



Animayo Gran Canaria Designated as an Annie Awards Qualifying Festival by ASIFA-Hollywood Alongside Only Six Animation Festivals Worldwide

Animayo Gran Canaria is also the first and only animation festival in Spain that qualifies for the Academy Awards® in the category of International Animated Short Films, and the only one of its kind to qualify works for Best Animation “Animación con Ñ”.

The 21st edition of Animayo Gran Canaria will hold its in-person event in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria from May 6 to 9, inclusive. In addition, the festival will extend its programming online until September 2026 and, starting in June, will expand across the rest of the archipelago in an adapted format.

Animayo Gran Canaria, International Festival of Animation, Visual Effects and Video Games, has been designated by ASIFA-Hollywood as a qualifying festival for the Annie Awards, joining the first-ever **Annie Awards Qualifying Festival List**, made up of only seven festivals worldwide.

This initiative “distinguishes festivals with impact, artistic excellence and a sustained commitment to advancing the art and industry of animation”, as stated by the International Animated Film Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and promoting the art of animation through education,

recognition and preservation, and known for organizing the annual Annie Awards (often referred to as the **“Oscars of animation”**).

This first list of qualifying festivals for the 2026 Annie Awards **includes** Annecy International Animation Film Festival, Ottawa International Animation Festival, Kaboom Animation Festival, Animafest Zagreb, Animation Is Film, Animayo International Film Festival and Fantoche International Animation Film Festival.

A new milestone for Animayo Gran Canaria – “La Isla de Mi Vida” – about which Damián Perea, creator, director and producer of Animayo, stated: “The news took me by surprise in the middle of preparing the 21st edition of the Festival, and I couldn’t be happier. It couldn’t have come at a better time, just one week before the festival. Recognition at this level motivates us and fills us with energy. **Being among seven of the world’s leading festivals is undoubtedly a tremendous honor.** It has taken many years of intense work and constant dedication, always striving to grow and achieve the highest standards in every sense. In the end, the effort is always worth it.”

Perea also added: **“This recognition is not mine alone.** It belongs above all to the entire team who have worked tirelessly, giving their very best in every edition. I may be the visible face, but the festival is built by many people who are deeply committed to creating a unique experience every year. **Our goal** has always been for every student, every attendee, to experience something special, something inspiring, something that leaves a mark. That is why we strive to surpass ourselves each year, to go one step further, to reach a higher level.”

He continued: “Thanks to this collective effort, we have built something far greater than a festival, a community of artists that, after 20 years, has become a true family. **We must also acknowledge** the sponsorship and collaboration of the Cabildo de Gran Canaria – La Isla de Mi Vida, the City Council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, the Government of the Canary Islands, Turismo de Gran Canaria, and Fundación La Caja de Canarias, as well as production companies, studios, schools and universities. I am grateful for their support, because what began as a regional initiative in Gran Canaria, ‘the island of my life’, a destination where creativity and inspiration naturally coexist, is today **a globally established platform capable of connecting talent, industry and market.**”

Being the only festival of its kind in Spain selected by ASIFA-Hollywood as an **Annie Awards qualifying festival adds to other important credentials of Animayo, such as being the only animation festival in Spain that qualifies for the Academy Awards® of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Hollywood** for the International Animated Short Film category (since 2018) and for Best Animation “Animación con Ñ” for Spanish-language works (since 2022). Thanks to this recognition, awarded films from its Official International Competition have achieved, to date, 5 nominations, 7 shortlists and 1 Oscar® for Best Animated Short Film.

With even greater enthusiasm following this new recognition, Animayo Gran Canaria – La Isla de Mi Vida is finalizing the details for its 21st edition, reaffirming itself as **“an internationally established platform capable of connecting talent, industry and market, which began 21 years ago as a regional initiative.”** The **program** will feature more than 40 guest speakers from Europe, the United States and Canada, associated with studios such as Pixar, Disney, Warner Bros., DreamWorks, Skydance Animation, Framestore, Blur Studio, Giggiebug Entertainment, Heebo Entertainment and Platige Image.

The 21st edition of Animayo Gran Canaria will present **a program including** 13 masterclasses, 12 educational talks, 6 workshops, 6 International Competition Sections, and the World Premiere exhibition “The Visual World of Alan Bodner,” along with premieres and exclusive content, around twenty stands from artists, schools and universities, more than 20 hours of recruitment sessions, portfolio reviews and signings, as well as 3 panels and talks.

As Perea himself expressed during the presentation of this new edition: “There are festivals where stories are shown, and there are festivals where they begin. That is Animayo, a **project made by and for people, where talent is not only showcased, it is connected.**”

MEDIA RESOURCES

* HD video of Damián Perea statements: <https://we.tl/t-Lne95WytZj39O95d>

* Photos: attached

Access our press kit:

URL: <https://www.animayo.com/prensa/>

User: Prensa_Animayo

Password: animayofest_animayo

Includes:

* 2026 dossier and posters

* Animayo 2025 highlight video

* PR. Tony Bancroft, Disney animation icon, arrives in Spain for the first time with Animayo Gran Canaria

* PR. World Premiere Exhibition “The Visual World of Alan Bodner”

* PR. The 21st edition of Animayo Gran Canaria will connect talent with the global elite of the sector

