

Direct her: Festival highlights female filmmakers

BY JULIANNE MCSHANE

Call it the Attack of the 50 Film Women!

A short cartoon about serial killers, the Devil, and traffic jams will screen as part of 50 female-made movies at the three-day Women's Film Festival, starting at St. Francis College in Brooklyn Heights on April 4. "Panic Attack!" is a comedic take on the way that women's fears and frustrations often persist even after being ignored, according to its creator.

"I think women have a tendency to stuff down things that are driving them insane and making them furious," said Eileen O'Meara, who lives in the distant land of Los Angeles. "Men are more allowed to be angry, but culturally we're supposed to shove stuff down more, and maybe it does come out in anxiety [for women]."

O'Meara drew, animated, and voiced the three-minute film, which follows a woman on her morning drive as her routine worries ("You're going to be late!") escalate to more dire predictions ("Did you leave the coffee on? You better turn around or the house will catch on fire!"). The artist said that the animated short was an effort to put her own constant stressors to artistic use.

"I was so overwhelmed with anxious thoughts myself, I was trying to figure out a way to make it a constructive part of my life," she said. "Part of me was trying to turn the tables on the stuff that was torturing me."



Voices in her head: Filmmaker Eileen O'Meara channeled her fears into "Panic Attack!," one of 50 films showing at the Women's Film Festival at St. John's College in Brooklyn Heights from April 4-6. Tim Maloney



Trio of terror: Eileen O'Meara fears getting locked up with members of the Manson Family in her short film "Panic Attack!," screening on April 6 at the Women's Film Festival at St. Francis College.

Direct her: Festival highlights female filmmakers

(continued)

BY JULIANNE MCSHANE

The free, fourth annual festival — which runs from April 4–6 — will offer women filmmakers a chance to connect with each other and their audience — a rare opportunity, since female movie-makers were excluded from such spaces for so long, according to the event’s director.

“All film festivals for the first 100 years or so were men’s film festivals,” said Fort Greene resident Augusta Palmer, who teaches communication arts at the school. “I think it’s still good to have some women-only spaces in terms of the production of the films.”

St. Francis students and faculty chose the 50 films from more than 200 submissions, according to Palmer. Festival highlights include the comedy “Heather Has Four Moms,” about a teenage girl whose four lesbian mothers oppose her losing her virginity with her boyfriend, and “The Trail,” a horror film about a biracial couple who get lost on a hike together. The fest will also include panels focusing on the business side of the industry, including discussions about crowd-funding and distributing films on April 4.

Women’s Film Festival at St. Francis College (180 Remsen St. between Clinton and Court streets in Brooklyn Heights, www.sfc.edu). April 4–6. “Panic Attack” on April 6 at 4 pm. Free.

Reach reporter Julianne McShane at (718) 260–2523 or by e-mail at jmcshane@schnepsmedia.com. Follow her on Twitter [@juliannemcshane](https://twitter.com/juliannemcshane).

Dr Oz & Dr Roizen: Pacifying a Panic Attack

KING FEATURES



By **Dr. Mehmet Oz**, **Dr. Mike Roizen**

Drs. Oz & Roizen: pacifying a panic attack



I'm selling my house and have a new great place to move into, but I had a panic attack last week. Before it happens again, what should I do? — Rose W., Meadowlands, New Jersey

Eileen O'Meara created a three-minute, animated film called "Panic Attack" that starts with a woman who is pregnant, caught in a traffic jam, wondering if she'd left the stove on and can't get back home to check. Her worries then spiral from one fear to the next, until she ends up thinking her unborn child might be a spawn of the devil and perseverating on what she should do about it. Clearly, having a panic attack is frightening, despite the fact that O'Meara, who suffers from them herself, turned one such episode into an amusing cartoon.

Panic attacks often are triggered by fear of disaster or losing control when there's no actual danger or threat. They can be amplified by side effects of medications, excess alcohol use or lack of sleep. Physical symptoms usually start with hyperventilation and shortness of breath, and can progress to chest pain, feeling faint, trembling, sweats or chills and heart palpitations. Recurring attacks can lead to cardiovascular problems and development of a phobia.

Panic attacks sometimes are called a "panic disorder" because they're a disordered stress response. They can develop after physical or emotional trauma, or an upheaval in your life (moving!). PAs may run in families, and women experience them twice as often as men.

Fortunately, there are effective treatments. In the short term, tranquilizers or antidepressants may help. In the long term, cognitive behavioral therapy can teach you ways to short-circuit PAs before they happen by identifying trigger situations and helping you avoid them, or teaching you techniques that dial down stress.

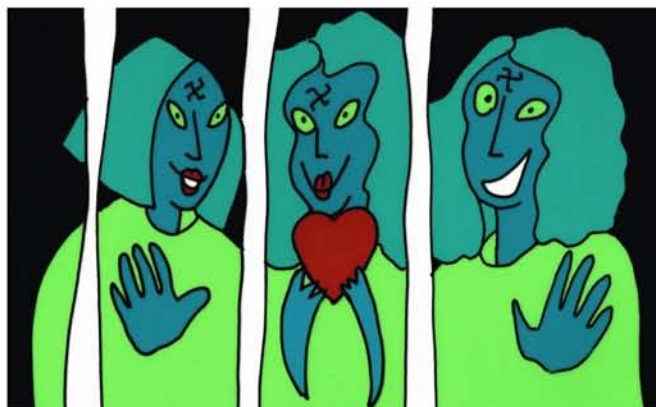
Mehmet Oz, M.D. is host of "The Dr. Oz Show," and Mike Roizen, M.D. is Chief Wellness Officer and Chair of the Wellness Institute at the Cleveland Clinic. Email questions to youdocsdaily@sharecare.com.

Review of Eileen O'Meara's *Panic Attack*

Written by **Denise Papas Meechan**

Developmentally Edited by **Alexandra Hidalgo**

Copy Edited and Posted by **Megan Elias**



You're driving. There is no warning. A sharp, intense pain shoots straight down your arm into your heaving chest. Your heart rate accelerates from 88 to 188 BPM in a millisecond. Your mind shifts into overdrive—flashing images of everything and everyone you've ever done wrong; everything you've failed to accomplish. You're drowning in your own shortcomings, burning with fears of losing control, and trying to count the deluge of irrational thoughts that come into your head. But yet, you can't even... remember... to breathe.

O'Meara's short is only three minutes. But *Panic Attack* is rooted so strongly in its realism, as well as in its playfulness, that the three minutes become the most intense moments in your day and will remain with you months after.

A panic attack is a sudden episode of intense fear, out of proportion to a situation, that triggers a severe physical reaction to that situation. The symptoms are immediate, frightening, and challenging to control. And, in the hands of an ingenious artist like Eileen O'Meara, a short film about a panic attack is all of this with a generous jolt of unadulterated hilarity.

Following the works *Agnes Escapes from the Nursing Home* and the UNICEF cartoon *The Right to Express Yourself*, *Panic Attack* is the latest gem in the O'Meara film family. Her impressionist, stream-of-consciousness short is hand sketched from the point of view of a woman having such an attack.



supporting women and
feminist filmmakers

Review of Eileen O'Meara's *Panic Attack*

(continued)

O'Meara chose animation as a medium for exploring the fluidity of the mind as it shifts, accusing photographic imagery as being more tied to "real time and space." She made the right choice. Her drawings, or rather, doodles, show the woman, her cat, a baby—everything—transforming into each other. They are cryptic, rough, and basic, and they morph into each other much like the anxious thoughts occurring in the mind. The animations maintain a continuum that is married with anxiety-inducing whispers that range from "Did I leave the coffee on?" to "Should I have married him?" to "Will I give birth to a Satan baby?"

The film deftly blurs the lines of reality and the irrational state of mind that swiftly avalanches into questions of existential existence. The eternally evolving animation shape-shifts from the woman to her coffeepot to the fire she will cause if she left it on to the Manson-women she will share a cell with when she is convicted of arson.

The sequence of simple, strong animations is accompanied by the basket case of sound effects (designed by maestro audio mixer Tim Maloney). The maddening thoughts ping pong back in forth in allegro tempo from the right and left speaker, as an underlying heart-beat—at first low and quiet—gets louder and faster as the movie nears its end. The result is a physiological arousal of the senses that forces the viewer to feel the film rather than simply watch it.

Panic Attack is a story born from a filmmaker's heart rather than mind and O'Meara, as a filmmaker, and as perhaps a sufferer herself, is the quintessential compassionate soul to create such a work of moving art.

For those who suffer from panic attacks, they feel like they last an eternity. But in reality, the human body cannot sustain that heightened state for very long. O'Meara's short is only three minutes. But *Panic Attack* is rooted so strongly in its realism, as well as in its playfulness, that the three minutes become the most intense moments in your day and will remain with you months after.

Panic Attack is a story born from a filmmaker's heart rather than mind and O'Meara, as a filmmaker, and as perhaps a sufferer herself, is the quintessential compassionate soul to create such a work of moving art.

Learn more about *Panic Attack* on the film's website and Facebook and on Eileen's website.
Learn more about Denise by visiting her profile.

<https://agnesfilms.com/reviews/review-of-eileen-omearas-panic-attack/>

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Panic Attack! directed by Eileen O'Meara

BY BARBARA ANN O'LEARY ON SEPTEMBER 3, 2018

"Could you please tell us about a moment during the making of your film when you could feel your vision coming together or when you overcame a challenge in a satisfying way?"



Eileen O'Meara

I've been making hand-drawn animation about subjective states for some time.

I wasn't sure what my next film would be about, and if I should move on to computer animation.

I was in the car, freaking out and overwhelmed by repetitive anxious thoughts when I wondered—would it be possible to turn the tables on these intrusive thoughts by trying to use them?

If I make a movie about this unbridled anxiety, could I look forward to these thoughts—instead of dreading them? I decided to incorporate the repetitive voices in to a new project—"Panic Attack!"

Instead of using computer animation, I decided to make it completely hand-drawn, with thick jiggly lines reflecting the agitated state of mind.

I wanted it to be all one shot—a single sequence of transforming drawings going back and forth between reality and her imagined fears. With no edits—just one scene melting in to the next, I hoped to show the fluidity between mental states, and how sometimes our obsessive thoughts can seem even more real than the outside world.

<https://directedbywomen.com/dbw2018-shorts-of-all-sorts-nyc-part-3/>



Featured Story

"Panic Attack!"



by Eileen O'Meara

I've been overwhelmed by anxiety for as long as I can remember.

I thought it was the normal way to be!

I'd be stuck in traffic, and these irritating voices would take my brain hostage

"Did you leave the coffee on? The

house will catch on fire, the neighbors will burn!"

Even though I knew the fears were unfounded, I found myself turning the car around again and again.

I decided to make an animated movie about it.

On some level, I hoped there would be a power shift—if I welcomed the voices and saw them as ideas for a movie, perhaps they would be less overwhelming and frightening.

So I kept a pen in the car and started writing down all the ridiculous things they were saying ("Are you pregnant with a devil baby?").

I wanted "Panic Attack!" to be all one shot--one single sequence of transforming drawings—to show the fluidity between different mental states. Imagined fears can seem just as real as "objective" reality. I hoped that making it one single sequence (no edits) would reflect how easily we go back and forth between perceiving the world that's in front of us -- and the reality that's only in our minds.

ADAA Featured Story: Panic Attack! (continued)



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Featured Story

“Panic Attack!” (cont.)

Making “Panic Attack!” didn’t exorcise my demons or cure me. However, objectifying the crazy thoughts took some of the edge off the overwhelming dread. When you can externalize or objectify some of the craziness, it seems to help a little bit.

It’s great to meet people at screenings who want to talk about their own

experiences with anxiety and panic attacks. “I can’t stand driving behind trucks with sheets of glass, because I know when they hit the brakes I will be decapitated!”

Ultimately, realizing you have a shared experience that you can laugh about with other people makes it all a bit less horrifying. And the ADAA website provides a valuable resource for people to share their stories—and confirm that this is a common, universal human experience.

Panic Attack is a 3-minute hand-drawn animated film by Eileen O’Meara

- www.panicattackmovie.blogspot.com
- www.facebook.com/panicattackmovie
- www.eileenomeara.blogspot.com



<https://adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/personal-stories/panic-attack>

unseen FILMS

Panic Attack! Dances with Films

by Steve Kopian



Eileen O'Meara's PANIC ATTACK begins with a woman at a stop light pondering if she left the coffeemaker on and then spiral out as she deconstructs her life.

Beautifully animated so that one metaphysical crisis blends into the next, this film scores huge points and more laughs by nailing how our minds work when left untethered. How we get from A to B to Z makes absolute perfect sense - not so much because it does, but rather we all have done exactly that.

Rarely has three minutes been so perfectly spent.

This charmer is one of the best films at Dances With Films, and is absolutely something you have to track down.

<http://www.unseenfilms.net/2018/03/panic-attack-2017-queens-world-film.html>

Image by image - drawing a movie

Federico Leitão



Eileen O'Meara really enjoys drawing.

She began making movies in grade school with her friend Judie. According to Eileen, she made Super-8 movies with "Marlena Perkins' Wild Kingdom: Hunt for the Chocolate Mousse". Nowadays, she enjoys thinking of an idea and sketching it, trying to figure out how to best communicate it as a sequence of images.

Her inspiration to become filmmaker was best described when she said: "After years doing art and photography, adding the element of time seemed like a natural fit.". To pursue this dream, she went to Notre Dame for art undergrad and then to USC Film School.

She faces various challenges natural to this type of occupation: it is always hard to get funding; plus, sometimes, it is hard to recreate her own ideas with real world images; finally, promoting movies can be excruciating. However, she feels a sense of satisfaction when other people connect to her work.

She enjoys movies with emotionally engaging and suspenseful stories, which, she admits, are traits of a visionary mind. Eileen is an artist deservedly recognized for her hand-drawn films "Agnes Escapes from the Nursing Home" and "That Strange Person". In the future she plans to keep making movies, experimenting with new things and techniques.

Her film is called "Panic Attack!". It is a beautiful hand-drawn animation that explores anxiety, obsession and one woman's slippery hold on reality.

If you want to watch this movie, check out www.cosmicfilmfest.com and enjoy a vast selection of movies that will definitely entertain you.



River Bend Film Festival focuses on Indiana filmmakers and documentary films

By Becky Malewitz South Bend Tribune

Saturday will feature two shorts blocks consisting entirely of Indiana filmmakers.

Eileen O'Meara was born and raised in South Bend. A graduate of Saint Joseph High School and the University of Notre Dame, the filmmaker now lives in California.

Her animated short "Panic Attack!" will be screened today at Goshen's Art House. The three-minute film is one of 10 being shown during the shorts block titled "Creepy City" and labeled for mature audiences only.

The idea for the film — which features approximately 12 of O'Meara's hand-drawn drawings per second — arose from its creator's own fears. Having just finished a movie, the artist began to worry about what to do next.

"I'm just driving around town getting overwhelmed by these thoughts, and I thought, 'OK, let me just make a movie about this,'" she says.

Her wish was that making a film about her anxieties would be almost therapeutic.

"I hoped I would be like, 'This is never going to bother me again because when the anxiety comes, I'm going to say "Ha, I'm going to put you in a movie,"'" she says. "It took the edge off, but it didn't really cure me."

"Panic Attack!" begins with a thought many can relate to: "Did I leave the coffee pot on?" The animation then uses thick lines and limited color to merge inner fears with reality. It forms a surreal tangled web that makes it impossible to distinguish what is real and what is not.

"I'm hoping that by accurately expressing one of my subjective perceptions or views that it can be understandable by other people or that other people can relate to it," O'Meara says. "... I think that a lot of people have this issue."

O'Meara is known in the industry for her experimental animated films. During her tenure, she has produced work for HBO and Warner Home Video. Her short films have been screened at Sundance and on PBS and Showtime. Over the years, she has met several Hoosiers who now work in Hollywood.

This is the first time she has shown at the River Bend Film Festival and says she appreciates the festival's commitment to Indiana filmmakers.

"I think people have a different worldview," she says. "I think it's interesting to curate a program that is films made by people from Indiana in order to see what kind of vision Hoosiers have."



The animated short "Panic Attack!" features hand-drawn animations by South Bend native Eileen O'Meara. The film will be featured in the shorts block titled "Creepy City" today during the River Bend Film Festival.

The Carmel Pine Cone

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On the Internet: www.carmelpinecone.com

October 13-19, 2017

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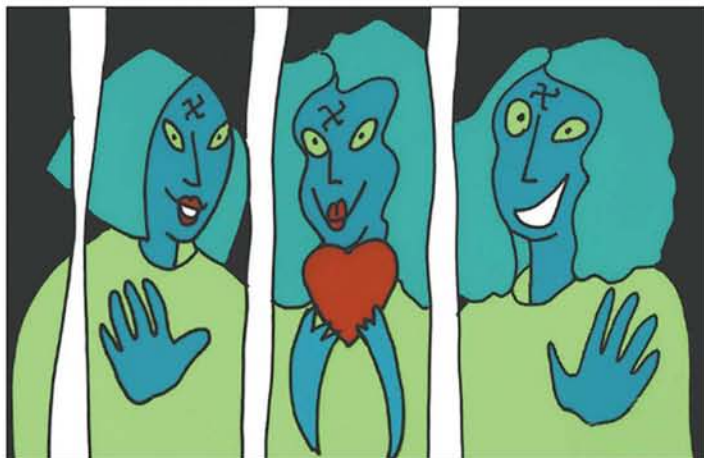
A humorous film about panic attacks? How does that work?

By ELAINE HESSER

PANIC ATTACKS aren't funny. Except that they are, sometimes. Especially to those who have them regularly. You see, humor is an incredibly effective defense against anxiety. It's nearly impossible to laugh and feel fear at the same time. Nearly.

People (like this reporter) who have panic attacks can develop a sort of dark sense of humor about them, because they're surreal and absurd, like suddenly finding yourself in "The Scream" by Edvard Munch. Although they're different

See PANIC page 29A



The outstanding offerings at this year's Carmel film festival include "War of the Limelight," made by students in a local film academy founded by Michael Buffo; an animated short called "Panic Attack" by Eileen O'Meara; and a silent movie, "The Unknown" which was shot in Pebble Beach in 1927 and will be accompanied during its film fest screening with live music composed by local resident Michael Governor.

PANIC

From page 25A

for each person, here's how they go, generally.

You're minding your own business, doing your job, driving somewhere, sitting in church or just eating lunch. Maybe there's a triggering thought, like, "I'm running late." Or maybe not. A fluttering starts inside, as if you're walking into a dark alley or someone is following you.

What happens next can vary widely in both what's experienced and the degree of severity. According to the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual, symptoms can include, a pounding, racing heart; sweating, trembling, shortness of breath, choking sensations, chest pain, nausea, dizziness, feeling detached from reality, fear, numbness, or chills — among others.

The fear is real, even though the person experiencing it all



Eileen O'Meara, who says she's had panic attacks for "decades," has made an animated short about them.



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usually knows on some level they're perfectly safe — at least after surviving the first hundred or so.

It's hard to imagine, then, that someone's made a three-minute animated film that's simultaneously poignant and funny about it. But Eileen O'Meara of Los Angeles has done just that, and "Panic Attack" will be screened at the Carmel International Film Festival on October 20 and 21 at the Carmel Youth Center.

O'Meara, who has had panic attacks for decades, and who describes herself as "a little OCD," said she believes the roots of her anxiety are in her childhood. Her father would be driving with the family, a half-hour away from home on the way to a vacation destination, and suddenly start wondering whether "anyone had left the iron on."

He'd turn around and go home to make sure no one had.

"I thought everyone's family did that," she said, laughing. In fact, she said, "I've always had an incredible amount of anxiety. I thought it was the normal way to be a person."

So, it's no coincidence that her animated short — which is one continuous, unedited drawing that morphs from frame to frame — starts with the protagonist at a stoplight, worrying about being late, and then suddenly wondering if she left the coffee pot on. As the anxiety blossoms, she pictures her neighbors' homes burning down — with them and their children inside — as a result of her negligence.

Things go downhill from there, until the episode ends. On one hand, the fears become so absurd that you can't help but at least smile a little; on the other, it's bittersweet, because you know that to the person experiencing them, they're all too real.

"I thought making a film about my fears would take away their power and make the attacks less scary," O'Meara said. She added, "It didn't." Then she burst out laughing again.

O'Meara, who has a master's degree in cinematic arts from USC, said that producing the film took many years, partly because she originally drew it on cels, like old-timey cartoons.

She planned to shoot it with an animation camera, but by the time she'd finished, "There were none left in L.A. Everyone went digital." Then she tried photographing the cels to tie them together digitally, but the shiny surfaces were too reflective.

She finally was able to scan them into the computer and tie them together after learning to use some animation software.

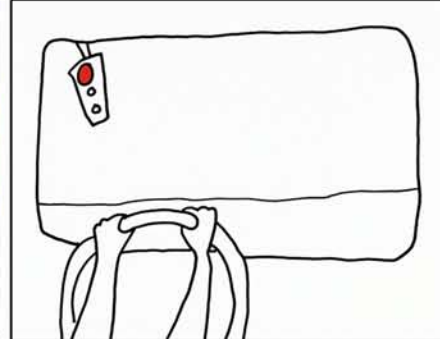
The film's been shown at dozens of festivals, from Brooklyn to London, Poland and New Zealand, to positive

reviews. It's won awards for animated and short films at five of those. One of her previous films, "Agnes Escapes from the Nursing Home," had a screening at Sundance, and other of her works have aired on HBO, PBS and Showtime.

According to O'Meara, almost everyone who has had panic attacks has come up to her after the screenings and said things like, "It feels like you just looked inside my head." Only one woman thought she'd set out to make fun of people who have panic attacks. She didn't think it was funny at all.

Except that sometimes, it is.

Courts-metragés - Panic Attack: our review



Eileen O'Meara unquestionably captures the feelings of anxiety, distraction, and worry with her illustrations in her new hand drawn short "Panic Attack!"

With seamless fluid transitions from start to finish, the flow of this two and a half minute animation is all done in one continually transforming drawing.

From the perspective of a woman waiting at a stop light as she begins to experience a panic attack, the viewer travels with her through the erratic eruption of her ever persisting thoughts.

O'Meara has established this miniature work of moving (living) art that will resonate existentially with those who suffer and cope, as well as thrive through the daily perils of anxiety.

They pester and engulf her focus, leaping from one tangent to the next, from one memory to the next, from one possibility to the next and the next and the next.

The anxiety of forgetting one small task at home that may be irrelevant for some, and how it unintentionally can snowball into an avalanche of inescapable scenarios.

The amazing capabilities of the human mind can be so outstanding and remarkable yet at the same time they can wickedly scrape at the brim of one's inner fear and become overwhelming, imprisoning and completely intolerable to withstand.

O'Meara shows us how these voices that echo in our heads can go from simply annoying to sadistically criticising.

She creates the clearest visuals of the cloudiest constructs of anxiety. Dismantling one drawing as it builds into the foundation of another and then topples and dissolves, just as the protagonist loses attention.

O'Meara has established this miniature work of moving (living) art that will resonate existentially with those who suffer and cope, as well as thrive through the daily perils of anxiety.

<http://www.mulderville.net/nouvelles/courts-metragés/1362/panic-attack-our-review>

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FILMS COMMUNITY ENDORSEMENTS



Panic Attack! • Rhode Island Film Festival

Interview with Writer/Director Eileen O'Meara

•

Congratulations! Why did you make your film?

Thank you! First of all, I like making hand-drawn animation—especially hand-drawn animation that expresses inner states, dreams, or perceptions that can't be represented in other ways. Second, I've been bothered by these repetitive voices — the voices you hear in the movie — for some time now. So I guess I hoped that making the movie would help exorcise them! And, for me, at least, the act of drawing can be sort of calming.

Imagine I'm a member of the audience. Why should I watch this film?

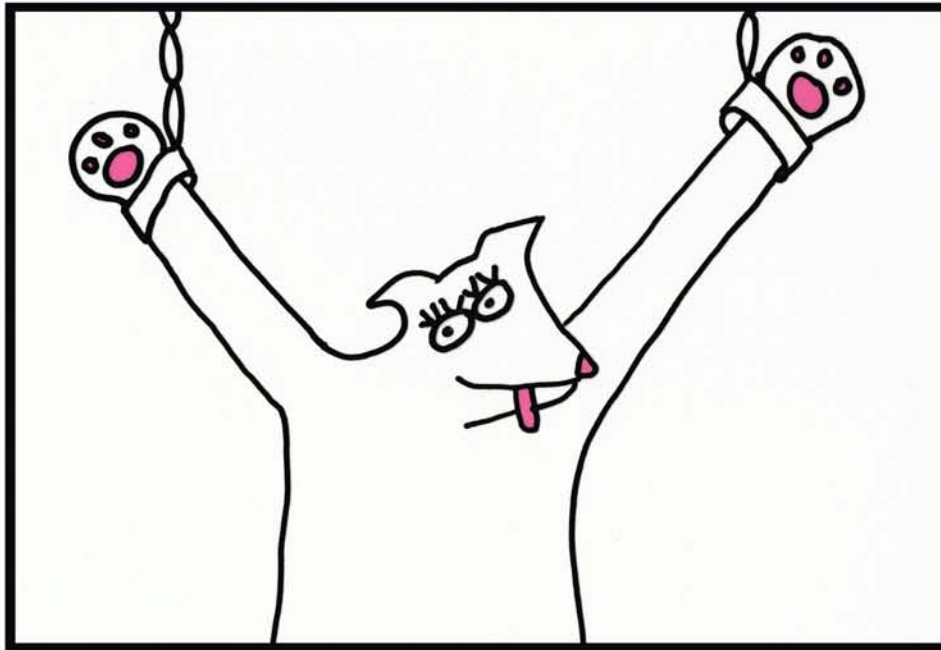
I'd like you to be transported on this subjective journey through a panic attack—with all the crazy specific thoughts and fears.

How do personal and universal themes work in your film?

I think to some extent, we all worry about death, mortality... whether or not we left the coffee on... whether or not we're pregnant with Satan's baby...I find it sort of odd and funny that these different concerns can cause the same amount of dread.

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FILMS COMMUNITY ENDORSEMENTS



How have the script and film evolved over the course of development and production?

I'd be sitting in my car stuck in traffic and get absolutely overwhelmed by anxiety. Some of the repetitive thoughts were just ridiculous-- yet they filled me with dread.

I started writing them down. I thought that by writing them down, it might take away their power. I used the notes as a starting point, then did sketches and animated the sequences. After video-testing the sequences, I would decide if they matched the way I had been feeling. If not, I would try to figure out how to re-do them. Since the movie is all one shot (with no edits), I had to figure it out from beginning to end as an evolving sequence of drawings.

There is a major difference between the anxieties in my head and how the movie turned out. The thoughts seem to happen in just an instant. But when I tried to show all the thoughts at once, the movie seemed like a big confusing jumble. So I tried to stretch it out into something more fluid and understandable.

What type of feedback have you received so far?

People have been very receptive. One woman mentioned her own obsessive thoughts: Whenever I drive behind a truck with glass or sheet metal, I have to pull over because I become obsessed that they'll slam on the brakes and I'll be decapitated!

Has the feedback surprised or challenged your point of view?

I was surprised when one person found the idea of making a movie about panic attacks offensive—she had been hospitalized for panic attacks, and didn't think it was appropriate to make light of them.

WE ARE MOVING STORIES

FILMS COMMUNITY ENDORSEMENTS



What are you looking to achieve by having your film on www.wearemovingstories.com?

I'd be delighted if more people could see "Panic Attack!", and my other projects as well.

Who do you need to come on board (producers, sales agents, buyers, distributors, film festival directors, journalists) to amplify this film's message?

I'd be happy to talk to anyone who is interested. I'd love to reach a wider audience, and have the opportunity to make more animation.

What type of impact and/or reception would you like this film to have?

I hope there is something you can relate to in "Panic Attack!". Or for your sake, maybe not!

What's a key question that will help begin a conversation about this film?

How are your inner voices related to your perception of your self?

Would you like to add anything else?

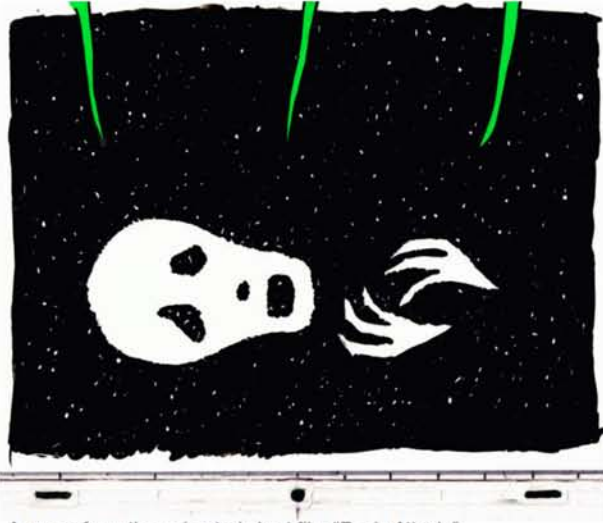
You can see some of my other work at: www.eileenomeara.blogspot.com I'd love to work on any new animated projects. Feel free to contact me at: eileenomeara@earthlink.net

About the creator: Eileen O'Meara is an American artist known for her hand-drawn films "Agnes Escapes from the Nursing Home" and "That Strange Person". She has produced and directed commercial animated spots for clients including Warner Home Video, Motown, HBO, and WEA Latina.

<http://www.wearemovingstories.com/we-are-moving-stories-films/2016/6/22/palm-springs-short-fest-panic-attack>

Filmmaker's animated short 'Panic Attack' to screen at Las Cruces fest

By Adrian Gomez / Journal Arts and Entertainment Editor
Friday, March 9th, 2018 at 12:02am



A scene from the animated short film "Panic Attack."

Eileen O'Meara was born to draw.

In fact, what makes her most happy is when she can draw and make a film.

It took longer than normal for her to complete her latest animated short film, "Panic Attack."

The film will screen as part of the animated shorts block of films at the Las Cruces International Film Festival today.

The film is a hand-drawn animation from the point of view of a woman having a panic attack.

"I wanted the transitions between reality and her imagined fears to be seamless, so there are no edits," O'Meara says. "It is one continually transforming drawing."

O'Meara says it took a long time to complete because she had a day job.

"I would start it and I would get the idea down," she says. "Then I'd get a job and put it away for a while. Then six months later, I would get it out again. I worked on it in little bits and pieces. I was planning on shooting the film, and by the time I finished, there weren't any more animation film cameras in Los Angeles that I could use. So I had to scan it and put it together by hand. Technology moves on without me."

Albuquerque Journal

Before “Panic Attack,” O’Meara worked on her hand-drawn films “Agnes Escapes From the Nursing Home” and “That Strange Person.”

She produced and directed commercial spots for clients including HBO, UNICEF and Motown, and received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, California Arts Council and Women in Film Foundation.

On this project, she worked with sound mixer and consultant Tim Maloney.

He has created films for the experimental band Negativland, the Walt Disney Co., Cat-Head Theatre, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

“Working with Tim helped me put the finishing touches on the film,” she says. “I wanted to do this film to give viewers a different perspective on panic attacks. Some people really enjoy it. Others will tell me that I’ve given them a panic attack.”

O’Meara studied art at University of Notre Dame and then went to film school at the University of Southern California.

Her interest was in live action, but she eventually was drawn to the animation department.

“It incorporated my past interest in art,” she says. “Short film has always been something I wanted to do. I like having the choices all be mine. It’s a balance for me. With a client, I am doing what they want. When I get to do my films, it’s all for me.”

SEND ME YOUR TIPS: If you know of a movie filming in the state, or are curious about one, email film@ABQjournal.com. Follow me on Twitter @agomezART.

<https://www.abqjournal.com/1142844/filmmakers-animated-short-panic-attack-to-screen-at-las-cruces-fest.html>



Final Girls Berlin Film Festival Review: A REAL SCREAM – COMEDY HORROR Block

PANIC ATTACK

(Dir. Eileen O'Meara, USA, 2018)



An animated cartoon short about panic attacks — the short recreated what it might be like to have a panic attack in the morning while driving to work. But also, maybe it's also about plants that are trying to drive people crazy?

Seriously, if you have a moment, take three minutes to watch this delightful short.

I really loved the song at the end, when the plants sing in a cute-creepy voice: 'Did we just become plant food? Hail Satan.' Seriously, if you have a moment, take three minutes to watch this delightful short.

Favorite Thing: The plants singing.



The Final Girl Berlin Film Festival is a horror-film festival in its 4th year that takes place in Berlin, from late January to early February. The festival is a trans-inclusive event dedicated to celebrating women in horror, tired of seeing the depiction of women as victims, objects, or props. Which is why I was so excited to review **A Real Scream – Comedy Horror** block for The Final Girl Berlin Film Festival, 2019.

<http://www.nightmarishconjurings.com/2019/02/05/final-girls-berlin-film-festival-review-a-real-scream-comedy-horror-block/>

Panic Attack! [Final Girls Berlin Film Festival]

Posted on February 5, 2019 by Felix Vasquez



Eileen O'Meara's "Panic Attack" is a very short but sweet look at the chaos that is the panic attack and how horrific it can be. Animated and painted by Eileen O'Meara herself, "Panic Attack" is centered on a young woman waiting at a stop light while driving. When she ponders if she shut off her coffee machine, suddenly her imagination begins to take on a life of its own and a mole hill is transformed in to a gigantic mountain before our very eyes.

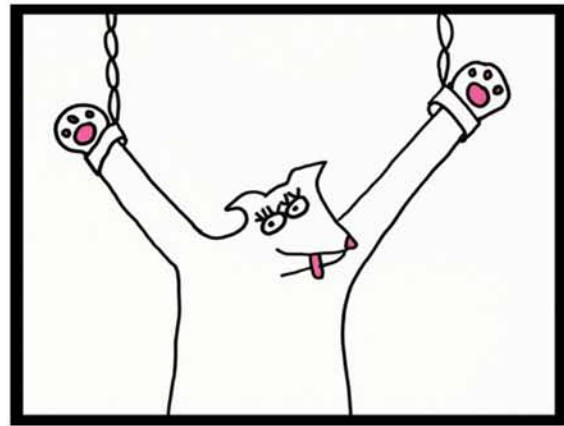
If you've ever needed insight in to how the mind can become a monster to those inflicted with anxiety or panic disorder, this is a quite stellar peek.

Eileen O'Meara lends a genuine, distinct voice to her film's premise, and I look forward to seeing more from her soon.

"Panic Attack" is a wonderful three minute look at the causes and ill effects of the normal panic attack and how the minds of the mentally ill can catastrophize just about everything in their life; even something as minute and mundane as the state of a coffee pot. While to you or me it's minimal and likely not even worth thinking about, to someone with anxiety, it's everything until it destroys us. If you've ever needed insight in to how the mind can become a monster to those inflicted with anxiety or panic disorder, this is a quite stellar peek. Eileen O'Meara lends a genuine, distinct voice to her film's premise, and I look forward to seeing more from her soon.

The Final Girls Berlin Film Festival runs every year from January 31st to February 3rd.

<http://cinema-crazed.com/blog/2019/02/05/panic-attack-2016-final-girls-berlin-film-festival/>



Sizing Up the Palm Springs International ShortFest: Cruz's Picks

By Cruz Moore

A continually flowing hand-drawn representation of the never ending nagging thoughts we all possess, *Panic Attack!* is an embarrassing reminder of how over-blown our imaginations can get when left by themselves.

The film starts off with a woman waiting at a stop light and soon the repetitive droning of her own whispering thoughts begin to fill your ears with, "You're gonna be late."

***Panic Attack!* hits close to home for anyone who has an overactive imagination that leads their mind into a vice of stressful scenarios, only to be brought back to the reality that you are simply waiting at a stop light.**

This stressful reminder eventually spirals down a staircase into an endless cluster of interconnected thoughts of anxiety like, "Did I leave the coffeemaker on? What if I date someone who turns out to have a weird fetish? What if I have a deformed baby? You abandon it. You end up sharing a cell with the Manson girls!"

Director and writer Eileen O'Meara's own voice not only supplies these thoughts but also an endless amount of onomatopoeic words to accentuate the constantly changing fluid visuals, all of which become remixed into a catchy credits song.

Panic Attack! hits close to home for anyone who has an overactive imagination that leads their mind into a vice of stressful scenarios only to be brought back to the reality that you are simply waiting at a stop light.

<http://www.pscomiccon.com/blog/2016/6/26/sizing-up-the-palm-springs-shortfest-cruzs-picks>

<https://www.ocregister.com/2018/02/05/filmmakers-slated-for-huntington-beach-festival>



Panic Attack!

The new, beautiful, short animation from the veteran animator who created splendid bumpers for MTV. In competition at the Lucca Film Festival.

Review by Michele Faggi

Eileen O'Meara is a veteran of animated films. She produced music videos and commercials for MTV and Channel-1 when they were still an art form, and short films for UNICEF and HBO.

Reflecting on her many works, I remember the beautiful Gilberto Gil "Mon Thiers Monde" music video made in 1994, one of the first experiments using digital and analog masks, design and live action, and the visual transformations that characterize her oeuvre.

O'Meara presents her most recent work at Lucca Film Festival in the competitive short film section curated by Rachele Pollastrini.

Panic Attack! is a hand-drawn three minute animated film, following the line of Zagabria's school, keeping the style, rhythm, color of the "absolute" cinema of Ruttmann, Richter, Eggeling and Fischinger. It returns to entertaining life oscillating between figure and abstraction, rapper and frenzied delirium typical of the American Chuck Jones style cinema.

O'Meara, who worked for MTV alongside the Brothers Quay, has capitalized on a specific style of animation that is very powerfully focused on shape-shifting objects, matter and drawing - and far from contemporary animation.

A visual materialization of stream of consciousness, the film is a progressive journey into the genesis of a panic attack -- through subjective symptoms, thoughts, images and out of control sensations.

A visual materialization of stream-of-consciousness,
the film is a progressive journey into the genesis of a panic attack --
through subjective symptoms, thoughts, image
and out of control sensations...

Brilliant.

O'Meara uses animated drawings to enter the thought process, turning it into the pure visual fantasy of an infinite and self-defeating mind.

It overlaps with incredible sound designed by Tim Maloney, a teacher at California State University and filmmaker who has worked with Walt Disney, and the experimental band Negativland.

The movie is framed by a car dashboard, where a woman sits in the throes of an attack. That limitation becomes a small universe where disturbing thoughts focus on ideas about the end of the world, and an entertaining struggle between good and evil.

It's visualized through Catholic imagery -- as if Catholic culture was the source of the weight and guilt that annihilates our minds every day.

Brilliant.

 Autore  Ultimi articoli

 **Michele Faggi**
Michele Faggi è un videomaker e un
Giornalista iscritto all'Ordine dei Giornalisti
della Toscana. È un critico cinematografico
regolarmente iscritto al SNCCI. Scrive anche di
musica e colonne sonore. Si è occupato di
formazione. Ha pubblicato volumi su cinema e
new media. Produce audiovisivi



Victoria Independent Film Festival brings movie producers from around the world

Posted: Mar 14, 2018 11:24 PM PDT
Updated: Mar 14, 2018 11:24 PM PDT

by James Munoz, Sunrise Co-Anchor [CONNECT](#)

The Victoria Independent Film Festival is set for April 5th-8th. The event brings many movie producers from around the world to screen their work.

One three-minute short "Panic Attack!" will be screened at the festival.



"Panic Attack!" is a hand-drawn animation from the point of view of a woman having a panic attack. Director/Producer Eileen O'Meara wanted the transitions between reality and her imagined fears to be seamless, so there are no edits, it is one continually transforming drawing.

The animated short explores anxiety, obsession, and one woman's slippery hold on reality.

O'Meara is an American artist known for her hand-drawn films "Agnes Escapes from the Nursing Home" and "That Strange Person". She has produced and directed commercial spots for HBO, UNICEF, and Motown, and received grants from the NEA, California Arts Council, and Women in Film Foundation.

The Victoria Television Group is a proud sponsor of the film festival.

<http://www.crossroadstoday.com/story/37729407/victoria-independent-film-festival-brings-movie-producers-from-around-the-world>

PANIC ATTACK!

A Truly "Animated" Fest

by Michael Devine



Film Fest associate and writer Nathan Judd talked with Eileen O'Meara about what it takes to bring a panic attack(!) to the screen.

How did the idea for "Panic Attack!" come about?

I've been working on hand-drawn animation about perceptions of reality, subjective states, and existential issues for a while now.

I wanted Panic Attack! to be all one shot--one single sequence of transforming drawings—in order to show the fluidity between different mental states. Sometimes what you are imagining can seem just as real as objective reality.

I hoped that making it all one shot would reflect how easily we go back and forth between perceiving the world that's in front of us, and the reality that's only in our minds. For the content—I must have been trying to think of a new project and was overwhelmed by the repetitive thoughts!

What measures did you take—whether as the director, the artist, or both—to give the viewer the experience of having a panic attack?

Sometimes when I'd be stuck in traffic and the voices would start up, I'd grab a pen and write down all the crazy things they were saying. (Of course, keeping my eyes on the road at all times.)

After I'd finished the drawings and was refining the timings and sound, I'd listen to the movie and try to compare it to my memory of the panic attacks. At first, I tried to make the voiceover exactly mimic the voices in my head. But the words went by too quickly, and you couldn't really understand anything. So I had to stretch things out a bit.

I hoped that making it all one shot would reflect how easily we go back and forth between perceiving the world that's in front of us, and the reality that's only in our minds.

When the voices really happen, it seems like they are talking all at once and overlapping.

But when I tried to reflect that in the soundtrack, it just came across as a crazy, unintelligible jumble! So I had to slow it down and stretch it out so that you could actually tell what they were saying.

I also played around with stereo effects. It struck me that sometimes certain comments were coming from the left side of my head, and others were coming from the right—and they would ping back and forth in a rhythmic fashion. So I tried to compare the developing soundtrack to what I remembered my brain doing.

PANIC ATTACK!

A Truly "Animated" Fest
(continued)



I added the heartbeat sound throughout most of the movie— starting out slow and quiet at the beginning, then getting louder and faster, because it struck me that the rhythm of the persistent thoughts was associated with the rhythm of my pounding heart beat!

Audio and other considerations aside, approximately how much time did it take to complete the animated portion of this fascinating three-minute film?

It took me years to make! I would start working on it, then when I got a paying job, I'd box up the drawings and put them in the closet.

When I had time to work on it, I'd pull out the boxes, and find scrawled notes I'd left myself "more blue here," "clunky trans, fix eyeballs," "dog too fast," "heart lift Manson streaky paint".

It almost seemed like starting over every time I pulled the box out of the closet.

I had originally planned to shoot on 35mm film. However, when I was finally done with the drawings and ready to shoot, I couldn't find any 35mm animation cranes! Everyone had gone digital, and the old animation camera houses had closed down. So it took a while to figure out how to put the movie together digitally instead of on film.

...animation is the best medium for exploring the fluidity of the mind as it shifts between perceiving objective and subjective realities, since live-action photographic imagery is more tied to "real" space and time.

You have said elsewhere that you initially planned to make live-action films, but found animated films to be more interesting. What was it about animation that first drew you to it?

I suppose there were several things that contributed to my decision to pursue animation.

I enjoy drawing, it calms me down and helps me focus.

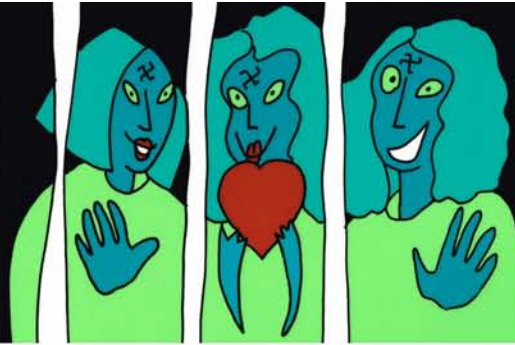
I like to draw the transitions and transformations between things, and for some reason, the idea of one thing turning in to another just amuses me to no end!

The themes I was interested in seemed better expressed in the medium of animation.

When I was in grad school at USC, the animation department emphasized following your vision and figuring out how to best express it. Although I did learn a lot from the more commercial live-action side of the school, I was drawn more to the artistic spirit of the animation department.

PANIC ATTACK!

A Truly "Animated" Fest
(continued)



In your opinion, what power does animation have over other film genres to tell stories?

I suppose for me, animation is the best medium for exploring the fluidity of the mind as it shifts between perceiving objective and subjective realities, since live-action photographic imagery is more tied to "real" space and time.

<http://www.lciffilmfest.com/news/2017/10/27/panic-attack-a-animated-fest>

Oxford Film Festival



Learn more about our 2017 filmmakers with our Take 5 series. Meet Eileen O'Meara director of Panic Attack!

#1: In 140 characters or less, describe your movie and why someone should see it.

Do you ever wonder “did I leave the coffee on?” or “what if I give birth to Satan’s baby?” This hand-drawn animation explores anxiety, obsession, and one woman’s slippery hold on reality.

#2: Biggest lesson learned in getting the film made? Best part in getting the film made?

Everything takes longer than you think it will. People can be incredibly generous with their time and talent.

Oxford Film Festival

#3: Tell us about you. What is your movie making background?

I went to Notre Dame in fine arts, then USC Film School. I've been doing freelance animation and various odd jobs in entertainment ever since.

I like to make independent hand-drawn films that express subjective states. For "Panic Attack!" I used thicker lines and a limited, strong palette to reflect the agitation.

#4 What do you want the Oxford Film Festival audience to know about your film that isn't obvious from its title or description?

I wanted the transitions between reality and her imagined fears to be as seamless as possible, so I designed "Panic Attack!" to be all one shot. It is one continually transforming drawing without any cuts.

#5: What does the future hold in store for your film and for you?


I hope to continue to show Panic Attack! at festivals, then get to work on my next project!


Learn more at:

<https://www.facebook.com/panicattackmovie/>

<http://eileenomeara.blogspot.com/>

<http://eileenomeara.blogspot.com/p/panic-attack.html> or buy tickets at www.oxfordfilmfest.com

 Jan 3  0

 oxff, oxford film festival, panic attack, animation, eileen o'meara



DAILY JOURNAL

KANKAKEE, ILLINOIS | FAMILY OWNED SINCE 1903

20th Annual *Dances With Films* Brings the Best of Independent Filmmaking

THE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Eileen O'Meara's PANIC ATTACK

"Panic Attack!" is a vibrantly animated short film depicting a typical morning for one woman. We get inside her head, listening to the mental rabbit hole that she finds herself falling into as she questions whether or not she turned off the coffee maker.

Where this leads is simply extraordinary, spinning out of control. And I'm guessing that I'm not the only one that is going to laugh out loud because I could completely relate to what happens!



Eileen O'Meara's PANIC ATTACK!"

Pamela Powell, Film Critic

The Daily Journal

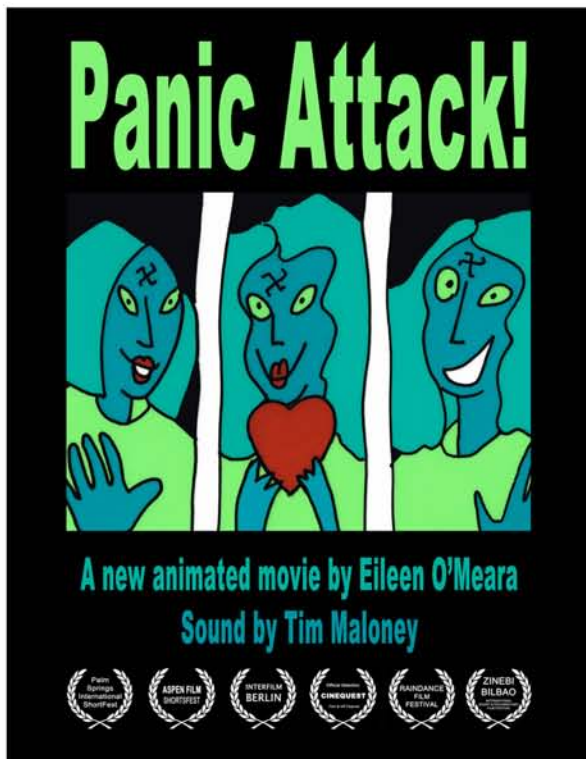
Reel Honest Reviews - The Consumer Advocate of Films

<http://reelhonestreviews.com/?s=panic+attack>

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

THINGS TO DO > COAST MAGAZINE

Filmmakers slated for Huntington Beach festival



Animator Eileen O'Meara's animated short "Panic Attack!" is among those slated for the Huntington Beach Film Festival.
© Eileen O'Meara

By [STAFF REPORT](#) |

PUBLISHED: February 5, 2018 at 11:15 am | UPDATED: February 6, 2018 at 11:52 am

Up-and-coming filmmakers will again be showcased at the Huntington Beach Film Festival taking place at the Huntington Beach Library Feb. 22-24.

The three-day lineup includes feature length and short films by American and international filmmakers, as well as documentaries and animation, such as this from LA-based artist Eileen O'Meara, titled [Panic Attack!](#) Her animated short explores anxiety, obsession, and one woman's slippery hold on reality.

For the full schedule of all the festival offerings and for tickets, see [Huntington Beach Film Festival](#).



Can you talk a little about your inspiration for the film? Was the film helpful for dealing with your own anxiety?

I've been making hand-drawn short films about subjective states for some time.

I wanted *Panic Attack* to be all one shot--one sequence of transforming drawings -- with no edits--so the transitions between objective reality and her crazed imaginings would appear seamless. Because when you are imagining these things, they seem just as real as what's in front of your eyes.

I also wanted to use thicker lines and a more limited palette to get the agitation across.

As far as my own anxiety...Look, I know that the voices are ridiculous! I hoped that making this movie would bring that to light, and that they'd completely lose their power. No such luck!

When the voices start up, I may have a moment of awareness "here we go again"--but I still find myself turning the car around to make sure the bathtub isn't flooding the house.

**When the voices start up, I may have a moment of awareness--
"here we go again!" -- but I still find myself turning the car around
to make sure the bathtub isn't flooding the house.**

Why are you excited to screen in Brooklyn, and what do you hope Brooklyn audiences might relate to or takeaway from the film?

I'm delighted and honored to screen at the Brooklyn Film Festival, thank you for including me! Of course I'd like to connect with people—I made this because I figured I couldn't be the only person with this problem.

I also wanted to show how sometimes our crazed imaginings can seem just as real as objective reality--there can be a fluidity between the two states--and even when you know your repetitive thoughts don't make any sense – they can still take you hostage.

—Allyson Morgan, Brooklyn Film Festival

Brooklyn Film Festival—20th Anniversary Edition At 7pm, you have another chance at the Made in NY Media Center by IFP to see the Animated Shorts 1, which includes *Panic Attack*, directed by Eileen O'Meara
<https://www.facebook.com/BrooklynFilmFestival/posts/1379454272135258>

Bielefeld "Bilderbeben 2018" on "Conspiracy"

For the first prize of 750€ provided with the sculpture "The Little Plump", ("Der kleine Plumpe") the jury quickly became very united.

"Panic Attack" reached the festival from California / USA and is an animated film by Eileen O'Meara.

We see through the eyes of a slowly panicking woman, how within seconds the whole world has conspired against her and drives her to disaster.

Despite all the sympathy for the main character, the film is full of irony and visual humor, which also thrilled the audience.

The director sent a video message to the festival.



"Panic Attack!" First Prize



#PFF17 • Panic attack!

by Luca Ieranò

Eileen O'Meara is an American artist known for her animated short "Agnes Escapes of Nursing Home" which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. She also created advertising bumpers for MTV and Channel 1, and short films for major organizations including UNICEF and HBO.

She designed and directed "**Panic Attack!**", an animated short film which shows **what happens in a woman's mind during a panic attack.**

It's completely hand drawn, like all O'Meara's works. The images follow the thoughts and inner voice of the protagonist who, sitting in the car waiting for the light to turn green, asks herself a simple question "did I leave the coffee on?"

In one quick moment--in a **sudden destabilizing vortex**--she begins to doubt every aspect of her life, even wondering "am I pregnant with a devil-baby?"

"Panic Attack!" explores the anguish caused by a progression of associative thoughts that have been infected by anxiety and shipwrecked by obsessions, from a normal forgetfulness to existential doubts, **a downward spiral, a fall into the abyss.**

The images follow the narrative phrases, and are funny and ironic as they fluidly transform with each continuous doubt -- moving between concrete or abstract figures, elaborate or stylized, colorful or black and white, **to shape the mental flow.**

Catholic imagery is used, referencing the direct or indirect origin of the guilt and anxiety.

Tim Maloney's sound editing, which oscillates between irony and anguish, is well done and worth mentioning.

For this edition, **Birdmen is the media-partner of the Pentedattilo Film Festival**, the international short-film festival that will take place in Pentedattilo (Reggio Calabria) from 7th to 11th of December. This is a preview of our reviews.

<https://inchiostro.unipv.it/2017/11/29/pff17--panic-attack/>

"Memoria interna", del argentino Andrea Braga, primer premio Brain Film Fest

The third prize, worth 500 euros, was given by Diana Garrigosa, president of the Pasqual Maragall Foundation to

"Panic Attack!" by Eileen O'Meara (United States).

The "exceptional graphic realization, the originality of the images, the view of a reality that can be very common, and the effectiveness in translating images of panic disorder" has been valued.

The films, including fiction, documentary and animation, have been selected by a selection committee and evaluated by the jury for the Solé Tura Award.

In this edition, the jury was made up of the filmmakers Maria Ripoll and Agustí Villaronga, the professor of journalism Bienvenido León, the social educator Roser Guerra and the psychiatrist Paz Flores.

The jury has valued the creative quality, the innovative approach, the scientific rigor and the solid argument of the presented works.

Barcelona, 18 mar (EFE).- La película "Memoria interna", del argentino Andrea Braga, ha obtenido el primer premio en el Brain Film Fest-Premio Solé Tura, el nuevo festival internacional de cine dedicado a impulsar la creación audiovisual y dar a conocer los diferentes aspectos del cerebro.

El VIII Premio Solé Tura de cine sobre enfermedades del cerebro ha contado con la participación de 220 propuestas, de los que fueron seleccionados veintiocho cortometrajes a competición de nueve países, entre los que ha destacado la producción española con 15 cortos.

El primer premio, dotado con 1.500 euros, ha sido por "Memoria interna", del cual el jurado ha valorado "la generación del relato de la protagonista como metáfora de los tiempos que vivimos, por la sofisticación de la narración, por la realización creativa y por la forma en que se trata la memoria".

El corto "Silencio por favor", del español Carlos Villafaina, ha recibido el segundo premio, dotado con 1.000 euros, porque "muestra con dureza y humanidad la necesidad de la implicación familiar, porque muestra la vertiente social de las discapacidades y porque reflexiona sobre como la sociedad protege pero acaba excluyendo".

El tercer premio, dotado con 500 euros, ha sido entregado por Diana Garrigosa, presidenta de la Fundación Pasqual Maragall a la obra "Panic Attack", de Eileen O'Meara (Estados Unidos). Se ha valorado la "realización gráfica excepcional, la originalidad de las imágenes, la muestra de una realidad que puede ser muy común y la eficacia en la traslación en imágenes del trastorno del pánico".

La quinta edición del Premio del Público decidido por votación popular en línea y por los asistentes al festival, ha reconocido el filme "Clausura", de Mariana Franca (Brasil).

Desde la organización del Brain Film Fest-Premio Solé Tura se hace una valoración "muy positiva de esta primera edición del festival que, durante 4 días, ha recibido más de 2.000 asistentes".

El Brain Film Fest-Premio Solé Tura está impulsado por la Fundación Pasqual Maragall y organizado conjuntamente con la Fundación Alzheimer y la productora Minimal Films.

Las películas, que incluyen ficción, documental y animación, han sido seleccionadas por un comité de selección y evaluadas por el jurado para el Premio Solé Tura.

En esta edición, el jurado estaba formado por los cineasta Maria Ripoll y Agustí Villaronga, el profesor de periodismo Bienvenido León, la educadora social Roser Guerra y la psiquiatra Paz Flores.

El jurado ha valorado la calidad creativa, el enfoque innovador, el rigor científico y la solidez argumental de los trabajos presentados. EFE.

Splice Film Fest takes over Erie Movie House this weekend



A still image from "Panic Attack!" screening Friday during Erie's Splice Film Fest.

By Lindsey Poisson
@ETNPoisson
Posted Jun 7, 2018 at 2:00 AM

Dozens of short films and video projects from around the world will screen in Erie this Friday through Sunday.

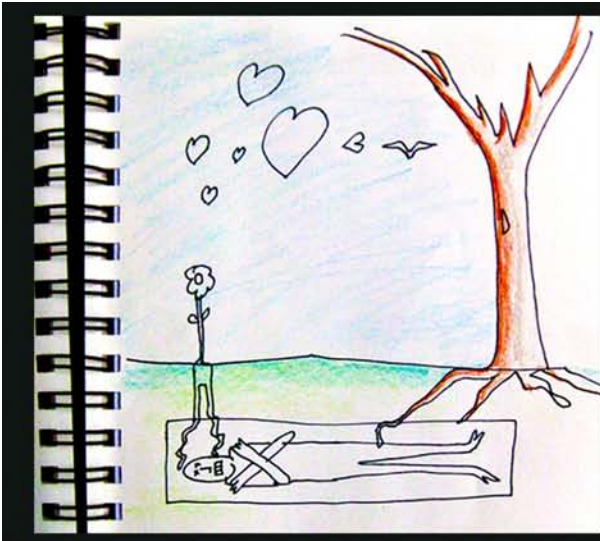
Film buffs will want to clear their weekend for the Splice Film Fest, taking place this Friday through Saturday at the [Erie Movie House](#). The three-day event will screen dozens of short films and video projects that are 1-10 minutes long and have been submitted by filmmakers from around the world.

Friday's lineup of about 20 titles includes comedy, animation, documentary and student films. Saturday, which features two screening blocks, will screen narrative, LGBTIQQ and student films in the afternoon, and experimental, erotica and more student films in the evening. Then the fest will wrap up with student film screenings on Sunday.

Due to the content of some films — including adult language and situations — film fest attendees must be 18 years or older. Ticket purchases also include free arcade gameplay at the Erie Movie House.

SEE IT

The Splice Film Festival takes place Friday, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.; Saturday, 2:30 to 4:40 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 3 p.m., at the Erie Movie House, 3424 West Lake Road. Admission is \$10 per film block, or \$15 for a weekend pass. For more details, visit www.splicefilmfest.com.



Eileen O'Meara's *Panic Attack!*

Melbourne International Animation Festival, Malcolm Turner

Eileen O'Meara hails from a family of artists and originally studied Fine Arts at Notre Dame University in Indiana before shifting to Los Angeles to attend USC.

"I planned to go in to live-action, but found I was more interested in animating liquid and hand-drawn transformations that illustrate subjective states," she says.

Her brand new film *Panic Attack!* (the very last film we were able to squeeze into this program) is a fiesta of stretch and squash animated morphing. Animated 'old-school' by drawing and colouring directly on to cels, O'Meara even wanted to shoot it directly onto 35mm but was thwarted by the extinction of the equipment that would have made that possible, falling back to using a digital camera out of necessity.

For all that, the most striking feature of the film is the whacky voice track. The temptation to ask her about where these voices come from proves too much to resist.

"Ha! Unfortunately, they came from inside my head," she says, apparently taking the question well. "After I finished the animation, I sat down at the computer with headphones and a microphone and tried to re-enact those irritating voices that just keep repeating, repeating, repeating.

"It was hard to get the recordings to sound exactly right, so I ended up layering several versions of most of the lines. It was also a challenge to figure out which speakers to use. I tried to remember or imagine where the voices seem to be coming from, and accurately place them in the surround mix.

"I initially planned to have other people do the voices, but when a friend came over to do the male lines, it just seemed too creepy and bizarre that his voice would be inside my head."

"I planned to go in to live-action, but found I was more interested in animating liquid and hand-drawn transformations that illustrate subjective states." Eileen O'Meara