



PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of Europa Cinemas exhibitors

Cannes - Hôtel Majestic - 20 May 2006

In the presence of Mrs Viviane Reding and Mrs Véronique Cayla

2005: European films progress notably in the Europa Cinemas network

In the context of falling cinema attendance, exhibitors belonging to the Europa Cinemas network succeeded in increasing the proportion of European films on their screens.

In 2005, almost 60% of screenings were reserved for European films. Progress was apparent above all in **the proportion of European films distributed outside their country of origin, which increased from 34 to 37%.** It was therefore diversity which gained ground in this network, and this did not concern the European continent alone since **13%** of screenings offered Asian, South-American and African films.

Exhibitors nevertheless voiced several subjects of concern.

First the increased vulnerability of cinemas in the face of the headlong race towards new supports for film distribution, and the threats this poses to the chronology of exploitation.

Secondly, uncertainty concerning the conditions of introduction of digital projection, on a technological and above all economic level. How will independent exhibitors manage to finance such substantial investment without losing control of their scheduling and lowering quality?

Concern finally as to the financial resources of the forthcoming MEDIA 2007-2013 programme.

The Commissioner, Mrs Reding, congratulated the exhibitors of the network for their excellent, in-depth success in the distribution of European films. Their daily commitment to audiences, the diversity of their programming and the quality of their cinemas enabled European productions to make headway in a highly competitive environment. She confirmed the involvement alongside them of the MEDIA programme.

Véronique Cayla, Director General of the CNC, stressed the success of the network in terms of diversity of scheduling and the welcome extended to all audiences, and notably the younger viewers. She emphasized that digital technology was an opportunity for distributors and exhibitors alike to improve the circulation of European films.

Exhibitors looked forward to the next Europa Cinemas Conference which will take place in Paris from 16 - 19 November 2006.

The three European films which in 2005 benefited from the largest number of screenings in the theatres of the network were:

- 1 - *Der Untergang* (Germany, Oliver Hirschbiegel)
 - 2 - *Mar adentro* (Spain, Alejandro Amenabar)
 - 3 - *Un long dimanche de fiançailles* (France, Jean-Pierre Jeunet)
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Since it was founded in 1992, Europa Cinemas has pursued a long-term activity in the film theatre sector and set up the first international network of theatres showing a majority of European films.

The aims of Europa Cinemas:

- Increase the screening of and audiences for European films, in priority non-domestic films
- Develop the European initiatives launched by exhibitors in favour of Young Audiences
- Encourage diversity of offering in European titles
- Develop a network of theatres allowing joint actions to be undertaken at national and European levels
- Assist with the transition to digital projection in film theatres.

In total, Europa Cinemas is active today in **59 countries** and supports almost **1600 screens**, thanks to the support of the European Union's MEDIA Plus and EUROMED AUDIOVISUEL II programmes, EURIMAGES (Council of Europe), the Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC) and the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (France), and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.

In the framework of EUROMED AUDIOVISUEL II, Europa Cinemas has committed itself for 3 years to two new action programmes: EUROMED CINEMAS, alongside the Centre Cinématographique Marocain (project leader) and MED-SCREEN with Beirut D.C. (leader), Ankara Cinema Association and Europanet by A.I.A.C.E.

The Africa Cinemas programme was launched in 2003 with the support of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the French Ministère des Affaires Etrangères and the European Commission. Europa Cinemas is responsible for its implementation.

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