

13 SHORT FILMS COMMISSIONED THROUGH ANIMATION 2018

BBC and BFI unveil the filmmakers selected for prestigious talent programme

London – [Embargoed until 00.01 Friday 20th July]: Loneliness, loss, love and libido are just some of the subjects explored in the 13 short films commissioned through **Animation 2018**, the prestigious programme from the **BFI** and **BBC Four** designed to find and support the UK's most exciting new and emerging animators. Each of the films supported through Animation 2018 will receive production grants between £2,000 and £10,000 towards the completion or creation of an original film and the opportunity to be broadcast on BBC Four following a premiere at BFI Southbank.

The selected films take different approaches to the form, using styles and techniques ranging from hand-drawn images to live-action puppetry, stop motion, CG, 2D and 3D and covering a diversity of genres from science-fiction to documentary to celebrate and explore the medium of animation. The films will each be 2-10 minutes in duration and showcase fresh animation talent from all nations and regions of the UK.

This is the second edition of the UK-wide collaboration between the BFI and BBC Four which encourages and supports talent from a variety of disciplines. The last, Listen to Britain 2017, celebrated British documentary filmmaking and has already acted as a launchpad for a number of promising careers across broadcast and film.

Animation 2018 forms part of the BFI's yearlong focus on animation, which celebrates the diversity, richness and innovation of British animation, through screenings and events in venues up and down the country, a new collection of 300+ archive animations available to view for free online and the release of BFI supported *Early Man*, the latest film from Nick Park.

Animation consultant Helen Brunson will be working with and sharing her expertise with the filmmakers. Helen has worked extensively in the animation industry, for numerous clients including Aardman Animations, BBC, CBBC, The Brothers McLeod as well as for Animation UK and on the British Animation Awards. Her film credits include *Wife Of Bath*, *Morph*, *The Pearce Sisters*, *Nina Needs To Go*, *Children Of The Holocaust*, *Isle Of Spagg*, *Quiff In Boots*.

Development and delivery of the animations will be managed by independent production company Wingspan Productions which produced Listen to Britain 2017.

The selected filmmakers

- Tom Adriani will create a hand-drawn animated fairy tale set in a war-torn London.
- Jordan Buckner will use CG and 2D animation to consider one man's strange encounter in a dying industrial town.
- Edward Bulmer, Shereen Ali and Andrew Eu will combine live-action puppetry with sketchy, hand-drawn animation to explore one man's sleepless night, as he obsesses over a bad joke he told at work.
- Jonny Eveson uses black and white 3D animation to tell the story of an alien city powered by a strange light, and a child who unwittingly threatens to bring it down.
- Sophie Koko Gate will explore one woman's relationship with a beautiful giant slug.
- Astrid Goldsmith will use stop motion to tell an allegory for our times of a maverick, Morris dancing badger who risks expulsion from the band by dancing forbidden steps and making forbidden friends.
- Katherine Hearst and Maria Pullicino will create a short 2d animation about a lonely bird working in an oppressive factory, who finds an ingenious way to escape.
- Ieuan Lewis and George Warren are co-directing a stop frame animation following an Inuit struggling with his dog to survive after an oil tanker leaks oil off the coast of Alaska.
- Carla MacKinnon is collaborating with composer Hannah Peel on an experimental mixed-media film using real-life interviews and exploring the experience of romantic love.
- Mary Martins is drawing on autobiography and unravels her earliest childhood memory in Lagos, which she believes has been crucial in forming her sense of identity.
- Tom Rourke will create a bold and colourful 2D animation whose heroine lacks a limb but is determined it won't hold her back - and she happens to be a penguin.
- Ed Smith will use 2D animation to tell the dark but funny story of Archie and Mary, a couple who obsessively shave themselves, and the conflict this leads to.
- Co-directors Victoria Watson and Chris Watson will use stop motion to explore an old man's life as he confronts loneliness and loss and discovers that love never dies.



Emma Cahusac, Commissioning Editor, BBC Arts, says: “I’m delighted that BBC Arts and BBC Four is part of this ambitious initiative which champions new talent. We’re delighted to be partnering with the BFI on this project and can’t wait to see what the animators have in store for us.”

Gillian Scothern, Broadcast Producer, BFI, says: “We were blown away by the quality and quantity of submissions we received for Animation 2018, and the wealth of talent across the country using animation to create boundary-pushing work. The 13 films we’ve selected use traditional techniques alongside cutting-edge technologies to tell a diverse range of stories in new and exciting ways.”

Deborah Lee, Executive Producer, Wingspan Productions, says: “We are looking forward to working with such an impressive range of up-and-coming animation talent and helping them shape their first film for broadcast. These filmmakers promise to showcase the unique potential of animation to take on complex subjects and make something impactful, entertaining and often extraordinary. Prepare to be delighted.”

The broadcast for BBC Four will be commissioned by Cassian Harrison, Channel Editor, BBC Four and Emma Cahusac, Commissioning Editor for BBC Arts. The project is part of Culture UK - an alliance between BBC and Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Creative Scotland, which takes a fresh approach to cultural collaborations, commissions and creativity.

Project summaries:

The Three Crow Boys – Tom Adriani

This animation takes place in a ravaged London street in the midst of war. Between mounds of rubble and bomb craters stands the house of a lonely old blind man. Late one night he receives three unexpected visitors. *The Three Crow Boys* is an original fairy tale, exploring the nature of monsters and madness. Not for the faint hearted, this story follows in the dark footsteps of the Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault and Angela Carter.

//_sleeper – Jordan Buckner

//_sleeper is a short animation set in a dying, industrial town both familiar and unfamiliar. This is neither future nor past, but rather somewhere lost. Somewhere other. The film uses a mix of

2D and CG animation to explore what happens to a lonely figure when a mysterious anomaly appears on the fringes of the landscape. It aims to capture the strange sense of ennui, loss and anxiety that feels appropriate for our times.

***Frank's Joke* – Edward Bulmer**

Frank told a bad joke at his new place of work. Nobody laughed. Now at 3am in the morning he is unable to sleep as he obsesses and ruminates over this social faux-pas, leading him to ponder on the nature of memory itself. This comedic look at how our brains can keep us awake at night uses a mixed media approach of live-action puppetry and expressive hand drawn animation to convey the physical world and Frank's mental space respectively.

***Meteorlight* - Jonny Eveson**

Meteorlight is a black and white 3D animated film set in a strange world plagued with darkness. The story follows Spudling, a sheltered character whose parent runs the factory manufacturing light for the city's inhabitants. When finally granted permission to follow their parent into work for one day, Spudling discovers the secret of what is really powering their world...

***Slug Life* – Sophie Koko Gate**

We watch one young woman's unconventional attempt to take control of her own love life by growing the perfect partner - a beautiful giant slug. Both freaks of nature, it's a seemingly perfect match; until the slug is introduced to the outside world where he develops a taste for dinner parties and stimulating conversation.

***Quarantine* – Astrid Goldsmith**

In an English coastal border town, a small band of badgers live in the shadow of an animal quarantine facility. As they struggle to keep their folk traditions alive, they try to ignore the strange sounds coming from the compound. But when tragedy strikes, they are forced to seek help from the unlikeliest place. A post-Brexit dance fantasy, Quarantine is an exploration of the fears that drive anti-immigrant rhetoric, viewed through the lens of British folk tradition.

***Outside the Box* – Katherine Hearst and Maria Pullicino**

Tody is a lonely bird slaving his life away in a packaging factory. He dreams of a better life in the sunshine with someone there who actually cares if he's tired or overworked. When a box

arrives at his station, destined for sunnier lands, Tody decides to make a break for it in order to find his paradise. The factory, however, has other plans.

***Uki* - Ieuan Lewis and George Warren**

A short stop frame animation following a lonely Inuit who struggles to survive after an oil tanker leaks oil off the coast of Alaska, killing all the wildlife in the area. It's a dark comedy about companionship, loneliness and pollution.

***Love & The Worlds* - Carla MacKinnon and Hannah Peel**

Inspired by the poetry of Edwin Morgan where natural and domestic worlds collide and the hidden animal instincts of humans rise to the surface, this poetic visual narrative features voices from interviews recorded around the UK, woven into an evocative soundtrack. Stop motion puppets and live action footage combine to tell a dark love story.

***Childhood Memories* - Mary Martins**

Combining 16mm colour footage of Lagos, Nigeria from the 70s with stop motion and 2D hand drawn animation, this multi-layered animation explores autobiographical memory and the cultural elements of our earliest childhood memory. Often episodic, this recollection of personally experienced past events often emerge from as early as three years old. After the age of five, these memories become elusive. A journey back to where it all began can be both beautiful and enlightening.

***The Penguin Who Couldn't Swim* – Tom Rourke**

The Penguin Who Couldn't Swim is an animation about a disabled penguin who lives on a rocky island in the southern seas where she feels isolated from the rest of her colony. She is inventive, resourceful and tough but frustrated about what she cannot do. This is an animation about disability, made by a disabled animator.

***Hair* - Ed Smith**

Archie and Mary Harrison obsessively shave themselves. Archie hates hair, and Mary loves Archie. In an attempt to please the love of her life, Mary suppresses her secret desire for hair. However, soon this desire starts to surface and their relationship becomes toxic.

***Ladder to You* - Victoria Watson and Chris Watson**

Inspired by the loneliness experienced by older people in our society, Ladder to You is an insight into the life of Eric, an old man dealing with the loss of his wife. We follow Eric's day-to-day life and become immersed in the solitude he is trying to overcome. Through his feelings and memories of better times we get to see what it's like for the thousands of old people who live every day without any human contact. Ending with a message that love can beat despair, Ladder to You can also hopefully inspire people to give a little more time to the older folk who live amongst us.

- Ends -

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About the BFI

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK - investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.



BBC Arts

The BBC is the biggest creator of arts content and is Britain's creative partner – a stage for the nation to experience the very best arts; when they want, how they want.

- **The nation's stage:** access to arts and culture programming for all through the licence fee – we create and showcase more arts and culture than any other broadcaster
- **An Innovator:** constantly finding new ways to bring the best quality culture to audiences; working with the arts sector as partner and acting as a hot house for new talent
- **Britain's creative partner:** a bold force in the UK creative sector as creator and commissioner, also a platform for new talent
- **An investor in quality:** we only present the highest quality arts and culture programming, crafted by skilled production teams and shared with all audiences
- **Bringing the nation together:** like no other we create and amplify moments in arts and culture, cutting through with a broad audience