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## FAMILY

### Children's TV Festival Goes Around Globe

By BRENDA REES, Special to The Times

This month, introduce your kids to a thirsty penguin named Pingu; an adventure-loving caterpillar called Knyacki; Pi, a young computer prodigy; and Jack, a cat that searches for the Princess of Kittylitterland.

OK, so these television characters might not be what your kids are watching on a typical Saturday morning, but many are familiar faces to children in other parts of the world.

These and other characters will be featured as part of the 10th International Children's Television Festival, sponsored by the Museum of Television & Radio in Beverly Hills. Held during four weekends in November, the festival offers screenings from 21 countries along with live performances and craft workshops.

New screenings and performances will be presented each weekend and, best of all, they're all free.

"We want to expose our children to the diverse world we live in that some children have completely different experiences from us in the United States," says David Bushman, festival coordinator. "But we were also looking for pieces that would show that underneath our external differences, we have similar values, like loyalty, family and friendship. We wanted entertainment, and we also wanted poignancy."

Bushman says planning for the festival started in February, when more than 340 companies were asked to submit programs for consideration. After viewing hundreds of entries, Bushman and fellow festival coordinator Jenna Alden whittled the submissions to the 33 that make up the schedule.

"Our criteria for submissions [were] twofold," Alden explains. "We wanted programs that show us what animation looks like in different countries something that kids here might never have seen before. And we also looked for programs that depict how kids live in different countries, what their daily life is like."

Some programs that give portraits of children's everyday lives are found in the "Open a Door" series, produced in a variety of countries including Namibia, Israel, Spain and the Philippines five episodes of which will be featured. Another festival screening, "The Animal I Love: Bakhytjan and His Falcon," is part of a live-action series that explores the relationship between children and their pets in different countries.

Each festival day has screenings at 1 and 3 p.m. The earlier screening is more suited for preschoolers the films are shorter and have easy-to-grasp concepts while the later one is recommended for ages 6 and older.

The screenings are a mixed bag of live action, animation, clay animation, stop-frame and computer animation. Some are very short (2 minutes); others run up to 28 minutes. Some are pure entertainment; some explore simple joys; others are dramatic tales).

Dale Zaklad, the museum's education director, says that the festival offers families a peek at the bigger world around them and, for once, television cannot be considered the bad guy.

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"Let's Dance: Hagar in Israel" is one of 33 programs to be shown.

*Museum of Television & Radio*

The 10th International Children's Television Festival will be held weekends in November, beginning Saturday, at the [Museum of Television & Radio](#), 465 N. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills. New screening selections will be featured each weekend. The museum is open from noon to 5 p.m. All events, performances and workshops are free, but there is a suggested donation of \$6 per adult, \$2 per child. For a complete listing of screenings, show times and performances, visit the museum's Web site at [www.mtr.org](http://www.mtr.org).

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