

## 'Red Turtle,' 'Big Bad Fox,' 'My Life as a Zucchini' Vie for Best Director at First European Animation Awards

'Revolting Rhymes,' 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt,' 'The Amazing World of Gumball' face off for best director in the TV/broadcast category

By [John Hopewell](#)



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Michael Dudok de Wit's "The Red Turtle," "The Big Bad Fox & Other Tales," directed by Benjamin Renner and Patrick Imbert, and Claude Barras' "My Life as a Zucchini" vie for best director at the inaugural [European Animation Awards](#). Their Emile Awards Ceremony which will take place in Lille, France on Dec. 8.

Equalling "The Red Turtle" and "Zucchini," two other movie titles have received three nominations: Remi Chay s "Long Way North," lead-produced out of France by Sacrebleu Prods. and Maybe Movies; and "Ethel & Ernest," a U.K.-Luxembourg co-production between Lupus Films, Ethel & Ernest Productions, Melusine Productions, and Cloth Cat Animation.

"Revolting Rhymes," "We're Going on a Bear Hunt" and "The Amazing World of Gumball" contend for best director in the TV/Broadcast category. "Gumball" scored in four categories. A two-part CGI special produced by Magic Light Pictures for the BBC, and created by Magic Light Pictures in Berlin and Triggerfish Animation Studios in Cape Town, "Revolting Rhymes" scored three nominations for its Roald Dahl's poem reprises of traditional fairy tales.

Director of “Who Framed Roger Rabbit” and “The Thief and the Cobbler,” Canadian-British animator Richard Williams will receive the first Lotte Reiniger Achievement Award in recognition of his contribution to the art of animation.

The Emile Awards Ceremony will be followed by the European premiere of “The Breadwinner,” from Nora Twomey, the co-director of “The Secret of Kells.”

France has a large production hand in six of the eight Emile-nominated animated features; the three TV series making the final cut for director are all U.K. productions. That said, created by preeminent figures in European animation – France’s Didier Brunner and Jean-Paul Commin and the U.K.’s Peter Lord – the first Awards weigh in as not only a celebration of European toon industries – both film and TV – but also a recognition of the extraordinary artistic heights they can attain and their essence as a collaborative craft crossing multiple skill-sets and international frontiers.



One high-profile example: a Sony Pictures Classics release in the U.S., “The Red Turtle” marks legendary Japanese Studio Ghibli’s first-ever international co-production – with London-based Dutch filmmaker Dudok de Wit and, as producers, France’s Why Not Prods., Wild Bunch, Prima Linea Prods., CN4 Prods and Arte Cinema France and Belgium’s Belvision Coproduction. *Variety* described it as “hypnotizing,” “a fable so simple, so pure, it feels as if it has existed for hundreds of years.”

Equally, the first U.K.-produced series out of Cartoon Network’s development studio in Europe, “The Amazing World of Gumball” was created by France’s Ben Bocquielot who has said that the show’s influences range from Europe’s modern illustration tradition in to “The Simpsons” and Japan’s “Akira” and Hayao Miyazaki.

The Emile Awards also lay large emphasis on craft contributions – distinguishing between character design and animation in TV and film, for example – and underscore the youthfulness of Europe’s animation industry, especially in film. Of the eight animated movies that have scored nominations, six are first features for at least one of their directors; only France’s Jean-François Laguionie, up for consideration for best writing with “Louise by the Shore,” has made more than two features.

Above all, the first European Animation Awards serve as a timely reminder of the panoply of subjects and themes tackled by European animation, which often plays as an auteurist artistically-ambitious alternative to Hollywood.

“Ethel & Ernest”, for example, adapts Raymond Briggs’ graphic novel homage to his parents; “The Big Bad Fox & Other Tales” – produced by Folivari’s Didier Brunner, distributed and sold by Studiocanal, and co-directed by Benjamin Renner, one of the directors on the Academy Award nominated “Ernest & Celestine” – plays like

Looney Tunes meet Miyazaki in a rambunctious portrait of animals whose characters slip stereotypes.

Produced by Rita Prods., Blue Spirit Prods., Gebeka Films and KNM, "My Life as a Zucchini" delivers an unsentimental portrait of orphanhood; "The Red Turtle" constructs a parable about a man castaway on an island; up for two awards, Spain's "Psiconautas, the Forgotten Children," directed by Alberto Vazquez and Pedro Rivero, sets a darkly-humored coming-of-age adventure in a dark, sometimes appalling post-apocalyptic world.

Gkids distributes in the U.S. half the nominated feature films at the Emile Awards Ceremony, as indeed "Revolting Rhymes" and "The Breadwinner," which it also co-produces – a sign of just how much the New York - based distributor is embedded in Europe's animation industry.

## **1ST EUROPEAN ANIMATION AWARDS, DEC. 8, 2017**

### **THE NOMINEES:**

#### **Best Student Film**

"Oh Mother!" (Poland)

"Merlot," (Italy)

"About a Mother," (Russia)

#### **Best Commissioned Film**

"The Story of an Idea," (U.K.)

"Otto 'Time'," (Germany)

"The Last Job on Earth," (U.K.)

#### **Best Animated Short Film**

"Chulyen, a Crow's Tale," (France)

"Among the Black Waves," (Russia)

"The Burden," (Sweden)

#### **Best Background and Character Design in a Short Film Production**

"Peripheria," (France)

"Manivald," (Estonia, Croatia, Canada)

"Child Dream," (France)

#### **Best TV/Broadcast Production (Best Director)**

"Revolting Rhymes," (U.K.)

"We're Going on a Bear Hunt," (U.K.)

"The Amazing World of Gumball," (U.K.)

#### **Best Background and Character Design in a TV/Broadcast Production**

"Hey Duggee" (Season 2), (U.K.)

"Puffin Rock" (Season 2), (Ireland)

"Ernest & Célestine," (France, Belgium, Luxembourg)

#### **Best Character Animation in a TV/Broadcast Production**

"Revolting Rhymes," (U.K.)

“We’re Going on a Bear Hunt,” (U.K.)

“The Amazing World of Gumball,” (U.K.)

### **Best Writing in a TV/Broadcast Production**

“My Knight and Me,” (France)

“The Amazing World of Gumball,” (U.K.)

“Floopaloo, Where Are You?” (Season 2), (France)

### **Best Storyboard in a TV/Broadcast Production**

“Revolting Rhymes,” (U.K.)

“The Amazing World of Gumball,” (U.K.)

“Shaun The Sheep” (Season 5), (U.K.)

### **Best Soundtrack in a TV/Broadcast Production**

“My Knight and Me,” (France)

“Lastman,” (France)

“Fresh Out of School” (Season 3: Guillaume Apollinaire), (France)

### **Best Feature Film (Best Director)**

“The Red Turtle,” (France, Belgium, Japan)

“The Big Bad Fox and other tales,” (France, Belgium)

“My Life as a Zucchini,” (France, Switzerland)

### **Best Background and Character Design in a Feature Film**

“Psiconautas, the Forgotten Children,” (Spain)

“Long Way North,” (France, Denmark)

“Ethel & Ernest,” (U.K., Luxembourg)

### **Best Character Animation in a Feature Film**

“Ethel & Ernest”

“The Girl Without Hands,” (France)

“The Red Turtle”

### **Best Writing in a Feature Film**

“Ethel & Ernest”

“Louise by the Shore,” (France, Canada)

“My Life as a Zucchini”

### **Best Storyboard in a Feature Film**

“Psiconautas, the Forgotten Children”

“Long Way North”

“The Red Turtle”

## Best Soundtrack in a Feature Film

["My Life as a Zucchini"](#)

"Long Way North"

"The Girl Without Hands"



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