



BRIEFER ENCOUNTERS

BRISTOL'S ANNUAL SHORT FILM AND ANIMATION EXTRAVAGANZA IS BACK.

The 14th edition of the Encounters Short Film Festival kicks off this month in Bristol from November 18-23, and will once again be screening some of the year's best short films and animations.

Guest speakers at the five-day festival include award-winning actor and director Paddy Considine; Oscar-winner Richard Williams; and Clare Kitson, the former Channel 4 commissioner and champion of British animation.

The festival will also screen around 300 shorts and animations from 30 countries, including newly-rediscovered early animations by Alexander Shiryaev; new BBC comedies; the finalists for the 2008 DepicT! 90-second film challenge; a new film by 2007's International winner Radu Jude (Romania); the debut short by Turner Art Prize nominee

Sam Taylor-Wood; and *Come Here Today*, starring Rhys Ifans and produced by Sadie Frost.

There is also the festival's Film School, which includes editing and cinematography masterclasses; explorations of new digital developments and pervasive media, guest screenings from Ireland, Poland, Russia, Scotland, UK film schools and UK-based minority filmmakers; a birthday tribute to the music videos of Bristol's Collision Films, three new BBC music shorts, the regional premiere of *Waltz with Bashir*, and screenings and hands-on events for young people.

Tickets are available on Encounters Short Film Festival Web site, as well as at the festival's main venue, the Watershed, in Bristol.

www.encounters-festival.org.uk



Marion Bataille's amazing novelty alphabet book is now available from Bloomsbury Publishing. This beautiful volume has no printed words – just Bataille's ingenious alphabet letters that pop up from the pages.

From the proud pyramid of an A on the inside cover, to Z, standing on its side at the end, each letter assumes a personality of its own. *ABC3D* costs £9.99 and makes an ideal stocking filler or Secret Santa present for one of your designer colleagues. www.bloomsbury.com



Postcard, by FL@33, is an international showcase of contemporary postcard design featuring the work of more than 100 artists, illustrators, photographers and designers from around the world. Even in an age of free e-cards, emails, texts and media messages, the humble postcard thrives, and this book proves that artists, designers and illustrators are continually exploring the endless possibilities of one of the smallest canvases available. The book comes with 20 specially commissioned postcards that sit snugly in the pockets of the cover. Designs come from France, the UK, Germany, Australia, Canada, the US, Spain and Switzerland.

Published by Laurence King, the 224-page paperback *Postcard* costs £19.95. www.laurenceking.co.uk





The International Comics Festival returns to London's ICA for two weeks of talks, exhibitions and films starting on November 14.

Two exhibitions feature at the ICA's concourse: Incredibly Strange Comics featuring some of the world's weirdest graphic novels: *Amputee Love*, *Hansi: The Girl Who Loved The Swastika*, *Trucker Fags in Denial*, *My Friend Dahmer*, *Mod Love*. Another strand is PoCom 2: Potential Comics Continued, where artists including Neal Fox, Bill Bragg and Emma Rendell join Web comics wizard Daniel Merlin Goodbrey to extend the gallery and online project initiated at the first Comica exhibition in 2003.

The festival includes a raft of high profile guest speakers including the Pulitzer Prize-winning creator of *Maus*, Art Spiegelman; Ian Rankin; Bulgarian-born artist Alex Maleev; and Dave McKean, who this year conjured up *The Graveyard Book* with Neil Gaiman.

Full programme details can be found at the ICA's Web site.

www.ica.org.uk



Fans of Finnish design will want to lay their hands on *Love Helsinki* - a 'coffee table exhibition' that is the joint project of graphic designers Vesa Ahtiainen, Anssi Risnen and Laura Suuronen, who met while studying at the University of Art and Design Helsinki.

Exploring the ways the city has inspired the three designers, the project takes the form of 12 coasters bearing bold graphic designs. The colourful pieces speak of small, everyday things, and focus on examining familiar places from a new perspective. As well as giving your home a touch of Scandinavian class, the coasters allow you to get a taste of the city without leaving your lounge.

www.lovehelsinki.net



Carting a camcorder around with you has become a whole lot easier, thanks to Kodak's pocket-sized Zi6 digital camcorder.

The camera is similarly priced to the Flip Mino (£129.99 including VAT to the Flip's £119.99 at Amazon), but unlike the Flip camcorders, the Zi6 shoots in HD, offering 720p at either 60 or 30 frames per second (as usual with these models, UK TV framerates aren't available, but most TVs can playback the Zi6's video). It also takes still shots at three megapixels (interpolated), stores data on SD cards (up to 32GB), and runs off two rechargeable AA batteries.

The Zi6 includes a built-in USB connector: just press a button on the front of the camera and out pops the connector. Its 2x zoom lens lets you zoom like you can with a Flip, but the Zi6 also includes a Macro switch that, when engaged, allows you to get within an inch of your subject without blurring. It features a 2.4-inch LCD that's not tremendously bright but can be seen outdoors in all but the sunniest conditions; a mono microphone on the front; a built-in speaker; and AV (composite) and HD (component) output ports on the side.

www.kodak.com/uk

While Sony launched its PRS 505 e-book reader here in the UK, a newer model goes on sale in the US from November. The company hasn't confirmed availability for the UK yet, but the new reader's features make it worth holding out for. The PRS-700 features a similar six-inch electronic paper display to that used in the PRS-505 but there's a new touch panel and a reading light.

The touch panel means users can 'turn pages' on-screen, search through e-books using an on-screen keyboard and highlight passages using a stylus. It can store about 350 e-books in its internal memory, and Sony says the battery supports up to 7,500 pages of continuous reading. It's compatible with a range of e-book formats. It costs US\$400 (about £235), which is \$100 more than the PRS-505 model, which will remain on sale.

www.sony.co.uk

