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Press Release, 8 May 2017

## **Positive Conclusion to a Successful 11<sup>th</sup> Animation Production Day**

**Stuttgart – the 11<sup>th</sup> Animation Production Day (APD), which took place from 4–5 May in Stuttgart’s L-Bank and ended on Friday evening with the inaugural presentation of the Trickstar Business Award, was a resounding success. APD, the most important co-production and financing market for animation projects in Germany, is held jointly by the Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film and FMX, International Conference on Animation, Effects, VR, Games and Transmedia. By yesterday evening, 160 participants from 24 countries had, in over 600 pre-planned one-to-one meetings, negotiated co-operations for the 44 animation projects selected to be showcased in this year’s APD. And over 300 industry representatives attended the APD Conference on Thursday.**

“Once again this year APD has grown by around 15%, which naturally delights us. But APD’s continuing growth also demonstrates how important it has become for producers to bring international partners on board to create projects capable of competing in the international market. Today there is no other way to raise the necessary budgets. The demand for more European and international co-operation is great and that is why APD is becoming increasingly important to the German industry,” said **Dittmar Lump**, Managing Director for Organisation and Finance of the Film- und Medienfestival gGmbH.

**Prof Andreas Hykade**, Head of the Animation Institute at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg and FMX stated: “At APD 2017 the entire spectrum of animation was represented. The showcased projects were of a consistently high artistic quality. I was particularly delighted to see the next generation represented with a series of fresh and new projects. In future I would like to see more submissions containing this kind of innovation: alongside classic animation formats, VR, AR, VFX and games concepts are also welcome. The broader the spectrum, the better it is for APD.”

**Prof. Ulrich Wegenast**, Programme Manager of the Film- und Medienfestival gGmbH added: “It is great to see the synergies between the Animation Festival and APD develop and how the German and international producers presenting series and films at the Festival use APD as a business platform to introduce their new projects and find partners here. At APD, some of the best and most creative production companies in Europe truly come together.”

### **High calibre speakers at APD conference attracted more than 300 participants**

For the first time this year, APD was supported by Creative Europe MEDIA’s “Access to Markets” programme. Alongside the one-to-one meetings, the APD Conference was, as ever, a key part of the programme. This took place for the first time this year in the Rotunda of Stuttgart’s L-Bank and, with a total of more than 300 participants, also attracted great interest amongst the industry representatives at ITFS and FMX. During the conference the hotly-debated topic of VR was explored with a view to its potential for the animation industry. Stephan Schindler, Chairman of Virtual Reality e.V. Berlin-Brandenburg, Sol Rogers, Founder and Managing Director of REWIND, and Sara Diamond and Brian Collins from Google Spotlight Stories shared their visions of the technical and content possibilities presented by VR for the media landscape of the future.

Insights into a spectacular animation project were then given by Hugh Welchman (BreakThru Films) and Edward Noeltner (Cinema Management Group). The animation film “Loving Vincent” is composed of 160,000 handmade oil paintings by 120 international artists. This also required an unconventional financing concept. Alex Weimer (MovieBrats Pictures) reported in a further case

study on the creation and financing of the German-Chinese project “The Dumpling Queen”. In this year’s Content Briefing Sessions Jackie Edwards (BBC Children’s), Dr Astrid Plenk (MDR), Nadine Bernard (Ketnet) and Alix Wiseman (9 Story Distribution International) introduced their current programme requirements and programming strategies.

Another highlight was the presentation of the new “Animation Germany” initiative. In a panel discussion at the APD Conference Dr Christoph Palmer (Producers Alliance), Tania Reichert Facilides (Freebird Pictures), Annegret Richter (AG Animationsfilm) and Dittmar Lumpf (Film- und Medienfestival gGmbH) publicly introduced the initiative for the first time. Its goal is to improve the competitiveness of the German animation industry and strengthen its presentation and presence on the international market.

### **The first Trickstar Business Award goes to the Polish project "The Shadows"**

This year’s APD drew to a glamorous conclusion at Friday night’s presentation of the Trickstar Business Award. This new, 7,500 Euro award recognises national or international innovative and groundbreaking business models for projects or companies in the animation industry and went this year to the Polish project “**The Shadows**” by BreakThru Films. The Trickstar Business Award is the world’s first animation prize to have an explicit business focus. It is presented by ITFS and endowed by Region Stuttgart. The evening’s other award winners were: “**The Journey of the Elephant Soliman**” (Juliette Alfonsi, Matthias Drescher) for Best German Animation Screenplay; the Tricks for Kids Award for Best National Series went to Klaus Morschheuser (Studio Soi) for “**Trudes Tier**” and Best International Series went to “**We Bare Bears**” by Daniel Chong and Manny Hernandez (Cartoon Network).

As part of the co-operation with CARTOON, European Association of Animation, once again this year three German producers will have the chance to pitch their series projects at the CARTOON Forum in Toulouse in September. The three prize winners are: „**Lena’s Farm**“ (Studio FILM BILDER), „**Brotherhood – The Adventures of a Legendary Pirate**“ (WunderWerk) and „**Mabel Cleans Up**“ (Viola Lippmann Illustration & Design).

And, for the first time, a German feature film project received a wildcard invitation for CARTOON Movie with the project „**Jason and the Nucleonauts**“ by Spintop Entertainment securing its place.

### **The next Animation Production Day takes place from 26 – 27 April 2018.**

#### *About Animation Production Day:*

*Animation Production Day (APD) is a business platform for the international animation industry and takes place every year as part of the Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film and FMX, International Conference on Animation, Effects, VR, Games and Transmedia. APD is organised by the Film- und Medienfestival gGmbH and the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg. It brings together co-production, financing and distribution partners for animation projects in a series of one-to-one meetings and, with the APD Conference, offers focused discussions and presentations on current challenges facing the industry. [www.animationproductionday.de](http://www.animationproductionday.de)*

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