

Catherine

presskit



CATHERINE
a film by Britt Raes

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Creative Conspiracy

presents

Catherine

a film by

britt raes



with the support of the Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF)
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pitch

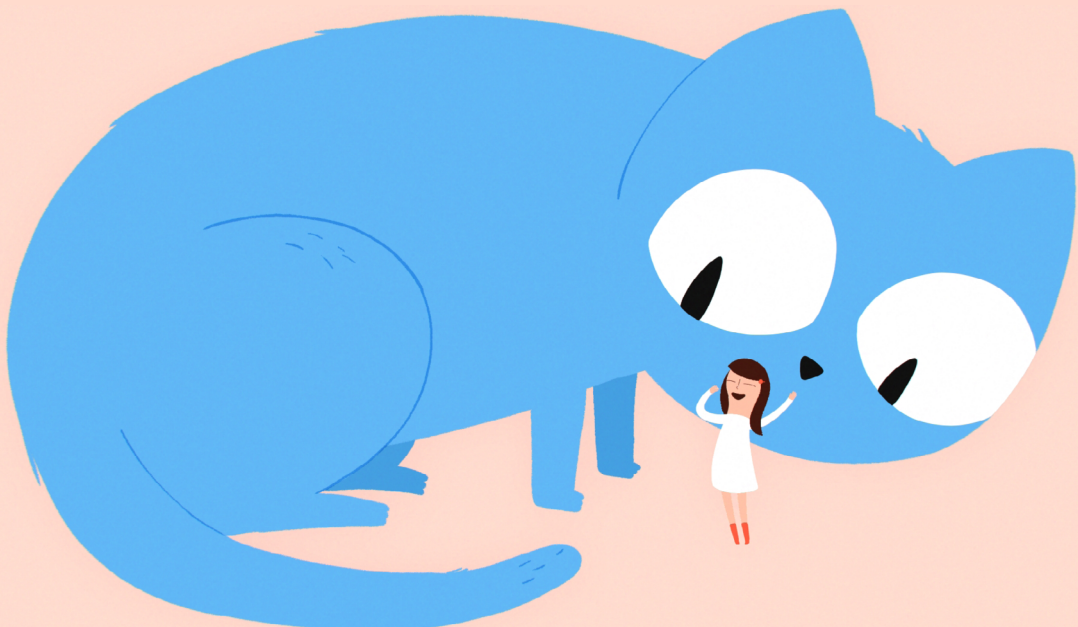
The bittersweet life story of a sweet young girl, who grows up to be a crazy old cat lady.

short synopsis

Catherine loves pets! But most of all, she loves her cat. As a young girl, she can not connect with other people.

Her cat is her life, and little by little she grows up to be a crazy old cat lady...

Will she ever find friendship, or love?



long synopsis

As a young girl, Catherine has a favorite bear that she drags along with her wherever she goes. But one day, the bear sadly rips apart! So Catherine her mother gives her a fish. When Catherine discovers the fish, she is so excited! But she accidentally kills it...Not to worry, maybe another animal would work out better. What about a bird, a dog, or maybe a ladybird?

Unfortunately, they all die a tragic death...each of the animals dies because Catherine is just too enthusiastic! So when her mom gives her a little kitten, Catherine turns away. She is fed up with all the dying animals...

But the kitten is persistent, and quickly becomes Catherine her best friend. Kitty and Catherine do everything together. Catherine is completely smitten with her kitten, and she starts to see cats everywhere! She doesn't even really notice Dwight, the boy next door who tries to be her friend. When Catherine is bullied by Wendy, she runs back home to the safety of her cat. This is where she feels protected and at ease.

As she grows up, Catherine lives alone with her cat. Having her cat close to her, is what makes her happy.

One day she goes to the supermarket and she has an unexpected face to face with Dwight. But their lucky encounter is interrupted when Wendy shows up. Catherine feels humiliated by Wendy, and runs away leaving Wendy and Dwight behind. She runs back home as fast as she can.

When she is almost home, tragedy strikes. Kitty gets hit by a car. Catherine her life falls apart, she is devastated. But just when she thought al was lost, there is Dwight, who manages to comfort her. He brought Kitty back! As a stuffed dead cat on a small wooden pedestal. Catherine is over the moon, and literally leaves the door open for Dwight for him to enter her life.

As they grow old together, they outlive one cat after the other. Each of them is stuffed by Dwight, and Catherine lovingly puts them on her shelf. They seem to have an established happy life together, as an unusual family.

But when Dwight gets hit by a car, we realize that Catherine only ever truly loved her cats. She has become a crazy cat lady, and not even her cat wants to be around her anymore.





about the director

Britt (°1986) loves to draw and tell stories. Working in animation makes her happy every day! She likes chocolate, indie music, Totoro and riding her bike. If she is reincarnated, she hopes to come back as a cat called Fluffy. She is currently developing an animated series about pets and writing a children's book.



about the production company

Creative Conspiracy is an animation production company and animation studio based in Gent, Belgium. They produce and create animated TV series, short films and high end animated commercials.



frequently asked questions



Another movie about cats? Aren't there enough already?

Nope, never!

And what makes "**Catherine**" different is that it is not only a movie for cat lovers, it's definitely also for cat haters. But I am not going to spoil why!

Is the story autobiographical?

It is inspired by real life, certainly the core feeling of the film. The starting point of the concept was '**feeling home**', and what this meant to me, and to other people.

When I was a kid living in the countryside, I always had a cat. But when I was 12 years old, we moved to the city. We took our cats with us, but they didn't like being locked inside, so we brought them back and didn't have a family cat after that. When I was 22, I got my own cat, a real house cat. And it brought back this strong feeling of home, a feeling of belonging. I was intrigued by this, and realized this was a very universal feeling people have towards their pets. So I thought it would be a great starting point for a story. So yes it is autobiographical in the sense that I am a cat lady myself. But I do hope that I don't end up like Catherine!

It's your first professional film, how was it different from making a student film?

After graduating I realized that what I truly want to do is tell a story. In my studies it was ok to make a film that was open to interpretation, where different people would see another meaning in the same film. With "**Catherine**" my personal challenge was to create an intelligible film, so people would feel what I intend them to feel as they watch it. But I didn't want to have a predictable story, I wanted to surprise people! But with a story that makes sense.

Another big difference was the execution. At school you do almost everything yourself, design, storyboard, script, animation, colors, backgrounds,... This was the first time that I really worked with a team that I had to direct.

Working with a team, how did that influence the project?

It gives so much energy, and it was very stimulating having other people enhance the project! I truly felt that what others added to the project, made it stronger. And it made me enthusiastic again as well! The project would never have been the same without their input, and yet it feels even more 'my' film than if I would have made it alone. Because people working on your film ask the right questions, and make u think about your vision, it brings out the best of you.

The animators and the voice actors really breathed life into the characters, strengthening their personalities. The music brings a flair to the film, and lingers in your head. I wish the songs were a 5 hour soundtrack I could listen to!

Having other people's input is so precious, I hope to involve others in my future projects as well. And help other people strengthen their projects!

How was the animation divided?

The story is divided into 3 parts, according to the age of Catherine. She grows up from a small kid, to a grown woman, to an old lady. As there was a team of 3 animators, it made perfect sense to assign each animator to a different age. It was important that the overall style matched, but each animator applied their own style into the movement of the certain age. As a child Catherine is very enthusiastic and bubbly, but when she is older she is more timid.

Besides the 3 animators there were also 2 animation assistants who helped with the inbetweening and coloring of the entire film.

And myself, I animated the transitions of the backgrounds. The movement had to be organic, it was hard to explain what I exactly wanted. So it turned out to be easiest to do it myself.

How did you find the voice actors?

As I was going to LA for a holiday, it seemed like a fun idea to look for a native speaking English cast to record there. I was there anyway, so why not take advantage of the opportunity? I really wanted to have the original voices in English, and the choice of English voice actors in Belgium isn't extensive.

With the help of Julia Pott (who was my mentor during the development of the short film), I found Madi and Braden. They did some castings by email in advance, and it was just a perfect match! Madi did the different ages of all the female characters (so that means young Catherine, adult Catherine, old Catherine, young Wendy and adult Wendy). Braden did all the male voices. We recorded everything in just one day, it was impressive how they could switch between the different ages and characters!

After a great American vacation, flying back with the voices on a hard disk, I was excited to start the production!



What was the hardest part?

That was choosing the colors! In general, I am a doubter. So, one day I loved the colors I picked, and the next day I hated the combination. I've never used this much color in a film before. Making illustrations in color is very different than moving images, the color combination has to work in every frame. There is no use of outlines in the film, so the colors were really important for the readability of the images.

But one day you just have to make a decision and finish the film. And I am happy with the end result!

What was the funniest moment during the production?

That must have been the day we had Rudi Rok over to make all the animal sounds for the film! Rudi is a Finnish stand-up comedian, who has mastered the skill of making sound effects just with his voice. Gregory, the sound designer, found him on YouTube and we decided to fly Rudi over to Belgium for a day of recording in the sound studio! It's amazing that a tough athletic guy can make these cute kitten sounds. When he visited the animation studio, he barked as he left the building and people were looking around wondering if there was a dog inside.



genre

Short animated film
Tragic comedy
Black humor

duration

11 minutes 51 seconds

technique

2D computer

credits

Creator/Director/Script

Britt Raes

Producer

Karim Rhellam

Mentor Development

Julia Pott

Animation

Oskar De Rycker
Olivier Vanden Bussche
Serge Lenaers
Lenny Bieseemans
Sarah Rathe

Sets

Bram Algoed

Compositing

Wannes Aelvoet
Karim Rhellam

Music

Pieter Van Dessel

Sound

Gregory Caron

Voices

Male voices Braden Lunsford
Female voices Madison Reeves
Animal Sounds Rudi Rok

Technical support

Wim Wouters



Festivals

AWARDS

23 awards and 3 special mentions including

— 2017 —

Cinanima // Portugal

Award for Best Film More than 5 up to 24 Minutes

Leeds International Film Festival // UK

Audience Award World Animation Competition

San Sebastian Horror & Fantasy Film Festival // Spain

Audience Award to the Best Animation Short Film

Kaohsiung Short Film Festival // Taiwan

Award Best Animated Short

Dublin Animation Film Festival // Ireland

Audience Award

Honourable Mention Best 2D Film

Womanimation // USA

Audience Award

Animakom // Spain

Award Best Female Director

Award Audience Winner

Anima Brussels // Belgium

Award Best Belgian Short

JEF European Youth Film Festival // Belgium

Award Best Short chosen by Childrens Jury

Award Best Short chosen by the Professional Jury

SCREENINGS

Selected for more than 120 festivals worldwide including

— 2017 —

LIAF // UK

Aesthetica Short Film Festival // UK

Denver Film Festival // USA

Show Me Shorts Film Festival // New Zealand

Philadelphia Film Festival // USA

Animatou // Switzerland

BFI London Film Festival // UK

Animasyros // Greece

Fantastic Fest // USA

Helsinki International Film Festival // Finland

Melbourne International Film Festival // Australia

Stockholm International Film Festival Junior // Sweden

Dallas International Film Festival // USA

SXSW South by South West Festival // USA

— 2016 —

Les Arcs European Film Festival // France

Film Fest Gent // Belgium

Anim'est // Romania

full list of awards & screenings

catherine-catlady.tumblr.com/screenings













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