



Overwhelming success of Animayo Gran Canaria 2023 with 20,139 participants compared to the 15,610 of the previous edition in its face-to-face phase

- **The 18th edition of Animayo Gran Canaria celebrates a 29% increase in participants compared to the face-to-face phase of its previous edition, which had 15,610 participants.**
- **Due to the extremely high demand, Animayo had to announce successive "sold-out" for its 'Full Pack', 'Basic Pack', and 'Professionals' passes.**
- **Next week, the Official Animayo 2023 Awards will be announced, and 2 works will receive direct passes to the preselection for the Oscars®, as Animayo is the only animation festival in Spain designated as a "Qualifying Festival" by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of Hollywood for the Oscars® in two categories.**
- **Along with its collaborators, Animayo Gran Canaria 2023 reaches a figure of over 600,000 euros in "Talent Scholarships," increasing it by 100,000 euros compared to the previous edition.**
- **The application period for these study scholarships for the 2023-2024 school year, both online and in person, will remain open until June 30 on the Animayo website, and details will be announced soon.**

- **In its recruitment sessions, Animayo scheduled over 400 interviews to apply for 78 job offers in 30 categories to meet the demands of 13 recruiting companies.**

Animayo Gran Canaria 2023, the most successful in its 18 years of existence, with a total of 20,139 participants compared to the 15,610 of the previous edition, in its face-to-face phase.

The 18th edition of Animayo Gran Canaria breaks its own attendance record. This is reflected in its **20,139 participants compared to the 15,610 of the previous edition** in the same face-to-face phase. **A 29% increase** that stands out in master classes and screenings, as well as in the fan zone and Animayo experiences, which are new additions to this edition.

These overwhelming numbers only account for the recently held face-to-face phase, and **they will still be increased** by the final number of participants in the 'Talent Scholarships' program (until June 30) and the screening of the Official Animayo 2023 Awards, which will take place in the coming months of August and September. This count will undoubtedly increase with the final tally of the entire edition once its online phase is completed.

This edition was approached "with renewed strength, with the same enthusiasm and energy as previous editions," as stated by Damián Perea, founder, director, and producer of Animayo, during the press conference for the media, where he also emphasized, once again, that this would be "the best edition of all." He was not mistaken. Almost a year of arduous pre-production work carried out by the Animayo team, led by Perea, to make **Animayo Gran Canaria 2023, the 18th International Summit of Animation, Visual Effects, and Video Games, shine like never before.** The event took place in the capital city of Gran Canaria over four days, from May 3 to 6, once again turning Las Palmas de Gran Canaria into the epicenter of the industry worldwide.

With **more guests than ever and a larger audience than ever before**, in the words of the acclaimed filmmaker and Festival director, "an enthusiastic, young audience with such a thirst for learning that they carried me through every minute of the Festival. They didn't miss a single day, from ten in the morning until ten at night. That's the desire to be present and learn, and that's what's wonderful about Animayo. Just imagine if all these people approached their regular classes or jobs with this enthusiasm. What would the world be like? I am proud to see how all these young people came every day with that hunger for each master class, each workshop, each screening, and every opportunity during the recruitment sessions. They were hungry for everything! Even seeing how they took advantage of any encounter with the guests to show their own works, however fledgling, or how our guests took the time to listen to their concerns and provide guidance, beyond the scheduled activities. This incredible audience even showed up for autograph sessions, turning each occasion into another small interaction. I am very proud of this festival, this new edition, of bringing Animayo to the island of Gran Canaria, and achieving these standards, and of the entire Festival team whose passion and work make it all possible."

Indeed, this success was already hinted at by the **successive "sold-out"** announcements made by the organization. The first of these occurred on April 12 for the 'Full Pack,' 'Basic Pack,' and 'Professionals' passes, prompting Animayo to activate a special pass called 'Recruitment Plus' to

meet the high demand from job seekers in the industry. This pass, too, was quickly sold out within a few days.

The **programming** of this 18th edition was more ambitious than ever, with a strong emphasis on education and employment, which truly represents the heart of Animayo. The festival featured **over 40 renowned guests and speakers**, including **national and international artists and creators**, who shared their knowledge in **14 in-person master classes** with 2,997 participants, and **5 workshops** with 113 participants, focused on practical learning in areas such as character design, animation, visual effects, digital product design, art, and videomapping at the CICC Space. The same venue also hosted **three panels** on artificial intelligence, the use of new technologies, and women in the VFX industry, which attracted 320 participants, underscoring the importance of these participatory actions that facilitate finding common ground and expanding knowledge with industry experts. This offering was already integrated in the previous edition and has returned to stay.

To celebrate Animayo's 18th birthday and bring together an impressive lineup, star guests traveled to the island of Gran Canaria from countries such as the **United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Poland, the Czech Republic, Canada, the Philippines, Denmark, and Ukraine, in addition to Spain**. For the first time in a festival in Spain, Animayo, in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, welcomed the living legend of Disney, **Andreas Deja**, a former animator from the iconic studio responsible for bringing unforgettable characters like Scar, Jafar, King Triton, and Lilo to life, not to mention films like "Who Framed Roger Rabbit," "The Lion King," "Aladdin," "Beauty and the Beast," and "The Little Mermaid."

With sold-out tickets, the first day began with a **welcoming ceremony** where both Antonio Morales, President of the Island Council of Gran Canaria, and Damián Perea, delivered speeches to the attendees, paving the way for the first masterclasses of the festival. In the afternoon, in the presence of an excited audience filling every seat in the auditorium of the CICC Space, we had the privilege of witnessing a Spanish **premiere**: the screening of Andreas Deja's first independent work as a director and producer, "**Mushka**". This hand-drawn, nearly half-hour-long short film is set in the Soviet Union of the 1970s and tells the heartwarming story of the relationship between a girl and a Siberian tiger. Following the premiere, Andreas Deja also delivered his first of two masterclasses at Animayo, in addition to conducting the character design workshop. He also presided over the International Jury at Animayo this year. With a packed audience, "Mushka" was screened during the **official opening of Animayo Gran Canaria 2023** at the CICC Space, where the figure of **Claudio Biern Boyd**, known as the Spanish Walt Disney, who passed away last October, was also honored. On behalf of his family, his son Carlos Biern (also an executive producer and director of animation content) accepted the **Animayo Honorary Award** for his immense contribution to the world of animation.

In terms of premieres, in collaboration with the Polish Institute of Culture and the Czech Center in Madrid, there was also the national premiere of the children's animated film "**Rats and Foxes: A Friendship from Another World**" by **Jan Bubenicek and Denisa Grimmova**, distinguished guest speakers. Additionally, the Spanish premiere of the making-of documentary of '**The Peasants**' by **Dorota Kobiela** took place. This film was created based on the novel by Wladyslaw Reymont and features realistic and pre-impressionist painted animation in the style of 19th-century Polish painting.

As mentioned earlier, Animayo Gran Canaria 2023 featured other prominent guests such as **Bobby Chiu and Kei Aceda** from Imaginism Studios, known for their work on projects like "Alice in Wonderland" (directed by Tim Burton) and "Alice Through the Looking Glass" (directed by James Bobin). Both guests were the stars of their Concept Art exhibition, which had its **European premiere** at the festival in the CICC Space. The edition also welcomed relevant guests such as **Laura MacMahon**, (Axis Studios Group, known for "Love Death Robots Vol. 1: Helping Hand,"

"Scrooge: A Christmas Carol," and "Diablo: Immortal"); **Signe Vinther**, (Ghost, known for "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story," "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," "The Walking Dead," "Star Trek," and "Black Panther"); **Borja Montoro**, ("Space Jam: A New Legacy," "Klaus," "Mary Poppins Returns"); **Abraham Lopéz**, ("Blue and Malone Impossible Cases," "Dragon Keeper," "Deep"); **Albert Barba**, and **Sandra Lasso**, ("Luck," "The Secret Life of Pets," "The Grinch," "Despicable Me 3"); **Clara López**, (ReDefine, known for "John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum" and "Lost in Space"); **Carolina Jiménez**, ("Joker," "Game of Thrones," "The Hobbit" trilogy); **Kateryna Ocheredko**, (Thru Films, known for "Loving Vincent"); **Edgar Martín-Blas**, (Virtual Voyagers), Xavi Bové (La Salle Barcelona, known for "Sonoscopi"); **Jose Jesús García and Mónica García**, (The Core School), among others. As Damián Perea pointed out, "these are just a few of the relevant animators, producers, directors, VFX supervisors from companies like **Disney, Star Wars, Marvel, Pixar, and Dreamworks**. They came to share their experiences and knowledge in a close and personal way, to teach and motivate the new generations."

Creating **real job opportunities**, Animayo Gran Canaria 2023 scheduled **over 400 interviews for 78 job offers in 30 categories to meet the demands of 13 allied recruiting companies**, renowned players in the industry such as Skydance Animation, Axis Studios Group, Ghost Fx, Fortiche, Studio Nowake, BWater Animation Studios, Atlantis Animation, 3Doubles Producciones, Amuse Animation, Mondo TV Studios, BMCaff Studio, **Ánima Kitchent**, and Hampa Animation Studio. This professional offering was complemented by their designated **Networking Zone**, which saw **91 professionals** participating and facilitated exchange and business opportunities between production companies, entrepreneurs, and potential investors in the animation industry worldwide. Additionally, the Fan Zone of Animayo, located in the Multipurpose Room of the CICC Space, shared space with the autograph signing area for the star guests (1,923 signatures). It hosted **14 artist tables** led by illustrators, graphic novelists, designers, 2D animators, storyboard artists, content creators, and leaders of digital communities such as Kaos, Ivart, Luca, Daniel Hace, Abenchara Montesinos, Elvira Piedra, Logan Tucou, Delioma Herquin, Lisa Giambra, Lara Gimeno, Iris Cabrera, Letstark, Tama, Jota Studio, and Gema Vadillo, who presented her latest graphic novel "El amarillo no existe" (Yellow Doesn't Exist) nationally. They all had the opportunity to sell their art and interact with the audience, making it another successful aspect of Animayo, which will continue to be.

And **starting from the foundation**, "teaching to see, to create, and to have a critical mindset for the future audience, including the talents of tomorrow," **until June 30**, free of charge and without leaving the classroom, this Festival will continue to celebrate its '**Animayo Schools**' program. This program includes 4,934 registered students from educational institutions who will participate in activities that include screenings for secondary, high school, arts, and degree students, as well as online masterclasses taught by artists and creators from top production companies and universities. Of course, the next necessary step could not be missing: the '**Decide Your Future**' program, in which 533 participants attended informative talks about artistic and technological careers open to educational institutions, students, tutors, and parents. The program featured **collaborators of the festival such as** U-Tad, Centro Universitario de Tecnología y Arte Digital, The Core Entertainment Science School, L'idem Barcelona, La Salle Universidad Ramón Llull, Reboot Academy, IED Madrid, LCI Barcelona, and Escuela Artediez. These collaborators are joined by the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, University of La Laguna, Escuela de Arte de Gran Canaria, Escuela de Arte de Tenerife, and Escuela de Arte de Fuerteventura. Completing the circle of education and opportunities, **the 18th edition of Animayo Gran Canaria increases its Talent Scholarships by 100,000 euros, reaching a total of over 600,000 euros** in grants to support online and in-person studies at top national and international schools and universities. This open call **has no geographical limits** and will remain open until June 30, with applications submitted online through the Animayo website, and the organization will provide detailed information in the coming days.

At this point, it is worth noting that **the youngest members of the family had a voice and vote**

again in **'My First Festival,'** one of the official sections designed specifically for family audiences. Children aged 5 and above, as well as young adults and other family members, had the opportunity to vote for the best animated short film of the edition from a selection of **11 international animated shorts** with messages related to the promotion of social values.

Moving on, we come to **another major highlight** of the festival: its **5 Official Competition Sections**, featuring works of animation, visual effects, and video games. The winners of these sections, which will be announced next week, will form the **Official Animayo 2023 Awards**, granting **2 direct passes to the pre-selection of the Academy Awards®**. **Animayo is the first and only festival in Spain designated as a "Qualifying Festival" by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Hollywood for the Oscars® in two categories:** International Animated Short Film for the 'Grand Prize of the International Jury' and, since last year, 'Best Short Film in Spanish - Animation with Ñ' (for countries where Spanish is an official language). Therefore, as mentioned, the winning works in these two categories will automatically become eligible for the Academy Awards® and will directly enter the pre-selection process.

With an unprecedented audience turnout at Animayo, with 1,491 participants, attendees at all the **screenings that took place at the Guinguada Theater in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria from May 3rd to 6th**, filled not only the seats but also the amphitheater. They enjoyed a selection of **approximately 60 short films** that were chosen from **over 2,000 submissions from more than 80 countries worldwide**. After a further selection phase conducted by the Animayo team, the number was narrowed down to 200 films. Finally, these 60 short films were presented for public voting and, most importantly, for the vote of the Animayo Gran Canaria 2023 International Jury.

In addition to the screenings, the Guinguada Theater also hosted the renowned screenings of **'La Noche Dos Rombos'** and **'La Noche del Humor,'** featuring a selection of intellectually-themed and artistically humorous short films with a touch of spice from the talented independent director and animator Bill Plympton.

Thanks to the strong push and determined support of its sponsors, **Animayo Gran Canaria has been able to establish itself for 18 years**. These sponsors include the Gran Canaria Island Council, the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Council, the La Caja de Canarias Foundation, Gran Canaria Tourism, the Government of the Canary Islands, as well as the involvement of production companies, studios, schools, and universities, along with numerous private companies that firmly support the film industry and the effort to bring culture and education to all audiences.

All in all, Animayo Gran Canaria 2023, with a **record-breaking attendance** in its in-person phase, once again turned its capital into the epicenter of the audiovisual industry, showcasing the best of animation, visual effects, and video games. This marks the beginning of **'Animayo Itinerant,' a journey around the world to cities and countries such as** Los Angeles, Madrid, Barcelona, Lanzarote, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Brussels, Chicago, Mumbai, Prague, Colombia, Belgrade, and Korea.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Attached are high-definition photos and videos.

HD Video of Animayo 2023 Participants: <https://we.tl/t-PqIqUj4Xsr>

Official Trailer of Animayo 2023: <https://we.tl/t-k7n74NBv3V>

