



ANIMATE EUROPE RESTART! THE STREETS OF EUROPE



INTERNATIONAL COMICS COMPETITION 2021

ANIMATE EUROPE RESTART! - THE STREETS OF EUROPE









Stefan Hahn Germany



Kristýna Plíhalová Czech Republic





Torben Siebert Germany



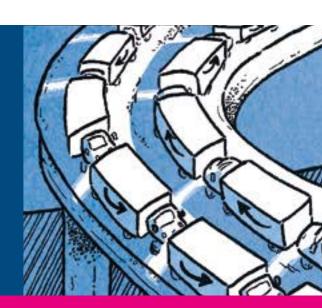


THE FRIEDRICH NAUMANN FOUNDATION FOR FREEDOM

FOREWORD



In 2013, we launched our biannual international comic competition – *Animate Europe*. Through *Animate Europe*, comic artists and graphic novelists from all over the world are invited to explore, reimagine and express their thoughts and ideas about Europe – past, present and future. Over the past years, numerous artists from all over the world have submitted their creative outputs. Our comics travel throughout Europe and overseas, they are published in our comic book, showcased on our website, publicly exhibited and even animated as short films. This year, our fifth Animate Europe competition set out to collect another round of comics that inspire conversations about the ideas and values of Europe through storytelling.



The topic of this year's competition is "Restart! – The Streets of Europe". This takes us back to where it all begins: the citizens of Europe, their realities and priorities. We asked what kind of restart would they advocate? Which vision of Europe do they and would they represent? To examine this more closely, we studied citizens where they interact with each other and where true participation occurs: in the Streets of Europe! But – in which kind of streets do we see this interaction taking place? At the crossroads, where different paths unite? In murky back alleys, hidden from plain sight? Where do roads end, where do new ones begin? These were the kind of questions we hoped to be explored by the artists. The number of entries that we received from all over the world overwhelmed us!

Let's have conversations about the Europe we wish to live in! And why Europe? We, at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, believe in a unified Europe and the potential of the European Union for freedom and peace. Europe is more than just the European Union. Europe represents peace, democracy, human rights and freedom.

In this anthology, you can find the works of our five competition finalists from four countries. As diverse as they are in terms of style, topic and vision, they share the common belief in a strong and vivid Europe, based on mutual understanding and trust.

Go ahead and see for yourself! Enjoy the read!

Thomas Ilka

Regional Director European Dialogue



JURY



Lucie Lomová

is a comic book author and illustrator. Her most popular comic is Anča and Pepík, a series about two little mice that has also been adapted as an animated series. After a decade of creating comics for children, she turned to an adult audience with her graphic novel Anna en cavale, succeeded by Les Sauvages nad Sortie des artistes. She has also been teaching comics at the Faculty of Art and Design in Pilsen and cooperates regularly with Czech TV as an illustrator.



Julie Tait

has been working in the cultural sector for more than 30 years. She worked in almost every medium before finding her passion for running festivals. From 2008 - 2012, she ran a major outdoor arts festival programme across the whole of Cumbria in the UK as part of the London Olympics Cultural Olympiad. In 2013, she founded the Lakes International Comic Art Festival, which is the only one of its kind in the UK. Julie has won a number of awards and is Chair of Space2Create, a charity, which develops creative programmes for people with mental health issues.



Judith Vanistendael

studied at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin and earned an academic degree in Art Sciences from the University of Ghent. She did her postgraduate studies on Latin America and pursued the comics master at the Sint-Lukas Art School in Brussels. She is known for her comics When David lost his voice and Salto, as well as for her illustrations for Rosie & Moussa. Her semi-autobiographical work, Dance by the Light of the Moon, has been translated into nine languages and nominated twice for the prestigious Grand Prix de la ville d'Angoulême. Vanistendael also works as an illustrator for several publishing companies and teaches comics at an art academy. Her work has been translated into numerous languages.

JULIE TAIT

It's both exciting and an honour to consider work by such a diverse range of creators from across Europe and to be reminded of why the European Union is so important. It's been great to discuss the power of comics to communicate this belief with my peers from many different countries.

It's always good
to come out of your
own shell and see a
bigger part of the world.
And comics is a mighty and
attractive tool helping us
to communicate across
different cultures.

LUCIE LOMOVÁ



Mathieu Diez

After a career in the banking business, Mathieu Diez started pursuing his own projects, namely the "Café du bout du monde." In 2006, these projects became the Lyon BD (Comics) Festival, born out of the idea that sequential art could meet all other art forms and open itself to a wider audience. After 13 years, Lyon BD has established itself as one of the most innovative comic festivals in Europe. In 2017, he was appointed comics artistic advisor for "Frankfurt in French – France, Guest of Honor at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2017".



Kalle Hakkola

is a curator, producer and a scriptwriter of children's comic book series. He has worked as a director of the Helsinki Comics Festival and is a co-founder of the Comics Center in Helsinki. Hakkola promotes Finnish comics all over the world and works closely together with Finnish Literature Fund.

Lyon BD has been working on many international projects over the passed years, and this all has really become one of the pillars of our activity. Along with that, our core DNA is to work with artists and on original creations. It then seemed very natural to take part in this initiative uniting so many countries and creators across Europe. It's been a real pleasure to participate.

It is great to see comics used in so many different ways to tell stories. The competition gives us a good peek into the variety in European culture.

MATHIEU DIEZ

KALLE HAKKOLA

THE FINALISTS



Stefan Hahn **Germany**

Stefan is studying at the Kassel College of Arts. He draws comic strips and cartoons. Last year he went to the Villa Arson, Nice as part of his Erasmus program. There he finished "Bigfoot", his longer comic strip. His shorter comic strips were published in several comic magazines. Stefan enjoys drawing funny comic strips, in which he incorporates his daily experiences.

Maria Konstantinova Russia

Maria is an aspiring graphic artist, born in Moscow, Russia. She spent four years in South Korea, studying Visual Communication Design in the daytime and, at night, as a passionate lover of animation and graphic novels, working on her personal projects and searching for stories to tell. She likes creating childish and naive fairy worlds that help viewers to forget their daily problems for a while, to enjoy a comforting, heart-warming





Kristýna Plíhalová Czech Republic

Kristýna lives in Prague, the Czech Republic, where she also studied Dramaturgy at the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts. She uses her knowledge gained at the Academy to tell stories in the form of comics. Her work is frequently published in several magazines and she also consistently publishes short comic stories on social media about her kids and their adventures. She has illustrated several books for children and young adults and worked on several children's programmes on Czech Television. When she is not drawing for work, she draws for fun. She loves drawing.



Torben Siebert Germany

Torben is an illustrator and comic artist form Germany. Born in Hamburg, he loves to write, make music and, of course, draw. Following a brief journey into Philosophy, he completed his studies in Visual Communication in Hanover. There he was able to devote himself extensively to illustration, printmaking and comics. As a Bachelor's thesis "759 375 Comics" was created – an experiment that allows the reader to combine this actual number of stories (as yet unpublished). Currently he is working on several projects, mainly exploring the possibilities of classic animation. Since recently graduating, he has constantly been trying to figure out where to go next as a draftsman.



Belgium on 12 August 1995. He studied and lived in Brussels. He attended the LUCA School of Arts and, for five years, studied Graphic Storytelling, which is a more elegant term for comic books. After that, Mattias completed a two-year study course revolving around teaching Art at schools and academies. At present, he has two published comic books: "Uitzicht met kamer" (View with a room), and "Inbreker deel 1: de sleutel" (Burglar part 1: the key). Both were published by Oogachtend, a publishing house based in Leuven, Belgium. He is currently working on the second part of "Inbreker", which will be a trilogy.



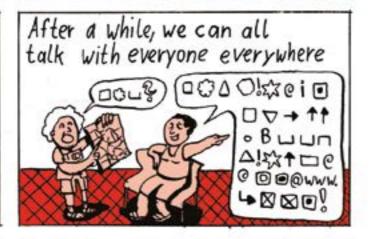


We have to invent a new and easy language, which every person in Europe can speak.





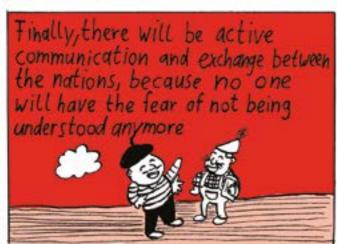










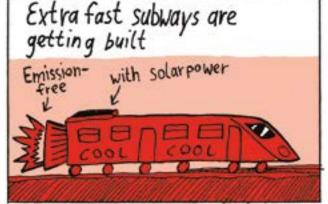


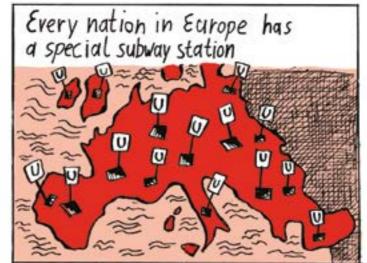
Hahn

















Hahn





















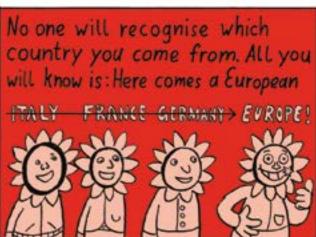




A common clothing style will strengthen the sense of belonging to Europe! So I present to you:









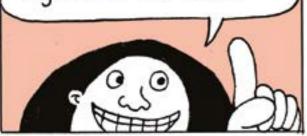




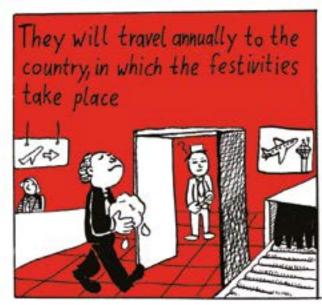


Hahn

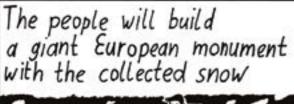








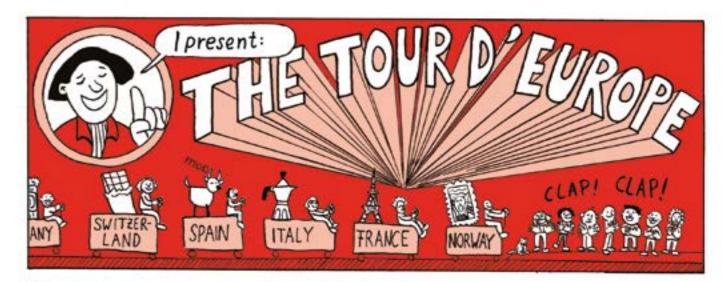




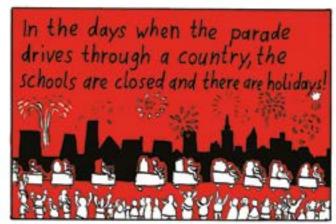




Hahn





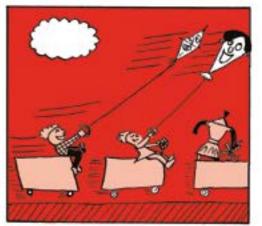












Hahn







AND I COULD HAVE SWORN I SAW NATURE RESPOND TO HER.



AND MORE THAN THAT, AT THAT TIME I REALISED ...



THAT FOR SOME OF US. TO HEAR AND TO BE HEARD IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN FOR THE OTHERS.









IT CAME TO ME AFTER THE PANDEMIC WAS OVER.









SOMETIMES A SINGLE WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT IS ENOUGH TO START A GREAT MOVEMENT ...



AND EVEN A TINY BIT OF ATTENTION CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.







WHAT IS MORE. AT THAT MOMENT I REALISED THAT I HAD NEVER BEEN ALONE ON THIS JOURNEY.





IT STARTED WHEN OUR LIVES HAD BEEN COMPLETELY TRANSFERRED TO THE INTERNET.









WE STILL HAD CALLS, BUT IN THE END I WAS ALWAYS ALONE.





I FELI LIKE I HAD FORGOTTEN HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS...







AND BREAKING THAT VICIOUS CIRCLE WAS NOT SOMETHING I COULD DO ON MY OWN.





IT WAS AFTER THE PANDEMIC WAS OVER .















THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THERE, THESE POWERS INSIDE ME,



AND THE MORE I LOOK AROUND, THE MORE I FEEL THEIR GROWTH.





I NOTICED THAT OTHERS HAVE SPECIAL POWERS WITHIN THEM. THEY KNOW THEY HAVE A WAY TO CONTRIBUTE.



BUT NOT ME. I AM NOTHING SPECIAL. HOW CAN I HELP? IF ONLY...





















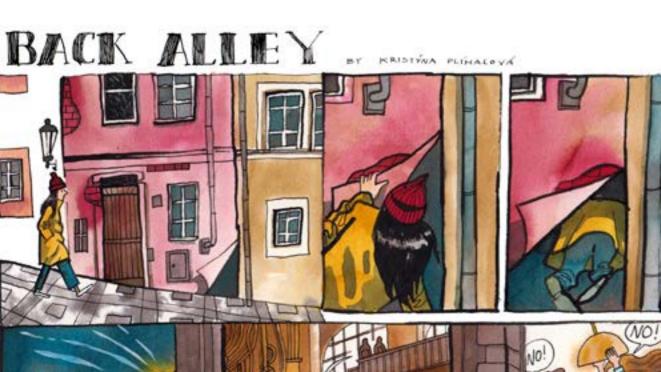
MAYBE AFTER ALL THERE IS SOMETHING I CAN DO?

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BECAUSE SOMETIMES EVEN A SINGLE SMILE IS ENDUGH TO MAKE A CHANGE.

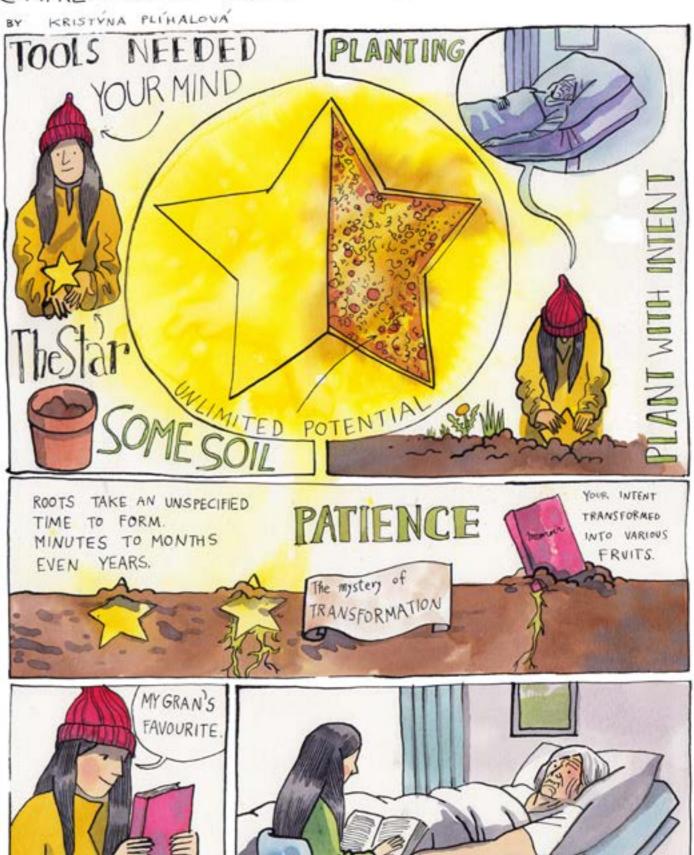
COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO GROWING

STARS

















PRIORITIES

WHAT KIND OF STREETWILL WE BE SEEING IN THE FUTURE? IT'S INTERESTING TO THINK ABOUT THAT. AT FIRST YOU WOULDTHINK OF THE ARCHETMAL FUTURE-STUTE-FLYING CARS, BIG EXPENSIVE BUILDINGS WITH FANCY SKYWRUS, FAR ABOVE SEALEVEL SOME COOL PLANTS HERE AND THERE.

> THIS OF GURSE IS IN THE MORE DISTANT FUTURE. WHAT ABOUT THE NEAR FUTURE? WHAT WILL WE SEE IN THE COMING YEARS?

IF YOU ASK METHE ANSWER'S PRETTY CLEAR.



THEREFORE WHEN I TRY TO LOCK IMBTHE FUTURE THE ONLY THING I CAN SEE ARE BETTER CITTIMISED, MORE ETFICIENT FIND - OF COURSE - BIGGER STREETS.

THE POSSIBILITIES PERLLY FREE ENDLES AFTER ALL!

THE ONLY LIMIT IS THE SEA. I SUPPOSE.



SERIOUSLY! SOMETIMES WHEN LOOKING HTOUR PRICEITIES YOU RUMOST GET THE FEELING THERE SHOULDN'T BE STREETS AT ALL ANYMORE!

Naive.

What could our position in the world, a European path, so to speak, look like?



I think about a european voice bringing values to the table, that are not presented often these days.



Naive, isnt H 7



Nowadays there's often talk about this ... though very uninspired in my opinion. Our own path, our own voice. What a chance! So I dare to write something myself ...



Im not telling about economical volves here, but real ones which offer a thoughtful, life-orientaked path.



Could'nd this be something truly valuable in the global discourse? Hmm ...





But to dump it ... would'int that be even more naive?



THE LOOP











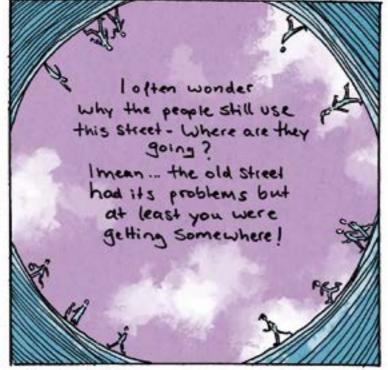


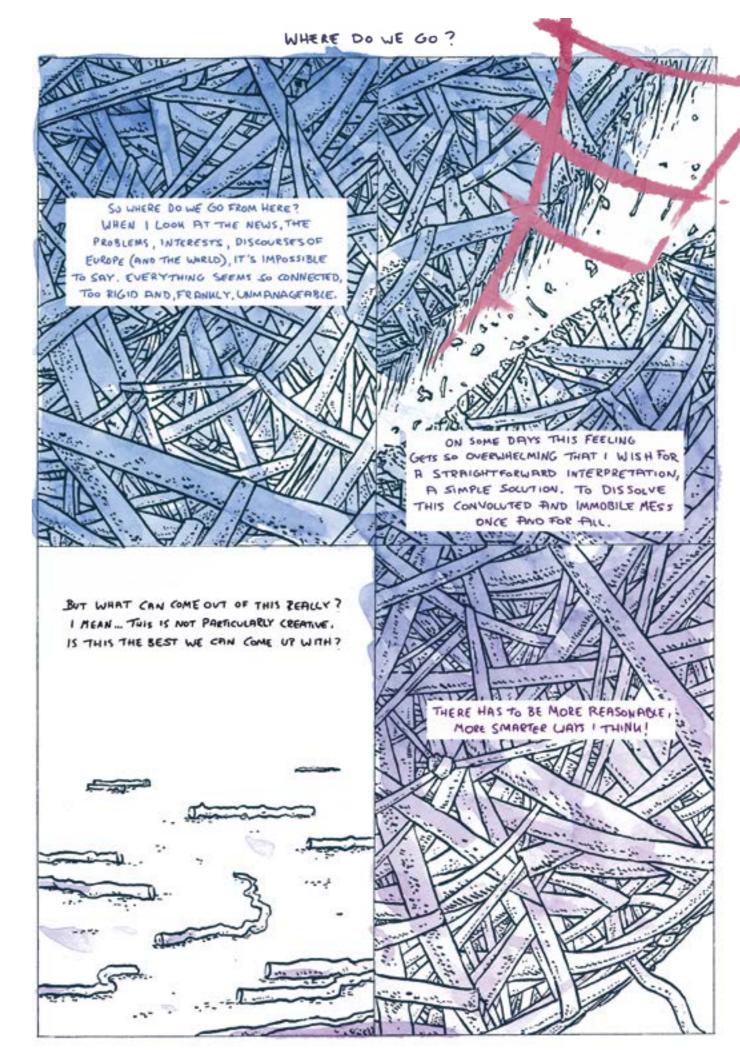






... the street is still in use working with magnets or something like that. Some people say the street is less crowded, less noisy in its new form, but...





STREET MUSICIANS









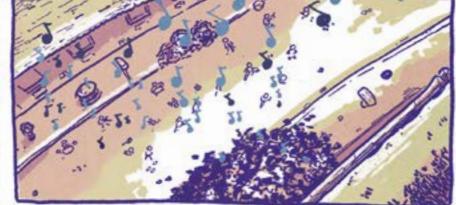














blind spot





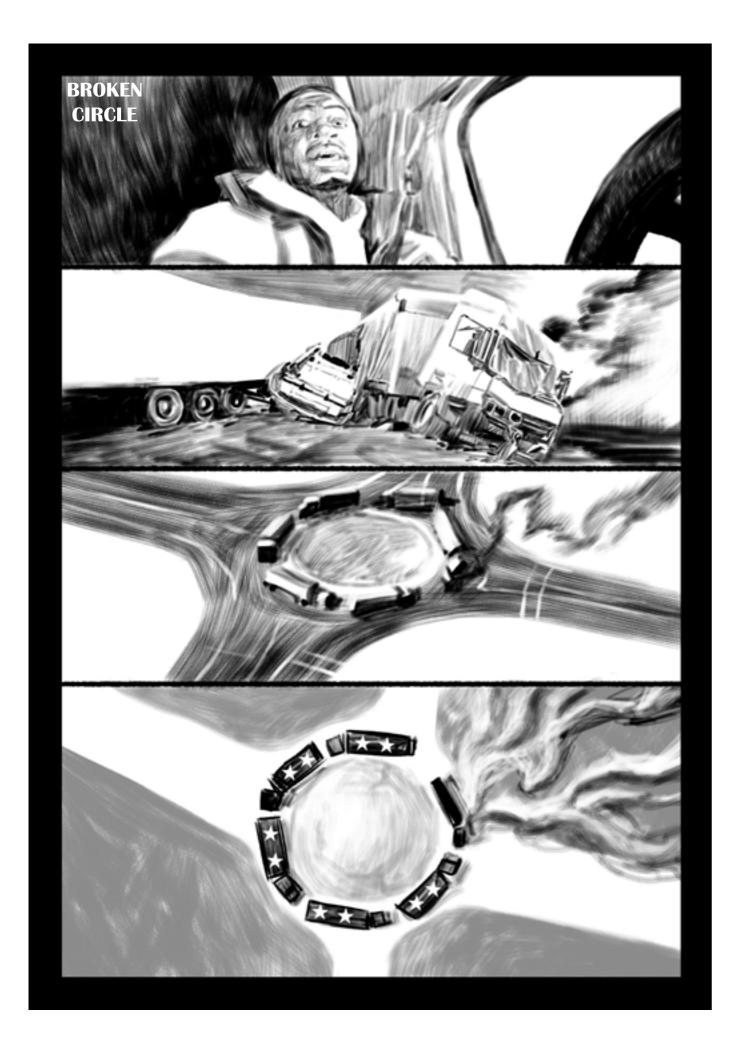


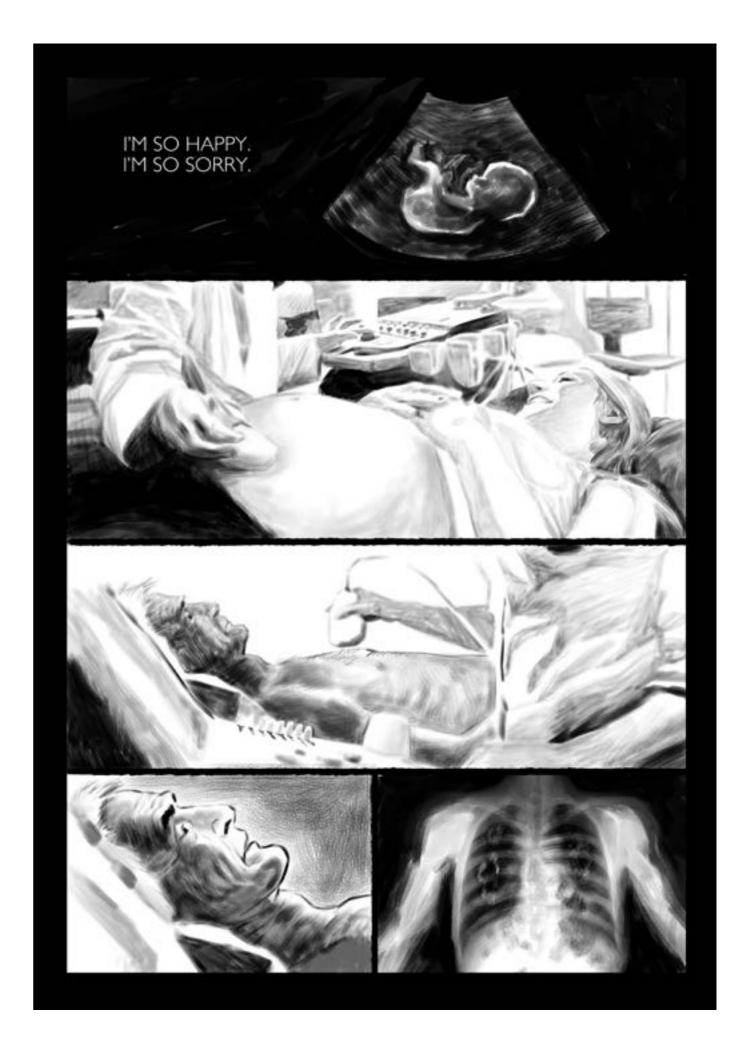


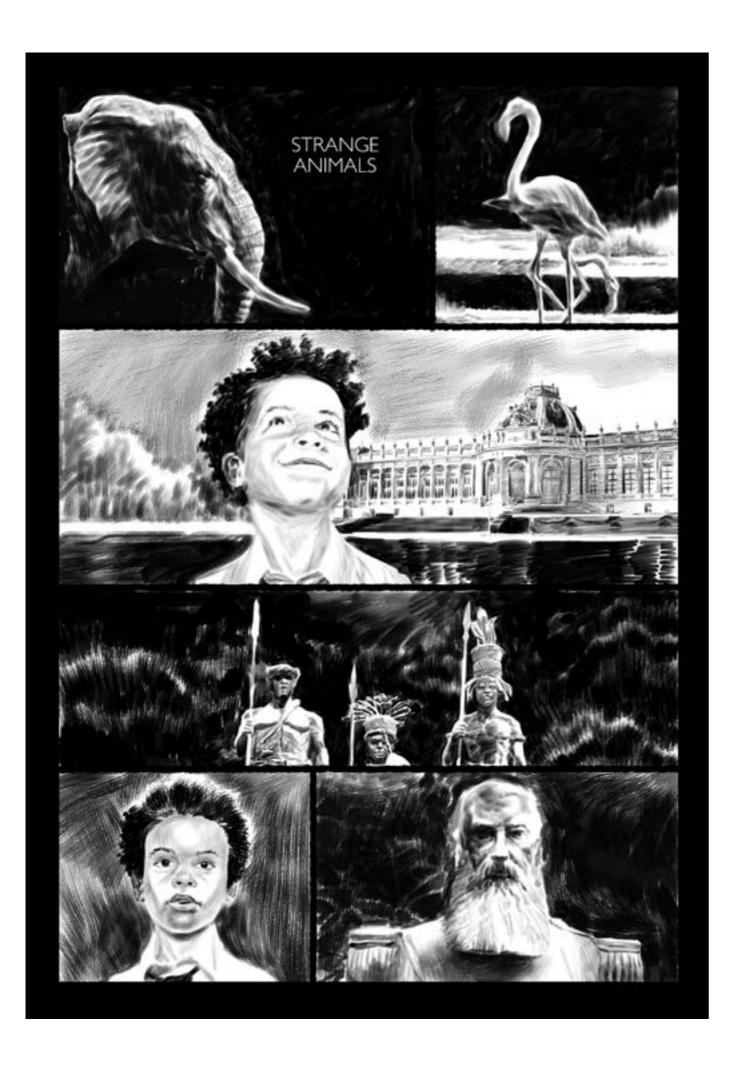














INTERVIEWS



Stefan Hahn

What inspired you to become a comic artist?

When I draw comics, I like the fact that, from the first idea, I arrive at the finished story quite fast (compared e.g. to an animation movie). Actually, you only need a pen and a paper. I enjoy expressing myself in stories and small gags.

What is it about our competition that fascinated you and encouraged you to participate?

I especially liked the challenge to create a comic about a political topic. Normally, I don't write and draw about these topics, so that was new for me.

What inspired you to your stories that you entered for *Animate Europe*?

I took the topic "Restart-The Streets of Europe" literally and wrote about a main character

who runs around in the streets of Europe and tells everyone (who wants to listen) his ideas for a better Europe.

What message would you like to send to the readers?

I want to entertain the readers and make them think of their own ideas for a better Europe.

How do you think comics can be used for political education?

First of all, the comic medium (and its advantages) should get more established by people. For this, it would be a good idea to introduce comics into school education. Comics should be read (e.g. in language or history) classes, and children should be motivated to create their own comics.



thing that is

absolutely our

responsibility -

our actions.

Maria Konstantinova

What inspired you to become a comic artist?

I have always wanted to try my hand at drawing comics. Previously I have created short videos and animations, but telling a story through a limited amount of static images – well, that is something different, more challenging and exciting.

What is it about our competition that fascinated you and encouraged you to participate?

What drew me in was the topic "Restart!

- The Streets of Europe". We are all so tired of Covid at times, that the only thing one thinks about is what comes next.

What inspired you to your stories that you entered for *Animate Europe*?

Sitting at home the whole of last year and feeling helpless, I decided

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that, though problems may sometimes seem unsolvable, there are still some small steps that can be taken. Maybe after all it is these feasible solutions that can solve the bigger problem. So I created the comics.

What message would you like to send to the readers?

There is only one thing that is absolutely our responsibility – our actions. So please do not give up – there is always something that can be done.

How do you think comics can be used for political education?

I would say that the higher purpose of comics is to accentuate the existing problems. Colourful images encourage readers to step into the characters' shoes. It can help them to see the situation from a new perspective.



Kristýna Plíhalová

What inspired you to become a comic artist?

I love telling stories. I thought telling stories through the theatrical medium could be the right thing, so I studied at Drama School. But, ever since I can remember, I also drew a lot. So then, after being at home with my kids, it all clicked. I use the storytelling skills learned at Drama School and combine them with the drawing skills that I improve every day. It turns out that I really love creating comics.

What is it about our competition that fascinated you and encouraged you to participate?

The Czech Republic is inherently sceptical of the EU. That makes me truly angry. The European Union is based on some great ideas that we need to be reminded of. This competition let me explore those ideas in an unusual way. It made me develop stories that impart big abstract thoughts in a tiny one-page space. It was a challenge not to be missed.

What inspired you to your stories that you entered for *Animate Europe*?

I was thinking about the way the EU can connect people. How the idea of the Union can help to build bridges and connections and elevate people's lives. I like the sort of mythical explanation of the European flag as a representation of the Virgin Mary's cape

The
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a tiny one-page
space.

and the stars around her head. And from this image, I just let my mind flow. It was a very freeing process.

What message would you like to send to the readers?

Let's not stay focused on what separates and distinguishes us. But instead, let's see how we can connect to each other. Don't let our governments build the Union. Let us, the citizens, build it. It is our Union and these are our connections. Take care of them..

How do you think comics can be used for political education?

Oh yes! Comics as a tool for education are so effective. As you can see from examples in this competition, the artist can tell a story in a few simple frames. You can put so much meaning and information in those little windows. And the reader can read it over and over, find all those meanings, and through visual markers imprint the information on his memory. One of my professional dreams is to create educational comics about civic duties, voting and taxes, etc. It would be so very useful, for young people especially, and also it could overcome the inequality in education, because you have to be clear in the picture and modest with words, so that everyone can understand. As you can see, it's a huge topic for me. I could talk about this for hours.



Torben Siebert

What inspired you to become a comic artist?

I've been drawing for as long as I can remember, so today I find it difficult to track how or why I came to drawing in the first place – I think it's a natural part of me. I was able to pursue my passion further during my studies, where I was able to deal with the medium of comics and narrative theory on an academic base. This opened up completely new perspectives on comics, especially by exploring and questioning the possibilities of narrative and aesthetics, so that comics with their wide scope are now my favourite way of expressing myself.

What is it about our competition that fascinated you and encouraged you to participate?

Of course, there is a general interest, or rather a stance, towards politics and world affairs – European dialogue is a subject that is extremely important in my eyes, and so I was immediately enthusiastic about the topic. But I was also very attracted by the artistic challenge: Up to now, I've primarily devoted myself to the aesthetic side of comics. To position myself politically via comics and to write about social issues was exciting to me, as was the form of the one-pager: it's some-

how especially challenging to abstract the many possible issues into 6 pages.

What inspired you to your stories that you entered for *Animate Europe*?

In general, I had the political and social issues and developments of recent years in mind while writing – for example, the climate catastrophe, the limits of European cooperation in the Mediterranean, as well as the situation of the EU, in particular its role in the world.

Moreover, theoretical, especially philosophical texts always represent a great source of inspiration for me. My view is probably quite influenced by them, so I like to try to incorporate insights I gain from these sources in relation to current issues into my work, often in an abstract way. Questions of system, democracy, discourse are of particular interest to me, which I think shines through in my comics. In this sense, I have also tried to interpret the street as a theme again and again in different ways.

What message would you like to send to the readers?

Above all, I think it's important to take an interest in politics and discourse in our democracies – not to close ourselves off from

the bigger picture, to encapsulate ourselves in our bubble. Art can be the best instrument for this. A certain critical and informed attitude can only be beneficial, also to protect ourselves from right-wing nonsense. Nevertheless, in my opinion, we should not be afraid to think idealistically. For me, this means wishing for a more social, more solidary, more life-friendly future – an even better Europe!

How do you think comics can be used for political education?

Comics can be an excellent medium for political education, to my taste especially when they try to depict the bigger picture on a smaller scale. In my opinion, abstracting larger issues to a more intimate visual level is some-thing that can succeed especially in comics with their silent appeal. The one-pager is also a good way to do this: drawing a situation, discussing a topic, sketching a mood in just a few panels can be particularly successful in comics and make the message seem even more convincing.

Personally, it was important to me that some of my comics take a more critical look at issues, because I'm convinced that it's only by dealing with the inadequate that a positive development can emerge.



Mattias Ysebaert

What inspired you to become a comic artist?

I've always loved drawing, and I love telling stories. The comic book medium is the perfect combination of both. I always read comics as a kid, and knew then that I wanted to create the same.

What is it about our competition that fascinated you and encouraged you to participate?

It's about Europe. Being European, it felt a little more personal. I live in a big city, and I see a lot of people around me. I sometimes wonder what they're thinking of, what their worries are.

This contest seemed like a convenient opportunity to put thoughts and observations on to paper.

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In the same
way as people
are educated through
text in books, something
similar can be applied to
an illustrated story. You
can, however, put a lot
more emotion into an
image.

What message would you like to send to the readers?

That we live in a strange world. There's a lot of misery in it, too. People might not show it on the surface, but there are a lot of things going on behind the scenes. I think I want to put extra emphasis on the fact that no one goes through life without a little bit of a struggle.

How do you think comics can be used for political education?

I don't think it's hard. In the same way as people are educated through text in books, something similar can be applied to an illustrated story. You can, however, put a lot more emotion into an image. Something that can't be as easily conveyed through text. That's where a comic book has the upper hand.

ANIMATE EUROPE AVAILABLE FORMATS

In 2013, we launched our biannual international comic competition Animate Europe. The competition entries of our finalist are compiled in comic books and available as travel and open air exhibitions. Furthermore, all winner comics of our past comic competitions are now available as animated short films!

If you want to book an exhibition, order comic books or get further information, please get in touch with us.

Available formats:

Comic book publications

- → 2013: Animate Europe (en, de)
- → 2015: Animate Europe Fast Forward (en, de)
- → 2017: Re-Animate Europe (en, de, fr)
- → 2019: Animate Europe+ (en, de, fr)
- → 2021: Restart! The Streets of Europe (en, de, fr)

Exhibitions

- → Roll-up travel exhibitions of all our competition rounds (en)
- → Open Air exhibitions of our comics 2017, 2019, 2021 (en, fr)

Animated short films

- → Seeing the Bigger Picture Animate Europe Winner 2019 David Shaw
- → The Old Lady Gives No Answer Animate Europe Winner 2017 Magdalena Kaszuba
- → The Union Animate Europe Winner 2015 Nicole Krcmar
- → Erasmus and the Seal Animate Europe Winner 2013 Marco Tabilio

Special publications

- → Animating COVID-19
- → Debunking Disinformation

https://www.freiheit.org/european-union/focus/animate-europe

Exhibition highlights:

- → Paris 2018
- → Angoulême 2019
- → Paris 2019
- → Goethe-Institut 2019
- → Maastricht 2019
- → Saarbrücken Kinder & Jugendbuchmesse 2019
- → Erika Fuchs Haus 2019
- → Paris 2020
- → Museum Europäischer Kulturen 2019, 2020, 2021

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PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF "ANIMATE EUROPE"







Founded by the Federal Foreign Office according to a decision of the German Federal Parliament.

Let's press Restart
and see what happens! The restart
takes us back to where it all begins: the
citizens. Let's focus on European citizens, their
realities, their priorities. What kind of restart would
they advocate? Which face, which vision of Europe do they
represent? And let's study them where they actually are: in the
Streets of Europe! The streets are the place where society interacts, where true participation occurs. What streets are we looking
at? A network of endless staircases, a highway into the future?
A sleepy country road, a spooky back alley? Where do roads end,
where do new ones begin? These were the questions the Friedrich
Naumann Foundation for Freedom asked comic artists and graphic
novelists all over the world in the fifth round of our international

Animate Europe comic contest.

We believe in a unified Europe and the power of the European Union for freedom, peace and stability. Let's generate discussions about Europe! This anthology compiles the entries of the five finalists in our 2021 contest round "Restart! – The Streets of Europe".

Have a good read!







