

International Children's and Youth Film Carnival to offer amazing movie journeys in summer (with photos)

With the summer holidays approaching, the Film Programmes Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department will present the International Children's and Youth Film Carnival 2018 (ICYFC), taking viewers on journeys filled with thrills and spills – up to the mountains, down to the sea, and even further beyond.

The ICYFC is a highlight of the International Arts Carnival and will present a selection of international animations, feature films and short films to be screened from July 6 to August 12 at the Theatre of Hong Kong City Hall, the Cinema of the Hong Kong Film Archive and the Lecture Halls of the Hong Kong Science Museum and the Hong Kong Space Museum.

Among the nine feature films, five are fun-filled animations. In "Pixi Post & the Gift Bringers" (2016), a gift-giving genie from Japan is absent from the annual Genies' Forum for Christmas presents. Christmas elf Pixi Post is sent to the human realm to investigate, and soon uncovers a horrible scheme set to turn the world upside down. The film won Best Feature Film for Children at the Anima Mundi Festival 2017. "The Dragon Spell" (2016), based on Anton Siyanika's children's book "Nicky Tanner", tells the story of Nicky Tanner, who dreams of being a dragon slayer, tails a sorcerer and finds himself on a thrilling journey across mysterious lands in search of a dragon. "The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales" (2017) takes the audience to what could well be the craziest animal farm in the world. The film won Best Animated Film in the César Awards 2018, Best Animated Film in the Lumiere Awards 2018 and the Golden Poznan Goat prize for Best Feature Film for Children at the Ale Kino! International Young Audience Film Festival 2017.

"Lila's Book" (2017) tells how Lila, a picture book character, persuades Ramon, the book's owner, to take her back to the fascinating forest she lives in from the cruel real world despite all the dangers lying ahead. The film won Best Animated Feature Film (Catbus Kids Children's Jury Prize) in the Children's International Film Festival Seattle 2018 and Best Children's Film at the Warsaw Film Festival 2017. In "The Incredible Story of the Giant Pear" (2017), a quirky professor turns a giant pear into a vehicle. Together with a small elephant and a little cat, they sail towards a mysterious island and embark on an adventurous journey. The film won Best Children's Film & Best Adapted Screenplay in the Robert Awards 2018.

The remaining four feature films include "Casper & Emma: Go Hiking" (2017), in which two kids and their toy doll friends go out of their way to play matchmaker. In "Lotte & Luise: Twins on Board" (2016), twins who were separated at a young age begin a mission to find out their birth secrets by swapping identities after a camp and move into each other's home. The film won the Second Prize (Children's Jury) for Live-action Feature at the Chicago

International Children's Film Festival 2017. In "Mister Twister at the Pitch" (2016), an oddball teacher divides his time between tending to his injured mother and leading his students to victory in a football tournament. The film won the Golden Calf Audience Award at the Netherlands Film Festival 2017. In "How to Steal a Dog" (2014), a girl named Ji-so comes up with a perfect plot to steal a dog so as to improve her family conditions. Unfortunately, she lands herself in a bitter feud over a rich woman's family estate. The film won the Golden Poznan Goat prize for Best Feature Film for Children at the Ale Kino! International Young Audience Film Festival 2015.

The "Youthful Encounters" section features three films for youths about overcoming obstacles and challenges when growing up. In "Windstorm and the Wild Horses" (2017), Mika tries to save the hometown of her beloved stallion Windstorm by reorganising a wild horse contest. The film won Best Feature Film in the Equinale Film Festival 2017. In "Storm – Letter of Fire" (2017), a 12-year-old boy who wants to save his father fights against tyranny for justice and becomes a mover and shaker in a big era. The film won the Starboy Prize (Children's Jury) at the Oulu International Children's and Youth Film Festival 2017. In "The Day My Father Became a Bush" (2016), war strikes and a father is drafted to go to the battlefield. His little daughter is left to her own devices, having to seek refuge with her mother in a neighbouring country. The film won Best Dutch Family Film (Cinekid Lion Jury Award) in the Cinekid Festival 2017 and Best Film (Professional Jury) at the KinoKino International Film Festival for Children 2017.

The "Film Tunnel" section features "The Iron Giant" (1999), based on a sci-fi novel written by British children's book author Ted Hughes to his daughter. Set in 1957 when various countries were at odds during the Cold War, the novel not only celebrates the protagonists' friendship, but carries even bigger messages – no war and no nukes. The 2015 "signature edition", a re-edited and restored version two minutes longer than the original film, will be shown. The award-winning work won recognition with prizes including Best Feature Film (BAFTA Children's Award) in the BAFTA Awards 2000 and a total of nine awards in the Annie Awards 1999 including Outstanding Achievement in an Animated Theatrical Feature, Outstanding Individual Achievement for Directing, Outstanding Individual Achievement for Writing, Outstanding Individual Achievement for Effects Animation and Outstanding Individual Achievement for Music.

Experienced dubbing artists Pat Kwok and Kinson Lai will perform live Cantonese dubbing for "Casper & Emma: Go Hiking", "Pixi Post & the Gift Bringers" and "The Dragon Spell", which will also have English subtitles. The other films have Chinese and English subtitles.

Apart from the feature films, 23 animations and shorts from around the world grouped into three programmes, which are suitable for both children and youths, will be screened during the ICYFC in the "World Animation & Shorts" section. Numerous adorable new characters will be introduced, such as a grumpy toad, a penguin who finds life too chilly, a selfie cat, and Johnny the space delivery courier. Ken Kwan, a veteran scriptwriter, director and actor of children's drama, will host interactive activities in Cantonese during the intervals for some of the programmes.

In addition, three sessions of the Hand-painted Film Workshop, organised for the first time by the Hong Kong Arts Centre, will be held on July 15 in Cantonese for children aged 5 to 12 to work on an animation together and experience the joy and excitement of creating and projecting hand-drawn images frame by frame. The workshops will be held at the Function Room (AC2), Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Tickets for all screenings and workshops, priced at \$60 and \$90 respectively, will be available from tomorrow (May 11) at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries, please call 2734 2900 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/fp/en_US/web/fpo/programmes/2018icyfc/index.html.

