



Industry Forum 2022 Panels & Participant Bios

June 14, 2022 — Small is Mighty: Women Forging Paths in Animation

We're shining a spotlight on multitasking animators forging their own, distinct paths to get their work made, including the director-producer team of Mascha Halberstad and Marleen Slot, who launched their own stop-motion studio, Marieke of the celebrated Oscar-nominated design and animation trio Job, Joris, & Marieke. We'll look at creative business models that complement animation and enhance value proposition while slaying industry biases. PLUS: discover how small is mighty, from the Netherlands to New York.

With: Marieke Blaauw, Mascha Halberstad, and Marleen Slot

June 21, 2022 — Fostering a Diverse Workforce

We're thrilled to host this conversation with BIPOC filmmakers whose successes we celebrate and whose insights we will glean. Emerging and aspiring creators and students will leave with a roadmap for how to get their foot in the door. PLUS: best practices for studios and platforms to identify and support new talent telling diverse stories.

With: Priya Giri Desai, Camrus Johnson, and Huda Razzak

Moderated by Laura Ordoñez

June 28, 2022 — STEM Stories on Screen

Whether you are an educator, a change maker, a science and film nerd, or just love a good lab coat, join us to discover the profound impact that representation can have in supporting science-based careers and study and the outsized impact of representing diverse stories for women and girls to pursue STEM careers. PLUS: how to use these films and related materials to spark real change in the classroom and beyond.

With: Liam Cohen, Scott Cohen, Kerri Grant, and Nic Yulo

Panelist and Guest Bios

Marieke Blaauw is one-third of the Dutch animation studio Job, Joris, & Marieke. Along with Job Roggeveen and Joris Oprins, Marieke writes, directs, and designs all of their short films and music videos. Their work is distinguished by its absurd concepts and distinctive designs. In 2012, they created the children's series *The Tumblies*, which was broadcast in the Netherlands, sold internationally, and nominated for a Prix de Jeunesse. Their short film *A Single Life* (NYICFF 2015) was nominated for a Cartoon d'Or and an Academy Award®. Their latest series, *SWOP*, made its world premiere at NYICFF 2022 and is based on the short *Kop Op (Heads Together)*, which won an International Emmy Kids Award and the NYICFF 2017 Grand Prize. Together, their films and music videos have won over 75 awards and have been screened at more than 300 film festivals worldwide.

Liam Augustus Cohen is a PhD candidate in experimental condensed matter physics working under Professor Andrea Young at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He received his



NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

bachelors in physics and electrical engineering/computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his masters in physics from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Liam grew up in NYC and attended NYICFF regularly, where he developed a love of Miyazaki and science. He hopes his work with NYICFF will bridge the gap between the magic of cinema and the art of science, inspiring children to pursue careers in STEM fields to manifest the very world they lose themselves in when in front of the silver screen.

Scott Cohen is recognizable from his many character portrayals in television, theater, and film, receiving rave reviews for his varied, wide range of performances. He has a loyal following for the TV roles of Max Medina on *Gilmore Girls*, Wolf in *The 10th Kingdom*, and Harry Denby in a three-season arc on *NYPD Blue*. Scott starred opposite Hope Davis in NBC's *Allegiance*, Paul Giamatti on Showtime's *Billions*, and Natalie Portman in the film *The Other Woman*. On stage, he has performed with Dylan McDermott and Maura Tierney in Nicky Silver's *Three Changes* and Amy Brenneman in *A Nervous Smile*. He is currently working with The Directors Company on Anastasia Traina's play, *Seagulls on Sullivan Street*. As a producer, Scott is working on procuring rights and guiding multiple projects for the web, television, and film. In addition to a prolific career as a performer, Scott is an adjunct professor at Hunter College in NYC and serves on the Columbia County Film Festival Advisory Board. Before joining NYICFF's Board of Directors, Scott attended the Festival for years with his wife and their son, Liam.

Priya Giri Desai started her work in children's media in 2003 at GBH Boston, working on the Emmy-nominated series *Postcards From Buster*, a spin-off of *Arthur* that explored kids of all backgrounds around the world. As Development Producer in Children's Media at GBH, she helped to conceive and pitch media projects that spanned television, SVOD, audio, and more. She developed WGBH's kids podcast strategy and produced their first podcast, *Molly of Denali*, for which she also created and executed a Scriptwriting Fellowship that brought Alaska Native writers to the team that eventually won the 2020 Peabody Award. She is the Executive Producer for BWA Studios and consults, develops, and produces independent media projects for kids and families across platforms. She is a co-founder of The India Center Foundation, a member of the The Winsor School Corporation, and serves on NYICFF's Board of Directors.

Kerri Grant moved from her home in Jamaica at age 11 to live in New York with her family, where being an immigrant and feeling like an outsider led to poems and journals and a love of writing. A serendipitous internship at Nickelodeon led to a role as a script coordinator on *The Backyardigans* which, in turn led to a Nickelodeon writing fellowship in Los Angeles. She has since worked as a staff writer on shows such as *Doc McStuffins* (for which she won a Peabody Award, Sentinel Award, NAMIC Award, NAACP Image Award, and Humanitas Prize), Disney's *Elena of Avalor*, and *Mira, Royal Detective*. She served as a story editor on *Nella the Princess Knight* and is the Executive Producer of Netflix's *Ada Twist, Scientist*. She is an eight-time Emmy nominee.

Mascha Halberstad is a director and co-founder of Holy Motion Studio, a Netherlands-based studio that produces stop-motion films. She got her start animating for several feature films



NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

before directing her own shorts, television series, and music videos. An episode of her series, *Fox & Hare* made its US premiere at NYICFF 2019. Mascha's first feature film, *OINK*, opened both the Berlinale Generation K+ and NYICFF 2022, where it made its North American premiere. She is currently working on *King Sausage*, a 20-minute musical prequel to *OINK*.

Camrus Johnson is an actor, writer, producer, filmmaker, and musician, known for playing the lead role of Luke Fox in *DC's Batwoman* on The CW. He has also acted in *The Sun is Also a Star*, *The Cat and the Moon*, and in the podcast series *Day by Day*. His short film *Grab my Hand: A Letter To My Dad* won the NYICFF 2020 Jury Award for Best Animated Short, and his short *She Dreams at Sunrise* took home the Festival's Grand Prize in 2022. He is currently developing an original comic book series.

Laura Ordoñez is Head of Podcast Ratings and Reviews for Common Sense Media, where she spearheaded the launch of the first of its kind comprehensive podcast ratings and reviews channel. Before joining Common Sense Media, Laura worked as a podcast producer, host and project manager for a Bay Area startup, creating a platform to help parents gain knowledge and confidence in raising their children. Her work is centralized on highlighting diversity, equity, and inclusion with the goal of serving underrepresented and underserved audiences.

Huda Razzak was born in Chicago, Illinois to parents who immigrated from Iraq. In 2021, she graduated from Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) with a Master of Fine Arts degree in Animation. Huda focuses primarily on writing, storyboarding, and production. She is also a two-time ScreenCraft finalist, former ISF Film Grant recipient, and selected participant in a directing mentorship with Women in Animation. She currently works as a Story & Editorial Production Assistant at Netflix Animation. Her short film *The Ocean Duck* received the NYICFF 2022 Jury Award for Best Animated Short.

Marleen Slot's Viking Film is a Netherlands-based production house that specializes in arthouse and animated films. Marleen has produced films that have screened at film festivals around the world including TIFF, San Sebastian, Sundance, and Berlinale. In 2020, along with director Mascha Halberstad, she opened Holy Motion Studio to focus on stop-motion animated features. In addition to NYICFF 2022 Opening Night film *OINK*, Marleen produced *SWOP*, a TV series from famed animation and design studio Job, Joris, & Marieke, which had its world premiere at NYICFF 2022. Prior to Viking Film, Marleen worked at Lemming Film. In 2013, she was named Producer on the Move at Cannes Film Festival. She has also served as a chairman of the Netherlands Producers Association.

Nic Yulo is a children's book author and writer-director whose work spans from picture books to AAA video games. She is a 2022 BAFTA Newcomer, a Chinonye Chukwu Emerging Writer Awardee, and a juror for the 2022 BAFTA Games Awards. Her work has received an Alfred P. Sloan Screenwriting Award, an Adobe Design Achievement Award, and has been recognized by the Sloan Film Summit presented by Film Independent, NYWIFT, SeriesFest, and Shondaland. Her debut picture book, *Patch of Sky*, which brings easy STEM concepts to life for very young



NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

readers, will be published by Dial Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin Random House, in July 2022.