

Europa Cinemas

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Cinemas
on the move
Awards 2018
Next/Change

Europa Cinemas Network Review

President: Nico Simon
General Director: Claude-Eric Poiroux
Head of International Relations – Network Review Editor:
Fatima Djoumer –
fdjoumer@europa-cinemas.org
Press: Charles McDonald –
charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk
Deputy Editors: Sonia Ragone, Maxence Delamare
Contributors to this Issue: Adrian Preda,
Charlotte Wensierski
Translation: Cinescript
English Proofreader: Tara Judah
Graphic Design: Change is good, Paris
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**Founded in 1992, Europa Cinemas is the first
international film theatre network for the circulation
of European films.**

Europa Cinemas
54 rue Beaubourg
75003 Paris, France
T + 33 1 42 71 53 70
info@europa-cinemas.org



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Connected & Collaborative: the power of networking

When the idea of creating an international network of cinemas first arose, it was in the knowledge that although exhibitors were kilometres apart from one another, they had identical professions and similar responsibilities including: creating and managing public venues that are open every day of the year, leading teams of professionals with diverse roles (customer experience, projection, programming), and inciting audiences to come and see new films on their screens each week.



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Furthermore, they shared an interest in joining forces to create a stable and dynamic market for European cinema.

This did not mean adopting a uniform approach, or even establishing a large-scale, centralised programme. Instead, it was about benefiting from the diverse range of practices that could be shared in order to build on our expertise and results.

These results speak for themselves. Over the past 25 years, the Network has spread to more than 700 cities, making it possible for hundreds of European films to circulate extensively and to reach 40 million cine-magoers yearly. At present, it is the only

network organised on such a scale to bring so many European works of all origins to different audiences, and to attract funding for a significant proportion of the films made on our continent. Through its work to support the circulation of films in Europe, it has become one of the key initiatives in the MEDIA programme.

When it comes to expertise, it is first and foremost exhibitors who make brave programming choices every week and support an unprecedented proportion of European films: almost six out of ten screenings feature European films.

To that, we can add the enterprising event managers who are also experts in devising publicity and promotional activities tailored to the films they screen and the audiences they want to attract. Today, the main challenge for our profession is to ensure that the cinema remains the preferred venue for discovering, enjoying and sharing everything exceptional it has to offer due to its diversity and creativity. Europa Cinemas has become a forum for constant innovation and exchange among exhibitors who are provided many opportunities to broaden their expertise, share best practice and achieve promising results, especially for young audiences. These opportunities take the form of:

- A number of online tools: website, database, members' app, instant communication media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram).
- Two Network Reviews per year to showcase cinemas and their initiatives in the field.
- Regular studies on investment, practices and innovation in the Network's cinemas.
- Three 4-day Innovation Labs during which experienced professionals provide training to young exhibitors to enhance their skills. As part of a new initiative, a number of shorter Innovation Day Labs are also organised at film festivals.
- An opportunity for exhibitors to sit on the jury for the Europa Cinemas Label at five international film festivals.
- Contribution to initiatives such as the European Parliament's LUX Prize and 28 Times Cinema in Venice.
- Three major prizes for excellence, awarded every year to the best exhibitors in the Network.*
- A first-time Innovation Prize, awarded this year to the Fyrisbiografen Cinema in Uppsala (Sweden).
- Next/Change, which offers exhibitors in the network the opportunity to visit their colleagues to compare and broaden their own experiences (see p. 6-7 of this Network Review).
- The Network's Annual Meeting for exhibitors and their partners at the Cannes Film Festival.
- A biennial Europa Cinemas Conference to discuss current issues and challenges in the sector.

The next conference will take place in

Lisbon, 21-24 November 2019.

In 25 years, and in close cooperation with all sections of the industry, Europa Cinemas has formed an influential network of professionals. It is particularly committed to developing and renewing an ever-broadening audience for European cinema, at a time of fierce competition in terms of choices available to the public locally and on demand. Its success in those tasks will be achieved through the growing power of an active and collaborative network.

*In 2018 the best exhibitors in the network were awarded the following prizes:

- Marlies Kirchner (Theatiner Film in Munich) for Best Programming
- Marijana Bosnjak (Kino Urania in Osijek) for Best Young Audience Activities
- Marc Bonny (Comoedia) and Thierry Frémaux (Lumière Cinemas) in Lyon as the Entrepreneurs of the Year. This prize is jointly awarded to two independent exhibitors, both of whom are at the helm of their respective companies. Through their cinema investment take-overs, expansions and renovations, they have transformed and reinforced the presence of the Network cinemas in Lyon in a matter of a few years.

Claude-Eric Poiroux

General Director of Europa Cinemas

NEXT/CHANGE: Europa Cinemas “Erasmus” programme for exhibitors

Launched in 2016, the main objectives are to enable exhibitors to travel abroad and experience, first-hand, new working practices in other Network cinemas, to improve on their own skills and expertise in areas of programming, customer relationship/ data management, spaces and design, brand development and initiatives to develop new audiences, etc.



Jan Makosch (Yorck Kinos, Berlin, Germany) at Curzon Cinemas in London (UK)

My aim and intention in applying for the exchange programme Next/

Change from Europa Cinemas was to widen my horizon with regards to the design of different cinemas. I chose the British company Curzon Cinemas for two reasons. First, their company bears similarities to Yorck Kino Gruppe with the number of cinemas and the size of the company and, secondly, my colleagues met Irene Musumeci from Curzon at the last EC Innovation Lab in Bologna, where they arranged the exchange.

I had the opportunity to visit five different cinemas, each in different districts in London. Depending on the area, the audience was diverse in its own way in each location. My first impression of what they had in common was that most of them looked more like bars and cafes than what you would usually expect of a cinema.



Harmen Huizenga (Slieker Film, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands) at Cinéma Le Méliès in Saint-Etienne (France)

Through the Next/Change programme, I wanted to visit a cinema that was clearly able to discern itself from other cinemas with special programming alongside a strong weekly première programme. Although disparate in size (both in screens/seats and as an organisation), Le Méliès is operating in a city and cultural landscape that is similar to Slieker Film in Leeuwarden.

I am convinced that the power of this unique cinema is, for the large part, in the horizontal or non-hierarchical organisational structure.

The richness of the Méliès programme is, for me, an example of outstanding programming and, although we can't implement all that Le Méliès has developed, I will at least try, for Slieker Film, to secure more debates and partnerships with organisations in our city and province.



Gregor Janežič (Kino Vrhnika, Slovenia) at Kika & Agračka in Krakow (Poland)

The Agračka and Kika cinemas from Krakow received the Europa

Cinemas Award for “Best Young Audience Activity” in 2017. As I was determined to extend my knowledge on the topic of Young Audiences, I decided to glean strategies and ideas from the best.

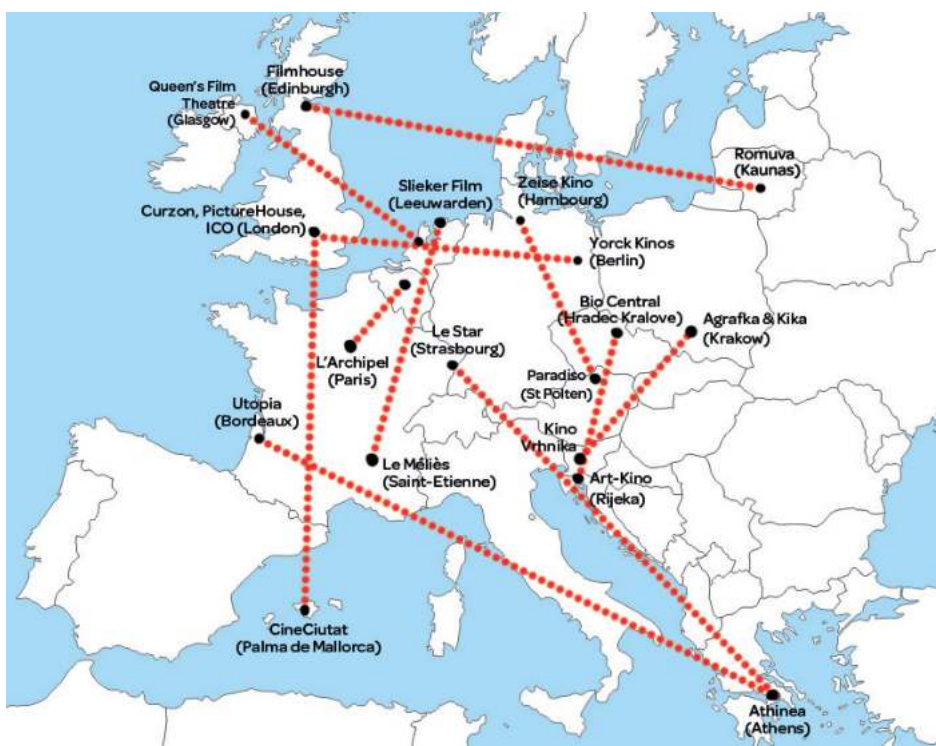
This exchange was a great experience for me. I learnt a lot of new and useful ways to develop one's audience and discovered what a working day in a bigger cinema, that is 900 km away, looks like. Even if we come from different countries and have slightly different programming methods, we still have a lot in common.



Aneta Kohoutová (Bio Central, Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic) at Art-Kino in Rijeka (Croatia)

My principal objective was to broaden my knowledge in the

field of working with young audiences. It was really important for me to see what an ordinary day looks like in a similar cinema to mine but 1,000 kilometres away. It's always good to network, share and get inspired because, when you work in the cultural sector, things change very quickly and you have to prepare and be flexible in order to react fast. Through this experience I learnt how we could develop, which elements we do really well and which things we could improve upon. I met new people, got to know the local culture, saw a lot of films, became part of the Art-Kino team and learned a lot from how Art-Kino is working with young audiences.



Javier Pachón (Cineciutat, Palma de Mallorca, Spain) at Picturehouse, Curzon and ICO in London (UK)

The exchange gave me the kind of theoretical inspiration and practical

and functional information that I needed. Plus, getting to observe many aspects of London's colourful landscape of small and big cinemas (The Lexi, Everyman's Screen on the Green, The Electric, etc, besides the many Curzons and PictureHouses) is like getting a glimpse of what the future of arthouse cinemas looks like.



Irene Musumeci (Curzon Cinemas, London, United Kingdom) at Yorck Kinos in Berlin (Germany)

Over the week of my exchange

I visited eight of the twelve Yorck

Cinemas – each one quite brilliant in a distinctive way: hip and cool Babylon and Neues Off reminded me of our Soho and Aldgate cinemas with their indie programming and film-loving hipster crowds; the grand old International could be the Socialist cousin of our massive Chelsea auditorium; Filmtheater am Friedrichshain, Yorck Kino, Cinema Paris & Delphi Filmpalast would get along with our Bloomsbury and Mayfair crowds of slightly older cinephiles who love grand old cinema palaces. At the various cinemas, I spent time exploring their facilities, discovering treasures in old projection booths, as well as having conversations with each cinema manager about their experiences in the different venues.



Ines Benesch (Zeise Kino, Hamburg, Germany) at Cinema Paradiso in Sankt Pölten (Austria)

When I found out about the existence of the Next/Change programme, I immediately wanted to apply. I am always

curious to see how other exhibitors work in comparable environments. With the help of Raphaëlle Gondry, I chose to visit Cinema Paradiso in St Pölten as I wanted to undertake the exchange in a cinema similar to Zeise Kino. This exchange was, for me, a really great experience, and one that we should repeat more often.



Monika Inceryte (Romuva, Kaunas, Lithuania) at Filmhouse in Edinburgh (UK)

Exploration of the cinema industry has been my main drive professionally for more than three years, since I started working at

Romuva. In order to learn how to strengthen the position of Romuva as the only arthouse cinema in the city and to bring wider visibility to the venue, I chose to gain experience from Filmhouse Cinema in Edinburgh. The cinema is similar to Romuva in terms of social situation and demographics. After the exchange, I came back to Romuva refreshed, inspired and enriched.



Innovation Prize

Fyrisbiografen (Uppsala, Sweden)

One hundred years of age, cinema Fyrisbiografen had seen declining admissions for decades. But an innovative project, using customer data and smart business strategies, turned the cinema around, increasing ticket sales by fifty percent in 2017 and enabling us to give our audience life-changing film experiences.

Fyrisbiografen is the oldest cinema in Uppsala and one of the oldest operating cinemas in Sweden. Founded in 1911, Fyrisbiografen established itself as the arthouse cinema in Uppsala, screening the “*most recent and best works of cinematographic art the world market has to offer*”, as the first newspaper ad for Fyrisbiografen stated.

In 2017, Föreningen Fyrisbiografen launched a project focused on innovation and business development, led by digital consultant agency Cybercom, with funding from the Swedish Film Institute. Fyrisbiografen had seen declining admissions for decades, and the potential of increasing audience was an important part of our project, though the primary objective was more focused on improving the cinema-going experience itself. We designed the project around three core values, providing; quality screenings, an engaging visitor experience, and the smartest and easiest way to engage on digital platforms. We were confident that if we improved

our operations around our values, we would be able to achieve our primary goal: to be Uppsala’s premiere cinema-going experience. Our hypothesis was that this would then lead to increased audience satisfaction, an increased frequency of cinema visits per customer and an increased number of admissions.

Increasing admissions by fifty percent in one year is quite a challenge for a 100-year-old business in decline, but we knew of several businesses in other industries that had achieved even greater success, namely, tech start-ups. In order to reach our goals, we had to shift our mindset from thinking of our business as an old cinema and, instead, to thinking of it as a start-up. Initially, a start-up company is only focused on two things: improving their product and talking to their users. We had to adopt a similar mindset, focusing on improving our cinema-going experience and talking to and interviewing visitors to the cinema in order to understand the ways in which we could further improve.

Our process of working towards creating the best cinema-going experience was entirely data-driven; we realised from the start that there is no quick fix in reaching such a goal and, as such, we had to look at cinema-going experiences from a holistic point of view. We ended up



with more than sixty project components, from fundamentals such as the design of our ticketing system to details including the colour of the push pins for our film posters. Each project component was designed based on initial data from studies or audience interviews, and we continuously created tests, with relevant key performance indicators, in order to validate whether or not our process in each project component was moving in the right direction.

When selecting the project components to start with, we prioritised efforts that had high impact, measurability and feasibility. An obvious starting point was our almost-antique ticketing system that made it difficult for our audience to book tickets on a daily basis. An improved ticketing system would mean an increase in sales, since it would enable us to view web statistics, meaning it was measurable and required little in the way of work to set up.

By tracking audience behaviour across our digital platforms, including our website, ticketing system and social media, we learned a lot about how our audiences behave in differing situations. We could track our conversion rate, for example, and see how it increased when we improved our ticketing system, using different kinds of images and applying alternate marketing strategies.

Though it significantly affected both our number of admissions and our revenue, using data to improve digital platforms was not very innovative, and we could simply apply methods used by tech start-ups straight out

of the gate. What was more interesting, however, was when we tried to use the same mindset – data and other similar methods – to develop hypotheses and to create corresponding tests around our actual cinema, its foyer, cinema seating, ticket office and auditoriums. What our audiences experience when they step into our cinema cannot be reduced to numbers and percentages but, if we at least think of it and work with it in that way – that an idea based on data can design improvements for the actual cinema – we could probably improve the film experience as much as we've improved our conversion rates. For instance, one volunteer noticed that our ticket office window made it hard for visitors, especially older visitors, to hear what was said, due to the glass window. The volunteer collected rudimentary data and suggested a few solutions or iterations to help solve the problem. Today, we've simply removed the ticket office window which has resulted in a much more accessible visitor experience.

By working with data-driven improvements across the entire cinema-going experience – from the way we design our events to the way we talk to our audience – in the same way as we work with digital platforms, we're confident that we can help create much better cinema experiences than we did just a few years ago. Increasing our audience on such a scale has been great, but what really matters is our ability to screen films in such a way that they are able to have an impact and change people's lives.

Olle Agebro, Managing Director





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Best Programming

Theatiner Film (Munich, Germany)

As you enter the cinema, classic film posters from the 1950s and '60s greet you as a wide marble staircase draws you into what might seem, initially, to be a 1950s time capsule. The 164 seat, single screen cinema has retained all of its original features; protruding mirrors, wood panelling, linoleum flooring, wall fitted lights and dark velvet upholstery. The listed building is like an architectural and cinematic gem from a golden age.

Walter Kirchner (1923-2009) founded film distribution company Neue Film-kunst and, in 1953, he became internationally well-known thanks to arthouse films. Along with the mainstays of the French Nouvelle Vague, he was also releasing classical titles that were largely unknown to German audiences at the time, including films by Buster Keaton, Sergey M. Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov, Ernst Lubitsch, Alfred Hitchcock, and the German cinema of the Weimar Republic. He also paved the way for modern classics of European Cinéma d'Auteur, such as the works of Michelangelo Antonioni, Ingmar Bergmann, Luis Buñuel, Federico Fellini, Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet.

In August 1957, Kirchner opened Theatiner Film in the centre of Munich and made it the flagship venue for cinematic experiences, influencing a large number of film enthusiasts and (future) filmmakers. Designed

by architect Hans Atzenbeck sen., the cinema offered Munich's first CinemaScope screen. In the '70s, Marlies Kirchner took over the day to day running of the cinema and the ownership and programming of the theatre.

Having studied foreign languages and lived abroad, Marlies Kirchner was asked to work for her late husband's film distribution company. She advised the company on which films to buy, which led to strong international contacts and to her visiting national and international festivals. Even today, Marlies Kirchner is a regular at many festivals. She still loves to watch films and, although no longer in her youth, she is still curious about new talent.

This approach is reflected in her programming: although her cinema's interior is all about nostalgia, the programme is not. Theatiner Film specialises in screening first run European and international arthouse films. The main focus is on works from France, Spain, Italy and Latin America. Many of the smaller and less known arthouse films find their place at Theatiner Film.

Marlies Kirchner also preserved one 35mm projector when the cinema digitised in 2013 as maintaining the option to show original analogue film material was a necessity for a cinema run and frequented by filmmakers. Some beloved classic titles, many coming from Neue Filmkunst Walter Kirchner, also cherished by Marlies's team, are



© Beat Presser

screened as part of special strands. This is in addition to the regular programme of new arthouse releases, and the cinema’s participation in festivals including Filmfest Munich, Cinema Italia, Underdoox or Kino Der Kunst.

One particular feature we love about Theatiner Film is that all films are presented in their original language with subtitles. Theatiner was the first “all original language” theatre in Munich, with Marlies Kirchner establishing her niche in the city’s cultural landscape. The cinema is therefore popular with Munich’s French, Italian, Spanish and Latin American communities as well as those who are looking to brush up on their language skills. The Theatiner team is also multi-cultural with staff from Italy, Poland, and Germany, and with Iranian and French roots.

What makes Theatiner Film a special place and invaluable for us is that it truly feels international. People say that Munich still resembles a village more than a city at times, but this small film theatre feels big-city, almost metropolitan.

Marlies Kirchner has a very distinct taste in films and for her audience. With countless regulars that sometimes refer to the theatre as “their living room”, Theatiner Film has so far withstood the challenges of time. At the moment, with a huge increase in the number of titles on the market—which are not necessarily all of high

quality—a focus on the films that are truly special is key. This is a problem that all arthouse theatres seem to face but, it is especially challenging for a single screen cinema. Nevertheless, we hope that Theatiner Film will continue to run for at least another sixty years.

Matthias von Tesmar and Bastian Hauser,
Theatiner Film staff



© Wolf Gauditz



Best Young Audience Activities

Kino Urania (Osijek, Croatia)

Kinematografi Osijek Ltd. is a privately owned exhibition company, active in the field of cinema management since 1901. Kinematografi currently manages cinemas Europa and Urania, both of which are protected cultural heritage sites. Cinema Europa's space today functions as a venue for different cultural events including concerts and conferences.

The first screening at Urania took place way back in 1912 and the venue remained the favourite meeting place for Osijek citizens concerning films, concerts and shows, which were regularly sold out. The building is in the Art Nouveau style, which perfectly matches its programming; a focus on quality film productions, arthouse and cultural film traditions.

The company had to deal with several major changes in 2011. Two modern multiplexes, in new shopping centres, opened in the city of Osijek. This led to a reduced number in attendees at the Europa and Urania cinemas. Kinematografi Osijek Ltd. was not only faced with an issue of disloyalty in lieu of the competition, but also had to fight a lack of understanding from local, regional and national authorities, as well as an internal weaknesses within the company.

All of our regular activity had been obstructed, so we decided to close both cinemas. The very existence of our company was under financial threat. We knew that we needed a new strategy to overcome these challenges. Redefining the company's mission and vision has allowed us to build a completely new identity and has

led to new projects, which have been successfully implemented. The cinema now has more than 70,000 admissions per year and provides richer cultural content with a tailor-made programme including; workshops, panels, concerts, alternative music competitions, theatre performances and new media forms.

Alongside our regular programme, we develop and host special events and festivals such as French Month, Cool Tour, Short Film Marathons, SEDECO festival, various *in memoriam* cycles, and many others. All of our educational programmes (e.g. Parlez-vous-Francais, Sichtwechsel) have become very popular and we have seen an increased number of participants in recent years.

For every programme, Kino Urania collaborates with the local community, especially with kindergartens, elementary and high school students, and institutions and NGOs, striving to underline the importance of audio-visual heritage for young people through a great variety of projects. Kino Urania tries to educate a younger audience to convey positive values including multiculturalism, a cross-disciplinary culture, social responsibility and tolerance. It inspires and engages young people to get involved in different audio-visual activities, with an emphasis on cinema heritage, language, tradition, creativity and European cultures.

Our general mission is to ensure innovative and diverse film programming in an area where there are very few and mostly mainstream alternatives on offer.



Kino Urania always tries to enrich Osijek's cultural life and to entertain the local community in new ways and with new content – always with active participation from the audience.

What we actually do is to personalise the experience of watching films in the cinema by showing the audience they are not just numbers to us but an important part of cinema life in general, breathing the same air, walking the same steps, and experiencing the same emotions we do.

All of our young audience programmes are created in collaboration with schools, institutions, NGOs and youth institutes to instill film education as a positive, rewarding and vital element for younger generations. We are very sensitive to children with inadequate childcare and facilitate free access for them to all of our screenings as well as free participation in all young audience initiatives, together with other children.

Our film education workshops start with kindergarten children and elementary school pupils until the banner of "Pozor, snimam svoj prvi film" (Attention please, it's my first film), which takes them through the various elements of film production (scenario, cinematography, location, costumes, dialogue, etc.). We also organise weekend children's screenings in the mornings, with workshops or activities related to the film they are going to see.

All of the school screenings correlate with the school programmes (elementary, secondary and higher education) and, over time, we have created a culture for teachers, professors and students, too. This became a specific tool for us to attract audiences and target groups, renewing loyalty among our audiences.

Aside from the regular weekly film programme, we also have a total of nineteen specialised programmes every

year. These have proved so popular with our audience that they have gradually become a staple in our wider activity.

Among those, "Sichtwechsel" – the festival of tolerance and ideas exchange, first held in 2014, attracts around 5,300 viewers every year, mostly students. These activities have opened up topics of tolerance towards the others, as well as a respect for linguistic and cultural diversity.

In addition to the promotion of Austrian and German productions, one of the main goals of the festival is the preservation and popularization of German language in an area that was a part of Austria and German speaking culture until the end of World War I.

"Parlez-vous Français?" and "Sprechen Sie Deutsch?" are programmes promoting French and German languages and cultures through screenings of different genre movies from German and French speaking countries. In collaboration with the Alliance Francaise and Deutsche Gemeinschaft, films are an additional educational material in a wider learning process. At the same time, our partners have noticed the increase in the number of their members learning French and German, by more than 5,000 subscribers.

We have also noticed that, after a couple of years attending our young audience programmes, children were asking their parents and teachers to go to our cinema and, as such, our primary goal is being achieved: the acceptance of film as an additional educational tool and the acceptance of the cinema as a place to watch movies, learn and have fun.

Marijana Bosnjak, Manager and Programmer





Entrepreneur of the year Cinéma Comoedia (Lyon, France)

The Comoedia is one of the oldest cinema venues still operating in France. Established in 1914, it has lived through the 20th century and, within its history, the story of cinema unfolds: from the carnival performances of the early days to the 70mm great theatrical pictures of the 1960s and '70s, with *Ben-Hur* or *West Side Story*, which remained onscreen for fortyweeks in a row, in one huge 700 seats auditorium.

Not forgetting the tragic hours of history, when the Comoedia was among the buildings destroyed in Berthelot Avenue, in the 1944 bombings, its main building has been rebuilt, and standing in its existing form since1949.

Then, when television took off and became a fear-some competitor for cinema theatres, successive extensions – from one to three screens in 1974, and then from three to six screens in 1982 – enabled operators to maintain attendance and multiply the offer.

Sold to the UGC group in 1993, the Comoedia was run by their company for ten years until the growth of multiplexes became such a seemingly unavoidable and crowded horizon for exhibition that it led to closure at the end of December 2003.

The 2003 closure seemed final until a new team, led by Marc Bonny, rose to the challenge. Bonny bought the place and undertook a significant restructure of the venue including, for instance, the creation of a large foyer with a bar area and a new layout to access the auditoria. On top of the six theatre rooms, all with improved sound and image, the venue also now hosts the office of distribution company Gebeka Films.

The Comoedia opened its doors to the public once again in November 2006, with a clear arthouse intention. Following the shock provoked by its closure, its reopening revealed a deep attachment from audiences across Lyon for the city's historical cinema.

Six years after its reopening, the Comoedia entertains an audience of 300,000 people every year thanks to its programming, which highlights the best of new releases and combines celebrated *auteur films* with work from up and coming directors, including their first films.

Many actors and directors come to meet the audience at premieres, debates and festivals, while our central ethos is a dedication to quality films for young audiences, at school time or beyond.

Before long, it was time to think about the future and sustainability of the venue. Cinema is a supply market and, at a time when major cinema chains own locations with ten to fifteen screens if not more, one cannot miss an opportunity to extend, a rarity nigh-on impossible in a city centre.

The extension took six years to complete and the three new screens opened to the public on October 18th 2017. One year on and the new scheme has produced results: attendance for our first year with nine screens was 375,000 admissions, which makes the Comoedia one of the best art house theatres in France, screen-wise and admission-wise.

Cinema exhibition in Lyon and in the rest of France has experienced strong concentration over the past thirty years. Nowadays, two main national chain exhibitors,



UGC and Pathé, have the lion's share of the market in the big cities.

In Lyon, Pathé is in charge of three venues and thirty-eight screens, while UGC has four venues and forty-seven screens. In this landscape, and with the constant increase in real estate prices, it is not easy for an independent entrepreneur to access a quality locale and to secure films with favourable terms.

The initial project consisted of making the Comoedia a place for auteur cinema exhibition, with rigorous programming, screening films in their original languages, regularly organising premieres with cast and crew in attendance, hosting festivals, discussions and an ambitious and regular programme for young audiences.

This editorial line, implemented as soon as the venue reopened in 2006 and, steadily maintained ever since,

enabled us to build audience loyalty and to stand out from the other offers in the city.

Other elements that contribute to differentiating our venue include the absence of advertisements and no food or drink allowed in the auditoriums. We can add to that the diversification of communication tools over the years: our website, of course, but also a regular presence on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

Two examples of events that take place in the cinema are Collective Hallucinations, a festival is organised by an association of B-Grade cinema lovers every year in early April that attracts high admissions from fanatics of subversive cinema rarely screened (fantastic, gore and cult), and our «secret film + brunch» sessions, organised on Sunday mornings once every two months. The screening of the secret film (a premiere that is programmed quite in advance of the film's release date) is preceded by a presentation of films and events to come and followed by brunch in the bar.

Our current concerns are focused around two issues: what will the role of digital platforms be in the coming years and, how can we anticipate and respond to the impact of their inevitable growth on theatrical screenings? In a context where general attendances are declining and the market is getting tougher, how does one remain resilient in the face of aggression from national chain exhibitors and their trend of leaving only crumbs to independents? The best answer appears to be: to hold a clear and consistent editorial line and to always improve upon the quality of the welcome and warmth of the venue.

Marc Bonny, President





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Entrepreneur of the year

Cinémas Lumière (Lyon, France)

Founded in 1914, the Lumière Fourmi stands as one of Lyon's oldest film theatres. A single screen cinema for a long time, it became a theatre complex in the 1970s when two additional screening rooms were created. The Lumière Fourmi closed its doors in 2012. François Keuroghlian, the owner and manager of the theatre since 1974 then asked for the help of the Institut Lumière so that the theatre could carry on its mission even after his departure.

Established in 1976 was the CNP Terreaux and the CNP Bellecour was launched later, in 1983. Both belonged to *Cinéma national populaire*, founded by Robert Gilbert and Roger Planchon in 1968. In 1998, Roger Planchon sold both theatres to Galeshka Moravioff, the exhibitor of Cinéma Bastille in Paris and Le César and Les Variétés, in Marseille.

The Lumière Fourmi, along with the CNP Bellecour and Terreaux were bought, renovated and reopened by the Institut Lumière in 2015 and 2016. They were, respectively, renamed Lumière Fourmi, Lumière Bellecour, and Lumière Terreaux in January 2017.

The film theatres were refurbished but remained loyal to the original spirit and programming of their founders. As part of this new beginning, the guiding principle was to preserve the feeling of neighbourhood theatre associated with these venues and to support arthouse cinema in all its forms while welcoming a wider audience. All three film theatres offer an art-house programme that is both demanding and diverse. The project behind the creation of the Lumière Cinémas was to provide the public with community theatres, fuelled by quality programming and

a welcoming atmosphere with optimum screening conditions, and that allows those who miss national releases to see those films later (the Lumière Fourmi is a "continuation" theatre, showing second run releases). The CNP Terreaux is dedicated to more mainstream arthouse films while the CNP Bellecour focuses on in-depth art-house cinema. The three theatres are located fifteen minutes apart on foot; they are each situated in a different area of Lyon and have their own specific public.

This positioning enables the films to stay on our screens for a long time as we're able to circulate them between the three theatres and therefore keep them around for several weeks.

This certainly was a risky project: the financial investment was significant, and our film theatres are really small, though our exhibition costs are high, which makes for a fragile economy. In addition to financial support from the CNC and the region, we had to find additional financial support to keep staff employed and to relaunch the project in small venues with small screening rooms. The financial arrangement involved both private investors and two banks. As no-one was previously able to save the theatres, the idea of a film library doing it, using the real economy was a saving grace.

The founding idea was to save theatres located in the city centre, for the public and professionals, so that the historic sites could go on living. In France and in Europe, the theatres that are located in city centres are continually disappearing. We're really happy with the results: 206,000 admissions in 2017 and 525 new seats in Lyon. Films that



couldn't be shown in Lyon, due to a lack of screens, can now play, and be screened for a longer time. There's still a lot of work to do to improve on these results, though.

The three theatre re-openings galvanized the whole of the town. More screens and greater cultural diversity has meant a more lively film culture and increased audiences for all of the theatres.

In Lyon, there are currently twenty-four independent film theatres with 2,535 seats among them, up against eighty-six film theatres and 18,432 seats for the wider Lyon network. The Lumière Bellecour has three screens and 202 seats, Lumière Fourmi has three screens with 137 seats and Lumière Terreaux has four screens and 254 seats. This represents 23.58% of the city's independent market and 3.2% of the city's total cinema capacity. Over time, we have become an important player for distributors, with a loyal and ever-growing audience.

The theatres did well in finding their place back in the Lyon network. The adventure won't stop here for Lyon, as other theatres will surely be created within the scope of projects launched by other cinema operators.

Among our most innovative projects, we have the "suspended ticket". It is a ticket pre-paid by other viewers. When the extra amount left by the audience at the box office reaches four euros, we print a ticket that says that someone living with low income can watch a movie for free. Each of our theatres prints around four tickets weekly. That means that, every week, twelve people who had lost the habit of going to the movies are getting into it again. Both the beneficiaries and the other paying audience are happy with this initiative. We set this up from the very start, with the re-launch of our film theatres. It was very important for us that the film theatres – which remain the most affordable cultural place of all – would be welcoming to a really wide audience. We were inspired by the "suspended coffee" and "suspended baguette" schemes that are set up in local shops for people in financial distress.

Finally, we agreed on a specific rate for people who are on minimum allowances. We decided on the same rate that is offered to people under the age of fourteen, which is four euros.

A film theatre is a social place and the solidarity among spectators when sharing in the pleasure of watching a film in a proper screening room is what really shows it.

For now, although our film theatres attract a wide audience and allow for a great variety of films to be shown, they're still seeking economic stability, and the market is fragile. Only time will tell if we are able to work on new projects but, this project, is currently growing and needs our full attention.

Cinémas Lumière Team





Belgium

Studio Skoop, Ghent

A strong identity as key marketing tool

Studio Skoop is located in the historic city of Ghent in Belgium. Founded in 1970 as a single screen arthouse cinema and café, its roots were firmly cemented into the artistic scene and rock-and-roll lifestyle of the Seventies. It all started with three screenings a week (the first screening ever was *Goto île d'amour* by Walerian Borowczyk). In its early years, founder Ben Ter Elst also launched the international Ghent film festival, which is currently still the biggest film festival in Belgium. In 1976, Ter Elst invested in a second screen, but he would mainly screen second run, classics and artistic films – a strategy that earned Studio Skoop a solid reputation but would not pay off financially. In the early Eighties, current owner Walter Vander Cruysse took over. In 1986, a large renovation transformed Studio Skoop into a sophisticated three-screen venue with national releases, proving that there was a market for arthouse film in the Flemish/Ghent region. In 1989, a fourth screen quickly followed and, after twenty years, Studio Skoop earned its reputation as a state-of-the-art quality cinema. In 1993, Studio Skoop was the first Cinema in Flanders to be a proud Europa Cinemas member. Finally, in 2000, a fifth and final screen was installed.

Studio Skoop has retained the cosiness and colourfulness of its early years, but with greater emphasis on quality programming and in providing a quality film experience. The key to our success lies in not making hasty decisions, investing in the right equipment (projectors, audio systems, air conditioning, etc.), and in employing competent people who are passionate about their jobs. Over the years, Studio Skoop has faced many challenges: from rising reconstruction costs to changing fire regulations, as well as stiff competition, a drop in attendance, distributor boycotts and expensive investments (digitisation, modernisation, etc.), and yet it has always found a way to overcome those challenges and stay relevant largely through listening to its audience and providing them with the right content.

The strongest marketing tool Studio Skoop uses is its identity (in Dutch we say “smoel”, which means “mug”), something that comes with tradition and a sort of relentless stubbornness. Ghent has a population of approximately 250,000. With one multiplex (twelve screens), two arthouse cinemas (each with five screens) and a couple of single screen theatres, we strongly believe it's essential not to offer the same content and to maintain our own identity. In a way, our wellbeing correlates with the successes of our competitors, since we're all trying to do the same thing: namely, getting the people off their sofas and into the theatre, socialising and broadening their perspectives.



Sharing films and splitting revenue would not only mean offering a smaller film portfolio, it would also instigate competition for the bigger releases, making casualties of the smaller ones and smaller distributors, too. This divide and conquer strategy has paid off in the past. It has created breathing room for some unexpected successes. For example, *The Best of Youth* by Marco Tullio Giordana ran from November 2003 until March 2005 and had 38,321 admissions. From 2006 until 2008, *Babel* by Alejandro Inarritu played for twenty-nine weeks and *The Lives of the Others* by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck played for over a year (fifty-four weeks), averaging 15,000 admissions. More recently, films like *The Great Beauty* by Paolo Sorrentino, *Toni Erdmann* by Maren Ade and *The Broken Circle Breakdown*, by hometown favourite Felix Van Groeningen, were big hits.

Partnerships with local businesses, (non-profit) organisations and individuals that initiate or support events and festivals has proven valuable. After nine editions of Viewpoint Documentary Film Festival (which was relaunched this year) and with ten editions of Japan-Square Film Fest in 2019 under our belt, we're proud of all our past and present events and partners. Every new initiative is a gamble at first, but building an audience year after year pays off. Therefore, consistency is key. Managing expectations for new initiatives, maintaining partnerships, trying to reach niche audiences and following up on logistics are imperative to every event we organise.

The biggest challenge we're facing today is targeting younger audiences (between ages twelve and eighteen especially). The majority of this age group tend to visit the commercial multiplexes. This is why investing in school screenings and young audience screenings is very important to us. They are our future audience and we have to make sure they discover exciting alternative content



(without obligatory brain splattering and car explosions). We put together young audience programmes, focussing on European film, contact schools about our screenings and themed programmes, and yet for reasons unknown to us, it's getting increasingly more difficult to convince teachers that film is an excellent way to deliver a message.

Another challenge we face is the managerial transition of our operations to the next generation. With Walter Vander Cruysse behind the wheel for over thirty-five years, changes are imminent, and the future for Studio Skoop is uncertain. Still, we are optimistic and we will keep promoting arthouse film as an added value in life, not just a luxury for the happy few.

Floris Vandekerckhove, Assistant Manager





Bosnia and Herzegovina

Operation Kino

Bringing European arthouse films across Bosnia and Herzegovina

What does a country need, when only thirty-five screens are fully operational throughout the year, with 46% of those screens belonging to multi-plexes, and when blockbusters are predominantly on offer? Greater access for their audiences to see high-quality films.

Operation Kino, a satellite event for the Sarajevo Film Festival, represents a unique cultural programme in the form of a travelling cinema. The project was launched in 2010 in cooperation with Sofia IFF and Transylvania IFF, right when the process of digitization of single-screen cinemas in Europe was underway. Bosnia and Herzegovina was set to follow suit. During that period, Operation Kino was seen as a way to bridge the two phases in the digitisation process. Eight years later local authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have not yet allocated any funds for cinema digitisation and there is no interest or incentive to create an institutional strategy for audience development. Operation Kino, an independent project, remains inadequate and insufficient but, it is the only long-term project in Bosnia and Herzegovina that is fully dedicated to audience development.

Operation Kino creates a unique cinema experience, not only in bringing open air cinema, with free access to

screenings but, also, in developing audience knowledge and taste through the programming of high-quality European films. The film programming strongly relies on the selections of Sarajevo Film Festival, and a range of genres are presented, with various cultural forms that are under-represented in the blockbuster realm. The programming is not only anchored on films from countries with high-production values, but also features many titles from countries with lower production benchmarks. As there is an evident lack of a cinema network in Bosnia and Herzegovina, each year, one or two national titles are included and distributed through the Operation Kino network, recent titles include: *Death in Sarajevo* by Danis Tanović, *The Frog* by Elmir Jukic, and *Good Day's Work* by Martin Turk. A special focus in the programming is dedicated to younger audiences, and each tour features at least two children's films. These screenings are always organised in collaboration with local schools. As there are no certified materials on film culture and production from the educational institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we have created a Film culture compendium, offering additional material for teachers in elementary schools who are engaged in any media or film literacy subjects aimed at students aged twelve to fourteen.



From when it first launched, Operation Kino brought 185 film programmes to more than 65,000 people. From its very beginning, it was travelling to around ten cities and setting up open-air cinemas across Bosnia and Herzegovina over a two-month summer tour. The programme targets various demographics, including those from culturally, politically and socially deprived regions of the country, where the majority of the population doesn't have access to a cinema or has very limited access to film programmes. As time passed, working closely with local activists highly engaged in the cultural activities in their communities, proved essential for Operation Kino's sustainability. A network of local partners across the country emerged increasing the scope of programme. Thanks to those partners, we were able to organise and engage local audiences and run a six month tour across forty cities, at both indoor and outdoor venues in 2018.

These hard-working and committed activists, scattered all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, made us realise how isolated they are, which further inspired us to challenge the existing reconciliation practices. Over the years, a number of tailor-made activities focused on the positive impact film can generate in communities and, at the same time, activities that stimulate mobility and cooperation were created and implemented. In 2016, we launched a new workshop, "Operation Kino in Action" for a new generation of local partners to foster and strengthen social activism and entrepreneurial culture. Through the workshop we focused on developing the knowledge and skills of participants (stimulating leadership, and an elementary understanding of project management), needed for the proactive participation in socio-economic and cultural activities across Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the essential project management

and entrepreneurial skills they acquire, we encourage participants to develop new projects that will be of direct interest to their local community. We strive to create an engaged audiences and young film lovers to further advocate the importance of European culture and the promotion of peace across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Altijana Maric, Programmer





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Bulgaria

Dom na Kinoto, Sofia

Year-round events in the “Cinema House”

Dom na Kinoto (the Cinema House) is situated in the old city centre of Sofia, next to a hot mineral waters spring. The building belongs to the Union of the Bulgarian filmmakers and, since 1989, the cinema opened its doors to a general audience. The Dom na Kinoto is run by Art Fest and its young team is dedicated to the development of a cinema audience.

For many years, Dom na Kinoto has been the most important cinematic and cultural centre, for both professionals and true film buffs in Bulgaria. Its hall has screened the best of world cinema as well as retrospectives, week-long marathons of foreign cinematography, seminars, festivals, educational and entertainment programmes, exhibitions and presentations.

Dom na Kinoto has been part of the Europa Cinemas network since 2003. It is also one of the main venues for some ten annual film festivals organised in Sofia, the biggest of them being the Sofia International Film Festival, Cinemania, Cinelibri, So Independent Film Festival and the Northern Light Film Festival.

Audience is our focus and we are trying to develop their engagement through different initiatives. We aim to keep the film-going experience exciting. Besides being home for film festivals and premieres, Dom na Kinoto is also a place where many events take place, including art

exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances, discussions and thematic screenings.

We are always thinking of ways to communicate our passion for cinema to the audience.

Developing young audiences is our long-term mission. Among the current projects of Dom na Kinoto is “Sofia International Film Festival for Students” (which started in the autumn of 2009). It includes free screenings every week, which are moderated by film professionals



© Alexander Stanchev



and give audiences the chance to meet directors, actors and other members of the films' creative teams. Dom na Kinoto also welcomes the EFA Young Audience Award and various activities targeting niche audiences.

A Special Children Cinema Programme is featured on weekends. The array of valuable films ranges from turbulent cartoons to award-winning children's and youth film productions, filmed works of literature and others.

Our marketing policy is focused on creating events around screenings and turning Dom na Kinoto into a community focused cinema. We are developing a strong network of partners in order to reach wider audiences.

The diversity of our programming, partnerships and festivals and, in general, its engagement are at the heart of Dom na Kinoto's ethos. The cinema also hosts meetings with directors, debates, and encourages new local talent to express themselves. We are also introducing thematic programmes such as: "With Friends In Cinema", which features audience pleasers or debate oriented films; "Gourmet Screenings", where films are accompanied by wine tasting and other gourmet pleasures; "Fashion Screenings" where films for fashion icons are shown in partnership with top hair style studios with goodies for the audience.

In 2018, we started two new initiatives: "Mummies matinees" (screenings for parents with babies) and "Films in your language" (screenings trying to attract foreign visitors to Sofia and offering Bulgarian and other films with English subtitles).

In the summer of 2018, we also launched a programme of documentary films presented by their filmmakers which was very successful. There is no distribution of documentary films in Bulgaria and we are trying to work with the audiences to attract more young people.

We have also introduced screenings for the visually impaired and will further develop this programme in the

future. In 2019, we will launch screenings for people with intellectual disabilities in a partnership with a foundation.

Dom na Kinoto's key purpose is to develop a film community and to offer a variety of content in a friendly space that is always something more than expected. Our biggest challenge is to attract new audiences. In the last three decades, art house cinema theatres almost disappeared in Bulgaria and a strong tradition of cinema-going was lost. Thus, we are trying to be attractive for new generations, with appealing content and events and to offer a variety of film literacy programmes.

We would like our audience to feel at home at Dom na Kinoto. We have one hall with 300 seats, a spacious lobby, a welcoming café bar and great spirit. If you are passing by Sofia do come and visit us!

Mira Staleva, Cinema Manager





© Mari Mur

Finland

Kino Engel, Helsinki

A renewed cinema to revitalise Helsinki’s old town

Kino Engel is a small twin cinema in the heart of Helsinki’s old town, near the Cathedral of Helsinki. The cinema opened in 1985 under the name Amanda (so called after the statue of Havis Amanda, nearby). From its beginnings, the cinema was home to quality arthouse films. In 1995, Cinema Mondo took over the theatre and renamed it Kino Engel (there is also a Café Engel in the same quarter, where we now hold outdoor screenings

in the summer). From then, the mission was clear: to show the best and most interesting, quality films in a peaceful environment, with the films in focus. Our main focus is on international/European arthouse films. We also show children’s films every Sunday, dubbed in Swedish to cater for a language minority. These have become extremely popular. We are part of the leading film festival in Finland “Love and Anarchy”,



Rovana Savolainen

which takes place in September every year. Smaller festivals and events are also held, from time to time, at Kino Engel. As our main focus is films, our concession stand offers coffee and chocolate – no popcorn!

Most of the marketing and communication for our audience is social media focused nowadays. Our Facebook page has almost 20,000 followers, which we think is great for a cinema with 123 seats.

The cinema is in Torikorttelit, Helsinki's old town and an animated neighbourhood where you will find designer shops, restaurants and cultural activities. Most of the magnificent buildings that make up this neighbourhood were designed by the famous Carl Ludvig Engel, almost 200 years ago.

Kino Engel was closed for a year and we re-opened, fully renovated, in May 2017. The renovation was part of the city of Helsinki's efforts to revitalise the so-called market quarter (Torikorttelit) of Helsinki. As such, the refurbishment included the whole building in which Kino Engel is located, and adjacent buildings, too. As a result, our lobby has a new, more open feel and the cinema is now more visible from the street. We installed new, more comfortable seating, and capacity was reduced by 28%. There are new restaurants and a work hub is our immediate neighbour, making the building far livelier than before. The renovation has had a positive impact on the cinema, with a good increase in attendance.

Every year, from midsummer to September, we take over the small patio at Café Engel to show films every night. The café provides wine and food service and there are blankets available if it gets cold. We programme this as a summer-long mini festival featuring previews, classics and recent films. The most popular films this summer were music films *Whitney* by Kevin Macdonald, *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* by Ol Parker and *Maria by Callas*

by Tom Volf. Popular classics included Dario Argento's *Suspiria* and Paolo Sorrentino's *La Grande Bellezza*.

In December last year, we started a co-operation with the Finnish-Swedish Film Centre (Finlandsvensk filmcentrum) to establish regular screenings of children films with Swedish dubbing. Children films in the Swedish language are shown in Helsinki but not with regularity and, often not in our prime slots. We wanted to commit to a regular offer so that families would know there is something for them, every week. This was a new and exciting adventure for us as we'd never really programmed family films before, at least not so consistently, so it was interesting to see if families would find us. Luckily, the effort has been a success, with many of the screenings being sold out.

Besides Kino Engel, our company Cinema Mondo is also working on distribution. We distribute between twelve and sixteen theatrical films each year, with a focus on European arthouse films. We are one of the leading independent film distributors in Finland and started our business back in 1990. Recent films include *Maria by Callas* by Tom Volf, *Un beau soleil intérieur* by Claire Denis and *Sami Blood* by Amanda Kernell (Europa Cinemas Label Winner in Venice 2016). Working in both distribution and exhibition has its advantages. We have the ability to show films longer than the multiplexes so that our audience has time to discover more niche films and what we do.

Ville Purjo, Marketing Manager





France

Les Montreurs d'Images, Agen

“Watching a film together, feeling the same things at the same time. Only cinema can create this!”

“Les Montreurs d’Images” (the “picture showmen”) is an arthouse cinema, established in 1995, in honor of the 100th birthday of the invention of the Cinématographe by the Lumière brothers. Agen, home to 30,000 people in south-west France, in a rural area between Bordeaux and Toulouse, had no arthouse cinema, no place to

see films in their original versions, and nowhere to see ambitious European “films d’auteur”.

A small group of volunteers took it upon themselves to provide all of these things, in creating this cinema. The ambition was, and still is, to schedule auteur and alternative films, classics, young audience films and to create

a space for meeting, discussion and exchange, with special events, where the film and the Cinema create discussion.

“Les Montreurs d’Images” is not a corporation. It is an association, owned by its 1,800 members. Fifteen elected members manage the cinema, which includes finances, programming, long-term strategising, etc. just four people are employed by the cinema.

These members’ activities are organised in thematic commissions, such as classics, young audiences, students, festivals, etc. This allows them to work efficiently and respond quickly.

In 2013, in collaboration with the city, we moved to a new building, which was originally a public school. The cinema is now composed of two theatres (200 and 100 seats), a patio (thanks to the former school playground, which has been preserved), and a cosy café that sells only organic and local meals and beverages. We select these products with as much care as we select films.

Our cinema also includes a classroom, dedicated to cinema lessons. It is available for teachers, from kindergarten to university, when they want to analyse a film and it is also where workshops – organised by us or external partners – take place.

This effort shows the difference between us and any other “mainstream cinema”: we take care of film education. Younger generations are surrounded by images, of many kinds. It is, therefore, important to explain to them what these images do; how watching images can create different feelings, and how and why that is achieved. This is also a citizenship duty.

Developing audiences is obviously a challenge and, in particular, young audiences. For this, we can count on a strong and dedicated long-time network, comprised of teachers (from kindergarten to university), holiday centres, and social workers, to name but a few. Thanks to this, specific screenings for schools and young audiences represent 20% of our audience.

Each of these screenings are introduced by a member of the cinema. For very young children, it’s a way to make them feel safe, so they know about the lights turning off, and to be sure that they understand what the big room is for.

For teenagers, the introducing speech is more about the film itself, its geographic and historical context. And, obviously, it is also a good way to remind them to turn off their mobile phones. Most of them have forgotten what a film theatre is for: a place where the outside world disappears. Three or four times a year, we also stage events shaped especially for teenagers and students, such as “les Presque nuits” (“almost nights”) and genre themed nights (horror, comedy, romance, etc.), each of which has many fun elements involved – if you ever dreamt of getting married by Elvis, you would love our “romance night”!

We also pay attention to accessibility for a wide range of people, which is why our “solidarity ticket” is only €2,50.

Many festivals are organised throughout the year: “Premières Toiles” in October, for young audiences; “Human rights rise” in March, with various partner organisations; and our major and most ambitious festival, “Musique on tourne!”

This festival includes tributes to legendary composers (Ennio Morricone, Bernard Herrmann), new composers are showcased at the bar (Frank Williams, composer of *The Starry Sky Above Me*), and there are more casual showcases of local music and dance bands, at the bar or on our patio.

This event also includes a young composer contest, which, last year, hosted five young composers playing a live, original score to a scene from Hitchcock’s *The Birds*. Two prizes are awarded: the Jury award and the audience award.

Recently, we were very proud to establish a partnership with the Agen prison. Five or six times a year, we choose the film the inmates watch before leading a discussion around it: cinematographic grammar, script, directing, editing, et al.

One of our most affecting memories is probably from January 2015, where we held a screening of the Daniel Lecomte’s documentary *It’s Hard Being Loved by Jerks*, focusing on the 2008 satiric newspaper cartoons including “Charlie Hebdo”, only days after the massacre. This was an emotional and necessary time for gathering.

And we believe that’s what cinema is for: gathering. Watching a film together, feeling the same things at the same time. Only cinema can create this. That’s why we love what we do.

Pierre Dupont, Deputy Director



Some members of the Association with the actor Vincent Landon



Ireland

Irish Film Institute, Dublin

Growing appetites for quality cinema and promoting the value of the cinema experience

As Ireland’s national cultural institution for film, our mission at the Irish Film Institute (IFI) is to present audiences with the finest in independent, Irish and international cinema, while promoting critical reflection and discussion. Simply put, we exist to foster a love and appreciation for film. As well as cinema programming, we house the national moving image collection in our archive and through our diverse educational programmes, we enable widespread engagement with film for people of all ages.

The IFI started life many decades ago in 1943 as the National Film Institute. We went through many changes and incarnations in the decades that followed but it was in 1992 that we moved to our current home, an old Quaker Meeting House, on one of Temple Bar’s cobbled streets in the heart of Dublin City. Twenty six years later the IFI now houses three cinema screens, a bar and restaurant, a film shop and the IFI Irish Film Archive which contains a library and climate controlled vaults to house the many film collections that we preserve.

We provide our audience with access to the best of new international and Irish film culture, which often includes a number of films that would not otherwise have a theatrical release or be seen in Ireland. We aim

for fifty percent of our new releases to be exclusive which, although not always possible, gives audiences choice and alternatives to offerings elsewhere.

The annual film festivals that we host and programme all showcase European and world cinema and have a loyal following, from the East Asia Film Festival to our Family Festival.

We have monthly strands such as the IFI Film Club where audience members can discuss and examine a particular film with members of the IFI team after a screening. Events such as these give us a way to both communicate directly with our audience, respond to their needs, and add value to their experience. We are lucky to have a loyal membership base made up of approximately 6,500 IFI Members and IFI Friends. As lovers of film and of the importance of the cinema experience they support the IFI annually with their subscription and many attend the IFI weekly, sometimes daily! There’s a great sense of community among our members and friends, and we value their input and their continued support.

Along with well-established audiences, we actively introduce new audiences to film culture through our education department and provide young people throughout Ireland with access to challenging and inspiring cinema. We achieve this through an extensive schools programme, both at the IFI and touring

nationally, and through a number of innovative programmes aimed at family, youth and life-long learning audiences.

In 2016 an exciting project came to fruition when we launched the IFI Player, a virtual viewing room for a selection of films from our national moving image collection in our archive, which spans from 1897 to the present day. The material on the IFI Player has been selected to give audiences a taste of the breadth and depth of the collections reflecting all aspects of indigenous amateur and professional production. With the subsequent launch of a suite of apps, the IFI Player has continued to be a great success, helping us to bring Irish culture and social history to audiences globally, and now has over 194,000 users worldwide.

Two new additions to our programming in the last year have been the F-rating and our Mystery Matinee monthly strand. The F-rating is a way to champion the substantial creative contributions by women to the film industry and denotes any film that is directed by a woman, and/or is written by a woman. The inclusion of the F-rating in the IFI's monthly and festival programming continues our long-standing commitment to screen the work of female filmmakers. It also forms part of our strategy to reflect a diversity of thought in our programming choices through different voices, eras, genders and cultures. The Mystery Matinee strand provides audiences with the chance to take a risk each month and buy a ticket for a surprise film. Sometimes it will be a title audiences would expect the IFI to show, but not always. The choice of film is only revealed when the lights go down and the film appears on screen. We have very much enjoyed seeing the large response to this strand and hope audiences will continue to take the leap into the unknown as we keep them guessing each month!

We are currently the only cinema in Ireland who can project the large and loud 70mm film format. We were extremely lucky in the last two years to show two of our new releases on this rare format for *Dunkirk* and *Phantom Thread*. Our recent re-release of long term IFI customer favourite *2001: A Space Odyssey* was also shown on this glorious format and was one of our most popular film events so far this year at the IFI. Projecting on film formats, especially 70mm, can be costly due to additional work load, staffing and print transport costs, however audiences have been coming in large numbers to these screenings which is extremely heartening and we feel very strongly that these films should still be seen as the filmmakers intended.

The main challenges we face are the recent shift in film consumption habits and the fact that audiences for cultural cinema are growing older. By engaging audiences of all ages through our special film events, we will continue to work on growing appetites for cultural cinema amongst younger audiences and promoting the value of the cinema experience for all.

Saidhbh Ní Dhúlaing, Cinema Programmer





Italy

Cinema Massimo, Turin

A cultural hub, showing films from across the ages, from all countries, between past, present and future

The Cinema Massimo represents, for the city of Turin, for cinema lovers and for students at the University, a central meeting point, just a stone's throw away. Built in the 1930s, bombed in 1942, during World War II and rebuilt immediately after the end of the war, it continued its activity up until the early 1980s. Bought by the city of Turin, renovated and transformed into a multi-screen complex, it has since (1989) become the film theatre for the National Cinema Museum.

Cinema Massimo, located in the city centre, close to the Mole Antonelliana (a symbolic building for the city) has three rooms. The largest has 454 seats and is on the ground floor, and the other two hold 147 seats on the first floor. The first two screens are used to show new releases, while the third is completely dedicated to retrospectives and events. The three rooms are each equipped with 4K digital, 16mm and 35mm film projectors, all video formats and a Dolby digital 7.1 surround sound system. Thanks to this extensive technological equipment, the theatre can fulfil its mission of showing films for all ages and from all countries up on the big screen, building a constant dialogue between past, present and future.

We can easily say that the Cinema Massimo shows over a thousand different films per year (all in their

original language with Italian subtitles), including newly released films, archive films, special screenings for schools and in film festivals. Three of our film festivals (Turin Film Festival, Lovers Film Festival and Environmental Film Festival) are organised directly by the National Cinema Museum. The strength of our activity is the ongoing organisation of Q&As with directors, scholars and crew members, who are invited to interact with the audience. Over the years, we have hosted, among others, directors such as Abbas Kiarostami, Werner Herzog, Sydney Pollack, Peter Weir, Jane Campion, Nanni Moretti, Francesco Rosi, Mario Martone, Robert Guediguian, Arnaud Desplechin, Olivier Assayas, Edgar Reitz, Tsukamoto Shinya, Kore-eda Hirokazu, Miike Takashi, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Amir Naderi, Kim Ki-duk, Costa-Gavras, Idrissa Ouedraogo, Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, Michael Cimino and Andrej Konchalovski. Some of Massimo's initiatives are linked to the Museum's exhibitions, for example we hosted Isabelle Huppert's exhibition of portraits, Gus van Sant's photographic exhibition, and exhibitions devoted to the First World War and the Animal Film Stars.

One of the projects we are most proud of is named "Crossroads". Classics of silent cinema are accompanied by live musical performances, each time entrusted to very different musicians in training or performing



various repertoires. We love to arrange everything from jazz to rock, from electronic music to experimentation, without forgetting the very simple accompaniment of the piano.

Our deep interest in the relationship between cinema and music has led us to a new project called SoundFrames. The Museum has conceived an exhibition made only of video installations which display many aspects of the constant dialogue between those two different art forms. From the music originally written for silent films to contemporary music videos, the exhibition is an immersive journey in 120 years of cinema and music. To go along with the exhibition, we have organised, both inside the Museum and at the Cinema Massimo, many events with projections and live music.

In recent years, our main objective has been to bring young audiences back to film theatres. This generation deserted cinemas to enjoy films in other ways. For this reason, we have directly involved groups of university students to participate in a public contest, the purpose of which was to understand the conception of a film cycle, involving them directly in the presentation of individual films to the public and in their promotion. The result was surprisingly positive both in terms of the quality of the projects and in terms of public response. Currently, three groups are working on this project (one film cycle is around the theme of the family, one is about the relationship between cinema and philosophy and the third is dedicated to the Israeli-Palestinian question).

At the same time, the museum's educational department works closely with schools to organise screenings in the film theatre, workshops inside our Museum and film and image education classes in schools of all levels. To promote our initiatives, we have created a website

specifically dedicated to Cinema Massimo, we regularly use social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and we produce a booklet that is distributed every month throughout the city.

Stefano Boni and Grazia Paganelli, Programmers



Stefano Boni and Grazia Paganelli with the director Hirokazu Kore-eda



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Latvia

Kino Bize, Riga

From Art Nouveau apartment to arthouse cinema

Arthouse cinema Kino Bize was built in a former apartment in the very centre of the city of Riga. The Art Nouveau area it's housed in is also where the great film director Sergei Eisenstein was born. It was transformed into a cinema by a group of friends, a few professionals, and the contribution of my entire family. For example, my cousins were in charge of painting while some of my friends were in charge of installing old wooden doors. A Slovakian friend even came to Riga to renovate seventy cinema seats from a former Soviet cultural centre. It was an incredible moment, and it was just the beginning. Since then, we have established Kino Bize as one of the three arthouse cinemas in Latvia, and as a proud member of Europa Cinemas.

It is a unique cinema, as personal as you can get. It is a place where you spend time, watch a good film and talk about it with a staff member or another member of the audience. The size of the venue allows the cinema staff to be approachable for questions or conversation. Similarly, the screening room makes people feel comfortable in joining in with discussions and Q&As. I would argue that people in Latvia are not the ones to jump into public conversations eagerly, but it is different at Kino Bize owing to the proximity and design of the space, which helps people feel at ease and more

relaxed in order to overcome any initial embarrassment.

While visiting other small cinemas in Europe, I have discovered great beauty in their boutique yet very powerful position as social hubs, especially in interacting with the local communities around them. They have been a source of inspiration in what we do. When Anouk, from a cinema in Canada, accidentally came across Kino Bize a week ago, she spent two days just hanging around and enjoying the atmosphere, saying: *"I love it. This is the first time I see a cinema built in an apartment!"* It feels good to share these vibes and experiences with people visiting Kino Bize from across the ocean.

Film related talks, lectures and discussions have also been an important part of the cinema programming. Films are not only a cultural, artistic medium but, also, enable delving deeper into the subjects explored by filmmakers. Laura Lizuma from our team says:

"Ever since our first screenings, we have positioned our cinema as a socially responsible cultural entity, and these are not just empty words. Each film in our programme has its own context and contribution, and we try to highlight this added value through special events. I think, this is the right way to get closer to the audience. Of course, we are also present on social media, but I think that even the network cannot compete with the live experience, so our best promotion is what we do and not what we say about ourselves."



The different people attending Kino Bize usually are very respectful, friendly and interested in what and how we do things; they are eager to create a dialogue with every film we show. In so many instances, they have been our therapists when, for whatever reason, you might have had an exhausting day. Similarly, it cheers us up when we greet a new mum living in another part of the city that regularly comes to the baby-parent screenings at Kino Bize. Sometimes, after several conversations before or after film screenings we have become friends with the audience and they have suggested thematic events that we have then gone on to organise. For example, a sold out screening of the documentary *The Last Pagans of Europe* by Lauris and Raitis Abele, with an accompanying lecture, on the day that Pope Francis visited Latvia.

The next big challenge we face, and have for the past three years, is in building a new entrance to the cinema. We are about to finalise the necessary documents needed to start the building process that will enable easier access for our audiences and better visibility of the venue from the street. A challenge for programming is to grow on our successful children mornings programme and develop fun and meaningful cinema experience targeted for teenagers.

Our major programming challenge is to improve our successful children's programme, held on the second Sunday of every month. It is organised by two of our four dedicated team members who select artistically exquisite animation programmes for three to nine-year-olds. After the screenings, children and parents are welcome to stay in the cinema cafe for creative workshops to build their own imaginary worlds and to participate in relaxed talks about topics from the film. For some of the children, this has been their first

experience in a cinema and in watching a film on a big screen.

We are focusing more and more on this aspect of our audience engagement and have started a separate family film programme (with titles like *Summer 1993*, *Cleo and Paul*, *Los Bando*). We further plan to develop fun and meaningful cinema experiences targeted at teenagers. More work and a continued struggle, but I have complete confidence in our incredible team that simply make things happen.

Maris Prombergs, Member of the board





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The Netherlands

Focus Filmtheater, Arnhem

Focus changes your perspective: the realisation of a flexible film theatre in a changing society

Imagine a film theatre with a daring programme, add to that a spacious and trendy café restaurant and you automatically visualize Focus Filmtheater Arnhem. Located at the very heart of Arnhem, Focus aims at engaging a large and diverse audience in film and visual culture by creating and sustaining a flourishing and versatile cultural film environment. When it comes to numbers, our ambition for the coming years is to grow from 70,000 visitors in 2017 to 120,000 in 2020. Looking at last month's results, this amount might well be reached sooner than expected.

We are convinced that film as a medium has everything to offer. Besides its obvious entertainment value, movies are meaningful in many ways: they can broaden a general perspective, deepen personal experiences, extend knowledge, emotion and wisdom and reveal other, significant perspectives. To achieve all of this, Focus curates a diverse programme of contemporary arthouse films, highlights from film history, thematic seasons, documentaries, special programmes for children and a wide range of educational activities. In relation to special projects, Focus intensively collaborates with many local, regional and national cultural and/or social organisations. We feel

strongly about our responsibility to be an active part of the Arnhem region, to contribute to a flourishing cultural environment, to open up neighbourhood communications and to help maintain a general positive urban vibe.

Focus Filmtheater was founded in 1973 as a small non-profit cinema with just ten volunteers. In 1978, Focus moved to a listed building. In the next four decades we expanded from a one-screen to a three-screen cinema. After years of planning to realise our dream of a beautiful new venue (dreaming had started in the nineties), the process gained momentum, over the past five years. After nearly a full year of building, a brand-new, state-of-the-art film theatre with five screens and one open air cinema with the capacity to seat 430 visitors, opened its doors in April 2018. Together with Studio Halfvol we organised a remarkable campaign leading to a crowded opening night on June 15th of this year.

Our new film theatre is an expression of our vision on form, function and sustainability. DP6 architects (from Delft, NL) designed a building respecting the urban and historical context that both accommodates and reflects the substantial ambitions of the new Focus. An important criteria was to come as close as possible to climate neutrality. Among several measures undertaken to assure sustainability, the entire roof is covered by solar



panels. On top of all of that, Focus is, with its remarkable central stairs and glass ceiling, a very attractive building; after considerate scepticism (often concerning its location in front of the church), feedback from locals was great.

Before starting this entire process, we've asked ourselves, "What is our actual added value as a film theatre in a world where the number of screens already exceeds the population?" The answer can be found in our physical and programme flexibility. A cinema doesn't exist in splendid isolation. It should be a meeting place where everyone feels at home, where film provides entertainment as well as meaning and where the boundaries of the medium can be explored and exceeded. In order to cope with the complexity of this mission, the new building offers durability and flexibility. In a changing society, Focus intends to move forward and invites the audience to join us on the journey ahead.

Completing the actual building means our aims of physical flexibility have been accomplished. Focus has six screening rooms. One is equipped with a retractable stage and can be transformed into either a cinema, a theatre with a large flat floor or into an open space hall. This gives us the opportunity to show multi-disciplinary content. Since its opening, we successfully organised a plethora of events, from film with live music, a beautiful combination of film and theatre, a film quiz, and a club night with VJs. This multifunctional hall offers endless possibilities for a tremendous range of activities together with a significant extension of our target groups.

We are also extremely happy with our roof top cinema, Zaal 6, a unique open-air space, fully equipped for high-quality film projection, where we stage outdoor screenings, concerts, drinks, meetings, etc. Its success was highlighted this summer, which was unusually hot for Holland. For two months in a row, we staged over

thirty open-air screenings that sold out nearly every single night. Another important element of the new Focus building is our restaurant. Besides offering good food and drink (sustainability also plays an important role here), the restaurant offers many possibilities to organise film-based culinary events, such as Breakfast at Focus, movie dinners and Funny Film Food for children.

The new Focus Filmtheater also doubles as a Third Place, an extension of your living room, a place where you can work, meet friends, learn and experience. Focus is a vibrant part of the city of Arnhem and actively facilitates urban dialogue, creating space for individuals to raise matters, ask questions and make suggestions. As inclusion is our top priority and as we feel the need to diversify our audiences, we are very happy that in our first six months we welcomed more young visitors than ever before. It took a while but Focus really was built in the right place at the right time.

Suzanne Bos, Marketing and PR Coordinator





Portugal

Cinema Trindade, Porto

The beacon of arthouse cinema in Porto

Cinema Trindade, originally opened in 1913 as Salão Jardim da Trindade, is an historical cinema of the city of Porto. In its early days, it housed a movie theatre, ballroom, café, billiards and a terrace. Its success led to a remodeling in 1957, and its new lease of life as Cinema Trindade.

Following the crisis of the Seventh Art in the 1970s and '80s, this space was again renovated in the early '90s, transformed into a bingo hall and a small twin cinema. However, this project did not survive the decline of the historical zone of Porto and closed in 2000.

Américo Santos, founder and CEO of Nitrato Filmes, is the current proprietor and in charge of programming. It was he who decided to re-open the venue for the fourth time and so, in February 2017, with two screens (168 and 178 seats), this project emerged and fulfilled a demand from the community, at a time of great effervescence of cultural life in Porto.

The recent transformation of cultural spaces downtown has provided constant activity in the most diverse cultural areas, generating high expectations and the need for an arthouse cinema. We are very well located, surrounded by many nice places to eat and drink and a metro station is just around the corner.

When we reopened, our greatest concern was in guaranteeing high quality projection and, therefore,

ensuring integrity in the presentation of films and for the work of artists. But, above all, in keeping the memory of the old cinema and maintaining its charm.

In addition, we try, as much as we can, to offer a personalised service, not limiting ourselves to just selling a movie ticket. We always have something to say about the movie and its director, or additional information to give to our viewers.

Film exhibition in Portugal is experiencing an era of great demand for innovation and creativity. For this reason, we outlined a policy of action focused on the singularity of films. Cinema Trindade focuses on the particularity rather than the standardised view, with the aim of valuing, together with the spectator, the uniqueness of each film.

We believe that our exhibition model can provoke a catalyzing effect for the audience, though we still have the challenging task of attracting younger audiences that mostly attend film festivals and events.

The film exhibition in Portugal is going through a moment that demands innovation and creativity. For this reason, we outlined a policy of action focused on the uniqueness of the films we program. Cinema Trindade focuses on the quality rather than on mainstream choices, with the aim of giving value, together with the spectator, to the uniqueness of each film.



We often say that our policy is anti-multiplex, offering high quality programming. Yet we consider ourselves “a multiplex of films”, not of screens, given the diversity that has always characterized our programming.

One of the strategies we find most effective in keeping our audience loyal is promoting the Tripass, a discount card that we share with other movie theaters in Porto. Still, we always bear in mind the everyday challenge of reaching a wider audience.

In short, this project is based on a display model that enhances a kind of exhibition similar to festival’s screenings, which has shown great results in Portugal.

Most of our releases are enhanced by the presence of actors or directors and we are proud that, in such a short period of time, we have already hosted internationally recognized names such as Lucrecia Martel and Aki Kaurismaki.

In this context, we intend to situate Cinema Trindade in Porto as a space that meets audience expectations and plays a key role in the revival of cinema in the downtown area.

As such, we think we are now capable of proclaiming Cinema Trindade as an beacon of arthouse cinema in Porto, offering diverse programming and remaining unique.

Américo Santos, Cinema Director





Serbia

Eurocinema, Subotica

“A Safe Haven for author’s films”

In the tranquillity of the Pannonian plains, in Northern Serbia, is the town of Subotica. It has a vivid history of the arts. A significant piece of its cultural mosaic is dedicated to cinema, which has more than 115 years of tradition, mostly thanks to Alexander Lifka, a pioneer of cinematography from Central Europe, who built the first cinema in Subotica.

The town, with its long established tradition, now has just two operating cinemas, one of which is Eurocinema, run by the Open University Subotica, a company with 65 years of experience in education and cultural management. The Open University opened a cinema in 2010, at a time when there were no more cinemas operating in Subotica. Starting with one screening a day, via a 35mm projector, our cinema staged a place for the gathering of Subotica’s cinephiles. Soon, we expanded our programme and included film classics as well as new releases from all over the world, increasing from three to five screenings daily.

In 2011 we became members of the Europa Cinemas network and, in 2013, Eurocinema was equipped with a DCP projector, with the help of Eurimages and Serbia’s Ministry of Culture. Over the years, Eurocinema has created a programme structure focused mainly on European cinema, which happened naturally as the

Open University has been running the European Film Festival of Palić for twenty-five years.

The cinema itself was built in the amphitheatre of the Open University at the beginning of the 1980s and was later adapted to a screening hall. Towards the end of this year, we are planning to renovate our cinema, and, for that purpose, we will invest around 65,000 euros. Part of the funds (around 25%) have been provided by Film Centre Serbia and the rest will be of our own investment. Most of the funds are allocated to the acquisition of new seats and the reconstruction of the cinema’s flooring.

Although we have just 213 seats in our cinema, over the last few years we managed to break our own attendance records, attracting over 40,000 spectators per year. Eurocinema has become one of the top single-screen theatres in Serbia and the most visited cultural venue in the city of Subotica. We have also increased the number of films screened in our cinema, currently sitting at 180 per year. This was very encouraging and motivating for us to continue the activities closely connected to our company’s main goal: creating a stimulating environment for the development of arts and education.

Activities in our cinema range from; programmes dedicated to school children, special screenings and presentations of young or established auteurs, screenings of the best movies from festivals across Serbia and



abroad (such as IFFR and Artekinio), screenings of operas, short films made by children during our workshops, and events marking special anniversaries and collaborations with cultural institutions operating in Serbia (Institut Francais, British Council, Instituto Cervantes, Italian Cultural Institute, Embassy of PR of China). All of those activities give our audience the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the developments in cinema and culture in general from all corners of the world. In addition, the Open University runs numerous workshops, film clubs and exhibitions during the whole year and most of those activities are presented at Eurocinema through different types of events.

Starting in November 2018 and extending to March 2019 we are giving young filmmakers from Serbia and Hungary the opportunity to present their films and deliver lectures to our audience through cross-border IPA project “FILMY” which we will implement in collaboration with our partners from Szeged (Hungary).

We are especially proud of our European Film Festival Palić, where we screen films in the “Parallels and Encounters” section, a competition programme dedicated to Eastern European cinema. The programme focuses on certain countries as well as acting as an homage to the laureates of the Alexander Lifka award, which is assigned by the Festival for exceptional contribution to the European cinema. Festival attendees also have an opportunity to speak with cinema masters such as Roy Andersson, Ken Russell, Christopher Hampton, Slavko Štimac, Želimir Žilnik and many others who have presented their films in Eurocinema.

Thanks to Eurocinema’s programming policies and well-established European Film Festival Palić we are honoured to attract an audience that is familiar with and fond of European cinema. In that sense, Subotica

is a leading town in Serbia and, as Emir Kusturica put it “a safe haven for author’s film”.

Challenges for the future remain the same as in previous years – preserving our audience, providing more opportunities for initiatives directed towards audience development and new efforts in improving our cinema’s infrastructure.

Ilija Tatić, General Manager of Open University Subotica





Slovenia

Kosovelov Dom, Sežana

A municipal single screen cinema as a benchmark of film education in Slovenia

Kosovel Cultural Centre (Kosovelov Dom Sežana) is one of several cultural centres in Slovenia that brings theatre, dance, music, visual arts (three galleries), and – last but not least – cinema together under one roof. The cinema in Kosovel Cultural Centre (a public institution) is a regional film venue offering quality feature and art films, with a special emphasis on European and Slovenian cinema. As a member of the Slovenian Art Cinema Network, as well as Europa Cinemas and CICAIE, we look for diversity and, of course, the aesthetic quality of mostly non-commercial films.

Cinema projection is a significant aspect of Kosovel Cultural Centre's programme. We have only one digital projector, which is why we run our major film programme in the Main Hall (437 seats). Where possible, we have projections in a smaller hall (85 seats), that is not digitised. In July and August, we organised weekly open-air screenings at our outdoor amphitheatre.

Over the past few years, we have been steadily developing our own film education programme for youngsters, called *Filmšula*. The activities are done in cooperation with a local secondary school and youth

centre. The aim of the project is to develop the critical thinking of youngsters through active viewing of films, reflecting on and discussing the films together. The participants learn about film language and, occasionally, we organise workshops. This year, for example, we are planning a workshop on video editing with smartphones.

In 2017, we introduced a huge film education project called *Filmarija*, which also incorporates the above-mentioned *Filmšula*. Within the framework of the project we offer morning screenings for schools that include a short introduction to a film and a discussion after the viewing. Our film educational activities also attract audiences beyond the borders of the municipality of Sežana, and are one of the major reasons why they like to attend our events. Once a month, we organise special weekend screenings for children and their parents, also followed by discussion.

This project alone has attracted almost 3,000 children and young people. We published *KULdnevnik* (*COOLdiary*), which could be described as a cultural diary and was distributed (for free) to all the children that attended film events in all of the venues participating in the project. The diary presents cultural codes of behaviour and manners, instructions on how to

maintain the diary, and a free space for noting down impressions after film screenings and workshops. This year we enhanced the diary with presentations on film-making occupations.

In addition, we are proud to have widened the reach of the project by taking it to two regional towns, Cerknica and Postojna. As neither of these places has a cinema theatre and, as their film programmes are still in early development, the programme is reduced (five screenings in each town, with discussions and workshops with optical toys). The response from the public has far exceeded our expectations. *Filmarija* is a project co-financed by the Slovenian Film Centre.

In August this year, we hosted an event called *MUVIT/6x60*, a film marathon where participating groups of filmmakers were given sixty hours to write, shoot, edit and hand in a six-to eight-minute long film. Twenty-two teams submitted films, bringing together young people from all over Slovenia, plus one group from Italy. The expert jury announced the three best films from this year's Muvit at a closing event, where the audience prize and a special mention were also awarded.

In cooperation with the local library, in 2018, we introduced a new project called *Reading and Watching: American literature & filmography*. It is funded in part by the US Embassy in Ljubljana. From October 2018 to March 2019 we will offer five events, in either our cinema or the library. The main purpose of the project is audience education. We aim to present two types of media dealing with the same content, each with its own means of expression. We further wish to point out the difference between the experiences of reading a book and watching a movie and how each affect our imagination. We have prepared a list of films adapted for the

screen from novels. The audience will be encouraged to read the book and watch the film in advance in order to be able to take an active part in the discussion at the event.

These evenings will be hosted by two external experts: one will cover the literary aspects and the other will cover film. They will reflect on and talk about the means of expressions the authors and filmmakers were relying on in making the film or writing the book. We will also have a special guest - film journalist and critic Matic Majcen, who will present his book on Kubrick's film, *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Approaching its 30th birthday, Kosovel Cultural Centre is still facing multiple challenges and generating many ideas. The building itself is in need of some renovation work and the equipment requires some technological improvements (a new DCP projector and a new portable DCP projector, refurbishment of seats). We have also taken up a special challenge to expand our target audiences, while, at the same time, hoping not to lose our loyal visitors. Our task is to continue to appreciate and further encourage the enthusiasm of our existing audience while also trying to attract the interest of potential new audiences. We also need to look beyond the border of Italy, home to many Slovenian people who are eager to keep in touch with Slovenian culture.

Nina Ukmar, Cinema Manager



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Spain

Cinemes Girona, Barcelona

Supporting local and worldwide independent cinema

Cinemes Girona is housed within Barcelona’s formerly occupied iconic movie theatre, Cine Moderno. The history of the premises extends beyond its iconic years in the 1950s and ‘60s to 1936, when cosmopolitan Cinema New York opened. Cinemes Girona started its journey in 2010, when a group of producers, distributors and exhibitors joined up to save the theatre, situated at the border of two of Barcelona’s most emblematic neighbourhoods, Gràcia and Eixample.

Since then, two complementary focuses have clearly marked our programming: those of diversity and local talent. Our billboards showcase the best films of European cinema, as well as weekly Asian and Latin American screenings, thanks to a long standing, ongoing collaboration with Casa Asia and Casa Amèrica de Catalunya, both of whom design a high quality programme and partner on advertising. On the other hand, we also try to increase visibility for national productions. We believe that supporting local creators is consistent with our aims and obligation to forge on with a long standing tradition of excellent local filmmaking.

For us, it is essential to take an active part in the community, and we work hard to establish strong links with various groups and organisations, making our screens available for their needs and celebrations.

It is increasingly common for citizen organisations to use the audio-visual media to communicate and, as such, we make our cinema available as a meeting place for discussion and debate. We like the idea that our screens are a mirror on which our city is contemplated.

Another interesting way to keep us connected to the city is to host film festivals and shows throughout the year. Curated by diverse groups, our annual programming integrates films from different communities, such as Greek- Cypriot, Hindu or Brazilian. We host more than ten thematic film festivals a year, spanning ecology to art and design, indigenous cinemas and American indie cinema. This activity allows us to attract diverse audiences that, despite not going regularly to the cinema, become involved if the subject is appealing enough.

Bringing new audiences to theatres is one of our obsessions, especially young spectators, who lately have become more and more reticent to go to movie theatres. To this effect, we have led on ground-breaking actions, some of which have created a stir within the exhibition sector. But, in our opinion, this is a breath of fresh air for the industry. For example, in July 2013, we launched a pioneering offer for our annual passes. We were driven by the urgent need to digitise our screening rooms and by our discovery that people wanted a reduction on cinema ticket pricing. That was five years ago, and, since then, we sell our annual passes to everyone, but aimed especially



at younger audiences, who usually think they cannot afford cinema tickets.

Getting young audiences into cinemas must be one of our priorities as a movie theatre. We have a policy of affordable prices for families and we collaborate with film schools and with others organisations that work on the promotion of cinema for young audiences and school children. We have hosted My First Festival for many years, a festival organized by Modiband, whereby three and four-year-olds have their first experience as jurors at a film festival. In November, we hosted the “Cinema and Children’s Rights” Festival, organised by Teleduca and the City Council of Barcelona, attended by 5,000 local school children. Throughout the year, we also host a “Cinema for Students” programme and, together with the pioneering Drac Màgic movement, we organise family sessions from December to April, under the name of Kinosaurus,

an initiative in which cinema is not only about watching a movie but, also, about experiencing it with all of our senses.

We are very pleased to see that our movie theatre, with only three rooms, has become a benchmark venue for the city. It is an open space for talent and diverse proposals, and it is open to ideas through images. An exhibitor’s work is constantly evolving: though there is obviously still room for the classic exhibitor, who decides on their programme according to weekly revenue, and who hangs movie posters and waits for an audience to arrive. But, the cities of the 21st century have a well-trained and demanding population that knows movies can be seen through any window. They demand added value, a more complete experience and one that can only be provided by movie theatres with a unique character.

Juan Antonio Espinosa Roca, Director





Switzerland

Cinepel, Neuchâtel

A quality exhibition company running eight arthouse cinemas in Romandy

Cinepel SA is a family owned business that has run movie theatres in Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds for three generations. Both towns are in the Neuchâtel Canton, one of the five French speaking cantons in Switzerland, and where all of our theatres are located; five theatres with seven screens in Neuchâtel three theatres with five screens in La Chaux-de-Fonds.

Cinepel offers a wide variety of cinematographic programmes to the Neuchatel public. Our CEO, Edna Epelbaum, oversees programming. It is important to her to provide a forum for European movies and, more specifically, Swiss movies, documentaries and short films. Additionally, we facilitate the presentation of Swiss and other national filmmakers’ work in our theatres to engage with our audience. It is important that the public interacts with actors, directors and producers, and that we provide a “peek behind the scenes”.

Presently, Cinepel endeavors to attract younger viewers to the cinema. First, the theatres were renovated to make them more attractive and welcoming; Cinepel updated the Rex cinema in Neuchâtel in 2013 and the Scala multiplex in La Chaux-de-Fonds in 2015. Our most important construction project to date was the renovation of the Apollo multiplex in Neuchâtel in 2017. The overall cinema

experience was enhanced after we increased the width of seating and row pitch in each of the multiplex theatres, in addition to creating a more modern, open reception area. To see a movie in a high quality, on the big screen with Dolby surround sound is at the heart of our profession, but creating a space to promote discussions between people before and after the movie is also important.

Cinepel has further implemented a new concept, in collaboration with local cinema organization, #Ciné. The idea is to screen a film once a month, organized by young people for young people. They choose the movie, organise an event related to the movie’s theme, invite a relevant guest speaker, and organize promotional activity via social media (Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat...). This project allows groups of young people to come together to create a unique experience for themselves and, at the same time, they discover – or rediscover – the experience of viewing a film on a big screen. A study undertaken prior to this project showed that young people were motivated primarily when no adults are involved.

Our efforts are not only dedicated to our younger audience, however. In September, we launched “Ciné Lunch” at the Apollo multiplex. The idea is to start the day with a lunch break to allow those available in the daytime to come to the cinema. Indeed, people who have professional or family activities do not always have the



time to watch films at the cinema. This approach gives them an opportunity to come at a different time.

We have also noticed that many Seniors appreciate this new offer as they do not like to go out at the end of the day or later in the evening. The programming for Ciné Lunch is mainly art house films (European and Swiss) with a weekly preview. This concept was already relatively common place in the German parts of Switzerland and we are the first to launch within the French parts.

As managers of theatres in a town of 33,000 inhabitants and 94,000 in the surrounding area, it's important to maintain contact with the public. This closeness allows us to adapt the film programme to the relative demand (original version or French, 2D or 3D movies, documentaries, blockbusters, etc) and is a guarantee of high-level service.

In 2017-2018, I had the opportunity to participate in a one-year pilot program, the Women's Mentoring Scheme organized by UNIC (International Union of Cinemas). At this time, the cinema world is primarily male. This European project is exclusively for women to benefit from mentoring by more experienced women and develop competency within the industry. In my case, I benefited from the experience of a woman who has competency in Human Resources and is an executive director of a UK cinema group. I had the opportunity to visit one of the biggest multiplexes in London and to compare our operational, technology, organization and management systems.

Emotions are the driving force of the 7th art and continue to be so despite social changes and technology evolution. The Cinema remains a place to meet others and share emotions.

Sandrine Liscia, Cinema Manager





United Kingdom

Independent Cinema Office

10 cinemas, 14 screens

With Brexit a looming possibility, the need for art in the UK to help foster mutual understanding and empathy has never been more important, especially with our friends in Europe. The Independent Cinema Office exists to foster more opportunities for independent screens of all kinds to do the pioneering, community building work that they do. We want to see cinemas becoming more ambitious with their programming and sharing truly life-changing cinema with their audiences. We want UK audiences to see films that present the lives of people in other European nations as it is, outside of narrow media portrayals and political wrangling. Cultural film is one of the best ways to do this, as film is an art form that is truly inclusive. Our goal is to take that promise and make sure that the widest possible range of people are seeing the widest possible range of films, having soul-nourishing experiences in their communities.

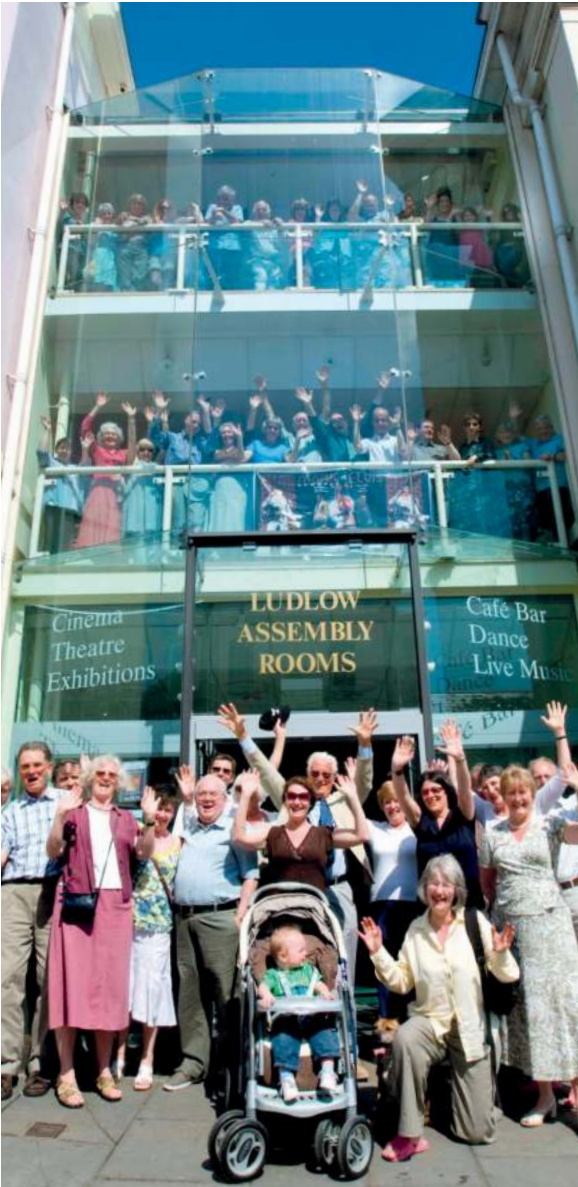
This year, we're celebrating our tenth anniversary of our Europa Cinemas mini-network. This network spans everything from full time independent cinemas with a very wide ranging programme, to smaller rural sites where film is only part of their programme. ICO is strongly committed to helping cinemas broaden their programme, whatever their baseline. For many venues in our network, participating as a solo member of the Europa Network is

not currently possible, but we serve to help them gradually increase their screenings and audiences for European films. Audience development is not an overnight project, but the success and growth of this network shows that taking part does encourage audience members to change their taste. Cinemas in our network become known as a key place to engage with these films on a consistent basis.

As with all independent cinemas, the strength of our network is in its diversity, responding to local audience tastes in a variety of ways. Focusing on individual cinemas, Stoke Film Theatre (which opened in 1974) shows local archive films from the Staffordshire film archive every week which are free to all to attend, as well as showcasing films by University of Staffordshire students.

Many of the venues, while not based in traditional cinema venues, make an advantage of their location and immediate demographic. Reading Film Theatre is based on the University of Reading campus and serve students with programmes curated in collaboration with university departments; Saffron Screen in Essex is based in the local County High School and leverages this to engage younger audiences with independent cinema. MAC in Birmingham serves the multicultural community in which it's based, carefully curating programmes that are often led by the South Asian and disabled communities that connect with the venue.

While foreign language cinema is not as consistent a



box office winner as in previous years, many of our venues create a major buzz around world cinema by hosting festivals in house. Quad's Derby Film Festival has become a major asset to the venue, hosting many UK premieres of European titles otherwise unavailable to UK audiences. Ludlow Assembly Rooms and Courtyard both act as hosts for Borderlines Film Festival, the UK's sixth largest film festival, and the only large festival to take place outside of a major city. Instead, it brings major previews of world cinema and local filmmaking to isolated rural communities in three counties, making a genuine contribution to accessibility of these films. Plymouth Arts Centre is host to Rebel Film Festival, which has scored many major coups in the last few years, culminating in an appearance by Oscar-winning cinematographer Roger Deakins in 2018.

We see festivals as a key driver of more European co-operation, which is why we've been proud to run our "Developing Your Film Festival" training programme (kindly supported by Creative Europe – MEDIA) over the last eight years. This course has brought together over 200 festival professionals from 44 countries, gathering to learn about how to improve the growth, profile and revenue of their festivals. We have seen numerous collaborations between European festivals as a result of the scheme, sharing staff and programming ideas.

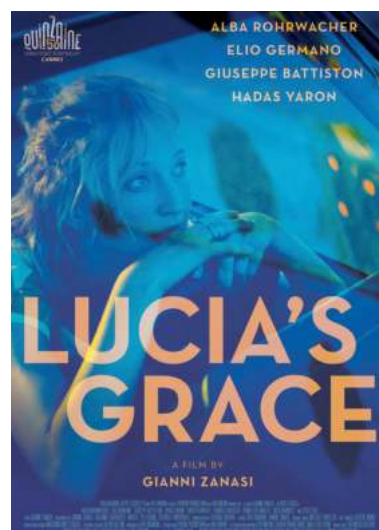
All our cinemas are committed to showing as wide a range of film as possible and giving their local communities – whether in cities or in remote, rural locations – the chance to see exciting and dynamic world cinema and arthouse film. Knowing there is a wide network of cinemas doing the same work, sharing the same ambition, across Europe is an inspiration for us.

Duncan Carson, Marketing and Communications Manager





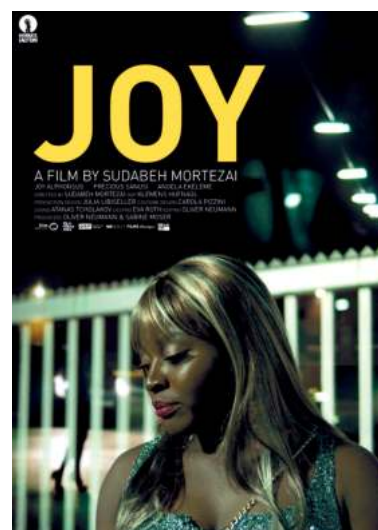
EUROPA CINEMAS LABEL WINNERS 2018



"I Do Not Care If We Go Down in History as Barbarians" by Radu Jude



"L'Époque" by Matthieu Barye



FOR 15 YEARS, NETWORK EXHIBITORS HAVE BEEN AWARDING THE EUROPA CINEMAS LABEL TO THE BEST EUROPEAN FILMS AT MAJOR EUROPEAN FESTIVALS. THE EUROPA CINEMAS LABEL AIMS TO ENHANCE THE PROMOTION, CIRCULATION AND BOX-OFFICE RUNS OF EUROPEAN AWARD-WINNING FILMS ON THE SCREENS OF MEMBER CINEMAS ACROSS EUROPE.



EUROPA CINEMAS

43 countries / 725 cities / 1,204 cinemas / 2,992 screens

Europa Cinemas
www.europa-cinemas.org

President
Nico Simon
General Director
Claude-Eric Poiroux

Head of International Relations
Fatima Djoumer
fdjoumer@europa-cinemas.org

Press
Charles McDonald
charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk

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