

Northwest Animation Festival

13932 SE Raymond St. • Portland, OR 97236 • director@nwanimationfest.com • www.nwanimationfest.com

PRESS RELEASE

April 22, 2013

This year the Northwest Animation Festival will screen over 150 films at its May 17-19 event. In three short years, it's become the biggest animation showcase in the USA.

NW Animation Fest is a variety show that celebrates the best new work from independent animators around the globe. This year's event includes screenings of 155 short films from 30 countries plus numerous peripheral events. The festival runs for three nights and two afternoons on May 17-19 at the Hollywood Theatre in Portland, Oregon. Two weeks later the film program repeats in its entirety at the Bijou Arts Cinema in Eugene, Oregon (May 31-June 2).

Tickets cost \$10 for afternoons, \$15 for evenings, or \$55 for a 3-day pass. Saturday afternoon is a special all-ages program. For more info, visit: www.nwanimationfest.com.

A VARIETY SHOW

NW Animation Fest's touchstones are fun, art, variety, and quality. When you go to a show, expect to see a cross-section of the animation world and go home wowed by the imagination, craftsmanship, and spectacle.

A major appeal of the variety show format is knowing that whatever you're watching now, the next film will be something completely different. The festival's programs are deliberately eclectic, showing works that are in turn hilarious, dramatic, strange, and inspiring. Programs move along at a good pace, too — animation favors short subjects, the average film being only about 6 minutes long.

NW Animation Fest is remarkable for its quality as well as quantity. Festival Director Sven Bonnichsen actively recruits award-winning films from other noteworthy events around the world. This year includes many Oscar contenders, such as the Oscar finalists *Fresh Guacamole* and *Head Over Heels* — and the Best Animated Short of 2013, *Paperman*.

LARGEST ANIMATION SHOW IN THE USA

This May, NW Animation Fest is presenting the single largest showcase of animation in the United States: 155 short films. Coming in second place, Florida's Citrus Cel Animation Film Festival screened 124 in early April. In third place, New York city's Animation Block Party screened 93 last July.

Selections were drawn from a pool of 628 submissions — an astonishing number for a 3-year-old event. (For comparison, the Portland Oregon Women's Film Festival only reached 600 submissions in its 6th year.) NW Animation Fest did two unusual things to attract so many films: it reached out and made direct invitations to filmmakers screening work in other festivals, and it offered a period during which any filmmaker could submit their film for free.

This year's deluge of entries created something of an organizational crisis. Using just the local team, it would have taken 26 weeks to review them all. Not willing to give up rigorous evaluation, the fest rapidly built a new team of 49 jurors and invented an original system for jurying films online. Half of the expanded team lives

outside of Oregon, and 7 members are in other countries. It's an exciting and appropriate evolution: an international festival with a genuinely international selection team.

MORE THAN JUST FILMS

NW Animation Fest is more than just films. A host of special events surround the festival. A unifying theme is the Do-It-Yourself spirit, encouraging festival attendees to get involved in making animation themselves. A few highlights...

One of this year's films is *Animation Hotline*, by Dustin Grella. The New Yorker encourages people to leave a phone message at 1-212-683-2490. He then selects clips to animate, using colored chalk on a blackboard. An "Animation Hotline Hotspot" will be running in the Hollywood Theatre's lobby, so festival attendees can call and leave Grella their own message during the event.

Friday night, NW Animation Fest and ASIFA-Portland co-sponsor a late-night "Drink & Draw" party at Tony Starlight's Supperclub-Lounge. Attendees are provided with sharpie markers and light boxes. You make twelve sequential drawings then pass the last one on to another person. At the end of the night, all of these drawings get compiled into one hilariously chaotic short film. Instant animation — no experience necessary!

Late-night on Saturday, Patrick Coan performs *New Key of the Ancient Light*. It's an innovative blend of music, animation, and games. Improvising on the piano, Coan interactively generates digital imagery on a projection screen. Audience members further contribute to the event by using common video game controllers to influence elements of the animation in real time.

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Members of the press are cordially invited to attend the festival for free. Passes have been included with this mailing — or you can simply identify yourself as press at our info table. For writing advance reviews, please consider watching the enclosed 2013 Sampler DVD.



Contact

Sven Bonnicksen
Festival Director
director@nwanimationfest.com
www.nwanimationfest.com
503-762-6830