

Sunny Side of the Doc 2015: a vintage year

With more than 2000 delegates in attendance, the 26th edition of the international linear and interactive documentary market was a record-breaking year. The event gave awards to strong, international projects.

La Rochelle, 25 June 2015 – The 26th edition of **Sunny Side of the Doc**, the international marketplace for linear and interactive documentaries, which took place from 22 to 25 June 2015 at l’Espace Encan in La Rochelle, gathered more than 2000 delegates, including 260 international decision-makers, 515 exhibiting companies and 57 nationalities. This year, Sunny Side welcomed delegations of producers from countries as diverse as Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Spain, Poland and South Africa among others.

Highlighting innovation in writing, production or broadcasting, Sunny Side of the Doc has placed the documentary in a new era of digital content production, with international themes, from natural history and wildlife to science and history.

A news-making market

In its role as an exchange platform for the documentary market, Sunny Side of the Doc set the stage for several international announcements.

On the very first day, ZED announced the signing of a collaboration agreement with CITVC, the international distribution subsidiary of the Chinese CCTV broadcasting group.

Illinois Public Media launched a new Research and Development fund to invest in national and international co-productions.

France Télévisions also made the most of its presence at the international documentary market to launch IRL (In Real Life), its new broadcasting platform dedicated to “new real-life writing”. IRL is currently on line, but it is in September that the site will be offering around 20 factual short programmes.

A market of signatures

The 2015 edition has been marked by a number of wide-ranging production and distribution agreements.

Several international coproductions involving China were also finalised, following pitches in Asian Side of the Doc and previous editions of Sunny Side. These include **A Chef on Tour**, a 6x26’ series produced by TV Only and Chengdu Radio & Television or **Flood, Challenging our Future**, a documentary produced by the French company Géorama TV and Heilongjiang TV, which brings together no fewer than 25 international partners.

Following the success of the documentary feature **Sur le chemin de l’école** in 2013, produced by Winds, **Les chemins de l’école** (a collection of 26x26’ and 3x52’) explored the difficulties some children have in getting from their homes to their schools. An agreement was signed between Barthélémy Fougea (Winds) and Fan Lixin (Cloudstone Productions) for the upcoming production of a series of the same name, of 5x26’ (**Ways to School**), which this time only will focus on the eventful journeys of Chinese children on their ways to school.

Finally, **Family Matters**, produced by LIC and CROP TV or **Battle of Brushes**, by Pan Nalin, a stereo 3D feature documentary on calligraphy, produced by Kafard Films (France) and Beijing Flame Culture & Media are some of the coproductions finalised at Sunny Side 2015.

“What is remarkable about these coproductions and, more broadly, the agreements signed here in Sunny Side, is that each of these projects has matured and grown in previous editions of Sunny Side, or Asian Side, leading to the actual start of production today”, said Yves Jeanneau, CEO of Sunny Side of the Doc.

Sunny Lab: increasingly connected

With new writing forms, new broadcasting opportunities and new technology, innovation is increasingly at the heart of Sunny Lab. A number of panels shed light on the new challenges authors, producers and broadcasters will have to take on: the management and monetisation of audiences, brand content, social networks and crowdfunding in particular.

Sunny Side of the Doc and Sunny Lab have also made it possible to underline the creative energy of the documentary which has proved able to adapt new technologies such as virtual reality and animation. This is shown by the presence of manufacturers and distributors such as Sony, AV Broadcast, Aaton Digital, Pôles d’Images who presented their Cinemascope drone or Deep Inc., which contributed to the technical prowess of the 360° documentary **The Polar Sea**. *“In just a few years, Sunny Lab has brought in a new generation of producers – digital native producers – who use innovative approaches to develop the documentary and underline its extreme vitality”,* explained Yves Jeanneau.

The awards: international-scale projects

Best Global Issues Project

Terror Studios, Inside the ISIS Propaganda Machine // Canal+/Capa Presse, France

Best EBU Science & Knowledge Project

Bugs : Nature’s Little Superheroes // a&o buero filmproduktion, Germany

Best Interactive and Transmedia Project

In Search of Max Hudan // Impakt Film, Poland

Best Mix Docs – Investigation Project

The Meddler // Finch, Australia

Best Natural History & Wildlife Project

Hoopoe II – The Big Journey // Kubefilm GmbH, Austria

Best Arts & Culture Project

Citizen Loewy : How a Frenchman Designed the American Dream // Les Films du Tambour de Soie, France

Best History Project

Leningrad Symphony // Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion Hambourg GmbH & Co. Kg, Germany

Sonuma Award

Ireland // What's Up, France

Cezame Music Agency Award

The Dream Project // Gebrueder Beetz, Germany

K5600 Lighting Award

Bugs : Nature's Little Superheroes // a&o buero filmproduktion, Germany

Best Music Award

In a Grand Ecran Wildlife Programme sponsored by UMCF & La Sacem

Laurent Ferlet for the film Grizzly, coproduced by Keith Scholey, Adam Chapman & Disneynature

In the context of **Docunexion Québec-France**, the project *Sea Is My Country // Once Upon & Les Films du Balibari* will be invited to attend RIDM / Doc Circuit Montréal 2015.

Special Award Le Chaînon Manquant goes to *Waiting For Leo // Ladybirds Fictions*

Sweet Sport Sunny Side of the Doc attribué à *My Dear Lines // CNEX Studio / Doc U Media & Culture Co., Ltd, Chine*

A significant increase in the volume of business

More than ever Sunny Side has shown itself to be *the* unmissable event for international coproductions and **programme purchasing**. *"This edition is genuinely a vintage year with a particularly visible growth in the number of international negotiations and transactions"*, said Yves Jeanneau. *"Professionals, broadcasters and producers all say that they are particularly happy about coming here and the deals that they have made. Sunny Side is a coproduction market AND a buying and selling market! This was clearly one of our objectives and we have achieved it!*

"Simply focusing on the domestic market alone is no longer a tenable situation. Today the future belongs to those who make the effort to invest in internationalisation".

Finally, with the Grand Ecran, Sunny Side of the Doc has provided the general public in La Rochelle with world premieres from TV channels and a selection of the most amazing wildlife films in partnership with the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and the Wildscreen Film Festival. 1775 visitors have discovered the 17 documentaries shown on the screens of the CGR Dragon and the Médiathèque Michel Crépeau.

**The next edition of Sunny Side of the Doc will take place from
20 to 23 June 2016 at the Espace Encan in la Rochelle.**

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