



Countdown to the 19th Animayo Gran Canaria, the festival that develops talent and boosts the industry

- **Top international studios and producers will attend Animayo Gran Canaria: Sony Pictures Animation, Platige Image, Cinesite, Polygon Pictures Inc, Plymptoons, Nørlum Studios, and Skydance Animation, among others.**
- **More than 30 guest speakers and star participants will participate in 14 master classes, 15 educational lectures, 4 workshops, 5 premieres and screenings, 3 author presentations, 5 school stands, 20 talent stands, 2 exhibitions, and 12 hours of recruitments, portfolio reviews, and signings.**
- **Animayo Gran Canaria will also present the 'Invest in Spain Animation Network' meeting encouraging collaboration and the creation of international strategic alliances.**
- **Sony Pictures Animation will present the European premiere of an exclusive behind-the-scenes master class and for the first time in Europe, an art exhibition of the critically acclaimed 'Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse', winner of seven Annie Awards, including Best Picture, and nominated at this year's Academy Awards® for Best Animated Feature.**

Animayo, the International Festival of Animation, Visual Effects, and Video Games, is **the first and only festival in Spain** designated as a "Qualifying Festival" by the Hollywood Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for the **Oscar® Awards** in the category of animated short film and also the only one of its kind that qualifies for the **best animated work in the Spanish language**, starts the countdown to the **19th edition** of the festival will be held in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands, Spain) from **May 8 to May 11, both days inclusive**, and will extend its online programming until September 2024.

Once again, under the slogan 'developing talent, driving the industry', Animayo presents an ambitious programme that reflects its commitment to quality since its inception in 2006.

Previewing part of the programme at the last press conference, Damián Perea, filmmaker, producer and director of Animayo, revealed some of the **highlights of the new edition**, which will be attended in person by top-level international producers and studios such as Sony Pictures Animation, Platige Image, Cinesite, Polygon Pictures Inc, Plymptoons, Nørlum Studios, Skydance Animation, Atlantis Animation, B Water Studios, Fortiche Production, 3 Doubles Productions, Tomavision Studio, BMCAFF Studio, and Amuse, among others. Some of these participants are a key part of another fundamental axis of Animayo, which is to provide real professional opportunities with its 'Professional Encounters' featuring in-person recruitments, upon registration, to which this year the **'Invest in Spain Animation Network'** has been added. Located in the Gabinete Literario in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, it is an **exclusive event for professionals aimed at generating real business opportunities in the Spanish industry by establishing networking and opportunities between foreign companies and decision makers and Spanish production companies and studios**, which already includes some 200 B2B meetings between participants. It will be attended by **Elena Moreno, M&E Industry Manager at Icx- Invest In Spain**, who will inform the participants about the role of the organisation in the promotion of the Spanish film industry, inviting the attendees to **consider Spain as a strategic destination for future investment and production**, emphasising the benefits and support that Icx-Invest In Spain offers to facilitate and promote collaborations in the film industry.

Animayo Gran Canaria 2024 will feature **more than 30 guest speakers and star panelists on a roster of experts, artists, and creators from national and international studios, producers, and schools** who, at the CICC Space and at the Teatro Guinguada, will share their knowledge through **14 in-person masterclasses**, each lasting 90 minutes, covering topics such as animation, production, VFX, and leadership, among others, **4 workshops**, each lasting 240 minutes, focused on practical learning of skills and capabilities in areas such as animation, matte painting, illustration, and artificial intelligence, in addition to **15 educational lectures**, 5 premieres and screenings, 3 author presentations, 5 school stands, 20 talent stands, 2 exhibitions, and 12 hours of recruitments, portfolio reviews, and signings with **more than 15 participating companies from the sector**, including The Platige Image, one of Europe's leading cinematic video game studios, creators, among others, of the series filmed in the Canary Islands "The Witcher".

Distinguished guests **from cities and countries such as** New York (USA), Los Angeles (USA), Denmark, Poland, Toronto (Canada), Tokyo (Japan), Lyon (France), and Spain, among whom Damián Perea revealed last week the participation of internationals such as John Musker, for the first time at a festival in Spain, legendary director of titles such as 'The Little Mermaid', 'Hercules', 'Aladdin' and 'Moana', from Walt Disney Animation Studios, where he worked for 40 years as animator, writer, director and producer. **Musker to chair the Animayo Gran Canaria 2024 International Jury**, whose winning entry will get **a direct entry into the Oscar® shortlist**, Animayo being the first and only animation festival in Spain to qualify for the Hollywood Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awards in the Best Animated Short Film category. Musker's participation will be full, as he will also be giving a drawing workshop and a master class on writing and directing animated feature films. In addition, Animayo will host **the Spanish premiere** of his short film **'I'm Hip'**, **followed by an exclusive master class** in which John Musker will explain 'how he made' this animated musical, among others, on the short list of the last Oscar® Awards.

Also featured, the iconic animation director **Bill Plympton**, twice nominated for the Oscar® Awards, who already chose Animayo last year for the premiere of the feature film 'Slide', his fascinating animated western. Old friend of the Festival, practically 'the godfather of Animayo; our first guest of the first edition'. Master of independent animation cinema, known for his versatility as a director, producer, cartoonist, animator, and composer of his own films. With more than 40 awards at festivals around the world and 30 nominations. Also, **Sony Pictures Animation's Patrick O'Keefe** (production designer) and Sony Pictures Imageworks' **Pav Grochola** (FX and look of picture supervisor) will present

the **European premiere of an exclusive behind-the-scenes** presentation detailing the making of the critically acclaimed "**Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse**", winner of seven Annie Awards including Best Feature, and nominated at this year's Academy Awards® for Best Animated Feature. Representing **Platige Image** are **Rafał Kidziński** (Poland), VFX Supervisor, Production and Pipelines Manager, and **Jarosław Sawko** (Poland), executive producer, with notable projects: "Another Day of Life", "Star Wars Outlaws", "The Witcher".

Ann Le Cam (Los Angeles, USA), who, leading creativity and innovation, spans three continents in her career with experience in fields such as Studio Leadership, Production Planning, and Talent Management: was **the former Vice President of Walt Disney Animation Studios** where she served as Executive Vice President of Production, Studio Planning and Talent, and the Global Head of Animation Talent and Production for Weta FX Studios / Executive Fellow at Harvard Business School. **Shuzo Shiota** (Japan), producer, president, and CEO of Polygon Pictures Inc with several Emmy awards or the Special Prize 25th Japan Art Festival ("Transformers: Prime", "Star Wars: Resistance"), sponsored by U-tad University Center of Technology and Digital Art. **Elena ø Alexa** (Denmark), with two Oscar® nominations, production director and co-owner of **Nørlum Studios** ("Long Way North", "Calamity").

More star guests who, Perea said, "**come to share their knowledge, convey their experiences in a close way, to teach and motivate new generations**", professionals who mingle with the audience attending the Festival, also participating in autograph signings", such as **Julián Larrauri** (Madrid, Spain), producer, director, and screenwriter, (U-tad). **Ramón Rosa** (Madrid, Spain), senior digital effects composer, Senior Nuke Supervisor (The Core School). **Mercedes Delgado** (Toronto, Canada), Lighting and Comp. Supervisor (Cinesite), **Gustavo Sánchez Pérez** (Toronto, Canada), supervisor, leader, and visual effects artist (Rodeo FX) **Gisela Prunés** (Los Angeles, USA, and Barcelona), creative talent strategist for digital media and human resources specialist. **Lucía Peralta** (Madrid, Spain), Digital Matte Painter, Environments Supervisor (Skydance Animation). **Julie Mellan** (France), Illustrator. **Sandra Lasso** (Madrid, Spain), Talent Acquisition Director (Skydance Animation). **Sara Koppel** (Denmark and USA), Animation Artist / Director / Animator. **Carlos Fernández De Vigo** and **Lorena Ares** (Navarre, Spain), directors and producers of animation (Dr. Platypus And Ms Wombat). **José García- Romero** (Madrid, Spain), director of admissions and sales (U-Tad University Center of Technology and Digital Art). **Esteve Garriga** (Barcelona, Spain), coordinator and professor of 3D Generalist (L'idem Barcelona). **David Carretero** (Barcelona, Spain), director of the Animation and Video Games Area (LCI Barcelona). **Ayose Lomba** (Gran Canaria, Spain), teacher, Industrial Engineer and multimedia and video game product developer (University of the Middle Atlantic). **Miguel Miranda** (Tenerife, Spain), animation supervisor (3 Doubles Productions).

To discover the professions of the future and achieve the real goal of working in this industry, it is essential that young students, parents, and tutors learn firsthand about the educational options available at first-level national universities. For this purpose, Animayo once again hosts the '**Decide Your Future**' program, which includes a wide variety of lectures ranging from the most artistic to the most technological careers, and to which you can already register to attend, as educational centers, by sending an email to dori@animayo.com. **The universities and schools participating in this program are:** U-Tad, University Center of Technology and Digital Art (Madrid), The Core School (Madrid), L'Idem (Barcelona), LCI (Barcelona), University of the Middle Atlantic (Gran Canaria), and Artediez School (Madrid).

Additionally, and adding to the **portfolio reviews** of young students, the '**Scholarships to Talent Animayo**' program will offer **more than 600,000 euros** to promote online and in-person studies at some of the already mentioned national schools and universities for the 2024-2025 academic year. This call is open without geographic limits and will remain open until June 30, 2024, and you can apply online, on the the Animayo website.

On the other hand, **screenings** occupy an important place in the Festival. Animayo will be screened **from 8 to 11 May at the Teatro Guiniguada** of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, for both season ticket holders and the general public, **4 Official Competition Sections made up of 59 short films from among the 257 that passed the last pre-selection of the Animayo team.** A selection of short films resulting from an annual competition of more than 2,000 works -2309 this year-, of 2D animation, 3D animation, visual effects, experimental cinema, advertising pieces, animation spots, video clips, video game cinematics and virtual reality. Short films **from more than 80 countries around the world like** Spain, the United States, Germany, Norway, France, Hong Kong, Poland, Argentina, Uruguay, or Australia, divided into 5 Official Sections that will give rise to the Official Animayo 2024 Awards after the deliberations of the International Jury whose highly distinguished president, star guest of the Festival, will soon be announced by the organization.

Completing the offer, equally for subscribers and the general public, returns the so-called **'Two Diamonds Night'** which brings a **second exhibition for Animayo Gran Canaria 2024, of augmented reality, by the Danish Sara Koppel**, artist, animator, and director at Koppel Animation. Her works have been exhibited worldwide and since 2021 she is a **member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of Hollywood.** In 'Two Diamonds Night', a selection of short films with a more intellectual and artistic humor theme with a 'spicy' touch by the same artist will be projected, also featuring her interventions about the creative process and the "how it was made". Also at the Teatro Guiniguada, (Saturday 11 at 21.30 hours), the premiere in the Canary Islands of "Cafuné" and "The Longest Night Dawns" by directors Lorena Ares and Carlos F. de Vigo will take place.

All this without forgetting the **Fan Zone and Animayo Experiences (CICCA)** where you can meet the **talent stands, enjoy experiences, play games in virtual environments,** and where **3 presentations of graphic novels by their authors:** "Instants", by French illustrator Julie Mellan (@juliedessine), "The City", by digital illustrator Jorge García (@jota_studio), and "I Don't Love You Either", by illustrator Kaos (@estudiokatastrofico).

And as could not be otherwise, Animayo also puts children in the spotlight, for as Perea pointed out **'A Festival that teaches to see, to do and to have a critical mind, in which we try to educate from a very young age the future public among whom, without a doubt, the talents of tomorrow will be found'**. For them and their families, Animayo, **with the sponsorship of the Czech Center of Madrid, brings the premiere in the Canary Islands of the animated feature film "Shelly and the Magic Lantern",** (Hungary, Czech Republic), by director Filip Posivac (Saturday 11 at 11.00 h), sponsored by the Czech Center of Madrid. It will also again celebrate **'My First Festival'** (special family audience) on Saturday 11 at 17.00 hours at the Teatro Guiniguada, with free admission until full capacity. Directed at children from 5 years old, as well as young people and adults who **will be able to vote for the best animated short film** for this edition among a selection of international animated short films where the dissemination of social **values such as solidarity, friendship, respect for traditions, the pursuit of dreams or fun** will be present.

The entire Animayo team is already counting down the days to welcome its audience and prestigious guests back to the capital of Gran Canaria, with the collaboration of **Society for the Promotion of the City of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.** Outstanding guests who, in addition to experiencing the special atmosphere of this unique Festival in situ, will have the opportunity to visit the most emblematic places on the island. The **Cabildo de Gran Canaria**, main sponsor of Animayo, has been promoting the island for years as a node for the digital creative industry, a public initiative that encourages the establishment of national and international companies in the animation sector, digital production, video game development and other cultural products created through digital processes. All in all, **Gran Canaria Tourism** believes that it is worth taking advantage of the strong growth that this industrial

sector is experiencing, understanding that the destination's brand should not be left out of this emerging cultural industry, with an affinity to the advertising and communication sector. For this reason, it supports Animayo Gran Canaria 2024, a consolidated event that aims to gain presence for the 'Gran Canaria' tourism brand among companies and professionals in this sector who have settled on the island, or among professionals located in other countries but interested in the event (illustrators, 3D designers, visual artists, all types of authors in digital production), profiles 100% oriented towards the creation of content. In addition, as an exclusive activity for the press, there will be a meeting with guest speakers, production companies and collaborating schools, as well as the 'Animated Breakfast' where you can meet in person some of the guests from the international industry participating in the edition.

Definitely, a **19th edition of Animayo, International Festival of Animation, Visual Effects, and Video Games**, which in its preview of programming is already deployed through the **winning poster of the international poster contest Animayo 2024**, and in which, once again, art and technology merge to boost limitless talent. The work chosen as the representative image of Animayo 2024 is "Epiphany", created by the Spanish artist **Asala Montaser**.

With in-person and online formats, Animayo, **from Gran Canaria (Spain), extends its programming to other cities and countries, in its "Itinerant Animayo" version**, developing actions in Los Angeles, Madrid, Barcelona, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, India, Brussels, Italy, Prague, Chicago, Belgrade, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Korea, México and Portugal, among others.

MEDIA RESOURCES

ANIMAYO PRESS LOCKER ACCESS:

URL: <https://www.animayo.com/prensa/>

Username: Prensa_Animayo

Password: animayofest_animayo

Animayo 2024 program: https://www.animayo.com/?accion=grancanaria_2024

