

# ANIMAFEST 9

SYMPOSIUM FOR CONTEMPORARY ANIMATION  
STUDIES — KIC, PRERADOVIČEVA 5

WORLD FESTIVAL OF ANIMATED FILM  
[WWW.ANIMAFEST.HR](http://WWW.ANIMAFEST.HR)

10 | 6 | 2026



Z... ZNAČI ZAGREB... IS FOR ZAGREB



# SCANNER XIII



# ANIMAFEST SCANNER XIII

## SYMPOSIUM FOR CONTEMPORARY ANIMATION STUDIES

09 – 10 June, 10:00 – 16:30 h, Kulturno informativni centar (KIC), Preradovićeva 5  
In English, open to public

The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the Symposium for Contemporary Animation Studies **Animafest Scanner XIII** aims again to create synergy of theoretical and practical discourses and stimulate exchange between filmmakers and scholars. As the worldwide animation studies are rapidly growing and evolving in recent years, catching up with the increasing field of animated films, Animafest Scanner symposium is again at the frontline of the discourse and the interaction of theoretical and practical approaches to animation. The symposium is held as part of the **World Festival of Animated Film - Animafest Zagreb**. Over the course of its fifty-four-years history, the festival has given a stage to different animation forms and formats in competition and non-competition environments, presenting a worldwide selection of auteur, experimental and mainstream animated films in various programs.

This year the speakers will focus on the following four subjects: **Genealogies of Animated Form: From Hand-Crafted Motion to Artificial Intelligence / Writing Animation History: Methods, Periodization and Perspective / Curating Animation: Festivals, Exhibitions and Canon Formation / Music in Animation.**

**Amid Amidi** is this year's keynote speaker and the recipient of the **Animafest Zagreb Award for Outstanding Contribution to Animation Studies for 2026**.

Journalist, critic, historian, and publisher, Amid Amidi is the co-founder and, from 2004 to 2025, the publisher and editor-in-chief of *Cartoon Brew*, an online magazine that became one of the most important platforms for information, criticism, and scholarship on animation in the twenty-first century. Amidi laid the groundwork for much subsequent research through his earlier periodical *Animation Blast* (1998–2007). Among his many books, the highly influential *Cartoon Modern: Style and Design in 1950s Animation* (2006), which earned the Theatre Library Association Award, holds a prominent place, as does *The Art of Pixar Short Films* (2009). His widely respected publications include *The Art of "Robots"* (2004) and *The Art of Pixar: The Complete Colorscripts and Select Art from 25 Years of Animation* (2011). In collaboration with Tee Bosustow, Amidi also authored the concise yet innovative and foundational *Inside UPA* (2007), a logical continuation of earlier research into modern animation. Equally interested in classical, modern, and contemporary animation, Amid Amidi has been a central catalyst and source of inspiration for many colleagues who have followed in his path. While his work continues to evolve, it already represents a major achievement as an exceptional and exemplary contribution to the study of American and global animation.

Historical and current trends, numerous perspectives, new findings in the fast-growing field of animation studies, paired with exciting speakers – all this and more awaits you at the **Animafest Scanner XIII symposium**, in the context of screenings and other events organised by **Animafest Zagreb 2026**.

### ORGANIZERS

World Festival of Animated Film –  
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– Nikica Gilić, PhD, Prof., Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb  
– Prof. Holger Lang, Independent Scholar  
– Prof. Hrvoje Turković, PhD, Prof. (retired), Academy of Dramatic Arts, University of Zagreb  
– Andrijana Ružič, Independent Scholar, Università Statale di Milano

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# PROGRAMME 2026

## 09/06 TUESDAY

09:45 Welcome & Introduction

### PANEL 1: GENEALOGIES OF ANIMATED FORM: FROM HAND-CRAFTED MOTION TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Moderator: Nikica Gilić

10:00 – 10:30

#### Animating an Archive: AI and the Limits of Cultural Heritage Interpretation

Jürgen Hagler (UAS Upper Austria, Ars Electronica), Celine Pham (media artist)

10:35 – 11:05

#### Narrative According to Landscape Animation

Akira Arimochi (Aichi University of the Arts)

-coffee break-

11:20 – 11:50

#### Golem Lover: Avatar-Mediated Relationships and the Emergent Languages of Game Worlds

Jenna Caravello (UCLA Department of Design Media Arts)

11:55 – 12:25

#### The Paradoxical Realism of Deconstructed 3D: Why Does Self-Aware 3D Seem More Real than Hyperrealistic 3D?

Paulina Martyna Ziótkowska (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

-lunch break-

14:00 – 14:45

#### Keynote: Whose History Is It?: Telling the Story of American Animation

Amid Amidi (Animafest Zagreb Award for Outstanding Contribution to Animation Studies)

### PANEL 2: WRITING ANIMATION HISTORY: METHODS, PERIODIZATION AND PERSPECTIVE

Moderator: Franziska Proksa

14:50 – 15:20

#### Contemporary Chinese Animation Canon: Institutions, Festivals and Transnational Exchanges in Comparative Perspective

Olga Bobrowska (Institute of Art and Design, UKEN University in Kraków); Chunning Maggie Guo (Renmin University of China, Confucius Institute of Geneva University)

-coffee break-

15:35 – 16:05

#### Anime Auteurs: Rethinking Auteurism in Japanese Animation from Miyazaki Hayao to Ōtomo Katsuhiro

Betty Stojnić (Nagoya University)

16:10 – 16:40

#### Bruno Edera's Unfinished History of Pornographic Animation

Aurélie Petit (INRS Montreal)

## 10/06 WEDNESDAY

09:45 Welcome & Introduction

### **PANEL 3: CURATING ANIMATION: FESTIVALS, EXHIBITIONS AND CANON FORMATION**

Moderator: Holger Lang

10:00 – 10:30

**A History of Cinema as Art, the Place of Animation: A Comparative Approach, France/ United States 1946–1976**

Cécile Noesser (ESAD Amiens)

10:35 – 11:05

**Curating Socialist Animation: Animafest Zagreb and the Cold War Circulation of Polish Animated Film**

Ewa Ciszewska (University of Łódź, Polish Animation Research Group)

-coffee break-

11:20 – 11:50

**Curating Feminist Animation: 25 Years of Tricky Women Tricky Realities and the Transnational Politics of Visibility, Canon Formation and Circulation**

Martina Tritthart (Institute for Cultural Analysis, University of Klagenfurt)

11:55 – 12:25

**Expanded Animation: Curatorial Practices Between Cinema and the Gallery**

Paola Orlic (independent curator)

-lunch break-

### **PANEL 4: MUSIC IN ANIMATION**

Moderator: Andrijana Ružić

14:00 – 14:30

**Freeride in C. Repetitions and Loops as a Form-building Element in Music and Auteur Animation**

Edmund Jansons (Atom Art / Art Academy of Latvia)

14:35 – 15:05

**Imagine the Unheard. The Radical Aesthetic of Electronic Music in the History of Animation**

Jens Meinrenken (freelancer, Humboldt University of Berlin)

15:10 – 15:40

**More than Just Noises and Crackling. Artists Associated with the Polish Radio Experimental Studio as the Authors of the Sound and Music for Films by the Polish School of Animation**

Katarzyna Figat (The Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz)

# PANEL 1: GENEALOGIES OF ANIMATED FORM: FROM HAND-CRAFTED MOTION TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

## ANIMATING AN ARCHIVE: AI AND THE LIMITS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

**Jürgen Hagler** (UAS Upper Austria, Ars Electronica), **Celine Pham** (media artist)

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 10:30**

The paper explores the potential and limitations of artificial intelligence in animating and interpreting cultural heritage, focusing on the projects *Brosch AI – Distorted Dreams* (2025) and *Unfinished Decay* (2026), two AI-animated short films based on the works of Austrian artist Klemens Brosch. The project employs AI technologies such as diffusion models and generative adversarial networks to transform archival drawings into animated visuals, balancing authentic reinterpretation with intentional artistic distortion. Through detailed analysis and practical experimentation, the paper highlights key challenges, including the realistic animation of figures, the preservation of stylistic fidelity, and the animation of extremely high-resolution gigapixel images. By embracing animation artefacts and errors as artistic interventions, the project resonates with Brosch's psychological themes and biographical context. The discussion critically reflects on broader implications regarding authorship, originality and the role of technology in cultural heritage preservation and creative interpretation, advocating for a nuanced understanding of AI-driven digital heritage practices.



**Jürgen Hagler** is an academic researcher, educator, artist and curator specializing in animation, game studies and media art. He studied art education, experimental visual design, media culture and art theory in Linz, Austria. He is a Professor of Animation and Media Studies and the Head of the BA and MA Digital Arts programmes at the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria. His research focuses on expanded animation, playful interactive environments and interdisciplinary media practices. He has held key roles in international festivals and conferences, directs the Ars Electronica Animation Festival, and founded Expanded – Conference on Animation and Interactive Art.



**Celine Pham** is a media artist working across 3D motion graphics, film, installation and interactive systems. Her practice moves between constructed visual worlds and real-time generative environments, exploring how digital technologies shape perception, narrative, and embodiment. She combines computational processes, spatial media, and moving image to create works that operate between design and emergence. Whether through choreographed 3D animation or algorithmic systems, her projects investigate authorship, transformation, and the evolving relationship between human intention and machine agency. Her work spans experimental film, immersive environments, and performative media formats. Celine Pham lives and works between Austria and Southeast Asia.

## PANEL 1: GENEALOGIES OF ANIMATED FORM: FROM HAND-CRAFTED MOTION TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

## NARRATIVE ACCORDING TO LANDSCAPE ANIMATION

Akira Arimochi (Aichi University of the Arts)

Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:35 – 11:05

In this presentation, I will discuss “landscape animation” – challenging works that place landscape at the very core of the piece. Landscape animation tends to be presented in the field of contemporary art, such as in museums and galleries, rather than at film festivals. Observing this trend, I must first define landscape animation, which is a challenge in itself. To date, much of animation has been created and critiqued through the depiction of character faces, proper nouns and gestures. Conversely, discourse regarding landscape animation that actively approaches the scenery is insufficient. Therefore, in the early stages of this research, I proposed the hypothesis that landscape depiction alone can tell a story, distinct from the portrayal of character movements. I will present two points as results of this validation: (a) Through a prolonged encounter with landscape, the animation artist imbues the topography (like New Topographics) with a transcendent intensity that triggers a profound release of nostalgia and catharsis, the generation of narratives within in the viewer’s thoughts and memories through that effect; (b) There is potential for diverse landscape expressions in animation. Three examples used for validation follow: *The Pure Necessity* (David Claerbout, Belgium) transformed a Disney classic through a long-term, meticulous creative process that eliminated staging, exaggeration and humanity. *Juxtaposed LAND* (ALIMO, Saudi Arabia/Poland/Japan) merged the act of “reading text” – a daily habit of a researcher examining various literary materials like philosophy – with the act of “watching images,” presenting a new form of fragmentary long-lasting. *Such a Landscape* (Dana Kavelina, Ukraine) is an animation created as a creative act to resurrect the dead. By capturing scenes of war she has faced for many years in the historical context, she poetically articulates a means to reflect on human society. By analysing and examining landscape animation in this way, we may find how “landscape” can transcend the conventional frameworks of animation culture to act as a key element for defining and evolving new perspectives. I expect them to have a transformative impact on the thinking surrounding the connection between human evolution and narrative in both anthropology and landscape studies.



**Akira Arimochi**, born in 1977 in Japan, is a Professor of the Aichi University of the Arts. He served as a visiting researcher at the Estonian Academy of Arts for two years starting in 2012, and in 2019 he obtained a PhD from the Tokyo University of the Arts. His research focuses on the history of animation and comparative art studies. To date, he has secured 11 competitive external grants for his research. In 2024, he presented his research on humour at Animafest Scanner XI. In 2025, he published the article “Is Prit Pärn a Surrealist?” in *Animation Studies 2.0*. Additionally, he curated a landscape-themed animation exhibition at an art gallery in Japan and organized and served as a speaker at two animation conferences during the 1<sup>st</sup> Aichi Nagoya International Animation Film Festival in 2025. His current research focuses on the narratology of landscape animation, and the history of surrealism and animation.

**PANEL 1: GENEALOGIES OF ANIMATED FORM: FROM HAND-CRAFTED MOTION TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE****GOLEM LOVER: AVATAR-MEDIATED RELATIONSHIPS AND THE EMERGENT LANGUAGES OF GAME WORLDS****Jenna Caravello** (UCLA Department of Design Media Arts)**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 11:20 – 11:50**

This paper explores animation as a real-time process for agency and communication, analysing emergent play in massive multiplayer online video games. I will highlight specifically the anonymized interpersonal relationships and bonding behaviours that develop across virtual gaming platforms. I focus on habits and rituals in networked games that casually subvert developer-intended mechanics, allowing players intimate access to one-another, as well as the ludolects (game-specific languages) that shape how communities interact within game microcosms. I connect these behaviours to the avatar as a kind of digital golem; a crafted body that players project on, inhabit and animate, one that becomes central to how language, intimacy and shared practices take form. I argue that building relationships across networked games has become so ubiquitous that it influences game design more broadly, contributing to the rise of simulation-style gameplay in both triple-A and indie titles. Through true stories, reflective artworks and case studies including *Active Worlds* and *VRChat*, I show what avatar-mediated friendships, romances and intimacies look and feel like within the virtual bounds of a game, and what these behaviours reveal about how players navigate identity, presence, communication and connection while embodying an animated body in a game world.



**Jenna Caravello** (1988) is an artist and storyteller working with animation and video game software to explore deeply personal narratives, the identity politics of digital avatars and social relationships across online forums. Her work foregrounds emotional and often marginalized topics in tech spheres, like longing, absurdity and love, across experimental video game forms, interactive sculptural installations, animated films and mixed-reality audiovisual

performances. Caravello is an Assistant Professor at UCLA in the department of Design Media Arts and Associate Director of the UCLA Game Lab. Her animation, game and installation works have been featured internationally, including at the Melbourne International Animation Festival, the National Taiwan Arts Education Center, REDCAT in Los Angeles, the Seoul National University College of Fine Arts, the Raindance Film Festival, the GIRAF International Animation Festival, the Nimoy Theater, and Slamdance. She is the recipient of a 2018 Jules Engel Award from CalArts and a 2018 Princess Grace Award.

## PANEL 1: GENEALOGIES OF ANIMATED FORM: FROM HAND-CRAFTED MOTION TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### THE PARADOXICAL REALISM OF DECONSTRUCTED 3D: WHY DOES SELF-AWARE 3D SEEM MORE REAL THAN HYPERREALISTIC 3D?

**Paulina Martyna Ziótkowska** (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 11:55 – 12:25**

3D animation from the beginning of the medium was mostly driven by the pursuit of photorealism, understood as a technical goal. By now major industry studios, apart from stylized cartoons, make hyperrealistic digital images indistinguishable from filmed reality, fighting against the uncanny valley effect. Yet alongside this dominant tendency, a distinct current has begun to emerge. It was enabled by accessible software, with films made at home or in small studios. Lesser computing capacity seems to be embraced: these films seem to visually connect to the very beginnings of the medium, playing with the deliberate imperfection of the visuals. Instead of perfecting the illusion, these films begin to dismantle it. The 3D program becomes a visible material and the animation becomes strangely self-aware. Rather than hiding the mechanisms of simulation, these films reveal them. Glitches, rigid physics, visible rigs and grids, and computational artefacts are no longer treated as mistakes, but rather as expressive elements. This approach can be described as “deconstructed 3D”. Paradoxically, these childlike, naive visuals, in their very imperfection, convey something deeper about the world: they function as a diagnosis of contemporary times, revealing a broken simulation of reality. The viewer begins to perceive the simulation as a system with its own rules and its own limitations, parallel to the visible reality. Exposure allows active engagement and criticism, which illusionist cinema does not offer. Through an analysis of works by Nikita Diakur, Gerhard Funk, Faiyaz Jafri, and Esteban Azuela, this presentation explores how such self-aware uses of 3D not only question what realism in digital animation might mean, but also invite us to look more critically at the mediated reality that surrounds us.



**Paulina Ziótkowska** is a Polish film director, 2D animator and illustrator. She studied animation at Łódź Film School in Poland and at Filmuniversity Babelsberg. Her debut film *Oh Mother!* (2017) was screened in many festivals worldwide winning many prizes. Her next film *Bless you!* (2018) amongst others has won a special mention at 68<sup>th</sup> Berlinale and a special mention at Animafest Zagreb. Her films have been shown at festivals like Clermont-Ferrand, Annecy, Krakowski Festiwal Filmowy, Melbourne IFF, Ottawa IAF, Stuttgart, BOGOSHORTS. She took part in Fontevraud residency and TAIS residency in Toronto. She is a PhD candidate at PAD, UNAM in Mexico City.

# KEYNOTE: WHOSE HISTORY IS IT?: TELLING THE STORY OF AMERICAN ANIMATION

**Amid Amidi** (Animafest Zagreb Award for Outstanding Contribution to Animation Studies)

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 14:00 – 14:45**

American animation history is inseparable from the corporations that produced it, and that entanglement can have consequences for how its history is told. Studios shape archives, manage reputations, and quietly determine which stories are safe to tell. Drawing on my experience as a biographer, historian, editor and journalist, this personal talk reflects on the practical difficulties of telling truthful stories about American animation in an industry that often emphasizes carefully curated narratives. Rather than proposing a new framework, I ask more basic questions: what does honesty look like when access is conditional, when silence is rewarded, and when candour carries professional risk? I consider the recurring tension between working with companies to gain access and bypassing them when access comes at the expense of honesty. Perhaps a more candid animation historiography may begin by acknowledging its own constraints.



**Amid Amidi** is co-founder and, from 2004 to 2025, the publisher and editor-in-chief of *Cartoon Brew*, an online magazine that became one of the most important platforms for information, criticism, and scholarship on animation in the twenty-first century. Amidi laid the groundwork for much subsequent research through his earlier periodical *Animation Blast* (1998–2007). Among his many books, the highly influential *Cartoon Modern: Style and Design in 1950s Animation* (2006), which earned the Theatre Library Association Award, holds a prominent place, as does *The Art of*

*Pixar Short Films* (2009). His widely respected publications include *The Art of “Robots”* (2004) and *The Art of Pixar: The Complete Colorscripts and Select Art from 25 Years of Animation* (2011). In collaboration with Tee Bosustow, Amidi also authored the concise yet innovative and foundational *Inside UPA* (2007), a logical continuation of earlier research into modern animation. A biographical study of the American classical animator Ward Kimball, perhaps the most influential and inventive artist associated with Walt Disney Studios, is scheduled for publication in 2027.

## PANEL 2: WRITING ANIMATION HISTORY: METHODS, PERIODIZATION AND PERSPECTIVE

### CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ANIMATION CANON: INSTITUTIONS, FESTIVALS AND TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

**Olga Bobrowska** (Institute of Art and Design, UKEN University in Kraków),  
**Chunning Maggie Guo** (Renmin University of China, Confucius Institute of Geneva University)

Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 14:50 – 15:20

This paper analyses the formative processes in contemporary Chinese animation canon-building endeavours in China and abroad. It focuses on twenty-first-century films acknowledged as particularly significant for the development of Chinese art-house animation and for the rise of new voices and modes of expression recognized by domestic and foreign audiences. Certain institutions and festivals serve as essential reference points for understanding canon-building practices in China. The specificities of the Chinese art-house film culture's architecture are explained with attention to economic, media-technological and social factors shaping its development and institutional framework. Animafest Zagreb is treated as the main reference for surveying Chinese films' presence in the Western festival circuit, as Zagreb has traditionally bridged Sino-Western art-house animation exchanges. We argue that the development of artistic animation in China may be divided into four stages, three of which fall within the twenty-first century: (1) 1980s–1990s, Chinese–Western collaborations through ASIFA in Zagreb, Annecy and Shanghai; (2) 2000–2015, the debuts and pursuits of a generation of independent animators, (3) 2015–2020, intense exchanges between professional and academic communities and the steady presence of student films in festival programmes; and (4) 2020–currently, when art-house animation faces COVID-19 and post-pandemic challenges while a new generation successfully enters the festival stage. These stages are explored through a comparative analysis of selected films treated as case

studies illustrating the aesthetic and thematic orientations shaping Chinese and Western cultural ecosystems in contemporary animation canon formation.



**Olga Bobrowska**, PhD, is an animated film scholar, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Art and Design of the UKEN University in Kraków (Uniwersytet Komisji Edukacji Narodowej), co-founder and festival director of StopTrik International Film Festival (Maribor, Slovenia), film culture activist and curator. She authored two monographs published by the CRC Press (*Chinese Animated Film and Ideology, 1940s–1970s. Fighting Puppets*, 2023; *Chinese Animated Film and Ideology. Tradition, Innovation, and Interculturality*, 2024). She is a permanent contributor of *Zippy Frames*.



**Chunning (Maggie) Guo** teaches at Renmin University of China. She earned her PhD in independent animation. She has been invited to present 20 papers in more than 10 international conferences, including at Animafest Scanner, SAS, IAC, Under the Radar, Expanded Animation. Her collaborative animation work *Ketchup* has been screened at more than 20 international film and animation festivals and received the Best Short award at the Chinese Independent Film Festival in 2014 and the NETPAC Award at the Busan International Short Film Festival in 2015. She has published more than 40 papers in Chinese and international journals.

## PANEL 2: WRITING ANIMATION HISTORY: METHODS, PERIODIZATION AND PERSPECTIVE

### ANIME AUTEURS: RETHINKING AUTEURISM IN JAPANESE ANIMATION FROM MIYAZAKI HAYAO TO ŌTOMO KATSUHIRO

**Betty Stojnić** (Nagoya University)

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 15:35 – 16:05**

As animation from Japan becomes an ever-larger part of various cinematic canons, animators such as Miyazaki Hayao have come to acquire “auteur status”, encouraging scholars and critics to pursue director-oriented approaches to anime history grounded in auteur theory. Building on my doctoral research – an auteur study of Ōtomo Katsuhiro, best known for *Akira* (1988) – this presentation examines the methodological, theoretical and historiographic challenges posed by “anime auteurism”. Unlike Miyazaki, Ōtomo is rarely treated as an auteur, with this project being among the first sustained attempts to do so, raising the question of how auteurs are not merely “studied” or “discovered”, but actively constructed within animation history. Drawing on previous auteur studies of “canonical” anime directors, namely Miyazaki, Takahata Isao, Oshii Mamoru, and (more recently) Shinkai Makoto, I outline the dominant methodological tendencies in the field, from biographical accounts to glossary-style reviews of major themes, as well as analyses of a given director’s engagement with issues like artificial intelligence or climate change. I then reflect on my experience researching Ōtomo while based in Japan: visiting exhibitions, consulting art books, magazines and online fan archives, while determining which materials (or different versions of the same material) to include in the process of “assembling” Ōtomo the auteur.

How should scholars catalogue an anime director’s oeuvre, which often comprises not only films, but also television series and manga? How do we discuss “intention” or “contribution” in the context of a complex studio system structured around fluid roles and shared skills? What is “anime”? What is its historical, national and/or commercial identity vis-à-vis Japan? The construction of the “anime auteur” is a fraught endeavour, uniting questions of authorship, national cinema, and medium specificity in a single motion. Precisely for this reason, however, auteur-based approaches offer exciting grounds for rethinking these categories, calling for a more critical engagement with director-centred animation histories.



**Betty Stojnić** holds a PhD in Global Screen Studies awarded by Nagoya University and the University of Warwick (co-tutelle). She specializes in Japanese cinema and animation, with a particular interest in film-philosophy and the depiction of technology and science in anime. Her research has been previously published in *Mechademia*, *The Journal of Anime and Manga Studies*, and *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy and the Moving Image*. Her paper, “Anime and Drone Warfare: Operational Images, Dissimulation, and Hypercinematism in A Farewell to Weapons”, was selected as the runner-up at the 2026 British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies publication awards for best published essay by a doctoral student.

## PANEL 2: WRITING ANIMATION HISTORY: METHODS, PERIODIZATION AND PERSPECTIVE

### BRUNO EDERA'S UNFINISHED HISTORY OF PORNOGRAPHIC ANIMATION

Aurélie Petit (INRS Montreal)

Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 16:10 – 16:40

In 1976, Swiss animation historian Bruno Edera published a short but remarkable article in the Ottawa International Animation Festival issue of *Fantasmagorie*, cataloguing dozens of erotic and pornographic animated films from Europe, North America, and Japan. Born in 1937, Edera authored *Full-Length Animated Feature Films* (1977, with Roy Disney), *Histoire du cinéma suisse d'animation* (1978), and *Le cinéma d'animation africain* (1993). A collaborator of major animation festivals (including Annecy and Zagreb where he curated and moderated in the 1970s), Edera was referred to by ASIFA as the “Bible of animation”. At a time when animation was increasingly framed as a family-oriented medium, Edera insisted early that pornographic animation should not be relegated to the margins of animation history—thus anticipating the later concerns of porn studies, which frames pornography as a culturally significant media form rather than a marginal genre. This paper argues that Edera’s unfinished project represents one of the earliest attempts to construct a transnational history of pornographic animation and demonstrates how revisiting his archives allows us to rethink animation historiography through a more holistic lens that includes sexually explicit forms of animated production. Edera treated these films as part of a broader transnational history of animated images. Throughout the 1970s, he continued to write about adult animation while developing an ambitious illustrated manuscript titled *De l'érotisme à la pornographie... Image par image* that sought to document the global history of erotic and pornographic animation. Although the project remained unpublished at the time of his death in 2020, the archival materials he assembled reveal one of the earliest sustained attempts to historicize animated pornography. By revisiting Edera’s largely overlooked research materials that I acquired back in 2022, including a 700-page manuscript and the digitization of more than 150 archival documents from Edera’s personal collection (film stills, press clippings, and distribution materials), this paper outlines a complementary history of animation, the canon from which pornography still remains largely absent. Edera’s archives trace a lineage of sexually explicit animation that extends from early twentieth-century stag cartoons such as *Out of Order* through the liberalization of sexual representation after the collapse of the Hays Code, the emergence of adult animated features in the 1970s, and the later international circulation of Japanese pornographic animation. Ultimately, this paper opens a collective discussion about how Edera’s unfinished manuscript might be preserved, contextualized, and potentially completed.



**Aurélie Petit** is a postdoctoral researcher at the Quebec Research Chair on French-Language Artificial Intelligence and Digital Technologies (INRS) in Montreal, Canada, where she works on the (Re)Generative AI for Culture project. She holds a PhD in Film Studies from Concordia University. As an interdisciplinary social and visual researcher of animation and technology, she explores its intersection with gender and sexuality. During the last years, she has held research positions on the topic of AI, adult content, and online governance within the Canada Research Chair in Digital Regulation at Work and in Life, the AI + Society Initiative, and the Social Media Collective at Microsoft Research. She is the Guest Editor for *Porn Studies’ Special Issue on “Artificial Intelligence, Pornography, and Sex Work”*.

## PANEL 3: CURATING ANIMATION: FESTIVALS, EXHIBITIONS AND CANON FORMATION

**A HISTORY OF CINEMA AS ART, THE PLACE OF ANIMATION: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH, FRANCE/UNITED STATES 1946–1976**

**Cécile Noesser** (ESAD Amiens)

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 10:30**

Shortly after the Second World War, several initiatives were launched in France and Europe to build film collections within modern art museums. Designed mostly by artists, their aim was to establish cinema as an art form and give it a place in museum collections. These were twenty decisive years in the creation of a legitimate heritage and corpus of film works, and the canonisation of a certain artistic animation. The pioneering programme “Art in Cinema”, conceived by experimental filmmaker Frank Stauffacher at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art from 1946 to 1954, included some sixty film events. Twenty years later, the “Essential Cinema” collection launched by the Anthology Film Archives in New York was another ambitious attempt to define cinematic art. It comprised 330 titles, compiled between 1970 and 1975 by filmmakers James Broughton, Peter Kubelka and Jonas Mekas, and theorists Ken Kelman and P. Adams Sitney. In Paris, the director of the Musée national d’art moderne entrusted Peter Kubelka with the design of “A History of Cinema” at the Centre Pompidou (1976–77). These three curatorial initiatives were accompanied by publications that contextualised and complemented the aesthetic, critical and historical narratives forged during these events. They were made possible thanks to close ties between French and American curators and institutions. Animation occupies an important place here, both in terms of numbers and authors, from the graphic avant-garde of the 1920s to the pioneering experiments with video and digital images in the 1970s. In order to integrate cinema into the museum, these curators considered film as belonging to the field of visual arts, thereby legitimising the presence of animation in the collections. But animation is also invisible as an art form with its own history, to the benefit of the experimental or avant-garde cinema category. Based on this observation, we will examine how animation is sometimes integrated and sometimes distanced from these collections, by analysing acquisition and promotion choices (editorial or exhibition).



**Cécile Noesser**, PhD in sociology of arts and culture, is the author of *The Resistible Rise of Animated Cinema. Socio-genesis of a cinema-bis in France* (L’Harmattan, 2016). Specialist in the broad fields of animated film and its connections with art, she teaches at the École supérieure d’art et de design (ESAD) in Amiens. Since 2023 she is co-director of the Cinémas d’animation collection at L’Harmattan. She is also a programmer, critic, curator and co-founder of a gallery dedicated to animation.

## PANEL 3: CURATING ANIMATION: FESTIVALS, EXHIBITIONS AND CANON FORMATION

### CURATING SOCIALIST ANIMATION: ANIMAFEST ZAGREB AND THE COLD WAR CIRCULATION OF POLISH ANIMATED FILM

**Ewa Ciszewska** (University of Łódź, Polish Animation Research Group)

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:35 – 11:05**

This paper examines the ASIFA-sponsored festival Animafest Zagreb as a curatorial site that actively shaped the visibility, circulation and canonization of Polish animated films during the Cold War. Established in 1972, Animafest Zagreb functioned not merely as a showcase of animation, but as a transnational platform where programming strategies, jury compositions and critical discourse intersected to produce aesthetic hierarchies across the global animation field. Focusing on the period between 1972 and 1990, the study addresses four interrelated dimensions of curatorial authority. First, it analyses programming tendencies that governed the selection and thematic framing of Polish films in festival line-ups, examining how these choices reflected broader conceptions of animation promoted by festival organizers and ASIFA. Second, it investigates the reception of Polish animated works screened in Zagreb through press reviews tracing how critical language contributed to their international positioning. Third, it considers the role of Polish professionals serving as jury members, examining how participation in evaluative structures translated into symbolic capital and professional recognition. Finally, it explores the “echoes” of Animafest Zagreb in Polish professional discourse, mapping how the festival was reported, interpreted, and instrumentalised in domestic debates on animation. Methodologically, the paper combines archival research (festival catalogues, press clippings, ASIFA documentation) with reception analysis and institutional history. The case of Animafest Zagreb is read within the framework of Association Internationale du Film d'Animation, which consciously promoted animation as a medium capable of transcending ideological divisions. This positioning makes the festival a particularly revealing site for studying how socialist-bloc animation circulated internationally without being subsumed into Cold War binaries. By foregrounding curatorial practices as agents of canon formation, the paper contributes to current debates on festivals as knowledge-producing institutions. It argues that Animafest Zagreb played a formative role in shaping the international perception of Polish animation, demonstrating how curatorial authority mediated between artistic practice, institutional networks and global circulation in the Cold War era.



**Ewa Ciszewska** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Film and Audiovisual Media at the University of Łódź. Her research focuses on the history of Polish animation, cultural heritage management in animation, Polish–Czechoslovak film cooperation during the communist period, and film education in Poland. She is the co-author of *Společné světy Studia Malých Form Filmových “Se-Ma-For” w Łodzi (Social Worlds of the “Se-Ma-For” Small Form Film Studio in Łódź, University of Łódź Press, 2025)* and the founder of the Polish Animation Research Group.

### PANEL 3: CURATING ANIMATION: FESTIVALS, EXHIBITIONS AND CANON FORMATION

#### CURATING FEMINIST ANIMATION: 25 YEARS OF TRICKY WOMEN TRICKY REALITIES AND THE TRANSNATIONAL POLITICS OF VISIBILITY, CANON FORMATION AND CIRCULATION

**Martina Tritthart** (Institute for Cultural Analysis, University of Klagenfurt)

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 11:20 – 11:50**

Film festivals can be understood as symbolic gateways to global cultural and social realities. Rather than merely exhibiting films, they actively frame debates, guide public attention, and participate in the construction of the public sphere. Crucially, they also function as transnational nodes that enable the circulation of films, aesthetics and discourses across borders, thereby shaping how cinema is historically understood and canonized (de Valck 2016, 9). This talk asks: How do feminist animation festivals function as transnational sites of canon formation, and how do their curatorial practices reshape regimes of visibility in global animation culture? It argues that the animation canon is not a neutral or purely historical construct, but one shaped by curatorial power, and that feminist festival practices can intervene in and reconfigure its underlying hierarchies in a transnational field. As sites of selection, framing, and circulation, festivals influence which works travel, which remain marginal, and how they are positioned within global aesthetic and political discourses. Their programming is shaped by institutional frameworks, curatorial strategies, and dispositifs that directly impact international visibility and cultural value (de Valck 2016; Krainhöfer and Kurz 2022, 74). In animation, festival practices increasingly extend beyond the cinema space to include exhibitions, installations and immersive formats such as VR and AR. These expanded forms not only challenge conventional viewing conditions, but also facilitate new modes of transnational exchange by connecting audiences, artists and institutions across different spatial and cultural contexts. In this framework, *Tricky Women Tricky Realities* (founded in 2001) serves as a key case study. Dedicated to animated films by women and genderqueer creators, the festival has developed into an internationally networked platform that combines competitions, thematic programs and discursive formats with workshops and educational initiatives (Cicero 2011, 178). Its curatorial model fosters not only visibility but also sustained exchange between local and global animation communities. The festival's practice constitutes a targeted intervention into historically gendered and geographically uneven regimes of visibility. While early cinema opened new spaces of participation for women, film culture has also been shaped by gendered structures of representation and spectatorship. *Tricky Women Tricky Realities* addresses these dynamics by foregrounding works that challenge dominant visual regimes and by amplifying voices often marginalized within global circulation networks.



**Martina Tritthart**, PhD, studied architecture at Graz University of Technology and is a researcher specialising in spatial perception, light and media-enhanced architectures. She currently teaches and conducts research at the intersection of visual culture and artistic practice. She is the programme director of the Master's programme in Visual Culture and a postdoctoral research assistant at the Institute for Cultural Analysis at the University of Klagenfurt. She has previously taught and conducted research at Graz University of Technology, the University of Art and Design Linz, and FH Joanneum, among others. Her work as a visual artist and curator, particularly in film and media art, as well as her long-standing engagement with concepts of space, informs her perspective.

## PANEL 3: CURATING ANIMATION: FESTIVALS, EXHIBITIONS AND CANON FORMATION

### EXPANDED ANIMATION: CURATORIAL PRACTICES BETWEEN CINEMA AND THE GALLERY

**Paola Orlić** (independent curator)

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 11:55 – 12:25**



The increasing presence of animated film at contemporary art exhibitions calls for a reconsideration of the relationship between cinematic temporality and the spatial logic of the gallery. Positioned between the paradigms of the cinematic black box and the exhibitionary white cube, animation offers a particularly productive field for examining the expanded conditions of the moving image, following the concept of expanded cinema proposed by Gene Youngblood. In contrast to the linear and collectively synchronized temporality of cinema, the gallery produces a fragmented and mobile mode of spectatorship, shaped by circulation, variable durations of attention, and the coexistence of multiple works. As noted by Raymond Bellour in his reflections on the “between-the-images” condition of moving images in exhibition spaces, the displacement of film into the gallery fundamentally alters the viewer’s experience. Curating animation in this context therefore requires the development of a specific exhibition dramaturgy of the moving image, addressing spatial sequencing, sound environments, duration, and modes of audience engagement – an issue also explored in curatorial discourse on the moving image by authors such as Chrissie Iles. Drawing on a past decade of curatorial practice connected to the World Festival of Animated Film – Animafest Zagreb, this paper reflects on strategies for exhibiting animation in a gallery context. The annual exhibition “Behind the Scenes” (2018–2025) presented artists from the festival’s Grand Competition Short Film and Student Film Competition, translating cinematic works into spatial formats through drawings, storyboards, animation loops and installations. Complementary solo exhibitions dedicated to major figures of international animation – including Borivoj Dvorniković Bordo, Suzan Pitt, Georges Schwizgebel, William Kentridge, Phil Mulloy and Michaela Pavlátová – further explored the material and processual dimensions of animation. Reflecting on these case studies, the paper examines how curatorial strategies can negotiate the shift from cinematic duration to spatial viewing conditions, proposing the gallery as a productive site for encountering animation within the expanded field of contemporary moving image culture.

**Paola Orlić** is an art historian, curator and cultural producer recently appointed as the Head of the Administrative Department for Culture and Civil Society in the City of Pula. For more than decade, she has been working in the field of animation, moving image and contemporary visual culture. She has served as festival producer and curator of the exhibition programmes of the World Festival of Animated Film – Animafest Zagreb, where she has developed and curated a series of gallery projects dedicated to animation and the moving image. Her work includes the annual group exhibition “Behind the Scenes” as well as large-scale solo exhibitions of internationally acclaimed animation authors and recipients of the Animafest Zagreb Lifetime Achievement Award such as Borivoj Dvorniković Bordo, Suzan Pitt, Georges Schwizgebel, William Kentridge, Phill Mulloy, Michaela Pavlátová. Her curatorial practice focuses on the relationship between animation, exhibition space and expanded moving-image culture.

## PANEL 4: MUSIC IN ANIMATION

### FREERIDE IN C. REPETITIONS AND LOOPS AS A FORM-BUILDING ELEMENT IN MUSIC AND AUTEUR ANIMATION

**Edmund Jansons** (Atom Art / Art Academy of Latvia)

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 14:00 – 14:30**

The presentation focuses on the process of creative research and the development of the animated short film *Freeride in C*. It is a non-narrative animated short and a creative experiment exploring ways to bring the methods of animated filmmaking closer to the compositional methods of a musical work. The theoretical study developed during this process, “Repetitions and Loops as a Form-Building Element in Auteur Animation”, reflects the main stages of the research connected to the making of this film.

*Freeride in C* is an attempt to evoke a synesthetic effect in the viewer, allowing them to experience an organic fusion of music and moving image. In this work, the interaction between sound and image is formed not only through synchronization during the editing process, but also through a deeper structural correspondence. Terry Riley’s 1964 composition *In C* consists of 53 short numbered musical phrases that performers repeat in sequence for as long as they consider necessary. This freedom of choice makes each performance of the piece entirely unique, with unpredictable rhythmic combinations of musical motifs.

Repetition and looping are an organic part of the expressive vocabulary of contemporary composers and musicians, but they are just as intrinsic to animation. Beginning with pre-cinematic optical toys, continuing with film loops in experimental cinema, and later in the GIFs of the internet era, looping and repetition have long been a natural part of the animator’s vocabulary. *Freeride in C* explores the formal similarities between animation and musical composition, attempting to combine them into a more organic audiovisual work. The theoretical research focuses on the use of loops and repetition in animation and attempts to examine their application as broadly as possible, comparing and analyzing similar examples from animation history, such as *Canon* by Norman McLaren, *Tango* by Zbigniew Rybczyński, and *Revolver* by Jonas Odell.



**Edmunds Jansons** is animator, director, illustrator and founder of the animation film studio Atom Art. He studied TV directing at Latvian Academy of Culture, graduated MA at Estonian Academy of Art – the masterclass by Priit Pärn in 2012. In 2024 he finished professional doctoral studies in Art Academy of Latvia. His filmography notably includes the animated documentary film *Little Bird’s Diary* (2007); animated shorts *Choir Tour* (2012), *The Isle of Seals* (2014), *Guard of Honour* (2021), *Freeride in C* (2024), pre-school series *Shammies*, and 25-min Christmas story *Pigtail and Mr. Sleeplessness. Jacob, Mimmi and the Talking Dogs* (2019) is his first feature film and currently he is working on his next feature *Born in the Jungle* (2026). In addition to his main line of work, Edmunds is a recognized and beloved children’s book illustrator.

## PANEL 4: MUSIC IN ANIMATION

### IMAGINE THE UNHEARD. THE RADICAL AESTHETIC OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC IN THE HISTORY OF ANIMATION

**Jens Meinrenken** (freelancer, Humboldt University of Berlin)

**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 14:35 – 15:05**

From the early beginnings of synthetic sound in the 1930s to the digital interfaces of modern sound design, electronic music plays a key role in animation history. The alienated, often strange sounds that were first created through the paintings on a paper and then later by synthesizers and other new invented electronic instruments are nothing less than the discovery of an unheard musical universe within the world of animation. An outstanding example for that development are the films of the polish animator Piotr Kamler. In many of his films from the 1960s to the 1980s he used compositions from famous avant-garde musicians that are or were members of the Groupe de Recherches Musicales (GRM) in Paris. The so called “musique concrète” or acousmatic music by composers like Iannis Xenakis, Beatriz Ferreyra or Luc Ferrari provides an aesthetical experience that is based on a radical new understanding of sound and music. The tradition of absolute film and visual music of the 1920s is here transformed into a new world of animation and electronic music. With the advent of the computer and the rapid evolution of electronic music, this radical aesthetic ushered in a new era of animation unlike anything seen before. The tendency of experimental animation to create surreal and sometimes psychedelic worlds has, through MTV and the art of the music video, evolved into a mainstream form of entertainment. This lecture aims to trace the development outlined here using selected works from the history of animation, while exploring the extent to which contemporary animation still radically combines music and imagery.



**Jens Meinrenken** is a freelance art historian, lecturer and curator. He studied art history, philosophy and German language, as well as literature in Bamberg and Berlin. He is the co-founder of Deutscher Comicverein and has published numerous articles on a wide range of subjects including animated movies, computer games, and comics. His work as a curator includes for example “Heroes, Freaks, and Super-Rabbis”, “Jewish Dimension of Comic Art”, Jewish Museum Berlin (2010) and “Comics from Berlin. Pictures of a City”, Haus der Berliner Festspiele (2013). He also curated a film programme about the intersection of comics and animation for Animafest Zagreb 2017.

## PANEL 4: MUSIC IN ANIMATION

### MORE THAN JUST NOISES AND CRACKLING. ARTISTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE POLISH RADIO EXPERIMENTAL STUDIO AS THE AUTHORS OF THE SOUND AND MUSIC FOR FILMS BY THE POLISH SCHOOL OF ANIMATION

**Katarzyna Figat** (The Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz)

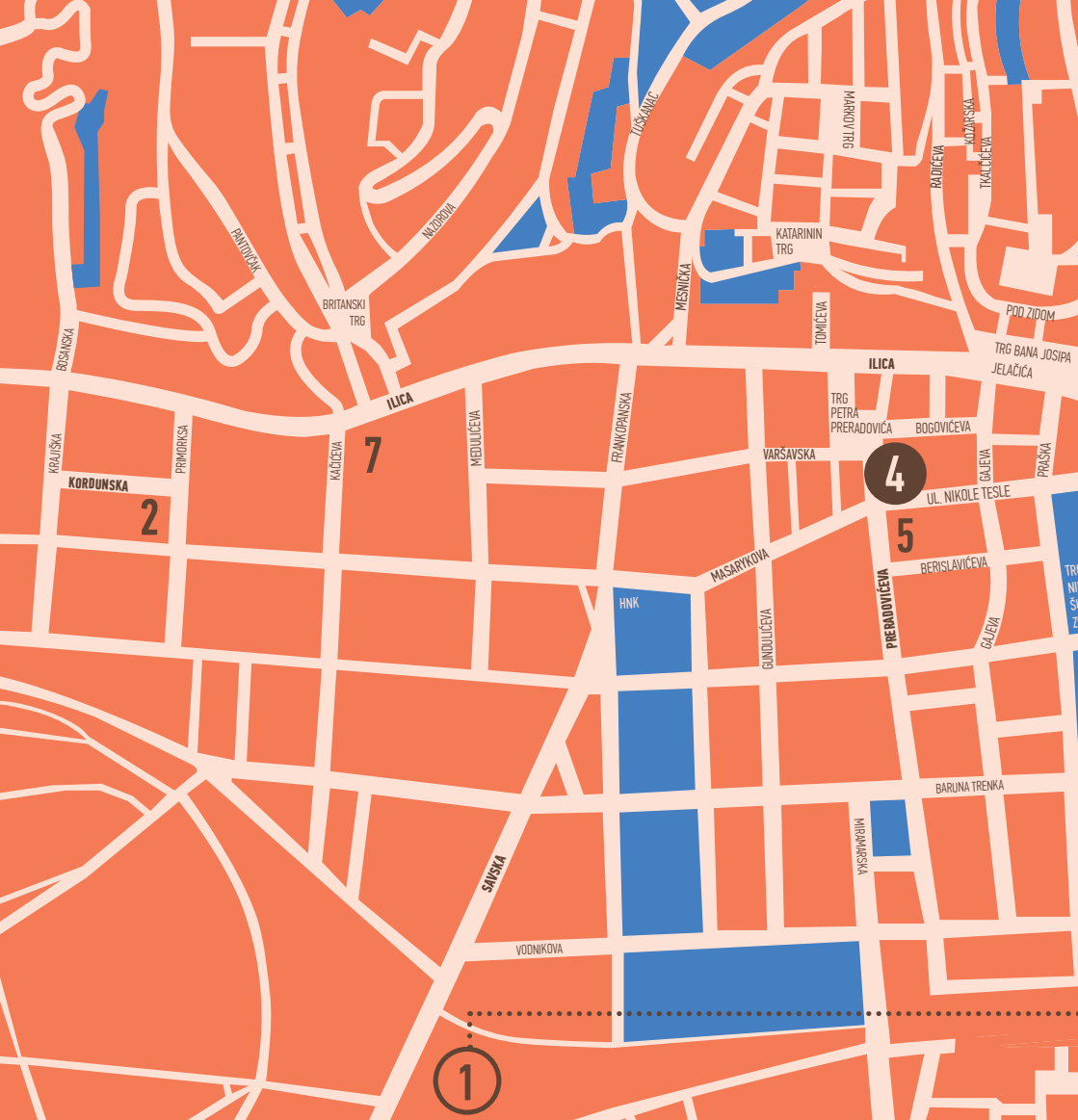
**Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 15:10 – 15:40**

The Polish Radio Experimental Studio – a realm of *musique concrete*, as well as electroacoustic and electronic music. In addition to their work as producers and composers in the field of absolute music, artists associated with the Polish Radio Experimental Studio have authored or co-authored the sound and music for hundreds of films of nearly every type and genre. A particularly interesting aspect of this work is the sound and music for animated films, created by artists representing the Polish School of Animation. The Polish School of Animation is an informal, author-driven movement in the history of Polish animated film, within which, for several decades, films were created that were united by a search for form and means of expression for a metaphorical treatment of themes contemporary to their authors. This search for form also took place in shaping the relationships between sound and image, and thus the search for sound and musical layer that would, on the one hand, support the message, and on the other hand, help shape the overall artistic impact of the work. The Polish Radio Experimental Studio, as a unit statutorily dedicated to experimentation in the field of “creating sound elements for radio plays and spoken-word and musical programs (...) as well as *musique concrete*” (Brzostek, Walewska 2018: 46), was therefore an ideal partner for many artists in their joint, creative exploration of the audiovisual form of their works. The aim of this presentation is a comprehensive analysis of the techniques, aesthetics and methods employed by composers and sound engineers associated with the PRES in the process of developing the sound and music for films of the Polish School of Animation. Why was working on animated films so appealing to the artists associated with PRES? Why was collaboration with them so interesting to animators?



**Katarzyna Figat** is a film sound engineer and music consultant, academic lecturer, and in her spare time, a passionate film expert. She lectures on film subjects at the Faculty of Composition, Music Theory and Sound Directing at the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz, and collaborates with National Film School in Łódź. She is intensively involved in academic work, participating in conferences and research projects, as well as publishing. Her main area of academic interest is the analysis and aesthetics of sound and film music.





## LOKACIJE LOCATIONS

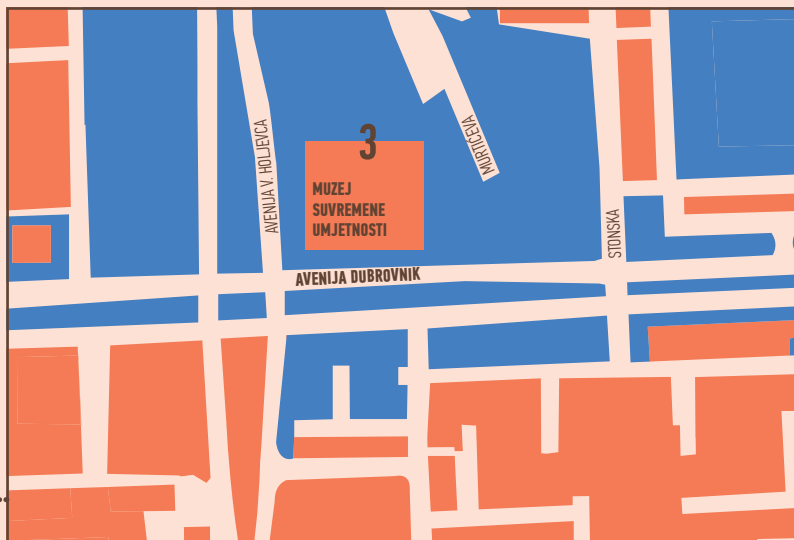
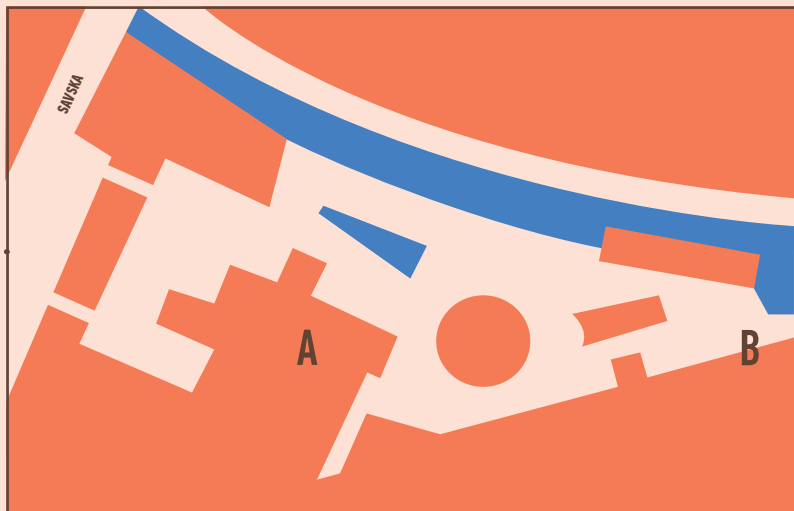
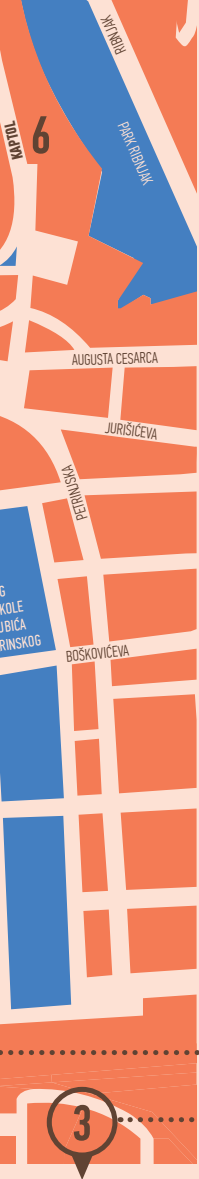
- 1 FESTIVALSKI CENTAR**  
**FESTIVAL CENTRE**  
 STUDENTSKI CENTAR (A–B)  
 Savska cesta 25

**A KINO SC**  
 08 – 13/06 10 – 22 h

**B MM CENTAR**  
 09 – 13/06 10 – 20 h

**2 KINOTEKA**  
 Kordunska 1  
 08 – 13/06 9 – 20 h

**3 MUZEJ SUVREMENE  
 UMJETNOSTI ZAGREB (MSU)**  
 Avenija Dubrovnik 17  
 09 – 18/06 17:30 – 20 h



**4 KIC – KULTURNO  
INFORMATIVNI CENTAR /  
GALERIJA NA KATU**  
Preradovića 5  
08 – 13/06 10 – 22 h

**5 GALERIJA ŠIRA**  
Preradovića 13  
08 – 12/06 9 – 16 h / 18 – 20 h  
13/06 11 – 16 h

**6 GALERIJA KRANJČAR**  
Kaptol 26  
08 – 13/06 11 – 19 h

**7 KLET**  
Ilica 73  
11 – 13/06 11 – 19 h



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