

melbourne international **ANIMATION** festival

phone +61 (0)3 9375 1490
mobile +61 (0)415 730 098
email info@miaf.net
web www.miaf.net
address po box 584
flemington, vic 3031
australia
ABN 722 469 87 238

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To Whom It May Concern

I am very pleased to be able to provide this reference for **Jessica McLeod-Yu**. Jessica relocated from Sydney specifically to work on the 2015 Melbourne International Animation Festival. It was immediately evident that Jessica was an incredibly capable person, able to display a great deal of initiative and drive. She very quickly took command of some of the most complex elements of the festival delivery, in particular handling all international and local guest/presenter arrangements, somehow bringing something approaching order to the often chaotic temporary office space we inhabited at our screening venue and managing much of event marketing effort. As the festival progressed, I was also more than happy to have Jessica become more of a public face of the festival including having her introduce some of the programs and guests. In many ways, she was really the central figure that held much of the festival delivery together. This is no small achievement; MIAF is significantly under-resourced for what it is attempting to achieve and the event delivery can be stressful, constantly in a state of change and complex. Jessica's uncanny ability to grasp and manage the logistics of her role speaks volumes for her ability to tackle a wide range of projects, including that of film producer /director which is, I know, one of her major goals. She will excel at this.

Away from the raucous mayhem of keeping MIAF moving, it also became clearer to me that Jessica's considerable creative ambitions are well within her grasp. Apart from being able to draw very well and rapidly building a substantial technical skill-set as a filmmaker, watching Jessica's determination to get to the artistic core of many of the films selected for MIAF was illuminating. As the festival Director I get a great deal of "free advice" regarding the merits of films selected but Jessica's reactions to many of them was as sophisticated and nuanced as any. I was not surprised to subsequently find she had written a novel. She understands what makes stories 'work'.

Supporting early career talent in any field is, by definition, a risky endeavour. While Jessica's track record, as an animation filmmaker is not extensive at this stage, I honestly believe she has everything it takes to make a significant contribution to animation in Australia. Apart from the talent, technical skills and stamina she also has a very "feet-on-the-ground" approach to the less exciting facets of the endeavour such as budgets and deadlines.

I definitely wish Jessica well as she pursues a career as an animator and filmmaker; I have no doubt she will get there. I would be more than happy to discuss this reference in more detail and can be reached at the above contacts.



Malcolm Turner

Director: Melbourne International Animation Festival
Co-Director: London International Animation Festival
Animation Programmer: New Zealand International Film Festival
Presenting Programmer: Sydney Film Festival