

Interviews

Maya Puig Eriksson - IMF - Interactive Media Foundation

INTERVIEWED BY ROB FORD,
FEBRUARY 12 2016

I try to move into the new and unknown with trust and fearlessness. Open and curious. And then even the smallest things in life can become the greatest adventure. And if there is fear, I better follow it. That is usually where the really interesting stuff happens and I learn the most.

Q Please give us a brief bio of yourself.

I am german-mexican, born 1981 in West-Berlin where I am now based after having lived in Mexico City, Sao Paulo and London.

I work as a Creative Producer at the Interactive Media Foundation in Berlin, where I am responsible for the development and creative execution of story-driven interactive projects.

I am a storyteller, with a background in directing and scriptwriting.

Currently I am finishing the work on an interactive Graphic Novel series for young girls about anorexia prevention - www.ninette.berlin - and developing our crossmedia project Bauhaus Spirit www.bauhaus-spirit.com.

Q What do you do for inspiration?

I get a lot of inspiration from walking through the city. Sitting in cafés and looking at people, listening in to their conversations, walking into a gallery by chance and discovering a gem. Looking at magazines is great for visual inspiration, as are instagram and pinterest. And daydreaming. Preferably under a tree.

Q Please list 3 of your favourite sites.

www.nowness.com for gorgeous eye-candy

<http://highrise.nfb.ca/> - a really beautiful long-term project with so many different sub-projects all highlighting and uncovering life in the highrises across the world

<https://www.chromeexperiments.com/> - great for inspiration, for getting my head around creative code, for discovering projects

Q What do you regard as being your biggest achievement?

Balancing work, my kids and some space for those daydreams.

Q How many hours do you work each week?

Currently I am on a 35 hours a week contract. I try to get things done in that time but put in the extra time to get things done when needed.

Q How do you relax or unwind?

Dancing barefoot in the living room, a walk through nature, reading, writing, drinking coffee in a nice café and loosing myself in play with my kids.

Q If you weren't working on the internet what would you be doing?

Telling stories is what I love doing, but I can myself running a small bed and breakfast in Mexico - later.

Q What's your favourite part of your job? What's the hardest part of your job? What do you do when you get stuck?

We have the great luxury to work on many large scale projects that we are really passionate about. Each project is a new adventure. We really invest time in the development of the ideas and there is a lot of creative exchange happening in the team.

Getting the job done in 35 hours a week is a challenge.

Work on something else or go for a quick walk.

Q What's the longest you've ever stayed up working on a project?

Looong.

Q What software could you not live without?

Mail

Q How many projects does your company juggle at any one time?

5-6

Q Who do you rate as being the top 3 design companies?

I am interested in studios that are pushing the boundaries of digital storytelling and in those that manage to really be cross-disciplinary

These are 3 of them:

<http://thesecretlocation.com/> - great interactive experiences combined with strong storytelling. Also doing some great stuff in VR.

<http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/> - some of the most cutting edge work in terms of participatory experiences. You should really check out Karen. All the therapy i needed ;)

<http://www.acne.se/> - they make great jeans and great digital projects! And films. What else could a girl want?

Q Are there any websites that have shone through as being pioneering in the last 5 years or so?

<http://a-way-to-go.com/> I simply love this project and the work of Vincent Morisset and his team – both the web-version as well as the VR-experience are beautiful. And Philipp Lambert who created the soundscape also worked as Soundartist on the Land of the Magic Flute. Extra love his way!

www.netwars-project.com - a great crossmedia project by our colleagues of Filmtank. Especially the webseries is groundbreaking in its combination of fiction and documentary!

<http://iloveyourwork.net/> - by Jonathan Harris. This project is really round. From the fact that you pay for accessing the content, to the format of using 10sec clips to portray the reality behind the porn industry, an industry which uses exactly the same tools/mechanisms to sell us fantasies online. And he is incredible at using data visualization creatively and emotionally! For that really check out old and new projects like <http://wefeelfine.org/> from 2006 and <http://networkeffect.io/> from 2015.

Q Who is your target audience?

A lot of the work we do at the Interactive Media Foundation is geared towards kids and teenagers. I am really excited about creating for teens - understanding how and where they are consuming media, how they are consuming stories and how they are bringing themselves into the conversation.

Q Has winning FWA awards helped you in any way?

We are really happy that the site got a huge boost in traffic from winning the FWA award and it is being shared and appreciated! Hey, thats why we do it!

Q Have you written any books, if not do you plan to?

Never say never.

Q Are there things you do OUTSIDE of work to ensure that you are in the right mindset to be creative and/or successful in whatever you are doing?

I try to move into the new and unknown with trust and fearlessness. Open and curious. And then even the smallest things in life can become the greatest adventure. And if there is fear, i better follow it. That is usually where the really interesting stuff happens and i learn the most.

Q The web is getting out of the web. Do you find that thinking in digital solutions alone hinders you? Do you feel the urge to solve the problem using all mediums necessary?

I personally dont „come“ from the web. I come from filmmaking. So already in the work I do i bring in different disciplines and approaches. I think it is vital that we reach an audience through various platform and mediums, as long as every part created remains integrated and true to the story/project. As a company we also work accross different mediums – from Film to Web to Games. Hands-on workshops and Hackathons. It is great!

Q What would be your ultimate vehicle to travel in?

I love my bike. She is called Giselle.

Q There must be a project that you have always dreamed of doing, what is it?

There is this story Id like to tell, set in a small desert town in Mexico near the border...

Q What are you excited about learning next and is there a long term challenge you are considering tackling?

I want to learn to play the guitar.

Q What is the most expensive thing you have bought in the last week?

Tickets for me and my friend to see Punch Drunks „Sleep No More“ in NY on my Birthday in two weeks. He is taking me in, so Birthdays treat is on me ;) So excited!

Q Any parting shots or pearls of wisdom?

Smile and always carry a pen and a notebook.

Q It has been a privilege, thanks very much

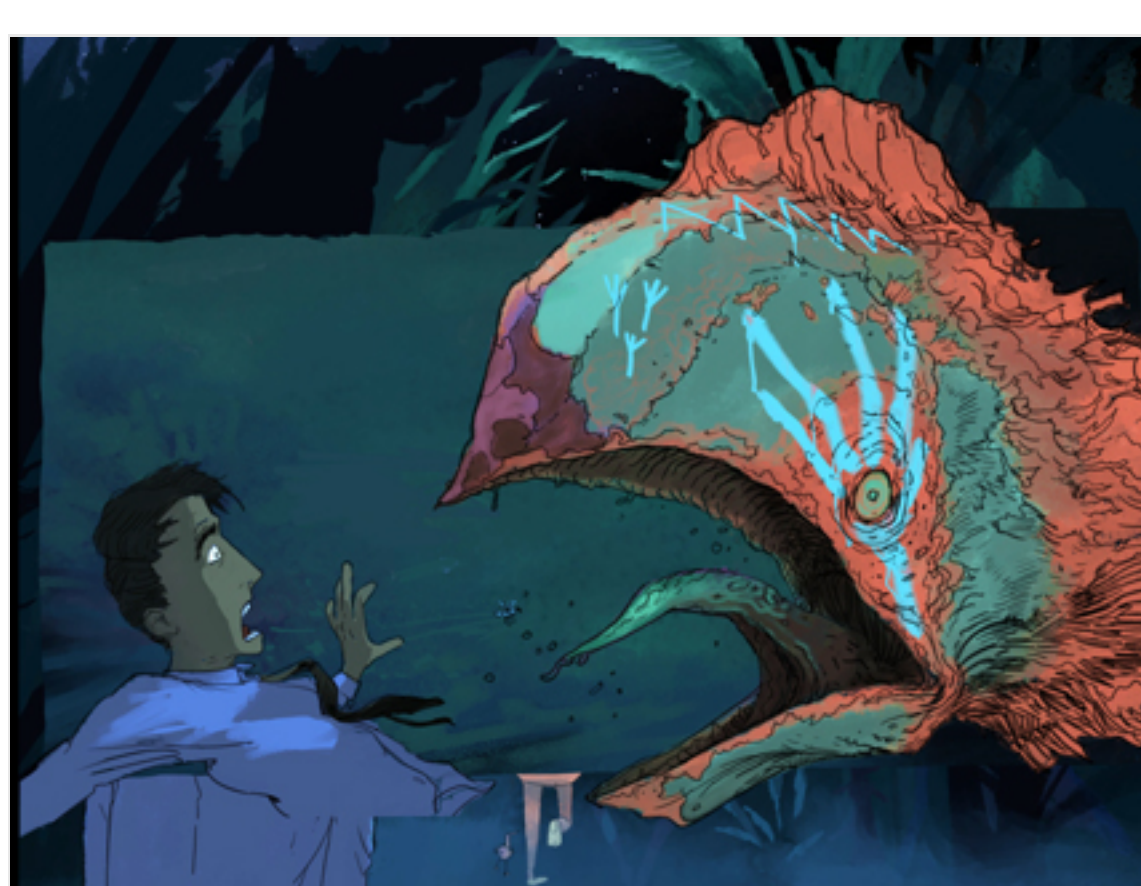
The pleasure is all mine. Thank you.

Links

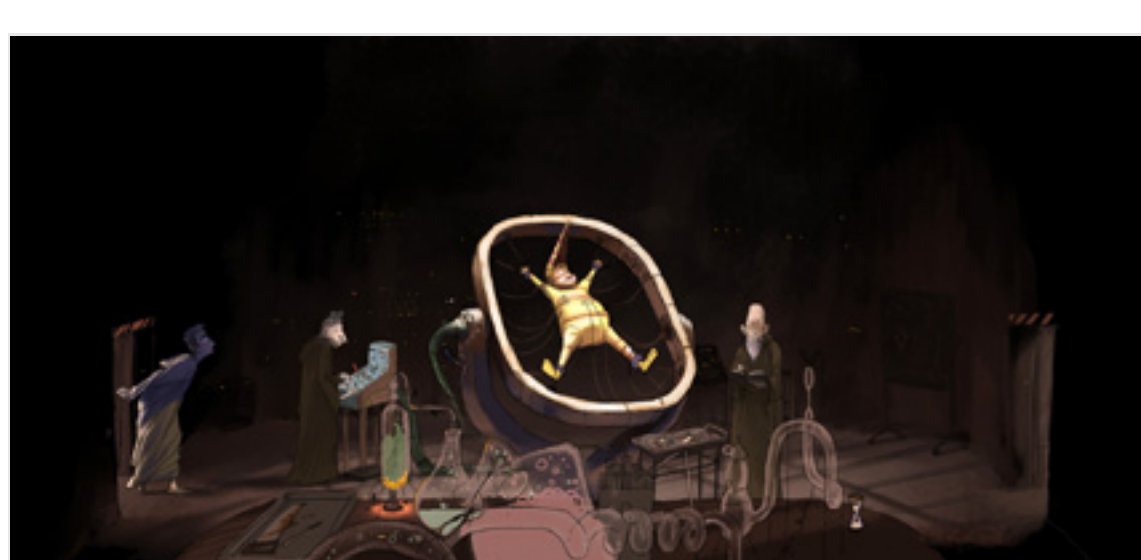
- Ninette - thin is never thin enough
- Tinkertank - Creative with technology
- DOK Hackathon Leipzig
- The Land of the Magic Flute
- Interactive Media Foundation



The Land of the Magic Flute



The Land of the Magic Flute



The Land of the Magic Flute



Ninette - thin is never thin enough



Ninette - thin is never thin enough



Ninette - thin is never thin enough



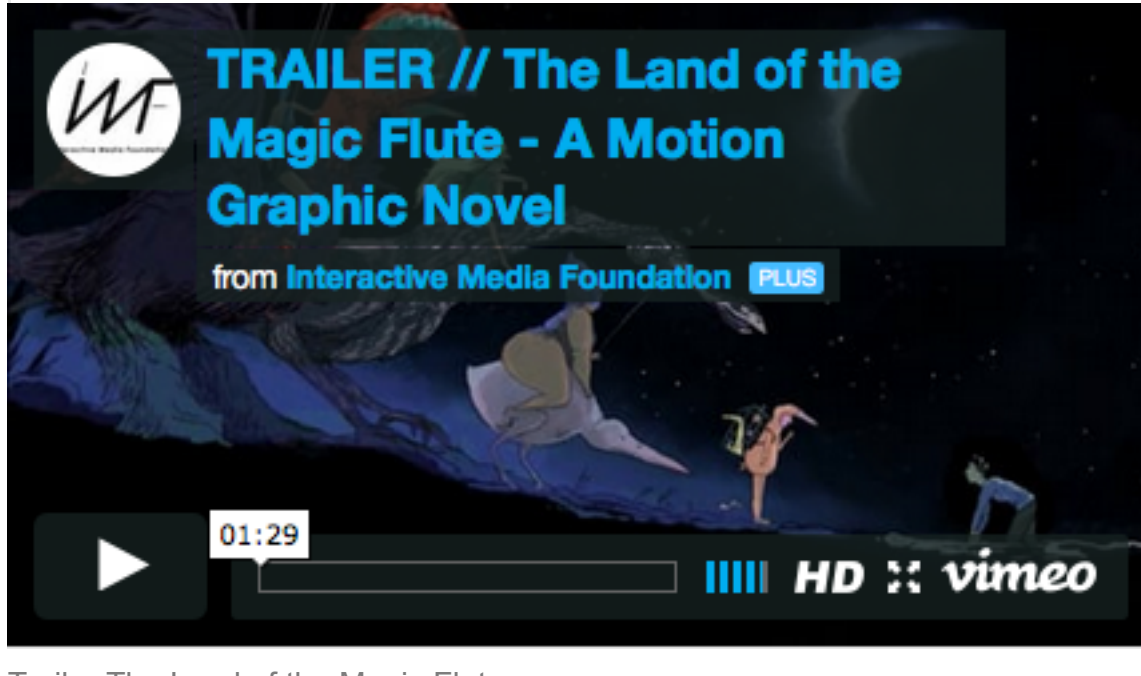
Ninette - thin is never thin enough



Ninette - thin is never thin enough



Trailer Ninette - thin is never thin enough



Trailer The Land of the Magic Flute