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青岛亚洲电影文化合作论坛
QINGDAO ASIAN FILM AND CULTURE COOPERATION FORUM

主办 .. 北京电影学院 中共青岛市委 青岛市人民政府

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UNITED POWER OF ASIAN CINEMA

Qingdao Asian Film and Culture Cooperation Forum

Deng Xiaoe, International School, Beijing Film Academy

Though it is Hollywood productions that dominate the world's screens, it's hard

ics, educators, directors, producers and film officials. They came from China (including Hong Kong and Taiwan), South Korea, Japan, India, the Philippines, Vietnam,

questions on collaborations of Asian filmmaking and film education. Many delegates came to the Forum as professional filmmakers and educators, such as South Korean



Ji Zhiwei, BFA; Don Zirpola, LMU; Caterina d'Amico, CSC; Yang Jun, Qingdao MG; Zhang Huijun, BFA; Victor Valbuena, NAP

to ignore the increasing power and influence of Asian cinema.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Chinese cinema as well as the 55th birthday of the Beijing Film Academy, the Asian Film and Culture Cooperation Forum was co-hosted by the Beijing Film Academy (BFA) and the Qingdao Municipal Government in the beautiful coastal city of Qingdao between October 16 and October 20, 2005.

Over one hundred delegates mainly from Asia-Pacific countries and regions attended the Forum, including distinguished film crit-

Australia, etc. Caterina d'Amico, President of CILECT, Don Zirpola, Vice President of CILECT and Victor Valbuena, Vice President of CILECT and Vice Chairman of CAPA were invited to the Forum as special guests from CILECT.

Apart from discussing the issues regarding Asian cinema collaboration, the Forum had a special mission: To discuss how to further the collaborations among all CAPA members. For the first time in Asia, film educators were brought together with filmmakers and critics as well as officials to share their ideas and

director Kim Sung-Soo (MUSA: The Warrior) who is also a professor of the School of Film, TV and Multimedia of the Korean National University of Arts, Filipino independent filmmaker Eduardo Lejano Jr. who is also a young professor at the University of the Philippines, Chinese directors Xie Fei (Song of Tibet) and Tian Zhuangzhuang (The Blue Kite) who are also very respected professors at the Beijing Film Academy, to name just a few.

Upon their arrival, all delegates were greeted with heart-felt applause and handshakes and were

given a brochure containing their pictures, resumes and speech outlines. This helped everybody to get to know each other even before the Forum started. At the opening ceremony on October 16, Beijing Film Academy President Professor Zhang Huijun and the Vice Mayor of the Qingdao Municipal Govern-

In recent years, Asian cinema has managed to co-exist with Hollywood blockbusters. China (including Hong Kong and Taiwan), South Korea, India and many other nations have produced a number of internationally applauded films, many of which were co-produced by several Asian countries and regions. However, as

million cars to match the box office revenue of one Hollywood blockbuster Jurassic Park, so they decided that in the 21st century, cultural development will be the key to their national power." Encouraged and supported by the government, the South Korean film industry has become full-blown.



ment Du Shicheng delivered their congratulatory speeches. Internationally renowned director Zhang Yimou was unable to attend, but he sent his best wishes to the Forum.

In order to discuss Asian filmmaking and education collaborations in greater details, the host BFA designed three panels: the film theories panel, the film production panel and the education panel. Each panel had a host and each delegate was free to choose a panel for participation. Prior to each panel discussion, there was a keynote speech session for all delegates.

the famous Taiwan film producer and critic Chiao Hsiung-ping noted at the Forum, "All Asian films are faced with two threats, one is Hollywood and the other is piracy." She also raised the question, "What is Asian cinema? What are the common grounds for Asian cinema collaboration?" The film industries in each Asian country and region vary greatly. Chiao said, "In Taiwan the market share of Chinese language films is less than 1%, the rest goes to Hollywood films. Comparatively, the South Korean government has realized that they must export 1.5

With the huge number of Korean films and TV dramas that South Korea has exported, experts predict that South Korea may become the Asian Hollywood in the near future.

Raymond Wong, a hugely respected Hong Kong comedy star and director was saluted by numerous fans at the Forum. Now chairman of Hong Kong Oriental Group, Wong has benefited greatly from collaborations among Asian countries and regions in film production. He said, "Hong Kong cinema was called the Oriental Hollywood in the 80s. There was a time when six films

were made in seven days in Hong Kong.” He pointed out that with the threat of Hollywood it was very important to have co-productions within Asia. He gave the example of *Seven Swords*, “Its box office revenue in Hong Kong was only RMB 8 million, while it made 80 million in the Chinese mainland. Directed by Hong Kong director Xu Ke, interpreted by both Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and Korean stars, composed by Japanese musicians, and post-produced in Australia and Thailand, *Seven Swords* is one of the best showcases of Asian co-productions. The film was chosen as the opening film at the Venice Film Festival this year. It showed that Europe and America have recognized the power of Asian collective efforts.”

Wang Zhongjun, co-founder of the Huayi Bros. Co. Ltd., China’s most successful private production company, is famed for his candidness and wit. As a successful film financier, he said, “In the Chinese mainland, only a film with a budget of US \$15 million has the hope of making US \$10 million at the box office.” He also noted that the only way for Chinese films to survive is to make international co-productions. He semi-jokingly told the young and unbending film director Lu Chuan that he should start making more commercial films and hiring more internationally influential stars for his future films. Wang said, “Co-productions have the advantage of sharing risks among the several parties involved. In Lu Chuan’s case, I would like to find him an investment of over 10 million yuan for his next film if he can make it an Asian co-production.”

Kim Sung-soo is one of the youngest and most successful Korean directors that have gained international recognition in recent years. He grew up watching a great number of Chinese films. His dream has come true when he made his first big-budget film, *MUSA: The Warrior in China*. He said, “China

has the most important role to play in the Asian film community. This is evidenced by such hits as *Hero*, *House of Flying Daggers*, *Seven Swords* and the more recent *Myth* and my own film *MUSA: the Warrior*.” Kim also noted that in a world where Hollywood dominates every country’s film industry, Asian cinema should first of all reflect Asian people’s emotional identities. “Some say the *Monkey King* and the *Outlaws of the Marshes* are properties of China only. That is like saying that fables belong only to Greece. Films can bring people from different races and cultures together.”

CAPA member school representative and director of the Film and Television Institute of India Mr. Tripurari Sharan was

“All Asian films are faced with two threats, one is Hollywood and the other is piracy.”

a keynote speaker at the Forum. He said, “Cultural cooperation between different countries in Asia has to be conceived and perceived within the overall context of cultural differences and the broader framework of the desirable areas/media in which cultural cooperation may be attempted.” He also focused his speech on Asian cinema in relation to the domination of Hollywood cinema across the world.

Another CAPA member school representative Eduardo Lejano talked about the resurgence of Filipino Indie filmmaking. He cited the 1st Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival in the Philippines and defined the jargon indie. He then talked about the relationship between digital video and low budget, the fact that Cinemalaya films didn’t rely on big name stars but attracted its audience by demonstrating “how fresh concepts and effective storytelling are basic tools for a truly satisfying movie experience.”

The education panel was the

most specific and best-performed one at the whole Forum. Professors, deans and directors from all CAPA member schools delivered their speeches at the panel. The theme of the panel was further collaborations among CAPA members and CAPA commitment next year. Dr. Victor Valbuena, professor in the School of Film and Media Studies at Ngee Ann Polytechnic in Singapore hosted the first session of the panel. In his speech, Dr. Valbuena talked about the possibilities, means and prospects of collaboration among Asia-Pacific Film and Television Schools. He gave several case studies of successful collaborations among film and television schools. He proposed ways of collaborations such as exchange programs which include exchange of educational materials,

exchange of student films, staff and student exchanges, co-production programs in which exchange students work together on a mini co-production film using local talents and utilizing local funding. Dr. Valbuena also stressed the importance of film festivals in showcasing outstanding student productions among member schools. He concluded, “the possibilities of collaboration among film and television schools in the Asia-Pacific Region are many and varied...the political will of heads of schools, plus a willingness to be open and flexible in dealing with the minor irritants of collaborative work can make joint initiatives come true.”

The Australian CAPA member school representatives attended the Forum as a collective group: Jennifer Sabine, Head of the Victorian College of the Arts, School of Film and Television in Melbourne, Alison Wotherspoon, Head of Screen Production of the Screen Studies Department of the Flinders University, Ian Lang, Head of the Griffith School and Graham Thorburn, Head of Film, TV & Digital Media, AFTRS. Ms. Wotherspoon proposed training for a digital future and the possibilities for creative collabora-

tion among CAPA member schools. She cited examples of Chinese and Australian post-production collaboration and proposed a new CAPA media project called Digital Kid Worlds. Mr. Graham informed delegates of the AFTRS Center for Screen Business which would be co-productions between Australia and Asian countries and suggested some specific programs. Gipsy Chang Yuk Mui, senior lecturer of the School of Film/TV of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Professor Shinken Yokokawa, Director of the College of Arts of the Nihon University and Xiang Zhongping, Director of the Television Art Department of Zhejiang Institute of Communication and Media all talked about their successful examples and difficulties in collaborating with other CILECT and CAPA member schools. Headed by Professor Tran Thanh Hiep, director of the Hanoi Academy of Theater and Cinema, the Vietnamese delegates expressed their urgent need to collaborate with other CAPA schools. They also invited everybody present to recommend professors and professionals to help their school build a stronger teaching system and curriculum. Both Caterina d'Amico and Don Zirpola were very pleased to witness such united power presented by all CAPA members.

Professor Zhong Dafeng, Dean of the International School of the Beijing Film Academy and CAPA Chairman, chaired the second session. He summarized the delegates' proposals and cited some successful examples of the Beijing Film Academy collaborations with other CILECT and CAPA member schools. He strongly supported the idea of setting up a CAPA website to facilitate communication among professors and students from all CAPA schools. He was also very keen on building a student internship system among CAPA schools. Regarding the BFA's future collaborations with other schools, Professor Zhong told the floor that the Boao Forum for Asia has sponsored the

BFA to receive two exchange students from Asia-Pacific region and BFA would create more opportunities for staff and student exchanges. He said that in the year 2006 the BFA, as chair school of CAPA, would endeavour to organize more events including student film festivals, exchange programs, BFA cinematography workshop and so on.

As Caterina d'Amico said in her congratulatory message to the Forum, "The opportunities to deepen reciprocal knowledge and awareness and the chances to study forms of cooperation are indispensable instruments to the establishment of a healthy human society." The world needs Asia, and the Asian cinema needs to unite all its nations and regions to bring to the world greater films and stronger talents.



escac



The Catalan Film and Television School

There were very few prestigious film schools in Spain when ESCAC was founded in 1995. Its curriculum and educational system were one of the strong points leading more than one thousand students to choose to study at ESCAC during these ten years.

Now, with such fierce competition in the market, ESCAC has sought its distinction and seal of excellence in its master's and graduate programmes, and the fruits are beginning to show.

For more than five years, ESCAC has offered masters and graduate programmes. These have been five years full of efforts and dedication worthy of a stage of growth. Products have been launched in view of all the market needs without turning our backs, as so often happens in the industry of specialised training.

The secret lies in continuous training of its faculty and on-going ties with the audiovisual industry. Launching new programmes leads to nothing if the needs of the market are not taken into account. Our alumni are in daily contact with us. We listen to them, we ask them questions and we see what they lack and need.

During the degree programmes, our students take all the common and speciality subjects. However, when they go out into the industry and have been working for more than two years, they realise the need for slightly more specific studies. This is where ESCAC comes into play once again, searching for differentiating, professional teachers coming 100% from the industry.

It is no easy task to find good professionals within the industry who are also good trainers, but since we are in constant contact with the industry, this proves not to be such a problem.

Every day in the productions in which we participate we observe certain people who might work for use as professional trainers. A simple CV is not enough for ESCAC



Josep Maixenchs, founder and director of ESCAC

to choose a future trainer. We like to watch them on the ground, how they work amongst themselves and how they interrelate. In this way, we avoid the future problem of choosing an unqualified trainer.

At the same time, ESCAC is the gateway to the industry for many foreign students.

The number of future professionals in the industry that come to us from the other side of the Atlantic is by no means negligible.

10 YEARS

Latin America is a good market for us. There are many students who need to complete their degree in a foreign country, and speaking the same language is really helpful.

Our department of masters and graduate programmes strives to provide a comprehensive service for students coming to Spain to study in a specialised programme.

We try to make things easy for them, to help them find education-

al grants and to give them a hand in whatever they may need. It is very important for students who are going to change their entire lives for the upcoming year to have all the information they need to come to ESCAC. We provide information on the cost of basic necessities, the lifestyle they will lead, the situation in the domestic industry and any other information they may require.



The Catalan Film and Television School

ESCAC is a private teaching centre affiliated with the University of Barcelona, teaching fiction, didocumentary, producing, editing, sound, art direction, scriptwriting and camera.

Curriculum

The programme in the advanced degree in film and audiovisuals takes four years, divided into two different cycles.

The first cycle is made up of the first and second academic years, when students take all the common obligatory subjects. This first

the audiovisual language.

second year

In this course, students are introduced to each of the professions in film making through eight theoretical-practical subjects.

The goal of the practical classes in this academic year is for students to consolidate their learning of the audiovisual language.

third and fourth years

ESCAC provides training along eight different lines of speciality designed to empower students professionally in scriptwriting, producing, directing (fiction and

rooms; screening room; and all the equipment needed to produce audiovisuals, including digital video cameras (DVCAM, Betacam, Mini DV), 35 mm cameras (Arri, Mitchel) with video assistance for fiction and animation, 16 mm and super 16 mm cameras (SR1, BL, ST, Bolex, Krasnogorsk), lighting supplies (HMI, tungsten, fluorescence), travelling, live sound supplies (DAT, mixers, wireless microphones) and all the accessories needed for electrical supplies.

The school also has its own 35 mm photography laboratory. Students benefit from agreements

The first university degree in Spain specialising in film making.

cycle is of a theoretical-practical nature, with a greater stress on theoretical than practical classes.

Starting in the second cycle, which encompasses the third and fourth academic years, students choose a speciality to focus on during their last two years of training.

The second cycle is much more practical in its approach, with fewer theoretical subjects. In the last semester of the fourth academic year, which is totally practical, students undertake their end-of-degree project.

first year

The first academic year taught at ESCAC provides new students with a common theoretical foundation. For this reason, the majority of credits correspond to general and theoretical subjects.

The goal of the practical classes in this academic year is to make students aware of

documentary), camera, art direction and editing. Through a technological, humanistic and artistic approach applied to the execution of projects in different audiovisual formats, the curricular design is assessed based on knowledge acquired, skills and creativity.

Facilities

The school has a new 5,000 m² building, totally designed and equipped for teaching and producing audiovisuals.

Students have two 300 and 140 m² sets, equipped with a hoist system and more than 50,000 watts. Other facilities and equipment include: digital post-production rooms; Combustion, AVID and Final Cut on both Mac and PC systems; linear and non-linear editing rooms; 16 mm and 35 mm Movolas; HD Protocols mixing room; digital audio post-production

with companies to fine-tune their practical training using systems such as Edit Box, Telecine Spirit, Inferno, Flame, Arrilaser 2k, Solitaire, mixing rooms with Dolby digital 5.1 matrix, SDDS, 35 mm screening rooms, etc.

The building is located on the Terrassa university campus – some 30 kms from the Catalan capital Barcelona – near colleges such as Image and Sound Engineering, Multimedia, Photography and Optics, and the new radio broadcasting complex.

Escándalo Films

ESCÁNDALO FILMS is the production company linked to ESCAC, through which the graduation projects can be produced.

Since its inception, the goal of ESCÁNDALO FILMS has been to develop productions focusing on the short format to encour-

age young creators to join the film and audiovisual industry.

Aware of the importance of public exposure for these projects in the students' training process, ESCÁNDALO FILMS coordinates the presentation of student projects at festivals, and distributes them in movie theatres, on video and television.

More than 200 national and international awards and nominations by the film academy for Goyas and Oscars attest to this young production company's success.

Escándalo Films also produces advertising spots for institutions affiliated with ESCAC as well as the school's own advertisements, from the original idea to the final edit, with all the steps carried out

by the students themselves.

With its latest spot, the school won the Silver Sun award at the prestigious advertising festival in San Sebastian in 2003.

Since 2003, Escándalo Films has produced more than forty video clips per year thanks to an agreement with ICIC (Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries)

through which Catalan music bands are subsidised so that students and alumni of ESCAC can produce their video clips.

Fernando Trueba, Julio Medem, Álex de la Iglesia, Enrique Urbizu, Javier Fesser, Cesc Gay, etc.

Given the success and growth of the project, and with the aim of opening it up more to the city of Barcelona, ESCAC was pleased to accept an invitation from El Mercat de les Flors – the prestigious centre for theatre, dance, flamenco, film and new technologies – to participate jointly in this event. Thus “Row Zero ESCAC” was born, with a capacity for 350 spectators, which is 95% filled on the average, meaning that the activity has garnered resounding success. After the film, a master class is held with the director, followed by drinks and music in the theatre's spectacular hall, sharing the spotlight with directors of such stature as Fernando León De Aranoa, Enrique Urbizu, Javier Fesser and Jaume Balaguero.



Row Zero and “Tuesdays at ESCAC”

Since 1995, ESCAC has held “Tuesdays at ESCAC”, a film event aimed initially at all students of the school. After the screening a member of the film team is invited to discuss the film with the audience. In these ten years, many media personalities have come to our cinema, including Pedro Almodóvar, Alejandro Amenábar,

Festival Base

Thanks to the experience gained by its department of exhibition and distribution, ESCAC has ventured to hold a festival of film schools every two years, with the following aims:

To provide an opportunity for new film professionals from schools all over the world to meet each other and present their works to the international audience.

To develop an audiovisual market for the schools' products.

To provide exclusive master classes by renowned creators on the world film scene.

To act as a bridge connecting students with the professional world, and as a platform for making them known and supporting their joining the market.

To show the best short films in the history of film.

R & D

ESCAC is participating in a pioneering worldwide project along with other film schools from all over the planet.

The Global Studio project, in which we are participating along with the foundation I2CAT, will make it possible to design and construct a network of environments on advanced Internet (studio, set, stage, forum...) for interactive communication based on high quality live video and audio and in landline and mobile settings on the ground for both indoors and outdoors. In short, we are helping develop a land-based and mobile HD Internet platform on a global level.



On the one hand, the standardisation of digital formats, high-definition film and the use of recording, post-production and screening formats beyond just celluloid, or in addition to it, have all been a reality for some time now. On the other hand, we are in a world that generates and demands information at increasing speeds and quantities. In order to fulfil these needs virtually all governments in the world have made or are making major investments in infrastructure. Nowadays, this infrastructure enables almost all the regions on the planet to be interconnected via fibre optic lines, and they also permit Internet hook-ups at gigabyte speeds (second generation Internet), a vast broadband network that opens a new world of possibilities.

It is also clear that the new strategies of developing and distributing contents necessarily go through network of networks. The music market is the proof that it is feasible to use the web to reach the potential audience and compete with the traditional market in terms of costs and benefits.

These considerations are not merely a theoretical framework, but are now a proven reality which make possible events such as HD opera broadcasts at 1.5 Gbps and screening them in a movie theatre, as well as holding high-quality video conferences over IP networks or broadcasting different types of contents according to the possibilities or needs of each hook-up. All of these experiences have already been accomplished, and the technology needed to do them is now within the reach of the immense majority of our institutions.

Cinema on high-speed Internet

START HERE

At film schools all over the world, we are specialists in creating contents and in training those who fill the world with contents. The exchange of productions amongst our institutions is ongoing via festivals. The trainers are in constant transit between institutions to share knowledge, and the student teams hold frequent exchanges within their training process.

We now have the chance to take the initiative in using the technical possibilities within our reach.

The current level of technical development of second generation Internet and the existing infrastructure enable us to take a step forward in establishing collaborative relationships amongst the different institutions.

Creating a stable connection network amongst many different film schools which would make it possible to view and/or exchange contents in real time and high definition.

Holding shared classes through video conferencing over IP networks, also in high definition.

The possibility of undertaking shared projects without the need for all the participants to be physically present in the same place, and without the limitations of capacity and time that current conventional Internet speeds and the physical transport of material require

ESCAC is part of a second generation Internet development group that encompasses institutions and universities in the city of Terrassa (Barcelona). Along with the Foundation I2CAT we have taken part in a variety of content broadcasting experiences.

(Continued on p. 13)

MY DINNERS WITH REINHARD

(on the occasion of his retirement)

dick ross

I have many reasons for gratitude whenever I reflect on the visits I made to the Berlin school in the 1990s.

Every so often, the school had a tendency to move to a different building. For me this meant an invigorating change of hotels and apartments, and of course, locations to explore. Over the years the student selection process seemed to evolve or refine itself so that I was able to work with an increasingly sophisticated intake of young people embarking on three or four years of challenging evolution into film makers. But most importantly, I was able to renew my friendship with Reinhard Hauff, the master puppeteer of the whole experience.

I am sure that the book of which this little memoir will be part is awash with complimentary recollections by sober-minded colleagues, who will forget to remind him of his first contribution to film education in Berlin – the creation of a cafeteria that actually offered edible food – even if he had to cook it himself. Of course I know that twelve years down the line, there are more impressive innovations to be savoured than schnitzel or salad. But like an army, a school marches on its stomach so lest we forget, I note it here.

And talking about food, my contribution here reflects on a more private side of Reinhard, which tended to come to the fore between six and seven thirty in the evening. I thought of it as a sort of cerebral aperitif, and even now I miss it greatly.

When my workshops with the students were over for the day,

I liked to stroll across to a fish and wine bar that owed its décor theme to the island of Sylt. Often I was savouring a herring or two and a glass of Chablis, both of which are noted for their powers of restoration, when Reinhard would appear.

For a start we would not have much to say to each other. He asked no questions, and I had no answers.

Then he would say: Don't look now, but there is that woman

again. Just there, to your left.

Of course, when one is told not to look in any particular direction one does so immediately. The woman was elderly, wearing dark glasses of a style long out of fashion, and a fur coat that reminded me of a cat my aunt used to own before she ran it over in her little Austin Seven car. The woman was concentrating on her fish platter, pausing only to sip her beer. She dabbed at her froth moustache with a small napkin. Reinhard sighed. I raised an eyebrow in query.

"So brave. First her husband, you know, the engineer, then her son..." Reinhard's voice trailed away into discreet silence. He sipped his Chablis.

"What happened?"

"The husband was quite well known before..." Reinhard moved his chair a little closer. He glanced around, as if afraid to be overheard. "He was an engineer, but had no head for business. He invested heavily in a car that was



Reinhard Hauff, past director of DFFB, Berlin

supposed to run on a milk derivative. Of course it was nonsense, but he fell for it. It was a way out. He could see it coming..."

Reinhard had a maddening habit of stopping just at the crucial moment. He collected another pair of Chablis and returned to our table. He seemed to have forgotten his family saga.

"Go on," I prompted.

"Oh, yes. His son. He was supposed to be a philosophy student, but he was dodging classes to learn Japanese flower arranging. It nearly killed his father. He was a freemason, and you can imagine how they would react..."

By now, I could imagine anything – or everything. I glanced across to the old lady. She had

finished her platter and was examining her teeth in a small silver mirror. She took off her dark glasses. Just then, a young man entered the bar. He was carrying a small bunch of roses.

“Watch this,” said Reinhard. The young man walked to another table, presented his bouquet to a pretty girl, and sat down.

“Damn, “ said Reinhard.

Of course life is never so neat. It lacks the sense of completion always found in fiction.

Now it was my turn.

“See those two men over there? Talking on mobile phones. They had a terrible row two years ago and swore never to speak to each other again – at least publicly. But they are partners in business and can’t afford to split up...”

And so it went on. Turn and turn about, we chose totally ordinary people, and for a few minutes placed them in our own private spotlight. There were no rules to the game, and no winners. But I would rate those evenings as some of the most enjoyable I have ever spent.

Reinhard has a rare talent to slip the chains that fetter the imagination and he delights in the result. He wanted this experience for all his students too. Many preferred to accept the leash and to trot along in the mainstream. But I know there were also many across these twelve years who learned to look, to think, and to create original and moving work because above all else Reinhard, as their mentor, encouraged them to rattle their own personal chains.

Dick Ross
Provence, France
April 2005

(continued from p. 10)

We are currently working on a joint educational experience with the film school at the University of Sao Paulo.

Our wish is to encourage all the schools to join this type of project in order to create a stable network of interconnection between film schools that will make it possible to exchange contents, experiences and knowledge simply and rapidly.



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Film and Audiovisual School of Higher Education
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The AFDA Master of Fine Arts Johannesburg

In a Harvard Research paper February 2004, titled, the MFA is the new MBA, it is has been found that American companies are more and more frequently having to hire MFA graduates to ensure that they are able to differentiate their products in the market- this is due to the accessibility of information and technology, no longer can these companies hire more traditional professionals to make their products emotionally compelling, this after all is the province of the artist, people like many of you sitting here today.

The MFA has taken up a new position in business, and is considered as a minimum standard for anyone wishing to rise to the top of their particular creative profession. Countries like Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Finland are placing America's domination of ingenuity and innovation under serious threat. This has come about through heavy and focused investment in the development and training of intellectual capital in the creative fields, leading them to turn out stellar products like Nokia, Lord of the Rings, the Sydney Olympics, and in the process, have begun to break the stranglehold of the American Goliath on world markets.

I believe that South Africa ranks amongst these David-like countries in terms of developing our creative industries. The combination of our previously untapped human potential and cultural diversity is key to us breaking the foreign cultural stranglehold on our audiences.

Good morning and welcome to the official announcement of the

newly accredited two year part-time Master of Fine Arts degree for feature length film production. My congratulations to the master mind behind the MFA Bata Passchier and Anton Basson and the team that made this dream of a MFA degree a reality. This is no small feat, and ranks up there as one of our proudest and more remarkable achievements. I believe that in years to come, we will look back at today and be able to clearly plot one of the key contributing strategies in the creation of a sustainable, profitable and most important of all, representative local feature film industry that competes in the global arena.

Most importantly, local and representative, for without a representative intellectual capital task force equipped with the relevant skills to research and expropriate our rich cultural diversity, we would continue to remain the industry that we became under the Apartheid regime- elitist, isolated, insecure, fenced off, stagnant and hopelessly out of touch with our broader local audience.

Providing facilitation to foreign media houses and productions may well stimulate the industry, but it is a well documented fact, as in the case of Australia and Italy, that facilitation does not grow the local film industry- and that in the long term created a decline in the number of local productions- When last can you say that you saw a whole batch of great Aussie or Italian films. Facilitation certainly has a role to play, but we should not allow it to distract us from the core business of local manufacture- why should foreign companies have a stranglehold on 99% of the 500 million cinema ex-

hibition rands spent in this country.

We have a responsibility to ensure that we develop the intellectual capital task force to capture this market and more- after all, very little is known about the broader local audience. Yes, there have been various attempts by local exhibition companies to establish what this market is all about, but to no real avail. Part of the problem I believe is that you cannot successfully develop a market without developing the product alongside it, and visa versa.

The Master of Fine arts course is designed to mimic the traditional research and development process utilized by most markets for the development of products and markets. In our case the brand is our culture, the delivery mechanism feature film and the market our 45 million South African citizens. We as South Africans are in a unique position in that we have been given the opportunity to start all over again, and part of this starting all over again is about integration, transformation, about the getting to know who we are, what drives us as a nation, what we truly look and sound like and ultimately what makes us unique to the rest of the world. This we can only find out from our local audiences.

It makes perfect and logical sense that if we wish to create South African cultural products for export, then we had better understand and know who we are as a nation. It is evident that South African filmmakers, bar the Leon Schuster's of the world, continue to make films for themselves, with very little consideration for the audience. It is critical that we as film-makers and artists, discover and research who we are, and in the process, lead

transformation in this country, that we stop talking about change and genuinely go about formulating a strategy to create popular cinema for the people, by the people.

This is going to take the passion, work ethic, integrity and self discipline of a group of very special people- a group that will pioneer popular cinema in South Africa- a group that we will refer to as the dream team.

The MFA has been designed to assemble and develop two representative "Dream Teams," many of which are sitting here today, the key conceptual thinkers to carry out this task, and in so doing plot the way forward for the expropriation of our cultural gold and to create a new leadership for the South African film industry.

The two Dream Teams are a representative group of writers, directors, producers, editors, animators, sound and production designers, cinematographers, bankers, lawyers, accountants, marketing and financial specialists, grouped into a formal and structured part-time evenings environment devoted to creating cultural relevant narrative concepts for development, production and exhibition for a specified and researched audience or market.

The program is designed to yield two feature films per year, each film tested and measured against the market that has been targeted and developed for the film- In so doing we will create a new model for manufacturing popular cinema in South Africa. By 2007, we intend to have the Cape Town Masters up and running, giving us four feature films per year. The program is part-time, evenings only, with a 6 week shooting window that allows you structure and to continue with your current employment and film production activities, much like the business school MBA model, except that you are doing what is today

considered to be the new MBA.

Its about a plan, its about structure, its about rolling up our sleeves and putting in the extra work, its about measurement and exactness, its about us constantly developing and improving ourselves, its about your organization supporting and funding the productions and bursaries for students to attend the MFA, its about committing yourself to the social and economic transformation of this country, its about cultural enlightenment, about being proud to be a South African, and in the process, about being part of the creation of a novel and new national identity and voice in our cinema that constantly seeks out approval from our number one customer, the potential 45 million South African audience.

OUTLINE OF THE MFA PROGRAMME.

The formulation and design of the AFDA program is based on creating a research, development and manufacture environment for popular cinema for the previously disadvantaged and untapped potential broader local audiences of Southern Africa. The curriculum is focused on encoding and the construction of a production model as opposed to only utilizing the traditional the critical analysis methodologies and decoding of entertainment products. Screenplays and films will be analysed with the focus on "what entertains an audience". The aim of the MFA is to research and determine the answer to this question.

The decoding of narratives , their histories, innovations and variations will be further utilized to enable graduates with the origination of conceptually relevant narratives and create structures, environments and data for creating narrative designs for motion picture medium and its local markets. This we believe will ensure that the axiom of having to understand and

conquer your local market, is critical to the global success of the film.

The microscopic, neuro-scientific and evolutionary nature of storytelling and its symmetry with the research and development of potential market segmentation is the key to the course . For this reason it is important for all learners on the MFA to understand the ETB (the explosive theme bundling) process for narrative development and manufacture in Motion picture medium and that they can be actively involved in the narrative and screenplay activities and writing.

The first quarter will examine market and narrative analysis, film fundamentals in narrative, aesthetics, performance, control (management and commerce) and the actual medium, of filmmaking. These will be blended with certain competency drills and assessments in the various disciplines/electives, namely, directing, producing, cinematography, editing, animation, effects, sound and production design.

All learners, irrespective of their discipline specialization, return from the two month break with a ninety page screenplay. The group will be divided into two self reflective and inter-reflective teams, which over a period will determine through subjective assessment, which of the two narratives will be most successful in the local market place. Various screenplay activities like comparing the ETB structures in three similar screenplays and seeking out parallels between their narrative and others will be utilised and analysed for their market impact.

Once the two narratives have been chosen, 6 months of screenplay refinement follow. This will be augmented with screenplay lectures, further discipline lectures, discipline workshops and pre-production. Various test results and assessments of the disciplines and the market are conducted in this

period, which also includes formal pre-production on the films and the development of budgets and treatments. The lectures in specific disciplines will be conducted in such a way that they interrogate the manner in which each discipline is used to tell the story.

This is followed by principal photography and early contingency requirements of the production and the viewing of dailies and rushes. Post production follows as well as the completion of the MFA theses in each particular discipline. The thesis from each discipline must deliver research and evidence on how their contribution of their discipline contributes to the creation of the production. It must also be accountable for its audience research and hypothesis for the market.

Various test audiences will be engaged for analysis and research, and the adjustments effected in post production or contingency, budget allowing. The entire group works on the marketing strategy and campaign, which focuses on why the film will sell and its appeal in the market place. Further research into their contribution to the development and capturing of a market is undertaken during the post production phase.

The final measurement and test against the target market takes place with early exhibition of the film. The subsequent analysis, evidence and results are factored into the thesis document, with recommendations and advice for the next group of MFA students. Critical analysis and conclusions based on audience responses and analysis are made available to the public.

NOTES and the TIMETABLE.

The MFA is a recognized post graduate degree course that runs over two years in the evenings and is designed to yield two 'popular cinema' narratives that will develop, produce, market and

exhibit two feature films for South African audiences. The emphasis is on local audience needs and requirements first and foremost.

The formal lecture and workshop programme runs on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 17h30- 20h30.

The first year is dedicated to the development of a screenplay in relationship to audience research and reach. This applies to all master students, irrespective of personal discipline focus.

During the course of the year this is narrowed down to what the two eventual production groups deem to be the film productions that will be most successful in the market place.

The discipline focus for each student will be finally determined by their experience and the assessment of their successful inputs into the project.

The lecturing staff will be drawn from senior AFDA lecturing staff, specialist lecturers from commerce, the humanities, arts and the film industry.

The cost of the two year course is R80 000.00 This includes the R10 000. 00 registration fee.

The films will be funded by AFDA, where a minimum budget of 2.500.000 will be made available for each production's costs. Copyright ad ownership of the film will belong to AFDA and the investors of the MFA project.

In the event of a film making a profit, all funds will be recycled back into the MFA production fund.

Phase one. Eight weeks, 10th October 2005-1st December 2005.

Fundamentals in Narrative, Control, Performance, Medium and Aesthetics.

Core course focus- screenwriting in relation to PSPO technology and audience research.

Phase two: Ten weeks. 31st January 2006-5th April 2006.

Fundamentals in Narrative, Control, Medium, Aesthetics, Performance and Medium.

Core discipline focus-screenwriting, directing, cinematography, producing, Editing, sound and production design, special effects and animation. The Assist programme.

Phase Three. Eight weeks. 2nd May 2006- 22nd June 2006.

Fundamentals in Narrative, Medium, Control, Performance, Aesthetics.

Core course focus- screenwriting, directing, cinematography, producing, Editing, sound and production design, special effects and animation.

Phase Four: Eight weeks. 10th October 2006-30th January 2007.

VALA preparation and presentation. Amendments.; VALA Production.

Phase Five Ten weeks. December 2006- 16th February 2007.

Principal Photography.

Phase Six. Eight weeks. 12th February 2007-4th April 2007.

Rushes Viewing and critique.

Post production.

Sound track presentation.

Audience research with each discipline.

First cut viewing.

Publicity materials.

Phase Seven. Eight weeks. 8th May 2007-28th June 2007.

Second cut viewing.

Core discipline focus: producing- distribution, exhibition, audience response.

Sound track presentation.

Third cut viewing.

Audience response.

Promotional material.

Final cut.

Phase Eight. Eight weeks. 6th August 2007-28th October 2007.

Final presentation.

Audience research workshops.

Distribution plan.

Presentation to VALA.

Public screening.

Thesis hand in.



The Song Remains the Same

THE STRUGGLE FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN FILM AUDIENCE 1960-2005

MP Botha

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The years 1959 to 1980 had been characterised by an artistic revival in filmmaking throughout the world, ranging from exciting political films in Africa and Latin America to examples of great art cinema in Europe and Asia. National cinemas emerged in Australia, West Germany, Iceland and New Zealand. In 1977 Iceland, for example, was nearly invisible on the map of world cinema. Few films were made there, but since the establishment of a national film commission similar to our NFVF (National Film and Video Foundation) an independent cinema emerged. Following the establishment of the New Zealand Film Commission in 1978 19 features were made over a period of five years, almost double the number for the previous eighty years.

Unfortunately, due to moral and political censorship, a severe lack of audience development and inadequate film distribution, South Africans and thus local filmmakers were not exposed to these remarkable developments in world cinema.

1.1 Afrikaans language films

Since 1956 and the introduction of a regulated subsidy system, the Nationalist government and big business collaborated to manipulate local filmmaking. Ideology and

capital came together to create a national cinema that would reflect South Africa during the Verwoerdian regime of the 1960s. However, it was initially a cinema for whites only, and predominantly Afrikaans (Botha & Van Aswegen 1992).

Of the 60 films made between 1956 and 1962, 43 were in Afri-

ABSTRACT The author aims to discuss the historical process which led to the fragmented nature of film audiences in South Africa presently. He examines the current status of film audiences and stresses the importance of audience development as an important option for the commercial growth of the South African film industry.

films than for English productions. It was therefore evident that the Verwoerdian government realised the potential influence this Afrikaner-dominated industry would have on the growth and spread of the Afrikaans language.

Since 1962, Afrikaner capital became a significant factor in the film industry when the insurance company SANLAM acquired a major interest in Ster-films, a distribution company with the explicit intention to provide cinema predominantly for Afrikaner patrons. By 1969, Satbel (the Suid-Afrikaanse Teaterbelange Beperk) was formed, and the financing, production and distribution of films in South Africa were now virtually in the hands of one large company (except for a few cinemas owned by CIC-Warner) (see Shepperson & Tomaselli 2002).

The white Afrikaans audience for the local cinema was relatively large and very stable, guaranteeing nearly every Afrikaans film a long enough run to break even as long as it provided light entertainment,



kaans. Four were bilingual and the remaining 13 were English. This subsidy system only rewarded box-office success. Once a film had earned a specific amount of money at the box-office, did it qualified for the subsidy, which paid back a percentage of costs. This percentage was initially higher for Afrikaans

basically escapism, and dealt in an idealist way with Afrikaner reality and beliefs (Botha & Van Aswegen 1992). It meant that Afrikaners wanted their ideals visualised in these films. This idealistic conservatism was characterised by an attachment to the past, to ideals of linguistic and racial purity and to religious and moral norms (Botha & Van Aswegen 1992).

Sadly, severe moral censorship in the 1960s and 1970s prevented South Africans from viewing the international landmarks such as Fellini's *Satyricon*, Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* and 1900, Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* and many other films, which at that critical stage would have challenged our conceptions of sexuality, politics, race and aesthetics.

Most Afrikaans films ignored the socio-political turmoil of the period, as well as the realities experienced by black South Africans. Most Afrikaans films communicated by means of obsolete symbols that had little multicultural communication value. They painted a one-sided and stereotypical portrait of the Afrikaner, leading to a misconception about who and what the Afrikaner was. Furthermore, the negative portrayal of blacks as a servant class in these films is a visual symbol of the deep-seated apartheid ideology.

Attempts by directors to challenge the stereotypes of Afrikaners met with box office disaster. A very appropriate case study on *The Guest*, one of the most acclaimed local films, is provided in Keyan Tomaselli's book *The Cinema of Apartheid* (1988) By portraying one of the icons of Afrikaans poetry, Eugene Marais, as a drug addict, director Ross Devenish struggled to find an audience for his film.

1.2 A black film industry by whites

An attempt by the South African authorities to create a black film

industry under apartheid during the 1970s resulted in the making of a large number of shoddy films in ethnic languages that were screened in churches, schools and community and beer halls. It was contrary to government policy to allow black cinemas in the urban white areas, as this would concede the citizenship of urban blacks. The urbanization of blacks was portrayed in these films as uniformly negative and homeland life as more fitting.

Black and white audiences were treated differently. South African audiences were separated, each with its own set of rules and operations, films and cinemas. Any film which in any way reflected South African society in turmoil, was banned by the state, or received no distribution whatsoever, and thus did not qualify for any film subsidy. A true national film industry did not emerge through the Afrikaans and made-for-blacks films.

In sharp contrast to these movies, director Ross Devenish portrayed the realities of South African black lives in a neo-realist approach in the award-winning *Marigolds in August* (1980). Again, local audiences fed on Afrikaans soapies, stayed away and the director left South Africa to work in the United Kingdom

1.3 An alternative South African cinema

Since the late 1970s and the early 1980s, a group of film and video producers and directors who were not affiliated to the established film companies in the mainstream film industry, made films and videos about the socio-political realities of the majority of South Africans. Some of these films were shown at local film festivals. Other venues included universities, church halls, trade union offices and the private homes of interested parties. Many of the films experienced censorship problems during the

State of Emergency during the 1980s, and some were banned.

The films had small budgets and were either financed by the producers themselves, by progressive organisations (such as the International Defence and Aid Fund for South Africa for a United, Democratic, Non-racial South Africa) and overseas television stations. These films were chiefly the product of two groups that emerged jointly: a group of white university students opposed to apartheid, and black workers who yearned for a film or video using indigenous imagery that would portray their reality in South Africa and that would give them a voice and space in local films. Together with numerous documentaries, community videos and full-length films such as *Mapantsula* (dir. Oliver Schmitz, 1988), short films and animation work marked the beginning of a new, critical South African cinema.

Initially this new cinema was based on material that reflected the realities and aspirations for a democratic society of the black majority of South Africa in their aspirations, but since the early 1990s, other marginalised voices emerged in these documentaries and short films, for example those of women, gays and lesbians, and even the homeless. It is from these films and videos that the symbols and iconography of a national South African film industry can be drawn, rather than from the diversions produced by the Afrikaans cinema of the 1960s and 1970s, or the made-for-blacks cinema of the 1970s. Most of the new critical local features or short films can be described as progressive film texts, in the sense that they were consciously critical of racism, sexism or oppression. They dealt with the lives and struggle of the people in a developing country and were mostly allied with the liberation movements for a non-

racial, non-sexist South Africa.

Some of these films dealt with events which were conveniently left out of official South African history books, or were excluded from television actuality programmes under control of the Nationalist regime. Therefore, they became guardians of popular memory within the socio-political process in South Africa.

According to Keyan Tomaselli (1988:226), the years 1986-1987 can be regarded as the turning point in the South African film industry. Only then did some feature films begin to critically examine the South African milieu, apartheid and colonial history. Tomaselli calls this the new wave in the South African film industry. Martin Botha and Adri van Aswegen labelled it an alternative film revival, a cinema that gave a voice to those who were previously marginalised by apartheid (Botha & Van Aswegen 1992).

The films touched on issues of black-white conflict and friendship (Jock of the Bushveld, dir. Gray Hofmeyr and Danie Joubert, 1992), the poor treatment of black farm workers by certain farmers (Place of Weeping, dir. Darrell Roodt, 1986), the effects of war on whites ('n Wêreld sonder Grense), terrorism (City of Blood (dir. Darrell Roodt, 1983) and the trauma of racial conflict (Saturday Night at the Palace (dir. Robert Davies, 1987) (Louw & Botha 1993:167).

Approximately 944 features were made during the 1980s, as well as nearly a thousand documentaries and several hundred short films and videos (Blignaut & Botha 1992). Although most of the features were of mediocre quality, at least 20 to 30 remarkable indigenous local feature films were made. They included Mapantsula, a vivid portrayal of the State of Emergency in the late eighties; On the Wire (dir Elaine Proctor,

1990,) about the psychological scars left by the war in Namibia and Angola; The Road to Mecca (dir. Athol Fugard and Peter Goldsmid, 1992,) a film on the life of artist Helen Martins; Andrew Worsdale's Shutdown (dir. Andrew Worsdale, 1986, banned, released 1992), a political satire; the evocative Afrikaans dramas with strong female characters – Fiela se Kind (dir. Katinka Heyns, 1988,) Die Storie van Klara Viljee (dir. Katinka Heyns, 1992), and Paljas (dir. Katinka Heyns, 1998) Jobman (dir. Darrell Roodt, 1990,) a strong anti-apartheid drama set in the years after the Sharpville Massacre; and Manie van Rensburg's masterful portrayal of Afrikaner nationalism during the 1940s in The Fourth Reich (1990).

Unfortunately many of these films remain unseen by the majority of South Africans. Some were severely censored like The Stick and Shutdown. Jobman and Shutdown were never released commercially. In fact, by the end of the 1980s and early 1990s it was easier to view these films in London, Amsterdam and Paris, than in South Africa.

One should also note that cinemas were only desegregated in South Africa as late as 1985, and segregation of South African Broadcasting Corporations channels during the 1980s also led to very fragmented audiences across race and language.

Despite the lack of audience support, directors like Jans Rautenbach, Lionel Ngakane, Manie van Rensburg, Ross Devenish, Darrell Roodt and Andrew Worsdale are evidence that there is indeed great talent in the local film industry. Van Rensburg's The Native Who Caused all the Trouble and The Fourth Reich are films that built on the foundation of the post-1987 new wave.. The failure of The Fourth Reich at the South African box office, however, was a shock for

the local film industry. This impressive and entertaining saga of Afrikaner nationalism during the early 1940s cost some R16 million, (US\$ 6.2 million) raised mostly through the tax break scheme of the 1980s. The film opened with 20 prints, highly favourable reviews and a saturated media. Van Rensburg won the best director award at the South African Awards ceremony, but all these favourable variables couldn't result in box office victory for one of our best film directors.

By the beginning of the 1990s we had a fragmented film industry with fragmented audiences.

1.4 Attempts to create a national film commission

The year 1994 could be regarded as a landmark for the South African film industry due to the historic democratic elections and the birth of a post-apartheid society. A comprehensive study by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), into the restructuring of the entire South African film industry was completed and forwarded to the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (Botha et al. 1994). The HSRC research team recommended that state aid to the local film industry should be administered by a South African Film and Video Foundation (SAFVF). Commercial viability should not be the sole criterion for government support of locally made films. All types of films, including short films, should benefit, and a developmental fund should be used to support first-time filmmakers from previously marginalised communities.

It was recommended that the proposed Film and Video Foundation should support all aspects of the film industry.

Dr Ben Ngubane the South African Minister of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, formalized an

Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG), in August/September 1994, to counsel him on the formulation of policy for the newly established government. The aim of this group was to assist the Minister to affirm and promote the rich and diverse expression of South African culture, so that all citizens are guaranteed the right to practise their culture, language, beliefs and customs, as well as

head of the HSRC research study into the film industry, Martin Botha, and the film consultant to the Minister (and Chairperson). The writers proposed that the South African film and video industry be administered by a Statutory Body, the South African Film and Video Foundation (SAFVF). They felt that it was important to include "video" in the name, as it is then obvious that the

was based on box office returns, ceased to exist, and an interim film fund became in operation. Ten million rands were annually distributed among various projects, which included funding for short filmmaking. In 1998, for example, R110 000 (US\$20,000) was allocated to the development of short films and R1 010 000 (US\$185,000) for the actual production of short films. During 1999 the proposed National Film and Video Foundation



enjoying freedom of expression and creativity, as set out in the Reconstruction and Development Programme. Obviously, the film industry has a crucial role to play in the forging of social cohesion and the process of democratization and development in South Africa.

In November of 1995, four months after the final ACTAG document was published, Dr Ngubane appointed a Reference Group to write up the Film Development Strategy document. This Reference Group comprised fourteen disparate members: individuals from the film industry; academics such as Keyan Tomaselli; the

Foundation embodies that area.

One of the long-term aims of the proposed Foundation was to facilitate the placement of the South African film industry on a sound commercial footing and enable it to become internationally competitive. This would, in turn promote South Africa as a tourist attraction, and as a location for foreign film productions, and television and advertising commercials. It will also enable South African audiences to see their own stories and interpretations of experience reflected on local screens.

In March 1995, the old South African film subsidy system, which

was es-
tablished

to support the local film industry, including short filmmaking. One of the strategies of the NFVF is to develop and implement effective domestic and international marketing and distribution strategies, and to redress past imbalances in the industry by actively identifying and addressing these problems through all NFVF activities

The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology commissioned a study during 2000, which provided an overview of the current status quo of the South African film industry. The Price Wa-

Cosmic Africa

terhouse Coopers report (Nel 2000) concentrated on the core activities of film and television production across the film industry value chain. The study highlighted the areas of opportunity and growth in the South African film industry.

The results and recommenda-

annual film/television revenues. This trend is expected to continue for various reasons, including the fact that the television audience in South Africa is growing at approximately 13 % per annum (based on the free-to-air audience growth).

The most significant trends

number of documentaries, shorts and features over the past few years,

- The alignment and consolidation of the independent film production sector,
- Past and recent surges of media donor funding for the development of documentaries,



tions were presented at a special symposium. It was estimated that fewer than 15 productions companies produce more than 90 % of all feature film and television productions in South Africa, although there were more than 150 registered producers in the country. The industry was also traditionally highly dependent on the commissioning activities of SABC, the national broadcaster for the majority of production work. According to the latest research, the revenue generated from television production currently constitutes approximately 36 % of the total

shaping the South African film industry currently are:

- The emergence of black film talent. Directors such as Zola Maseko (*The Life and Times of Sara Baartman, Drum*), Ntshavheni Wa Luruli (*Chikin Biznis – The Whole Story, Zulu Love Letter*), Akin Omotoso (*God is African*), Teboho Mahlatsi (*Portrait of a Young Man Drowning*), Dumisani Phakhathi (*Christmas with Granny, Waiting for Valdez*), Riaan Hendrickse (*A Fisherman's Tale*) and Norman Maake (*Home Sweet Home*) have impressed local and international audiences with a

Jobman

- International demand for South African conservation and wildlife productions,
- Strong recent South African participation in international markets,
- The signing of co-production treaties between the NFVF and countries such as Canada, Italy and Germany, and memoranda of understanding with countries such as India and Sweden, as well as South African industry players such as pay-channel M-Net and the Media, Advertising,

Publishing, Printing and Packaging Sector Education and Training Authority (MAPPP-SETA)

- The realization and in some cases active steps towards the use of digital production formats and its applications thereof in an African setting,
- The decrease in video hire activity,
- The increase in vid-

for South African films, local filmmakers are still struggling, almost three decades after Ross Devenish's attempts, to find an audience for their work. The poor local performance of internationally acclaimed films such as *A Reasonable Man*, *Chikin Biznis – The Whole Story*, and *The Long Run* leaves one of a feeling of *déjà vu*. Recent features such as *Forgiveness*, *The Story of an African Farm*, *Yesterday* and

population of approximately 42 million people, South Africa has a tiny cinema-going audience measured at approximately 5 million persons, and a rapidly growing television audience in approximately 49% of the total number of South African households.

Several research reports and publications, from Tomaselli (1988) through Blignaut & Botha (1992) to the report on marketing



eo sell-through, and, lastly,

- A newly re-regulated broadcasting industry that still needs well defined monitoring mechanisms to drive measurements regarding local content quotas from a production point of view.

2. SOUTH AFRICAN AUDIENCES AND RECENT SOUTH AFRICAN CINEMA

Despite the establishment of the NFVF and significant positive initiatives such as the Film Resource Unit (FRU) to develop audiences

Promised Land had better results at the box-office during 2003 and 2004, but several internationally acclaimed local features haven't thus far received any theatrical release on our screens, for example, *Proteus* and *The Wooden Camera*.

A film industry, or in more ambitious terms, a national cinema, is ultimately dependent on the number of people who are willing to pay for it. Without a paying audience, whether it is cinema, television, video or new media exhibition, there can be no industry to speak of. With a total

and distribution for the 2001 Industry meeting (NFVF 2001), provided a comprehensive overview of the historical and present factors, which shaped film audiences in South Africa. Some of the most important findings and recommendations are the following:

- When comparing South Africa to developed markets we utilise research and marketing methodologies based on so-called first world models and income groups. Herein lies part of the problem when it comes to the

implementation of market development and growth strategies based on research methods not suited to the South African reality.

- Our film industry has been held to ransom for decades by the developed markets' funding and exhibition models, content and distribution strengths and the world-wide dominance of the Hollywood studios. It has been estimated that Hollywood product dominates 99% of screen time in South African cinemas. Local filmmakers have to compete with films by independent American, British and Australian filmmakers, as well as "art-house" films from Europe, the Middle East and Asia for the remaining 1%.

- One of the key problems within the local exhibition sector are the film exhibition sites that are outside the reach of the majority of South Africans, the limited concentration of theatres in metropolitan areas and the general lack of culturally specific, community based film exhibition points and product.

- Audience attendance at South African cinemas is decreasing at an alarming rate, to the extent that exhibitors have had to close down cinemas, especially in townships. Some independent cinemas in townships have been

converted to churches. Various factors contributing to this decline, including the increase in the range of entertainment media, especially a wider range of television content, door price increases, unemployment, crime, and a lack of effective marketing strategies.

- Some theatrical distributors such as UIP (United International Pictures) owned by international studios merely serve as a "courier service" between the international studios and the local exhibitors.

They do not have a quota system for local content distribution and exhibition and the rationale that informs their decision to acquire and to exhibit or NOT to acquire and exhibit product is based solely on the commercial viability of the product. Criteria used to determine viability are sometimes out of touch with South African and African realities, especially if one studies the cultural role of cinema within African communities.

- The unfair competition and massive marketing budgets of Hollywood studio backed film releases reduce the chances of South African box-office success at the cinema level. The introduction of incentivised screen quotas for domestic and African film theatric releases thus becomes a necessary intervention. France is an important example in this regard.

- Through audience development programmes South African distributors and exhibitors can ultimately create a demand for local content on the screen, video hire, video sell-through, pay TV, free TV and public broadcasters, both locally and internationally. The screening of award-winning local short films such as *The Sky in her eyes* as part of a theatrical programme by one mainstream distributor, Ster-Kinekor, should be applauded.

- The Film Resource Unit (FRU) reaches audiences of at least 300 to 500 thousand annually, free of charge. FRU plays a significant role in local film audience development.

- There is a need for aggressive marketing of South African films in people's home communities and the generation of local media enthusiasm around promotion of local product. Local film journalists and critics are to be encouraged to support local product.

- All provincial film commissions should include distribution, promotion and exhibition

initiatives in their overall development strategies, encouraging South African film festivals and retrospectives country wide and internationally. It is critical that such festivals are marketed to the people to create a high level of awareness. A festival such as Apollo plays a significant part in this regard.

- Government subsidies and lottery funds to increase mobile film units with screenings in community halls, churches and school halls, as well as opening cinemas in townships, should be considered.

Some valuable recommendations are provided in the Industry/Indaba 2001 Report on Marketing and Distribution (NFVF 2001). A strong emphasis is placed on audience development.

3. CONCLUSION

A national South African cinema of diversity should be encouraged on all levels. Film is not only for getting buttocks on seats, but more importantly, a means of self-expression by voices, which were silent during the apartheid years. Those voices could belong to blacks, women, gays and lesbians, and others, who never had the opportunity to express themselves.

One could just look at three decades of African cinema to note the role played by film in the exploration of sociopolitical issues, popular memory, modes of communication and providing a space and a voice to those, who never had the power in their representation on film. In the face of globalization South African documentaries such as *The Great Dance* and *Ochre and Water* again remind us of the dangers of disappearing cultures and communities.

If making profit is the only determining factor for the advancement of cinema, we would never had the remarkable aesthetic, social, technological and social developments

in international cinema during the past hundred years: The Soviet Cinema and German Expressionism of the 1920s, Italian neo-realism in the 1940s, the French New Wave of the sixties, the New German Cinema and the Australian New Wave of the 1970s, the 5th Generation of Chinese filmmakers who took the world by storm in the 1980s and the Dogme Movement, begun in Denmark in the 1990s.



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(Footnotes)

1 A longer version of this paper was published in *Kinema*, No 21, Spring 2004:pp 67-89.

2 Dr. Martin Botha is a corresponding member of CILECT. He is the Academic Head of the CityVarsity Film, Television and Multimedia School in Cape Town, where he also teaches international film history, as well as film theory and analysis.

3 The concept "national cinema" is a complex one. Throughout history there has been a constant interaction between social organization and culture. By definition culture is a term which refers both to material production (artifacts) and to symbolic production (The aesthetic). In both instances, culture functions as the record and reflection of social history and the social process. Concepts of nation and national identity are also bound up in this socio-cultural functioning. Susan Hayward (1993) raises important issues regarding the concept of a nation and a national cinema.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES UPDATE

Canon is the last big manufacturer that entered the low – end High Definition arena. Its camcorder XL H1 is a significant edition to the rapidly growing number of camcorders and editing systems developed for HDV as the most popular, affordable HD format. Since I believe that it could also be of interest to our members, this Update is completely dedicated to this device.

Nenad Puhovski, Chair NT Committee

Canon XL H1 and its features



Three Native 16:9 Image Sensors

XL H1 is built around a 3 CCD system with a separate native 16:9 CCDs for each primary color. With the XL H1, each 1/3" CCD has 1.67M pixels. The result is higher resolution, delivering outstanding picture quality, highly accurate color reproduction and a wide dynamic range with virtually no color noise.



20x HD Video Lens

Featuring Canon's XL lens mount, the XL H1's 20x HD lens gives you outstanding resolution, contrast, and color reproduction. What's more, the 38.9 - 778mm lens is coupled with Canon's superb Super Range Optical Image Stabilization (OIS) system. The sophisticated stabilization system corrects camera shake instantly for steady shots -- even when they're hand held at long focal lengths or taken with the camera in motion.

HD Resolution with Selectable Frame Rates

The XL H1 is capable of recording and playing back High Definition (HD) images using DV cassette tapes. It delivers 1080i HD resolution, along with selectable frame rates of 60i (or 50 fields for PAL), 30F (or 25 frames for PAL) and 24F. For high-speed subjects 30 Frame delivers spectacular clarity, 24 Frame gives the look and motion of film.



Professional JackPack

For the multi-camera shoots XL H1 is equipped with Genlock synchronization or SMPTE time code input and output. Also provided are uncompressed HD-SDI and SD-SDI output.



Total Cine Control

With the XL H1, one can control the total look of the future video by fine-tuning all important picture settings like: Gamma, Knee, Black, Master Pedestal, Setup Level, Sharpness, Horizontal Detail Frequency, Horizontal / Vertical Detail Balance, Coring, Noise Reduction, Color Matrix, Color Gain, Color Phase, Master Red Gain, Master Blue Gain, Master Green Gain, R-G Matrix, R-B Matrix, G-R Matrix, G-B Matrix, B-R Matrix, B-G Matrix.



Skin Detail

The XL H1 gives the user a great control over hue, gain, area and Y level (+/- 6 steps). During setup EVF shows a zebra pattern over masking area flashes between picture and white-mask. During setup EE and IEEE1394 out flashes between picture and zebra pattern, enabling easily smoothening out of the skin blemishes.

Combination 16:9 EVF and LCD panel

Canon XL H1's is equipped with 2.4", 16:9 Electronic Viewfinder that can work in either EVF or LCD mode, and can be adjusted left to right, and forward to backwards. Safe Area Markings (80%, 90%), Aspect Ratio Guides, B/W mode, Zebra Pattern (70 -- 100 IRE) make it easy to frame and check exposure, while Peaking and Magnifying Focus Help all assist in composing the shot and getting the proper exposure. In the extreme telephoto mode one can also utilize the Distance Readout System (in either feet or meters).



Custom Presets and Custom Keys

Using the XL H1's six custom presets and two custom keys, one can quickly and easily retrieve previously defined picture and camera settings. Six custom presets allow storing of different sets of camera adjustments. Once saved, the presets are easily retrieved for duplicating a previously defined look. Using the

SD / MultiMediaCard slot, up to 20 Custom Presets can be stored and easily transferred to another XL H1. One can even send the presets by email to another XLH1 user. With the XL H1, two custom keys can also be defined, in both camera mode and VCR mode, giving customized shooting modes that can be retrieved as needed.

Flange Back Adjustment

This adjustment is used to adjust the Flange Back of a lens mounted on the XL H1. This adjustment can be done automatically or manually by the user

Clear Scan

The XL H1's Clear Scan feature lets a user to match the scan rate of the camera to the scan rate of computer monitors, thereby eliminating the horizontal band effect from monitors included in your shot.

SMPTE Time Code and Color Bars

The XL H1 conforms to industry standards with SMPTE time code, as well as Drop, Non-Drop, Rec Run and Free Run modes. The XL H1 also generates industry standard SMPTE color bars with a 1 KHz reference tone (-12dB or -20dB) for adjustment purposes, and for setting up video and audio monitors in a variety of production and editing situations. When used as a lead-in, the bars also allow for fast hand-off in the professional broadcast and film post-production environments.

4 Channel Audio

The XL H1 provides 4 channel recording with independent control of levels for each channel. The HD camera's audio capabilities also include Locked or Unlocked in DV Recording.



Interface Connections

Canon XL H1 ensures a wide range of connections, including: BNC video, Component video, S-Video, Composite video, IEEE 1394, 2 Audio LR connections with Phantom power, Microphone terminal, Headphone terminal, LANC terminal, HD-SDI, Genlock, Time Code input and output.

The camcorder will be available in December 2005 for about \$ 9.000.



What is new in XLH1?

The Canon XL H1 does not replace the Canon XL2, which is still in production and will continue as Canon's flagship 3CCD standard definition DV camcorder. What the XL H1 represents is an entirely new market for Canon as its first high definition video camera. It provides raw, format-agnostic uncompressed HD in the 4:2:2 color space at a throughput of 1.485 Gbps over an HD-SDI (high definition serial digital interface) output. HD video from the Canon XL H1 can be externally recorded in a variety of industry formats including HDCAM, DVCPRO HD, and D5-HD. The HD-SDI output carries uncompressed video and sync data only while audio and timecode output are available through other jacks on the camera.

The Canon 30F and 24F frame rates and the technology which creates them are related in no way whatsoever to the current Sony HDV implementations known as CineFrame 30 and CineFrame 24 (which have been commonly referred to as CF30 and CF24). Instead, the Canon 30F and 24F frame rates are identical to the 30P and 24P results produced by progressive scan CCDs. The Canon XL H1 CCD block is interlace, not progressive, therefore the 30fps and 24fps frame rates cannot be referred to technically as 30P and

24P. However, 30F and 24F from the XL H1 appear identical to 30P and 24P, as they are basically the same results as progressive, but produced by different means. When the XL H1 is set to Frame recording, the CCDs are actually clocked at 24 frames per second. The video signal remains at 24fps as it is passed from the CCD block to the baseband LSI, and through the HD Codec LSI. Only when it reaches the recording output stage is it resampled to 60i via a 3:2 pull-up method. In the 1080/50i European version of the XL H1, Frame recording is available in the 25F frame rate only. Customers who buy either the 60i or 50i version of the XL H1 may opt to send their camera to Canon factory service for an upgrade to full switchability between both 60i and 50i modes.

The Canon Console

"Canon Console" is a PC-based software package which will allow control over a variety of camera features and recording operations. The software package is designed for integration into professional production studios.

Canon Console will provide control over four primary functions: image control, camera operation, video recording, and playback. The extent of manual operation that the software allows appears to be quite extensive: Gamma, Master Pedestal, Color Phase, Custom Presets and AE Metering. The frame rate of the XL HD1, which shifts between 1080i, 60i, 30F and 24F, can also be controlled remotely, along with zoom, focus, shooting mode, and frame rate. The whole communication is done via the "Fire Wire" connection.



THE ULTIMATE TEST**The Munich International Student Film Festival****25 YEARS AND STILL GOING STRONG****Dick Ross**

Please write around 1,000 words on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Munich International Student Festival.

Please put your name and number at the top of every page and write on only one side of the paper. Starting...now.

No problem. Let's see, one thousand words divided by 25? That's, er, four to every hundred and a thousand is ten hundred so that's forty words per festival. That is around three sentences for each event. No way.

So much for Plan A.

A quick re-think. Keep calm.

Plan B

Re-read the question. The letter, in which it was contained, said:

"This text is to be published in the Festschrift"...Mental note: What is a Festschrift?

*"...I remember that evening at the Hackerhaus..."*You might. I deny all knowledge. I was not there. It must have been my brother.

"...you spontaneously agreed to contribute to the volume..." If I was there, I must have been drunk. The last time I did ANYTHING spontaneously was in 1957.

"Please write something – some film (festival) history, but most of all personal experiences you may have had over the years."

MAY have had? Of course I had. One goes to a festival to have personal experiences. Pause.

That's 229 words already, without saying anything about the enormous influence this particular festival had on the course of film education globally in the last quarter of a century.. seven hundred and sixty-one words to go. Get on with it.

This year also marks my own, personal 25th anniversary in film education. I note with some cynicism that no-

body seems to be celebrating this fact.

I had been Professor of Film, Television and Animation at the Royal College of Art for only eight hours when I first met Professor Längsfeld at a CILECT reception in London. This encounter has been well documented in the official history of CILECT, so I will skip the usual comments about his jacket sleeves. I recall we called each other "professor," a title I still found a trifle embarrassing, mostly because at that time I was still spelling it with a double "f" and one "s".

The other day whilst meandering through my archives, I found a letter I received from Wolfie only a few months after we first met. It was an invitation to attend an international student film festival in Munich the following November. It was the brainchild not of CILECT nor even of Wolfie, but of a bunch of his students, led I recall by Hubertus Meyer-Burkhardt, who had complained that they saw very few films made by students from other schools. The easiest way to remedy this, they argued was to mount their own festival and bring the world to their doorstep. Wolfie, never a man to turn away a good idea, told them to go ahead.

For me, the invitation was good news and bad news. The good news was that I finally had an opportunity to visit Germany for the first time. And I was already finding my new job as head of a film school a rather lonely occupation. Perhaps out there somewhere there were kindred souls? Munich could be the answer.

The bad news was that I had to supply a 60-minute showcase of my best student films. The students I had inherited were rather limited in terms of talent. I had only one film I considered worthy of showing publicly. I added a couple of others that were so obscure

they might suggest genius or a measure of intelligence. Or perhaps they were merely obscure. I was not certain.

Armed with a pile of cans and accompanied by the only student filmmaker who wore clean shoes, we took a train to Munich.

It seemed an ideal way to travel, with all the promise of murder on the Orient Express, frontiers to cross, foreign spies and a Russian émigré countess in heavy disguise. In fact, the only memory of that journey was that my student had a savage attack of intestinal wind and we had to travel most of the way with the compartment door open.

The arrival at Munich was most satisfying. There was a television crew waiting, who turned out to be students making the festival newsreel, but it was better than nothing. I wonder what happened to those newsreels? Lost forever in the archive I suppose, but they often recorded the first public appearance of young filmmakers who have gone on to become national and international giants. I recall, at one of the earlier festivals, the camera operator was Sonke Wortmann, a student in his first weeks at the Munich school.

In those days, the festival was held in the Film Museum's cinema in St Jakob's Platz. The Munich students helped us register, and handed out festival packs with maps, guides and screening programmes. There were tickets by the dozen not just for the cinema, but also for meals and tours and civic receptions. The City of Munich had opened its doors and its collective heart to us, and we were grateful. Students were also given an envelope containing a daily allowance in deutschmarks – at that time one of the world's favourite currencies.

We shuffled forward in line to register for our goodies. For me,

it became an annual ritual.

At the beginning of the second festival in 1982 I remember the student in front of me when asked his name, replied "Trier. Lars von Trier." I suppose it was the "von" that did it, because the student registrar almost bowed. Personally, I did not think he looked like a "von" but my experience of the Almanac de Gotha and European aristocracy was rather limited. Also, the year before, I had met and became friends with Ossie von Richthoven. There was no mistaking the real thing. Ossie was Wolfie's assistant at the time and had that remarkable skill of always appearing to be in three places at the same time. He also had an impressive collection of politically incorrect jokes that sadly cannot be repeated here.

There were only two real grown-ups at the registration in 1981. Their names should be inscribed in the heavens – Gisela Hundertmark and Sylvia Wolf. Gisela was working on behalf of the City of Munich and worked tirelessly to ensure the identity of the City and of the Festival would be forever linked. I recall Sylvia at that time was collecting gas cigarette lighters, a comparatively new gadget. As she worked the room, she gave a bravura display of petty theft. She must have collected dozens, because by the end of the festival my zippo was almost the only source of fire for the many smokers.

Wolfie, who had a horror of any form of paperwork, appeared soon after registration and dazzled us by recalling all our names. He also hi-jacked all the praise for the smooth efficiency of his student team.

Within ten minutes of arriving he swept all the school directors off to a nearby bar for a welcome drink. He bought round after round, explaining that in Munich, beer was called liquid bread, and therefore did not qualify as alcohol.

Several loaves later, I insisted on my right to actually pay for a round of drinks. Wolfie resisted, so I reminded him that we had won the war. Cool as a cucumber, he replied: "Good. That's got that out of the way. You pay." Quarter of a century on, I still use that phrase as a position of last resort when trying to argue with Wolfie. A word of warning. Don't try to use it

on him yourself. It is my copyright.

From the bar, we all moved on to a nearby restaurant known simply as The Greek. By now, the group had grown to include Finns, several Yugoslavs who even then eyed each other with caution, a couple of Swedes, one or two Belgians, assorted Germans, two Greeks and a Georgian. "I'm Georgy from Georgia." Later that evening, Georgy was to score high points for notoriety by downing a one-litre glass of red wine, followed by an impressive rendering of an operatic aria. Of course, twenty minutes later he became "emotional and confused" but nevertheless his elegant charm rarely left him.

A couple of festivals later he turned up from Tbilisi with three ancient leather suitcases. One carried the films for screening; the second, his clothes. The third remained locked until one evening, very late, he invited some festival friends to his hotel room. There were about ten of us, sharing three toothbrush glasses from the bathroom to drink the robust Georgian wine he supplied. Then he produced the third suitcase. He unlocked it carefully. Inside, exactly fitting the rectangular shape was a whole roast suckling pig. We attacked it with a plastic knife and gorged ourselves regally.

I know this trip down memory lane seems rather preoccupied with food. That is because the spirit of the festival was not only about films – and more about them later – but also and more permanently about fellowship. Abiding friendship. As the Munich Festival settled into the annual calendar of every film school in Europe and further afield, it became the key forum where teachers met, where staff and student exchanges were organised, co-productions agreed and more than one love child conceived. (The latter is merely a wild supposition in order to round out the rhythm of the sentence.)

As I write, the fog clears from memory. In my introduction, I referred to a letter inviting me to write this piece. I remember it now. It was at the last professors' dinner in 2004 at the Hackerhaus. Oh, the promises that are made at the professors' dinners! These gatherings during the festival were one of Wolfie's brightest flashes of inspiration. Actually, in his time they were lunches – long lunches – dedicated to

many speeches, exotic expressions of fraternal love and devotion, and a lot of hard talking about serious issues in our field of education. Strangely, most of the promises of co-operation made there were actually kept. And shared ideas found their way into curricula from one side of Europe to the other.

I have a somewhat truncated memory of these lunches. For nine years, I was the solo member of the pre-selection jury for the wonderful Young Talent Award. I had to see every film, so I usually had to depart from the lunch after the main course to catch the first screening of the afternoon.

There is one last memory about food at the festival. For it we have to go back to The Greek – the place on the corner of the Platz just before the Viktualienmarkt. It stayed open late every evening after the screenings ended. A hundred or more of us crowded into a space designed for forty. We drank a Greek white wine served in little copper pots that seemed fine at the time, but which produced a savage hangover. Some wit once observed that a hangover is the wrath of grapes. This wine was clearly made from the fruit of very angry vines.

Anyway, one evening during the second festival, the scene at The Greek was as usual. Suddenly the waiters appeared carrying piles of plates. The foreign students were stunned to see these young men suddenly start smashing the plates, scattering shards of china everywhere. One of my students leapt to his feet, grabbed all the plates from which we had been eating and hurled them on the floor. He moved to the next table, and several diners lost their unfinished meal as Philip, now clearly into the spirit of the event, hurled more and more fine porcelain to the floor. He had to be restrained while I explained that the plates meant for breaking were specially manufactured for the purpose. The cost of the seventeen plates he broke was added to my bill.

On that occasion, I paid up happily. I was king of the city. Our school had just won the prize for the outstanding programme of the festival. In less than two years after my first foray into the international scene with a programme of which I was ashamed, we had been honoured for the quality of our work. That is one of the huge benefits of the Festival – its standards have been

recognised around the world. For us, it quite literally saved our school.

Two months before that festival, Fassbinder had died. When the news reached our school, one of the students made a small shrine in the entrance foyer. There was a placard "RWF – Rest In Peace" and pinned to it was a single red rose. Our prize for winning the best programme at the Festival was a hat box containing the battered black fedora worn by Fassbinder on so many of his productions. Inscribed inside the brim were the signature initials "RWF". It became the school treasure, and every student director on the first day of shooting their graduation film was entitled to wear the hat. I stole it from the Royal College of Art when I left, as I knew that as time passed the memories of those glory days would be defiled. One day it will come back home to Munich.

That trophy was a gift of the Munich film community. The next year, my school was asked to supply the award for the next winner. I spent a whole year thinking about it. One evening I was having dinner in London with the Managing Director of Madame Tussaud's Museum. I mentioned my problem. I had just returned from an auction of movie memorabilia. I had placed a bid for Charlie Chaplin's famous trade mark – his cane. My offer was £10,000 below the winning bid. The Tussaud's man made an equally precious offer – a wax cast of the hand of Alfred Hitchcock. He delivered it two days before we left for Munich. It was still warm from the casting.

This tradition of the winning school providing the trophy for the next victor was typical of Wolfie's genius. It was a great way of moving a problem. The first winner of the "Best School Programme" prize in 1981 was the school of Lodz in Poland. I recall the student representative being presented with a 35mm film can containing a print of the graduation work of Wim Wenders. He said "It is an honour to receive this for our archive. To be really honest, we would rather have had a kilo of potatoes." There spoke a pragmatist in the tough days of the early 80s.

Across the years, the festival grew and moved to larger venues to accommodate representation from the rash

of new schools appearing not only in Germany but also elsewhere across Europe. The organisational structure also had to grow. It outgrew the original concept of a student-led event. They had wanted to see more films from their colleagues around the world. Their ambition was fully realised.

In fact, the festival was regularly voted the outstanding event of the year in the CILECT Directory of Festivals open to student filmmakers world-wide. This was not a hollow honour. CILECT gave its wholehearted support to the event, donating an annual prize which gave the winner further access to other festivals.

There was a time when CILECT had had its own biennial festival – at Karlovy Vary, which continued until the end of the 1980s. But Munich outshone it, and the Czech event faded. CILECT's recognition of the Munich event was a tremendous coup for Wolfie and his students. Now of course there is a bewildering variety of short film festivals – Tampere, Poitiers, Tel Aviv, Illumination in Helsinki, and so on. But the daddy of them all remains Munich.

Buyers from European television companies also came to Munich, not just looking for outstanding productions, but also to snap up the prodigious talent of the student writers and directors. Leader of the pack was Renee Goddard, representing Britain's Channel Four, the first television company outside Germany to recognise the significance of the festival. In its second year, I recall her diminutive, slightly regal presence on the final day. She had winged in at the last moment to present the Channel Four Prize – the purchase of an outstanding film for broadcast. She spoke with great authority about the quality of the films (which she had not seen) and then announced the winner. He was Lars von Trier with his graduation film "Images of Liberation". Its screening had polarised the audience. The post-screening interval between programmes was a time of shouting, outrage, dazzlement, and much shoving and pushing. Was it genius or blasphemy? Lars stood by, aloof and smiling. As he has done so ever since.

The crucial fact is that the Munich Festival is not just an annual showcase

of young talent. It is also a very public statement of the state of (mainly) European cinema of the future. There is hardly a director of note under the age of 45 who did not see his or her work premiered at the festival. Alongside Lars von Trier, there were others – Peter Cattaneo (The Full Monty), Mitko Panov with his miraculous "With Hands Up", Sonke Wortman (who completed his education at the Royal College of Art in a student exchange agreed at the 1986 Munich Festival), Rainer Kaufmann, Detliv Buck, the animator Nick Park, whose first Wallace and Grommit film gave a catch phrase to one festival -- "I've forgotten the crackers", Thomas Winterberg (Festen), Florian Gallenberger – and many more.

As I mentioned earlier, the festival grew larger, and as it did so, it came more and more under the umbrella of the City's International Film Festival structure. As so often happens, this new identity was embodied in one person in particular -- Marlies Messinger, probably the most efficient and friendly administrator anyone could meet. She smoothed the transition from St Jakob's Platz to the Ari Kino in the Türkenstrasse, and created a format that was to endure there for more than a decade. I suppose that things did go wrong occasionally, but we, the audience were never aware of anything less than a flawless organisation.

I have to make one exception – when a student delegate from Mexico took the stage during one screening to offer the bemused audience a very spectacular nervous collapse. Thomas Burnhauser, Wolfie's assistant at the time, led him off-screen and managed to persuade us that the young man was an over-enthusiastic performance artist who had mistimed his entrance. He spent the rest of the festival in hospital while a Munich medical team tried to discover what he had been smoking.

Another challenge for the organisers came when the Berlin Wall came down. It took Marlies and Wolfie only a few minutes to rearrange the schedule to enable us to watch history being made. Television screens gave us a live feed and minibuses took many participants to Berlin to join the celebrations. They came back heavily laden with pieces of the Wall. I have mine still.

No organisational structure can take account in advance of the unexpected. So we could only marvel at the good humour and flexibility of Marlies' team. I think mention should be made of a Viennese masochist called Marcus Murth (sp?). Actually, I do not know if he is really a masochist, but how else can one explain his many years of service as the secretary for the main jury? He was polite, diplomatic, dazzlingly efficient, and endlessly patient. The festival should award him the Grand Cross of Chivalry, or whatever the Bavarian equivalent is called. When I mentioned this to Wolfie, he told me that all Austrians were like Marcus – a fact I have never been able to disprove.

There were other “front men” on the festival team. Each year the Festival had two presenters who introduced each film and the filmmakers. Florian Gallenberger was one of the longest-serving presenters, dazzling the audience with his immaculate pronunciation of unpronounceable names, and his apparently endless supply of very smart and very expensive clothes. If his prodigious talent as a filmmaker had not intervened, he would have had a brilliant career as a TV host. His style was super-cool. Others favoured a more frenetic approach, prompting some members of the audience to wait in the foyer until they had finished their “Gee folks, aren't we having fun” banter. Of course, it was all a matter of taste. Frankly I had come to see movies, not watch tiny egos on parade. That's got that off my chest. Back to reflections about the organisation.

A key component of each festival was the presence of a guest of honour and a celebrated member of the global film making community to fill the role of president of the main jury. Wolfie spent months each year in search of the great and the good. I was often consulted as a last desperate measure. Between us we secured Alan Parker one year, Bud Schulberg another year. In his speech at the closing ceremony, Alan Parker thanked Wolfie -- and me -- for giving him the opportunity to sit in a darkened cinema for six days watching 173 student movies. Bud Schulberg obviously felt a similar reaction. He went straight from the festival to hospital suffering from internal bleeding. I was glad I had asked him

to sign a copy of the scenario of “On the Waterfront” on the opening night.

Another memorable jury president was Julius Epstein, whose screenwriting credits included “Casablanca”. He was 84 years old when he left the perpetual warmth of California for a Munich autumn. He came straight from the plane to a welcome lunch at a restaurant specialising in traditional Bavarian fare not far from the Arri Kino. There was no mistaking him as he walked into the restaurant. He was short and bald with a west-coast tan the colour of a polished walnut. He was wearing a camelhair overcoat with a tie belt. It was a style that was last in fashion in the 1930s and made him look like a retired boxing promoter. As he walked towards us, he was preceded by a pronounced smell of moth balls. He was not the least bit embarrassed. “I haven't worn an overcoat for forty years,” he explained. “I found it in the attic”.

The ten of us at the table had already selected our choice from the menu – ranging from wild duck to roast piglet. A team of waiters chose this moment to arrive with jumbo-sized plates piled high with meat oozing succulent juices and fat. Julius' eyes misted over. “I haven't seen food like that for fifty years,” he murmured. Wolfie handed him the menu. Before he could open it, Mrs Epstein intervened. “Lightly grilled fish. And a side salad. No fat, no oil, just a squeeze of lemon juice. And the same for me.”

Wolfie explained that this was Bavaria. But Mrs Epstein stuck to her choice. It appeared that Julius was something of a walking miracle. Across the years he had spent a fortune having most of his insides removed. Mrs Epstein gave us the gory medical details as we ate. Fortunately, the chef found a couple of salmon fillets, and delivered them exactly to order. Julius pushed it around his plate for a while, then settled to watch us demolish our meal. I could hear his taste buds squirting. Mrs Epstein, on the other hand, felt it would only be polite to try “a little taste” from each of our plates. She ate more than most of us.

Later in the week, Wolfie and Julius were flown from Munich to Hamburg (or was it Cologne?) to attend a special screening of a new print of Casablanca to mark the fiftieth anniversary of its

premiere. They flew in a private jet, and on the flight Julius consumed two plates of roast beef sandwiches and several glasses of schnapps. California was a long way away.

Mrs Epstein spent much of her time exploring her family tree, with the patient help of her Munich City hosts. They even traced a cousin still living outside the city. Mrs Epstein was overjoyed, and for a time forgot to monitor Julius' gastronomic adventures. They both went home happy.

Finally, I should add a personal note. For each of ten years at the Festival, I delivered a lecture exploring aspects of storytelling. For the three months before each festival, I cursed Wolfie as I wrote draft after draft of lecture notes. I forced myself to make an order out of my random ideas. The annual task helped me clarify the many aspects of my craft I had learned across the years I spent working with students from many countries. I still have the texts, and planned to assemble them into a book one day. Of course that day has never come, but the challenge and the pleasure of facing an appreciative audience has stayed with me.

You will have noted that I have managed to travel back across the twenty-five years of the festival with barely a mention of the films that were the event's *raison d'être*. The Munich Festival made – or broke – the reputation of many schools. It was the most influential showcase for their student productions, and great care was taken over the selection of each programme. Someone once wrote about “the collective genius” of the audience. I used to reflect on this as I fought my way into any screening where the work from Denmark, Poland, Sweden, Berlin, Jerusalem and a handful of other schools was being shown. We saw the best of the best, and we hailed the individual talents of many young students who have since confirmed our judgement by become the leaders of film making in their home countries. Recently, I was commissioned to compile a collection of twenty-five classic European short films of the last 25 years. It was an easy task. I had saved all the Munich catalogues. The films were all there.

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