

FMX 2024: Facts

FMX – Film and Media Exchange is Europe’s most influential conference dedicated to media & entertainment creation, exploring the latest in Animation, Visual Effects, Interactive and Immersive Media. Founded in 1994 as an event for students of the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg, FMX quickly developed into a platform for information and exchange for international artists and creators.

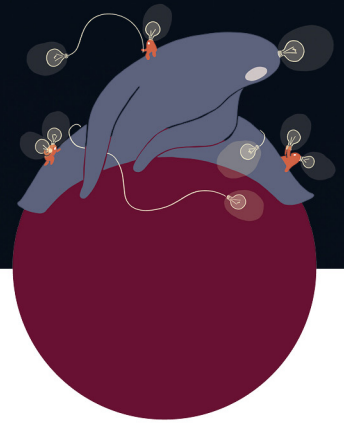
Founded	1994
Location	Haus der Wirtschaft, Stuttgart, Germany
Conference Language	English
Upcoming Conference	FMX 2024, April 23-26
Edition	28 th edition

In 2024, **FMX – Film & Media Exchange** is returning to four days on site from April 23 to 26, offering presentations, panel discussions, workshops, and exhibition rooms. Most of the content will be available on demand from April 27 all through May.

At FMX, professionals share insights in the latest development concerning the art, technology and business in media & entertainment. Around 300 speakers will discuss creative solutions, present cutting-edge tools and debate about business models. There will be talks on animated features and shorts like NIMONA, LEO and WAR IS OVER!, feature films like THE CREATOR, POOR THINGS und THE MARVELS, episodic productions like LOKI 2, PERCY JACKSON and DOCTOR WHO. Other hot topics at FMX are XR, Artificial Intelligence, Sustainability as well as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

At the Marketplace, visitors get a hands-on experience of the latest innovations presented by industry-leading companies and start-ups. Workshops, Masterclasses and showcases in Company Suites dig even deeper into the recent international developments. Top-notch studios scout talent at the Recruiting Hub, schools from all over the world present their programs and projects at the School Campus.

The conference has a reputation for providing an international yet intimate atmosphere, offering professionals and students a great platform to network and mingle.



FMX theme 2024: Connecting Ideas

The opportunity to connect ideas is one key feature FMX has been providing for three decades. In 2024, we're taking things to the next level, dedicating a special focus to the connective issues in collaborations. New possibilities have been changing the dynamics of the creative industries - Interoperability is the magic word. A growing number of sharing platforms, open standards and other initiatives have emerged recently, aiming to increase the ease, efficiency and creativity of how people cooperate across platforms, pipelines, and distances.

Program Chair: Sol Rogers

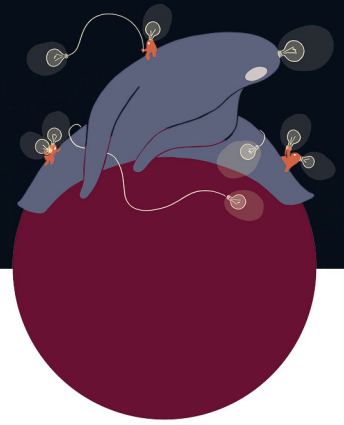
FMX is delighted to present one of the leading minds in the business of CONNECTING IDEAS as FMX Program Chair: Sol Rogers, Global Director of Innovation at Magnopus. Working closely with the FMX team, Sol is curating a program on connectivity issues and how they can be solved. "Drawing from my years of experience in attending the event and passion for innovation, I am looking forward to curating a dynamic lineup of participants and talks that align with our theme of Connecting Ideas", says Sol Rogers.

In 2011, Sol founded REWIND, the UK's leading immersive spatial design and innovation company, and served as CEO until its acquisition by Magnopus in 2021. Magnopus, founded in 2013 by Oscar winners Ben Grossmann and Alex Henning (HUGO CABRET), is known for its continuous innovation in the entertainment industry; its Emmy-nominated VR projects; its role as a leader in virtual production through its groundbreaking work on Disney's THE LION KING (2019); and its pioneering work in building the spatial web.

Partners

FMX is funded by the Ministry of Science, Research and Arts and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism of the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg, the City of Stuttgart, and MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, taking place in cooperation with ACM Siggraph. FMX is organized by the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg, hosting the Animation Production Days (APD), a joint venture with the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film (ITFS).

FMX 2024 welcomes the following Premium Partners: Animation Media Creators Region Stuttgart (AMCRS), Houdini and Maxon support FMX as Gold Partners; Silver Partners are Accenture Song, Chaos, Esri, Foundry, Lenovo, and MACK One.



FMX 2024: Highlights (selection)

CONNECTING IDEAS

KEYNOTE: Ben Grossmann, Magnopus

Addressing this year's FMX theme, **Ben Grossmann** will talk about building new technologies that are open source. These technologies will allow media creators to build new worlds, collaboratively, across platforms, pipelines, and distances. Ben is the founder of Magnopus. They have supported some of the most spectacular Hollywood imagery of the past years with bespoke technology, like the photo-real but entirely computer-animated remake of Disney's LION KING.

IMMERSIVE WEB & SPATIAL COMPUTING: Developing Open Standards for the Metaverse, curated by **Marc Petit** of the **Metaverse Standards Forum**

This track explores the integration of open standards in the 3D internet. Discussions feature Europe's user-centric metaverse approach, AI in storytelling and gaming, and web browsers' role in 3D. Speakers include **Neal Stephenson**, **Patrick Cozzi** (Cesium), **Anne Bajart** (European Commission), and experts from Google, ThatOpenCompany, W3C, and the Academy Software Foundation, curated by **Marc Petit** of the Metaverse Standards Forum.

THE STATE OF VFX

VFX FOR FEATURES: The VFX of POOR THINGS

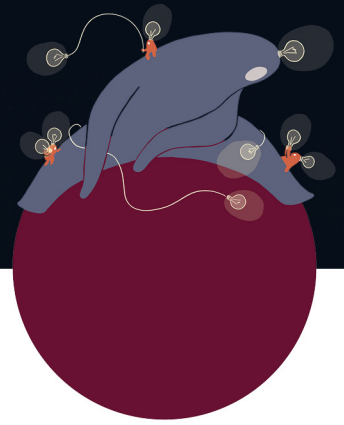
Yorgos Lanthimos' multi-award-nominated feature POOR THINGS has left audiences pleasantly disturbed. Join the BAFTA-winning Creative Director and Visual Effects Supervisor **Simon Hughes** (ALL OF US STRANGERS, THE FRENCH DISPATCH, DISTRICT 9) for a deep-dive into how visual effects can bring worlds of pure imagination to life.

VIRTUAL PRODUCTION: Getting to final VFX in DOCTOR WHO

UK Studio REALTIME provided cutting-edge virtual production and futuristic CG for DOCTOR WHO: "Wild Blue Yonder", a special episode to commemorate the show's 60th anniversary. With the return of the much-loved David Tennant as the Doctor, the episode takes fans to the very edge of the universe where sinister alien doppelgangers steal the show. **James Coore**, VFX Supervisor, and **Jonathan Rawlinson**, Head of Episodic, will be talking through the process – from the on-set virtual production to final VFX.

VFX FOR EPISODIC: Road trip in the USA (and beyond) with PERCY JACKSON

Raynault vfx' mandate on the first season of PERCY JACKSON was to bring Rick Riordan's world to the screen: from Camp Half Blood to Olympus, you'll travel through the intricate domains of the Underworld as well as various iconic cities and landmarks of the United States. The small team at Raynault vfx demonstrated its proficiency by conceiving and producing over 10 extensive photorealistic cg environments of this mythical journey. Raynault's work on the Percy Jackson series also included the involvement on virtual production sets, early development concept art and on-location photography shoots.

**VFX FOR FEATURES: Inside creative VFX development for Marvel Studios'****THE MARVELS**

Join us for a behind-the-scenes discussion about THE MARVELS with VFX Supervisors

Tara DeMarco and Sarah Eim, alongside pivotal vendor supervisors **Dominik Zimmerle, Ernest Dios** (both Trixter), and **Pietro Ponti** (Industrial Light & Magic). They will discuss asset and FX ideation, creation, and collaborative sharing as they unravel the magic behind the stunning visual effects crafted for Goose, Saber Space Station, and the dynamic elements that bring this film to life.

VFX FOR EPISODIC: Yu Yu Hakusho: A Japanese local production and its global VFX

Yu Yu Hakusho is a Netflix live action series based on the popular Japanese manga. It was one of the first Japanese productions to attempt a true global VFX production, working with four previs vendors, nine VFX vendors, and an in-house VFX team spreading across six different countries (Japan, Korea, India, Canada, U.S., Australia). Every step of the way, "the usual way" was never the answer, considering both the Japanese and the Hollywood methods. In their session, Overall VFX Supervisor **Ryo Sakaguchi**, and **Christophe Rodo**, VFX Supervisor, Megalis VFX, will cover the VFX challenges encountered through all stages of production with the aim to achieve a world class VFX for a Japanese production.

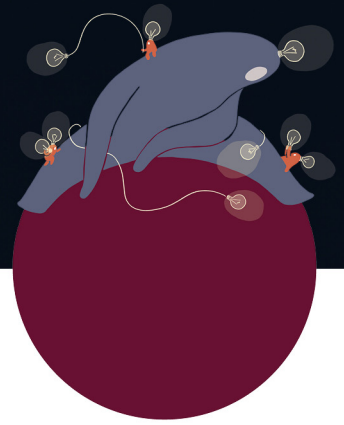
VFX FOR EPISODIC: Bending Space & time in LOKI 2

Time is out of control in the second season of LOKI on Disney+: The two-faced god Loki from Marvel's AVENGERS universe turns out not to be his original scheming self but a surprisingly heroic variant. Someone has to venture out into the vacuum of space to fix the time loom - but no protective suit can save them from time erosion. At FMX, VFX Supervisor **Christopher Smallfield** (Trixter) will explain how they came up with the look of that process.

THEN & NOW, curated by Ian Failes, before & afters

Going old-school: Breaking down the practical and in-camera effects in **I'M A VIRGO**: Director Boots Riley's Amazon Prime Video series made significant use of what might be called "old-school" effects filmmaking, including in-camera effects with forced perspective shooting, large and small puppets, miniatures, practical effects and many specialized scale set-ups. Here, visual effects supervisor Todd Sheridan Perry will share the secrets of these in-camera approaches, which were also complemented with digital VFX techniques. In a follow-up to his talk, Todd Sheridan Perry will be joined by VFX journalist Ian Failes to deliver a masterclass on how to use in-camera effects and set up a forced perspective shoot, right there as a hands-on demo for attendees.

What you need to know to build VFX software: **Mark Elendt**, Senior Mathematician at SideFX, will present and be joined in conversation with Ian Failes to discuss his more than 30 year history in building visual effects software. Houdini is a mainstay at so many VFX, animation and games studios, and Elendt will dive into the history and intricacies of the tool, especially relating to rendering and its earlier incarnation as Prisms. Attendees will get to talk directly to Elendt in a more intimate setting, to get down into the finer details of building VFX tools.



THE ART OF ANIMATION

FEATURE ANIMATION: Crafting the look and feel of NIMONA through bespoke character surfacing and unique environment builds

Want to learn more about how Oscar-nominated **NIMONA** was created? Join **Avril Hug** (Character Surface Lead) and **Marco Manzini** (Environment Model Supervisor) from DNEG Animation as they explore the craft behind character surfacing and the environment builds in this incredible animated film. They will dive into how the team at DNEG Animation brought life to the story's characters and the unique world they live in. Touching on various elements from lighting on clothing to staying true to the feel of the original comics 2D environment, this is one not to be missed!

FEATURE ANIMATION: Landing on LEO

Leo is a recent release from Netflix and Happy Madison Productions and tells the story of a 74-year-old lizard that's been living in the same Florida school for decades but one day decides it's time to escape! Join the film's Art Director, Kristen Anderson (Animal Logic) and Animation Director, Jason Figliozzi (Netflix), as they take you through the character design process from concept to animation and all the iterations in between, with a focus on Leo and Ms. Malkin from an animated cast of over 200. They'll explore the vast range of scale in their hero characters and will break down the most challenging scene to reveal how they pulled off this beautifully crafted, 3D-animated musical comedy.

ANIMATED SHORTS: WAR IS OVER! Animation Meets Real-Time at Wētā FX

Learn about the art and technology employed across the production of Oscar-nominated **WAR IS OVER!** – Inspired by the Music of John & Yoko. Leveraging the power of their VFX and animation pipeline with the strengths and efficiencies of real-time filmmaking, learn how the **Wētā FX** team crafted the unique visuals on this animated short.

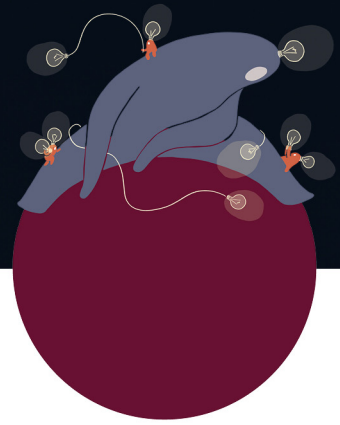
THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

STUDIO INSIGHTS: How to improve profitability

How can the use of the full power of Shotgrid or a similar data base help you improve the profitability of your VFX/animation production? **Heiko Burkardsmaier** (VFX Executive Producer and Head of Business & Legal Affairs at Accenture Song Content Germany) will cover basics such as Overhead calculation, Capacity usage and essential KPIs. He will also give a deeper dive into project planning and controlling.

GLOBAL INCLUSION, COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION, curated by Julie Ann Crommett (Collective Moxie, WIA) and Jinko Gotoh (Producer, WIA)

In order to connect ideas globally, we have to build an industry where we all belong. This track builds on last year's inclusion and sustainability theme asking each of us to commit to connection and community. How do we recognize our shared humanity while celebrating our uniqueness? The sessions will explore different aspects of storytelling and ask us what we can do to drive greater empathy and connection, understanding that it's necessary for our shared success. Attendees will leave this track with new ideas and tangible actions to immediately impact their organizations, communities, technology, and creative work.



Izumi Yoshida will share the process of making her award-winning short film *THE BRIDGE*, that deals with social complexities and healing after a war. Coincidentally, her team was all female. Audience members will leave with insights about the creative process and how to drive inclusion within their own work and teams.

Julie Ann Crommett is going to host a panel on LGBTQ+ representation in VFX and Animation with **Bret Parker** (director, *PETE*), **Charmaine Chan** (*THE CREATOR*, ILM), **Nosipo Maketo-van den Bragt** (Choc Tribe) and **Michaela Olsen** (Mighty Oak). They will discuss how LGBTQ+ identities intersect in their life, creative work, geographies, and companies. Audience members can take away a better understanding of the opportunities for LGBTQ+ people and stories within our industry.

Studio leaders **Michaela Olsen** and **Noriko Matsumoto** (Dwarf Studios) will use the FMX stage for an in-depth conversation about representation and inclusion in Stop Motion. They will share how they built their companies and talk about tangible actions of how to drive inclusion within stop motion and where there are opportunities to learn from each other globally.

TOOLS OF TOMORROW

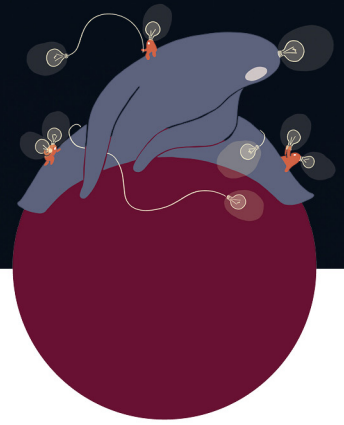
LIGHTING & RENDERING: Secrets on stylized animation

With every major animation studio doing stylized animation, it's safe to say stylization is here to stay. Owner and animator **Daniel Damm** (Damm it!) will talk about who brought it on, and how they did it. How a few people thought outside the box and changed the entire industry. Having seen where it all started, he will take a look at how things are done today. What are the current tools able or unable to do? Stylized animation is the ultimate art vs technology. Will it become available in real time engines the same way traditional 3D has after decades of technical advancements? And who will be the one bringing it there?

EXPANDING REALITIES

LOCATION-BASED ENTERTAINMENT: Immersive visual splendor in Paris

Join the team of **Moment Factory**, as it will dive into the creative and technical challenges faced in the studio's most recent projects, such as *AURA Invalides*, the monumental experience beneath the dome at Les Invalides in Paris. Get a behind-the-scenes look at their work and learn about the solutions that brought these iconic experiences to life. This session will be part of the FMX track LOCATION-BASED ENTERTAINMENT curated by **Brent Strong**, Executive Creative Director at Walt Disney Imagineering.

**EU XR: presenting a unique line-up of XR Innovation Actions during opening day**

Join us for an exclusive showcase featuring insightful presentations, followed by a panel discussion bringing together five projects funded by the European Commission - PANEURAMA, MAX-R, EMIL, XRECO and TRANSMIXR. We'll discuss and provide valuable insights into the collaborative efforts shaping the future of XR and the transformative potential all these projects hold across diverse technologies and industries.

Experience first-hand what these particular projects are all about and immerse yourself in their live demos at FMX, located in the foyer of Bertha-Benz throughout the entire opening day.

MASTERCLASSES**Acting for Animators with Ed Hooks**

Ed Hooks, author of the book "Acting for Animators – 4th Revised Edition", explains in this acting workshop especially designed for Animators the connections between regular reality and theatrical reality, scene structure, characterization, comedy vs. drama, heroes and villains.

THE QUEST FOR YOUNG TALENT**Schools Projects Presentations**

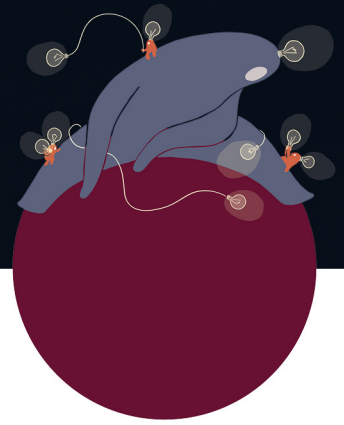
One of our most important goals is to connect young talents with VFX, animation and games industry professionals. FMX 2024 will present selected projects by students or recent graduates from schools participating at the School Campus. The presentations give an insight into development and production processes, making-ofs and behind the scenes at film and animation schools where innovative and high quality projects are produced.

FORUM**Marketplace**

The Marketplace complements the conference program with an exhibition space. Hardware, software and services are being presented here, as well as research projects and start-ups. An international audience of professionals and students gathers at the Marketplace to learn about the latest products and developments.

Recruiting Hub

At the Hub, international VFX, animation, design and games studios are looking for new artists to work on their latest cutting-edge digital media, entertainment and visualization projects. Young talents, professionals and alumni will meet over four days with employers from around the world.

**Recruiting Presentations**

During the Recruiting Presentations, companies will give you an insight into their work. They will speak about their recent and upcoming projects, present their facilities and work benefits, and show excerpts from their latest and greatest work.

School Campus

The School Campus is the Education Fair at FMX. Media design and technology faculties and programs from Europe and around the world present their courses and campuses in an open, relaxed atmosphere. Prospective students get first-hand information straight from lecturers, alumni and current students on studies and projects, laying the ground for careers in digital entertainment creation.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS**Get-Together**

The FMX Get-Together gives the community the opportunity to meet and network in the evening after the conference – right outside the venue!

ITFMX Screening: NIMONA

Join us for a special cinema-screening of NIMONA in cooperation with the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film (ITFS).