



Enzo D'Alo,
'Pinocchio'

Italy's Enzo D'Alo had his breakthrough in 1998 with "Lucky and Zorba," but it took him almost 10 years to get his latest pic, "Pinocchio," off the ground. D'Alo put Disney's classic to one side, and drew inspiration solely from Carlo Collodi's novel. Pic premiered at Venice, made its market preem at Berlin and is released in several territories.



Peter Lord,
'The Pirates! Band of Misfits'

Aardman co-founder Peter Lord has produced all the U.K. company's features, including Oscar winner "Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit," and he co-directed "Chicken Run" with partner Nick Park. But on Aardman's latest venture, "The Pirates! Band of Misfits," he helmed solo. Stop-motion pic was released by Sony in the U.S., and was Oscar nommed.



Michel Ocelot,
'Kirikou and the Men and the Women'

This is the third in Gallic helmer Michel Ocelot's "Kirikou" series, featuring the pint-size Senegalese hero in a series of adventures. Studiocal released the film on 500-plus prints in France, where it earned \$9.1 million. Studiocal also holds international rights. As with the previous pics, the film is episodic and the animation is traditional, with a fairy-tale quality.

European Distributor of the Year

Pro Films

Bulgaria's Pro Films, which was set up in 2005 by Emil Simeonov and Vladimir Petrov, has been a voracious consumer of international toonpics, including Denmark's "Ronald the Barbarian," Japan's "Pom Poko" and upcoming Italian offering "Gladiators of Rome." In a market constrained by piracy, a lack of access to theatrical screens and the death of DVD, Pro Films has pushed forward with the launch of its own VOD platform.

TF1 Intl.

Sales house TF1 Intl., which is repped at Cartoon Movie by Gregory Chambet, has a number of toons on its books, including the Africa-set "Aya of Yop City" and 3D adventure "Santa's Magic Crystal," which was produced by Anima Vitae, the team behind "Niko" (aka "The Flight before Christmas"). Past hits include "The Rabbi's Cat," which was produced by France's Autochenille.

Universum Film

German indie distrib Universum Film, which is repped at Cartoon Movie by theatrical entertainment head Jasna Vavra, belongs to the Bertelsmann conglom. Releases have included Finnish reindeer tale "Niko 2 — Little Brother, Big Trouble" and two German 3D toons, "Rusty Knight" and "Raven, the Little Rascal." Its library includes "Houba! On the Trail of the Marsupilami" and "Santa's Apprentice."

European Producer of the Year

Anima Vitae

Finland's Anima Vitae is best known for "Niko" and sequel "Niko 2 — Little Brother, Big Trouble," which plays at Cartoon Movie. The company is owned by five of its staff, one of whom is CEO Petteri Pasanen. The outfit is co-producing "Mice on Strike" and is being advised by former Hollywood exec Max Howard. Last fall it launched a joint venture with Malaysia's Creative Media Point.

Les Armateurs (France)

Founded by Didier Brunner in 1994, Les Armateurs is best known for Sylvain Chomet's "The Triplets of Belleville" and Michel Ocelot's three "Kirikou" movies. The company's "Ernest and Celestine," which grossed \$6.9 million in France, screens at Cartoon Movie, and "Swing Popa Swing," Chomet's latest project, is being introduced at the event. Upcoming projects include "French Riviera."

El Toro Pictures, Lightbox Entertainment and Ikiru Films

Enrique Gato's adventure comedy "Tad, the Lost Explorer" has been a huge hit for Spanish producers El Toro, Lightbox, Ikiru, Telecinco Cinema and Media Networks. Sold by Studiocal to 40 countries, "Tad" won Spanish Academy Goya Awards for first-time director, adapted screenplay and toon feature. Follow-up "Capture the Flag" has a completed screenplay. A "Tad" sequel is at treatment stage.

—Leo Barraclough

