



EUROPA CINEMAS

NETWORK REVIEW N°28



CINEMAS ON THE MOVE

EUROPA CINEMAS AWARDS 2016



06



08



12



32



42

Europa Cinemas Network Review

President: Nico Simon. **General Director:** Claude-Eric Poiroux. **Head of International Relations - Network Review Editor:** Fatima Djourmer. **Press:** Charles McDonald – charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk. **Deputy Editors:** Sonia Ragone, Jérôme Tyl. **Contributors to this issue:** Irene Angel Echeverri, Rémi Bigot, Claudia Droc, Raphaëlle Gondry, Adrian Preda, Menem Richa, Jean-Baptiste Selliez, Alexandre Tchernookov. **Translation:** Cinescript. **English Proofreader:** Tara Judah. **Design:** ★ Bronx agence - www.bronx.fr. **Client Director:** Gisela Blanc. **Project Managers:** Anne Saccomano, Lorie Cibois. **Graphic designers:** Sasha Gerards. **Layout:** Anne Devanlay, Camille Chauvin. **Print:** Intelligence Publishing. **Cover:** Kino Europa, Zagreb (Croatia)

Founded in 1992, Europa Cinemas is the first international film theatre network for the circulation of European and partner countries films. Europa Cinemas 54 rue Beaubourg - 75003 Paris - France - T: + 33 1 42 71 53 70 - info@europa-cinemas.org

Contents

04

EDITORIAL

by Claude-Eric Poiroux

06

EUROPA CINEMAS AWARDS 2016

06 Best Programming

08 Best Young Audience Activities

10 Entrepreneur of the Year

12

EUROPEAN TOUR OF CINEMAS

by Mikael Arnal & Agnès Salson

18

CINEMAS ON THE MOVE

18 BELGIUM

Plaza Art (Mons)

20 FRANCE

Cinema LUX (Caen)

22 GERMANY

Programmkino Ost (Dresden)

24 GREECE

Danaos (Athens)

26 ITALY

Cinemazero (Pordenone)

28 LATVIA

K-Suns (Riga)

30 LITHUANIA

Kauno kino centras 'Romuva' (Kaunas)

32 THE NETHERLANDS

Plaza Futura (Eindhoven)

34 POLAND

Luna (Warsaw)

36 RUSSIA

Kinoteatr Zarya (Kaliningrad)

38 SLOVENIA

Mestni Kino (Ptuj)

40 SPAIN

Cineciutat (Palma, Mallorca)

42 SWEDEN

Cnema (Norrköping)

44 SWITZERLAND

Kultkino (Basel)

46 UNITED KINGDOM

Queen's Film Theatre (Belfast)



Audience Development and Innovation Lab - Bologna 2016



The 28 Times Cinema 2016 group, with Karel Och (Director of the Karlovy Vary Film Festival) and Director Bruce LaBruce (President of the Venice Days Jury)

EDITORIAL

In his opening speech at the European Film Forum in Venice in September, Commissioner Öttinger spoke at length about the essential role Europa Cinemas and its exhibitors play promoting European films. He also highlighted the pre-eminence of cinemas and the dynamism of the people who run them. He described cinemas as a driving force in the digital revolution – the Commission's central concern. We are delighted to convey this message to you and would like to congratulate you on your work and results. On the 25th anniversary of MEDIA, we should remember how decisive this programme

has been for our network, providing most of our resources and support. It is fitting therefore that we continue our work with managers and teams at Creative Europe and the Executive Agency in Brussels. We would like to thank them here. An anniversary is also a good opportunity to look to the future. Exhibitors are all too aware that they will continue to play a decisive role in a digital revolution that has already had a major influence on their projection equipment and communication tools. We all know that films are made to be presented on a big screen and for an audience; and that they are shown



L'Atalante (Bayonne, France) was awarded by CNC the Jury Prize for its Innovative Programming (Network member)

there for a fair price and not pirated. Today, the public itself has started to pass on the message: *it's fine for films to be available on all sorts of small domestic screens and fine to multiply the offer. But taking the cinema experience away from us is out of the question!* More and more of us are hearing this call, which reassures us that our investments have a promising future! We are not alone either. No film director or film crew can work without thinking about pleasing an audience in a film theatre. Without cinemas, there is a risk of films having no chance of existing on any medium.

As you can see, in this edition of Network Review, we attentively continue our European tour of innovative cinemas and look at the initiatives they are developing. We showcase 20 exhibitors who are members of the Europa Cinemas network, including the three winners of our annual prizes for best programming, young audience activities and entrepreneurship. We have also dedicated an article to two young «explorers» Agnès Salson and Mikael Arnal who have crisscrossed Europe to meet the people coming up with and putting new ideas into practice. Besides the programming of European films, the wealth of initiatives is what makes our network unique. Europa Cinemas' primary activity involves sharing and developing these initiatives.

With the support of Creative Europe, the CNC and the FFA, we offer exhibitors in the network, and others who want to take part, many opportunities for discussion, collaboration, group work and training. In Sofia, Bologna, Seville and Sarajevo, 120 exhibitors have attended our

Audience Development & Innovation Labs in 2016. The purpose of these workshops is to pool tools for promotion and animation using the most effective digital communication techniques. A new initiative has built on these exchanges of best practice. The **Next/Change**, a type of Erasmus scheme for exhibitors, supports cinema staff so they can travel and meet with colleagues in other countries. A number of exhibitors have taken or are preparing trips of several days to find out more about new developments in other cinemas in the network. The **28 Times Cinemas** initiative, organised by the LUX Film Prize of the European Parliament, in partnership with Europa Cinemas and the Venice Days during the 10-day Venice Film Festival, is also seeing increasing success. 28 young film lovers, chosen by exhibitors from the network and supervised this year by the filmmaker Bruce LaBruce, have experienced the Festival as professional journalists. These young people have attended screenings, met directors and published blog reviews, photos of events and reports on day-to-day happenings on the Lido. At the same time, in the Venice Days section, four exhibitors from the network awarded the Europa Cinemas **Label** to a European film, like we do every year in Berlin, Cannes, Locarno and Karlovy Vary. Almost 1000 of the most dynamic exhibitors in Europe have got into the habit of working as part of a network, developing practices collectively to make their cinemas the best venues to screen European films and the best way to promote them to the public.

— Claude-Eric Poiroux,
General Director of Europa Cinemas



Claude-Eric Poiroux © Sandrine Jousseume



Phil(m)harmonics, *Chaplin*, at Kino Europa



BEST PROGRAMMING

KINO EUROPA (ZAGREB, CROATIA)

Kino Europa is Zagreb's most iconic cinema. It was built in 1924/25 by the wealthy Müller family from Zagreb with a wish to build the most beautiful, important and modern cinema in the region. After years of neglect and troubles over ownership, the City of Zagreb bought the cinema and, in early 2008, the cinema management was trusted to Zagreb Film Festival with the aim of making Kino Europa the regional hub for film and film art. In 2013 Kino Europa became a protected cultural heritage site and a Croatian national treasure. The cinema interior, its opulent stucco decorations and post-Art Nouveau classicist details are among the most magnificent in the city. The cinema premises, located at the very centre of the city, hosts the Large Hall with 500 seats in its auditorium, the Müller Hall with 41 seats, the Cinema Shop and the Cinema Bar, a popular hangout.

In 2008, when we occupied the cinema, our main intention and important task was to design a first-rate programme of contemporary, independent and art-house films from all over the world, and to regain the trust of the audience who completely lost the habit of frequenting old cinemas in the city centre. At the time, we were the only cinema focused on world and European auteur cinema, different from the existing multiplex programmes.

Nevertheless, this was not an easy task, we had neither the films, nor the means or audience, but diligence and hard work paid off: we managed to meet our initial objectives and embarked upon a long-term strategic timeline. The results of this effort are, today, evident, in both the increased number of visitors and through media visibility and acknowledgment among the local and international public.

Our programme's diversity and quality, and our special approach to every event and screening, as well as to specific audiences, make our strategy particularly innovative. Our motto is 'Think about what you watch'. We want the audience to perceive the cinema as a venue that is a living and vibrant institution, a place of discussion, conversation and learning about film culture 24/7. We watch our audience, with every screening schedule we follow and analyse the attendance and reactions to the programme that we prepared for them – so while managing to show a selection of the finest world cinema throughout the year, we have also learned to search for films of specific genres, themes and countries that our audience like. We are also trying to organize encounters between audience and filmmakers. Very often, we invite film critics to introduce screenings, and organize special events for children and senior citizens.

In the beginning it was very difficult to offer a wide range of nationalities in our programming (25 European nationalities were represented in our 2015 programme, and almost 72% of the screenings we had were of European films), as there were not many independent films available for distribution, and if a title of this profile with any commercial potential appeared, multiplexes had the priority option to screen them. We also had to start buying films in order to keep the continuity in our programming – and this was possible because our experience in organising the Festival connected us with numerous distributors and producers. Today, we are still distributing 5-10 titles per year. After years of struggling, digitisation made things much easier. Distributors grew more likely to acquire films from diverse origins and even those with very small commercial potential.

Also, we have a very rich range of regional cinema that is accessible due to close relations with producers from the region, and we have a very good presence of Croatian films in the repertoire as well. Sometimes this makes it even harder to cover and present all of the good films.

Additionally, festivals and film cycles are always attracting a lot of media attention, and they represent a form of gathering, so, for us, this is always an opportunity to connect with the audience and convey the message that the cinema is very active.

We have recently started a new program called Kinolektira, where once a month we screen classic films that are restored and digitized. Also, these screenings are accompanied by an introduction given by a film critic. The first screening was sold out and followed by a huge discussion on our Facebook event page with a conclusion that screenings of classics once a month are not enough.

In March, we screened *Rams* at our morning screening for senior citizens and we were lucky to have the director, Grimur Hakonarson, attend and hold a Q&A. We brought him to the evening screening in our small cinema auditorium and surprised the audience with his presence at the end of the screening. We had a very spontaneous and funny Q&A which created an amazing atmosphere in the cinema.

We are proud that we have learned to listen to our audience's needs and to respond to them. Our uncompromising programming, including the best independent and art films trained them and got them used to our line-ups. Today, the audience knows that they cannot choose wrongly with any film they see at Kino Europa.

Yet, we also face long-term challenges. First of all, we hope we will manage to renovate the building fully and to restore its old shine. This is one of the most important goals for the next four years and we have invested a lot of energy in its realisation. We have managed to do it technically, we have installed state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment, but now we are left to do the complete renovation of the cinema building.

■ Hrvoje Laurenta, Executive Director
and Selma Mehadzic, Programmer



The team



© Sabine Koestler



Kinderfilmfestival

BEST YOUNG AUDIENCE ACTIVITIES

MOVIEMENTO & CITY KINO (LINZ, AUSTRIA)

—

Linz arthouse era started in 1990, with the two small auditoriums of Cinema Movimiento (83 and 50 seats). In 1999 our “Association for the promotion of communicative cinema culture” acquired and renovated the City Kino, and in doing so probably saved it from closure.

We run our cinemas as a non-profit organisation, ensuring that any surplus funds are ploughed back. A third screen was added at Movimiento in 2007, while at City Kino we soon decided to transform the small third screen into Café Stern. We have always believed that a good food and drinks offer is a strong point of our cinemas. With its “Gelbes Krokodil” [Yellow

Crocodile] restaurant and the trendy bar “Solaris”, Movimiento offers two destinations that really pull in the public. DJ sets also attract lots of young people to the venue every weekend. In summer Linz’s OK-Platz, where the cinema is located, becomes one of the city’s hot spots. Being part of a building hosting a centre for contemporary art (“Offenes Kulturhaus”) is also a major advantage for Movimiento. Both our cinemas are located in the city centre. Since two multiplexes arrived on the outskirts of the city no other cinema has survived here. It is very important to us to ensure our cinemas are well equipped, in terms of both comfort and technology (3D, 4K, HFR, etc.). Nevertheless, we do not try to compete with the multiplexes and we specialise in arthouse productions. Obviously, there is some overlap in our programming and in such cases we focus on original versions with subtitles and do not screen any dubbed versions, with exceptions in the case of children’s films.

During our weekly young audience screening programme called Kinderkino we don’t show any blockbuster such as *Finding Dory*, which makes reaching the target audience more difficult. However, our engagement in collaborating with different children organisations and schools allows us to reach the younger viewers. For instance we collaborate with the youth association Kinderfreunde (Children’s Friends) to organise our Kinderfilmfestival and with Education Group – the schooling project launched by the Government of Upper Austria – for a structured school screening cycle with a pedagogical goal and discussions afterwards. We also organise special school screenings through direct contact with the teachers of Linz schools. Young people aged 14 and above used to be a minority within the context of our regular cinema operations. The “Filmring der Jugend” youth film club has been working for a number of decades now to get this target group interested in non-mainstream cinema. Through this initiative young people get to view films in advance and put the programme together with teachers. With around 1,500 admissions for the 6 films part of this programme, attendances have now tripled, in contrast to the demographic trend. Members of the “Filmring der Jugend” also benefit from significant reductions on cinema tickets for a whole year.

The cornerstone of our young audience activities are special screenings for schools and other groups. Here our specialisation on original language versions is also beneficial. Teachers insert our school screenings in original language especially within the context of foreign language studies. We send information on the films on the bill to schools every month and we break this down into themes and language versions. At present we are passing this information on personally to some 350 teachers. In 2015 this resulted in 380 screenings of more than 100 films with almost 10,000 admissions. Since 1994 Peter Müller is serving as Young Audience Coordinator and has been supporting teachers with a great deal of attentiveness and patience.

There are other activities that are not always reflected in the statistics, but that are just as important in our view: students on audiovisual courses at the University of Art and Design of Linz can present their final projects and screen the films they created as part of the final assessment for their degree free of charge at the cinema. The students of music video production often give premieres of their works after the last screening of the day.

Since 2004 we have been hosting the “Crossing Europe” festival, which we also co-founded. Christine Dollhofer, the Festival manager, primarily tries to attract younger audiences with her programming, while the “Local Artist” section has provided a fitting platform for the creative scene in the region of Upper Austria.

The majority of people who visit our cinemas do not come from the city of Linz, but from the surrounding area. The travelling cinema we have been operating since 1995, Wanderkino, has proven extremely beneficial in this regard. The 80 or so screenings we organise every year in places without a cinema certainly create awareness of the kind of programming we offer. Our small, 200-seat open-air cinema high up on the roof of the “Offenes Kulturhaus” is our summer attraction and makes going to the cinema a more comfortable experience when the weather is hot.

Twenty-six years ago we started out with the ambition of attracting 30,000 to 40,000 visitors a year to our cinema. We immediately surpassed this target. Since the two multiplexes were opened in Linz, our admissions have steadily increased to around 145,000, thanks in part, of course, to the increased capacities. I do not want to make any predictions about our future development, but even stagnation would be a major success. I am thrilled that, at the age of 60, I am still fortunate enough to be part of the team at a young and leading European cinema.

— Wolfgang Steininger, Director



Wolfgang Steininger © Sabine Koestler



Cinema Ideal, Lisbon

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

CINEMA IDEAL (LISBON, PORTUGAL)

Cinema Ideal is located in the centre of Lisbon, in the Chiado area next to Bairro Alto and Bica, two of the city's oldest and most popular districts which have been the hub of the city's night life for the last 20 years. It has 192 seats with a balcony and stalls (balcão e plateia).

The cinema has been in existence since 1904 and was last renovated in 1954. It always operated as a local film theatre that showed reruns of popular films (popular in terms of price, attendance and programming) but in 2001 it became a porn cinema. We renovated it completely and reopened it two years ago and since then, the building has already won two

prestigious awards for its architecture, and the quality of its décor and equipment has been particularly praised

We carried out this project at a time when Portugal was facing a political and economic crisis that represented a social and cultural tragedy. And in 2012 there was actually no public support for film theatres. The difficulties facing independent cinemas in Portugal are obvious and it is easy to grasp the extent of the catastrophe when you consider that only six Portuguese cinemas are members of the Europa Cinemas network, and that four of these are situated in Lisbon...

But when the opportunity arose (the idea had been lingering for three years), we did not hesitate to take on the considerable economic and financial challenge. Along with an architect friend whose 'qualifications' include an intense love of cinema, we worked in an atmosphere of pride and encouragement from many Portuguese cinema professionals.

Two years later, we realised that we were working against the tide: nowadays, there are countless new incentives drawing audiences away from film theatres and encouraging them to stay at home. We understood that we risked being the last human beings to share the unique experience of the film theatre where we could see films in the company of others who, during the screening, form a community of people from another country: the land of cinema.

We strive for a multiple approach: different audiences, different times of the day, different times of the year. Even with a single screen we always have at least two (and sometimes four) films being screened at the same time, in an endeavour to be a local film theatre and, simultaneously, to appeal to both older and younger people, to film lovers, and to people who simply want to see a film without having to go to a shopping centre.

It is true that, without film theatres, particularly one such as ours, most of the films we love and to which we are committed (in our other role as distributors, and as admirers of films created by others) could not exist. Today the job of cinema, to ensure that it achieves real results, is by nature multi-disciplinary, from production to distribution and screening, and anybody wishing to survive in the jungle of the new media has to know a little about everything.

This also means that the most important thing for anybody involved in a film theatre and who knows something about the world of production and distribution is the need to confront reality on a daily basis, to learn, challenge oneself constantly, seven days a week, twelve hours a day, and sense the reaction of the people for whom we work (both filmgoers and cinema professionals).

These last two years have taught us many things and we have used our new knowledge to put pressure on

local and national government with regard to the need for three, four, five or more "Cinema Ideal" film theatres to be created, not just in Lisbon but in the whole of Portugal. The cultural and political authorities, however, are having trouble understanding...

What I think we found most important, and most touching, was when people attending one of our screenings for the first time were really surprised when they went into the cinema and realised they were going to be watching a film in a brand new theatre that was totally different to all those identical film theatres in shopping centres (which represent 99% of film theatres in Portugal). And that, when they left, they congratulated us and left with a certain sense of being part of the Ideal. This happens all the time when we host festival screenings (there are about ten in Lisbon) and a filmmaker visits our film theatre with no particular expectations and ends up complimenting us when he realises that his film is being screened under these very good conditions: "You have a great film theatre here, you know..."

Of course, the future is uncertain but we've been hearing about the end of cinema (and in particular the end of the film theatre) for decades now. We shall live long enough to prove that we are immortal and that people will continue to want to see images and listen to sounds together, in the dark...

— Pedro Borges, Director



Pedro Borges



© Tour des Cinémas

EUROPEAN TOUR OF CINEMAS

A JOURNEY THROUGH CINEMAS IN REINVENTION

Agnès Salson and Mikael Arnal, two explorers searching for exciting cinemas, travelled through France in 2014 looking for innovative initiatives to find inspiration for their future cinema. In 2015, they visited more than a hundred European cinemas over four months, furthering their research and trying to answer the question: what will independent cinemas in the digital age be like? They shared everything they've learned on the website www.tourdescinemas.com and in the book *"Dreams, the cinemas tomorrow"*. In the next few pages we'll explore emerging practices from their findings in cinema exhibition all across Europe; from cinemas supported and financed by citizens to new spaces conceived of to extend the role of a cinema, through new contents and new ways of editorializing programming- the cinemas certainly have a bright future.



Numax, Santiago de Compostela © Tour des Cinémas

Our adventure started on August 15 by a long train journey to Santiago of Compostela in Spain to meet with Numax*, a cinema opened some months before, in March 2015. Two years earlier, the five founders, Ramiro Leido, Irma Amado, Pablo Cayuela, Xosé Carlos Hidalgo and Antonio Doñate partnered up to create the Numax as a co-operative where a cinema, bookshop, café and a video and graphic creation lab are run side by side. *“If all cinemas shut down, in order to see films, you have to open your own cinema,”* Ramiro Leido stated, filmmaker and worker at the cinema. Creating Numax was an opportunity for the team to deeply rethink the operational structure of cultural venues and the relationships between workers. It is a form of creative response to the recession; a tangible answer for changing work conditions. The natural follow up to these ideas was to favor an alternative to banks to finance the project: the credit co-operative Coop 57. In order to receive an agreement for a loan, they still needed guarantors. This is how they decided to reach out to the community with a public campaign. *“The whole campaign was very detailed and transparent, it was like a leitmotif. We reported everything, including our salary, which is the same for all of us,”* Ramiro Leido explained. The 182 people who answered the public appeal allowed Numax to be granted the necessary loan for the implementation of the project. Thanks to their connections in Santiago of Compostela and their strong relationship with the community, they succeeded in making this project happen.

Hundreds of kilometers from there, we met the team from Cineciutat*, the only independent cinema on the Island of Majorca, saved from closing by the citizens. Beyond the incredible story of this spontaneous citizen initiative to save their cultural landmark, the discussion expanded to the future of exhibition and even more widely to the future of the cinema industry. *“We knew this venue would not survive the 21st century by being solely a cinema. We needed to become a platform for*

alternative content, a place where the audience becomes a stakeholder, but also through the diversification of screened content.” explained Javier Pachón, Manager at the cinema.

We continued our journey to Perugia, located in the heart of Italy, to discover the new cinema Postmodernissimo*, and we had an immediate crush: from the look and the mood of the place to their community driven approach, achieved through a crowdfunding campaign, as well as the possibility for people to become shareholders of the co-operative. We met three of the four cinema lovers who partnered up to save the one-screen venue from decay: Andrea Mincigrucci, Giacomo Caldarelli and Ivan Frenguelli. In 2000, the former Modernissimo cinema shut down leaving a cultural void in the town’s historic center. After getting in touch with the owner to present their project, the four friends suddenly had a lot on their plate; create two additional screens in order to make the cinema profitable, comply with safety standards, and acquire two digital projectors. They set up a co-operative business where each of them could bring initial capital, but they also decided to get the whole town involved in the refurbishment so as to secure the success of the project. The rebirth of the place was set in motion along with a new philosophy seeking an experience beyond traditional cinemas, Giacomo Caldarelli explained, *“You can visit the cinema, spend a whole afternoon and the evening as well without necessarily having to watch a film. It is most of all a social place”*. The editorial line of PostModernissimo embraces the whole spectrum of cinema, seeking to break the labels separating arty films from commercial films. They only want to focus on the essential, *“We screen beautiful films”*. And beyond the films, the institution invites all forms of expression, *“It’s art at 360°”* said Giacomo Caldarelli. The cinema’s gallery welcomes exhibitions and installations that change every three months.



Postmodernissimo, Perugia © Tour des Cinémas

It was time to go to Rome to meet with the team at Cinema America Occupato, a few steps away from the cinema where everything started. Abandoned for 14 years, the movie theater America was a cultural highlight in the Roman neighborhood of Trastevere, destined to become an apartment facility and a parking lot. Following its upcoming destruction announcement, a group of about fifteen young students decided to occupy the building to save it from its sinister destiny. *“At the beginning we were just a group of students searching locations to meet for cultural activities. In Rome there are many abandoned places and we have discovered that 70% of those were movie theaters,”* Valerio Carocci explained. The group spent three months organizing events to get people from the neighborhood involved and to gain their confidence. On November 13th 2012, the neighborhood, committed to their cause, broke the chains to the movie theater and occupied the building. The first screenings were organized with the means at hand, each member bringing a piece of the necessary equipment: a projector, some speakers, etc. If the occupation was indeed illegal, the group of young people made a point of honoring the renovation of the place, little by little, upgrading it to meet with regulations for receiving the public and using the money earned from screenings (set at open pricing) and donations. They didn't just organise film screenings, either, but also staged book readings and debates, and the audience was invited to get involved with the programming, either by simply sending an email or in dropping by the cinema to suggest the name of a film they'd like to see. The young team communicated mainly through social media: their authenticity was a determining factor in their success and their real 'capital' came from the community they created, with more than 50,000 followers on Facebook. Why has the community grown so large so quickly? Because cinemagoers felt part of a citizens' movement aimed at putting the cinema back in the heart of the

district; they were supporting the notion of cultural heritage by keeping the building open, and they were bringing the cinema back to life again. By taking action when faced with a harmful situation for culture and youth in Rome, the “gang” has also proven wrong the cliché that politicians, in Italy and elsewhere, love to convey: that Youth are supposedly lazy and have lost interest in culture. Valerio said, right at the beginning of the adventure, *“What we did was illegal, but it was right. We were a group of friends, and we all believed in it, and when you believe in something, nothing is impossible.”*

While staying in Athens some days later, surfing the internet, we stumbled across an amazing project: the Up Outdoor Cinema in Lozenets, on the Black Sea coast in Bulgaria. We decided to change our plans to go there, crossing the whole country by bus. Perched on a cliff facing the Black Sea, the white dome of Up Outdoor Cinema offers a surprising view. The structure was first conceived by the design company based in Sofia, GARAGE-TAPAK in Bulgaria, to be rented for events. In 2014, while the unused structure lay dormant in the company's premises over the summer, the members had an idea: to turn it into a cinema. Built in 24 hours by a team of 5 people, the structure, with its diameter of 10 meters, can accommodate up to 30 people. The inside furniture has been specially designed, from bean bags in the bar area to folding children seats. Special attention to detail is more in line with global thinking regarding audience experience. *“Here it's not just about movies, you can spend time with your friends around a drink, listen to music,”* Mihaela Mihaylova, director of GARAGE, explained. The refurbished structure has flexibility and its low impact on the environment will allow a wider range of possibilities for the future.

In Croatia we discovered the Dokukino, a place entirely dedicated to documentaries. The Dokukino has one screening room but also organizes educational



Cinema America Occupato © Tour des Cinémas



Kinodvor, Ljubljana © Tour des Cinémas

programs, produces documentary films and has even set up a school to train young documentary filmmakers. This place became a complementary proposal to other arthouse cinemas already in the area. *“We weren’t exactly sure it would work out, we went for it without knowing if the audience would be interested. But we did it and we waited... And it started working. Once we had done this, we realized that there were no distributors for documentary films and that we should do that too! All was very connected, when we started working in the field we slowly discovered that something was missing, that no one was doing anything in this niche. And we also realized that it was easier and less expensive to do it all ourselves,”* Inja Korać commented. All around Europe, we observed an increase of places dedicated to niche films, such as places dedicated exclusively to documentary cinema or experimental cinema and Dokukino is certainly part of this movement.

The journey continued in Slovenia at the Kinodvor* in Ljubljana. Built in 1923, the Kinodvor is run by a passionate team offering quality programming and multiple events. To make things easier for young parents, they occasionally offer a nursery area for children on Sunday mornings. People who work a lot during the week or can’t afford to pay someone to watch their children can come to the screening and leave their children in a free workshop during the movie screening. To celebrate the 90th anniversary of their cinema the team organized events in old cinemas in the capital, now closed. On this occasion, they released the film *Grand Budapest Hotel* in the Grand Hotel Union, an old luxury hotel. To promote this event, they transformed the lobby of the Kinodvor into a hotel reception and Wes Anderson has personally created a video to welcome the audience to the Grand Hotel. Each element of the project was carefully thought out and implemented: from site selection to the promotion of the screening through to public involvement on social networks with the sharing of photographs taken throughout the evening.

FACTS AND FIGURES

125 days of travel
 17 countries crossed
 120 cinemas visited in 47 cities
 More than 15,000 kilometers travelled
 40 trains, 7 flights and 10 bus
 More than 20,000 photos taken
 200 liters of tea, 50 packs of wafer
 Fries and sandwiches everyday
 2 pairs of shoes worn out
 Not enough sleep, but hundreds of amazing meetings and discoveries

In Wroclaw, Poland, Kino Nowe Horizony* was also inspired by the event cinema movement and, more specifically, by Secret Cinema. In September 2015, for the re-release of the film *Sin City*, the cinema organized an interactive event inspired by the film; they hosted a paper chase, reconstructed some of its scenery and hired actors.

Next stop Netherlands to learn more about Cineville, an unlimited card for independent cinemas. This card was created in 2009 by two young students, working at Kriterion* cinema in Amsterdam. They expressed the need to give a younger image to arthouse cinemas. Cineville is not just a model for loyalty cards but also a website that promotes a new image of arthouse movies and cinemas through a team of young editors. The creation of the card proved to be a successful concept: the audience of the cinemas has been rejuvenated with an average age of card users between 25 and 30 years old, and generated an additional



Up Outdoor Cinema, Bulgaria © Tour des Cinémas



Studio K, Amsterdam © Tour des Cinémas

300,000 admissions per year in the city of Amsterdam. This card has expanded across the country, with 38 cinemas in 17 cities. In Rotterdam, Kino, a new member of Cineville, has just opened. It's a cinema center with four screening rooms, a bar restaurant on the ground floor and spaces for co-working upstairs. It brings creators from the audiovisual industry in Rotterdam together in one place. They are offering additional services such as use of the movie theaters when they are free, as well as two multifunction studios upstairs (for sound effects, postproduction, green screen). In Germany, the Wolf Kino, which will open in the coming months, will propose a flexible room and post-production area to invite creators to be part of the place.

The cinema is no longer strictly limited to the spaces of the screening rooms. Instead, it expands to be more convivial, and enriches its role in attracting new audiences. In Amsterdam, in the majority of independent cinemas, access to screening rooms is through bars and cafés which are real living spaces. Moreover, each café has its own identity. The Kriterion and Studio K*, two cinemas managed by students, have vibrant cafés, mainly frequented by young people. De Balie Cinema*, more specialized in documentary films and talks, has a large restaurant. It's the same at The Movies* which has its own pub but also at Ketelhuis* and at Rialto*, each of which has a café. A trend that we also observed in Berlin in places like Il Kino or at Sputnik*, which each have lovely cafes and restaurants. To seal the economic activity of the place, the Zukunft am Ostkreuz in Berlin has even launched a brewery to produce its own beer.

A little further north, in Copenhagen, Gloria* hosts the Copenhagen Radio Cinema (Københavns Radiobiograf in Danish) which organizes monthly radio sessions with compilations of recorded programs worldwide. These sessions especially attract young people who are willing to pay 60 Danish kroner (approximately €8) for a session. The Cinema

Bellevaux in Lausanne organizes CD listening sessions in partnership with music labels for the release of new albums. Cinema Nova in Brussels occasionally arranges "Open Ears" sessions in the screening room or in the café, a collective listening session of sound creations in the dark. Rethinking the offer in movie theaters is also about rethinking how to communicate on this offer. In Sweden, the Bio Rio in Stockholm* has created a label, the "A-rate" with three other cinemas (the Roy* in Göteborg, the Spegeln* à Malmö and the Röda Kvarn* in Helsingborg). This label was created to raise public awareness about gender issues. To be labeled "A", a film must pass The Bechdel Test, meaning that the film has at least two female characters, with names, that speak with each other about something other than a man. This test doesn't measure the quality of a film, but it allows audiences to interrogate the representation of women in cinema today.

Last stop was the UK where we spent the full month of December and discovered a multitude of independent cinema models. The most impressive movement we witnessed was community cinemas: communities can not only come together to save their local cinema, but they can also join hands to build their own cinemas. For many people, going to the cinema regularly has become difficult, either because there is no accessible cinema nearby or, for financial reasons or simply because they have lost the habit. Community cinemas can also emerge when there is no space locally to screen more niche films. The flexibility in the way they are organized means they can experiment and try new ideas, which may have a cultural influence far beyond what their capacity would initially suggest. There are more than 250 community cinemas in the United Kingdom, where this has become a real social movement.

One of the flagships of this movement is The Deptford Cinema, which was opened in South East London in 2014 because there was no longer any cinema in the



Il Kino, Berlin © Tour des Cinémas



Agnès Salson and Mikaël Arnal in front of the Gloria Biograf, Copenhagen © Tour des Cinémas



Lexi Cinema, London © Tour des Cinémas

Lewisham Borough at that time. London cinema ticket prices can go as high as £19, but the philosophy of the Deptford Cinema was to make cinema accessible for all. The story began with the discovery of a building which had lain empty for more than 15 years. A crowdfunding campaign managed to collect £7,824 to pay for projectors. The cinema was built completely by volunteers during the so-called “Building Weeks”. The principle behind these weeks was simple: volunteers would come forward and work together to offer their skills and knowledge to the project, whether this be to build a wall or to set up sound insulation in the auditorium. There are now more than 700 people who volunteer their time at the cinema. Anybody who wants to organise a screening or an event is free to do so. As well as the main screening room and the bar, there are plans in place to build a space where 16mm films can be produced. Inspired by the experience of The Deptford, a group of volunteers got together in 2015 to set up Small Cinema in Liverpool. Sam Meech developed the idea for Small Cinema after he realized that there wasn't a single cinema in Liverpool dedicated to independent filmmakers. The cinema, which was initially conceived as a showcase for local filmmakers, became a much broader project to enable the local community to get involved in organizing events. A final example of a community cinema we met with is The Cube Microplex in Bristol, one of the most well-known community cinemas in the United Kingdom. Opened in 1998, they organized cultural events, film screenings, live music and served as a meeting place for the local arts community. It presents itself today as a social art experiment in the form of a cinema and event venue. It is run by 150 volunteers who managed at the end of 2013 to raise funds amounting to £185,000 so that they could buy the building that hosts the Cube. On 1st April 2014 the building became theirs. This was only the first stage in their project, though, as they now have plans to refurbish the cinema completely.

*Europa Cinemas member



Small Cinema, Liverpool © Tour des Cinémas

The Cube Microplex organizes 350 events a year, most notably their humanitarian project, Kids Kino, which took films for children to areas devastated by earthquakes in Haiti (2010) and Nepal (2015).

Beyond the community cinemas movement, British cinemas are trying to change perception of their places, as seen for example by writing on their frontage, “I am a cinema, love me,” something the Lexi Cinema* in London has done as a way to draw attention: these few letters give a voice to the cinema. Some of them involve their audience in heritage restoration by offering them the chance to sponsor seats, or in the programming by inviting them to give their opinion about movies on post-its. Others have spaces dedicated to creation, transforming their venues into cultural and creative centers, as seen at Watershed* in Bristol, with its Pervasive Media Studio, a research center around new technologies and art. This space has been developed in collaboration with the University of Bristol and University of West of England, to host and promote the work of creative businesses, artists and academics exploring creative technology. The new spaces that we've discovered in these cinemas are diverse, and this is a fundamental issue for the identity of these places. To stand out today a cinema has to be more than a cinema: it has to be a living space.

Having travelled around Europe over the last two years, what we have learned is that it is essential – no matter where we went, whatever the shape of cinema exhibition in each country – that there are still people willing to open cinemas, whether they are built from scratch or taken over. In a time where we can watch movies everywhere, there is still a need of for where people can come together, share experiences and create memories. People still want cinemas, but those emerging spaces and initiatives must take a wide range of forms, fully embracing the new practices of the digital age.

— Mikael Arnal & Agnès Salson



BELGIUM

PLAZA ART, MONS

Year-round events and animation as essential for the cinema's life

—

In September 1994, instigated by both local and community authorities, our association took over the management of the “Plaza Mons”, a commercial cinema situated in Mons city centre, which was doomed to shut down, owing to the building of a multiplex cinema at the entrance of the city. We then decided to transform it into a place dedicated to arthouse cinema, so the “Plaza” became “Plaza Art”.

Our strategy is based on two complementary lines of approach. On the one hand we have a programming policy that defends high-quality cinema, mostly European and uncompromising. Our intention is neither to be dogmatic or elitist, but we want to preserve this stringent editorial line in order to reach the largest audience. We believe it is necessary to maintain a clear identity, not to show pure commercial films, as this would contradict our original approach and create confusion among the audience. In our daily selection we fight against recurrent clichés that associate arthouse cinema with boring intellectualism or elitism.

On the other hand, there is cultural and artistic added value. The recognition and life of our cinema would be pointless without the additional content that goes with film releases. It's only through this that such a cinema can exist and modestly takes part in the active life of a small province city centre. Organizing cultural and artistic content in such a place means making it more attractive, more dynamic, showing the audience that cinema is in tune with the way our society moves, that it is not closed in on itself, that some people make it exist for the public. In this way organizing quality events is a priority objective for us: previews, film clubs, debates, decentralized festivals come one after another, week after week. Directors, actors, producers and speakers participate in public meetings throughout the season. Our cinema remains a place where citizens, individually or collectively, take part in our events and express their views on societal issues. These events also allow them to create social links, meet other people, initiate a dialogue and, thus, promote social diversity. This editorial strategy can only function in a place that has a soul, a style with both a modern twist and retro charm, a place that offers a friendly environment that changes but retains its original colour.

On the basis of our previous experiences in schools, with annual attendance figures of 15,000 students, our educational team, who partners with *Ecran Large sur Tableau Noir* (literally "Wide Screen on Blackboard") and sets up projects combining culture and education, is also involved in out-of-school workshops and multiple educational initiatives catering for all audiences. For example, they organize the "10 heure des Enfants" (literally "10 o' clock for children"), which are intended for the youngest children, as well as analysis workshops and training courses on short film production, both based on the same educational strategy: our facilitators make their know-how available so that participants can interactively continue the discussions that started with the screening of a film.

In the future our challenge is twofold. On the one hand we want to reach even younger audiences (tomorrow's cinema lovers), mainly students, who, as you know, are not all interested, from the outset, in

arthouse cinema. This can be achieved through specific partnership agreements with educational institutions, particularly universities, attractive prices and targeted events.

On the other hand, we want to enhance our communication strategy and our visibility, especially to be in tune with the constant developments of digital communication. We therefore grow our presence on the Internet through, for example, the daily update of our Facebook page with competitions, photo reports on particular events, releases, etc. Moreover, we edit and publish a newspaper with a print run of 6,000 copies, which features our film programme and our activities.

In the summer of 2012 Plaza Art had a difficult time because of the potential sale of the building to a real estate developer. But a petition spontaneously placed online was signed by more than 4,000 people within 48 hours, which demonstrated the very special relationship we have with the local population and various associations.

The City of Mons then offered to purchase the building, which allowed us, a few weeks later, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our cinema. The event was sponsored by the Dardenne brothers, who met our public, as well as the partners of our cinema, several times.

Eventually, thanks to the City of Mons once again, Plaza Art will soon undergo major domestic renovations, which will highlight spaces chiefly dedicated to educational activities, meetings and exchanges with the public as well as cultural events. Plaza Art will also have two additional rooms: one in the present building and the other as a "screen on the roof", which will be out in the open. In this way we prepare for tomorrow's Plaza Art: see you in spring 2018!

■ André Ceuterick, Director



André Ceuterick (Director of the Plaza Art) with Cyril Dion



© Antoine Vuilliez



Andrzej Wajda

FRANCE

LUX, CAEN

Screening beyond our walls, in town...
and in trains!

—

Cinema LUX is an association which celebrated its 56th anniversary earlier this year. Boasting 140 members, it is independent and owns its own walls. It has had three screens since 2007 and also runs a video-club, café and shop in the foyer.

LUX's cultural objectives adhere to a double vocation that it has always advocated: promoting access to cinematographic heritage to as many people as possible and promoting diversified and pluralistic cinema that corresponds to a variety of tastes, opinions, schools of thought, religions and social backgrounds. These principles govern its programming policy and activities within the framework of its classification (arthouse and Europa Cinemas), but also its work on the ground with audiences and the large-scale events that it organises. LUX screens almost 400 films a year and proposes over 100 other cinema-related events such as debates, concerts, shows, encounters with directors, actors, festivals, film cycles, often in cooperation with cultural partners and associations in the Caen region.

Furthermore, LUX pays close attention to young audiences and carries out in-depth educational work, both in terms of screenings and film education.

One of LUX's originalities is that it runs an arthouse video club permitting it to expand its programming policy and activities and to arouse the public's curiosity, which is constantly nurtured by in-house exhibitions.

The film theatre must remain a place where audiences and works meet and this involves two aspects. The cinema is hence a social space (it has to imagine itself as a place of exchange, debate, discussion and conviviality in which the film lover can intervene) and one of artistic discovery. LUX's philosophy remains the same. What changes are the tools and LUX adapts as they develop. Our establishment has always been conceived as a participative venue, sometimes serious, sometimes more playful, opening its doors and screens to creation and to dissemination, conceived with and for the audience.

We believe that the film theatre has to be very attentive to its environment and to adapt to new constraints (fewer subsidies, new user habits). LUX has always known how to adapt its project according to its means. Having perfectly honed its on-site activities, the team rallied together to expand off-site activities and conquer new audiences. First, it extended its programming network, which now boasts four cinemas (Douvres-la-Délivrande, Lion-sur-Mer, Ouistreham, Falaise). Then it acquired funds and developed partnerships to organise off-site screenings, some of them in the open air, in Normandy (about 80 this year) and to pursue this off-site policy with regular screenings and events at the university. Finally, it developed its educational programme and combined screenings for young audiences with a wide variety of workshops (ranging from the creation of optical games to the making of films).

Since we are convinced that our activities have to take into account notions that are as wide-ranging as those linked to spatial planning, it is of course by developing

these beyond our walls that we can find sense in our cultural project as well as balance our budget, considering that such off-site events generate revenue.

In our constant desire to innovate and explore new ways of screening films and engaging with the public, we have developed several projects:

CinéTrain: Every summer for six years now and in partnership with SNCF, LUX has improvised a cinema in the wagons of certain TER roundtrip routes of the Dives/Cabourg-Deauville/Trouville train-line! For the length of a return trip and price of a ticket, passengers can embark on a journey into the universe of the cinema (with varying themes and forms each year).

PédaloCiné: This is about asking filmgoers to pedal bikes to generate enough electricity to project films in the open air and get the magic going! The films are projected onto a screen under the stars while a dozen bicycles are put to use behind the audience. Cinephiles can become cyclists for an evening or cyclists film lovers... This initiative is urban, original, participative, inclusive, cultural and above all ecological!

CinéPiscine: When a pool – open or covered – becomes a cinema! The stands turn into seats for those who might have forgotten their swim suits and caps, while the pool itself welcomes other film lovers who sit in floating seats in overheated water. Placed at the edge of the pool, the screen invites swimmers and viewers alike to navigate through “water films” (*Jaws*, *Piranha 3*, *Gravity*...).

There are so many ways for audiences to access arthouse cinema, in a playful way, and to become aware of our existence and work.

— Gautier Labrusse, Co-Director and Administrator and Didier Anne, Co-Director and Programmer



The team of LUX © Nastasia Kalawski



GERMANY

PROGRAMMKINO OST, DRESDEN

A cinema with character

—

Dresden has a population of 525,000 people and an extremely diverse and vibrant cinema scene. Being home to many different cinemas, it is one of the top-ranked cities in Germany in terms of cinema seats per head of population. ProgrammKino Ost is located outside the city centre in Striesen, a district dominated by high-quality residential buildings and with excellent local public transport connections. You could describe our cinema as the district's cultural hub.

In 1897 a ballroom was constructed on the site. The first, one-off film screenings were held here starting from 1906. In 1937 the hall was officially converted into a cinema, which continued to operate as a single-screen cinema right through to 2009. Immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, it started to present itself as an arthouse cinema and, as a single-screen venue, managed to increase its admissions from 57,000 in 1991 to 80,000 in 2004. In 2009 it was transformed into a modern 5-screen arthouse centre, in response to the changing structure of the cinema market and changes in audience behaviour, a move that secured its long-term economic future. Since then, Programmokino Ost has been showing films on the five screens with 204, 144, 117, 57 and 51 seats and now boasts annual admissions of between 160,000 and 180,000. When the venue was expanded, a great deal of attention was paid to creating modern, timeless architecture that deliberately contrasts with the historical elements of the existing building. Over the intervening period, Programmokino Ost has developed into the most successful and most widely recognised arthouse cinema in Dresden, one that enjoys an excellent reputation amongst audiences and local institutions alike. For many of the city's other cultural organisations (museums, theatres, associations, etc.) we have become the first point of contact when they are looking for a project partner.

The cinema's programming focuses on European and, in particular, French films. The Festival "Französische Filmtage Dresden" (French Filmdays in Dresden), which we have been organising for 20 years now, is the highlight of the year. We also offer everything else you would expect from a good arthouse cinema: documentaries (approximately 50 a year), films in original version, a wide range of childrens' and family films (approximately 40 childrens' films a year), premieres with directors, actors and other creative professionals, debates and discussions, school screenings, projects in cooperation with local partners and participation in national festival projects such as "Cinéfête", "BritFilms" and "Cinema Italia!". This diverse programme with a clear focus on specific areas is our trademark.

In addition to commercial film exhibition, we are also trying to develop our own formats and "house labels". One example of such an initiative is "Schullerkin" (literally baby dummy cinema), which gives young parents the chance to go to the cinema together with their babies (up to 1 year of age). Once a week, in the morning, we screen films that are currently running. We keep the lighting up a little and lower the volume a touch. Play mats and changing tables are also provided and baby food can be heated up if required. A second example is "körners corner", a talk format focusing on discussion and dialogue between creative professionals and the public. Working together with a local film critic, we invite professionals from all areas

of the film industry – directors, actors, producers, casting agents, film critics, screenwriters and score composers – and bring them into contact with the public during in-depth discussions.

Alongside our programming, we are constantly trying to find new initiatives, and are taking lots of little steps, to set ourselves apart from the other cinemas and offer audiences more than just a visit to the cinema. We want to give them a sensory experience that will stay with them. We sell an extensive range of DVDs, based on the demand of the customers, have installed a sandpit in the courtyard for children, do not sell any popcorn or nachos. Instead we have a healthier offer like 12 sorts of tea and fair trade wine, give advice over the phone to customers in need of some guidance, delay screenings by a few minutes if customers are stuck in traffic and put out a few extra chairs if a screening has sold out – all these things, and many more besides, help to create the kind of place that we believe a cinema should be.

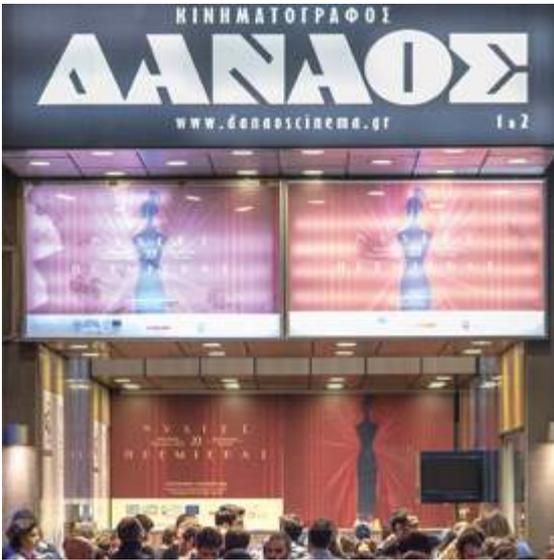
Our greatest challenge, in our view, is making sure our potential audience actually finds out about our offer. Due to the extremely fragmented media and advertising landscape and the increasing individualisation of information channels and leisure activities, we need to intensify our marketing efforts in both analogue and digital media. In the digital environment, we focus on our website and Facebook presence, as well as on a weekly e-mail newsletter. Print advertising, in the form of a weekly programme booklet and a permanent presence in the monthly local cinema paper, is also essential. But our biggest trump card is the impression that a visit to our cinema leaves on the public – if you visit us once, you will come back again.

Because we not only sell cinema tickets, but offer our customers an overall sensory and cultural experience.

■ Sven Weser, Co-Director



Jana Engemann and Sven Weser, Co-directors



© Vangelis Patsialos



GREECE

DANAOS, ATHENS

Enhancing the cinema experience in the home of Athens' film lovers

For over forty-four years, Danaos has offered a carefully curated selection of the best European and independent films to Greek cinephiles. Our two-screen cinema (600 and 110 seats) is located in the heart of Athens, and is equipped with the latest in digital and 3D projection technology.

The links of Danaos with the film community are strengthened every year through our partnership with prestigious festivals. Danaos Cinema has been one of the principal hosts of the Athens International Film Festival, the largest Film Festival in the city, taking place every year in September. Since 2001 we have also hosted the Francophone Film Festival of Athens, screening some of the best French language films of

the year. These events give us a chance to welcome stars of European cinema, and allow the audience to interact directly with them through thought-provoking Q&A sessions. In the last few years, Danaos has had the pleasure of welcoming Costa Gavras, Valeria Bruni Tedeschi, Fatih Akin and many Greek filmmakers and actors. Just this October, at the screening of documentary film, *Dancer*, we welcomed ballet's "rock star", Sergei Polunin, and were amazed at the audience's excitement. Mr. Polunin's fans packed the Q&A session, and surrounded him requesting autographs and photographs, making his departure almost impossible.

Despite the recent economic downturn in Greece, we remain committed to quality cinema, and our loyal audience has remained by our side. In fact, in 2015 *spottedbylocals.com* picked Danaos Cinema as one of the Europe's best art-house cinemas! Still, we are also exploring new ways to enrich our customer experience, and have found that audiences are ready to broaden their definition of what a cinema has to offer. In order to enhance cinematic experience we have created a tradition in showing films followed by lively discussions, as with our "Cinema and Psychoanalysis" screenings. Leaders of both fields are invited to discuss the film and engage the audience in conversation about where art meets science. Also, in the last few years, our collaboration with Cinedoc has resulted in screenings of top documentaries every Sunday afternoon.

Innovative screening ideas are at the forefront of our efforts to engage our audience. One of our most successful "experiments" was the "Secret Premieres". Danaos presented, on the first Monday of every month, some of most anticipated films of the year, before their official premieres, without revealing the name of the film. If an audience member didn't like the selected film, they could leave within the first 10 minutes of the movie, and receive a free ticket for any other screening at the cinema on a later date. But we found this very rarely happened as a buzz of excitement preceded every secret screening and audience members would try to guess what they would be seeing based on the few clues given. Among the films screened in these secret "avant-premieres" were *Shame*, *Her*, *Life of Pi* (in 3D), *Intouchables*, *Amour* and *La vie d'Adèle (Blue is the Warmest Colour)*. The consistent quality of the films selected assures viewers, and encourages them to return the following month for another surprise premiere.

Other cinema initiatives by Danaos Cinema include; live transmissions of opera and ballet performances, live 3D broadcasts of Wimbledon finals tennis matches, live music nights performed over silent films and the live transmission of the Monty Python show from the O2 Arena in London. This last event, in particular, was a great success, as online tickets quickly sold out in the first days of sales. In the last two years we have also hosted broadcasts of international concerts by legendary bands such as The Rolling Stones (Havana Moon concert) and Roger Waters (The Wall concert). Last but not least and, following

in the latest trends, we also host avant-premieres of new episodes of great TV series such as *Game of Thrones*. The screening of the first episode of the 5th season was a smash hit, as fans filled all our seats! These sessions bring new audiences to our cinema while showing our already established audiences that a movie theatre can offer so much more than just films. The response from cinema audiences to our "experiments" has been overwhelmingly positive, as seen in the responses to our online or on-site questionnaires. Through social media, we are able to remain in constant contact with our supporters, and their feedback is highly valued. Our newsletter currently reaches 12,000 subscribers and our Facebook page, with 11,500 Likes, helps us to further engage with our audience. We believe that over the years we have built an interactive relationship with our audience that helps us improve our venue but also sustains the love for cinema that exists in our community. It is very important to us that we stay informed of the latest trends and news, and that is why the Danaos Cinema team travel to major film festivals around the world and participate in all Europa Cinemas conferences.

To add to our commitment to quality films, two years ago we founded our film distribution company, DANAOS FILMS, (www.danaosfilms.gr) distributing mainly European and art house films. Our acquisitions include; *Viva La Libertà*, *Plemya (The Tribe)*, *El abrazo de la serpiente (Embrace Of The Serpent)*, *Im Labyrinth des Schweigens (Labyrinth of Lies)* and *Gleißendes Glück (Original Bliss)*.

What differentiates Danaos Cinema from other cinemas in Athens is that we always strive to find new ways of attracting the interest of audiences and to remind them that the ideal cinematic experience is a social affair, taking place in the presence of a cinema screen and not in front of their TV or laptop.

— Ilias Georgiopoulos,
Owner and director of the cinema



The team © Vangelis Patsialos



ITALY

CINEMAZERO, PORDENONE

Involving loyal viewers while reaching out to the “audience-to-be”

—

Cinemazero Cultural Association was founded in 1978. Its initial project was the organization of its first great and complete retrospective on Pier Paolo Pasolini, who had passed away a few years earlier. There was also an exhibition of Pasolini's original drawings, sketches and pictures, and the book *Il cinema in forma di poesia (Cinema as Poetry)* was released. It was the perfect beginning for a path that would develop into the three characteristics of Cinemazero: cinema, pictures/images and book publishing.

In 1982, Cinemazero co-founded with the Cineteca del Friuli “Le Giornate del Cinema Muto” (Pordenone Silent Film Festival), an event that was going to become one of the most famous international meetings for scholars, film critics and journalists, fully devoted to early cinema. After a few months, Cinemazero moved to the assembly hall in Pordenone’s gymnasium, which, today, operates as the headquarters for the film theatre (three screens, more than 400 seats), welcoming more than 100,000 people every year, with particular attention given to quality programming and special guests, including successful international directors (last year’s major guests featured: Nanni Moretti, Abel Ferrara and Giuseppe Tornatore). Cinemazero Cultural Association acquired a huge photographic and video archive over the years, featuring materials on Pasolini, Tina Modotti and other photographers, allowing us today to organize many exhibitions in Italy and all around the world. Some of the material coming from this patrimony is used to shoot different documentaries, such as one focusing on Federico Fellini and another on Pasolini’s last movie *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*, both presented at the Cannes and Venice Film Festivals. Also noteworthy is the kermesse “Le voci dell’Inchiesta” (The voices of investigative journalism), on the “cinema du reel”, that, together with FMK International Short Film Festival, are the festivals organised by Cinemazero completely devoted to low budget independent filmmaking. Cinemazero and the Centro Espressioni Cinematografiche recently founded the distribution company Tucker Film, a pioneering distributor of East Asian filmmaking.

Cinemazero is the only arthouse cinema in Pordenone and it represents not only a site of exceptional cultural activity and promotion, but also and above all an opportunity for aggregation and socialisation for the entire city, thanks both to its many events and special evenings – more than 100 every year, organized in collaboration with local cultural associations – and to its fair price policy, always attentive to the most vulnerable sections of the local population.

Approaching its 40th birthday, Cinemazero is still facing multiple challenges with many ideas and much enthusiasm. The association needs some renewal, not only from a technological point of view, but especially from an audience perspective, without losing its original spirit and the trust that the already loyal audience has granted Cinemazero. To save this “double soul” representing the biggest wealth for the association, Cinemazero needs to work on a two-way process: first of all, we have to appreciate and involve more of our “loyal audience” (more than 6,000 people own a Cinemazero Card) and, secondly, we need to get the interest and curiosity of the “audience-to-be”. It’s this last sector of the audience that Cinemazero has focused the majority of its efforts on recently. We created a special project, titled Young Club, which was a unique initiative at a national level that launched in

Pordenone just one year ago, as a pilot experience of absolute excellence at Cinemazero’s Media Library.

The Young Club, as the name suggests, is an exclusive initiative for young people aged 15 to 25 years, all united in devoting their passion to the cinema and willing to discover and improve their abilities in organizing cinematographic events and in producing high quality content connected to the cinema world. For this reason, Cinemazero Young Club is a real “training ground” where youth involved can compare their film knowledge, further their passion and grow professionally. Cinemazero offers its know-how, follow-up, practical suggestion and the opportunity to participate in international festivals, along with technical equipment for those who want to shoot their first movie and acting lessons (thanks to the cooperation with the theatre association 99MQ). The only rule at the Club is that there are no rules, meaning that the principal characteristic of the group is self-management, because only the youth know best what they desire! The first year of Young Club’s life consisted of weekly meetings and focus groups, training projects and labs held by Cinemazero professionals. The results were astonishing to say the least, with film marathons and reviews, demonstrating that young members improved in targeting and communicating with people and in knowing how to satisfy their cultural requests. In 2016, Cinemazero Young Club’s second year, the group is already working towards and organizing new film marathons, producing a short movie and shooting film reviews and interviews with directors and guests during Cinemazero’s events.

Our end result: young people, young people and more young people! But Cinemazero’s purpose is not only to address a young audience. The real challenge for the Association is in creating an “ensemble”, bypassing people’s ages and “categories” to accommodate everyone’s passion, which is the wonderful, boundless world of cinema.

— Manuela Morana,
Head of Educational Programmes



Manuela Morana



LATVIA

K.SUNS, RIGA

Ambitious programming in a difficult market

—

The exhibition company *Kino galerija* was founded 24 years ago. It was at the time when Latvia had only recently regained its independence and we were the first private film theatre in the country. Our first cinema *Kino galerija* was located in the Old Riga. It was a small, but cosy arthouse cinema with 100 seats. It was a time of change, the Iron curtain had fallen and any film could be screened. Piracy flourished and cinemas were flooded with films of dubious quality. Many cinemas were closed.

At present, in Riga, with its population of 700,000 inhabitants, only one cinema has been preserved of all the film theatres that existed before 1990 (Europa Cinemas member cinema Splendid Palace). There are 6 cinemas in Riga now, three of them are newly-built multiplexes.

In 2003 we embarked upon new challenge and moved to the cinema K.Suns (Cinema Dog, initially called *Andalūzijas suns/Andalusian Dog*, which opened in 1994, but the ownership has changed three times since then). The film theatre is located in the centre of Riga on the prestigious Elizabetes Street which is known as “cinema street”, owing to the 3 film theatres located there. In 2004 the cinema became a member of Europa Cinemas. The cinema hall has 181 seats, 16mm and 35mm film projection equipment, 2K Barco Digital and our team consists of 8 people. The cinema does not receive funding from the state, but we submit projects to the State Cultural Capital Foundation and to the Culture Department of Riga City Council for ad hoc support.

From the first day of our existence, we set a goal to screen films that differ in artistic quality from the repertoire at other cinemas. Or, at least, we would only choose films from the existing offer that coincided with our goal. We started working with foreign cultural organizations: Goethe Institute, British Council, Institut Français, Nordic Council, the Centre of Danish Culture and other resident embassies. British, French, Czech, German and Nordic film clubs operated in our cinema with weekly screenings, retrospectives and film premieres from the aforementioned countries. It was something new for Riga filmgoers and we had our own niche audience of arthouse cinema lovers, for whom we became a sort of a renowned brand.

Our programming policy has not changed in 24 years. The number of arthouse cinema-goers in Latvia is very limited, which creates an obstacle for screening such films: the distributors simply do not buy these films as they are unable to earn back the money invested. A vicious circle forms, everyone is horrified by the dominance of Hollywood productions, but, at the same time, there are merely a handful of European films screened in cinemas in Latvia. The same can be said about Young Audience films. In order to find opportunities to screen European films for young audiences we cooperate with the Danish Institute of Culture, the embassies of Norway and Sweden and organize a Children’s film festival around Christmas. The absence of Film Archives can be listed as another problem: no copies of films screened previously in Latvia are available, not to mention world classics. And digitalization has created a new problem: a month after the premiere of the film its copy is not available in Latvia any longer. It is practically impossible to include in our repertoire a film that is six months old.

In spite these problems we have managed to organize retrospective screenings of Ingmar Bergman, Luis Buñuel, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Alain Resnais, Bo Widerberg, Alfred Hitchcock, François Truffaut, Jacques Demy and many others. Educational film lectures have gained popularity among students, for example, *The Sad Screen Flowers* (melodramas), *The Mean Neighbours in the Subconscious* (doppelganger image in film), *Meditative Provocations*, *Surrealist Elements in Films*, *The Magic Images – Guess What this Film is About?*, *Who is Afraid of Horror Films?* etc. Aside from European films we also have Canadian, Japanese, Mexican, Columbian and Chinese film cycles.

We also work with the National Film Centre of Latvia and films from the largest former and existing film festivals are screened at our cinema: Arsenal, Riga International Film Festival RIFF, Riga International Film Festival 2ANNAS, Baltic Sea Docs. A special place among them is reserved for the latter, since it has been the most noticeable and uplifting event for our cinema this autumn. Baltic Sea Docs marked its 20th anniversary and for the 10th time it took place in K-Suns. We know how complicated it is to screen documentaries in cinemas, since it is not the most favoured film genre among film-goers. The teams at the cinema and at Baltic Sea Docs felt truly gratified to see that 97% of the seating capacity of the cinema hall was filled during the screening of all films!

It gives us strong motivation to work when a spectator says, “*Nineteen years ago I saw in your old town cinema, Kino galerija, The Full Monty, and I understood that I want to return to you and watch other films as well.*” Seems trifle but it was very rewarding for us!

— Aida & Juris Zviedri, Owners of K.Suns



Juris & Aida Zviedri



© G. Zaltauskaitė



© G. Zaltauskaitė

LITHUANIA

KAUNO KINO CENTRAS ROMUVA, KAUNAS

An historical venue meets the tastes of modern viewers

—

Located in the centre of Kaunas, Romuva is an historical cinema theatre that offers quality arthouse films every day. Kauno Kino Centras Romuva is an authentic and open cultural space and its strength is in its heritage and history. The cinema brings warm memories to generations of Kaunas citizens. For many, our cinema was the first place that brought films into their lives and this contributes to making every visit to our cinema a special experience.

Romuva was, at the time of its building, in 1940, the most modern film theatre in the Baltic countries. It has now been 76 years since the first screening of *Symphony of Love* took place. Kauno kino centras Romuva closed and re-opened a few times, but still managed to survive through different conditions and always kept its original purpose. It is the only cinema dating back to the interwar period in Kaunas and is the oldest cinema in the whole of Lithuania to still be open and to have preserved its modern art-deco style.

Kaunas has recently received the European heritage label for its architecture, and Romuva cinema was in the list of buildings that stood out and represent the architecture of the city. Back in the day there were more than 10 cinemas on the longest pedestrian street in Kaunas, but Romuva was the most modern, and brought new standards for film screenings. We improved the acoustics in the hall and we coated the wall and ceiling to prevent resonance.

The film programme differs from other cinemas in the city and Kaunas region because the majority of films screened are European productions. Furthermore, Romuva pays great attention to Lithuanian films.

Every year the cinema hosts several film festivals including; “Neptogus kinas”, “Lenkų kino festivalis”, “Vilnius Shorts”, and “Žiemos ekranai”. The daily programming is filled with premieres and screenings with discussions with directors. We also sometimes host concerts and events.

Romuva is the only cinema in the region that organises young audience activities, with screenings followed by discussions and lectures and regular animation and film-making workshops. Film education plays a key role in the development of the next generation as an audience for European film in Kaunas.

Among Romuva’s special programmes there are cinema classics evenings, “Good Cinema Club” and “Subtitrai”.

“Subtitrai” is a film cycle dedicated to Lithuanian films. The purpose of these screenings is to invite the audience, mostly young people, to think about the film and analyse the ideas and values reflected in our national cinema. This program is organised in partnership with Vytautas Magnus University. After each screening in the programme there is a discussion with a professor from the university and the filmmakers.

In the cinema classics evenings old-world, renowned movies are screened, sometimes using authentic Czech 35mm projectors.

“Gero Kino Klubas” (Good Cinema Club) encourages viewers to hone their critical approach to films and to share their emotions and opinions after the screenings by contributing to our dedicated website www.kinaskaune.lt, as well as to widen the professional

knowledge of films and to encourage the number of young film critics to grow. The project started in September 2015 with around 20 film lovers, between the ages of 16 and 22, selected to participate in a two day seminar. Afterwards they were brought together in order to comprise the club. Once every two weeks they had meetings with lectures or discussions about the films and, this year, we invited 20 other young people to take part in the club which was held in the autumn.

Between July and September 2016 we started a new initiative: outdoor screenings by the Kaunas castle. Films are selected from six different film festivals that take place at our cinema throughout the year, making the programme vibrant and relevant. The screenings brought thousands of viewers every Thursday to this special location known for its history. Hopefully this event has brought more visibility to Romuva and allowed new film lovers to discover our repertoire.

The biggest challenge we are currently facing concerns our infrastructure. The building itself, which is the only original cinema in the city, is remarkable and beautiful, but it was not maintained properly for years, therefore it needs renovation. The modernization of the building would enable Romuva to be more attractive.

Our vision of the cinema is to be a beloved, authentic and modern cultural space where cinema lovers, culture and heritage come together to enrich leisure experience. We want it to be the place where viewers can learn about the heritage of cinematography, share their impressions and express themselves.

— Gintarė Žaltauskaitė,
Communication Coordinator



Gintarė Žaltauskaitė and Monika Inceryte, Director



E-Nature



Club Natlab 18



Gob squad in Natlab

THE NETHERLANDS

NATLAB/PLAZA FUTURA, EINDHOVEN

A cross cultural venue where flexibility meets innovation



The Natlab in Eindhoven, where our venue is situated, is a place full of history. It was part of the vast - and in those days forbidden - area of the city of Eindhoven where the Philips company created a huge industrial complex, to manufacture light bulbs and build their famous radios, television sets and electrical equipment.

The Natuurkundig Laboratorium (Physics Laboratory) – hence NatLab, founded in 1923, was the heart of the company. Many researchers there worked on secret projects, like the compact cassette and the Video Longplay Disc, a forerunner of the CD and DVD. Philips, as a multinational company, left Eindhoven in the nineties, but the area got a second life, since the old buildings were refurbished and changed into lofts, cafés, a skate park, and many small offices to house the ever growing creative community in Eindhoven.

Nowadays Eindhoven is known for groundbreaking design practices, with a flourishing Design Academy and a big University of Technology. Natlab is the most important cultural venue in the area, and the only arthouse theatre in the greater Eindhoven region (which includes the Van Gogh-village Nuenen). We hold screenings of a wide variety of international arthouse films to stimulate our demanding audience. We have 520 seats, and some of our screening rooms are quite adaptable for different needs. And we are a theatre, too! National and international theatre groups, DJs and musicians enhance our film programmes, which are built around special themes, with three main festivals each year. We attract an audience of around 150,000 people, annually. On summer evenings in July and August, we organize a popular outdoor cinema next to our building, twice a week. Admission is free, and it is generally attended by approximately 1,000 people. It gives us an opportunity to reach out to the neighborhood and attract new audiences.

We also have a small art gallery, and many possibilities for workshops and debates. Together with the municipal library, a local, specialized bookshop and the Centre for Architecture we organize debates and talk shows on literature, architecture, city planning and city politics. A local radio station organizes a monthly cultural programme in our restaurant.

In our thematic programmes, we always invite start-ups to present their work. For our E-sports programme, part of our 2016 research about the future of film theatres, which also included E-nature and E-love, we invited game developers and professional gamers, but also the coach of Olympic swimming champion Ranomi Kromowidjojo, who explained how he uses live images shot from different camera angles to improve the results of the Dutch swimmers (the national swimming centre is based in Eindhoven). A totally different perspective on visual culture comes from various Eindhoven-based artists who we involve in our techno-parties to create the (art/film-related) visuals for a totally different atmosphere in our main, completely flexible screening room, which can house 500 guests during these nights. The Dutch dance culture, with world famous DJ's, is regularly integrated into our programme.

We are open daily, from 10am to 1am, and, during the daytime, our audience grows younger by the hour. The 30+ group, especially, enjoy our late evening

program. And every morning at 10.30 on weekdays, a special Film Club visits us to attend the preview of an arthouse film (one month ahead of the official release, 8 times a year). Films like *Winter Sleep*, *Locke* or *La fille inconnue (The Unknown Girl)* get a head start in this way. This Film Club is the oldest in The Netherlands. The average age is 55. The club is quite popular and has 1,700 members. We do not segregate our audience by age group but target them by mentality group, which helps to diversify the audience for a big range of special screenings, related to art, ecology, international politics (refugees) and local issues. Schools organize their film outings at our venue, and we are developing a special programme for the 3-6 year olds, inspired by the practice of the *Studio des Ursulines* (Europa Cinemas member) in Paris. We are very proud of the project "Life, the movie", which we developed ourselves, where people are encouraged to create their own film about a special moment in their lives. They use old digitalized 8mm films, videotapes and photography to make a documentary of about 10 minutes duration each. It is a great way to introduce people to film analysis. And it is remarkable what easy access editing software can do nowadays: the results are astonishing. The first screenings of the project in October 2016, with 16 films, was a big success. We will continue the project with the help of the Dutch Centre of Image and Sound in Hilversum and are planning to introduce it on a national level.

Recently, we took the initiative to become a European cultural embassy and use the Europa Cinemas network to look for partners in an exchange programme. We are aiming to become a place where European citizens are informed and inspired by films and cross over culture, to be able to live interesting lives.

— Pauline Terreehorst,
Director Natlab/Plaza Futura



Pauline Terreehorst



POLAND

KINO LUNA, WARSAW

Innovative marketing to reach out to a young audience, but not only!

Luna means Moon in Latin, but the inspiration for the cinema name was the Russian outer-space program. We like to share this oddity with our fans because, today, this name is a living symbol of our history. Luna is an art-house cinema that has been promoting high culture since 1962.

Luna is situated in the city centre, near the Zbawiciela Square, a very popular and trendy area, with plenty of small cafés and restaurants, filled by young Warsaw hipsters, but also old people. Our mission is to bring together the whole local community and we're very happy to work with people of all ages; seniors living in the neighbourhood, students from surrounding dormitories and hipsters. They all find

something interesting at Luna, and we care about this very acutely. The unique climate of this old-school/retro place makes the atmosphere very friendly.

Besides being a cinema with 2 screens (totalling 647 seats) and offering regular activities, Luna is also the organiser or host of many different events, like reviews and film festivals, concerts, shows, meetings with directors and actors, educational programs and children's projects. Among the many festivals we host: Millennium Docs Against Gravity Film Festival, the Russian Film Festival Sputnik, the Film Festival for Children and Youth Cinema in Sneakers, World Independent Short Film Festival Grand Off, to mention just a few of the biggest. At Luna you can also find the most niche events, e.g. "10 Buone Ragioni", co-organized with the Italian Institute of Culture, New Age Bollywood movies and many premiere ceremonies. Meanwhile, we're also a venue for regular parties with world famous DJs, and almost every month we are the place with the longest queue at our main door!

Our pricing strategy is one of our strongest points. The prices are very affordable, available for different social groups, like students or seniors. For them we have "Cheap Mondays", where we show slightly older movies, "Happy Thursdays", with a very low price for the latest movies, and "Senior Shows", where we show the best movie of the week at the lowest price in Warsaw, and all are very successful. This year we have received the award for "Seniors friendly place" from the City of Warsaw and Seniors Associations.

Our cinema has won several awards, for example, one for the most positive cinema in Warsaw from *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Clear Channel* and another for the best web marketing campaign within *Sieci kin Studyjnych*, the Polish arthouse cinema association.

Kino Luna also intends to play an active role in the cultural life of the capital by participating in public events, like the Night of the Museums. Of course, one of our goals is to widen and support Polish cinema, including unknown Polish filmmakers. For example, in 2015, we organised the official premiere of the documentary *The Particle of Podlasie*, made by 3 amateur directors, showing the beauty of nature and diversity of culture in the Eastern part of Poland. The film was a huge success in our cinema. It stayed on the screen for 6 months!

Our loyal spectators appreciate our repertoire because they are looking for something different to blockbusters. We screen artistic films awarded at the Polish and international film festivals, whether it be feature films or documentaries. We always try to combine artistry with entertainment. Sometimes it requires more sophistication than just playing the new Woody Allen movie! The key to success is to listen to the choices of our viewers, know their preferences, and try to anticipate them. We are trying to be selective, but also to give as many choices as our capacity allows us to do. We engage with several PR activities, some traditional marketing, and we focus on social media and customized

events. Our Facebook profile is one of the biggest, when compared with other independent cinemas. We have more than 25 000 fans and the weekly posts reach around 22,000 people. We have a structured Facebook strategy: we publish 2-3 posts per day, Monday to Friday, and 1-2 over the weekend. There are usually posts connected with Kino Luna. We tag actors, directors and offer prizes for better reach, and we always ask our partners to share our posts.

Luna has also developed an app for mobile payments. It allows customers (for now, only in Poland) to choose the movie, seats and pay for their tickets on a mobile device. There is a special ticket price for viewers who download the Luna mobile app.

Regarding the challenges we are currently facing, we certainly have to mention the competition we have with four other cinemas in the area, ranging 5 km, each with similar programming and comparable ticket prices. Furthermore, the venue is quite old and requires renovation.

Our latest most innovative project is the educational programme for the schoolkids called "CINEMA educates HEALTHY generation". Poland has the biggest percentage of growth of overweight kids. The huge problem of consuming junk food and sweet snacks at school and the total deficiency of any health education in the core curriculum motivated us to launch this programme. We grouped thematic documentaries and offered "lessons in cinema" or workshops with nutritionists, health coaches, as well as social researchers and economists. The programme received the patronage of the city of Warsaw and Greenpeace. It was launched at the end of September and up until now there are more than 2 000 children subscribed to the programme. We are very proud to do something so important for the younger generation.

■ Piotr Olak, Director
and Magdalena Borgus, Marketing Manager



Piotr Olak



RUSSIA

CINEMA ZARYA, KALININGRAD

A unique independent cinema introducing new concepts in Kaliningrad

Cinema Zarya is located in Kaliningrad, in the west of Russia. This region of Russia that has no borders with the rest of the country. It used to be a part of Germany before the Second World War called The Western Prussia, with its capital Koenigsberg.

The cinema history dates back to 1937. Then, it was called Scala and was famous for its acoustics, owing to the oval shape of the screening room with its starry sky above. Fifteen years ago, we tried to get some films from Warner Bros, but they did not want to work with arthouse cinemas. Their representative came to see us and when he visited the cinema, he just clapped

his hands and said to us: “Guys, you need to play opera here, not cinema!” One of the major screen events took place in Zarya in 1997: it was the world premiere of *Titanic*. Not only was it the world premiere, it was also the first screening in the world with the participation of James Cameron. He used the Russian deep-ocean submersibles Mir 1 and Mir 2 for the filming of *Titanic* and promised to screen the film in Kaliningrad. Zarya was the only choice at that time.

In the year 2000, the cinema was renovated by a great Lithuanian architect. It was done so well that it was awarded with first prize at the architectural forum in Moscow and was shortlisted for the Andrew Martin award in London (the “Oscars” of the interior design world).

A couple of years later, Zarya became the platform for the European Film Festival, which is still running, 12 years later. Among the guests of the festival were the likes of Jean-Jacques Annaud, Michael Fassbender, and Krzysztof Zanussi. Since then, it has transformed into a major cultural event for the whole region, although, up until 2007, it was considered by some people to be part of the casino that was next door, which belonged to the same person. The proximity to the casino had its advantages: Zarya did not have financial concerns, because we did not need to have sold out screenings. We needed a couple of viewers inside who, after the film, would go to the casino and lose as much money as a thousand cinema tickets. The situation changed after a law passed which closed down all the casinos across the country.

The next interesting story happened when we decided to make a Woody Allen monument and install it in the cinema. Since the ex-name of the city was Koenigsberg, and Woody Allen’s real name was Allan Stewart Konigsberg, we decided to make the connection. We contacted Woody Allen, made a competition for the best draft of the monument in the local media, met with Woody Allen, interviewed him, and made him choose his favourite draft. He could not choose between two of them and asked if there was a possibility to not just select one, but to make two monuments of him instead. We later made a short film of this story which traveled around the whole world and was released in the US as a bonus of DVD with the film *Paris-Manhattan*, starring Woody Allen.

The main challenge for Zarya has always been the attractiveness of the city; visitors from Moscow or abroad call it one of the most beautiful cities they have ever visited, but the locals simply do not appreciate it that much, or at least not enough to go out and enjoy it. So, we had to fight for their attention and organize interesting events that would urge them to come. All in all, within 15 years we had around 200 festivals, most of them international. Recently, we became the venue for the most prominent Russian Short Film Festival, Koroche, which also helps us to survive in an aggressive landscape, filled with multiplexes in malls.

We are proud of being an independent cinema, with a separate street entrance, which makes our venue very attractive in the whole city. We have always tried to screen more than just great European films, to also work as a cultural phenomenon introducing new concepts in the city: as a part of our programming we opened the first bike parking in town and held an interactive photo exhibition where everyone could participate. The idea behind these *Fotosushka* events is to choose a topic from a recent premiere, hang ropes across the ceiling and give people pins. Everyone is welcome to take part – to bring their own pics and share with others. Sometimes we even have a jury that chooses the best shots and we give tickets as prizes. It’s always so much fun and creates a lot of discussion. Finally, at some point during the event, everyone can take a picture they like and take it home with them, so that everyone is a winner!

We also hold thematic parties, one of which is called, “one country-one drink”, where we screen silent films with live jazz. Live jazz with old classics is always a success, with films by Chaplin, Keaton or silent horror film. People never go to the cinema and watch these films in their original versions, but live jazz gives the experience of a film-concert. Finally, we transformed our small screening hall into a party zone on Fridays, started vinyl markets in foyer on Sundays, turned the cafe into a library during festivals - mixing cinema with literature – created outdoor installations and turned the facade into a mirror hall. We realized that the only way to compete with the big venues is to be as creative as we can.

■ Artem Ryzhkov, General Manager





SLOVENIA

MESTNI KINO PTUJ

**A venue tiny in size but huge
in creative initiative**

—

Mestni kino Ptuj is a historical venue with their first film screening taking place almost 120 years ago – an anniversary we will be commemorating with special events all throughout 2017. The cinema screens a diverse contemporary programme, while striving to preserve the building's retro flair. A member of Europa Cinemas as well as the Slovenian Art Cinema Association, it is managed by youth centre CID Ptuj.

Mestni kino Ptuj is the head of a Europa Cinemas mini-network, which also includes Kino Rogaška in Rogaška Slatina and Linhartova dvorana in Radovljica. It is run by a very small but committed team, passionate about providing their audience with a pleasant space for enjoying films, good conversations, and other activities that enrich one's daily life.

We are the only cinema in town, and the only arthouse venue programming European films in the area – this makes us the go-to spot for lovers of arthouse film, as well as the cinema of choice for families and local film buffs. We are one of the most active and popular cultural institutions in the Municipality of Ptuj, and also one of the oldest.

We aim to cater to a wide variety of tastes and a broad demographic, so our programme is quite diverse. While we do also include blockbusters, our main focus remains on screening European and world cinema, art films, and independent productions.

Our selection of the best, most original and provocative films of the past season is screened at our annual open-air cinema “Kino brez stropa” (Cinema without a Ceiling). The programme for this event always consists of films that, in our opinion, merit a second (or third or fourth ...) viewing, and films that we feel failed to get the attention they deserved during their initial cinema run. For one summer week, our programme moves under the stars and into the courtyard of the Castle of Ptuj. The lovely setting, warm summer nights, free admission, and a carefully curated programme have proved to be a recipe for success – the screenings are immensely popular and have become a great way for us to introduce people to films that might have otherwise flown under their radar. We are getting people talking, we are getting them excited about cinema and that is a wonderful result!

We feel that it is very important that the cinema-going experience transcends the casual – it should be a pleasant event that is remembered fondly, which is why we offer our audience the opportunity to enjoy excellent films and special events regularly. We often accompany film screenings with debates, featuring interesting guests, in our “Pogovor o(b) filmu”/Film Talks programme. We invite filmmakers to present their new works and experts in various subjects to expand upon a topic covered in a particular film.

Our young audience is of special importance to us. We have developed a number of programmes aimed at children and youth: Kino vrtiček/Little Cinema Garden for pre-schoolers and kids up to 8 years of age, which includes a creative and playful workshop after screenings of selected children's films; Kinoskop for older children (8+), with workshops aiming to take a deeper look into the world of film; school screenings accompanied by introductions and optional talks after the screenings; free presentations about the functioning of a cinema for school groups, etc. In addition, we regularly organize animation workshops, offer cheaper

tickets for students, and have collaborated twice with Luksuz Produkcija in the organization of an international youth exchange focused on filmmaking (documentary and fiction shorts). We also regularly organize special screenings aimed at young parents with babies – so for many young ones, our cinema is the first one they have ever visited.

In working with young audiences, we feel that it is especially important to offer a carefully curated programme, which not only entertains the little ones, but also gets them excited about film and gets them thinking about cinema in general. In our experience, systematic work with young audiences is crucial for developing a local community of film enthusiasts of all ages.

Our biggest challenge for a while now has been communicating to the powers that be than an institution such as ours needs stable funding for core staff. We have been struggling with the problem of being understaffed for years. and, as our film programme, the number and complexity of events and our audience grows, this becomes even more of a challenge. It can be very difficult to juggle the various tasks in a cinema such as ours; curating a good and attractive programme, addressing new audiences, responding to the needs of our regulars, and developing fresh ideas, while also dealing with mundane necessities such as keeping the old building in operational shape and securing funding from multiple sources. To do all this well, in the long run, our tiny team undoubtedly needs to grow.

We are honoured to be part of Europa Cinemas, a network and brand that is globally recognized and respected. The networking and educational opportunities Europa Cinemas offers are invaluable and we always strive to make the most of them, as well as of the possibility of exchanging opinions, experiences, good practices and other information with our fellow network members.

■ Mateja Lapuh, Programmer



Mateja Lapuh



SPAIN

CINECIUTAT, PALMA DE MALLORCA

An arthouse cinema reopened thanks to the community

—

Now in its fourth year, for many people in Palma de Mallorca, “CineCiutat” has become a symbol of cultural resistance. In the darkest period of the crisis, a cinema closed by its owners and reopened by a citizen’s movement, in 2012, remains the only arthouse cinema in the capital city on this touristic Mediterranean island.

In 2012, the economic crisis hit hard in Spain, and film theatres were closing all over the country. Around 40% of venues were lost in less than a decade. Internet piracy, together with the high costs of the technological shift to digital projection, hit small urban cinemas, and those programming arthouse films, the most.

The Cinema Renoir in Palma's old slaughterhouse, a huge and beautiful building dating back to 1905, with yellow sandstone walls and a wooden roof, was not an exception. For almost 20 years, these 4 screens, with 560 seats, were the only original cinemas on the island of Mallorca, and the place where a whole generation of cinephiles got a taste for the best films, under the umbrella of Europa Cinemas. But in this case, the closing of the cinema in May 2012 was impeded by the reaction of the public. A citizen's movement, called "Salvem els Renoir" ("Let's Save the Renoir"), garnered a crowd of supporters in less than two weeks after the cinema closed.

Over 1,500 of them signed a petition for the rescue of the film theatre, donating 100€ each, as an annual fee, and created a non-profit association, "Xarxa Cinema" (the cinema network, in Catalan). This movement reopened the film theatre, under the name "CineCiutat" (the City Cinema), in July 2012.

Since then it has been a democratically managed cinema, whereby members of the association decide on programming, events, communications and all of the requirements of a cinema. It has become a central cultural hub on the island, growing at a rate of 20% every year in audience and box office. From 40,000 tickets sold in 2012 to the 75,000 in 2015, it has proved that such a model is viable, even in a high competition area like Mallorca.

The programme combines independent and small films – mainly European – with some quality broad audience titles, including (glups!) *Spectre* or Spielberg's *Bridge of Spies*, but only original language versions. Blockbusters are not considered for the programme, as there are a few multiplexes in commercial areas around Palma, and they also need to survive. With a very strong 'à la carte' and 'on demand' programme for schools and high schools (around 12,000 students visit the cinema every year), and all kind of events for kids, "CineCiutat" has become a cultural must for the younger audiences. Language students, with their teachers, also take advantage of the original language screenings to further what they are learning. Classics and documentaries are also shown in weekly strands, bringing together an audience otherwise divided into various niches. Another very successful part of the cinema's offer is private room hire at very affordable prices, for all kinds of screenings: from self-made short films to wedding videos, from concerts to poetry slams – and even for political meetings.

The reopening of the cinema was done with the four existing 35mm projectors, but shortly after it became

clear that the only way to survive was in becoming fully digitised in as short a time as possible. Thanks to donors and small investors, the purchase of digital equipment was done in two years, combining BluRay and DCP projectors. The shift to 100% renewable energy made CineCiutat the first cinema in Spain to become fully sustainable, and one of the promoters of the "Green Screens" project within the European arthouse association CICAIE.

Since its beginning, "CineCiutat" has worked to create a network of arthouse cinemas in Spain, and has encouraged similar citizen-supported film theatres to be created. Some of the reopened cinemas in Madrid (Cines Zoco Majadahonda, which is a member of Europa Cinemas, El Septimo Oficio), Valencia (Cinemes Aragon), or Santiago de Compostela (Numax, also a member of Europa Cinemas), together with other public and private cinemas around the country, formed the "CineArte" network in 2014, which now has 30 cinemas and is a member of CICAIE. Most of them are also proud members of Europa Cinemas, with a very strong part of their programme based on European non-national films.

Closely tied to the filmmakers' community on the island, and also to national and international networks, CineCiutat is proud to have welcomed directors Oliver Stone and Til Schweiger as well as actors Joseph Fiennes and Angela Molina for masterclasses and premieres. All the film festivals organised in Palma, including Evolution, Maremostra and Atlántida choose CineCiutat as their venue.

Innovation, careful programming and a very dynamic and committed community of cinemagoers and cinephiles are some of the elements that makes CineCiutat not just a cinema, but a thriving cultural force on the island.

— Pedro Barbadillo, President of Xarxa Cinema and founder of CineCiutat



Pedro Barbadillo



SWEDEN

CNEMA, NORRKÖPING

An interactive venue using cinema to cross cultural borders

—

In the heart of the old industrial environment of Norrköping, you'll find CNEMA, a municipal driven media house with activities running from early morning to late evening. Five years after opening, CNEMA is thriving and constantly renewing itself, never budging on its core aims: to show quality films from all over the world to a diverse audience through state of the art technology.

It started when Norrköping municipal cinema moved from its old location in an art museum to a remodelled old textile factory. It's no coincidence that Norrköping is called "Sweden's Manchester", as there are many old textile factories around the city. Now, the building is serving a new purpose without having lost its industrial charm and links to the past. We grew from one screen at the art museum to three with an in-house media lab, a film studio, editing rooms, and top-notch technology aimed at increasing the interest of film for all ages throughout the municipal region.

To reach out to the young audience we have established a close collaboration with both elementary schools and higher education institutes. Students of all ages come to us for media education: they make their own film and then watch it on a big screen! Our media educators also visit the schools to highlight the importance of film as a tool for education. And, of course, we host school screenings to open up important dialogue around current topics, as we believe education lays the foundation for the future. We see huge interest from students as well as teachers around how to make films, how to apply film as a tool within education and also around the art of storytelling with motion pictures.

CNEMA recently started managing a film fund, set up to support professional writers, directors and producers. This fund offers financing to movie projects produced and filmed in the area and to filmmakers in the early stages of their production with a strong connection to the town of Norrköping. The fund donates 310,000 EUR every year to different projects. This helps create a healthy environment for filmmakers, giving them a helping hand and a feeling that the municipality is being supportive of film culture, helping it to grow.

Every year we host a children and youth film festival and the main goal is to give families, despite their socio-economic status, a chance to watch films together without worrying about the cost. We are fortunate enough to be able to offer new and classical movies with greatly reduced prices because our belief is that enjoying cinema should be for everyone.

We recently started a new initiative to create a meeting point between Swedish teenagers and newly arrived immigrants. The situation around Europe and the rest of the world is leaving countries and cities to take a stand and to welcome all new people into our society and everyday life. Our aim is to build bridges between culture and language, between Swedes and immigrants from all over the world, of all ages. And what's better than going to the cinema together?

On that note we focus on raising awareness about the current situation for immigrants in a series we call "MigraMovies". We invite professors and other speakers within the field of immigration to talk about

the rising threat of racism and closed borders. We also feel that the film industry is keen to raise these issues with the type of movies that are being produced. Movies that raise awareness, about people in trouble, always have resonance for our audience and for us. Films can be picture perfect but also show a not so perfect picture.

We have a very diverse offer: daytime screenings for retired people, quality film screenings on a daily basis, live-streamed concerts, operas, ballet and theatre plays, classical films in collaboration with the Swedish Film Institute, New Balkan Film Festival, French Film Festival, Banff Mountain Film festival and Finnish films, just to name a few.

As with all cinemas around Europe, our main concern is to renew the charm of watching a film at its best: on a big screen. We are constantly trying to enhance the experience of visiting our cinema. Collaboration is key and a good way to bring people together over art in many forms. We arrange art exhibitions in our lobby, music performances in the theatre, tango dancing between films, video gaming on the big screen, and simultaneous screenings with other countries around Europe, to mention just some of our collaborations.

Because that's just the thing: the more we invite people to join, in any way, the more we can accomplish. Giving the audience a chance to see films from all over the world, in different languages, from different points of view, allows us all to keep growing and expanding our horizons – making the world borderless, by showing films from other cultures and offering the best of our own.

— Simona Macuh,
Administration, Programming and Communication



Thomasine Eriksson, Anders Sköld, Simona Macuh, Christian Tidebrink, Elin Bennett, Johan Karlsson.



SWITZERLAND

KULT.KINO, BASEL

Brainstream but not mainstream cinema ateliers

With seven screens in two locations in the heart of Basel, kult.kino is the leading arthouse group in northwestern Switzerland and it fulfills a cultural function. Since maximizing culture is the focus rather than profit, we often face a delicate balancing act between the desire to provide a cultural programme and the self-restriction that is necessary for economic reasons. Our main motto is: brainstream not mainstream!



Kult.kino stands for a multifaceted, lively and demanding film programme and a comfortable environment where there is space for debate. Every year, we show about 200 films from all over the world and generate some 200,000 admissions. Kult.kino offers variety in terms of origin and quality and is committed to supporting young filmmakers. We also organise previews, premieres and special screenings with panel discussions. With its carefully selected programmes, kult.kino expands the cinematic experiences of audiences, screening films today that will become cult films tomorrow.

Basel's kult.kino has been committed to high-quality cinema since the 1970s when it started out as one film theatre. Within the last 40 years, it grew up to four cinemas totalizing 9 screens, then two one-screen venues were then closed down, and last year the number of screens reached seven.

After completing the major process of digitisation, in 2015 we undertook huge efforts to extend the existing triplex film theatre (kult.kino atelier), adding two more screens and a bar. This forward-thinking strategy has met with a positive response from our audiences and the local population. It was an important step which demanded huge investment for the renovations and development so we needed well-connected friends to support us both morally and financially. The association kult.amici was set up to lend this important project extra seriousness, thanks to representatives in the cultural and political spheres. Major additional or special costs were covered by the members' contributions, small investments (such as buying a theatre seat, a lamp or a cable for example), as well as the generosity and goodwill of individual members and workgroups.

A year after going into operation, we can say that the investment was worth it. More than ever, kult.kino is perceived to be a major cultural institution and Basel cannot be imagined without it.

The kult.kino, which grew out of the oldest film club in Switzerland (Le Bon Film), is one of the best connected arthouse cinema groups in the country, with the best programming according to quantity, quality and origin. Over 75% of the films we screen are European and they are always shown in their original language. In three funny shorts made for the Swiss Association of Studio Films advertising campaign we demonstrate how much nicer it is if a Finn curses in Finnish, a Scott despairs with his Scottish accent and a French woman seduces in French... (www.independent-pictures.ch).

This year we accompanied audiences in special screenings with protagonists or directors through the following films: *The Sweet Escape*, *La Buena Vida*, *Above and Below*, *Melody of Noise*, *Offshore*, *Grozny Blues*, *My Life as a Film*, *Welcome to Iceland*, *Ama-San*, *Europe She Loves*, *Looking Like My Mother* and more. We also host various festivals, including "Bildrausch", "Look & Roll" and "Festival de l'Aube".

Moreover, we cooperate on single events with various partners such as theatres, jazz festival, radio stations or magazines. We also host the annual short film night, various school programmes, a cycle called "Lebenszeit" (Lifetime) and live transmissions from the opera, as well as the "Magic Lantern", a film club for children aged from 6 to 12 that was launched 20 years ago.

Our constant challenge is to keep our regular audience members interested and curious, while at the same time developing young audiences. We have to constantly draw up new strategies considering young people have so much on offer to them in a lively cultural city such as Basel. Work groups, composed of friends of kult.kino, are constantly developing new ideas to acquire younger audience members. But what really draws young and older audiences to the cinema are the films themselves – films which are relevant, moving, touching and simply have to be seen!

— Romy Gysin, CEO



Romy Gysin



Kenneth Branagh (in the middle)



Lenny Abrahamson (2nd on the right) with Takeover participants

UNITED KINGDOM

QUEEN'S FILM THEATRE, BELFAST

A leading cinema with a vital role to get young people involved in film

The Queen's Film Theatre (QFT) is unique in Northern Ireland. First established in 1968 as the film society for Queen's University Belfast it has since evolved to be the only dedicated arthouse cinema and the only member of the Europa Cinemas' Network in Northern Ireland.

Located on the University Campus, the QFT has two screens and a bar café. The film programme is a carefully curated year round selection of British and Irish, world, contemporary and classic cinema, complemented by a comprehensive range of education and outreach activity. The QFT also manages Film Hub NI, part of the BFI Film Audience Network, a UK wide initiative aimed at growing audiences for British and non-mainstream film.

As the leading independent cinema in Northern Ireland, QFT plays a vital role in the region and in the city of Belfast. With a mission to promote the best of film culture from around the world, the QFT is a standard bearer for the art of cinema and works closely with many partners and festivals to ensure that Belfast audiences have access to outstanding cinema.

Everything the QFT does is informed by a passion for film. We work hard to ensure the QFT programme, our marketing and the experience we offer our audiences is as good as it can be and we are always looking for ways to improve and to develop.

QFT takes its role as Film Hub and as a cultural leader for cinema very seriously. We provide a unique cultural experience for audiences and consistently represent a wide range of tastes and speak to a diverse audience. Cultural diversity and social equality are integral to everything we do and are reflected throughout our programme of work, from community engagement and partnerships through to audience development and education and outreach activities.

We work closely with the local filmmaking community and festivals to showcase cutting edge new films and events from all over the world. Our partners include Belfast Film Festival, Cinemagic International Film and Television Festival for Young People, Outburst LGBT Festival, NI Science Festival and Belfast International Arts Festival.

As QFT is not for profit, we receive some public funding to provide access to audiences from all socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds. As Northern Ireland emerges from the conflict of the past, we believe QFT should offer a welcoming, neutral space that is open and accessible to everyone. We believe film is an incredibly powerful way of building tolerance, empathy and understanding and bringing people together to watch and discuss film is very important to us. Everyone should have access to great cinema and we provide support for audiences in economic need or with disabilities. We have just launched a community ticket scheme where discounted and free tickets are available to disadvantaged communities across Belfast.

A key part of our work is the development and support of younger audiences and filmmakers of the future. Through our Learning programme we work closely with schools, colleges and youth organisations and bespoke programmes for approximately 4,000 participants per year.

Youth initiatives include community filmmaking projects, a year round schools programme and our Young Programmers initiative, 'Takeover Film', which gives 15-19 year olds the chance to programme and deliver their own annual film festival (www.takeoverfilm.com). 'Takeover' participants are given the opportunity to watch more European films, learn new skills by working alongside film exhibition

professionals and discover how to programme and deliver film events. Their ideas are crucial to the festival which is aimed and marketed to their age group. As well as hands on experience, they are also given networking opportunities and advice on future career possibilities and opportunities in the creative industries, including internships and accreditation in vocational qualifications. The experience has for many been life changing and has raised aspirations as they feel that their creative voices have been heard.

'Takeover' also offers opportunities for participants to get involved in local filmmaking projects. This year a short film made by 'Takeover' was included on the Blu-ray/DVD of Mark Cousins' film *I Am Belfast*. The film followed a walking tour around Belfast, led by Mark Cousins, on a day of film events celebrating the theatrical release of the film.

We are very proud that two of our previous 'Takeover' participants have gone on to take part in the *28 Times Cinema* initiative at the Venice Film Festival (organized by the LUX Film Prize of the European Parliament in partnership with Europa Cinemas and the Venice Days). This was an amazing opportunity for the young people involved, both of whom are passionate about cinema and about pursuing a career in the film industry.

With almost 100,000 paying viewers annually for only two screens, the QFT is doing well. The future holds many challenges however. QFT earns almost 80% of its own income but we are dependent on a certain amount of public funding and this is always uncertain in the current economic climate. More challenging is the lack of screen capacity – this drastically limits the number of films we can show and audiences we can reach and, although in the very early stages, the possibility of developing a film centre here in Belfast is now being considered.

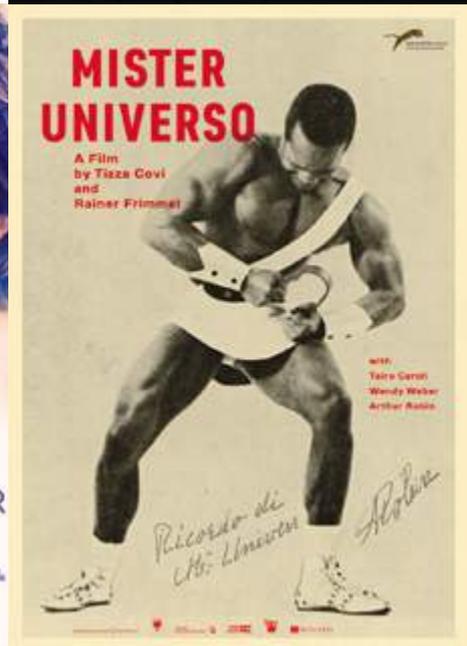
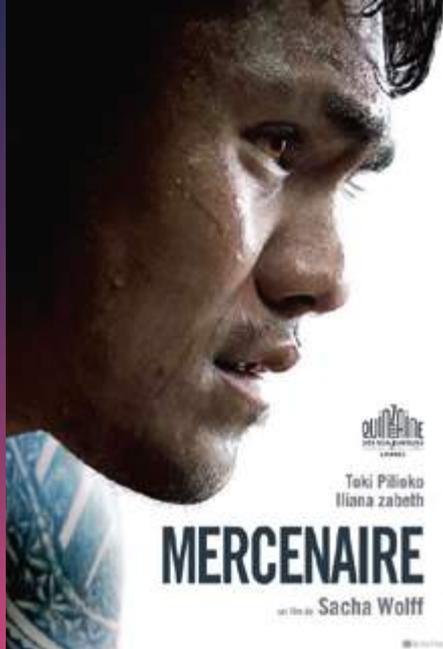
— Susan Picken, Head of QFT



Marion Campbell, Education Officer (on the right)



WINNERS
2016



CREATED IN 2003, THE EUROPA CINEMAS LABEL AIMS TO ENHANCE THE PROMOTION, CIRCULATION AND BOX-OFFICE RUNS OF EUROPEAN AWARD-WINNING FILMS ON THE SCREENS OF THE NETWORK'S CINEMAS ACROSS EUROPE.



EUROPA CINEMAS

41 countries - 644 cities - 1,078 cinemas - 2,648 screens

President: Nico Simon
General Director: Claude-Eric Poiroux
Head of International Relations: Fatima Djoumer - fatim@djoumer.de
Press: Charles McDonald - charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk

