

100% ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM — 30th ANNUAL REGARD FESTIVAL

Study Guide

This guide is designed to prepare students for their cultural excursion and post-screening discussions in class.

For each short film, there is an Info Sheet that includes:

- Basic production information:
 - Title
 - Director
 - Origin
 - Year
 - Genre (fiction, documentary, animation or experimental)
 - Duration
 - Themes
 - Synopsis
- The trailer, if available
- An attention-related question about the film
- A space for students to give their star rating (1 to 5)

Each Info Sheet is followed by a page containing suggestions for preparation before you watch the film and for discussion after you've seen it.

A printable version of this guide containing only the Info Sheets will also be sent to you by email, or you can **download it**. It is intended to be handed out to students and used during the screening.



regard
SCOLAIRE



If you want to re-watch the films in class, **they will be available online from March 23th until the end of the school year.**

The day after the festival, you will receive an email with a private link to the program you watched.



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Audience vote

Which film will be your new fave? We want to know!

This year, we'll take advantage of your presence in the theatre to collect your votes.

The procedure will be explained at the end of the screening.

The film with the most votes will be crowned *Youth Audience's Favourite – Teens*.

When deciding which of the films you prefer, consider these elements:

- Story and characters;
- Sound environment;
- Visual appeal;
- Direction and technical work;
- Emotional impact;
- Etc.

The results will be announced at the end of April, after the final school screenings.





Preparing for a trip to REGARD

At the REGARD Festival (and any other cultural event!), audience members have rights. Those rights help everyone attend screenings in a pleasant, respectful and open-minded setting where they can enjoy the artistic experience to the fullest.

Reminder: one person's freedom ends where the freedom of another person begins!

In other words, while exercising their rights, each student must take care not to infringe on the rights of their classmates

The audience member's rights:

- To experience their emotions (laugh, cry, be scared, etc.)
- To talk no louder than a soft whisper
- To remain silent
- To like or dislike a film
- To applaud during the end credits to show appreciation
- To attend a screening in a quiet setting where you can pay attention
- To ask questions after the screening (to friends, teachers, the REGARD team, etc.).

Freedom of speech

The Festival team strives to present a varied selection of short films, allowing students to situate their own tastes and interests. We encourage students to share their point of view and to welcome and respect the opinions of others.



The program of shorts you're about to watch has seven films. Three are from Canada. You will see a fiction, two documentaries and four animated films with very different styles. Here's some information about the films and their creators, to give you an idea of the context in which they were made.

The director of **One Step Ahead**, Anthony Bonello, loves the outdoors and adventure films. On his film shoots, Anthony has directed and led teams and expeditions in some of the world's most remote and challenging locations, from the Himalayas to the Sahara, the Arctic to the Andes.

Good Luck to You All was produced by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB). Its director, Cordell Barker, hails from Manitoba. He has worked in animation for nearly 40 years and his work is internationally acclaimed, including two Oscar nominations.

Sabrina Saleha, the director and writer of **Legend of the Fry-Roti: Rise of the Dough**, is an American with Navajo and Bengali roots. This short film, her first, is directly inspired by her multicultural identity. As well as having written, directed and produced the film, she plays the lead role.

Bára Anna Stejskalová, the Czech artist behind **9 Million Colors**, specializes in puppet animation. Her earlier shorts also used the stop-motion technique. They have been shown at nearly a hundred festivals around the world.

Léo Brunel, from France, is a 3D animation and visual comedy specialist who directed **Duet**. His final project for film school, *Hors Piste*, was a hit at REGARD and around the world in 2018, and made the shortlist for an Oscar nomination. That's like making it to the semifinals: each year, 10 to 15 films are shortlisted for the best animated film award, but only five receive a nomination.

The director of **Still Moving**, Rui Ting Ji, is Chinese-Canadian and lives in Montreal. She has animated for award-winning documentaries, feature films and short films alike and teaches animation in college. The film is inspired by the difficult experience of her parents' divorce.

Author, screenwriter and filmmaker Wanda Nolan lives in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. She has worked with the National Film Board of Canada on several projects. In **The Muse**, her love for Newfoundland is captured beautifully.



One Step Ahead



Directing

Anthony Bonello

Origin

British Columbia

Year

2025

Genre

Documentary

Duration

13 m 35 s

Themes

Identity, Self-definition,
Determination, Resilience

Synopsis

One Step Ahead follows Norwegian skier Bernt Marius as he gets back to doing what he loves: skiing big lines in the Sunnmøre Alps after losing his leg in an accident. The film captures the ups and downs of relearning the sport and working through the mental side of recovery. It's a raw, honest look at what it takes to keep moving forward when everything changes.

Question

Which moment was one of the toughest during Bernt's rehabilitation?



Appreciation

▶ Trailer



Preparation

Read the synopsis and take time to watch the trailer.

With the information you now have, how do you interpret the title: *One Step Ahead*?



Post-viewing

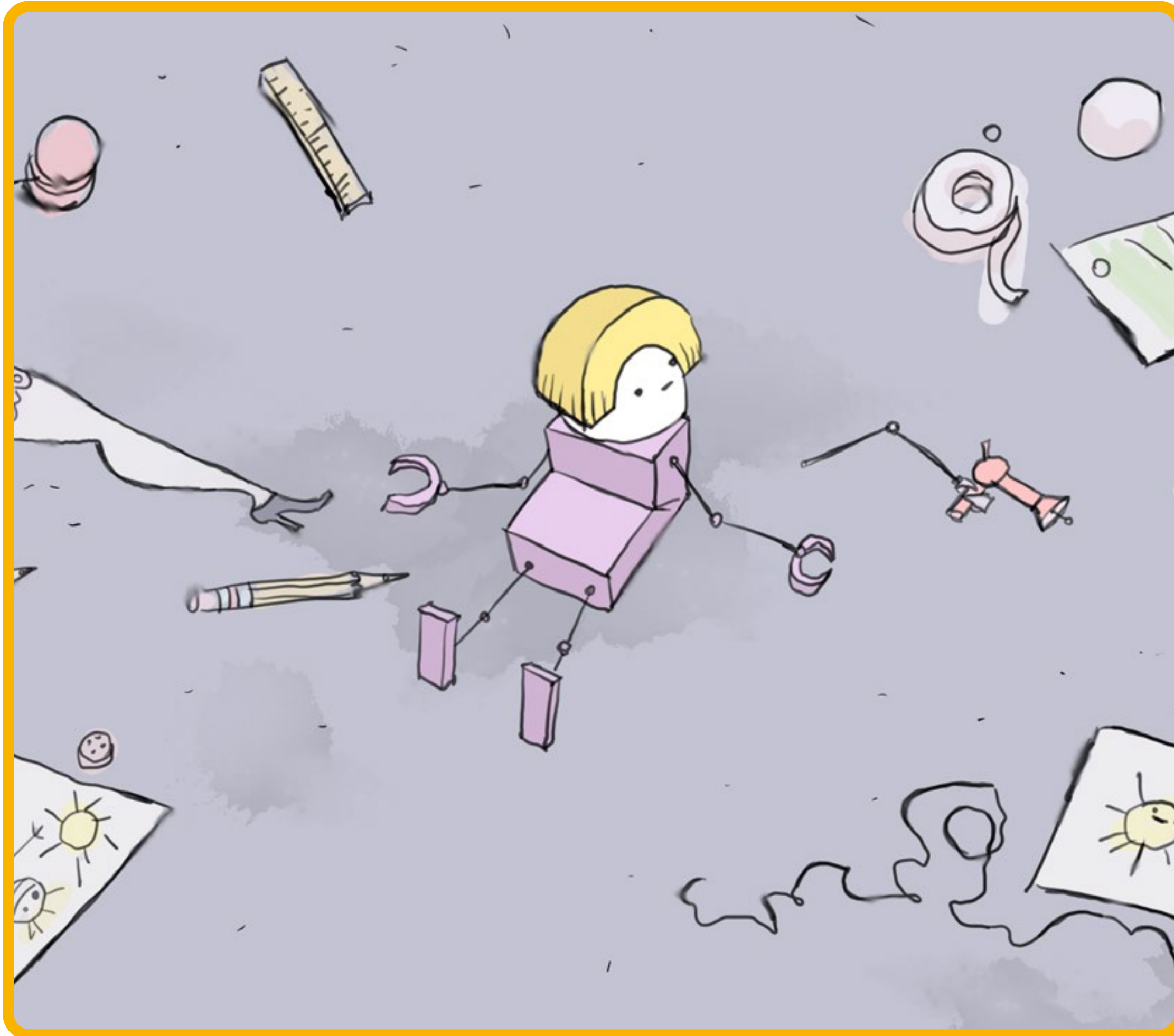
Oyvind, Bernt's friend and ski partner, looks impressed when he talks about his friend and what he went through. Because of his accident, Bernt had to redefine himself, and he also had to set new goals that will keep him motivated. He decided to go even more intensely into sports.

Do you have a friend you consider a role model?

If not a friend, who can be a role model for you? Why?



Good Luck to You All



Directing

Cordell Barker

Origin

Manitoba

Year

2025

Genre

Animation

Duration

8 m 15 s

Themes

Artificial intelligence,
the Future, Anxiety

Synopsis

A young girl plays with her toys, unaware that she might just be holding humanity's remote control. Voices of tech experts blend innocence, hope and mild panic about AI. This whimsical yet cautionary tale asks: Who controls AI, who profits, and who's still waiting for the manual?

Question

According to a specialist in the film, what could be the main problem, instead of artificial intelligence?

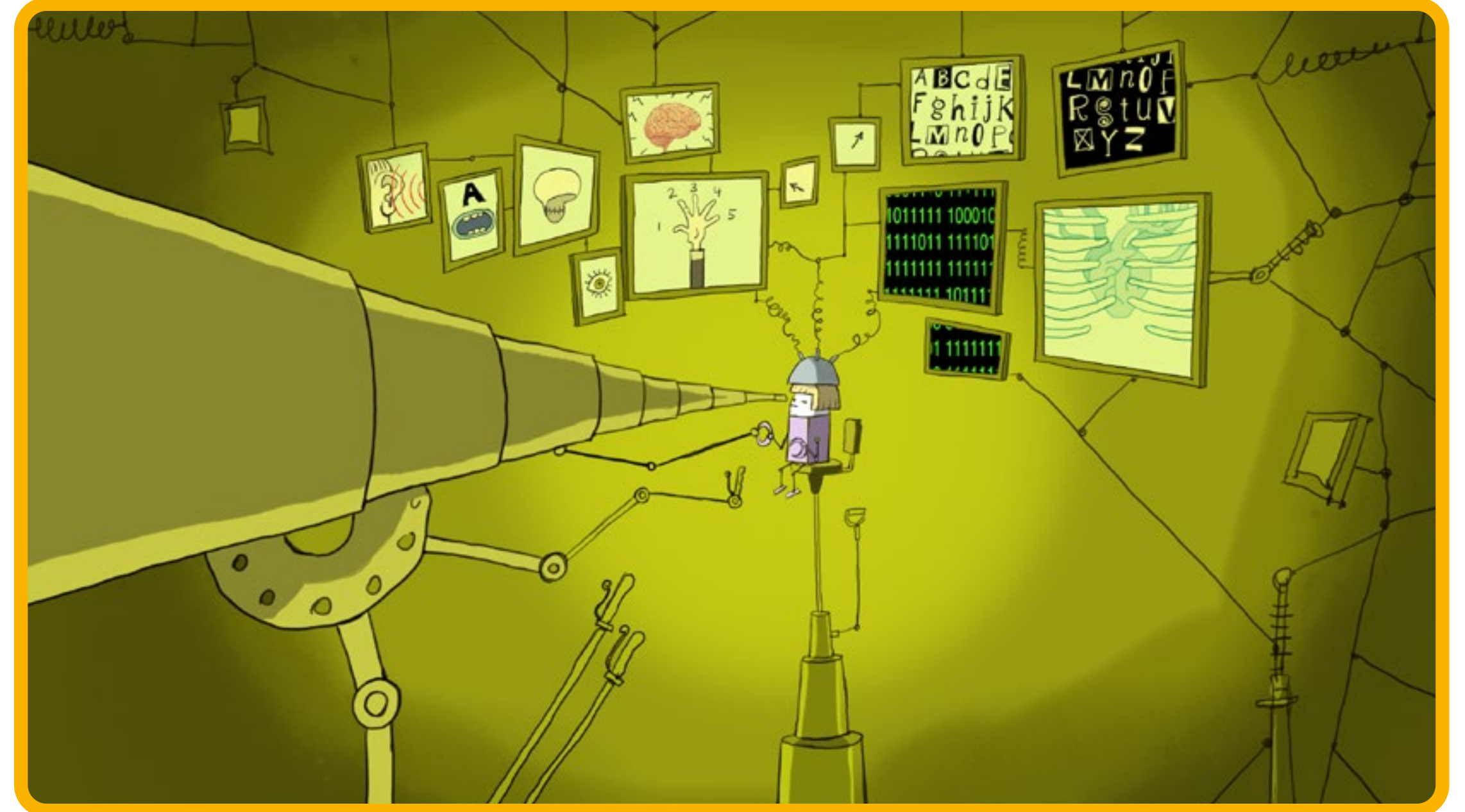
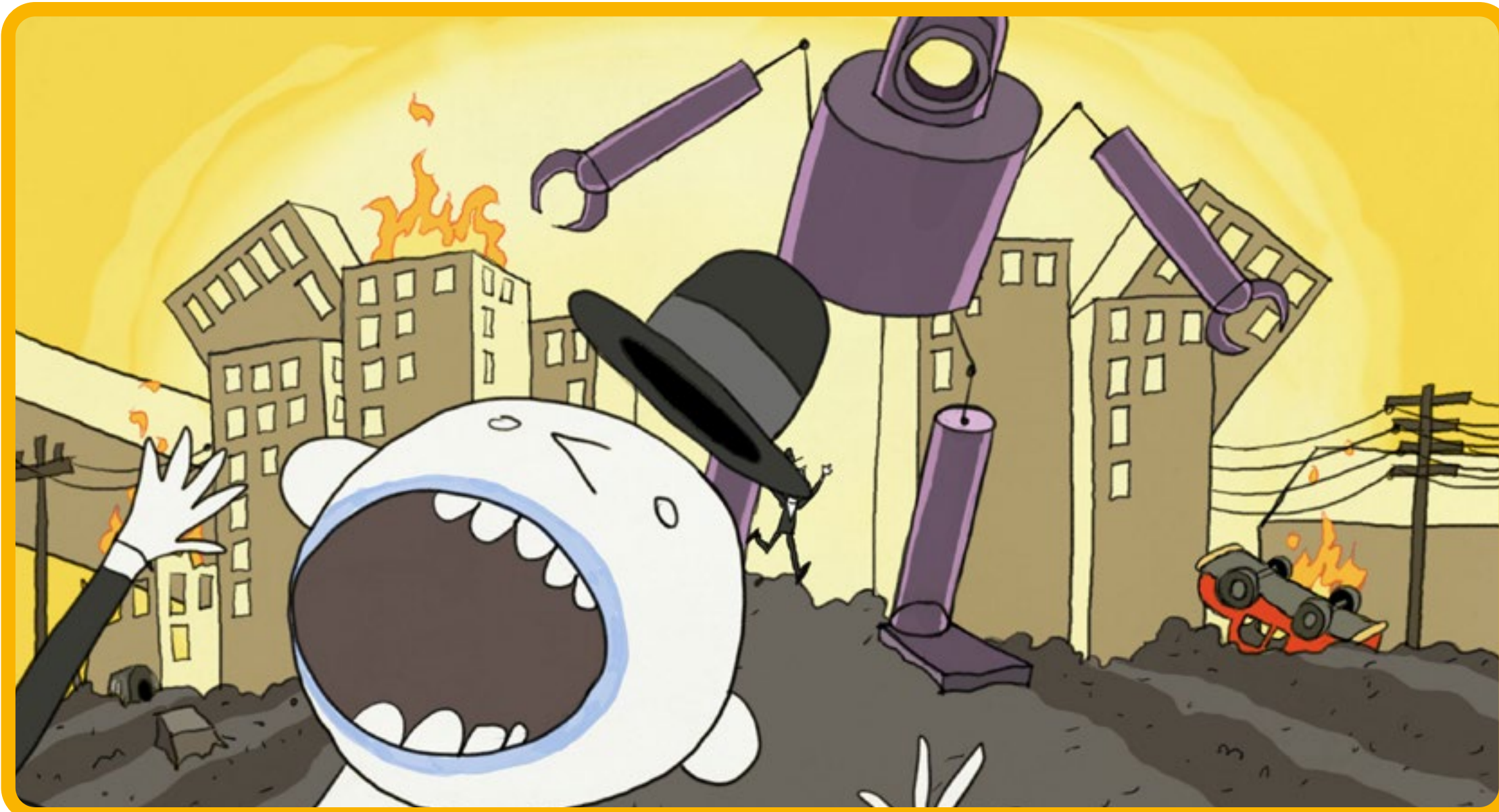


Appreciation



Preparation

The NFB offers **an interview with filmmaker Cordell Barker**. Reading it will help you prepare for the screening and understand the thought process that led him to make this film. You will learn more about his creative choices and about how making the film influenced his perspective on artificial intelligence.



Post-viewing

Discuss with your class or with your friends. What do you think about AI and the future of humanity? Will we need luck to face the future? How did the film make you feel? Do you like talking about these kinds of questions, or would you rather avoid them? Why?



Legend of Fry-Roti: Rise of the Dough

**Directing**

Sabrina Saleha

Origin

United States

Year

2025

Genre

Fiction

Duration

8 m 38 s

Themes

Cultural identity, Blended cultures, Competition

Synopsis

A Navajo/Bengali niece kneads to find dough-mestic harmony when her aunts burst into a frybread vs. roti showdown, forcing her to cook up her own recipe for belonging from all the ingredients of her culture.

Question

Which two gifts do the aunts give their niece, one in the past and one during the film?

**Appreciation**



Preparation

Legend of Fry-Roti: Rise of the Dough is a situation comedy. It includes plenty of elements typical of the genre:

- Stereotyped, exaggerated characters
- Misunderstandings taken to extremes
- A single location
- Running gags
- Wordplay

During the screening, pay attention to those elements and how they affect the comedic impact of the film.



Post-viewing

Although it's a comedy, the film explores several real issues the filmmaker has encountered in her life. Among other things, she looks at the difficulties of belonging to two cultures and never feeling fully accepted by either one. In your opinion, why did she choose comedy as a way of talking about such a serious and personal subject? What does this film genre contribute to the message?



9 Million Colors

**Directing**

Anna Stejskalová Bára

Origin

Czech Republic, Norway,
Germany

Year

2025

Genre

Animation

Duration

15 m

Themes

Empathy, the Animal Kingdom,
Differences

Synopsis

The ocean is paradise for Fran the shrimp. Her deadly claws take whatever they desire. For the blind fish Milva, it's a daily fight to survive. Fran sees it as beautiful and wants her to see the ocean in the same way. Can they overcome their differences?

Question

What fatal action will the shrimp take when she believes she has lost her new friend forever?



Appreciation

▶ Trailer



Preparation

The film's main character is a mantis shrimp. Do you know about this fascinating creature? It has amazing vision and can see colours unimaginable to us humans, which explains the title *9 Million Colors*. The mantis shrimp also has very impressive physical abilities. In order to better understand this character, check out this video about this unusual species.



Post-viewing

Did you notice that this film was made using stop-motion animation? Using a green screen, the creators were able to create the illusion of a seafloor. Can you imagine all the work that went into this film? There are plenty of characters to animate, and what's most impressive is the way the director managed to make the characters move as if they were in water - slower, with different gravity than on dry land.

The director, Bára Anna Stejskalová, has an Instagram account where she documents several steps in the creative process. We learn how she imagined and created her characters, her artistic choices and all the mechanics behind stop-motion animation. Go check it out!





Duet



Directing

Leo Brunel

Origin

France

Year

2025

Genre

Animation

Duration

1 m 09 s

Themes

Gaffes, Music, Teamwork, Humour

Synopsis

Two movers hoist a grand piano step by step up a slightly too narrow stairway, and accidentally discover a new passion.

Question

Do you know whose portrait is in the stairway?



Appreciation



Preparation

The film you are going to see is a 3D animation. Objects and characters in 3D have depth and thickness, a bit like virtual figurines or puppets that can be moved in a digital set, thanks to software.

On the other hand, in a 2D animation the characters and objects are drawn flat, like on a sheet of paper.

Can you name some 3D animation films?

Can you name some 2D ones?

Sample answers can be found in the last section of this guide.



Post-viewing

Léo Brunel, the director, has a distinctive style! You can see it in his character designs and in the absurd situations he creates. Check out his [Vimeo profile](#) to discover his other films, such as *Voltige* and *DEUSPI*.

In the Context section, we also mentioned his final film school project, *Hors piste*, which is [available here!](#)



The Muse



Directing

Wanda Nolan

Origin

Newfoundland and Labrador

Year

2025

Genre

Documentary

Duration

18 m

Themes

Intergenerational friendship,
Passions, Art, Hospitality

Synopsis

The Muse is a cross-cultural, cross-generational story about an unlikely relationship between a young Chinese fine-art photographer, Ting Ting Chen, and her muse and best friend, 74-year-old Robert Tilley. This short film celebrates art while challenging the preconceptions we bring to relationships between older men and younger women, to the immigrant contribution to our culture, and to the nature of memory.

Question

According to Robert, what qualities of Ting Ting explain her success?



Appreciation



Preparation

This film tells the story of an uncommon friendship. Before watching, consider the following questions:

- In your opinion, what makes a friendship strong?
- What qualities do you look for in your friends?
- Have you ever had, or do you know of, a friendship that might have seemed surprising at first?



Post-viewing

The portraits of Robert that Ting Ting photographed, drawing inspiration from Renaissance and Medieval paintings, are part of a project titled *Robert Through Time*. This series, like many other photos featured in the film, can be viewed on her website, but also in an art book and in an art gallery in St. John's, Newfoundland. Learn more about this emerging artist by visiting [her website](#).



Still Moving



Directing

Rui Ting Ji

Origin

Quebec

Year

2025

Genre

Animation

Duration

10 m 36 s

Themes

Communication, Separation, Conflict, Parent-Child relationships

Synopsis

After her divorce, a mother drives a rented moving truck with her daughter in the passenger seat. The two head into a new future, only to discover the pain and difficulties of leaving the past behind.

Question

What did you notice about the weather during the trip?



Appreciation

▶ Trailer



Preparation

The film you're going to see is about a life change for a family. The director, Rui Ting Ji, was inspired by her own story: the difficult divorce of her parents and the silence that followed. As she grew up, she realized that not talking about difficult topics can create distance, misunderstandings and a feeling of being trapped. For Rui Ting Ji, the film is a way to better understand family relationships and talk about her emotions.

Imagine that, like in the film, you're in a moving truck on the way to starting a new life. The truck is full of objects but it also carries intangible things, like your emotions. On one side of a piece of paper, write down an object you would definitely take with you, and on the other side write down the emotion you would feel at that moment.

In your opinion, what would be heavier: the object or the emotion?



Post-viewing

During the truck journey, mother and daughter experience several different emotions. They avoid each other, argue, and reconcile. Several elements in their environment reflect the characters' mental state. We might call these symbols or metaphors. In your opinion, which feelings or emotions are linked to these moments in the film:

1. Loss of control of the vehicle
2. The plant that wilts and falls over
3. Forgiving in each other's language

Provide your own interpretation of these moments; sample answers can be found in the last section of this guide.



One Step Ahead

Which moment was one of the toughest during Bernt's rehabilitation?

When he walked for the first time with the prosthesis. Because walking seems so natural and easy, but he wasn't able to do it.

Good Luck to You All

According to a specialist in the film, what could be the main problem, instead of artificial intelligence?

The problem could be human stupidity.

Legend of Fry-Roti: Rise of the Dough

Which two gifts do the aunts give their niece, one in the past and one during the film?

In the past, they both gave her a cast iron pan. At the end of the film, they both give her an apron.

9 Million Colors

What fatal action will the shrimp take when she believes she has lost her new friend forever?

She cuts out her eyes.

Duet

Do you know whose portrait is in the stairway?

All indications point to the great composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, recognizable by his red jacket.

Answers to the preparation question:

3D films: *Frozen*, *Inside Out*, *Zootopia*, *Racetime*, *Katak: The Brave Beluga*, *Butterfly Tale*, etc.

2D films: *The Princess and the Frog*, *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Hola Frida*, *Dounia and the Princess of Aleppo*, etc.

The Muse

According to Robert, what qualities of Ting Ting explain her success?

Her intelligence and stubbornness may explain her success.

Still Moving

What did you notice about the weather during the trip?

The weather changes from sunshine to rain and back again. It symbolizes the emotions of the mother and daughter, from conflict to reconciliation.

Answer to the post-viewing question:

1. The mother's loss of emotional control as she is lost in her thoughts.
2. Emotional fatigue, sadness.
3. Understanding, love, support, letting the other person know you understand what they're going through.