
Visegrad Animation Forum 2014

6 - 8 May

Třeboň

Central East European co-production, networking, educational
and promotional forum for animation

Feedbacks, results, transcriptions



co-organizers:



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ANNOTATION

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Introduction:

Visegrad Animation Forum is the platform of our regional animation that tries to support, promote and educate our professionals and young filmmakers on their journey to the European audiovisual market. It is based on the idea that animation filmmakers can save this regional animation by creating a common initiative that would share the energy, resources, contacts and production background. Its goal is to establish co-production ties not just between the Visegrad countries but also Eastern and Western Europe.

Visegrad Animation Forum held from 6 to 8 May at the 5th **International Festival of Animated Film in Třeboň** 2014 with the attendance of more than 100 professionals from not only Visegrad countries but the 14 European countries.

One of the main headlines was the meeting of public broadcasters from Central and East Europe (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia) who discussed the possibilities of international collaborations and sit in the jury of our region TV series pitching of new projects competition! As it was said by some international guests like Mike Robinson from Cartoon Forum or animation producer Lilian Klages from Denmark, this was a major achievement promising to put back on track the local animation industry if the TVs commission editors and producers got involved.

Among our participants there were some high profile international guests and western animation producers, professionals, TV representatives from France, Sweden, Great Britain or Germany. On the first place we would name some well-known names such as Sarah Legg from BBC, Danish producer Lilian Klages or a French producer Dora Benousilio from Les Films de l'Arlequin, Olivier Catherin from Les Trois Ours and Christian Pfohl of Lardux Films.

In our pitching competitions VAF recieved totally 29 online subscriptions in two categories - of short films or TV series. For capacity reasons, it was due to be selected only 7 projects in both categories. Polish director Natalia Brozynska won the main **VISEGRAD ANIMATION AWARD OF SHORT FILMS PROJECT** with a puppet animation "The Advisers of King Hydrops" while the Special Mention was awarded to the 2D animation morality "The Weasel" by Timon Leder from Slovenia. The VAF Award for best TV series project was handed to Slovenian director Kolja Saksida with his project "Koyaa" and the Special Mention to project of the television series received the artistic adaptation of Voltaire´s "The Adventures of Candide" by Hungarian team of Réka Gacs, Nándor Bera, and Brigitta Iványi-Bitter who also took the inspiration at Balázs Turai's short „Us and The Devil”.

Program was enlarged by several **case studies** on project development demonstrating how to develop a professionalized animated television series on BBC or KIKA - with a purpose of a bigger European television or international distribution prospects. In the same time we were following the development of the last year VAF pitching projects - how it have moved on in a period of one year, how the collaboration between the Czech and Slovak Television has been further developed.

Our region programme **VAF – Animation Today** offered a presentation of some of the best recent animation works in production or in distribution in the four countries - accompanied by the speakers from Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. The goal was to show what new has been done trough the last year in our region, in terms of new talents´emerging, interesting film productions legislative changes and funding options. This new part is also focusing to support our studios, professionals and filmmakers to connect with European animation professionals. This year, VAF 2014 invited the German studio **MOVIEBRATS** from Germany, **LES TROIS OURS** from France and Studio **BELLS** from the Czech Republic. There were also presentations of projects that won in the last year and which thanks to cooperation development between the Czech and Slovak TV.

VAF is not only competition, but it also aims to support the "market access" of local professionals – and their the possibility to enter the European animation scene. Such a forum is proposing a possibility of meeting industry professionals from Western Europe.

At the end of the three-day program VAF was held final and non-public roundtable **discussion with the organizers** of the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, in order to evaluate and reflect the course of Visegrad Animation Forum 2014 and give suggestion for the next year.

The jury of the category of TV series:

Vanda Horváth - Editor-in-Chief, Children and Youth Programmes, MTVA, Media Service Support and Asset Management, Hungary
Křešimir Zubčić - Head of Foreign Programme Dept., editor buyer, Hrvatska radiotelevizija, Croatia
Andraz Poeschl - Editor in Chief, Culture and Arts Programme, RTV SLO, Slovenia
Jan Maxa - Director of program development, Czech Television, Czech Republic
Dorota Osman - Deputy head of TVPABC Channel, Poland
Zuzana Hudecová - Head of Schedule, RTVS, Slovakia

The jury of the category of Short film project:

Thom Palmén - producer and distributor, Botnia Films, Sweden,
Lissi Muschol - producer Film Kabinette, Germany,
Nele Luise Fritzche - festival organizer, Interfilm Berlin, Germany,
Dora Benousilio - producer, Les Films de l'Arlequin, France
Matija Šturm - producer, ZVWIKS from Slovenia.



A Polish director **Natalia Brozyska** wins with a short film puppet animation project "The Advisers of King Hydrops" - show of the project.



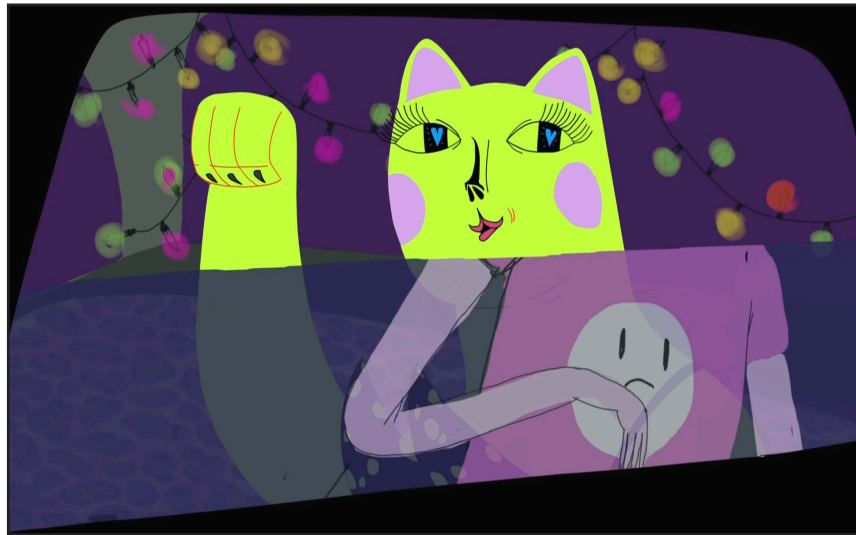
A special mention was awarded to the 2D short film project "The Weasel" by **Timon Leder** from Slovenia. (Show of the project).



Winners of short film projects.



Kolja Saksida from Slovenia won the Award for the best TV series project with a TV 2 minutes episode puppet serie "Koyaa".



“The Adventures of Candide” by a Hungarian team of **Réka Gacs, Nándor Bera, and Brigitta Iványi-Bitter** received a special mention for a project of a television serie.



Winners of category of TV series after taking over the awards.



Every year of VAF is unforgettable thanks to **Michal Procházka** – a programmer and VAF moderator.



Mike Robinson – well known Cartoon Forum European expert.



Presentation of a new animated project.



Visegrad animation today – series of presentations of today's novelties from Visegrad countries. Headed by **Martin Vandas**.



Board discussion about the future of animation in our national televisions.

VAF 2014 – case studies – one year later**Michal Procházka:**

Hallo, welcome again. We are entering the second day of our Visegrad Animation Forum held within the Anifilm Festival 2014. The same as last year the second day is dedicated to televisions. As we all know the television is very crucial topic for development and sometimes even survival of animation in most of our regions and our countries. At the beginning, let's start with presentation of two projects that were pitched last year at Visegrad Animation Forum TV series competition. Both projects were appreciated by jury composed by real TV professionals, and those two projects – The Websters – represented here by the film maker and producer Katarina Kerekes from Slovakia and her coproducer Ewelina Gordziejuk from Studio Miniatur Filmowych, and then the presentation will be followed by the Czech project of The Great Adventures of Rosa and Lisa by producer Vratislav Šlajer and the film maker monsieur Tuba. The question is to show us how far they have moved from last year when they presented the project, when they did some acclaims and respect from TV producers and to tell how sweet or hard is the life of television film makers in terms of realizing their dreams of projects?

Katarína Kerekešová:

Good morning, we would like to start with introduction of our project The Websters. Ewelina Gordziejuk – executive producer of Studio Miniatur Filmowych and me as a producer of my company Full Moon. The Websters are very special project not only as it was the best TV project last year but also that we also fulfilled the idea, efforts and aims of VAF. We met with Wlodek Matuszewski from studio Miniatur Filmowych here in Třeboň and started to negotiate the project here in Třeboň. We are really in coproduction now and it is thanks to VAF. We decided during last year to preserve all this basic information, general animation techniques, spoken word as dialogues, lengths of episodes - still 10 min, target audience – still it is 6 -10 years old children, and we decide together with Studio Miniature to reduce 26 episodes to more real and close 13 episodes. What happened last year? It was a turbulent year for The Websters; the family moved, have grown bigger, they changed visual looks of characters that are still connected with human world, still they live in their micro spider world. What we needed to change was the visual of characters. We wanted them to be more connected to the target audience and story, not to be so similar to each other and more connected to target audience. It is still 4 generation family with parents, grandparents, son and daughter. We moved them to an old lift machine room where there is a small cobweb; all the family members have their own cocoons –

living room, bedroom, and they are full of small human things. We wanted to say – we wanted to be closer to childhood - doll-houses, shelters and places where we wanted to be. The biggest collector is grandpa Webster, veteran of a large cleaning, very sad catastrophic historic event for spiders. He is simply convinced that everything could be useful one day a many retired people are. All members of the family solve extraordinary problems of ordinary life. Father is now the boss of a logistic centre for distribution of canned fly-food. With his big passion for travelling he would appreciate real travel, but fortunately the canned fly-food is flying to the world instead of him. Then, here is loving, firm house wife - mum Webster who still has passion for healthy lifestyle. Finally children – Hugo, son, adolescent, playing cool string instruments, and Lilly, sister, the main character. We are starting the new season with her coming to school and exploring her ability to produce her own fibre, own cobweb, her own childroom. She acts as glue in the family. We would like to preserve a sitcom model of TV series to solve all problems of all members of the family and just Lilly is optic of this problem. Now something more about our production. We started to create a creative team, many people from Slovakia and Poland. Here is Polish TV representative.

Ewelina Gordziejuk:

Thank you very much for coming and inviting me. I am from Studio of Miniatur Filmowych that is old but full of energy and we specialize in TV series. We are very happy to be coproducers of The Websters – a very unique project. We have a creative team and a script writer from Poland - Martin Graiv, we have also very young talented director Tomek Ducki in our team, so I hope it will be great collaboration. We try to find money in Polish Film institute and last session The Websters received the best opinion from Polish Film institute and now we are waiting for support and final decision.

Kerekešová:

Back to presentation – from Slovak side we have my company Full Moon, Ekran as a studio for visual postproduction and animation, and very important partner Radio and Television Slovakia, which supported us already here in development stage. All these partners have already cooperated on two TV series Mimi and Lisa, the first 7 episodes were released last year, and was quite successful. It is a multimedia project, i.e. with a book and we are also working on games.

Gordziejuk:

So from Polish side – our studio specializes in 3D animation and TV series. Last year we produced Hip Hip and Hurray, Mummy Fatal. And now we have in development a TV series Dojec. For The Websters we have received a letter of intent from Kino Polska.

Kerekešová:

So now to our time schedule: we are in the middle of preproduction, we have 13 treatments, we have started to work on story lines; we are near to final approval of characters from both sides. We are still working on project management. From producers side we have support from Slovak TV and Radio and Audiovisua Fund of Slovakia. We are waiting for final decision of the fund, decision from Polish Film Institute. Unfortunately, we were not successful in media. One of the comments was that we were to change visual, so probably we could apply again this year.

As for the budget – it is still quite high so we are still looking for interest from TVs and other inputs. This is financial strategy for development. As I have mentioned, we have already received a support from Audiovisual Fund, Radio and TV Slovakia and we are very close to decision of Polish Film Institute. We are still looking for TV broadcasters to help us to apply, also for media TV broadcasting or creative European TV broadcasting application. You will be welcome to be part of our network. Thank you for attention.

Procházka:

Thanks for presentation, it looks very nice. Our topic is TV coproduction – what is your experience with addressing television coproduction around Visegrad region and actually, I did not understand: can you tell us about support of Slovak TV for your project?

Kerekešová:

Radio and TV Slovakia supported our project with 50 thousand euro in the stage of development. We have their promise to support also production. Whole financial strategy for production is the question for next time; we want to start production in 2015 so I am not able to complete everything. But we have promise from Radio and TV Slovakia to be part of production. Now, after many years when we did not get any support and it was hard to cooperate with Slovak Radio and TV, there is really a change. I mean that representatives of TV could better explain, but we have 5 TV series in development and production. We have already got the money for development.

Procházka:

Does it mean that you have already got the money?

Kerekešová:

Yes, we have already got it.

As for experience with cooperation with other TVs, I started negotiation here

and during the year before with Czech TV. Last year I got very positive feedback but they had the same comments as media did – to change visual. So we made it and started to negotiate again and we will see. It is a long process. We have to be patient.

Procházka:

As there are no questions, let's move to the second project that was presented last year in Visegrad.

Vratislav Šlajer:

Hallo. We are also happy to be here after a year. We started to work on a project The Great Adventures of Rosa and Dora about a year and half ago. In Třeboň last year we had the first presentation. Let me start with showing you a trailer. (Screening)

The Great Adventures of Rosa and Dora is animated TV series; these are adventures of two girls who visit their grandparents at weekends. Grandma has a trouble-making dog called Lajko. They have to save him and the house and the world, and while doing so they learn a lot of things as grandma is a very smart woman. Basically, these are adventurous stories but with educational motifs. But it should feel as fun and adventurous stories in style of Indiana Jones, like classic adventurous stories with education. Last year we presented it as 13-episode animated series for bedtime story slot. Over the course of a year we presented the project to Czech TV coproduction that also helped us with international presentation. After presenting it in other international markets we got the basic respond that 13 episodes were not enough. We also need to make our target audience much clearer. We decide to make 52 episodes in 4 batches and have started to work on the script to be ready to present the project with 52 episodes. As for the script and technological process. It is a combination of 3D, 2D animations and painted structures. The main characters are like cell animation in 3D environment, painted in classical hand-draw paint technology. It is used as a texture for characters and environment. These educational moments will be in every episode described as a motion graphic design. Sophisticated combination of art and style with motion graphic design should bring a very modern look.

Šlajer:

What we have done in a year: we decided to make 52 episodes in 4 batches; we also decided to make a pilot episode to make sure everything works in the project. The pilot episode involved 26-min TV special, which we wrote a script for and work around financing. The plan is to produce a special this year and follow next year with TV series.

What we have learnt since last year: we need more episodes as there is no

market for short animated series. No sale agencies or broadcaster wants short series. We have to clarify our target group; we have educational elements in our stories, which makes the target audience a bit older. Writers need a room, as 52 episodes cannot be written by 1 or 2 writers, so we are establishing a writers room consisting of about 20 people with 3 main writers who put the storyline together. We started 2 months ago and so far we have had very good results, good ideas and we are moving ahead very fast. Our plan is to have first 13 episodes by June to be presented in Annecy film festival. Technical director is a key person.

We have experience with producing 13 episodes, but producing 52 episodes needs to set up different work flow. We are looking for a technical director. Technical director who is a very important person as there is need to build a workflow which can be useful for the whole team, so there must be very sophisticated tuning of animation softwares and developing our own parts of software to make the deadline we need.

Šlajer:

It is very important how you set up the workflow, it has influence on creativity of the project. If you do not have the process set up correctly, many ideas can get lost or tired. It is crucial to work and prepare workflow well.

Another thing we have learnt is that broadcasters respond very slowly, except Czech TV who is our great partner. We did a lot of international presentations and sent them to other broadcasters who respond very slowly, but with Czech TV we codevelop the project together and Czech TV on its own is presenting it internationally to Kika or MDR. At the moment are working on scripts, financing pilot episodes through funding and continue with international presentation which should start in Annecy film festival.

Procházka:

Can you tell us more about co-development with Czech television? Katarina was talking about support of Slovak TV of 50 thousand euro. It looks they understood that development of especially animation series is not a question of a low budget. How is it with collaboration with Czech TV?

Šlajer:

Barbara Johnsonová of Czech TV is over there. But coproduction has a system of in-house producers who have their own budgets. You put together the budget of the project and you negotiate. We try to share the costs of the project fifty-fifty and we negotiate. CZ TV will not give you money, you must negotiate. We have developed several projects and Czech TV is very open and collaboration works very well.

Procházka:

You were speaking about your plan for international presentation and looking for international broadcasters. You used French Le Petit Journal for The Newspaper of Grandpapa. Are you trying to target western televisions? Do you have some ideas about your goal? Would you be looking for other partners like Polish partners or other region?

Šlajer:

Well, after last year we had the feeling that our region broadcasters were basic possible partners. We are discussing the setting of the story now. We feel it is in Europe, but do not want to be too specific. It has to have a global appeal. We are targeting European broadcasters. Idea is to finance it together with Czech TV and at least 50 per cent from funding and pre sales and, of course we are looking for a possible big sales agent willing to invest and help us sell the project. Now we are trying to find a strong sales agent or a big animation company because, for practical reason we go round the world and try to sell it ourselves. But we are producers not sales agents. That is why we decided to make it in batches to give the option to sell from 1 to 52 episodes. So we try to make commitments through options.

Procházka:

You said that you have participated in MIPCOM. Did you meet many people from our region there or is it easy to convince people to take us seriously in such a big fair?

Šlajer:

I did not feel any prejudice to us being from Eastern Europe. It is a big market with lots of projects. Rosa and Dora had a very good appeal and we had a very good response from trailer. There are lots of educational programming, kids programming, but not many projects combining entertaining and education, so the response is great, sometimes we are unknown internationally production company with a young director who did mostly commercials, so nobody is jumping to hook us, but it is a slow process we have to present and keep in touch and push. I do not see the door is closed. We are there as one in many hundreds projects. We have to convince people. But it is a standard process.

Procházka:

We are talking about 2 things: importance to understand development and script writing. I was amazed to see you developed your room of script writers. That is what we need to do in our region. Do you also have an international cooperation with foreign script writers and script authors?

Šlajer:

Not yet. But we expect when we have confirmed international partners to do it this way. But now we have 13 ideas to go for 13 episodes and ideas to go with the other 52 episodes but we are not in the phase to work with international script writers. But we definitely will.

Procházka:

What do you think about international potential of projects? Would anybody comment on it?

Mike Robinson:

I love the list of what we have learnt from the year ago. How true it is - apart from Czech TV- how slow the broadcasters' responses are. How long way it is. But what you have done is you have learnt what you have to do to define your project – work out a plan, budget, number of episodes, recognize absolute importance of getting the writing right because this is the bottom line what broadcaster will look at – they will look at the script. They will like the design, because it is innovative, and when you present with the excitement of last year, you have to take in it, learn from it. Good luck for the future. You have to be very patient. Your daughter will probably be about 10 before it goes to production (Šlajer: and she will be perfect target audience). You do the right steps. What is important the US producers and directors have taken on board the comment and feedback that you have received.

Procházka:

I think that an important part of the process is to present but also to be heard, and also to listen to what comes back. Keep the integrity of the project, stay original.

Thanks for presentations. It is nice to see how the things are moving, maybe slowly, but still. We will continue with round table discussion with TV representatives of our regions.

Television round table**Discussion with management representatives of national televisions.**

Michal Procházka – ASAF - moderator

Vanda Horváth - Editor-in-Chief, Children and Youth Programmes, MTVA, Media Service Support and Asset Management, Hungary

Křešimir Zubčić - Head of Foreign Programme Dept., editor buyer, Hrvatska radiotelevizija, Croatia

Andraz Poeschl - Editor in Chief, Culture and Arts Programme, RTV SLO, Slovenia

Jan Maxa - Director of program development, Czech Television, Czech Republic

Barbora Johnsonová – Creative producer, Czech Television,

Dorota Osman - Deputy head of TVPABC Channel, Poland

Zuzana Hudecová - Head of Schedule, RTVS, Slovakia

Mike Robinson – international film expert

Lilian Klages – EIC, Germany, feature film and series producer

Theme: discussion of representatives of televisions about coproduction between television and animation film studios.**Michal Procházka (moderator):**

Hallo everybody. Let us start the round table discussion of representatives of televisions mostly from our region. Actually, last year was the first year when we started this television projects presentation and television representatives meetings. As we said before, the idea of television gathering is that we feel this is absolutely essential question for animation in our region. These are televisions that can contribute to new rise and development of animation in our region. As you can see in the Western televisions – they have already been coproducing for some time and you can see big TV series shown all around the world, 52 episodes, not 6, 7, 13 small episodes of television series screened on national broadcasters once or twice and then have no more life. We think if televisions can get together and start to initiate coproduction in television series, we can give job to many other animation studios, we can develop a new generation of professionals and bring the East European animation more to the spotlight. We are happy to have nice responds from representatives, so this year I can welcome here our friends from other televisions: Křešimir Zubčić from Croatian television, Andraz Poeschl – Slovenia, RTV TV Lublania, further on Dorota Osman from Poland, TV PABC channel, Zuzana Hudecová RTVS Slovakia (project The Websters developed with support of Slovak television), Jan Maxa - Director of

program development, Czech Television, Czech Republic, Barbora Johnsonová – Czech television, creative producer (The Great Adventures of Dora and Lisa), Mike Robinson – international expert, Lilian Klages – EIC, Germany, feature film and series producer.

The first question to Zubčić and Poeschl: what is the real result from last year on animation? What programs and slots do you have for animation and to what extent were you involved in animation projects? What is your profile of television?

Křešimir Zubčić:

Well, what has changed: finally we have started with coproduction. We never invested into coproduction before, so it was like investing money into a project that was supposed to be finished or not, wasting money on projects that are in development. We had to be careful about the public money. And finally we gave up from that idea and now we are going to invest money into coproduction, into production. So I have a table in my office, one scenario and hopefully we will start with it. Last year we were talking about signing the contract between public television and Eastern Europe. Probably that was the start. As soon as you start talking about something, people react. So my company finally reacted, twenty years later, but we did. Regarding the slots – I am the only one who makes decisions about both foreign and domestic programs for children. I am trying to make myself informed about what is going on in the world, not only in Europe. Still I am looking for a story, as I am working with public television. I do not care if it is 2D or 3D, the main thing is a story. So, I know it is not easy, it is all about following technology, investing money into new kind of production, but missing the story cannot be replaced by technology.

Andraz Poeschl:

I am pretty much on the same field considering the point of a story. Well, what has changed in Slovenian television: unfortunately on financial basis nothing has changed, so we are on the same level as last year considering the cuts of fees we get for televisions as a result of decision of ex-government. These cut us from let us say 40 per cent of cultural programs which I am the head of. Another thing that unfortunately has not changed was introduction of a new channel dedicated to culture and art, where we could put some more slots also of animation film. Therefore we are still combining inside the first and second national television programs. The second is rather dedicated to sports and others. The first program is that one where the most animation films are shown in Slovenia. There are Saturday and Sunday slots dedicated namely to children, and youth programs towards the noon. There was an experiment. It came to live the decision that two per cent of national income of national fee has to go cinematography, audiovisual

producers. We try to put forward idea of animation projects being produced for cinematography. It is good because we get some great ideas and we like to support great ideas and new generations of producers that are also doing the animation, but it is not good for TV series as such. We are trying to make some steps in this case as well. We have to consult it with law office because you cannot realize the plan where the series are being produced in the upcoming year. It is too much work and money to be invested one year. The producers do not get so much money; they have to search for other producers and coproducers. We have some slots in the afternoon around 6.30 p.m. The short animation slot after prime time of European films at 9.30 that is also one slot we try to put for animation short film.

Zubčić:

I forgot to mention magazine about animation – every second week – namely about animation that is not only for children but rather artistic or intended for festivals. It could be part of TV series and it is something that makes us different from other televisions.

Dorota Osman:

You were speaking about money, organization. But the reason why I am here is a bit different. Our TV PABC is a new born TV channel, since 15 February, and we have all but most important films from Czechia, Europe. But I am looking for new heroes, stories. We would like to teach children how to live to be good and we would like to teach them not so straight but giving them good examples. That is why I am here.

Procházka:

Dou you always buy or are you here also to follow what you can do for your coproduction?

Osman:

Of course, I am here to look for new heroes but we can do something together.

Procházka:

When I think about new heroes, I think all guys who try to develop animation are heroes.)) When somebody comes up with a good idea, he needs to know conditions for working with you. Do you have money for proper development, scenario etc.? What ideas for development do you have or do you only want to buy what is already done?

Osman:

For us story is very important. It must be interesting, give some examples for children, how they should live, and family relations are very important for us.

Procházka:

Ok, so if I have such a story, good hero, good examples, will you give me 20 – 40 thousand euro for coproduction of the pilot that we can go to cartoon forum with, will you go for it?

Osman:

I will have to ask our general manager and then we will talk about it.

Mike Robinson:

I think when a producer pitches a broadcaster, they are looking for two things to develop money. Commitments help open door in seeking coproduction partners. The first question the coproducer usually asks is: have you sold it out in our own territory? In BBC you are lucky to get 8 per cent of the budget. But where are the other 92 per cent? What I want to say is that you are supposed to secure your home territory. Commitment is a great deal to the producer as they seek for coproduction partners.

Procházka:

Who actually decides and agree on financial commitments of coproducers whether there is some money on development or not? Can you share your experience with hierarchy who the decision maker in Slovenian and Croatian or Polish television is?

Osman:

Well, always it is a great discussion. It is always struggle and fight. I am on one side and general manager, economic manager on the second side. And we are fighting.

Procházka:

Is there any selection process?

Osman:

There are not only two people, I am a deputy head of TVP ABC channel, we have also a head Małgorzata Mierzejewska, first we discuss with each other and then we fight.

Procházka:

Do you also fight in Croatia?

Zubčić :

It would be not honest if I said we do not fight. We have a board of managers – 8 people who do not communicate with each other; they have their offices. You give them a letter or pre-agreement, they get it, call you what the hell it is, you explain what it means for the future, we are going to invest money or develop. He or she signs it and sends it to another office. And the process gets repeated. It goes 8 times and finally everything is done and you can start. The process of signing is very long and includes many skills that we are not used to seeing in animation.

Poeschl:

It is pretty much the same in Slovenia. There is still a lot of work to be done on national television Slovenia considering any kind of international coproduction. The last case I was planning foreign coproduction on a documentary field. I made all the necessary agreements with coproducer from foreign country, and when was settled all, and when everything was prepared on the paper, then I talked to the assistant of a general manager and she said: why do we have to invest into coproduction when we can buy a done film. It is the same money as for presale and acquisition, but we do not have any risks. We do not even the respect that we could get from presale or coproduction. Well, there is no longer this general manager with his assistant. At the end of May a new general manager is coming and she is promising some new steps for coproduction as well. And I think a lot has to be done considering this field.

We are planning in autumn 2013 for the year 2014. We get the financial basis from the general director for the unit of television as such, and the unit gives the money to different parts of television, so we have to consider everything that has to be done in production, distribution upon this basis we get. Of course the costs of presales and coproduction are much higher especially when they are based on financial structure not in-house coproduction abilities we can offer. The acquisition is still the main area for animation series. Our colleague Andrea has been going to festivals and markets and has been looking for coproduction partners for many years. But she is finishing and we will have a new person. We can also offer some development money for the essential project for coproducers working on the territory of Slovenia. We can also put some money through funds.

Procházka:

Can you tell us about your commitments to support animation series in Slovakia? Elaborate the hierarchy within television on decision making and setting some

standards for producers so they could see the conditions of your mutual cooperation.

Zuzana Hudcová:

There is new priority for our top management and these are kids who are the future. We decided that we have to help young producers to make animation or any kind of other production for kids. We have a special central register, where anybody can get registered and he can put the project into this register. We have a big counsel – 8 people including Halka Mářčiková, the chief of our department and we are debating the projects.

Procházka:

Have you got a transparent evaluation point system to help you agree on certain project? And what is the budget of this room?

Hudcová:

Hard to say, it is always upon negotiation. We do not have such a big budget (e.g. 1 mil euro for production) so we have to decide what is good for us. We do not consider Slovak projects as the best. We have also much coproduction with Czech television. We are trying to find as much money as we can to help young producers.

Procházka:

So you have no problem to be a minority coproducer on the project?

Hudcová:

Absolutely not, but there are other things we can offer, such as PR, technology. We are simply open. It is not always about money.

Procházka:

And what are you actually looking for in your slots? What kind of program?

Hudcová

We have two channels, the first channel with special slots at weekend mornings, the second channel is specific and we have one hour slot every day – bedtime story. It has a great tradition in Slovakia (“also in the CR”). We are looking for stories for these slots and it does not matter if it is a documentary for kids, animation or magazine. We have now DIY magazine for kids, we are looking for many types and genres for kids.

Procházka:

What has changed in the Czech Republic since last year when you were so

optimistic as for the international coproduction? I was trying to find some information or figures, but I failed. How many minute for animation have you found and how many series have you realized? What are you working on right now in animation?

Jan Maxa:

I would like to leave the question about specific projects to Bára, as she is working on them. But let me say a few words about the finance of project. With regards to international coproduction we were hoping to hold meetings about the first independent international coproduction in animation with Germany. Unfortunately, the German partner could not make it to this festival. But we are planning to meet in 2 – 3 weeks. It takes time but the result should be a series produced partially here and partially in Germany and probably used as bedtime stories for Kika and Czech TV.

Procházka:

Tell us about Czech television involvement, what is your parity with Germany?

Maxa:

The result of the project, if it is done in Germany, is 3 times 10 minutes what we normally spend on Večerníček. If we produce in Germany, we will be 30 per cent coproducer, if we produce it all here or some of it in Slovakia, it will get much cheaper. It is upon negotiation. The project originates in Germany, it is an adaptation of a children book.

Procházka:

So it could be a vision that you could become a partner of German-Czech coproduction using Czech skills and lower costs?

Maxa:

International cooperation makes sense if it is win-win for both parties. If we set it up right, we can make it cheaper for Germany with good value for us. Germany will earn more money, it means good price for German broadcaster and animation studio will have work.

Procházka:

What will be involvement of Czech television?

Maxa:

The project has already been developed, so we are just looking at the stories, designs. In ideal case we would develop, but this project is already developed.

Procházka:

That can be idea of our region broadcaster – use a strong partner, cheaper capacity, local traditions, studio. But will it be still Czech project? Will you have some Czech footprints in this project?

Maxa:

It must have Czech character to be acceptable for the broadcaster. We do not broadcast acquired animation in Večerníček at all. It is on the border, but it looks ok.

Barbara Johnsonová:

We had lots of offers for coproduction and we have picked this one, so there must be something Czech, because we liked it.

Procházka:

I like the idea itself. You are bringing some work for Czech studios, opportunity for animators to get involved in international project. Lilly, how does it work to look for some cheaper country for outsourcing your project?

Lilian Klages:

It always depends on style. When we develop a certain style of a project, we look who could be interested. When we develop something Scandinavian, it does not look German. Each country has its print, its style, unless you go for a very international and general style. Firstly, I would look if I can find a broadcaster in Germany. We have an animation production where we meet the broadcaster. We have a team, we meet for half an hour sessions to pitch the right project and test if development goes the right direction and the broadcaster gives us open responses. Then, of course I see, how I can financially manage the project. I rather go for countries with good financing structure, like Canada, where I can get good tax credit and they are used to coproduction of TV series, or France, one of the biggest European financing countries. For a smaller content of TV series I mostly look for in the East.

Procházka:

Czech television is a public broadcaster, isn't it? Isn't rather a role for private television to enter into such a project?

Robinson:

There exist two types of genres. Public broadcaster has remit usually legislated for, where the topics and public duty have to be recognized in all genres of programming. Both commercial and public broadcaster look at ratings. They

want to know whether the project they are about to invest as coproducers will be commercially interesting. And both they are still looking for good ideas. They also know their audience. Most producers don't. You must be aware of who you develop a concept for. When you go to Kika or Czech TV, you cannot pretend to know their audience. You hope you'll develop a good concept, a good story. And then it is up to the broadcaster, public or commercial to say: yes, it could fit in to my audience. Even in Britain there are new shows and increasingly commercial broadcasters do exactly the same – they continue to market, try and hook the audience. Well-developed story is what both broadcasters want. Of course design, innovation, but key is a good story. The broadcasters have their own agenda. Public TV has guidelines legislated, commercial want to attract commercial opportunities, advertising space for other programming. And through children slots we can find the way to the evening ones. When you are pitching, be sure the pitch fits with your audience. But again, the bottom line is well-developed story.

Klages:

You need to know broadcasters. It helps analyse what and when they are showing, the target audience as they can differ from channel to channel. So you have to make effort to find out how much money they usually spend, how much they buy from abroad, how much they themselves get involved into own production, national production. Then you have a clear picture about your partner. Some countries have started one-day invitations into their televisions to show what they are looking for, which was very helpful for Danish television and Germany when the broadcasters introduced themselves and said what they were looking for, these are our guidelines.

Maxa:

The English or British private broadcasters are much more focused on providing public service. In Eastern Europe it is quite different: they are only here to deliver the target group to advertisers. So your question about Czech concept did not make sense because none of private broadcasters will invest any money into own kids programming, they only buy stuff from the market. The other thing I want to react to is that we hopefully follow the idea that public broadcasters should not base their evaluation of their success only on ratings. BBC is a nice example of a broadcaster with a perfect methodology of how to evaluate the quality of public service. Ours is similar to the British one. This is not the only criterion. As well as rating, there is satisfaction, innovation, successfulness on festivals, and that's what we present to the management.

Procházka:

We are all waiting for the moment when local televisions start coproduction. How much can independent animation studios be involved into such a project you brought from Germany to be done after development here? What is the plan, how can you fit with such a big project into capacity of an independent studio or Czech TV?

Maxa:

You should be careful before you choose, because when we coproduce with Germany, we make one series instead of producing each our own. The total amount of work is less. As a result there is one series that is shared by two broadcasters. As a public broadcaster we are financed by licence fees, which make 90% of our income. We are not allowed to advertise on the main channel, the kids channel or art and news channel. We only advertise on the second channel, where the revenues are funny. Most of our incomes are fixed from 2008. And there is very little hope that there will be increase of licence fees. We have cut costs as much as possible, added two more channels and we are on the limit, no more money is coming from anywhere within the Czech Republic. We can try to increase our commercial income but the opportunities are limited as long as we want to preserve the value of public services we provide. The only way to increase the production value and not to reuse the share of our production is that we have to find money outside, to find a way of coproduction with our neighbours that is the best way to preserve cultural values.

Procházka:

How will you use the capacity of TV, how will you work with independent studios? What is your animation plan?

Maxa:

Each project is specific. There is no general answer, for each project we look for the best way how to do it. And as for Germany - we plan to work with independent producer because we think that unlike us they could find some more money, e.g. from state funds. The reason why we are involved is that we want to enter this international arena just to step into these waters after 30 years of absence. We have a lot of ideas for our Večerníček but we want to get into this arena.

Procházka:

Barbara, could you tell us what was done last year in other projects of Czech TV? How many series have you got involved into, how many series have you done, how do you work with independent producers?

Johnsonová:

At the moment we are working on 5 animated series for Večerníček, one animated adventure series for older children and one educational animation program. It is a lot of work. As far as collaboration with independent producers, we are open to every good idea, but the problem is that good stories and ideas do not come very often. As we could see in the morning, the story of Dora and Rosa are one of very few I really like and I will do anything to help this project.

Procházka:

That is a very interesting problem – there not many good ideas proposed by animation professionals. Do you have similar experience? Is it harder to meet elaborated, clever project that you would enjoy like Dora and Rosa? Do you think we are behind professional standards of Germany or England?

Zubčíč:

I have about two thousand slots for children a year, so does it mean all my slots are missing the story? There are stories, but it's about quality. I think that the sphere of script writers was neglected, money was rather put into technology, and nobody invested into creative people writing stories. Maybe that will change. Neither me nor my company are writing, we are only selecting and it is possible to find a story. Stories do exist, it is not imaginary. Working on story before production is 50 per cent of all effort you have to make when you want to sell something.

Poeschl:

You have to consider that stories are universal but there are stories more attractive for particular audience. These are stories derived from national culture, in our case Slovenian, famous national poetry etc. In Slovenia we have problem with script writers, maybe on animation field we are the most lucky, but generally, on the field of documentary screen writing, full-length documentaries, fiction, series etc. we do not have screen writers. Therefore I introduced for the international fund certain amount of money we have to pay the television for animation slots.

I have heard many good ideas suitable both for Slovenian and international audience. Maybe this situation is because we did not have animation as such recently in Slovenia, as it was before. It is more expensive. We cannot afford as broad production plan for animation as we can afford for documentary. I would not like to get a bad screen play for fiction film and produce it, it is far better to produce animation projects ("because children will not complain").

Procházka:

Are you looking for new projects? What do you think when you see all the bed time stories Czech, Polish or Hungarian: are we lost? Do we have problems to address children audience, problems with script writing?

Osman:

I do not think so. We are still the same - we think in the same way, we think about our audience. We cannot forget for whom we are making the films. The film is not only technique, there should be a story. If you do not forget it, you are a winner. I believe that we can get a lot of stories, new animation films from Czechia, Slovakia and elsewhere, because all those countries made such films. Why should they stop now?

Procházka:

Zuzana (Hudecová), when you develop several series - how do look after scripts and get involved as for script? Do you cooperate with script experts or what is your strategy?

Hudecová:

Yes, for example The Websters or Mimi and Lisa were first big projects in last 2 years we worked on and we had some specialists like Halka working on scenarios. There is always one man from public TV and one coproducer and they work together.

Procházka:

Lillian, could you tell us how you work on script writing? Does TV get involved? Do you develop script writing room, what can TV, if they sign up with strong commitment, what can they do in this phase of script writing?

Klages:

It depends on the broadcasting partner. When you have a strong commitment, then someone says they like it and they want to put money into the development. It does not mean they just look at the script. They want to cooperate, have some remarks, and want some changes. So you work as partners and you must also take audience into consideration. I have worked on different television series with different scenarios from very close cooperation when we developed story lines, to the full script when we delivered final script with editors go over it. It was a very fluent mutual process. Fortunate example of having fully financed TV series from already existing brand was work with the US script writers and we were involved in entire design phase. So it depends on content and commitment you have. We have bigger variety of scenarios as we

come from a bigger country.

Robinson:

In the UK, whether it is acquisition or commission is rather blurred. Now I am working for the commercial broadcaster and they want storyline approval, script approval, they want to know how it fits in with the audience. For example, BBC wants approval of script, character, music, voice, etc. Normally it is good a relation between a coproduction company and broadcaster. Do not try to hide anything. You may be behind the schedule, ok, do not panic. If you develop a good relationship with your broadcaster - commercial or public - keep them informed, be a part of team. Your common interest is what comes out - it must be a good show. Some commercial and public TVs usually want approval, especially on series having good script editor helps to coordinate writers. And indeed – for good relationship with broadcaster, all is done to it. The broadcaster want to be sure about their assets – to get what they want to get, give them confidence – this company knows what they do. Sometimes they may say no, particularly on preschool they are strict as for what is acceptable. I also want some lines to be deleted or some changes. You have to be able to say yes, we are able to do it. It is important for the broadcaster to see they will get what they pay for.

Procházka:

How do you work in the phase of script writing? Do you have good script editors or are you able to provide script editors?

Maxa:

I would like to react to what was said. There is a crisis in good stories not only in the CR, story writing got lost in education system in the way it used to be commissioned by public broadcaster. Everybody who comes to us thinks of the story on the first place. Make us excited, interested. Majority of people talk about interesting things but they fail to make us excited. In March on MIT TV 2014 I felt this problem is global, the whole world is looking for stories. We all hope to find them this year perhaps in Scandinavia or South Pole next year... But back to your question: I think any project which deals with stories of children animation or series or anything has to have at least two editors, one involved and one not involved in the project. You must have the third eye that is not writing but helps writers discover the journey and say: you think you are writing a sitcom but you are not. This role can be fulfilled by creative producer or somebody else. But there have to be three people to be successful. And to the further part of your question if we have enough talented people – no, of course not, but we still seek and try to help young creators get new experience

and improve. We are still short of these skills.

Procházka:

I do not like generalization that we have a story crisis. That would mean that a half of the world is full of bad stories on TV and we have no good stories at all. It can easily turn into argument: so let us not shoot animation. Do you think that TV role of a public broadcaster is a role of a good- will partner trying to help to get good stories?

Maxa:

The answer is yes. In the Czech TV we have a pretty big development department if you take standards of any Eastern or Central European broadcaster. We are a group of 30 – 40 overloaded people and without a good story you do not have a good show. Of course, I am not saying everything is bad on Czech TV. I cannot say what is now on TV today as I have no time to watch it, but I am looking at what will come on TV in 2 years' time because what is what we are working on. And we are fishing in archives, milking the past, working with what was not used in the past by our previous management. We are thinking what we will show in the future. We do not have enough ideas now that would put us to the future. Yes, there is a crisis of stories but I do not want to say that all stories we have are shits.

Robinson:

This afternoon we had pitches of the projects. You got very little support from national broadcasters for development 8 – 10 years ago, no one invested. The trouble is they have limited resources. Encouraging is that some projects have come through and they are getting support. The resources mean they cannot invest into everything. There is the competition, referring to development and the project has to be strong to attract broadcasters.

Procházka:

We are struggling to push forward at least one or two projects to go through this pipeline. How could we work together to make it done? It is not easy within one television. Within more televisions – it is the same: we have the same low power, budget. But the big difference between the UK and us is that, despite a big competition, you have a lot of stories on the screen, but we are still waiting. What could we do – we are trying to invite experts, foreign lectures, make forums, and share experience. What could televisions do for partnership to have better script and stories?

Poeschl:

When I was talking about crisis of the scripts I specifically said the crisis is in

documentary and fiction films. Fresh wave is coming from animation projects producers. When an idea comes to a certain editor, we are trying to invest some money for development of the project, script writing or to send someone to a film festival and workshops where the scripts are being developed. And I think the presentation at such a forum or workshop is the best a producer can do for himself. To pitch the project, 95 per cent depends on your presentation, how you introduce it, 5 per cent on the story itself. You have to show that you are the one who is going to make the story, you are the chosen one, nobody else. You must trust yourself. This leads you to a certain end of the project, developed or undeveloped at this stage.

Considering the other fields: we have some experts in national television of Slovenia who have been working with script writers for fiction and documentaries for one or two years. The story is interesting and we have to develop it through the months to make it more interesting or more developed. Once again, there is fresh wave coming with animation producers.

Procházka:

Do you have some experience with work on scripts with your televisions, your broadcasters?

Włodzimierz Matuszewski:

Yes, I have a lot of experience on working with Polish public TV and series production. I would like to comment on the script problem. I was working for more than 10 years in this field. And I still hear complaints about bad scripts. And it is not only from animation. Any creative feature films, even if we have now competition and several hundred scripts, have still problem. Each year I go to television markets e.g. in Cannes and I see there are more than 900 produced series all over the world and I can say that one third is something original, the rest are average stories, similar to each other. The market has no good stories. Another thing is what you mean by good story. Something you remember, similar to what you liked. I see the story is a problem and to solve it is difficult. To find a good story you must work on many different themes, with comics, books, and magazines to look for good ideas. The result should be a good film, which is hard work. It also needs some investment and that is why we look around. One tenth of stories can be something, but without guaranty. It is the most difficult task; the ball is not only in the garden of producers, that problem should be solved together with investors. Don't be afraid to realize your idea. If you are a producer, be creative, try to find, develop and produce something you believe in.

Procházka:

The second mantra of this meeting is development. How to elaborate projects for TV series on international level? We have seen how our colleagues have learnt to

target at international scene, to look for international coproduction. We are still in early stage of development but can you tell us something about real development of animation series? What can you propose to coproducers in real world?

Zubčić:

At this stage of my company – coffee. We have not started with coproduction yet. But there are other things we can offer like PR, things around production, hopefully soon we can offer a team of people who have been working and writing for children for 20 years and cooperating with Croatian public television. For them it is not difficult to develop the story, they have to do it, as they are paid for it. Ages ago we had a committee of children writers as part of association of children writers. They got every script before production, they had to evaluate the script, make notes, complaints. Nowadays, we have so many slots we do not have enough people to read so many scripts. We must figure out how to deal with in the future.

Poeschl:

We can offer them little money for development, not much but still more than coffee. And if the project is good, we can introduce it for public tender. A commission will consider. As there are not so many projects in Slovenian TV, they might have good chances.

Osman:

I forgot to say something important. This February when we started broadcasting in TVP ABC we promised parents they can leave their child in our care and the child will be safe. Therefore we do not want any violence in the stories you offer. Nokicking, spitting, fighting or bad words. We are looking for values, for them we can offer a small budget.

Hudecová:

As I have already said, we do not have such big budget for our TV as other countries but I am here to offer you, to anybody who wants to produce animated series or who wants to offer coproduction to Slovakia – we are open to help with technology, development, storylines,.. We can do anything but it is about negotiation. I hope that after this meeting we will discuss possibilities of our cooperation.

Robinson:

You were speaking about initiatives. I have two suggestions: last year at a conference "Children's Meeting" in Sheffield there was a panel to broadcasters, two producers and writers. And demands from them were quite different. Many

writers in the audience had no idea what they should write. More initiatives should be given to what is important to know, what does not work in writing and also to talk about writing within kids TVs. My friends in the UK TV see about 2 – 2.5 thousand projects per year, and they select 4. It has a lot to do with writing. More feedback is good initiative.

Maxa:

We can offer to a broadcaster clear communication as for what we are interested and what not. We have from our broadcaster a 3-year plan which gives us a frame schedule for each channel. This plan is available for any producer. We do not publish them, but any creative producer will explain what is requested and what we have money and space for. If you have a special project, you are welcome. We do evaluation as the first step. We evaluate by involving several people to read and write comments. If we refuse, we give good reason; the reason is never that we did not like it. We try to give proper idea why we do not like it. If you pass the first stage, you are in development phase – we can fund the development fully or partially, which will guarantee you some rights. Our budget is close to 2 mil euro a year, it is a rolling budget, so the development money can be used several times. We have more than we can use at the moment. We do not waste. Our wastage rate is lower than I would like – about 10 per cent, healthy wastage rate is about 20 -30 per cent. From development money we can fund script writing and editing, and any non broadcastable activities - we can do animation tests, camera tests, design tests, pilot projects that are not broadcast, anything that is useful for the project to work. Finally, the project goes to a program board that approves of realization of the project.

Procházka:

Well, let me close our today's meeting, though we still have so much to discuss concerning international coproduction of TV series. We already know from experience of German coproducers that the questions of coproductions are not easy and it took years in other countries than Eastern Europe. I hope that with the initiatives that were mentioned here we will reach our goals, however long it may take. Let us hope the next year will be easier, when we meet here, to review and discuss what has been done. We will go through what we have reached during the year. We will also send you transcription of today's meeting and we will start working with some ideas mentioned, maybe with you in our associations, as we have several of them in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and we are in close cooperation with Hungarian TV. And we hope they will help get animation back to track.

VAF 2014 – case studies TV Series**Michal Procházka:**

We talk about how to develop good animation TV series, content. We invite you to share some experience: how do you work as a TV producer or TV representative, commission editor? What is your agenda, crucial points you deal with? You can help us develop standards of production in our region. Welcome Sarah Legg from BBC and Lilian Klages from Denmark.

Sarah Legg:

Thanks for invitation. I am going to tell you how CBBC buys, what have been the big animated titles in the past and our plans for the future. After discussing all these items I hope you will have a clear idea of what makes good animation. I am a program executive, which means I work alongside production from the very start, from storyline, script, animatic, rough cut, all the way through, basically. We are lucky to have about seven famous titles (e.g. Peter Rabbit, Club Babies, Everything 's Rosie).

What is CBBC? It is the only UK public service channel dedicated to preschool children (up to 6 years). We are a multi-platform commissioner, which means we commission platform not only across the television. We have an open dialog with parents throughout social media, which is important because we see viewing as a co-viewing activity which provides us motivating philosophy learning through play. This is a last month 's pre-channel overview performance in April 2014: the average weekly reach of 43.4 per cent and the average share is 16.9 per cent, which means we are the most watched pre-school channel in the UK. The top animated titles were e.g. Mike the Knight, Peter Rabbit, Everything 's Rosie, Octonauts, Cloudbabies... The channel runs from 6 to 7 pm daily, the contents is strict across the weekdays and slightly changed over weekends. Our strategy is always to have something new to show. We take time to build episodes in batches to keep them going as long as possible. We might transmit 10 new episodes, then repeat those 10, and then we have another 5 episodes, and repeat them etc.

How we buy animation: 70 per cent of our output is commissioned, i.e. fully funded by BBC. In-house production is guaranteed for 50 per cent of that and commissioned production makes 20 per cent of that. The rest is open up for creative competition. Thirty per cent make quiet output that includes all animation – quiet, because we pre- buy as a set, we do not buy off the shelf, we put in between 10 and 24 per cent of editorial budget and we have editorial control input all the way through. We only buy animated series, no features. Within series we might have special seasonal series – Christmas, Easter, holiday

etc. It is exclusively UK broadcast licence, the licence is for 5 years, after 5 years we might relicence for another 5 years or the right goes back to the company and it is free to select elsewhere. The licence is typically between 10 and 24 per cent of the yearly budget. We buy 4 new shows a year. We do not have much space on the channel.

The top shows of last year: animated titles of 2013 were e.g. Mike the Knight, Peter Rabbit. Mighty Octonauts, Peter Rabbit Christmas tale was the most watched show in 2012.

The big question: what makes animation a hit? Humour is a key factor for both kids and adults. Great design visually distinctive, strong characters, adventure based action, aspirational encouraging play and inspiration for children's imagination. Children learn without realizing that. Good example is Octonauts which is like Star Track in the water that includes biology giving the slot extra dimension. Then strong clear episode structure and solid writing team, education, information and entertainment are special values appreciated by BBC.

What are we looking for in the future: shows that do different unique selling point that are visually distinctive, ideas driven by understanding of the audience and original, inventive ideas, twist of a traditional theme. It is really hard to pitch a slot. We may like it but it is identical to what we already have. So make effort, learn what other producers make, what is already on the market, what niche you can fill. We also want diversity both on and off screen. Typically we are looking for shows for 2- 4 year-old audience and multiplatform approach.

In April 2013 the UK had an animation tax relief, i.e. the shows can claim 10 per cent back of their overall budget, which makes financing much easier. If you are thinking about coproduction, we are definitely open for business. We already have coproduction with France and Canada, Australia, Ireland or Poland.

A short example of our animation – screening.

Thank you very much for your time.

Procházka:

Can you tell us more about the diversity?

Legg:

The biggest goal of BBC is to reflect diversity because our audience is diverged culturally as well – e.g. the actors might be from different ethnic groups. This should also hold true about displaying on the screen. Rust the Mouse serves a specific audience very well. As a public service broadcaster we must serve to all of our audience.

Procházka:

Licencing...

Legg:

If a property already exists that has licencing attached to it, we would not be able to take it on. We cannot give any prominence to commercial activities.

Procházka:

You have specific categories of audience, like 2-4, 4-6. It is really elaborated compared to other projects we have seen before. Do you think it is a key to target the audience with such tight categories?

Legg:

Well, there is such a difference between the younger and the older. If you are trying to teach a 3-year old maths, you must choose a different approach than for 6 year-old. You have to cover the full spectrum of ages. And back to the licencing: we try to avoid shows that are obviously too toyatic, full of things that you can go out and buy. Licencing is one thing but creating show that is purely about selling toys is not acceptable for public service broadcaster.

Procházka:

We have seen eight projects. Do you think that some of them could appeal your audience?

Legg:

Well, a lot of comments of broadcasters were similar to those that came to my mind. Patrick and Theo – as much as it was a hilarious project – felt to me like and older proposition and the weapons made me wince. But in terms of pre-school stuff the Gargoyle's Tales I was interested in – I wonder where the name comes from? Anyway, history in animated format is an interesting concept and it would be also interesting to see how it develops.

Klages:

I saw you have 2 or 3 programs based on popular books. Is there something that is important: brand, already existing audience that is easier to attract?

Legg:

It depends how it is re-imagined. Something that works in books doesn't have to serve as well in TV series. It is project by project.

Lilian Klages:

It is good to have an insight of the UK as a case study. I am a producer based in Germany and Denmark, so I have two very different countries I am trying to play for or develop for: Germany with a very commercial market, with a lot of diversified broadcasters, they stand for different contents. So you really must follow who is doing what, buying what, coproducing what, broadcasts what etc. And also who you are addressing, talking to. The worst thing is if you are trying to sell a pre-school project to a broadcaster who only buys American action adventure series. That is waste of time. In Denmark we have only two broadcasters – Denmark radio which is very creative and original content based, and a very commercial TV2. We have to find a niche, so I agree with Sarah – do your homework and find out where you fit in.

I am a producer that usually produces commercial shows. We have 20-year tradition in animated feature film with internationally financing. What I find most interesting is to say: I have a wonderful product but how do I get it financed? How to make the pieces of a puzzle fit? Obviously, firstly you must have the interest in your region. In the UK the broadcaster finances almost all 100 per cent of your project. When I look at new developments, I try to look at the world, what are the others producing and where the rewards go to, what the trends are, what stories children like. We have to look at American shows because it is part of the world we live in. Then I would see the different categories and I would see the show like this that was rewarded: (screening of trailer) and then I would say – no Disney, we are not going to do that. I would say then: ok, this is the US market. What is going on in my market? And then I came to a big animation film festival in Stuttgart and saw the project The Amazing World of Gumbo – very different from Disney (screening of trailer).

I want to give you an insight of TV series I worked on. It was a TV series for Lego, which is very Danish, completely financed by Lego itself (screening of trailer). I guess it is nothing CBBC would be interested in because it is only about selling toys.

We have completely different approach from CBBC as all projects are based on selling toys. My first step is to learn the market, analyse the idea, look at some other projects and competition. It happens very often that you develop something and you might miss out that in the market you can run into someone with the very same project. To avoid that, analyse the market, watch what other countries are doing, what is offered, what is bought, what the competition makes, who is buying what. Get to know about your region and broadcasters, e.g. in Germany many producers do not know their broadcasters, do not know what they are buying, who to address, what content they have, what age groups they target on, how much animated content they have, own content versus acquired or licenced content, their annual budgets, contact person and where

to meet them. All this is important for your region as well as for Europe and the whole world. There are a lot of animated fairs and animation people tend to group so you can meet them in Annecy, at Cartoon forum where you can talk. It is people's business. We are a small group, so after a couple of years you know each other.

I always look at my content and ask: is it a market driven show or is it a creative show? If you want to finance, it is also important to know what financing mechanisms I have. If it is a market driven show, I am much more open to address other financing sources. I look at trans media, cross media, I see if I can first develop an ad or a book and then TV series. Sometimes it is better to create an ad and create awareness, especially if I want to make a market driven show. Broadcasters are much more interested if a series is based on a book or an ad or a toy line, for them it is less risk and lower marketing costs. They know there is already established audience.

As for financing instruments: still the most challenging is the development because there are not so many broadcasters open up for financing the project. So how to get the money? How can you make a teaser, develop a story world, do audience testing or market research. We have media program Creative Europe, we have broadcasters and regional funding or we have city funding. For the production it is the same – we have a local funding which we call regional funding, country funding or national funding or textual the program – it sometimes comes without any content requirement. It is great because if you have two broadcasters with different requirements and ideas of a story development, it is difficult to put it together. You have European funding, broadcasters with presale or coproduction schemes, you have distribution deals, you also have crowdfunding, private equity and microinvesting. So people go more and more for crowdfunding to raise some money for the initial teaser, for example. There are some restrictions as for rights and in terms of ownership and creativity. We have DVD sales, merchandising licensing, the latter is not very attractive for broadcasters because they may not want to have any products attached to merchandising deal, because they might have the merchandising deal for themselves, so you should bring this issue for negotiation.

There are different types of broadcasters. Because of diversity of distribution channels it is becoming more challenging for producers. So many new channels are popping out that it is rather confusing for us - producers. It takes us more time to find out what they are selling, what the niches are, if they have an animation channel, distribution platform etc.

Dramatic changes also come with children usage of computers. That is what we must take into consideration on developing content. Coproduction cooperation - we have some ideas, synopses, visuals, lever on the story, we have a pitch paper, focus on the development the story. We have to find a partner, development funding, we have to make a teaser because everyone wants to read

the script and to see things moving; we have to visit sales markets, and of course to pitch the project because we have to find a coproduction market. We have to find a coproducer and a distributor, and maybe to do some presales. So it is a long list of things a producer must think about before starting developing. So I have a list of these things and think about each step, not to forget anything, to do all in the right order etc. Producers have to make projects that children enjoy but we also have to raise money.

It was just short visualisation of our work. What is the most important: you have three different blocks that are divided into other blocks. So I have a broadcaster on one side and coproduction partner on the other. My broadcaster has his own coproduction partner who also needs to apply for tax shelters, funding. The scheme is important for your timeline. Even with a coproduction partner you do not have to go fast into final financing. Everybody has to look for his own resources and try to secure them.

Now I want to show you a cartoon that I am a fan of. It has a wonderful program for financing and markets and new financing methods. During the last cartoon forum there was an interview with a French producers and I want to show you as he is talking about new markets.

"Market places have changed in the past 5 years. It has to do with fragmentation of the market. You used to have a broadcasting landscape or free televisions that would run all series including those for children. So children were treated in blocks shown in the morning or at weekends. Children programming was part of a global picture. The competition was not big; you had one or two public channels, one or two private channels. So a broadcaster could play an important role in prefinancing the show. Going from children block to children's channels fully dedicated to children completely changed the landscape. There is a big competition. There are 15 – 25 channels in every market. As a result of fierce competition each of these channels has a very little segment and limited money that is available. Capacity of broadcasters to pre-fund the show is very limited, especially when local channels have to fight against the US networks. You can tap into their library, advertising and merchandising. Broadcasters have much weaker position in prefinancing the show. The best way to approach the market is to define your strategy. It depends on your own show, whether you believe it, whether it fits with the market. If you have a market driven show, whether based on toys, books, property, whatever, it is the best to go on early on development stage as it means less risk for the channels to develop your show. And you have chance to have the broadcaster go through the entire process and fund it. Whereas, if you have a very creative driven show, it is very difficult to convince buyer or scheduler that the show fits with the schedule, because it is brand new. You need to develop it further on. They must understand where you want to go and how this will make an impact, you have to go far with the developments, have enough elements. You must have almost finished episodes - full animatic of a story board

that you take, scan it, and put an entire sound track in it – dialogue, sound, music, so that your buyer, scheduler could look into the story as a finished one. It is a very useful tool. New markets are emerging pretty much in America and Asia. And you also have a digital world. It is quite difficult to get money from those markets. Their job is to carry shows not to pick and edit the shows. There is a lot of money available on those markets but they will come when the show is finished. So what you need is a distributor that can help you market, get financed and build the assets. He knows exactly the value of the show in the market. It may take long but thus you can build assets with long shelf life.

Klages:

I can only emphasize: go to cartoon forums, find out what your colleagues are doing and learn what the broadcasters and distributors want. That is why we have a European network and other institutions that help us understand the market. A lot of these institutions take care of education have support to European countries so you even do not have to pay the full price, which makes participation of some of you impossible. So there is a support for people coming from Eastern Europe.

There are more channels, bigger competition; we have to find our way around the fragmented market. New markets are popping up, Asia is a promising market because it is opening for coproduction and they are also looking vice versa, so there is a good opportunity to coproduce. And there are new formats.

In a pith of different distribution platforms that are becoming more and more diversified, there are more platforms looking for a new content. So it is worth analysing what they are looking for. It might be a good idea to create content for one of these new emerging platforms.

With existing property and community, the producers are able to attract better licencing deals from traditional game keepers and advertising revenues from agents and brokers. It happens that sometimes we start from the opposite side - we can do games and turn them into TV series. And we have formats that we can enlarge into bigger formats. Row view in Finland is an example of someone who does not have so much money but they started with a game product and then TV series, 2 min episodes. Now they have their own TV channel.

Now we are moving to feature films. It is amazing as you have a whole chain of different formats coming from different directions. I have a clip of Angry Birds series that you all know so we do not have to watch it. Books, comics, toys, games, merchandising - that is what I want to mention because if you do not find a regional funder, you should go into innovative funding. The original funders in Germany and Denmark have set up a new fund for innovative format.

If you have a program for Scandinavian countries, go to Malmö. If an Italian producer is in question, I would not recommend. There are some markets that are more international or European, like Cartoon Forum, where you can say: ok,

I can cover all kinds of different territories, projects, styles, content, distributors etc., but if you have a specific idea about financing concerning Nordic countries, go there.

It is useful to check pacing, scripting, structure, useful process is part of your development. Then you can share it with your intended broadcasters. Do not worry; I see a lot of animatics when I am producing a show.

Jan Maxa:

But beware of animatics offline or not broadcastable material. You can show it to people from development but do not show it to people from management or marketing who normally see finished stuff. They may think it does not look nice. So make your choice carefully who to show the animatic to.

Klages:

You have to put yourself into shoes of the person who is pitching. You always have to feel the person you have in front of you. You have to make them like what you sell, whether it is a dishwasher or a film.

Procházka:

What is the experience and challenges from developing projects together with production from our region?

Klages:

We are developing a feature film with a producer from the Czech Republic, and because it is an international coproduction so we have a production expert. After a long-term cooperation we know who to address, what the best animation studio is, but the challenge is that the project is rooted somewhere. It has a distinct language, so the challenge is that we know where it belongs to, we know its history, what is important for the main producer, we respect that but at the same time we are able to tell the story in an international context. It is all about knowing your partners, what they want or where they go to and from.

Procházka:

You consulted pitching projects yesterday. Could you comment on it?

Klages:

Before I came here, I was told by my partner that I am not allowed to come back with any project. But there were so many nice projects yesterday, producers had done such nice work, so if I could, I would offer a coproduction, but I cannot. But some of the projects were fantastic.

Procházka:

Could you give us a hint, which projects?

Klages:

Of course, from German point of view, some projects are more adaptable. I think the project creators know who I mean.

Thank you for your attention!

