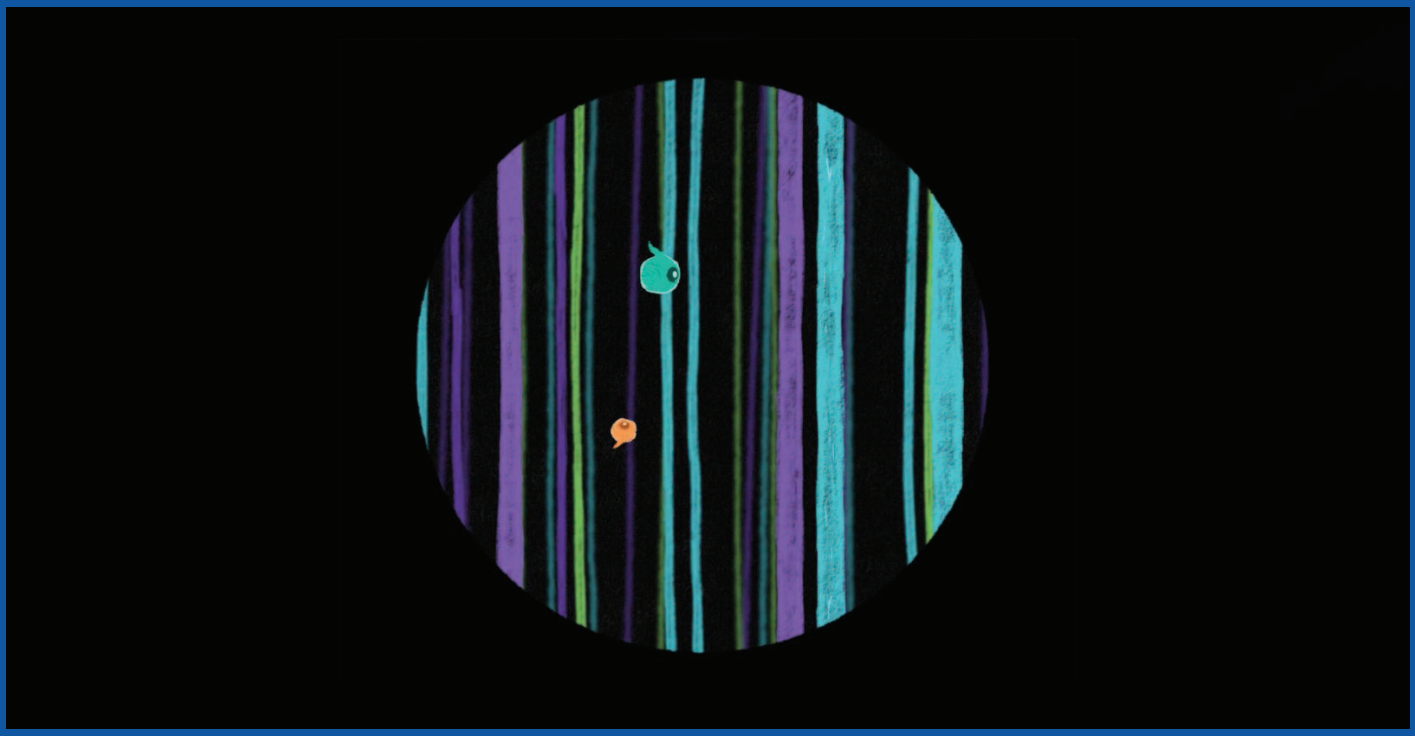
DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Scotland's International Film Festival for Young Audiences



Teachers' Resource Pack:
Shorts for Wee Ones – Toti

Early Years | Created by Sarah Derrick, DCA Head of Learning

Discovery Film Festival: Sun 25 October – Sun 2 November 2025

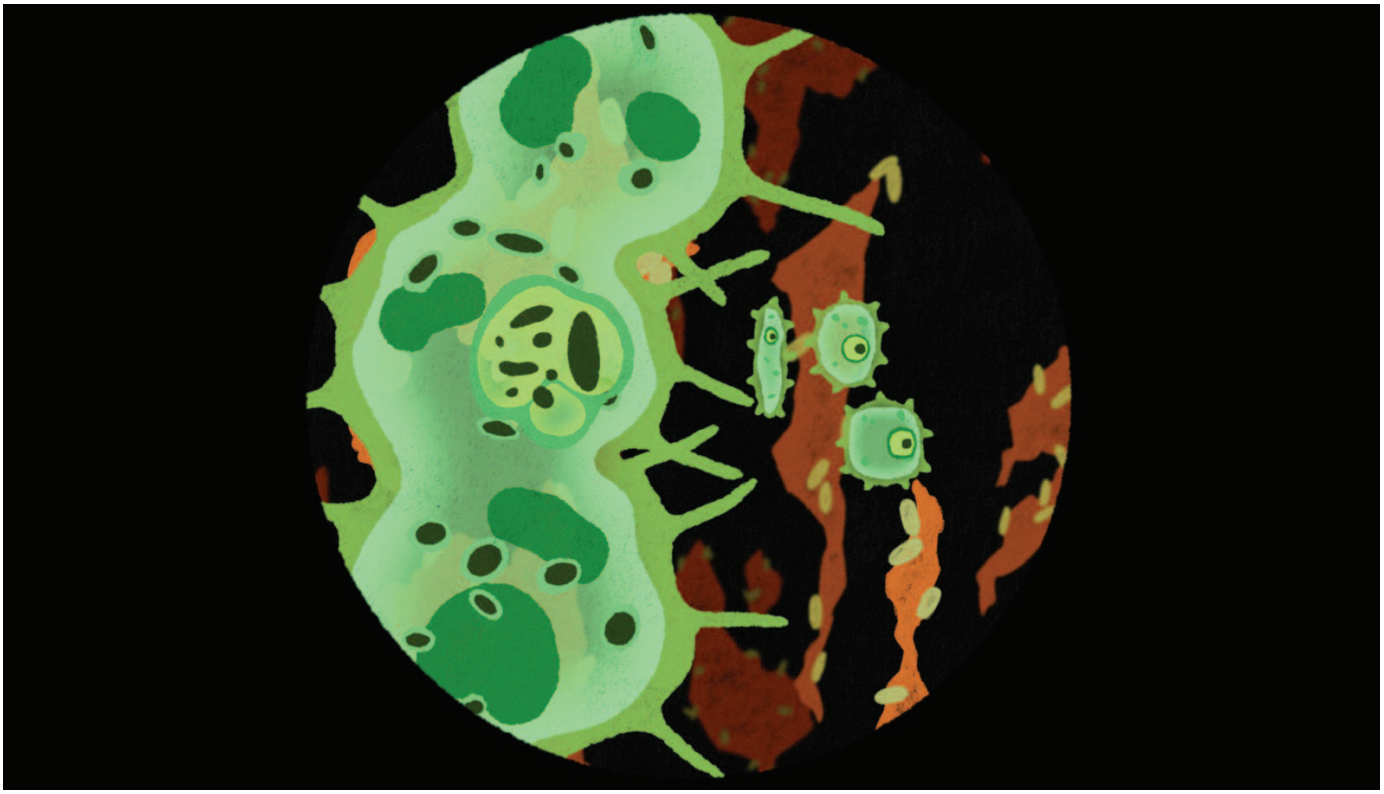
DCA
Dundee Contemporary Arts

DUNDEE
ONE CITY, MANY DISCOVERIES

CREATIVE SCOTLAND
ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

dca.org.uk/discovery-film-festival

With support from the DCA Cinema and Learning teams



Introduction

Discovery Learning Resources give you exciting classroom activities to enhance Curriculum for Excellence delivery.

They are created by classroom teachers and education professionals.

Each resource aims to:

- support and extend working with film in the classroom
- help prepare teachers for a class visit to a Discovery Film Festival film and to extend the impact of that visit for delivery of CfE
- develop confidence in Moving Image Education approaches and working with 21st Century Literacy/moving image texts

Each resource is free and available to download from:
https://www.dca.org.uk/discovery-film-festival-resources/

Toti

Dir: Maëlle Chevallier

Switzerland / 6m

Dialogue free

Toti

Synopsis:

Two small cells, Toti (orange in colour), and Blue, become friends and start exploring the world they live in, which is described as an 'organism'.

They grow up together, meet other beings from their world, and then an accident separates them.

Toti continues exploring on her own moving through many different kinds of experiences, and as a result keeps growing and evolving, responding to the environment around them.

Towards the end of the film Toti and Blue meet up again, only to realise that they have become different as a result of their different journeys. Will they stay friends or not?

Advisory note:

Suitable for all ages and stages.

Teacher's notes:

Age and stage recommendations, including CfE objectives:

The following CfE Experiences and Outcomes are covered in this pack:

Health and Wellbeing: **HWB 0-47a, HWB 1-47a**
Science: **SCN 1-12b, SCN 2-12b**
Literacy: **LIT 0-01c, LIT 1-20a, LIT 1-28a, LIT 1-29a, LIT 2-20a, LIT 2-24a, LIT 2-28a**
Expressive Arts: **EXA 0-05a, EXA 0-09a, EXA 0-18a, EXA 1-03a, EXA 1-09a, EXA 1-05a, EXA 1-18a, EXA 2-05a, EXA 2-09a, EXA 2-18a**

Teacher quote:

Art and science are closer than we think in terms of learning – both subjects include exploration or investigation, visualisation and communication. We love combining art and science in project-based learning (PBL), putting the A into STEM to make STEAM. The short film, *Toti*, is a rich experience for the senses and is a great resource for CfE STEM, Literacy, Expressive Arts and Health and Wellbeing outcomes. For upper Level 2 and into 3 this would be a fun route into the topic of evolution.

Sarah Derrick Head of Learning, Dundee Contemporary Arts

Before watching the film:

Activity 1: **Mindful Magnifiers (Health & Wellbeing)**

Use the Mindful Magnifiers Activity Pack and magnifying glass template here:

https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/mindful-magnifier-activity/

(a free resource from Elsa Support) for either an activity before viewing the film, or at the end of a school day.

Activity 2: **Shrink to the size of a cell: describe your world (Science, Literacy)**

Imagine:

Imagine you are the orange cell, and that you are actually inside each of the environments – use the stills from the film in **Appendix 1** for the whiteboard or as colour copy handouts.

Use your imagination to explore and describe the environment that you are in – use as many of your senses as you can. Teachers may wish to select or focus on key senses for younger children.

Look:

If you have class magnifiers you could use them to look at natural objects from the school garden, or from a local park and link to the imaginary microscope images in the film. You could use the "See, Think, Wonder" worksheet see here:

https://naturalhistory.si.edu/sites/default/files/media/file/200320-ssh-see-thinkwonder.pdf

Talk and Listen:

Talking and listening, group work or individual (and also writing for Level 2 to organise the information), explore:

- sounds
- smells
- movement
- textures
- colours
- shapes
- sizes
- pattern

Does it remind you of anything?

Compare with real life images:

In *Toti* the environments that the cells move through look very much like actual microscope images of human and plant biology: mycelium, corals, blood vessels, ice or salt crystals, xylem and phloem in plant stems, chlorophyll, our immune system cells. Stills from the film are in **Appendix 1** for you to use on the whiteboard or print off.

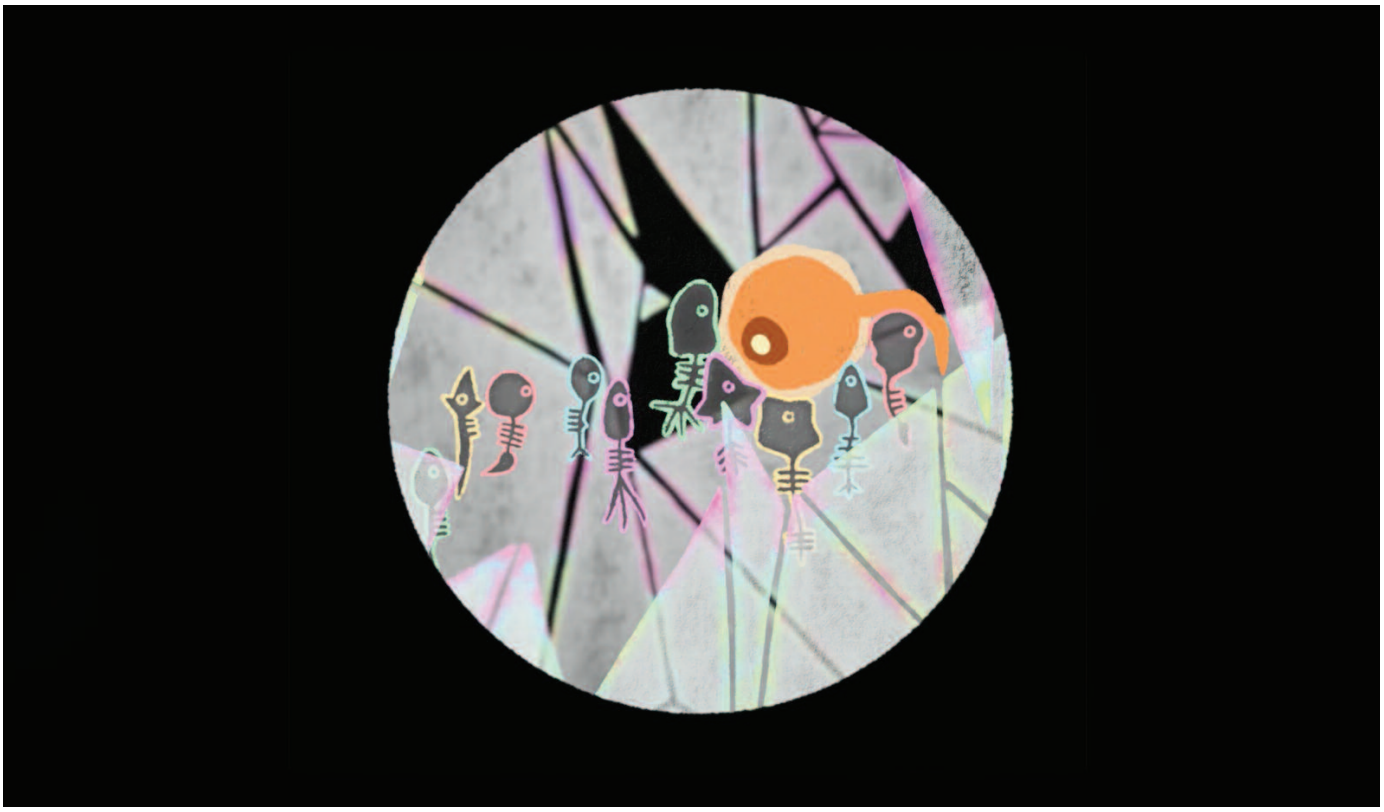
Show pupils real life microscope images. These websites have free, good quality images of real-life plants and crystals:

Science & Plants for Schools has some great images of real plant structures and cells:
https://www.saps.org.uk/teaching-resources/resources/3744/sapsimage-library/

CBBC Newsround from 2013 has some amazing microscope images:
https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/66508870

Myscope has images that you can increase the magnification on:
Here are sea salt crystals: **https://myscope-explore.org/letsZoomIn.html**
Here is a butterfly wing: **https://myscope-explore.org/letsZoomIn.html**

Nikon Small World Photography Competition 2019:
The surface of a seed: **https://www.nikonsmallworld.com/galleries/**



Activity 3: **Circle compositions: Collage or draw and colour (Expressive Arts, Science)**

Composing in circles:

Be inspired by Toti and the microscopic world framing everything within a circle as if you were looking through a lens to create scenes or mini environments. You can also use cardboard tubes for each child to mimic looking through a microscope at their different artworks or use a circular frame to place over the pupil's artwork to create the effect of looking through a microscope or an actual microscope slide.

Collage:

For all Levels you could use recycled materials, wool, string, straws, scrunched paper and tissue paper, recycled fabric, funky foam shapes or paint, drawing and colouring with crayons, coloured pencils or pens and explore the visual elements of line, colour, texture, pattern, scale, composition.

Texture printing and rubbings:

For Level 2 pupils making textural prints using bubble wrap, corrugated card, household items like forks, potato mashers, sponges, combs, scrunched foil and plastic bags and ready-mixed paint OR by making crayon rubbings from a range of surfaces and texture would be additional techniques to explore.

Extend to wider Expressive Arts:

Music:

In groups/tables create soundscapes for the different environments that reflect the different shapes, textures, movement and mood. Link to Film Education Cs and Ss:

https://screeningshorts.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2024/02/The-Ten-Tools-of-Film-and-Screen.pdf

Dance:

For all Levels you could use recycled materials, wool, string, straws, scrunched paper and tissue paper, recycled fabric, funky foam shapes or paint, drawing and colouring with crayons, coloured pencils or pens and explore the visual elements of line, colour, texture, pattern, scale, composition.

Texture printing and rubbings:

Create an expressive dance or movement piece that reflects the orange cell's journey through the different kinds of environments, linking to the movement, shapes, feelings, sounds and mood of each.

Move around the school hall, playground or classroom to reflect the journey, going through time and different environments. Could you use chalks to make large circles, colours and shapes on the playground?

Activity 4: **Film Education for CfE: explore the film and talk/write about it using the Cs and Ss (Science, Literacy)**

Using the Ten Tools of Film Education resource created by Screen Scotland:

https://screeningshorts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Ten-Tools-of-Filmand-Screen.pdf

You can explore some of the Cs and Ss in depth through Talking, Listening and Writing to enhance Literacy at all levels.

- **Character**
- **Colour**
- **Composition**
- **Camera**
- **Cutting**
- **Story**
- **Sequence**
- **Setting**
- **Symbol**
- **Sound**

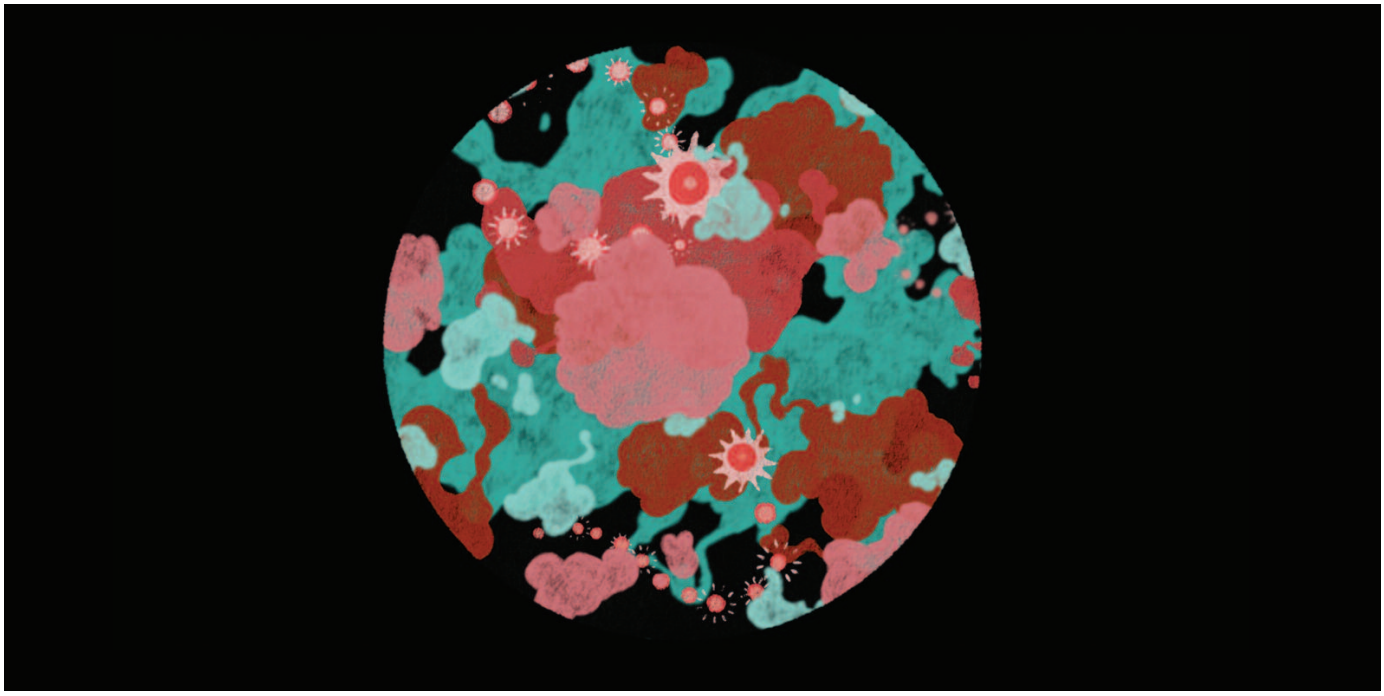
For example:

1. Sequencing the story and sounds:

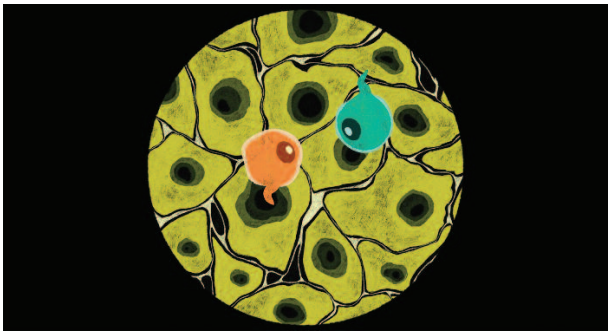
Using the film stills **Appendix 1** and poster **Appendix 2** invite pupils to make a story sequence and add suggested sounds for each image. Then narrate the story using their sequence.

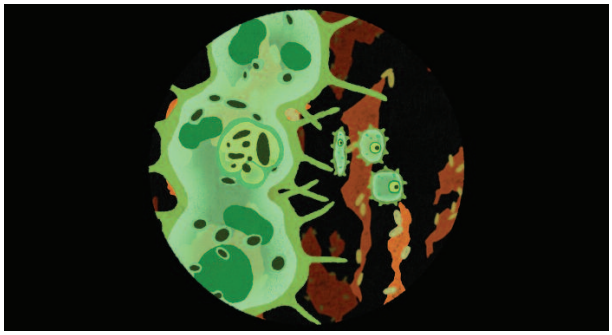
2. Characters and colour:

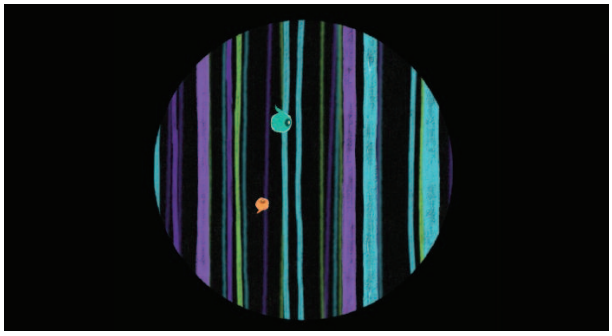
- What can pupils tell about the characters at the beginning?
- And at the end how have they changed if at all? How does the film maker show us?
- Why might the filmmaker have used orange and blue/ green as their colours?

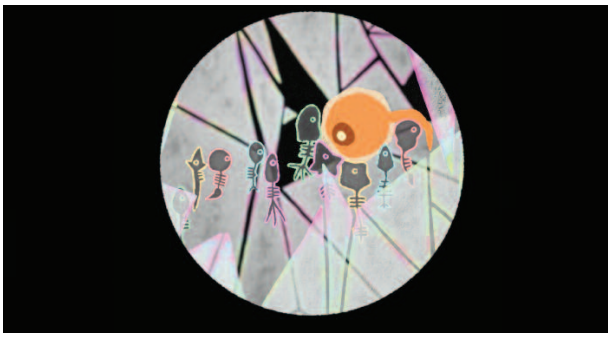


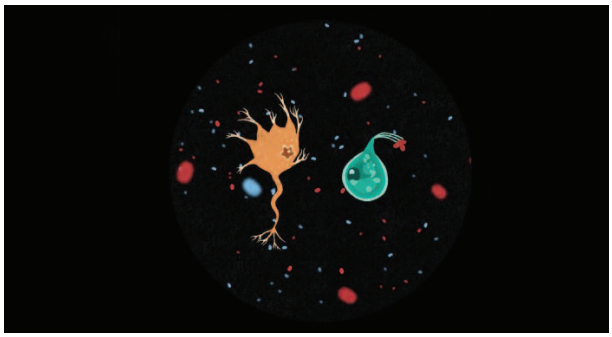
Appendix 1: Film stills



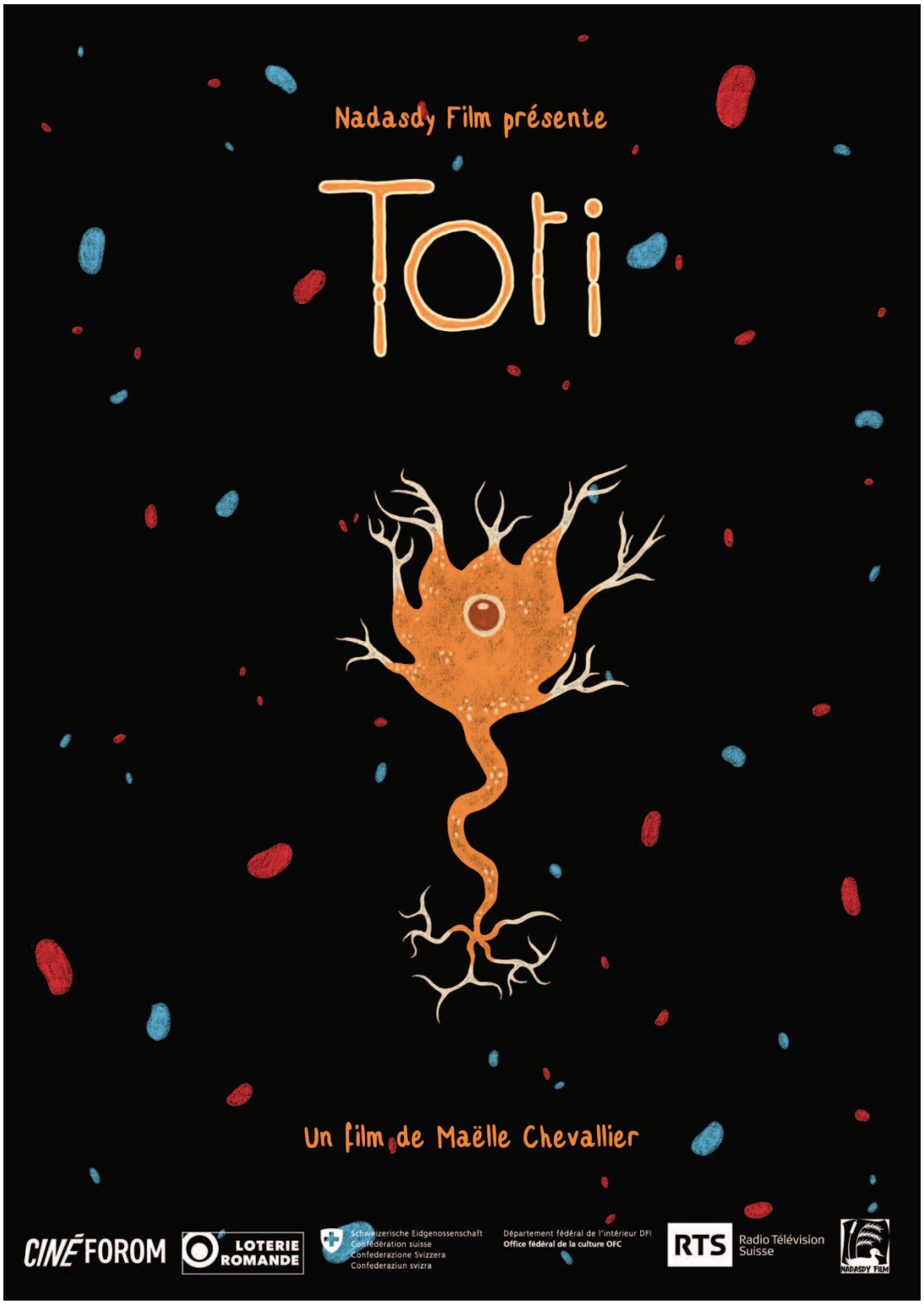








Appendix 2: Film poster



Useful websites/links:

Technologies Level 2:

Animating Science P6/7 Project – stop motion films made by pupils and teacher feedback:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyJ2oFFBBcg

https://www.dca.org.uk/news/dunning-primary-test-drive-new-animating-scienceresources/

Expressive Art & Design all Levels:

Luna (excerpt) by Katy Dove, visual artist – animation and soundscape as an example:

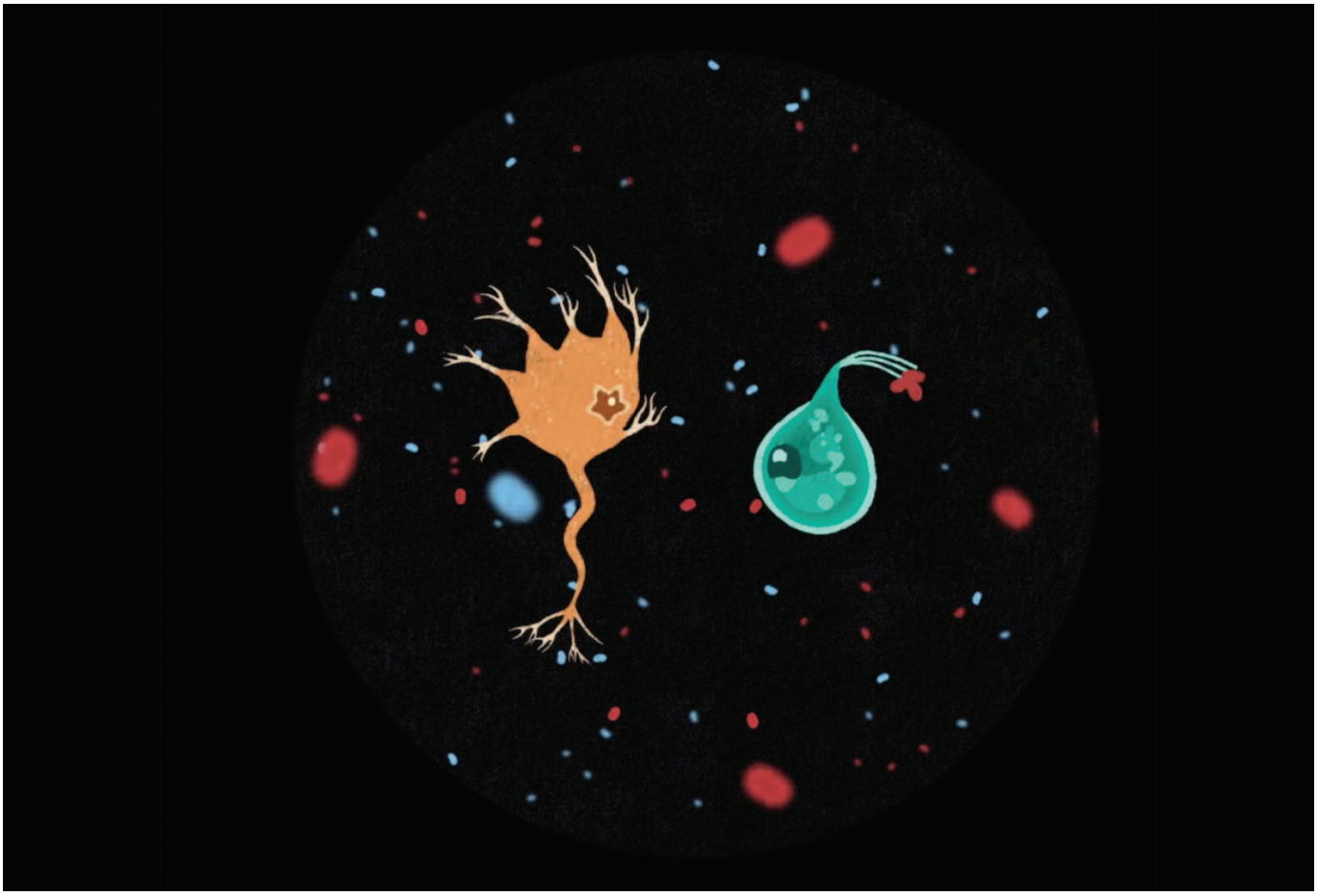
https://vimeo.com/81492504

Expressive Art & Design all Levels:

Rachel Eulena Williams, visual artist – images of compositions in circles or roundels:

https://www.dca.org.uk/exhibition-archive/rachel-eulena-williams/

https://canadanewyork.com/artists/rachel-eulena-williams



Evaluating this resource

We hope that you found this resource useful and appropriate.

Please do send us any film reviews, letters from your pupils, documentation of classwork and your feedback by e-mailing **amaya.marco@dca.org.uk**

Would you make a good Discovery Film Festival Case Study?

We are seeking a number of simple Case Studies in how teachers have used or are using Discovery films in the classroom across Curriculum for Excellence and across the Levels.

Any case studies that we develop would be intended for presentation on GLOW, the Creativity Portal and on Discovery Film Festival websites. We have a simple template to be completed and are keen to have classwork and documentation included.

If you would like to be a Discovery Case Study please e-mail **amaya.marco@dca.org.uk**