



PRESS RELEASE

FROM “SVADBA” TO “AVATAR” BLEND: FILM & GAMES 2026 CONFERENCE REVEALS ITS FIRST MAJOR NAMES

Zagreb, 17 September 2026 – The BLEND: Film & Games conference will take place in Zagreb on 23 and 24 October 2026, once again bringing together the film industry, the video game industry and emerging technologies. This year’s edition will feature the largest number of international guests to date, real-world case studies and discussions exploring how film, games, animation, virtual production and artificial intelligence are becoming increasingly interconnected.

The conference is organised by the **Zagreb Film Office** and the **Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC)** through the Games Croatia project, with **Algebra Bernays University**, where the conference will take place, as its academic partner.

In its first major programme announcement, BLEND presents six international speakers, one Croatian panellist, and a particularly exciting name joining this year’s edition – Croatian expert **Željko Barčan**, FX Supervisor at **Wētā FX** in New Zealand, whose 26-year career has connected film, television, animation, games and interactive experiences across some of the world’s biggest screen productions.

ŽELJKO BARČAN – FROM PITOMAČA TO WĒTĀ FX

Željko Barčan currently works as an FX Supervisor at Wētā FX and brings 26 years of experience creating visual effects for projects in which, in his own words, things “crash, burn, fly, splash and generally behave badly on screen”.

Throughout his career, he has worked at **Wētā FX**, **DNEG**, **DreamWorks Animation** and **Digital Domain**, contributing to productions ranging from *Stargate SG-1* and *The Boss Baby* to *Interstellar*, *PHAROS* and *Avatar: Fire and Ash*. He has worked on projects recognised with Emmy Awards, VES Awards and Academy Awards.

After almost three decades working at the intersection of film, technology and interactive media, Barčan comes to BLEND with the perspective of someone who has witnessed first-hand how the film and gaming industries increasingly borrow ideas, tools and processes from one another – and what this means for the future of audiovisual content creation.

CROATIAN AND INTERNATIONAL GUESTS: FROM TRANSMEDIA AND AI TO GAMING

Among the first confirmed international names is **Yves Fevrier (Belgium)**, a digital strategist and creative producer with more than 25 years of experience with the digital group Tintinimagination, which manages rights related to Hergé’s Tintin. At BLEND, he will discuss the convergence of film, video games, museums and other media in today’s evolving media landscape.

Igor Šeregi (Croatia), director of the film *Svadba*, comes to BLEND following the film’s exceptional success. He will discuss the origins of the project, the development of its story and its production challenges, as well as what it means to now be preparing *Svadba 2*.

ORGANIZATORI:



AKADEMSKI
PARTNER:



Silke Hassreiter (the Netherlands), professor at Breda University of Applied Sciences, researches the role of AI in employment, skills and the future of virtual production, VFX, video games and animation. Her focus will be on how AI is changing the labour market and which skills will become essential for new generations of professionals.

Jean Gréban (Belgium) has more than 35 years of experience in the international audiovisual industry and currently works as a Licensing Agent for **The Smurfs** in the gaming sector. At BLEND, he will explore how one of the world's most recognisable IPs has crossed media boundaries and adapted to the world of interactive entertainment on multiple levels.

Pierre Puget (France) is a screenwriter and director with experience across both the film and video game industries, associated with projects and studios including **BRAINS Narrative Studio** and **IO Interactive**. He brings extensive experience in developing narratives across film and games.

Pierre will also lead a workshop for producers interested in expanding their work into video games or transmedia projects. Registration for the workshop is required via info@filmzagreb.hr.

Andrei Goaga (Romania), one of Europe's leading experts in virtual production, will speak about the technologies transforming the way films, series and video games are created – from real-time rendering to virtual sets.

The first programme announcement also includes **Dalibor Barić**, a film director and multimedia artist whose animated films have screened at numerous international festivals. Barić will participate in a panel dedicated to the practical possibilities of using AI tools by directors and creators in the production of audiovisual works.

BLEND: Film & Games is conceived as a place where the conversation goes beyond trends to focus on the real-world experiences of professionals who are already shaping them.

Following more than **600 registered participants** at last year's edition, the 2026 programme brings an even stronger international focus, welcoming guests from across Europe and beyond.

The complete programme, along with additional speakers and panellists, will be announced soon.

Admission to the conference is free with prior registration, which remains open until **22 October at 6:00 PM**.

All conference updates are available on the official BLEND website, blendzagreb.eu, and through the social media channels of BLEND, Zagreb Film Office, Games Croatia and Algebra Bernays University.

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