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OPENING OF THE 22nd EUROPA CINEMAS CONFERENCE

Nico Simon – President of Europa Cinemas

Metka Dariš – Director, Kinodvor, Slovenia

Lucia Recalde – Deputy Director and Head of Unit, Audiovisual Industry and Media support programmes, DG Connect

Olivier Henrard – Deputy General Manager, CNC, France

Claude-Eric Poiroux – General Director of Europa Cinemas

Nico Simon – President of Europa Cinemas

There is one word not to be used over these three days: Zoom.

A great and hearty welcome to all of you to Europa Cinemas' 22nd network conference – three years later, instead of two – and after 30 years after Europa Cinemas' creation in 1992. This time, there is a record of over 600 participants and partners. Welcome to our support providers; the European Commission and Lucia Recalde, her colleagues and their team members, the CNC, Institut Français, CICAIE, Unifrance and MUBI – the sponsor of our conference bags this year. Since our last conference evolutions were shook up, disruption at the end of the tunnel. The sector is, though only slowly, getting back on its feet, in some territories faster than others. If most of those cinemas survive to this day, it is due to the fact that the European Commission quickly reacted and help us help you short-term, so that support could come much faster than usual. A great thanks to Lucia and everyone involved in Brussels. This support gave us all the ability and serenity to deal with the challenges in front of us, and after the pandemic – which is not really over – there are other crises hitting us.

Let's not forget that cinema already went through hell and high water in the past; in the '50s, for instance, nobody believed theatres would survive, but 'super productions' and technical advancements like CinemaScope and 70mm, stereoscope and 3D would save cinema. But this is not what saved it, what saved it were young directors reinventing cinema almost from scratch; the Nouvelle Vague, young American independent directors and I strongly believe that history will repeat itself. In the long term, it is not a strategy of more blockbusters, platforms or amusement park style theatres that will save it. It will be auteur films, and that kind of cinema can only grow in your theatres, so thanks for your commitment.

Europa Cinemas celebrates 30 years now and its past is its future. So, it is important that we prepare this future and adapt ourselves to a new environment and renew the association with those who will be part of this future. Over the past few years, we have been working on a more modern governance and a new strategy involving more of the network members in our discussions.

Metka Dariš – Director, Kinodvor, Slovenia

It's always great to celebrate anniversaries and achievements, but it's even greater when you know it's a clear indicator of the future ahead of us. What the two years showed us is that the network members are the key to the future of Europa Cinemas.

Collaborate to Innovate was prepared by the members through a working group, the same goes for the charters that we will present at this conference. We are the proof that Europa Cinemas is as strong as ever because it has members who care about cinema and film.

Lucia Recalde – Deputy Director and Head of Unit, Audiovisual Industry and Media support programmes, DG Connect

We are celebrating the 30th anniversary of Europa Cinemas. It's not just a network, movie theatres are cultural emblems. Thanks to those theatres in even the remotest parts of Europe, people have been able to meet auteurs that have changed their lives. It's also an industrial history. European cinema embodies the European spirit. At its creation, the aim was to promote European creation and diversity of European films. To remind you of your impressive successes: there were 30 exhibitors at the beginning and now there's more than 3,000 in over 700 cities in 40 countries. The team should be proud to underscore this success.

The European Commission immediately understood the dramatic effect of the pandemic and have dramatically increased the financial support of the MEDIA programme. We strongly believe in the survival of cinemas is of the utmost importance for the recovery of the AV sector at large. Since the recovery from the pandemic, we are unfortunately faced with additional challenges; first, the tragedy of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. I would like to take today as an opportunity to pay support to the community of film professionals for their extraordinary resilience during this time. On behalf of the European Commission, we want to tell you that we stand behind you and we will do our utmost in the MEDIA programme to support you in these difficult circumstances. But this is not the only challenge. As a consequence of the war, we are experiencing skyrocketing energy prices that have impacted both cinemas and citizens across the union. There is a third challenge, competing for audience attention, especially the youngest, who spend more time in front of a screen – though not necessarily a cinema screen. Some would say we are facing a perfect storm: a slow recovery of cinema attendance that is leading to a decrease in cinema revenue, and on the other, energy costs that are exceeding cinema budgets. We look forward to the feedback and results of your conference, and we are happy to see that Europa Cinemas did not waste a good crisis: we are seeing new models of collaboration, innovation and sharing, through Collaborate to Innovate, which has brought already good results.

Olivier Henrard – Deputy General Manager, CNC, France

We are at a turning point for cinemas in Europe. First, it is necessary to build admissions and help young generations to see films, not just films from outside of Europe. Second, to set up a regulation to ensure diversity in terms of films and movie theatres. Third, to help theatres cope with the energy crisis and to rise to the longer-term challenge of the ecological transition. Fourth, to protect them as strategic cultural assets in Europe and to build admissions once again. We are -29% [on admissions] in France. Compared to the average in recent years, our neighbours have experienced a bigger % loss; over 30 in Germany, 40 in Italy and near 50 in Spain. Exactly 30 years ago we sold 100 million tickets a year and now it's 200 million on average, since 1992 and 2022. Optimism should check pessimism.

The pandemic acted as a catalyst, strengthening certain trends. The crisis in Ukraine, the energy and inflation crises have compounded the existing crisis and the lockdowns sped up rise in platforms and less product available. At Cannes, CNC did a detailed qualitative analysis, to see why fewer people were going than expected, and identified any number of causes. People are no longer going, due to price, the quality of content, the prevalence of platforms. There are all sorts of levers that governments can use, amongst which is communication. In France, we're launching a big communication campaign to tell people to go back to cinemas, and it's been somewhat successful but, often, younger people have gone back to the cinema but they see a small number of films and, largely, not European films. It's not a question of quantity but of quality. In France, over 50s represent 40% and, 20 years ago, it was only 23%, but we need to close this gap, social media and digital platforms, video content, etc.

Lots of French and European films are doing better where there is an absence of American films. The American films bring in a lot of money but we have to make sure the two categories of film live together, as it's good to have both sides of the coin. Word of mouth is what helps films and they have to be released at the right time but there are too many films being released for them to get the attention they need. The visibility and diversity of films is a very real issue. We are working towards modernising the regulatory toolbox - regulations pertaining to unlimited cards/passes, and regulations pertaining to dissemination by distributors, with the goal to ensure diversity of films in theatres.

The third challenge - energy and the environment – is worrying for French cinemas and for other European countries. In France, we have a system to help but, above and beyond, we are envisioning to enable cinemas to cope with the increase in expenditure. We are considering making funds available to help pay for exceptional running costs.

Fourth: protect our movie theatres. There is a risk in terms of strategic cultural assets: networks and catalogues that can be bought by investment funds without cultural goals. European law doesn't authorise exceptions to the freedom of circulation of capital, apart from for security reasons, so we can't stop this kind of purchase but we consider this state of affairs serious.

Claude-Eric Poiroux – General Director of Europa Cinemas

The conference has deliberately turned to the future, but let's look at the process from the last 30 years. The first 45 cinemas were, in 1992, the pioneers of this network, which now comprises over 1,200 movie theatres. At the time they were called 'pavilion theatres' and located in 24 capital or key cities, from just 12 countries at the time [list shown]. Some of them are still present in the room. The success of Europa Cinemas is based on these 45 cinemas. Thanks to the members past and present, and the entrepreneurial spirit of the participating cinemas, and the CNC and European Commission whose programmes have financially supported the programming of European films on our screens. We owe them for the quality and perseverance of the network, an indispensable tool for the important culturally diverse work we do. We need to combine our energy with the value chain and greatly improve our promotional efforts. Over the next three days, we reinvent our cinemas in light of new challenges, environmental, energy and other. We have Collaborate to Innovate, animation and new editorial tools. But even if they are incredibly dynamic, the

movie theatres cannot, single-handed, ensure the success of all the diverse films. We need to work together. Wish you all an innovative and creative conference.

SESSION 1 / Panel 1 – BEYOND RECOVERY: THE CHALLENGE AHEAD / How to manage the immediate pathways to recovery

Moderated by Michael Gubbins – Partner, SampoMedia, UK

Speakers:

Laurent Creton – Professor, University Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

Simone Gialdini – General Director, ANEC, Italy

Katarzyna Orysiak-Marrison – Head of Marketing and Distribution, Gutek Film, Poland

Christine Beauchemin-Flot – Director, Cinéma le Select

Jannik Rakusa – Exhibitor, Waystone Film KG, Austria

MG: One of the benefits of the pandemic is the resilience and the rejuvenation of younger people. The programmes, charters and ideas we're going to hear about are fresh approaches. It's not just recovery, but rejuvenation and then, renaissance, I hope.

Laurent Creton – Professor, University Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

We have films everywhere: instruments everywhere, in our pockets, even. Theatres continue to be present but they are not always full. The situation is completely different in different countries and festivals work - people want to be together and share things - all we have to do is take time, and it takes a lot of work to reach those goals.

There was a challenge before the pandemic, as figures were already dropping. We built up the film industry at the beginning of the 20th century and it is still here in 2022 on an international scale. It is still here in theatres, despite the arrival of TV, home video, and personal devices.

A paradigm shift? No, these are long term trends that have appeared, and it is a part of a more general challenge. In France, we are at -29% [of admissions, and which is higher in other places], distribution is deeply impacted. The trends show; a multiplication of offers, intensification of competition, economy of attention, profusion of offering, concentration of audiences – the question is: how to promote and defend diversity? We have to look at the spectator experiences in the theatre, as well as TV, SVOD, tablets, smartphones, etc. Viewers have: anywhere, anytime, anyhow, anything, vs a place, a session, a ritual. It is all about editorialization.

Simone Gialdini – General Director, ANEC, Italy

The situation is different in Italy compared with France. We lost a further 12% compared with 2020, and in 2022 we are starting at a difficult level – we lost 70% in 2020, 75% in 2021, this year, too, and are really lagging behind other cinema markets. We lost maybe 120 of 3,500 movie theatres, which is small in terms of the global market. The government has supported us these past three years. There were no film releases in the summer, no national productions and blockbusters began in August, meaning there was nothing in the summer

months. In 2018, we talked with various institutions and there was continual growth as of February 2020 – over 100 million admissions – but various events from the pandemic have had a huge impact on the cinema. Major support was provided and emergency cases were granted. By the end of 2021, we better structured our relations with the government. We looked at critical issues for the cinemas in Italy, including the new government and national films are now faring better than in 2019, thanks to the quality of indie cinemas. We had a target of 200 million admissions, like in France. The goal is to support initiatives and the government and film industry are working on a plan to restructure film theatres. The last three months have been more positive with numbers increasing, showing that national films are now faring much better than in 2019. Arthouse cinemas in Italy are losing fewer admissions than other theatres due to this content, and are now standing at 49%. Longer term, the issue is being addressed through a new three-year plan that looks at the future, including support from the state and industrial sector, to no longer go on government support. We must work together, work on communication, as a joint action between distributors and exhibitors.

MG: Public support is critical; first survival – of the energy and war impacts – and then we go beyond survival and into renewal. To get past the immediate problem, the support is coming from government but it is ultimately a collective response.

Katarzyna Orysiak-Marrison – Head of Marketing, Gutek Films, Poland

We are in a moment of change, but it's not been a period of stability, as there was always change and disruption, so what we do and have been doing is trying to adapt. We are using festivals as test incubator for which films work and which don't and which ones need theatrical distribution while others perhaps do not. Sometimes you are surprised and that's the beauty of distribution - audiences can really surprise you.

MG: In a world of huge amounts of content, your approach is to focus on which ones are more cinematic and allow time for the cinematic campaign. But what people are struggling with, is how to test and be sure of which films to choose.

KO-M: It's constant experiment and consultation – we are in our first year – it's a new approach and not a system, but a new way of looking at which films to buy. The audience is changing every year.

Christine Beauchemin-Flot – Director, Cinéma Le Select

I am hopeful and intend to remain hopeful. To follow on, and broaden what was said, given our situation, it's very important to stick together and share our thoughts together. There are possible proposals and solutions we can find in this context; like what we're going to do with data, to innovate and collaborate. The issue today is the audience, who are tending to prefer the comfort of home. But we're very fortunate in our field of work because we can always invent new things; reach out to different audiences, organise conventional encounters, work with younger audiences; and we are fortunate in having the possibility to make the most of cinema education policy. Movie theatres can welcome school children. It can be done outside of the projected sphere of the school. A lot of arthouse cinemas cater to their geographic neighbourhood, close to the people, which is what people need. We

need to move with the times, using modern tools, and to draw on the values and missions of the arthouse movie theatres.

MG: Values are critical. There is a responsibility for us to introduce film to people who don't know it.

Jannik Rakusa – Exhibitor, Waystone Film KG, Austria

Our project is an adaptation of Cineville, but for Austria, and 18 arthouse exhibitors. We created a SARL company with tools to attract audiences. Cineville is non-stop cinema, to create a new kind of experience in cinemas as part of the network, supporting national and arthouse films. It costs 22 euros a month, and subscribers can see as many films as they like at the cinemas that are part of the project. We have 18 cinemas working with us, and [for example] a student studying in Vienna can still see a film at home because they've paid the subscription. It is an eight-month subscription but for people under the age of 26, it's four months, so that the threshold isn't too high for young people. The subscription is already paid so then they will be more likely to be encouraged to just go and see a film. Each theatre can keep its own personality and they don't lose their identity in any way but work as a group of arthouse cinemas. We've learnt a great deal from Cineville, to encourage people to see more diverse films.

SESSION 1 / Panel 2 – BEYOND RECOVERY: THE CHALLENGE AHEAD / Community cinema: acting local, thinking global

Moderated by Michael Gubbins – Partner, SampoMedia, UK

Speakers:

Christian Landais – ADRC Chief Executive, National Agency for Cinema Development in Regions

Veronica Kaup-Hasler – Executive Councillor for Culture and Science for the City of Vienna

Cristian Hordila – Festival Manager, TIFF Transilvania Film Festival, Romania

Metka Dariš – Exhibitor, Kinodvor, Slovenia

Christian Landais – ADRC Chief Executive, National Agency for Cinema Development in Regions

We are not a state entity, but a structure created in 1983 by the Ministry of Culture. There was a cinema crisis in the '90s that brought admissions down to 113 million. We are expecting 150 or 160 million to be achieved this year. We've always had the same values; people always talk about the cinema disappearing, but we're still here. Our association is supported by the CNC. There are 1,400 members who are all players in the dissemination of cinema in France.

Through repertory cinema / heritage films, we are trying to help distributors that traditionally focus on big cities. There were 334 movie theatres that participated in this, 'Play it again' cinema event in physical spaces that showed the importance of how central they are to the cultural life of those places as an act of regeneration.

Veronica Kaup-Hasler – Executive Councillor for Culture and Science for the City of Vienna

I invest in different sectors of the arts because we need it more than ever. We survived Covid by watching films, by reading books and listening to music. I increased funding for production and in distribution and arthouse exhibition also, which is an historic move for Austria. They got money just for being there and doing the work. They have to reach out to audiences and make the place somewhere unique. We have to reconsider what a cinema is - stepping outside of the economic model and to regard cinema like a living museum. We have to put money into arthouse cinemas so that they keep up.

We need better quality, less productions. Work less, make more quality films – this has to be in the evaluation for new tools. We can't solve future questions with the answers of the past. Everyone who sold off water and other common things have to rebuy it at high prices. We need solid products of the commons.

Cristian Hordila – Festival Manager, TIFF Transilvania Film Festival, Romania

After communism there were almost 400 screens. Twenty years later, in 2010, there are around 27. The rest of the screens have become real estate for mayors to trade into hotels, bingo halls and discotheques. We realised we have to use our involvement, political connections and funds to succeed in reopening or keeping venues. We convinced city hall to give us a cinema venue - Cinema Victoria - we could pay the employees and pay for renovations. We continue to manage the venue and no longer need money from city hall. We used 'soft pressure' and convinced them regarding regeneration and skills.

MG: If you've got to make the same argument over and over again, what is it for cinema?

CH: Legacy. There will be administrative people there no matter the government party, then you are building organic relationships with them, gaining their trust, and using those strong relationships to have them understand the legacy of cinema in the city, what it offers the community. We always invite/involve them so that it includes them in what we're doing. We avoid promoting any politicians or taking any side in terms of political parties.

Metka Dariš – Exhibitor, Kinodvor, Slovenia

For smaller countries, building visual literacy, besides showing films, means it has to be publicly funded. Someone has to pay for cinemas to be able to do these things. The only accessibility is if someone pays cinemas to provide for the community. The system is very fragile, as we have a different mayor in every municipality. These cinemas are centres for these films - because they count for 30% of national admissions, even though there are less than 30 theatres nationally. They have libraries, some are part of a museum, or have other activities, so they need national funding to ensure they can show national and international cinema.

MG: It isn't just about survival. It's about the next stage on.

VK-H: All our studies show that people have less and less money. Exclusion is creating tension in society. We need to come together so that people are not left alone at home in society. It is imperative for a healthy, democratic solution.

CL: The economic argument, there you can really win. Developing culture is important, but you don't need to stress the cultural element.

MD: The costs are going up which means we might not generate the same % (50%) of the funds required even though we are doing very well with audiences. Success of school visits across their network and support from the schools, but it's fifteen years of hard work.

What is the best strategy? To keep working as the gap widens, giving the audience what they need and not having the resources, or saying 'no, we can't work with this', and then what?

Mark Cosgrove (Watershed, UK): You're talking about cultural cohesion, but we're finding a cultural clash with cancel culture and politics making for fractured audiences. How do we get broader demographics back in the cinema?

VK-H: We need an artistic solution. From nothingness, you can't speak, so we have to find a complicated way or solution through art for keeping it. To continue talking about it, and to fight the populism that is a catastrophe from the past that is still there.

MG: The argument being made is that cinema can bring people together and we are in a place where there are lots of divisions.

MD: It's important that everyone who comes feels safe. My colleague (Koen) always says: film art is one of the most accessible forms of art. It's the only contemporary form of art that you can see the best quality of in a country that otherwise can't show the biggest exhibitions of painters/sculptures, etc.

SESSION 2 – EUROPA CINEMAS ARTHOUSE TALES / PART 1

Moderated by Maddy Probst – Managing Producer, Watershed, UK

Speakers:

Alexander Syllaba and Viktoria Schaberger – Cinema Paradiso, Austria

Eric Franssen – Director, Cinéma Palace, Belgium

Mario Fortin – Director, Cinéma Beaubien, Canada

Mustafa el Mesaoudi – Director, Cinema Wuppertal, Germany

Adam Trzopek – Director, Kino Muranow, Poland

Nina Milošič – Programmer, Mestni Kino Ptuj, Slovenia

Luz Delgado – Director, Cines van Dyck, Spain

Alexander Syllaba and Viktoria Schaberger – Cinema Paradiso, Austria

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, Cinema Paradiso is an old cinema in the city centre. We're located on the square in the city, but it didn't interest the city (they said) but first film had 10,000 visitors. So, we called it Cinema Paradiso. It was a real cultural battle, 10,000 signatures on a petition and we wanted to wake up the sleepy town. Politicians – even those not in favour of us, came to our events. We have a movie theatre, but also host 150 events, book readings, concerts and performances. In 2013, we opened another theatre in

Baden, near Vienna, organising cultural events of various kinds, including films for young audiences of all age groups. We also have a magazine – which people leaf through, and our entire team participates in making it.

Eric Franssen – Director, Cinéma Palace, Belgium

Cinéma Palace has four screens, a restaurant and all sorts of activities. Built in 1913, with a varied history, we now have four screens. The palace is in the city centre, a few steps from bars and in a popular area. We screen films with both Flemish and French subtitles on films to reflect the audiences in the area. We limit our programme to one release a week, welcome filmmakers and others from the sector, and work on young audiences, offering new releases, family time, special screenings with activities for children and school sessions integrated with teaching materials for the teachers. There are animation workshops for children, 35mm screenings, the history of the cinema is shared, we hold masterclasses, and tickets for students are cheap at four euros. We organise events, festivals, private events, have 4,500 square metres including a bar and restaurant, lectures and, in 2021, we welcomed our first exhibition borrowed from the French cinémathèque. We have quality equipment – 4K, Dolby, 35mm, video conferencing to show in partner rooms, and have postproduction companies that test at their cinema. We have 12 staff, four technicians, one programmer, one young audience [co-ordinator], comms, events, and Cineville launched to help with concerns around ticket prices. By 2022, we should have 135,000 admissions, a 20% drop on 2019.

Mario Fortin – Director, Cinéma Beaubien, Canada

Built in 1937, it was a 700-seater, with programmes mostly from France. In the 1960s, capacity was reduced to have 560 seats, and we added a second screen with 60 seats. Another two screens – 50 and 70 seats – were then added to enable programme admissions to grow. Up until 2021, the venue had never screened an American film. We have record audiences, often in the top five of the US box office (which includes Canada). Support systems in Canada aren't as advanced as in France. Our moto: "A good film will never become a great film if it's not screened in a movie theatre."

Mustafa el Mesaoudi – Director, Kino Wuppertal, Germany

Bought in 2014, built in 1887 Wuppertal was a hotel and restaurant. In 1889, the first film screened was *Trip to the Moon*, but not Méliès. Remodelled in 1904, there was a scandal: Goebbels sent things to the actors and the audience didn't like it so they asked him to leave. For a long time, the theatre showed the theatre piece with protection. In 1937, they screened films and in the war the cinema was completely destroyed and rebuilt as *The Salamander*. From 1951 to 2015 the form remained similar but more comfortable. We did not have the right to keep its former name as a shoe company sued us, so, for three years, it was called 'The Nameless Cinema' and people asked us to give it a name. So, in 2015, we called it the *Rex Filmtheater* and renovated it completely. We have screenings with local politicians present.

Adam Trzopek – Director, Kino Muranow, Poland

Kino Muranow is in Poland, with four screenings rooms. We started to serve fresh bread in the lobby, organised wine tastings and coffee festivals, invited small theatre groups to do improv and stand-up comedy, as well as hosting special screenings for parents with small

children. We were the first cinema in Poland to organise porn film festival – the “dark side of arthouse tales” – with performances in the lobby against human trafficking and such which attracted protest. The authorities can’t do anything, though, because the festival has no public funding. Our B Movie festival is very popular, as well as silent horror, splatter and blues festivals.

Nina Milošič – Programmer, Mestni Kino Ptuj, Slovenia

Kino Ptuj is a small cinema that’s been stealing ideas from years of Europa Cinemas conferences. We are part of a mini network of Europa Cinemas and have one regular employee. The population of Ptuj is less than 20,000 people. We are one of the oldest cinemas in the world, having recently celebrated the 125th anniversary of our first film screening. Heritage can also be a burden, however, as the cultural monument is of a serious organisation, not so light and attractive to young audiences. So, we created a new hall in a space that hadn’t been used for 30 years. Volunteers helped clean the space, we secured European funding for DCP equipment and we had no money for furniture. We used an armchair or two and received 160 offers from the community. Each time we posted a story about the person who donated and why they loved movies, etc. People then offered other things, like plants, lights, film book collections, and we managed to open it on our 125th birthday, which opened up new opportunities and now it resonates more with young people. We are the only cinema in town, so we try to offer to a wider audience, including small details that make a big difference; seven-year-old children sit on the floor instead of standing during a workshop. We bring ourselves closer to the audience, using pretty locations where we can take our new mobile DCP equipment. There is always something new, so we don’t repeat ourselves; sometimes that means looking at it from a different perspective. The most important thing I have learnt is not to think stereotypically of different demographic groups.

Luz Delgado – Director, Cines van Dyck, Spain

The dictatorship came to an end and we have a very old university with more than 40,000 students every year. Students fighting for democracy have contributed to the success of Cines van Dyck. We host events with musicians, celebrate European Cinema Night, have talks and other activities for young audiences, children’s literature events, workshops, etc. We now have four screens and a converted lobby space for the public. We avoided having stairs, to make things sustainable and accessible, with a ramp up to the cinema. There is flexibility to change the space and layout.

SESSION 3 / Workshop 1 – Roadmap to recovery and renewal / Collaborate to Innovate

Moderated by Michael Gubbins – Partner, SampoMedia, UK

Speakers:

Frédéric Cornet – Exhibitor/Distributor, Cinéma Galeries, Belgium

Pien Houthoff – Managing and Artistic Director, LUX Nijmegen, Netherlands

Elise Mignot – Director, Café des Images, France

Bárbara Fernández Vilarino – Director, Golem Madrid, Spain

Ieva Sipola – Director, Splendid Palace, Latvia

Frédéric Cornet – Exhibitor/Distributor, Cinema Galeries, Belgium

We brought the *Cineville* project from the Netherlands to Belgium. Cineville is a monthly unlimited pass (starting from 18 Euros) and we adapted the same idea for a new geographical area. In March 2021, many cinemas were asking “how can we survive?” so the goal was to increase the admissions for arthouse films and attract a younger audience. We dreamt about a new sense of community in Bruxelles and found willing participants. After few issues around sponsors, many cinemas joined the project, and we now share a website. The next steps for the project are to expand all across the country (it’s currently only available in Bruxelles). And the project holders are also thinking about creating one card for more than one country: why not a European card? Even if it’s an unlimited card, there is full transparency in the % of running costs for the distributors.

Pien Houthoff – Managing and Artistic Director, LUX Nijmegen, Netherlands

LUX has eight screens and we wanted to reach the audience, even in lockdown. We created a unique and common technical system for many cinemas. It is important to have one familiar surrounding where the public can feel at home. LUX is a true example of how we extend the social space of the cinema, it’s all about extending the conversation. Our event was in memory of Jean-Luc Godard and included some lessons about JLG in the cinema + online. At the beginning, it was free and many people participated, then we switched to a paying service and lost participants. Even though we lost the public, we believed we needed to try and to explore different systems. The biggest costs were technical, and profit, in the long term, is limited with expensive content. Still, we prefer to choose quality over quantity.

Elise Mignot – Café des Images, France

The pilot project podcast “Cinemas sur Écoute” links cinemas and music/sound. Its focus is about rethinking the cinema space. The project set up a sound laboratory in the cinema space because a cinema theatre is not only for films. We are making European cinemas *heard*. The goal is to educate the cinema audience to the sound and sensitize the artist to the cinema space. As one of the first participants of Collaborate to Innovate, I suggest paying attention to following the rules, reading the eligibility criteria carefully, especially which costs are covered and which are not. The next step is to continue this project, hopefully with other French or European cinemas.

Bárbara Fernández Vilarino – Director, Golem Madrid, Spain

The issue for Golem Madrid is poor and rare contact with young audiences. During the pandemic, we believed we could reach young audiences, even at home. The project was imagined during dark times because of the Covid restrictions. Thanks to our relationship with other cinemas in Spain, we’ve run a communication campaign with a film programme for young people. These are films that we thought the young generation needed see, believing the public should trust the cinema. Exhibitors shouldn’t list a programme according to the audience’s expectations but surprise them with something new.

MG: It’s understanding the psychology of young people and taking them to different spaces they don’t usually go to.

Ieva Sipola – Director, Splendid Palace, Latvia

During Covid, I was writing emails to other cinemas, re-establishing contacts. Getting to know our partners, their habits and working style was invaluable, especially for dividing up responsibilities. Our other advice is:

- 1) Networking, because you never know where a simple conversation can take you.
- 2) Key performance indicators (KPIs, to increase young audiences, from project audience engagement with digital tool and gamification elements, social media engagement – evidence-based findings)
- 3) Do not forget to celebrate the success
- 4) Learn from mistakes
- 5) Check the guidelines for the project fund carefully

I would like to link the cinema to young people's education, using digital games and activities before and after screenings. Innovation is now a necessity.

SESSION 3 / Workshop 2 – Roadmap to recovery and renewal / Winning back the audience

Moderated by Frank Groot -Financial Director/Programmer, KINO Rotterdam, Netherlands

Speakers:

Valerio Carocci – Exhibitor, Cinema Troisi, Italy

Unnur Sande – Manager, Vega Scene, Norway

Andres Kauts – Director/Programmer, Tartu Elektrikteater, Estonia

Marvin Weichert – Digital Marketing Lead, Yorck Kinogruppe, Germany

Hannele Marjavaara – Cinema Manager, Kino Tapiola, Finland

Noortje Van de Sande – Managing Director, Picl, Netherlands

Valerio Carocci – Exhibitor, Cinema Troisi, Italy

Cinema Troisi was established with 70% public funds, 30% own contribution. We had 250,000 Euros and the rest was state funds given by the Italian Ministry for Culture to complete the work. We have 70 seats for young people to work (there is a very popular laptop culture) and are at about -40% of pre-pandemic attendance. We are a single screen but also look at the results of multiplexes in the city.

Unnur Sande – Manager, Vega Scene, Norway

We have different programming to ensure diversity and inclusion and to target young audiences. We have a student day on Mondays where tickets cost 10 euros (instead of 15), which has increased audiences by 300%. Distributors give us previews on Mondays for the young people and we host special events. Our motto is: "A day without a special event is a day without meaning."

Andres Kauts – Director/Programmer, Tartu Elektrikteater, Estonia

We've worked on audience profiling, and focused on working with a physical space that isn't intuitive for audiences who come only or twice a year by making small changes like ensuring

the posters on the wall are detailed with when the films are showing so as to not have audiences unsure of if the films are playing now or have played in the past. The group we were most surprised about after our research were the people who love our cinema but almost never come. We hired a company, they interviewed 25 people, spent four days in the lobby making observations to categorise the people attending and approached them with University research that took 1-2 hours.

FG: Did the profiling change anything in your marketing?

AK: We try to think of the audience as single people more, not just 1,000 views on Facebook but thinking of speaking with humour to a single person.

Marvin Weichert – Digital Marketing Manager, Yorck Kinogruppe, Germany

We use a short survey – just three questions, two where customers give ratings out of five stars and then a free text field – it means people can come to you without having to come to you about a *bigger* thing – so you get the smaller insights. We also introduced a search function on the website – which tells us both what films are we missing out on and also what else are people searching for on our site that we don't offer, we can then improve our website to enable what people are looking for. We use Google analytics + social media data (Instagram insights) to guide us.

Hannele Marjavaara – Cinema Manager, Kino Tapiola, Finland

We wanted simple ways for the audience to tell us what they think about what we are doing; from wine bar opening times, to what they think about our hard of hearing screenings. During the pandemic we were unsure about what to do so we involved rather than told our audience what to do. A quick survey including what to do around safety protocols and what films they wanted to see (re-runs, etc) meant that we ensured our audience felt safe in returning to the cinema. When Finland lifted restrictions, we had 428 votes for keeping safety seats and 127 who wanted to squeeze in, so we followed their votes and we were the only cinema in Finland keeping safety seats but we had attendance because our audience felt safe. We found women over age 60 are the most vocal. We are the first carbon neutral cinema in Finland.

Noortje Van de Sande – Managing Director, Picl, Netherlands

Post-Covid is an interesting time, when some people have stopped offering online content and others are still doing it.

We, at Picl, are really investigating what works – what do audiences want to watch online and how can cinemas profit with this being in a theatre? Sometimes people just want to watch a film and, if you don't offer it, they'll just watch Netflix. We have forty participating cinemas but they aren't making a profit online, so what's in it for the exhibitor?

Offering online films or content including Q&As and discussions means it can be custom – you can build it yourself or as a group of cinemas and track the customer journey, but this is expensive and labour intensive. Curzon in the UK do this, as do Yorck Kinogruppe. Another option is to outsource solutions – something Picl offers – then you don't have to worry about things that the platform handles. Or there is partnership, as with platforms like MUBI.

Researching these solutions and finding what works best is what we are focusing on– and we will share our results in the future.

FG: In summary: offering day and date and also back catalogue on filmmakers gives customers a range of options. Researching streaming effects on cinema suggests that it mostly does *not* cannibalise cinema audiences, because people who love arthouse films love cinema and that's still the best place to watch films. But not all of them are able to watch what they want in the cinema, due to the volume of films being released – so it's not about convincing them to go to the cinema but offering both.

NVdS: People really wanted to go back to the cinema but people are also used to watching films at home so, as a cinema, it could be interesting to think about offering it online as well. It's an extra service or a way of keeping audiences loyal.

FG: Many of you are standing out – all through creating events in your space, or doing less events but focusing on them more with the team. It's clear that research and data is practical in finding out what your audience want as a group but also that movie-goers are individuals.

SESSION 3 / Workshop 3 – Roadmap to recovery and renewal / Tools for building diversity and environmental sustainability

Moderated by Michael Gubbins – Partner, Sampo Media, UK

Speakers:

Metka Dariš – Exhibitor, Kinodvor, Slovenia

Mathias Holtz – Programme Producer, Folkats Hus Och Parker, Sweden

Matthias Damm – Director, Casablanca Cinema, Germany

Anne Faucon – Director, Utopia Saintes Maries, France

Olivier Douet – CEO, La Cabinerie, France

Madeleine Probst – Managing Producer, Watershed, UK

Jérémie Monmarché – Deputy Director, Cinéma Studio, France

Presentation of the Europa Cinemas charters: Metka Dariš and Mathias Holtz

The charters will be available online after the conference on the Europa Cinemas website. The two charters outline the core Europa Cinemas network member principles. They represent a coherent technical, moral, and social position. They were devised by a working group of the members for the members. The core objective is to turn words into actions. The public is becoming more and more invested in these issues and they should be taken into account for next year's Collaborate to Innovate projects.

The charters each have principles that lead to actions so that every cinema can do something, linked to the environment and gender balance and inclusion. There is a seven-step approach given to help with turning the principles into actions. Some questions include: who are we hiring and how are we recruiting? How can we create a safe space for everyone? How can we become a more socially sustainable business? How can we build a

Green programme? Support from each country is needed but everyone can start at every level. You will probably find that you are already doing something.

Matthias Damm – Director, Casablanca Cinema, Germany

Every cinema can calculate their carbon footprint. The climate crisis is real, and it will affect everybody (and every business), with new requirements by law coming. There can also be cost savings in making sustainable environmental changes. Our cinema is a tiny 1974 built theatre, with a cinema from 1976 and new management from 2009. Before we made changes, we undertook research on the topics, from resources to waste, mobility, film and culture, social, economics. My advice in creating a roadmap is to analyse, prioritise, involve your team, and ensure no greenwashing. Pay attention to the carbon footprint methodology and calculate things correctly. Follow a protocol.

Anne Faucon – Director, Utopia Saintes Maries, France

We launched a crowdfunding campaign during the pandemic to build an ecological cinema in Troyes. The cinema will open at the end of December 2022. In France, Utopia cinemas are independent and arthouse film theatres. We also want to pay attention to the environment. For the architecture of the building, we found out that all environmentally friendly options already existed: from composting toilets to the wood structure of the cinema. This strategy is atypical in our geographical area, and we had many financial problems at the beginning because no one believed in this avant-garde project, they were all laughing. But even without political/financial sponsors, I never gave up. Employing local carpenters, migrants, etc., all choices were inclusive and ecological. Some green technologies were very expensive, but others were not, and in the long term, it will be cheaper. This is the first Utopia cinema to receive so much press. It was a very difficult project, but we have positive publicity because the project is concrete. I invite you all to visit the cinema, one-and-a-half hours from Paris.

Olivier Douet – CEO, La Cabinerie, France

On the technical side of “greening the environment”, I am working with projectors. The technical aspect of the cinema is often the most expensive. Exhibitors don’t want to change or repair their device because of the cost but this presentation shows that they can simply repair things – it’s a fast and useful choice. With the increase in energy costs, I suggest repairing cinemas projectors to save money (because, for most people, the major difficulty is “how to save money”). New technologies for projectors include:

- Laser retrofit for digital projectors
- Repair of equipment
- Sale and installation of new refurbished
- All-inclusive rental of projection equipment

We must use what we already have. To retrofit laser costs approximately 60/70% less in energy costs. Repairing projectors will also improve picture and colour range. Transforming projectors is already current in Asia, now we need to do it in Europe. There are, of course, different kinds and generations of projectors but a typical repair/installation of laser kit takes approximately 4-8 hours. The technicians go directly to the cinema’s projection booth, install and remove some parts of the equipment.

Madeleine Probst – Managing Producer, Watershed, UK

Before Covid, Watershed had planned to add an extra screen, but priorities have changed. Instead of the additional screenings, we wanted to change the “energy” of the cinema, making it cosier. There is now a street accessible café, and we are working with local artists. Our aims are to bring the city together, to be socially inclusive.

The importance of slow work, and being inspired by the idea that, “What we need are economies that make us thrive, whether or not they grow.” - Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist

Training is needed for each staff member, from kitchen workers to the CEO. Everyone needs to think about the ecology and inclusivity of the organization, and they all bring different perspectives and ideas. Focuses include re-imagining recruitment to reflect the community, gender neutral toilets, and keeping the cinema socially engaged and involved. We support Black Lives Matter & many other movements.

Jérémie Monmarché – Deputy Director, Cinéma Studio, France

Our cinema is an independent arthouse cinema. We have an audience, but the public is always the same (older people, cinephiles). The challenge is to find new, more diverse audiences, focusing on inclusivity. We organized themed workshops, included more foreign films in the film programme, including for the Arab community in the neighbourhood, and are looking more at working with local associations. These changes have strengthened links between local cinemas and socio-cultural professionals. Distributors are also more interested to work with us because they are sure that we can reach a particular kind of public. We want young audiences to discover cinema not only through school. And we also have a programme called “Ticket suspend” where the audience can drop a coin into a small box to give a free ticket to someone else who is not able to afford one.

SESSION 3 / Workshop 4 – Roadmap to recovery and renewal / How to stand out from the crowd through events and experiences

Moderated by Frank Groot -Financial Director/Programmer, KINO Rotterdam, Netherlands

Speakers:

Nathanaël Karmitz – CEO, mk2 group

Züleyha Azman – Marketing Director, KINO Rotterdam, Netherlands

Jaume Ripoll – Co-founder / Head of Content & Development, Filmin, Spain

Mira Staleva – Managing Director, Dom Na Kinoto, Bulgaria

Elliott Khayat – Producer, Haut et Court, France

Stephanie Silverman – Executive Director, Belcourt Theatre, Nashville, Tennessee

FG: Standing out means standing out from other ways in which people can spend their time and money, but it might mean standing out from your own history, also; finding a new way to prove to younger or older audiences why they should come or come back. How do we as places of culture become spaces where they speak to each other at the bar? You’ll hear why our places, our stories, and events are critical, through six inspiring examples.

Nathanaël Karmitz – CEO, mk2 group

Mk2+ tries to make impossible things possible, working with brands across three areas of innovation:

- 1) Alternative programming. Under the banner of 'mk2 Institute', we organise 200 events each year, over a six-month cycle. Cinema is a way to encourage participation in public life. We have between 100-600 people attending events. Prices are higher (10-15 euros), and the events attract a new audience, both younger and older, who attend lectures/masterclasses with people like Alison Bechdel, Annie Liebowitz.
- 2) During lockdown we launched an AVOD platform, to offer intelligent, free cinema to our audience.
- 3) Social Hubs – pop-up summer cinema.

The real innovation, however, is the cinema hotel, which was launched one-and-a-half years ago. We had a 100-year-old cinema that we could renovate completely into 37 rooms. The rooms are equipped with all platforms that are available on the market – there's also the whole mk2 collection, and a weekly guide, so you don't have to spend the whole evening looking/scrolling for something to watch. The hotel was open during lockdown and was the only way you could go to the cinema. It's a different experience, designed for cinema fans, attracts local, domestic and now tourist audiences. It has Japanese sponsorship and luxury French brands sponsored our Louvre outdoor screening.

Züleyha Azman – Marketing Director, KINO Rotterdam, Netherlands

We produced a documentary, which was shown at Il Cinema Ritrovato; we have karaoke, host concerts, jazz and pizza nights, club nights during IFFR, curate our own classic programming, and make own trailers and posters as a way to stand out from the other cinemas in the city. Build a brand, and when you build a brand, you build a community.

We've been hosting events for six years and everyone knows how to make them go smoothly. Even when an event was already sold out, we still hired a photographer so that people can know what they missed and book for the future.

Jaume Ripoll – Co-founder / Head of Content & Development, Filmin, Spain

Filmin is a streaming platform that is 15 years old. Our motto is "cinema can change your life; without movie theatres the movies wouldn't be meaningful." We are a platform and distributor, and we work with festivals and cinemas. We distributed nine films during the pandemic and helped other local Spanish distributors. We have close links with movie theatres, and exclusive release of classic films/invite speakers who are not the film's writers but have something to do with the themes in the work. We had 40 movies with 8,500 admissions during the festival (at the theatre) and had additional hybrid attendance.

Mira Staleva – Managing Director, Dom Na Kinoto, Bulgaria

We operate in a slightly isolated field and host many and diverse activities including for students presenting their graduate fashion collection following the *McQueen* doc. We held a special fashion night with musicians and created it as a 'champagne event', to be an emotional experience / famous visitors – their fans follow if they come to our venue / music – to make a record bazaar. The venue has a coffee shop and also a record shop

You don't come to just consume a film, because film you can consume in your home but you come for something different – an emotional experience and somewhere you can find friendship

Elliott Khayat – Producer, Haut et Court, France

'Mieux manger au ciné' is: 'France eating better at the cinema'. Based on the finding that food and drink in the cinema is too fatty and polluting, and given contemporary health and environmental concerns we propose quieter, smell-less, no-crumbs food without losing out on taste or quality. Organic food is not sad but good in all respects. Food is also another way of attracting people to the cinema, food brings people together.

We launched a national food contest, open to chefs, to find new original products made for cinemas and awarded prizes to six products. The second aspect of the project was to create an online platform that shows the products selected and other products (awarded and not) for their quality, sustainability, environmental impact, which acts as an interface between cinemas and chefs.

It's also important for us to go local – to improve transport between cinemas and local producers. We host cooking classes and tasting sessions – partner with local farmers, so that people can leave the cinema with fruit and veg for the whole week. Some might come for food and stay for film and vice versa. We also hold screenings for children followed by a snack – we want to propose alternatives as it's especially important for them to have healthier food.

Stephanie Silverman – Executive Director, Belcourt Theatre, Nashville, Tennessee

We are a three-screen cinema and had a large renovation in 2016, re-imagining how events and experiences would be part of the architectural experience. We added a classroom and opened up the theatres so that the building was having a 'conversation with the street'. We show repertory, first run and extended experience wrap-around. '12 Hours of Terror' is a one-ticket screening of horror movies, from 10pm to 10am. We don't tell the audience what the films are, but it's a big hit every year. We have costume competitions and it all creates community as the group stay in touch throughout the year.

We have 'Queer Classics' every July, in collaboration with other programmers for wrap around events and film screenings. It's important that the voice matches the ethics of the series. In a blue city in a red state, where we experienced extreme hate when a right-wing extremist retweeted our event with the trans-activist poet Alok, it's important we stand with and behind our communities.

SESSION 4 / Panel 1 – CINEMAS AND A NEW FILM ECOSYSTEM / Cinemas in a sustainable new ecosystem

Moderated by Michael Gubbins – Partner, SampoMedia, UK

Speakers:

Juan Heras – Founder and Director, Cines van Dyck, Spain

Daniela Zuklic – Managing Director, Thalia Theater Potsdam, Germany

Laurent Dutoit – Managing Director, Les Scala, Le City, Le Nord-Sud, Switzerland

Eva Esseen Arndorff – Distributor, Triart Film, Sweden

Jon Barrenechea – VP Distribution, MUBI, UK

MG: Looking at the future of cinema and the whole value chain, how can we come together in the market we now see? 1) We need to understand what those realities are, and 2) have an assessment of relationships along the value chain, and 3) how can we work together to build audiences for the future?

Juan Heras – Founder and Director, Cines van Dyck, Spain

We had a tsunami not just a crisis, but, bit by bit, like flowers in a field, they [the audience] are popping up and showing their heads. Cultural enthusiasm is important as is cultural diversity. We've talked a lot about younger audiences but my concern/question now is how do we get the older people back to the cinema? There has been a huge wave of solidarity over the years and, in a way, this remedies this world of solitude. We are social animals, after all, and we need to be together. Some want to come back but haven't been back yet – but images, series and platforms are not cinema. People don't have time to see the films, so we must ensure films are released at a more leisurely pace.

MG: What you're saying is that 1) the space itself still matters, as a key part of the ecosystem and 2) there are simply too many films being released. What do we do about that? Promotion of the films is also broken - there's not enough information from comms and not enough time for word of mouth.

JH: The internet is for young people but paper has disappeared and it was an important link between the theatre and the public - an extension of the physical place. We need to revert to some of those practices. Time is a freedom; you choose the time, place, and who you spend that time with. A cinema should be restful. Paper is important because you take it home; it exists during the time of the cinema and is a call back of the experience when you're back home.

Daniela Zuklic – Managing Director, Thalia Theater Potsdam, Germany

We have exactly the same problems as in Spain. We learned something during the pandemic: people showed great solidarity with us, arthouse cinemas in particular - they came to see us and asked how we were doing and, when lockdown finished, they returned to the cinema. The idea is to view the events in the cinema - we're here for everybody (school children, older audiences, etc.) Too many films are released simultaneously which means we don't have time to address or target the audiences correctly. People don't have time to come see us and we can lose their trust. The cinema is a cultural venue and it needs public money to this end. Distributors themselves don't invest enough money in marketing - many invest too little in terms of energy and in time and money. We have to cover a lot of the costs required to distribute films.

MG: You're saying, "give us the money and we will turn it into building our audience rather than spending it poorly/thinly across too many films."

Laurent Dutoit – Managing Director, Les Scala, Le City, Le Nord-Sud, Switzerland

Public funding is still small and it's good to have, but it's not enough (1% of our budget); we need back up - local, national, European Commission. We are doing our best to have the best on theatrical, home entertainment, streaming, etc. The main problem online is that we still don't really have the figures. The platforms keep it secret. availability is not enough; people will not just see it because it is available. They are selling a brand and a subscription but don't really care about diversity like the cinemas do. It's about linking diverse European content and audiences.

Eva Esseen Arndorff – Distributor, Triart Film, Sweden

We started streaming in order to have films for the audience. Today, we have both the streaming service and the cinema. How do we get the older people back? There are too many films and our main job as a distributor is to see all the crap so we don't have to have it on our screens in a year. If you keep a film for more than a week then a distributor will spend more money on coming together.

MG: You're saying, "You don't have to show these films, but you need to be brave not to." What you want is it for to feel comfortable and the programme simply feels flat.

EEA: It's important to believe that we can affect some change. We are there to be brave, in a way, to give it a try.

DZ: Not all movies have to be distributed in theatres.

MG: The money has disappeared in the market (DVD, pay TV, etc.) and the money is diluted across distribution: a boom in a bust.

Jon Barrenechea – VP Distribution, MUBI, UK

MUBI is a media company not just a streamer - but we stream films. We partner with the cinemas to develop that culture and our theatrical cinephilia is bona fide.

MG: The realities it comes down to, seems to me, much clearer. We're competing with thousands of other things to do. We're trying to find an ecosystem in which audiences can connect with all these things that compete. We have to be better than ever before to compete in that world with content and ideas and we're hitting a problem, we're doing it through volume.

JB: MUBI started as an online film festival, with curation, and the key thing is that it's 'hand-picked', even now that there's a catalogue. We publish a printed magazine, two podcasts, the Notebook; the contextual information we add to the film is each product handled completely uniquely. We're not selling kilos of potatoes. Perhaps for theatrical - going to the movies is a habit. It's not like a concert which is an appointment. But it's lost, just regularly going to the cinema. They're not afraid of Covid anymore, they've just lost the habit. Young people are the growth sector because they want to go out. The problem is, last time I was

here we were talking young audience development but maybe we need a new old audience development

SESSION 4 / Panel 2 – CINEMAS AND A NEW FILM ECOSYSTEM / Fighting for film: an art form with a future

Moderated by Michael Gubbins – Partner, SampoMedia, UK

Speakers:

Aurélié Pinto – Cinema Sociologist, University Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

Jan de Vries – Creative Director/Programmer, KINO Rotterdam, Netherlands

José Luis Cienfuegos – Director, Seville European Film Festival, Spain

Katarzyna Siniarska, Head of Sales, New Europe Film Sales, President of Europa International, Poland

Stefano Massanzi – Distributor, Lucky Red, Italy

Aurélié Pinto – Cinema Sociologist, University Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle, France

There is a lot of concern, shared by distributors and exhibitors and a drop in figures, owing to the health crisis. People have taken up subscriptions to streaming platforms, but there was still a lot of support for cinemas during the health crisis here in France. US blockbusters and French comedies are part of the 40 films of the year taking 50% of all cinema box office every year, even though there's around 15 films released a week.

There is an increase in the comfort of movie theatres, and a debate around what the ticket price should be. Working with young audiences and activities for schools make the spaces not just for watching the films but for those activities and for other things like a bakery, book shop, café, etc. As independent cinemas, they want to offer their audiences auteur films and to bridge the gap between Netflix and arthouse cinemas. But the middle and older ages are not going back as often - maybe occasionally – at 50% of pre-pandemic levels. Whatever the profile, people still feel that films are a greater quality than series. You take more time to choose a film than a series, and often it is therefore deemed as having greater value.

Jan de Vries – Creative Director/Programmer, KINO Rotterdam, Netherlands

Curatorship, and how you editorialise is more important than dumping content, like Netflix do, because there's an overwhelming amount of stuff to choose from, but cinemas can communicate and curate, earn trust from audience, and then lead them with your programming. People aren't going to a movie, they're going to a movie theatre; they go to a place, they don't really go to a film. But they choose you because you brand yourself, and people are desperate to belong to something and to identify with that place.

José Luis Cienfuegos – Director, Seville European Film Festival, Spain

Listening to how we can create events in the cinema – the festival is an event. We follow the opposite track, which is more important than before. We are all part of the same team, and that's what's changed. To-ing and fro-ing, we play a very relevant role in our work because we connect audiences with distributors and exhibitors. festivals are important for the

visibility of films. Exhibitors have to know the films they programme very well. In terms of comms, we're always using the same means, even if the cinema has lost % - we're all going to have to fight when it comes to communication.

MG: If we're going to fight, we've got to have the connections to do it. It's about creating connections with audience and connections with films.

JLC: Working on the film from the very beginning, festivals can be useful in that respect – for previews – it's when they [audiences] first learn about a film. It's a form of education, we need to work with schools and teachers.

Katarzyna Siniarska – Head of Sales, New Europe Film Sales, President of Europa International, Poland

There's fragmentation of the markets: communication, the ways you have to address niche audiences and across various platforms and the cycle of global premieres and when and how to talk about the films. The default strategies are harder to go to. It's more labour intensive to work on each film (eight per year), we need interviews with the filmmakers, we need talent available, need digital junkets, not to spend too much on travel and to be sustainable from an environmental POV. Not everyone wants the new 'organic wine', they just want popcorn, so there's not much middle ground between what a platform like Netflix offers. It's not quality, but maybe a prestige or heritage or different kind of experience; unique so that it stands out.

MG: There is a cinema culture; critics, food, etc., and during the pandemic parts of that infrastructure fell apart. but you're saying rebuild around what you're good at.

Stefano Massanzi – Distributor, Lucky Red, Italy

Yes, there's not enough good films. A new film means a new target audience; you have to start again. Now, platforms are using the communication of cinemas. And here are the best cinemas in Europe, so they are better than a lot of distributors and better than a lot of producers. Discoverability, it's about discovering the films - even if they are available on platforms, they are hidden. So, distributors and exhibitors need to talk and join forces to bring the audiences back. It's a mission, because the content is available everywhere. I don't totally agree that it's different content on the platforms and in the cinemas. My solution: you have to bring kids. Kids that are in school, for two-three hours a week of 'image education', and then you bring them to the cinema and then they come back. If you don't give them the education, it will be the market. The algorithm is built on something but it doesn't look like the future. They are a step ahead and have changed the way we are doing things and are using the cinema for gigantic rollercoasters and it's working. a cinema survives by doing everything/anything.

MG: The heart of this is that cinema does something different: it's a memory creation place, something you don't get from the day-to-day screen. We've got to rebuild film culture that is in tune with the world as it is now.

SESSION 5 – EUROPA CINEMAS ARTHOUSE TALES / Part 2

Moderated by Madeleine Probst – Managing Producer, Watershed, UK

Speakers:

Slobodanka Miškovič – Director, Art-Kino, Croatia

Caroline Grimault – Director, Katorza, France

Tamás Liszka – CEO, Budapest Film, Hungary

Gerardo De Vivo – Director, Modernissimo, Italy

Indre Mikelaityte – Deputy Director, Kino Romuva, Lithuania

Tom de Bont – Programmer, Heerenstraat Theater, Netherlands

Valentina Bender – Programmer, Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Sweden

Slobodanka Miškovič – Director, Art-Kino, Croatia

We are dedicated to the local film community in Rijeka. Last year we opened a children's house – an art and cultural hub for children – which is a unique project. Art-kino has 75 seats and the children's house is a legacy of Rijeka European Capital of Culture 2020. With the city library, we are trying to bring culture to children; not just to watch films but to create films and to apply the language of film art to express their own ideas. In the summer, we had events all over the city and during the pandemic we had a popular open-air cinema.

Last year, we had a programme called 'Adaptation' where we looked at literature adaptations to film. We begin with a book club, so they discuss the books, then we have the screening and moderated discussions with filmmakers and writers and at the end of the year a film/pub quiz. Our role in culture is really significant and we have to foster social connections and solidarity. Thanks to Collaborate to Innovate, we created a joint catalogue this year with a cinema in Split and Dubrovnik, including open-air screenings for students and to involve younger audiences with more interactivity (marketing, music, programming).

Caroline Grimault – Director, Katorza, France

Katorza is a cinema with six-screens in the centre of Nantes, in the former area of old cinemas. It has been around 102 years and has an amazing history. With my assistant, we decided to tell the cinema's history in a book. It was the first cinema outside of Paris to show CinemaScope movies. Festivals with special guests over 70 years has built audiences. We organised a 'no-screen' screening of a film, outside the theatre, in March 2021. We 'showed' the soundtrack of a film because we couldn't 'show' a film, and kept screenings up online.

Younger audiences are very involved, we have things like a zombie walk. Last September, we created 'What the film' - a special, extreme experience with six films in six screens, where only the person at the ticketing office decides which film the audience will go see.

Tamás Liszka – CEO, Budapest Film, Hungary

Our company goes back 70 years, and is owned by the city of Budapest, which in turn owns / used to own lots of cinemas across the city. When I grew up, and got my dream job, there were only six cinemas remaining in Budapest. What a disappointment and I wondered

where we went wrong. So, I researched the business models to learn from the mistakes of the past and build a better future. These cinemas are now banks, salsa dance clubs, cheap whiskey bars, Christian worship rooms, butcher's.

Learning from the conference, we've staged open-air screenings, created pop-ups to the point that it is now a public service, and we've extended that to the countryside as well. The audience is there, people love it. We have hot springs in Budapest and we turn the hot baths into cinemas. We recycle film posters/banners with an organisation for women that were the victims of trafficking, to turn the items into gadgets, pouches, chairs, to help the women eke out a livelihood.

Gerardo de Vivo – Director, Modernissimo, Italy

Modernissimo belongs to the Lucisano group of multiplexes. It is located in the old city of Naples and was inaugurated in 1994, a time of crisis but, in the city of Naples, we experienced a renaissance. Our strong point is our team and we have a social co-operative, young people who come for a year. We partner with Goethe Institute, a theatre in Naples (to reduce cinema and theatre prices). We organise screenings in solidarity with Ukraine for children, and we have educational programmes for school children. We work with fine arts academies and schools. We specialise in older films thanks to the Bologna film library. We also work with the Naples street art project.

Indre Mikelaityte – Deputy Director, Kino Romuva, Lithuania

It opened in April 1940 and has lived through many different periods. In 2015, the building was awarded a European cultural heritage label. In 2016, it was closed for an eight-month construction project that extended to five-and-a-half years. The entire building was renovated, with spaces suitable for dance, theatre, conferences and performances installed, including dressing rooms, a new [and transformable] chamber hall. It's the oldest cinema in Lithuania. The priority and most fast developing activity is education for children, adults and seniors. We collaborate with restaurants and festivities to bring (for example) Georgian culture through food, film and music. Our team aims to make Romuva a bold, open and cosy space for new and enthusiastic viewers.

Tom de Bont – Programmer, Heerenstraat Theater, Netherlands

We have three screens and how we stand out as a cinema is people saying, "I've had such a great night out" rather than "I've seen such a great movie", and that's because of our welcome – which we do 4,500 times a year, since 1975. We always explain something about the movie and the trailers as well as making sure people feel welcomed – the personal approach. We are also famous for our activities, which we use as a part of our marketing. We have big events and like make sure our activities help people feel at home. It's 90% of our work and maybe only 10% of our revenue, but it makes us different and personal.

We ask young researchers or professors from universities to be a guest programmer for a day, and they introduce the movie, giving a link between the film and their field of work. This means we have a room full of bright students who we hope are coming back to us.

Valentina Bender – Programmer, Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Skärisbiografen, Skärholmen, Sweden

We are a non-profit municipality cinema, have five to eight screenings a week, of which two are school screenings. We share the screening room with our theatre stage. We screen Saturday to Monday evening and the theatre have it Tuesday to Saturday afternoon. We are part of a 'culture house', with three theatres; 2-3 theatre productions every year, since 2010, and a new 'media lab', which opened in 2020. The media lab has a music studio and we teach filmmaking courses – there are editing programmes, people can sing with coaches, we lend computers and cameras. We also have creative spaces including a library and a large foyer for workshops. What's unique is that the theatre stage and cinema is all for children and youth. Our audience is five to 19-years-old always, but everyone is also welcome. Being a cinema with a culture house attached opens up lots of possibilities, meaning our projectionists are production specialists and technicians and run workshops. We have a pop-up listening lounge for radio theatre or audio documentaries.

Admissions are subsidised to approximately five to six euros for public screenings and two euros for school screenings. Popcorn is always included in the price, to encourage young audiences and families to come. The people who live in the suburb speak 92 different languages, the ticket price is very important in this area and especially for children. Our first year was focused on collaborating with a local youth organisation, who invited inspirational speakers and encouraged voting in the upcoming election, host poetry nights, etc.

We aim to expose children and youth to something new that they didn't know that they could like or that existed. We're developing our foyer to make it more interactive.

SESSION 6 – OPEN SLOT: CASE STUDIES

Moderated by Javier Pachón – Director, Cineciutat, Spain

Speakers:

Kinga Plicht – Manager, Gdynia Film Center, Poland

Mirona Radu – Manager, Peasant Museum Cinema, Romania

Anton Van Amersfoort – Programmer, MIMIK, Netherlands

Fanny Aubert Malaurie – Cinema Advisor, Institut Français, France

Cecile Becker – Communication, Public Relations & Partnerships, Cinéma Cosmos, France

Jana Trnková – Marketing, Aerofilms, Aero, Bio Oko, Czech Republic

JP: Overcome the fear or frustration of what others are doing if it seems difficult and try to be inspired or to find the tools to get one little idea and to translate that to your own context.

Kinga Plicht – Manager, Gdynia Film Center, Poland

We went outside the building – staged open air screenings and different events to try to reach every demographic. All our staff had different hobbies so we tried to bring them together – yoga with movie music, art workshops where children paint favourite film posters, cooking dishes known from the screen (in cinema café) with children, baking, etc.

We made people realise they can be a part of the cinema all year round.

Mirona Radu – Manager, Peasant Museum Cinema, Romania

Film O'clock is a film experience and is about celebrating diversity in languages and other aspects. We built Film O'clock in the pandemic, across six countries in Europe and Africa; Egypt, South Africa, Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Lithuania. In March 2023, our third edition will have Ukraine added as a participating country. We target a young audience and every screening is followed by a discussion in the cinema and online. There is a short film competition also.

Anton Van Amersfoort – Programmer, MIMIK, Netherlands

We have a new cinema which combines a new building with an old fortification. We opened in 2020 (in between lockdowns) as a merger between an arthouse cinema and a theatre. It's an open structure so you can see from one side to the other inside it. Four screening rooms, we take the Cineville pass. We have an educational department and have lots of children's screenings as well as repertory, new releases, activities and events. A bio and organic, no waste café/restaurant with lots of vegan options.

Fanny Aubert Malaurie – Cinema Advisor, Institut Français, France

Institut Français aims to promote French culture and French language worldwide. We have venues worldwide, many equipped with DCP. There are many activities including VR but cinema is a strong part of them, some of which are Europa Cinemas members. We hold open-air screenings in Morocco, where we have ten cinemas, including the travelling projector that goes to small villages. Education is a strong element of our programme and the EFF (European Film Factory) funded by European Commission, which provides support and 15 films with subtitles in nine languages and educational resources. We need to be creative to attract new audiences so we use the cinemas for new events, including Esport.

Cecile Becker – Communication, Public Relations & Partnerships, Cinéma Cosmos, France

A few weeks ago, I pitched this project for Collaborate to Innovate. The Media Lab project embodies putting the public at the centre of what happens in the city. The Media Lab is a tool to editorialise our programme, to talk about the films in the programme together with the public. The people involved with the project will become ambassadors for the cinema with their friends. We have a quarterly journal with interviews, reviews and reports, podcasts, videos, paper and social networks. Let's be open source and do things with and for the public.

Jana Trnková – Marketing, Aerofilms, Aero, Bio Oko, Czech Republic

We are four cinemas that collaborate with each other. In Prague, beer is very important so we have cafes in all our venues but the newest has the bar inside the cinema – with film and food in the cinema including breakfast and brunches, or wine tasting with French or Italian films. We have lots of events and previews, to make everything special. The programming has changed as the films that people would watch before the pandemic – 1980s B movies – are not coming back to the cinema but a younger audience is, so we are showing *Twilight*. We show retrospectives which help bring attention to the newer titles. We sometimes can

self-distribute (as we did with *The Lighthouse*) or change their distribution model (as with *Everything Everywhere All At Once*).

SESSION 7 – SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE AND NEXT STEPS

Michael Gubbins – Partner, SampoMedia, UK

Collaborate to Innovate and the two new charters were the end point that began with exhibitors in workshops and focus groups. The network has been creating something by getting together (on Zoom), fleshing things out into applications and working out how to turn concepts into activities. Putting things together gives a sense of direction, brings the family together and means we can see things from the same perspective. Europa Cinemas have provided a perfect visual metaphor this year – I can see the whole of Paris from my hotel room except for the Tour Eiffel – and we've been looking at how to navigate what's in front of you.

There is a sense of direction that came through the workshops and optimism and pessimism as a major theme. You chose to put your energy and love and passion into arthouse cinema – and we are now in, what some of us are hearing about, is an existential fight. You're optimistic and believe you can win it. If you stay in it, you're an optimist. The questions now are: What are we fighting for? Who are we fighting with? And how do we get people on our side to help us with that fight? It's not good enough that we all know it's an artform. We have to go out and sell it, and sell it to a new generation, and to keep doing it again and again.

- Dropping prices might be devaluing what we do
- We need to get young people to interact with film and see cinemas as belonging to them. The best way to get to younger audiences is to listen to them.
- Cinema as an artform, as a cultural artform, if it doesn't have meaning that can cross that cultural divide, then what is it for? We need no colour politics cinemas
- Data plus instincts and context is better than just instinct alone
- We need to see data in human terms
- Experimentation with films & venues is more likely to take place for subscribers
- People will look at VOD as a way of staying in touch with great films
- Audience engagement is not just about buying a ticket or a one-off event
- Initiatives need to be turned into everyday culture
- You must be authentic, trust, lose control and work *with* young people
- The user experience / customer journey has got to be simple and credible
- It's not about things that happen to us, it's things we can change and influence
- This isn't our artform, we are stewards of an artform that's been around a long time
- Cinema is a social space in real, living communities and you have to ensure you are connected to the full diversity of those local communities
- It's not "this belongs to us", it's "this belongs to you"
- Empowerment, partnership and collaboration

CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Nico Simon – President of Europa Cinemas, Luxembourg

The European Galaxy Quest is never give up, never surrender. I think that is very important.

Harald E. Trettenbrein – Head of MEDIA Unit, Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency

There is energy, love and passion: we have a real commitment from the network. Learning suggests we are in a golden age of choice for the viewers, which is a difficult situation for exhibitors and theatres. It's good to see in real life that the network is highly credible, it's powerful and it's support and exchange, and great ideas. You set yourself clear objectives, evaluate and re-evaluate. It's worth learning how innovation and project management works. This scheme [Europa Cinemas] is a privilege to have.

Claude-Eric Poiroux – General Director of Europa Cinemas

The network has become much younger and it is resilient.

Fatima Djoumer – Chief Operating Officer, Europa Cinemas

We have talked a lot about Collaborate to Innovate, and you will receive information for the next call for 2023. There is 1.5 million euros available for these projects and there is a whole team available to you. The next deadline is the programming report, and yesterday in the workshop on sustainability and gender balance and inclusion, there were two charters presented. You will receive the contract for 2023 with the two charters and we will ask you to commit to those with your agreements.