

Europe's Emile Awards to Honor Clare Kitson with Lotte Reiniger Lifetime Achievement Award

European Animation Awards Expand to Two-Day Event

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CREDIT: EUROPEAN ANIMATION AWARDS ASSN

Clare Kitson, the former National Film Theater programmer and TV executive who leveraged her position at Channel 4 to consolidate its position as a world champion of animation – as art, experimentation and entertainment – will become the second recipient of the Lotte Reiniger Achievement Award at this December 2nd European Animation Awards.

Kitson follows on animator Richard Williams, director of the legendary “The Thief and the Cobbler.”

Her choice says much about the EAAs’ ambitions. A showcase for the best artistic achievement in European animation, the first Emile Awards . as the EAAs are known – laid large emphasis on craft awards in its choice of categories. Kitson’s award reflects on how great animation gets made.

Joining Channel 4 in 1989 as commissioning editor of animation, Kitson’s early tenure – it ran in full from 1989 to 1999 – coincided with Channel 4 chief executive Michael Grade’s attempts to balance programming which sold TV advertising with an image of quality. Commissioning animation which ran a broad gamut – “Bob’s Birthday” and “A is for Autism” – but always had artistic ambition and a point to it, as she insisted, Kitson held her position at Channel 4 as one of the major forces in European animation, snagging four of the five Cartoon d’Or nominations in 1993 for best animation. This can be seen as a lesson in how outstanding talent must coincide with enlightened and passionate enablers – be they government officials, TV commissioning executives or producers – in order to yield an industry which does have a point, artistic and industrial.

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Few European animation executives have also written with such insight about the animation industry as Kitson whose book, “British Animation: The Channel 4 Factor,” reflects with humor and insight on the tension between art and commerce in one heyday of British animation.

national legislatures of Europe's upcoming Audiovisual Media Service Directive – E.U. legislation obliging Netflix, Amazon and other streaming services to fulfill European programming quotas. It also opens the door for countries to require them to co-finance local content as well.

As streaming services embrace children's programming as a keystone content focus, the directive, which sources say will be approved as early as December this year, is of key concern for Europe's animation industry.

Also on the two-day program is a round table hosted by the Screenwriters Guild focusing on a comparative study of the role of the screenwriter in European animation and an Aardman Masterclass celebrating the legendary studios' 40th anniversary, delivered by [European Animation Awards Assn.](#) president Peter Lord.

Kitson's award was announced by Irish producer and EAAA vice-president Paul Young on Wednesday at the 2018 Cartoon Forum, Europe's top dedicated TV animation event. Young also confirmed the increase of nomination categories from 16 to 18, including two new awards, in film and TV, for sound design.

Call for entries will be open through Oct. 15. Nominations and juries will be announced at a press conference in Athens on Nov. 8.

The 2nd Emile Awards take place Dec. 7-8 in Lille, northern France.