

PURPLE WHALE FILMS PRESENT

WHERE IS ANNE FRANK

A FILM BY ARI FOLMAN



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
OUT OF COMPETITION
2021 OFFICIAL SELECTION



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present



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INTERNATIONAL SALES:

wild bunch
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www.wildbunch.biz

U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS:

emilie@cineticmedia.com

kara@k2publicity.com

ryan@cineticmedia.com

FRENCH PRESS:

matilde.incerti@free.fr

bureau.incerti@gmail.com



TAGLINE

Kitty, Anne Frank's imaginary friend to whom Anne devoted her Diary, magically comes to life in present-day Amsterdam. Kitty sets out on a relentless quest to find Anne Frank. It's the beginning of an adventurous journey.

SYNOPSIS

WHERE IS ANNE FRANK begins with a miracle: Kitty, the imaginary friend to whom Anne Frank wrote in her famous Diary, comes to life in present-day Amsterdam. Unaware that 75 years have gone by, Kitty is convinced that if she is alive, then Anne must be alive too. WHERE IS ANNE FRANK tells the story of Kitty's quest across contemporary Europe to find her beloved friend. Armed with the precious Diary and with help from her friend Peter, who runs a secret shelter for undocumented refugees, Kitty follows Anne's traces, from the Annex to her tragic end in the Holocaust. Disoriented by our broken world, and the injustices that child refugees endure, Kitty wants to fulfill Anne's cause. Through her honesty, she presents a message of hope and generosity addressed to future generations.

STATEMENT FROM **ANNE FRANK FONDS BASEL**

Shortly after Otto Frank published the Diary of his daughter Anne Frank in 1947 for the first time, he decided to have it adapted for stage and film. The success of the Broadway show "The Diary of a Young Girl" (1956) followed by the Oscar winning movie by George Stevens was the beginning of the success of the Diary. To ensure that all royalties were used to support charitable and educational work, Otto Frank established the Anne Frank Fonds in Basel in 1963, which he appointed his universal heir. His nephew Buddy Elias, a famous actor in his own right, was chaired the organization after Otto Frank's death. Against this background the foundation initiated the animation film in which Anne Frank's imaginary friend comes to life. Together with the family the foundation decided to reach out to a new generation in their own language. Comics and animation are complex genres. The Anne Frank Fonds Basel asked Ari Folman to write the script and direct the movie. It took years to develop this ambitious project, which shows for the first time the full dimension of The Diary of Anne Frank, spanning an arc from her story to the present day. The film represents an important introduction to lessons of history, the Holocaust, discrimination and anti-Semitism. Ari Folman presents a courageous story on the highest artistic level, based on the The Diary of Anne Frank. AFF proudly presents the movie together with all its partners, 75 years after the first publication of the Diary.



Q&A WITH DIRECTOR **ARI FOLMAN**

“Where is Anne Frank” is a Holocaust movie. Why did you decide to use animation as a medium for your film?

As a way to reach young audiences. And it is exactly for that reason that the Anne Frank Fonds Basel approached me eight years ago and specifically asked for an animation movie. They were looking for a new dimension to tell the Holocaust story. Then came the idea to revive Kitty in the leading role and make her the protagonist of the movie – the narrator. Another two conditions were to connect past and present time and to follow the last 7 dreadful months of Anne Frank’s life.

So how did the new dimension turn out to look in the movie?

As I said, our main innovation was to turn Kitty from the imaginary friend of Anne into an actual, living person. She – and not Anne Frank – is the protagonist of our movie. She is going on a quest trying to find out what happened to Anne during the end of the war. How did she die, what happened to her? In doing so, she also discovers the current situation in Europe, flooded with refugees from all over the world, running away from war zones.

The animation has been visualised by Lena Guberman. Given that the medium avails you of boundless possibilities – how did the two of you decide on what the movie would look like in the end?

Sure, animation lets you reinvent the world. We had to start out by shaping Kitty and Anne. I believe we gave both very warm personalities. Lena is an exceptional artist and drew in a deeply beautiful way. But we decided at the outset to break with a certain pattern of the genre. Most war movies show the present in colour and the past as monochrome. We went the opposite way. Therefore, in our movie present-day Amsterdam is depicted in monochrome colours, the city is in wintertime and has been completely drained of colour. On the other hand, the past is seen through the eyes of Anne, it is very lively, colourful and rich in tones. That became the guideline of the movie. Moreover, we did not limit our palette in any way, as I had done in previous animation films. We just went wild with colours, especially when her imagination and dreams come up.

Can you tell us more about your reasons for working with Lena Guberman for this project?

I believe Lena is a genius. She creates the best figures for animation that I have ever seen. Her thinking is just made for getting pictures into motion. Because our job is not just to draw pictures. It is crucially important to get them into motion. Furthermore, Lena is an ideal partner in such a task. She is the opposite of egocentric. She is modest, focused on her work, and her beautiful soul contains an incredible amount of talent.

What techniques did you use for the film?

This movie is the first to tell the story of Anne Frank entirely in drawings. We are talking about 159,000 individual drawings that have been created in 15 countries. This technique infused the film with a vibrant, lively feel and the story flows without demanding any effort from viewers. To accomplish this, we developed a wholly new technique by combining static backgrounds with classic, animated figures in 2-D. Specifically, we recreated the "Hinterhaus" as a miniature model. This allowed us to create images of real scenery recorded by actual cameras. We then placed drawn figures into these backgrounds as animation. This is a true innovation. Nobody has ever done anything like this before in cinema.

Kitty has always been there. But just in the Diary and not as an actual person. So how did you go about creating her as a figure in the movie while staying true to the ideas Anne Frank had about Kitty?

Anne Frank has left us many descriptions of Kitty: who she is, what she looks like, what kind of personality she is. And of course, there is her dialogue with Kitty. I then went a step further and made Kitty into an alter ego of Anne's. In some respects, I ascribed an extrovert personality to her. She is a fighter, and she is not under the control of parents who set her limits, as Anne was. For Kitty, there are no fellow inhabitants in her hideout, criticising her. She is therefore free to do whatever Anne had wanted to do in her own imagination. That is just the way Kitty had to be – why else would Anne have invented her?

In the movie Kitty becomes an activist for refugees in the present day. Would you consider her to be part of new, political youth movements about climate and human rights?

She is indeed a child of our times. The character of Kitty started out as Anne's imaginary friend, basically. But in the movie she is building a bridge between the past and the present. As she ventures out into the world, she meets young people such as herself who are in danger – maybe because they have to flee from war zones. That reminds Kitty of Anne and the fact that Anne did not have an opportunity to flee during her relatively short time in hiding. This experience turns Kitty into an activist. At the same time, she realises her powers to promote a movement for children's rights. And these powers grow from her being a visitor in our world.



Alongside Kitty, audiences confront the Holocaust. Did those scenes pose particular difficulties for you? How did you handle them?

Realising the one scene where the Frank family arrives at the Auschwitz concentration camp was the hardest task in the whole movie. How can we show this specific moment in time to children? Animation as a genre does provide us with quite a range of options. But we had to choose wisely among them. In the end I found numerous parallels between the killing sites of the Nazis in World War Two and the Underworld in Greek mythology. Anne Frank was obsessed with Greek mythology. The Nazis had trains, transports, selections and death camps. In the Greek mythology beloved by Anne Frank there are no trains, but ferries; no land, but rivers. And we have selections there, conducted by Hades, the god of the underworld. There also are dogs there, just like the dogs the Nazis had on the platforms along the train tracks at the camps. I thought we would be able to create a montage to make everybody understand what the Frank family went through at the camp, by showing that experience in images derived from Greek mythology on the one hand and words telling the original story on the other. At the same time, we did not want this scene to become overly graphic and heavy-handed.

Were there any red lines for you in tackling the Holocaust?

For one, we did not want to show the end of Anne and Margot in a realistic manner as quite a few Holocaust movies have attempted to. Whether we are working with animation or in a regular feature film format: there is no cinematic form that is appropriate to show what happened. Because I believe none of us really understands what happened. To truly imagine what happened is just beyond our reach. I grew up in a family of Holocaust survivors and have heard the most horrifying stories a child can ever hear. But our minds are incapable of creating a visual connection to these stories and cannot fully grasp what happened. I would call this a task that is overwhelming to all of us. I therefore created an allegory to relate the story, using the tools animation and drawing provide us with to create imaginary worlds.

Drawing from the Diary information contained in the Diary, the intense dialogues between Anne, Kitty and Margot bring the movie to life. How did you manage to create those without falling into the trap of a didactic documentary format?

Intellectually, I have what you might call an internal board of censors. Whenever I appear to lapse into clichés, I immediately correct myself and try to turn that into a part of the story. If we want to reach an audience as filmmakers but we turn into teachers while doing so, nobody will sense that better than children. Therefore, for a conclusive story that makes sense, the dialogue and the format we use to tell the story are key to our success as filmmakers.

Telling the story of the Holocaust already presents a difficult challenge. How did you find the language and the medium to communicate that story to your audience?

I just turned to the powers of imagination. If you has to tell such a harsh story, you can work either with humour or a lot of emotions. Both methods present viable avenues. But if you exaggerate and force the audience to delve into tired clichés of agony and woe, you risk losing your viewers. You must maintain an even-handedness while showing human aspects of the characters and avoid overplaying emotions and turning to gimmicks.

You present a new, entirely different approach to the Diary, which is fairly well known among young audiences. Can you tell us about your thinking behind this?

We did keep much of the original material contained in the Diary. Scenes unfolding in the past are telling the story of the Diary and even the future beyond the Holocaust has been anticipated in the Diary to a certain extent. But the movie tells the story in an entirely different way, namely not as a monologue by Anne, but as a dialogue between the girls. For us, the imaginary friend has become real, and they are discussing among themselves what Anne has written down as her monologue. In the end we just use a different technique to tell the same story.

How much of the Diary and how much of Ari Folman is contained in Kitty?

In the film Kitty has her own personality, that is separate from Anne. The character of Kitty is not meant to be an extension or a rebirth of Anne's personality after her death. As Kitty leaves the house and ventures forth into the world, she has her own options. Although these have obviously been dictated by me, as the author of the script.



The Diary casts the relationship between Anne and her sister Margot, her mother Edith and Mister Dussel in a negative way in some respects. But you paint a positive picture of these relationships. Why?

If you discuss their parents with children, one tends to hear some bad things – no matter what the reality is. Teenagers generally like to assume a negative posture towards their environment and the world at large. They want to rebel. I assume this tendency gets aggravated if young people are forced to live in isolation for two years during their adolescence. Anne therefore might not have represented her surroundings in a wholly realistic way. Therefore, one should have empathy for her mother, whom Anne seems to have despised almost throughout, as well as for her roommate. This despite the fact that Anne and he did get mad at each other frequently. For these reasons I have rounded out these characters.

But you do believe that the Diary provides a strong foundation from which children to lessons of history?

I do. The Diary is profoundly human, it is very easy to read, comprehend and explain. And all the horrors that Anne and Margot went through after Anne had been forced to stop writing, are missing. We have no testimony from her to document those seven months that became the worst time of her life. That makes it easier to tell the story as a universal one about a girl in isolation during war time and under the constant threat of death – as a beautifully, intelligently and bravely written Diary. But this story is missing the horrific fates of those who starved in the ghettos or who were deported in trains towards the East into the “Final Solution”.

Did you actually follow Kitty's trail?

Kitty follows the path Anne took in Europe: At first, she went on a regular train also carrying regular passengers with her family to the Westerbork labour camp. Then the whole way to Auschwitz in Poland and from there to Bergen-Belsen. I followed the same itinerary for my research. Today, Westerbork has the feel of a park. The town has so much greenery that one hardly can imagine what happened there during the war. Meanwhile, I had been to Auschwitz numerous times because of my parents. Looking at the Bergen-Belsen camp, I found it had been devised with much thought as a memorial site. There is not much left of the original structures, but as you enter, you receive an iPad containing the testimony of a survivor which triggers your own imagination. I integrated that journey, slightly expanded, into the Kitty's story. I show all the people she meets along her way and how the whole world sets out to pursue her because she has stolen the secret Diary.

So you did research besides working as an artist?

This project took eight years to complete. One of the reasons for that was that we had to conduct deep, extensive research on every aspect before we were able to write. The screenplay is really based on a lot of knowledge. We worked with a team of researchers and visited many archives, but especially the archives of the Frank family maintained by the Anne Frank Fonds in Basel and Frankfurt.

You began your work on the script a few years before the refugee crisis began in Europe in 2015. How did those images on TV impact your work on the film?

I would say that the script evolved alongside real life. In the beginning, at the end of 2013, I was not thinking primarily about refugees, but about young girls in war zones who experienced stories parallel to the story of Anne. But as immigration of refugees from war zones to Europe reached an apex in 2018 and 2019, I rewrote the script, although we had already used it as a basis for the first part of the animation. The second part originally dealt with girls in war zones. I then went over those sections and focused on children fleeing from war zones to seek safety in Europe. This is one of the advantages of animation: productions are so time consuming that one can still undertake changes in the middle of a project.

You introduced Awa at that point, a girl refugee from Africa. What inspired that choice?

Awa is a refugee from Mali, and I researched how and along which routes African refugees reach Europe. Because the story takes place in Amsterdam, I found it appropriate to introduce an African girl. Furthermore, the story spans three generations from Anne, who invented Kitty and passed on the book to her; to Kitty, who finds Awa and then hands over the book to her. But we do not have the slightest intention of comparing the Holocaust with the waves of refugees reaching Europe in the last five years. You cannot compare these events in any way. We only try to point out that every fifth child on the planet today is in mortal danger because of exposure to warfare. And we want to help viewers realise what it means to be a child born into a war that one neither understands nor is engaged in. From the perspective of a child, the stories of Anne and Awa do have parallels.



Today, many young people are engaged in movements that try to change the world, they are becoming active. How do you perceive that in relationship to the film?

In my homeland of Israel, I see that activists hail from all generations. However, it was the young who demonstrated every weekend in front of ex-Prime Minister Netanyahu's house, in the heat of the summer and while it was raining heavily in the winter. And eventually they won: the corrupt government was replaced by a new one. The world is changing. It is becoming more racist, violent, anti-Semitic. And at some point, people reach a mindset that makes them recede and settle into their own comfort zones. Israel has been moving to the right in a significant way in recent years. Before Covid this provoked demonstrations, mainly by young people in their twenties. This activism was heart-warming and wonderful because it provided hope.

At the outset of the film project, anti-Semitism had not reached the extent we are currently facing. Can the movie counteract that in any way?

Holocaust denial is mostly virulent among extremists beyond the fringes of society. We must focus our efforts more at the mainstream of society to fight against the slow descent of that history into oblivion and to present these stories as vitally important and anything but dusty relics of the past. That, is much more crucial. In the same vein children should not be raised with clichés and didactic statements and fears. They are much too savvy for that as they grow up so fast with the technologies they are using today. It is astonishing how quickly they can absorb knowledge today even as three- or four-year-olds, as they touch a screen for the first time and learn how to use it. In doing so, they should encounter and grasp good, correct and important knowledge. If we fail to tell stories fitting to their way of doing things, we will not be able to establish a relationship with them.

Is that how you came to develop an educational programme for the film?

Yes, we did develop a fantastic educational program in cooperation with the Anne Frank Fonds Basel. There already exists the Graphic Diary that was published during the production of the movie in the fall of 2017 and has since been translated into 30 languages. Now, we also have the film and the story of Kitty as a graphic novel under the same title "Where is Anne Frank." We also developed an educational package for schools, teachers and students that contains a wealth of knowledge and complements the artistic projects. This meets a need we encounter today, as well as an opportunity to introduce history and current affairs to the classrooms.

You mention the book telling the story of Kitty. Unlike the Graphic Diary, this book directly brings up the Holocaust as a topic. Could you tell us more about that?

Anne Frank is being perceived as a girl that had been locked up during the war. But the "final solution" is missing in her original Diary because she did not write about it. Therefore, the movies that have been previously made about Anne Frank do not mention that part of history either. But the Kitty book works as a continuation of the Graphic Diary and tells what happened to Anne after the family had been betrayed and deported. The book reports on the final seven months in Anne's life. The Kitty book represents the complete picture of the story that Anne could not finish writing down and that Kitty then completed in her place.



In the book you let Kitty write a letter to Anne – the first answer Anne ever received to the letters she wrote herself. How did you approach that part of the book?

While I was working on the book it became really important for me to create a connection between both sides and not just depict the relationship Anne had with Kitty as a one-way street. After Kitty has found out that Anne had died and then discovered the stone at Bergen-Belsen bearing her name, she writes her a letter and promises her to realise Anne's dream to save every person who can be saved. And she promises to fulfil Anne's dream of falling in love. It's a kind of oath of friendship among those two girls. That was the main idea behind it.

Q&A WITH PRODUCER **JANITHILTGES**

You've produced over 80 films, yet *Where is Anne Frank* is your first animated film. How did this change of genre come about?

We felt that animation was the most suitable form for making the legacy of Anne Frank accessible to today's younger generation. Making a Holocaust film in times of increased Holocaust denial and of increased awareness of the pervasiveness of racism has been a guiding theme for us over the years.

What did you find fascinating about the script?

The way Ari Folman found outstanding solutions to a complex endeavour: the Anne Frank Fonds in Basel wanted a film about Kitty with a connection to the present and about Margot and Anne's last seven months after the end of the Diary. The artistic solution of turning Kitty into the main character was a brilliant idea of Ari Folman's.

The film was developed over many years. What are the essential issues for you as a producer once production actually starts in a case like this?

The main thing for me as a producer is to remain true to the fundamental idea for the creation of the film that I, but also the director, had in the first place. As is the case for any film production, animation involves hundreds of people who join the project and bring countless questions and challenges with them. It's absolutely essential to hold onto your own initial conviction and to weigh up carefully what you do in the present in order to ensure that you aren't working against your original idea.

How can you reconcile making a Holocaust film with an educational mission that aims to create a link to the present with also delivering an engaging, artful film?

I believe that we've simply made a film that aims to make the Diary of Anne Frank accessible to the young generation who might not have yet read the book but would watch a film. That was our fundamental mission. However, it goes without saying that we're filmmakers, and not politicians, and that the most important thing for us is to make a film that is good, powerful and accessible enough to allow us to achieve our goals. I'm convinced that we're going to reach a large international audience with this film.

You can do anything imaginable with animation. What were the lines that you didn't want to cross as a producer?

I didn't ever feel that I needed to take on a supervisory role. The whole thing evolved very organically as the film was developed over a long period of time. The essential thing as a producer is to have complete trust in the director. During production you can, of course, intervene and help where necessary. However, selecting the director is the foundation of every film and we all know what Ari Folman has already achieved and what we can expect of him. In this case, the great challenge definitely lay in showing what happened to Anne Frank after the Diary ends when she was deported. How can you bring the Holocaust into a film that is also being made for children and families? Ari Folman found a powerful way of doing this, which is one of the things I find extremely compelling about the film.

Where is Anne Frank is the first international Holocaust film for children and families. What was the appeal for you about committing to a project of this kind?

In addition to the fact that it's a Holocaust film that's been made for families, I was also attracted to the task of creating a contemporary perspective of the Holocaust. With the character of Kitty, we have a young, contemporary, witty personality, while the past is represented at the same time by Anne. This is the answer to the question of how we can make the topic relatable to a young audience.

The film also has a strongly political aspect. Is it important for a film-maker to produce this type of film?

When I saw the finished film for the first time, I was proud and touched because I believe that this is an important film that needed to be made today. Given all the problems that we have with different types of racism, immigration and all kinds of violence, I see the film's message as extremely important. I think that's what I'm proudest of.

The film will be released into politically tense situations in the world. What does this mean to you?

Today, we see populism, right-wing extremism, even fascism, and definitely racism and xenophobia in various countries. I don't believe a film can change anything, but I believe it's important that, as filmmakers, we do everything to fulfil our hope of films playing a part in reintroducing a different mental and political attitude.



You as the producer, Ari Folman and the whole team are committed to connecting the film to an educational programme for schools. Why?

From the very beginning of the project we've worked with the Anne Frank Fonds to release this educational programme to accompany the film. It's a mission for all of us to get this film into schools, to children and young people, in order to initiate a discussion about today's problems but also about the significance of Anne Frank's story in today's world. It's not only about the Holocaust, which must of course never be forgotten, but also about the lessons that we can take from it for our own life. So it's not only a matter of looking back at what happened then, but also to see what is essential about the Diary and its message for the new generation.

The educational programme looks at the Holocaust, Jews, anti-Semitism, but also at children's rights, migration and refugees today. The film deals with these topics at a time when this is urgently needed again. What can you tell us about this?

It's a sad fact that our film is extremely important at the moment as the problems addressed in it, and the dangers facing minorities and children, as well as wars, are more topical than ever. The fact that this is the case doesn't make me proud of humanity, and I believe that we all need to face up to these problems. Our film is just a drop in the ocean in this process. But we are doing what we can as filmmakers.

Behind the story, there's a legacy and the fate of a family. How did you deal with this knowledge as a producer?

Cooperation between Ari, the Anne Frank Fonds in Basel as Otto Frank's sole heir, and myself was not difficult in this regard. I only joined the team when the development of the film started, so five years ago. We were delighted that members of the family who were still alive and the Anne Frank Fonds never imposed any limitations, but always provided any support we needed. We had access to all the archives and at no time did anybody say: you can't do it like that. It goes without saying that we discussed everything and explained our ideas, but the relationship was always based on trust and there were never any attempts to exert pressure. We were completely free to create something that looks different to the Diary, that is a piece of art and that, we hope, also provides a certain level of entertainment. This is probably also due to the fact that, from the very beginning, it was important to all of us to be extremely clear about the type of film we wanted to make. This meant that we had a kind of moral deal.

Q&A WITH ANNE FRANK FONDS

THE FILM

The Diary of Anne Frank is a historical document. Why did you decide on an animated film?

Anne Frank was full of dreams, emotions and hope, and wrote about all these things. Although her writing has timeless aspects, the art of story-telling and the understanding of history are changing. It was crucial for us to have Kitty as a main character in the film. Despite always being there in the Diary, she was never portrayed. To understand Anne, it's important to see Kitty. Animation allows us to show Anne's imaginary friend while using the language of the present. A story that was never told.

The animation was produced in 14 countries. What led you to choose a film production of this scale?

That's what animation's like. It's handcrafted. Given that we brought together the greatest talents in animation, we were obliged to produce the film in the best studios around the world. You can't compromise on quality. We now have proof that our approach was the right one, as "Where is Anne Frank" is being distributed around the world.

Five years ago you published the Graphic Diary. What is this?

The Graphic Diary is an adaptation of Anne Frank's original text and contains selected dialogues based on the Diary. The Graphic Diary was written, compiled, and illustrated by Ari Folman and David Polonsky.

The Diary of Anne Frank is a contemporary historical document. Does the genre of animation not contradict this?

When the Anne Frank Fonds, together with the family, decided in 2009 to create an animated film, two questions were paramount: how can we reach future young readers in their own language without making concessions in terms of the work and the persons mentioned in it; and how can the reader's edition continue to reach young people? This year we are also publishing the critical scholarly edition of the diaries to underline the importance of an academic approach. The aspects of storytelling and of dealing with documents are equally important.



How can a reading audience today be reached with a historical text?

The definitive reader's edition is still being read around the world. In recent years, the readership has actually grown, especially in countries where there has been renewed interest in Anne Frank. At the same time, reading behaviour is changing. Young people today are socialized differently and are growing up in a different historical context with a different educational background. Due to the Internet, images have become increasingly important, which is why we created the graphic edition of the Diary with original texts, illustrations, and images.

Why is the film being produced now?

We developed the project with a view of completing it for the 75th anniversary of the first publication of the Diary in 1947 and 65 years after the first film. The world today is experiencing increasing Holocaust denial, discrimination, anti-Semitism and a lack of knowledge. It was important to find a new language to tell the story for a new generation without making any compromises in terms of the original text.

Can a film help combat this?

Yes, it can open doors. For this reason “Where is Anne Frank” is accompanied by an extensive educational package for schools, which is being released with the film. We have an educational mandate to fulfil, namely to introduce the past, teach history, and raise awareness.

What would Otto Frank say about this project?

We obviously don't know, but we can learn from the decisions he made during his life. After he had the Diary published 1947, Otto Frank realised that the book needed to be adapted for theatres and cinemas. This decision meant that the Diary enjoyed global fame following a successful Broadway show and the famous Oscar-winning film by George Stevens. The Anne Frank Fonds and the family are thus, to a certain extent, following in Otto and Anne Frank's footsteps with this project. Anne wanted to become a writer, and at times she dreamt of being an actor. She adored her cousin Buddy Elias, who himself became an actor, so you could say that this approach is part of the family's legacy.

What does Anne Frank's family think of the animated film and the Graphic Diary?

The family supported and promoted the projects from the start, because these literary forms correspond to the written and oral tradition that has always been part of the family. Anne Frank's cousin, Buddy Elias, who was President of the Anne Frank Fonds until 2015, approved the script and was delighted with the first developments of the animated film. He immediately recognised this as a way to reach a new generation of readers.

ANIMATION AND COMIC BOOK

What do we need to know about the genre of animation?

In animation everything is possible, but not everything should be done. The Diary is a historical source and not a novel. The animated film needs to recognise and respect this aspect. It was, therefore, important to remain faithful to the text, preserving the integrity of the individuals and of history as well as the facts. At the same time, however, it was also clear that exaggerations, condensing and narrative solutions were required. This is why we were delighted that director Ari Folman agreed to make the film. He wrote an amazing script that grasps the dimension of the Holocaust and the means of talking about it to today's generation.

The Diary is a contemporary historical document and not a novel. Can the animated film live up to the original?

"Where is Anne Frank" is an artistic solution that aims to capture the essence of the original and the time in which it was written. The parts of the script set in the past are fully based on the Diary. At the same time, this adaptation is necessarily a condensation of the Diary and provides a wider perspective that extends into the present and also tells the story of the last seven months of Anne and Margot Frank. It's based on research undertaken in numerous archives, including the archives in the Frank Family Center in Frankfurt (Germany).

What content is illustrated in the Graphic Diary, which was published in 2017?

The Graphic Diary is based on the original text, consisting of Anne Frank's letters to Kitty following the dates of the entries in the Diary chronologically from the first to the last entry. The Graphic Diary brings these letters to life by connecting the text and the images, reading between the lines, as well as interpreting and condensing the text.



You included many of the letters in their entirety in the book. Why is this?

Anne Frank possessed noteworthy narrative skills and sharp powers of observation, which make the Diary meaningful beyond its role as a historical testimony. We selected this genre as we wanted to reflect this, by retaining the Diary as a contemporary document and preserving the character of the original. The Graphic Diary uses a lot of the original text, which is unusual for a book of this kind. This was, however, the only way for us to ensure that the Diary maintains its integrity and authenticity. It is not a graphic novel about Anne or the Frank family, but instead, it is simply the Diary in graphic form.

Is it correct that together with the film you are publishing the Kitty Book, which is the sequel to the Graphic Diary?

Exactly. The Kitty Book tells the story of the last seven months of the Frank family that are not covered in the Diary: the awful journeys of Anne and Margot to the Westerbork, Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen camps; the Holocaust. And finally the book deals with the present in accordance with the legacy of Otto Frank and the family. The Kitty Book develops the narrative along the lines of the text and in accordance with the dates in Anne Frank's Diary. And it offers a much wider view of the dimension of the story of the Frank family, including documents. As the team also used the family archives, historical archives, and many other sources, in addition to the creative effort behind every illustration, a great deal of research went into the illustrations and, ultimately, the narrative plot.

TEAM AND DEVELOPMENT

Where was the film developed?

Mainly in Israel, Switzerland, and Belgium, but also to a certain extent in the Frank family's hometown of Frankfurt and their emigration destination, Amsterdam.

Why did it take you 10 years to create the animation?

High-quality and good solutions take time. First we had a long discussion within the Anne Frank Fonds about whether and how we should create this project. For years we had been waiting for good projects, but they never showed up. It was clear to us that it was crucial that the Kitty Story be told to enhance understanding of the Diary and its legacy. Using this approach, we engaged in lengthy exchanges with the family. We would never have created the animation or the graphic books without their approval. We invested a great deal of time in finding the scriptwriter, director and team. Once Ari Folman had agreed to the project, we set up a research team to work on the script and a development team for the technique. Animation always requires a lengthy period of preparation. Dealing with the Holocaust takes even more time, especially when it is associated with educational work.

Why did you decide to do the project with Ari Folman?

Ari Folman is one of the best scriptwriters and one of the most talented writers of dialogues. He listens, understands and reflects. He puts the subject of the film above artificial solutions. We didn't have to give him specifications on how to deal with the Holocaust. He grew up as the son of Holocaust survivors and he grew up with war, so he understands history from experience and not only from reading books. We knew from the beginning that the top priority was the script and not the technique. We always knew that once the script worked, everything else would work out. There are no second takes in animation, which means it's about the script. Ten years later we know that we made the perfect decision and are delighted that Ari Folman brought Art Director Lena Guberman onto the project. She visualised the project that we and Ari Folman had imagined.

How much freedom were the filmmakers given with regard to the text?

The one major guideline was to respect the authenticity and integrity of the work and of real people, and to provide a genuine reflection of Anne Frank's text. Artists are ambassadors of stories. Ari Folman and the team had total freedom to create this film and enjoyed the complete trust of the Anne Frank Fonds. Viewers should judge the result for themselves after watching the film.

The animated film contains fictional elements. Is this legitimate?

When it comes to the past, these elements are dramatic, but never fictional; they originate from, or are based on, the original text in the Diary. What is shown in the film is what arises from reading the text and from what Anne Frank wrote about her dreams, emotions and wishes. Although the part about the Holocaust is not in the Diary, Ari Folman and the team researched the fate of the family. The scenes set in the present are fiction and relate to the Diary from Kitty's perspective.

The animated film has a very contemporary and political dimension. Why is this?

Anne and Margot Frank were two of 1.5 million Jewish children killed during the Holocaust. Children are still fleeing from conflict zones and their lives are in danger; minorities, refugees and individuals are still discriminated against. Reading the Diary without putting it into the context of the present is meaningless as we need to learn the lessons of the past to make a difference. This is Otto Frank's legacy for the world and for the Anne Frank Fonds. We need to remember the past through the Diary, learn the lessons of history, and actively work towards peace by living together and engaging in dialogue.

The film is accompanied by an international educational project entitled "Dear Kitty": Why is this needed?

The Anne Frank Fonds is a charitable NGO. Our purpose is to provide education about the Holocaust, to teach dialogue in a multi-cultural and multi-faith open society, and to raise awareness of children's and human rights. The foundation owns one of the most important legacy texts of the Holocaust and painstakingly ensures that it is published and used in a respectful and meaningful way. We initiate projects such as the film not as an end in itself but to open doors on teaching about the past and the present. Our aim is not to educate but to transfer knowledge. The international educational package will be released alongside the film to provide opportunities of dealing with the subject in schools. This is actually the biggest achievement of the project.



VARIOUS FORMS OF THE Diary OF ANNE FRANK

What is the reader's edition of the Diary of Anne Frank?

The reader's edition combines the different versions of the Diary of Anne Frank in a single comprehensive volume. It was compiled by Mirjam Pressler and is translated worldwide as the definitive edition. It replaces the 1947 edition, which was based on an abridged and different compilation of the texts.

Does the Graphic Diary replace the reader's edition?

Not at all. The reader's edition is and remains the principal work of Anne Frank. We ensure that it remains available around the world in an unabridged form and in good translations at a reasonable price. The Graphic Diary aims to serve as an introduction or as additional reading, but the reader's edition is and remains a fixed element of school literature. The Graphic Diary is to be understood as a supplement.

Who is the animated film aimed at?

At an international young readership from the age of 12 years onwards and at families. It is also intended for adults who read the Diary when they were growing up and who can now experience it in a new form.

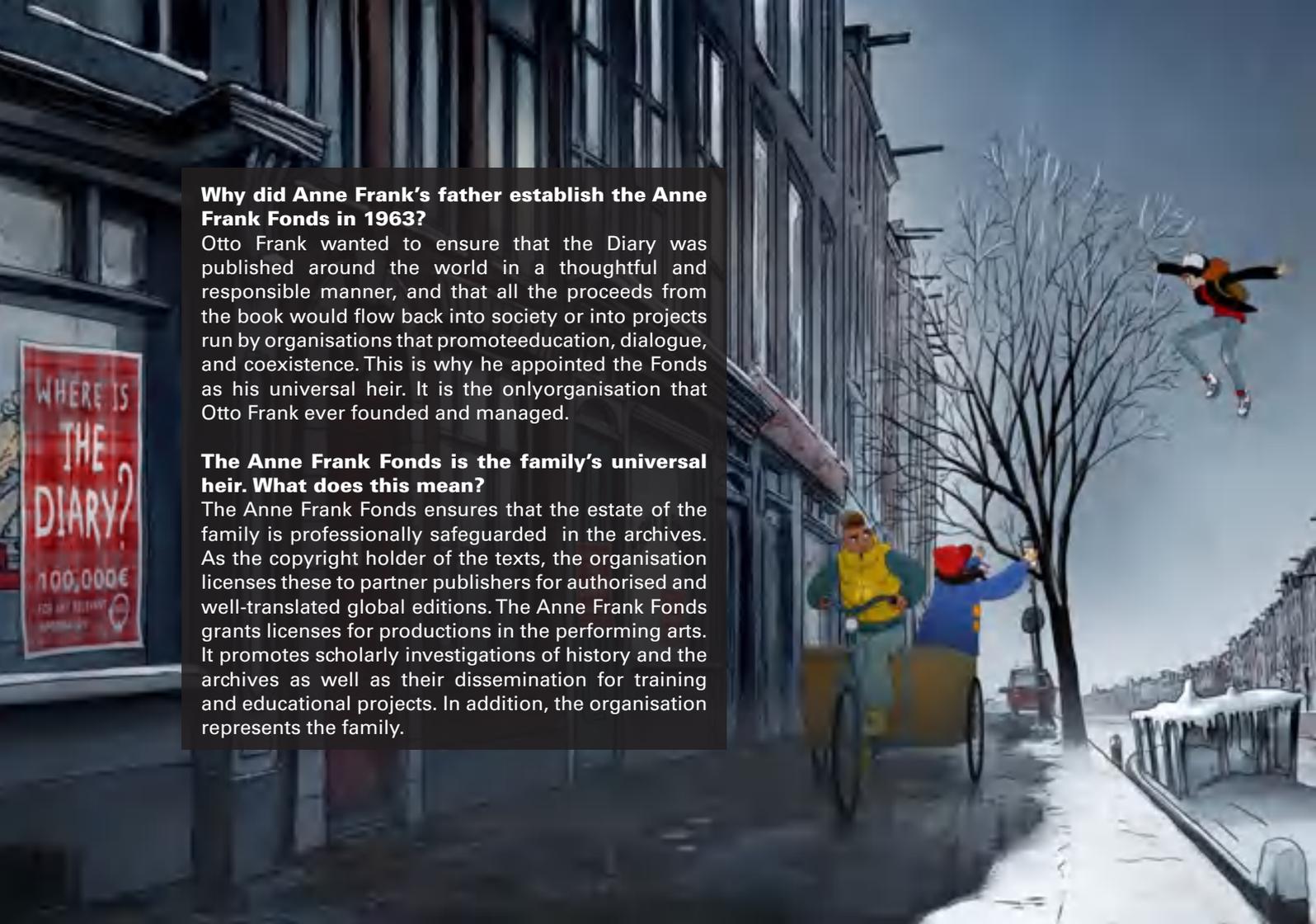
What are the different editions of the Diary?

There is the worldwide definitive and authorised reader's edition. This is the edition that can be found around the world and that is read in schools. In addition, since 2013, all Anne Frank's texts have been combined in a collected works edition. This edition is published in new translations on an ongoing basis and is aimed at senior-level school children, teachers and students. A new scholarly critical edition of the Anne Frank diaries, which is an academic edition with new translations, will also be published in 2021/22.

THE FRANK FAMILY AND THE Diary

Does Anne Frank's family support the animated film?

From the beginning, Anne Frank's cousin Buddy Elias supported the decision to create this narrative form of the Diary and demonstrated strong commitment to the idea throughout. This is because he recognized this as fulfilling an important last wish of his uncle, Otto Frank, namely to reach as wide a circle of readers as possible. The Anne Frank Fonds (which Buddy Elias was President of until his death in 2015) and the family have always focused on preserving the authenticity of the text above all else. At the same time, it was clear to Buddy Elias, who was himself a gifted narrator and actor, that this form would appeal to young people today. The film manages to juxtapose the humour and imagination that have always been prevalent in the family with the sad and serious known context of the story.



Why did Anne Frank's father establish the Anne Frank Fonds in 1963?

Otto Frank wanted to ensure that the Diary was published around the world in a thoughtful and responsible manner, and that all the proceeds from the book would flow back into society or into projects run by organisations that promote education, dialogue, and coexistence. This is why he appointed the Fonds as his universal heir. It is the only organisation that Otto Frank ever founded and managed.

The Anne Frank Fonds is the family's universal heir. What does this mean?

The Anne Frank Fonds ensures that the estate of the family is professionally safeguarded in the archives. As the copyright holder of the texts, the organisation licenses these to partner publishers for authorised and well-translated global editions. The Anne Frank Fonds grants licenses for productions in the performing arts. It promotes scholarly investigations of history and the archives as well as their dissemination for training and educational projects. In addition, the organisation represents the family.



What happens with the proceeds from book sales and licenses?

The Anne Frank Fonds donates all proceeds to charities around the world for educational or scholarly work. It also funds projects that promote the story in an effort to fight discrimination against minorities, to stand up for children's rights, and to raise awareness of anti-Semitism. The Board of Trustees of the Anne Frank Fonds serves in an honorary capacity.

The film was developed over many years. What are the essential issues for you as a producer once production actually starts in a case like this?

The main thing for me as a producer is to remain true to the fundamental idea for the creation of the film that I, but also the director, had in the first place. As is the case for any film production, animation involves hundreds of people who join the project and bring countless questions and challenges with them. It's absolutely essential to hold onto your own initial conviction and to weigh up carefully what you do in the present in order to ensure that you aren't working against your original idea.



ARI FOLMAN, DIRECTOR & PRODUCER

Ari Folman is an Israeli director, screenwriter, and film score composer. He has written for several successful Israeli TV series, including the award-winning *In Therapy* (Be Tipul), which was the basis for the HBO series *In Treatment*. He is the director of the Oscar-nominated *Waltz with Bashir* and *The Congress*.

FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

- 2013 THE CONGRESS** Writer, Director & Producer
Opening of the Directors' Fortnight Cannes - European Film Academy award for Animated Feature Film and winner of another 10 awards around the world.
- 2009 INTREATMENT** (TV) Writer (3 episodes)
Israeli Academy Award Winner Best Drama Series
- 2005-2009 ON ANY SATURDAY** (TV) Writer (16 episodes)
Israeli Academy Award for Best TV Series 2008
- 2008 WALTZ WITH BASHIR** Writer, Director & Producer
Oscar Academy award nominee for Best Foreign film 2009, Golden Globe Awards Winner - Best Foreign Language Film, César Award - Foreign Film, Festival de Cannes - In competition - 6 Israeli Academy Awards Winner
- 2004 THE MATERIAL THAT LOVE IS MADE OF** Writer, Director, Producer
- 2000-2004 SATURDAYS & HOLIDAYS** TV Dramatic series, Writer (13 episodes)
- 2001 MADE IN ISRAEL** Writer & Director
2 Israeli Academy Awards
- 1996 SAINT CLARA** Co-Director & Writer
Winner 7 Israeli academy awards, including Best Director and Best Picture, Winner jury prize at the Karlovy Vary festival. Opened the Panorama at the 1996 Berlinale Film Festival.
- 1993-2000 20 SHORT DOCUMENTARIES** – Channel 2 (TV) Director
- 1991 COMFORTABLY NUMB** Co-Director and Writer.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

JANITHILTGES - Producer

Since 1986, Jani is co-founder, partner and CEO of Samsa Film in Luxembourg. He is also co-founder and partner of ARTEMIS PRODUCTIONS (Belgium). At SAMSA FILM, in association with his partner/producer Claude WARINGO, and more recently Bernard MICHAUX, they succeeded in building the company's strong reputation and capacity in producing commercial art house films. So far, Jani has produced and co-produced more than 80 feature films. Since 35 years, he jointly manages SAMSA FILM which is, by its size and number of its productions, the first production company in Luxembourg. JaniTHILTGES is also Head of Studies of EAVE+, a professional training, project development and networking organization for audiovisual producers. In 2004, he was decorated by the Luxembourg Grand-Duke for his activities in the cinematographic field. In 2010, he was awarded the prestigious Prix Eurimages. Together with Head of Anne Frank Fonds Basel Yves KUGELMANN and famous Golden Globe winner director Ari FOLMAN, he founded PURPLE WHALE FILMS, based in Brussels, and brought to life FOLMAN's latest animated feature, "WHERE IS ANNE FRANK". The film will premiere

at the 74th Cannes Film Festival, in Official selection. Jani THILTGES recent producer's credits include : "THE RESTLESS" the new feature film of famous Belgian director Joachim Lafosse, selected in Competition, Official selection of the 74th Cannes Film Festival, "MORE THAN EVER" by Emily Atef, starring Vicky Krieps and Gaspard Ulliel (in post-production), "THE ORPHANAGE" by Afghan director Shahrbanoo Sadat which premiered at the 2019 Cannes Directors' Fortnight, "BLACK 47" the Irish successful Braveheart revenge movie by Lance Daly (Berlinale and Toronto Film Festival 2018) or Sam Garbarski's, "BYE BYE GERMANY" (Berlinale 2017). He has also produced these acclaimed and successful productions: "MÖBIUS" by Eric Rochant, "À PERDRE LA RAISON" (aka "OUR CHILDREN") by Joachim Lafosse (Best Actress Award for Emilie Dequenne, 2012 Cannes Film Festival "Un Certain Regard"), "NE TE RETOURNE PAS" (aka "DON'T LOOK BACK" by Marina de Van (2009 Cannes Film Festival), "JCVD" by Mabrouk El Mechri starring famous international star Jean-Claude Van Damme, "IRINA PALM" by Sam Garbarski (Berlinale 2007), "COMMET'Y ES BELLE" by Lisa Azuelos (box office success with one million admissions in France).

YVES KUGELMAN - Producer

Yves Kugelmann was born in 1971 in Basel where he also grew up. He is a journalist and became editor-in chief of the "Jüdische Rundschau Medien AG" in 1997. Since 2001 he is the editor-in chief of the "Tachles", "Revue Juive" and "Aufbau" magazines and the publisher of "JM Jüdische Medien AG" in Zurich since 2008. The company publishes magazines, books, films and podcasts. He is a co-founder of the annual study "Jahrbuch über die Qualität der Presse Schweiz" (Annual book on the quality of Swiss media) and a member of several boards, among which the Anne Frank Fonds, Basel, which was founded by Otto Frank in 1963 and initiated the new Animation about Anne Frank.. With Jani Thiltges, Ari Folman he owns the Purple Whale Films which produced the Animation „Where is Anne Frank“

LENA GUBERMAN - Art Director

Lena Guberman started drawing at an early age, and began studying art at the age of five. She graduated in Visual Communications from Betzalel Academy in Jerusalem (2003) and has illustrated eight published books, three of which have won the Israel Museum Award for Picture Book illustration for the years 2006, 2010 and 2012. In 2011 she was a part of Ari Folman's crew on "The Congress" (2013) as BG, Character Designer and Concept Artist. Guberman was one of the main character designers in Colin Brady and Christopher's Reeve's animated feature film "Everyone's Hero" and has illustrated articles in leading Israeli newspapers such as Ha'aretz and Globes using both digital technique and sculpting. In her book illustrations, she uses a variety of techniques from digital design to handmade sewing and embroidery and also sculpts clay.

KAREN O - Original Score

Karen O is a vocalist, songwriter, artist and the iconic frontwoman of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs. In addition to four albums with Yeah Yeah Yeahs and a solo album, *Crush Songs*, O has contributed to soundtracks for *Where The Wild Things Are* and *Her*—for which she was nominated for an Oscar; staged an experimental opera, "Stop the Virgens," at New York's legendary St. Ann's Warehouse; collaborated with fashion house KENZO and such iconic artists as David Lynch and Nine Inch Nails' Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross; and headlined festivals worldwide. In 2019, O released her latest project, a full length album with Danger Mouse entitled *Lux Prima*, which was released to widespread critical acclaim and earned a Grammy nomination for single "Woman". The pair also worked to bring their album to life with an immersive multimedia experience, «An Encounter with *Lux Prima*» that premiered at Los Angeles' Marciano Art Foundation

BEN GOLDWASSER - Original Score

Ben Goldwasser is one half of the genre-bending, Grammy nominated pop music act MGMT. Since forming at Wesleyan University in 2001, MGMT have released four critically acclaimed albums: *Oracular Spectacular* (2008), *Congratulations* (2010), *MGMT* (2013), and *Little Dark Age* (2018), and toured the world over, playing sellout shows and festivals on every continent. *Oracular Spectacular* was named album of the year by NME in 2008 and was one of Rolling Stone's top 20 albums of the decade. MGMT created and performed an original piece of music at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City to accompany a retrospective of the artist Maurizio Catalan, and have performed with the legendary Joshua Light Show. *Where Is Anne Frank* is Ben's first collaboration with Karen O and his first film score. Ben lives in Los Angeles with his wife Alisa and dog Freddie.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

EMILY CAREY (Anne Frank)

Emily is a rising star who can currently be seen on Netflix and BBC iPlayer as series regular, MIKA, in the hugely popular teen-thriller series, « Get Even ». Last year she starred as the titular role in Blake Harris' « Anastasia » and has starred as both YOUNG LARA and TEEN DIANA in Roar Utang's « Tomb Raider » and Patty Jenkins' « Wonderwoman », respectively. She has also appeared as BEA in Idris Elba web-series « Turn Up Charlie » and has recently finished filming the lead role of TEEN WENDY in Livia de Paolis' « The Lost Girls » opposite Joely Richardson and Vanessa Redgrave.

RUBY STOKES (Kitty)

Ruby was chosen from hundreds of actors to play the young lead in « UNA » opposite Ben Mendelsohn and Rooney Mara. She can currently be seen in Shonda Rhimes' series « BRIDGERTON » on Netflix and Sarah Gavron's film « ROCKS » which premiered at TIFF and was nominated for 12 BIFA awards and won the award for Best British Film. She played the lead in the BAFTA nominated short « Nose Bleed » by first time director Luna Cartoon and has just wrapped a leading role in Luna's next project « Shagbands » for Film4. She will next be seen in Ari Folman's animated feature « Where is Anne Frank ».

CREDITS



Written and Directed by

Ari Folman

Produced by

Jani Thiltges

Producers

Yves Kugelmann & Ari Folman

Producer

Alexander Rodnyansky

Coproducers

Eric Goossens, Anton Roebben , Bruno Felix,
Femke Wolting, Anne-Laure et Jean Labadie, Pierre Urbain,
David Mouraire, Samuel Feller

Animation Director

Yoni Goodman

Art director

Lena Guberman

Editor

Nili Feller

Original Score by

Karen O and Ben Goldwasser

VFX Creative Director

Dror Strom

Sound Designer

Aviv Aldema

Re-recording Mixer

Michel Schillings

Stop Motion Design

Andy Gent

Director of Photography BSC

Tristan Oliver

with

Ruby Stokes as Kitty
Emily Carey as Anne Frank

Casting

Casting Directors Kester Browning United Agents
Gaby Kester
Grace Browning

Dialect Coach Daniele Lydon

Executive Producers

Dr. Nathan Zomer, Sabby Mionis, KUK Films Limited,
AJH Films Limited

Associated Producers

Claude Waringo, Bernard Michaux, David Claikens, Alex
Verbaere

Line Producers

Alona Davidsohn Schory, Olivier Bizet, Denis Walgenwitz

with

Ruby Stokes Kitty
Emily Carey Anne Frank
Sebastian Croft Anne's Peter
Ralph Prosser Kitty's Peter
Michael Maloney Otto Frank
Samantha Spiro Edith Frank
Skye Bennett Margot Frank
Tracy-Ann Oberman Augusta Van Damm
Stuart Milligan Herman Van Damm
Andrew Woodall Albert Dussel
Naomi Mourton Awa
Ari Folman Officer Van Yaris
Nell Barlow Officer Elsa Platt
Maya Myers Sandra

And

Gaby Kester, Grace Browning, Daniele Lydon, Richard
Durden , Daniel Betts, Daniel Weyman, Tracy Wiles,
Leonora Haig, Dean Fouzailoff, Ben Tetro, Micha Rasin,
Simon Bubb, Tom Berkerly, Ike Bennett, Tina Gray, Paul
Grunert, Lottie Wade, Crispin Redman

In association with

Anne Frank Fonds Basel, Switzerland, The Actors Fund ,
Dramatists Guild Foundation, New Dramatists

Based Upon

Het Achterhuis, Dagboekbrieven 12 Juni 1942 - 1 August
1944 Samenstelling Otto Frank, 1947, Prometheus,
Amsterdam
De dagboeken van Anne Frank, edited by Mirjam Pressler,
1991, Prometheus Amsterdam
Diary of a young Girl, the definitive Edition 1991,
Doubleday, New York
Archives of the Anne Frank Fonds Basel, Switzerland
Archives Family Frank Center Frankfurt, Germany © Anne
Frank Fonds Basel, Switzerland

International Sales

Wild Bunch International

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R.A. Foundation

In association with

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screen.brussels, Le Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel
de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Flanders Audiovisual
Fund (VAF)

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Jury Prize – Weil Bloch Film Award For outstanding films on the subject
of shared society in Israel established by
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Television

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The Israeli Film Council

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Incentive, CoBO Fund

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Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany
Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah