

PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014

NOMINATORS' REPORT

REPORT ON CATEGORY 12-15 FICTION/NON-FICTION

by David Kleeman, Playcollective and ACCM, USA

12-15 may be the most difficult category to pre-select for PRIX JEUNESSE. Most obviously, it's the only category where fiction and non-fiction compete side by side, so jurors are "pinballed" back and forth among high-budget serial dramas, hard-hitting issue documentaries, video clips and arts shows, and reality formats.

More subtly, this is a transition age where young people's tastes and intellectual capabilities put them at the edge of "grown-up" TV; in fact, much of what they consume is not made uniquely for teens.

Throughout the nominating process - in all age categories - our first line of consideration was how well targeted the program was to the intended audience. PRIX JEUNESSE stands for children's and youth programming, not family TV or shows that are simply about kids. Drawing the line of what is made especially for 12-15-year-olds is especially difficult, because so many programs are modelled on prime time formats and genres - reality competitions, supernatural dramas, human interest profiles. What elements would make a teen version more appealing, when they could watch the (usually more expensively-produced) mainstream version?

At the same time, 12-15-year-olds still have a good bit of "kid" in them. They may be so grown up one minute, and craving the safety and simplicity of childhood the next. So, as jurors we tried to represent that split - in part by choosing light stories and humor programs as well as those about tough issues and adult themes, and in part by selecting shows (dramas especially) with a range of characters so viewer of all types would have a role model.

Not every country still considers 12-15-year-olds to be children, for the purposes of broadcasting; some stop making specialized programming for young people by age 12. So, we were very happy with the geographic distribution of the finalists - north and south, highly developed media economies and places with fewer options for kids, conservative and liberal cultures. We can promise extremely diverse content and genres with some true surprises, and a deep and engaging discussion!

It goes without saying that we also had to leave out many outstanding entries, as we could only accept about 1 in 5 programs to the finals. We have made a number of recommendations for screening in the Media Bar, and all jurors are available to make further suggestions if you have a special interest!

REPORT ON CATEGORY 7-11 NON-FICTION

by Kez Margrie, CBBC, UK

Wow what a privilege it's been to spend 5 days watching fantastic content for kids from around the world. We've laughed, we've cried and we've argued to get to this point of choosing the finalists.

Thank you to everyone who took the trouble to send in programmes. We were so privileged to be allowed a glimpse into what wonderful content is being produced around the world.

Getting to the final nominations was a huge struggle and some of our favourite programmes didn't make it through. I think it's important at this stage to acknowledge that our list of finalists is a direct result of the four particular judges on the 7-11 non-fiction panel. A different combination of people may well have made different choices, but I ask you to bear with us on the decisions we made as they were made for the best of reasons.

So what were our criteria for choosing the finalists?

Well, it's an art not a science but we kept the audience in mind at all times - there is of course a big difference between a 7 year old and an 11 year old and we tried to ensure we reflected this in the final choices. And while there are universal similarities between children across the world, the life experience of a child growing up in Columbia will be different to that of a child growing up in Taiwan. This was also a consideration in our final selection.

This year's Prix Jeunesse theme is feelings and emotion so this was also on the agenda while watching all the amazing content.

Some beautifully made programmes didn't make it through this year. However, what we were trying to do was reflect outstanding content from around the world and choose programmes from all four corners that will make you think, discuss, laugh and perhaps even shed a tear or two at times! There were gaps though - nothing is through from the African continent in this category [we had very few entries], which is a shame and so we very much hope that 2016 will change that!

We had many entries of one-off documentaries about, with, by and from children.

Issues ranged from immigration to Alzheimers, from death to dance and all told important stories. But we couldn't put them all through. There was some discussion about the inclusion of adults in these documentaries. At this age parents and teachers are still an important part of children's lives but we felt some films featured adults in a more child-friendly way than others.

The finalists are those we felt fitted all the criteria and put children firmly in the centre. These are stories owned by the children themselves, told by them for other children and we do hope you enjoy watching them - but do bring a hanky to the screening!

It's never been easier for children to become stars in their own show - by filming, editing and uploading their own content for the world to see. Their concept of 'good' is not beautiful shots of scenery and languishing commentary. The funniest Youtube clips go viral within minutes, however rough they may be. Any children's TV channel is now competing in this market - in ways we would never have thought imaginable just a few years ago. So we were looking for formats that we felt would engage kids in ways that would make them stick with what's



on the TV. We thought we might see more shows that reflected this changing landscape; but when done well, it can really work and there are a couple of finalists that demonstrate this.

In many countries by the time children are 8 or 9, 'learning' is seen as a dirty word and for school only. So we were particularly impressed with shows that managed to excite kids about finding out new stuff but without a whiff of 'worthy'.

We had several shows submitted, led by a presenter or expert, that give kids great experiences. At their best, these formatted shows really allow room for genuine change or challenge and don't feel too contrived. In some cases we felt that the format got in the way of a good story - those that kept us on the edge of our seats are finalists. We saw fabulous examples of strong presenting styles but had hoped that there would be more female presenters in the mix given this was a topic of discussion at the last festival.

Children's Rights came up a lot, and there are some great examples of children really taking the lead in communicating this with their peers.

It was good to see a few News programmes in the mix too, targeted brilliantly for the audience. Some were more 'report' based, portraying the main news in ways that are accessible to children. Others put kids at the centre dealing with issues more rooted in a kids' world. Hopefully you will see that mix reflected in our final choices.

It's been such a privilege to be on the judging panel for this category. It was evident how much thought and care had gone into each and every programme that was submitted and our debates went well past midnight on which should go through. There will have been cheers along with disappointments when the finalists were revealed and you may well disagree with some of our choices but this wouldn't be Prix Jeunesse if it was all plain sailing!

All the programmes entered are available for you to watch throughout the festival, in the Media Bar. Do please make the effort to spend some time there as there are some fantastic shows that didn't make it through. We have personally recommended a few in case you only have a short amount of time to watch extra content.

REPORT ON CATEGORY 7-11 FICTION

by Martina Peštaj, RTV Slovenia

From the 93 stories, some are very strong and some very funny, short and long, charming and painful, animated and acted. Some made us feel angry and some left us with feeling that we could hug the world - and all the children in it. That was the final balance of the inspiring week we had as pre-selectors for PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014 for the category 7-11 fiction.

We came to the conclusion - and we are happy about it - that a good story is still one of the most important foundations of creating children's television. Its spirit is changing with the years as the circumstances of living are changing, it's breathing with children, their parents and fellows, and it's catching their reality, their dreams, hopes and wishes.

Animation is attractive for children of this age group and we saw some very fresh and surprising manners of its use. The programme from a country, for example, where women don't have many rights, presented a heroine fighting for knowledge and equality with an unusual weapon: books. This programme united high educational value with an attractive format and was unanimously sent to the finals. We agreed that a thoughtfully created animation can even improve an already excellent story written in a book.

In the field of live action we would like to mention the traditionally outstanding Nordic programmes dealing with very sensitive themes such as child abuse and parental divorce, treating them honestly and respectfully. Even in fantasy programmes with a lot of stunning special effects, created for such a special occasion as the Christmas holidays, there is a delicate concern for children's feelings and relationships.

This year we would like to talk about the Dutch category: we screened a couple of programmes about immigrants, all of them showing different perspectives but sharing the same central point: children are divided between strong family habits and a new cultural environment, dealing with it with a heart and mind of a child, which is a universal theme. We couldn't choose them all for the finals, although they are really worth seeing. We would like to ask you to screen them in the Media Bar, as you'll find that there are many high quality and inspiring programmes in that category.

We're glad that our category is still represented with good old storytelling: fairy-tales, beautifully executed and expressing important values. But as we were discussing the innovative aspects of these programmes, we decided to leave the place in the finals to the programmes which really break out of the comfort zone. We recommend screening these fairy-tales in the Media Bar for a pleasant, heartwarming hour.

We must give special attention to the programmes influenced by the Web with great children's involvement - this is what children do best today! It's their world and the way to express themselves. And it was important to see these programmes in order to understand our age group better.

Since we are talking about the specifics of our age group: we could summarize that we saw a number of very strong kids fighting for their rights of education, of telling and showing their opinion, and of living a happy life with adults who hear, respect and protect them.

REPORT ON CATEGORY UP TO 6 NON-FICTION

by Jan-Willem Bult, Creator/Producer, The Netherlands

With a total of around 40 entries, this year's Up-to-6 non-fiction category was clearly the smallest of categories.

This is also why the nominators could only make a selection of 13 finalists.

The nominator's questioned if this relatively small amount of entries signals a low interest at broadcasters and producers in creating non-fiction for the youngest.

Still PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL has a great tradition in finding, debating and awarding the very best of preschool non-fiction programs over the past 50 years.

I remember hot debates early 2000 about one of my own documentary productions 'Piece of cake - Peanut butter'. By that time a runner-up. Or the festival buzz about a magazine show Blue's Clues. It became a winner. Not even mentioning one of the earliest winners of the famous glass ball: Sesame Street.

So the Up to 6 non-fiction category is definitely one that has brought spice to the debates about quality children's TV and spotlights to the genre and target group.

This year's selection may still be a historic one, since probably never before in this category the finalists represent this wide range of broadcasters and producers: from Europe, South America, North America and Asia. The selected programmes will also bring a wide range of themes to the festival. From sign language to yoga, from psychology to philosophy, from gardening to medical treatment. And the great thing today is that it's almost impossible to say from which part of the world which theme or genre is coming. It looks like the broadcasters and producers that produce preschool non-fiction today are trying new ideas and themes that weren't produced before.

I guess that's the magic of being part of PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL. You'll find surprises, you'll meet people from all over the world and you go home with a bag of inspiration and new ideas.

On behalf of my fellow nominators Sevilay Bozdemir (Turkey), Christoph Biemann (Germany) and Mariana Loterszpil (Argentina) I wish you an exciting and inspiring PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014.



REPORT ON CATEGORY UP TO 6 FICTION

by Christoph Biemann, Delta TV, Germany

When a child gets to the age of six it has learned an immensity. It will have gone through many changes and has developed physically and mentally. So if we look at this age group, we face a great variety of personalities, ability of reception, skills and knowledge.

The 86 entries Marina Loterszpil (Argentina), Sevilay Bozdemir (Turkey), Jan Willem Bult (The Netherlands) and I (Germany) watched together with Maya Götz from PRIX JEUNESSE did reflect this variety. Animations of simple shapes without a story for the very small ones were represented as well as live-action comedies requiring abstract perception. Luckily in this age group learning and entertaining is not contradictory. So programs dealing with letters and numbers proved to be highly entertaining and suitable for this category.

Of course storytelling was in the center of our attention. Did the program communicate well with the child audience? Was the topic located in the children's world? Was the idea attractive? Could one follow the story, was the plot plausible? And surely, being all professionals we also looked for outstanding crafts(wo)manship.

Be the hero an extraterrestrial potato, a pre-Columbian princess, a firefly, a monster or just a girl or a boy, the creativity in the programmes presented was great and enriching for all nominators. It was good to see that a big budget does not necessarily make a big program. It became evident once again, that a good idea and a well told story makes the finalist in PRIX JEUNESSE.