

INFORMER CINEMA # FLICKERFEST 2012

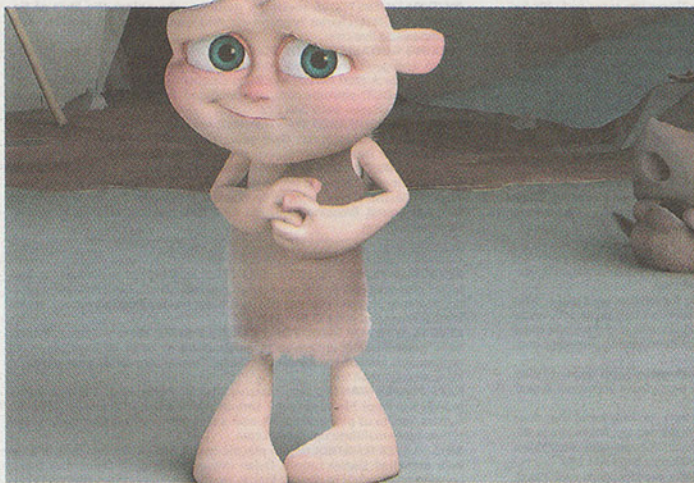
Short & Sweet

TIM MILFULL speaks with program director BRONWYN KIDD and one of her short film contributors, Brisbane-based animator ANDREW MARTIN, about the FLICKERFEST NATIONAL TOUR 2012.

Each year, after screening the entire Flickerfest programme in its hometown of Bondi, Festival Director Bronwyn Kidd has the daunting task of sifting through all of those films and deciding which ones she'll take on a tour around Australia. I ask Bronwyn how she copes with making such a Sophie's Choice. "We're looking at stuff that will tour well, that people will engage with, that's interesting and fits well together within a programme. We want to give a good taste of the variety of styles we have. It's very important that in our curation we can say there's some good animation, there's some comedy, there's some serious drama, there's the more quirky work, the stuff that's really surprising – there's a wide range."

And this is the fanboy point where I moan about missing out on the new film *It's Such A Beautiful Day*, from Academy Award nominee animator Don Hertzfeldt. Bronwyn's explanation doesn't offer much reassurance, but having seen one alternative, I have to agree, "Well, you would have had to come to Sydney to see it—Don only had a 35mm print; he didn't have it available digitally. So it was fantastic that we were able to screen *It's Such A Beautiful Day*. But we've got some other really good ones that you'll really like! I mean, standout crazy and quirky and just really unusual is *Brick Novax's Diary*, which is just hilarious, and tells the story using action doll figures – it won the jury award at Sundance last year, and has been really well received by audiences."

Bronwyn moves on to talk about other films in the touring programme. Matthew Jenkin's "accomplished" and subtly amusing *Cockatoo* sees an unfortunate Michael (Alan Dukes) resort to hiring an agency girl to sort out his misery over an ex-girlfriend; Anna Broinowski – of *Forbidden Lie\$* fame – offers an "irreverent" take on the ranga-roots of Pauline Hanson in *Fish & Chips*; while Matthew Moore has had "very favourable audience responses" to his film, *Julian*, which



had me laugh out loud at the final kicker of a line; and sneaking in under the radar from the competition is *Bear*, produced by Jon Polson – the creative founder of one of Flickerfest's competitors, *Tropfest* – and directed by and starring Nash Edgerton. This final film had me gasping out loud at one of the most frightening stunts I've seen in recent memory.

Complementing these homegrown efforts is a long list of international shorts, and Bronwyn is quick to note one of her favourites from award-winning Swedish director, Johannes Nyholm, "*Las Palmas* is the craziest film you'll see in a very long time, but it's so funny. This middle-aged lady goes on holiday in Majorca and tries to have fun, but the role is played by a one-year-

was really stoked about that," he says. "Flickerfest is another chance to show the film to a wider audience – I have a lot of people who have been wondering when they'll be able to see it."

Encountering films like Andrew's for the first time is one of the thrills of Bronwyn's job as a curator, "It's certainly a joy to discover great work. You see these filmmaker's films go on to be screened around the world, and they go on to do remarkable things. Within short film, people are not pressured by the box office; they're not pressured by commercial interests; they don't have 10 executive producers telling them how to change the ending of their film. People can be very individual. They can tell stories that they're really passionate about. For

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BRONWYN KIDD

old girl, and the rest are marionettes—that might give you a tiny bit of an idea...”

Adding a local spin to the Brisbane leg of the Flickerfest National Tour is a chance for audiences to see a hometown filmmaker celebrate the success of his own short film, *Gus*, which documents a very difficult social problem faced by a Neanderthal boy and his father. QUT lecturer and accomplished animator Andrew Martin had a taste of fame when his film picked up a gong at the Queensland New Filmmaker Awards at BIFF in 2011. "It was a good night, and there was a pretty big turn-out. *Gus* picked up the Best Animation Award, so I

me, that's what makes the job all that worthwhile, getting these great gems of cinema, and having the chance to share them with audiences, and bring this unique, creative work to people that they wouldn't otherwise get a chance to see."

► FLICKERFEST comes to the Judith Wright Centre for the first time this year, running Thursday Feb 9 – Saturday Feb 11. See www.judithwrightcentre.com for bookings, and www.flickerfest.com.au for further information on films in the program.