembourg and France) from Cartoon Saloon was presented at APD in 2009 – 2015 it is screened as a German Premiere in the feature film competition at ITFS 2015. In addition, "Latte Igel" (Parka Pictures (Denmark), Dreamin Dolphin (Germany), Eagle Eye (Germany), Grid Animation (Belgium)) got successfully underway at APD and is about to go into production. Famous series like "The School for Vampires", "Raven the Little Rascal", "Knight Rusty", "Marco Polo", "Tom und das Erdbeermarmeladebrot mit Honig" and many more have also been presented at APD since 2007.

APD's new "Producers Meet Producers" section got off to a very successful start this year. Here, almost 80 producers used the opportunity to meet other producers to find suitable

production partners for their own projects or to become involved in other projects in order to optimise studio capacity.

Dittmar Lumpp, Managing Director, Organisation & Finances, Festival of Animated Film Stuttgart and co-organiser of APD said: *“The idea for “Producers Meet Producers” was developed in collaboration with the market participants and shows us that such cooperation is absolutely the right route to take. We want what we offer to strengthen the competitive edge of the animation industry and will continue to align APD with constantly changing market demands in the future.”*

Professor Andreas Hykade, FMX Conference Chair and co-organiser of APD said: *“I’m delighted that this year as many as four projects from Filmakademie graduates were presented at APD. We’re training highly qualified new entrants into the industry here and it’s of particular importance to me that these talents are given the opportunity to introduce their ideas and concepts in this professional environment and to make contacts which will help them establish the quickest possible foothold in the market.”*

Artistic director of ITFS, Professor Ulrich Wegenast, said: *“This year, alongside the already existing partnerships, we’ve established new partnerships, for example, with CARTOON and Catalan Films&TV. International networks are an important cornerstone to facilitate international coproductions and to set up complex financing more quickly. Extending these partnerships further is an important goal for APD 2016.”*

An integral part of APD is the conference which this year, with around 200 participants, attracted great interest and was curated by Lilian Klages. Under the motto “Enable!“, speakers Axel von Maydell (CEO, Morgen Studios), Steffen Kottkamp (Creative Director, MackMedia, Europa-Park Media Company) and Christian Fannesbech (CEO/Creative Director, Investigate North) introduced cutting-edge methods of content development and production.

The second part of the conference, the *“Content Briefing Sessions”* presented by Christophe Erbès, was all about the concrete programme requirements of broadcasters and distributors. The speakers were Gabriele Holzner (Head of Family, Children and Lifestyle Programming, Hessischer Rundfunk), Wiebke Hofer (Senior Director of Sales, DHX Media), Katharina Pietzsch (Director, ZDFE.junior) and Jo Daris (Head of Operations m4e).

The conference’s third section, entitled *“Who Killed Bambi? – Journalism and Animation in Germany”*, was hosted by Ulrich Höcherl, editor-in-chief of *Blickpunkt Film*. After a keynote address from Gabriele Walther (Managing Director, Caligari Film), panelists Dr. Rolf Giesen (film academic and journalist, *Die Welt*), Daniel Kothenschulte (journalist, *Frankfurter Rundschau*), Tony Loeser (CEO/producer, MotionWorks), Andreas Platthaus (journalist, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*) and Julia Weber (Head of Theatrical Sales & Acquisitions, Global Screen) discussed the perception and success of German animation both at home and abroad. Here, controversial and passionate views on the qualities of German and international animation productions, reviews in the German press, the roles of film critics and TV broadcasters were all debated.

APD is hosted by the Festival of Animated Film Stuttgart and FMX – Conference on Animation, Effects, Games and Transmedia. The event is organised by the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg and the Film- und Medienfestival gGmbH. [www.animationproductionday.de](http://www.animationproductionday.de)

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