

# SETTING UP A HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

A HANDBOOK FOR FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS  
INCLUDING CASE STUDIES  
OF PROMINENT HUMAN RIGHTS EVENTS

Edited by the One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival

SETTING UP  
A HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
FILM  
FESTIVAL

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**ONE WORLD**  
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL **09**  
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## **SETTING UP A HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL**

A handbook for festival organizers including case studies of prominent human rights events

Edited by Tereza Porybná  
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Trust for Civil Society  
in Central and Eastern Europe

# ONE WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL: A FESTIVAL THAT IS NOT JUST ABOUT FILMS

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Established in 1999 by Czech NGO People in Need, the One World International Human Rights Film Festival takes place annually in Prague and 28 other Czech towns and cities under the auspices of former president Vaclav Havel. During the last edition, the festival presented 130 films and welcomed 100,000 viewers. It hosts three international juries, numerous filmmakers and human rights activists.

One World seeks to contribute to the public discussion about the role that the Czech citizen and the Czech Republic can and should have in a globally interconnected world and in the world in which we live. Primarily One World addresses young people, grammar and secondary school students and, through films and discussions, tries to present a collection of values on which a free and democratic society is based. The festival inspires and strengthens those who believe that personal civic engagement can bring about a true and positive change.

The program of the festival includes the highest quality documentary films that were completed in the previous year and received awards at prestigious international festivals, as well as investigative and activist films, which draw attention to the most serious problems and violations of human rights.

One World is also a year-long education platform. Special screenings for schools take place during the festival, accompanied by a talk

with a special guest. As part of the One World in Schools education project, we provide schools with sets of documentary films and accompanying teaching materials, which help educators to incorporate the subject of human rights, development assistance and other themes into their lessons. More than 2,600 schools in the Czech Republic are working with One World in Schools materials. Favorable responses have been received from students, teachers and specialists, which confirms the extraordinary potential of documentary films for the education of young people.

Through the longstanding **One World Tour** project, One World has also proven its worth as a yearlong institution that actively supports the establishment of human rights festivals abroad. It now has "sister" film festivals, which are regularly held in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Hungary, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Serbia, Ukraine**, and most recently **South Caucasus, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Bulgaria and Kenya**.

It belongs among the founding members of the Human Rights Film Network, which joins together 22 festivals throughout the world.

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# FOREWORD

By **TEREZA PORYBNÁ**, One World Human Rights Film Festival

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This handbook summarizes the plentiful experiences gathered during 11 years of organizing the One World festival, as well as the know-how of several other important human rights festival organizers. Its core aim is to offer practical advice to NGOs, cultural institutions, students, think tanks etc., who want to start their own festival or otherwise use film in promoting human rights awareness.

We hope that these examples of specific festival histories can not only help some to initiate their own projects, but also inspire others in continuing with their work, and enable those who have been in the festival business for a while to evaluate their efforts and exchange ideas.

The first – practical – part offers brief overviews of fundraising, programming and promotion strategies, as well as advice about guest services, educational programs, timelines, model budget, and other information we have found useful based on our own practice. Attention is also given to more general questions, such as creating a festival identity, choosing the right name or establishing a position within the wider field of film festivals. Of course we realize none of this is universal. We weren't aiming at providing a guaranteed recipe for cooking up a festival, but rather some motivation and ground beneath your feet, before you set off to implement your own plans.

As we believe in the power of good examples and learning from others' achievements (and mistakes by all means) we asked our colleagues from human rights festivals around the world (Europe,

Africa, Central Asia, Latin America) to note the landmarks of their development and how they reflect their functioning in the local socio-political context. This collection of "case studies", which forms the second part of the handbook, offers a chance to find out about the beginnings of the world's probably most well known human rights festival *Amnesty International*, discover challenges faced by *Ciné Droits Libre* festival in Burkina Faso, or learn about the concept of travelling festivals in the Caucasus. *One World Berlin* informs us of the new possibilities for human rights festivals in Internet distribution. And *Free Zone Belgrade* reminds us of the importance of visual presentation in order to get media attention. We feel that by simply browsing through these articles one can find innovative ways to approach one's own organization, or comfort in the fact that, despite the common problems, there can also be common solutions.

Of course, there would be no human rights film festivals without filmmakers and their distributors. Every year, thousands of new documentaries appear and the field may be somewhat overwhelming and hard to navigate. As a purely subjective attempt to regulate this vivid cinematic flow we provide in the appendix a short history of politically motivated cinema, a list of major film festivals and some useful links for tracking down films.

Putting this book together would never have been possible without the help of all those who submitted articles, provided comments on the concept, edited, translated and proof-read the material. Our deepest thanks go to them. During the making of this publication we saw it as a little trial for ourselves, something similar to a first festival edition. We hope the result is fruitful and worth the effort and we look forward to receiving your feedback. Who knows, maybe it will contribute to an updated, matured second edition!



SETTING  
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HOW  
TO  
START

# HOW TO START

By **IGOR BLAŽEVIĆ**, Founder of One World Human Rights Film Festival

Before starting to prepare the first (or second or third) edition of your human rights film festival, it makes a lot of sense to first consider what your core identity is and what you actually want to achieve.

I have come to the conclusion that the main difference between us “human rights film festivals” and traditional film festivals is not so much based in the specific topics and forms of the films we include in the program. Most of the films any of us will screen will be shown at other traditional film festivals as well. Particularly in the case of documentary filmmaking, since the days of Joris Ivens and Luis Buñuel (i.e. since the early days of documentary filmmaking) up to today, orientation and focus on social and political issues has always been the main passion of good, challenging and innovative filmmaking.

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So it is not primarily film content that makes one film festival a human rights one and what makes it different from other more traditional film festivals. If you compare the film program of a human rights film festival with the program of many documentary film festivals, you will find a lot of overlapping. The main difference is, I believe, **how we as human rights festivals understand the reason why we screen films to the audience and what we “do” with the films.**

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More traditional film festivals are organized primarily to create a forum for artistic and cultural reception and enjoyment, to provide a gathering point for film professionals, and to bring together



sellers and buyers (either for cinema and DVD distribution or for TV broadcasting). On the other hand, human rights film festivals are focused on information and testimony rather than art and entertainment; their aim is awareness-building and education. Rather than by film professionals, human rights film festivals are often organized by civil society organizations and human rights defenders who wish to use the power of film and video, the persuasive strength of audiovisual communication (the “seeing is believing” factor) and the spell of story-telling in order to act as human rights watch amplifiers, expose crimes and abuses, to mobilize solidarity and support and to advocate for change.

That is how most HR festivals understand their core mission and purpose. They try to bring more complex realities out from behind the superficiality of the “breaking news” and to draw attention to stories that are not covered by the mainstream media. They make an effort, through screening of films, an effort to raise understanding of global challenges, to encourage dignity, to foster mutual understanding and to promote tolerance, to empower the powerless and provide a voice for the voiceless, to ask for justice and search for truth and reconciliation.

If I were asked to name key pillars of a HR film festival I would say that it is a festival that:

- Screens films on human rights topics, political and social issues and current affairs
- Is closely connected with the civil/NGO sector
- Strives to mobilize support and to contribute to change
- Places strong emphasis not only on film screenings but also on discussions
- Develops educational and outreach programs
- Has a tendency to develop touring programs

Topics that are usually covered by human rights film festivals include:

- Crisis areas and current affairs
- Human rights abuses
- Truth, justice and reconciliation

- Global challenges
- Impact of global economy
- Debt and poverty, millennium development goals
- Legacy of the past
- Search for truth and justice
- Women's rights and gender issues
- Children's rights
- Rights of indigenous communities
- Minority rights and migration
- Societies in transition

I hope some of the above-mentioned suggestions will help you define your own mission and core identity, which will differentiate your effort from any other film event that may already exist in your country. There are several other early decisions you need to make almost before you start to prepare the first edition of your HR film event. Let me share with you a few reflections regarding some of those early dilemmas.

## CHOOSE THE NAME

You can call your event: *Human Rights Film Festival*. Some colleagues from the Human Rights Film Network have chosen that option.

My advice has always been to select **rather a more “sexy” name, one that has potential to draw a broader and more mainstream audience**. The title “human rights film festival” might be useful with some donors who have in their mandate support of human rights, civil sector development, democratization of society and building an open and tolerant society. But “human rights film festival” might make your task of attracting a significant audience much harder. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International did not have such a difficult task because the labels and image of their mother organizations are so strong that they could not make a mistake by calling themselves HRW Film Festival and AI Film Festival. But some other colleagues in the HR Film Network came up with very creative names, such as Watch Docs from Poland,

Free Zone from Serbia, Movies that Matter from the Netherlands and Perspektive from Germany.

## MEDIA PARTNERS

Never ever organize an event if you do not manage to have at least one media partner that is really committed to the success of your event. You can read more about this in the PR and Production chapters of this handbook.

## FIX THE DATES OF THE FESTIVAL

Before deciding about the dates of your festival, look into the following factors:

**Try to avoid being too close to any other film festival**, particularly if that festival is taking place in the same city where you want to organize your event. It is also good to schedule your event with some reasonable time distance from other major cultural or social events that might take away interest of the potential audience or fill the available space in media and advertisement slots.

You want to organize your event when students and pupils are at university and in schools, and not away somewhere because of summer or winter holidays. Most probably, your main (potential) audience is made up of young people attending higher level education. Be aware also that during exams students are nervous and busy, and not in the best mood to go to the cinema.

If you want to invite filmmakers, also try to avoid overlapping with major international film festivals, because filmmakers who have good films that year will most probably attend those festivals.

If you take all these factors into consideration, you will see that there are not too many months and weeks that are available to you (of course depending on how rich the cultural and social life is in your city) and most probably there is already one or even more

human rights (and other) film festivals taking place around the same dates you would like to choose.

## NUMBER AND GENRE OF FILMS, NUMBER OF DATES, NUMBER OF CINEMAS

In the first few years of organizing a HR film festival, less is definitely more. Yes, there are a lot of good films that people in your town and elsewhere should see, and there are so many urgent and pressing issues, but there are most probably not so many people in your city that will fill your cinema night after night for several days. So at the beginning KISS – keep it small and simple. Start with not too many films (ca. 15 in the case of countries with a weak and unprepared audience, 20 to 25 films in countries with an audience that is regularly exposed to art films and other film festivals), with no longer than 4 to 5 days in one or two, maximum three (but only if they are close one to another) cinemas and do not organize screenings all day long, but only in the morning for schools and in the late afternoon and evening for the general public.

Selecting films for the festival is the most exciting part of your work – so please do not become so enthusiastic about it that you overestimate the selection process at the expense of other tasks of the festival organizer.

**My strongest advice is – in the first few years of your festival, do not waste too much time, energy and funds from your meager resources on programming.** If you manage to establish a successful festival, you will have enough time in the years to come to develop your own programming skills and to enjoy it properly. In the first few years rather focus on the following:

- get the media support
- find your donors and sponsors
- bring people to the cinema

Your key challenge in the first few years is not putting a good film program together. There are so many good films that it is relatively

easy to put one together. So save your time, energy and money by developing a partnership with one or two already well established human rights or documentary film festivals and draw your program from theirs at the beginning.

Always remember: The best film program is of no worth if there are too few people in the cinema and no media attention.

You should also decide from the beginning about **the ratio between national and international productions in your program**. My advice is to include at least some of the domestic production as well, even if the quality of filmmaking and the variety of topics are weaker compared to what you find on the international filmmaking scene.

You should also make a decision from the onset about how you will overcome the language barrier. Most of the available films have English subtitles, but the number of audience members who are comfortable with English subtitles might be very limited in numbers. So you will need **to translate and subtitle, or to simultaneously translate** the film. Both are expensive and – be particularly aware of this – very time consuming.

## VENUE

Quite often you will not have many options for choosing venues and you are often forced to take whatever is available. But some bad choices could kill your event even before you have a real chance to gain the momentum.

One very important piece of advice: **Don't use places that attract nobody during the year or which are opened just a few times a year for anything but a film event**, even if they are for free. It is a hell of a task to attract an audience to a human rights film festival, so it is really much better to pay a certain amount for renting a space that is a popular gathering place for filmgoers, than to finish – after so much effort and hopes – in an almost empty hall with frustrated filmmakers sitting right next to you.

The ideal case is if there is an already popular venue with two to three screening rooms, none of them too big, or two to three cinemas within a very close walking distance. If at all possible, choose a venue where people in your city are used to going to see a good (art) film program. In that case, there is a potential core audience that is used to following the program of that place and it will be easier to attract them than to bring people to a place where they are not used to expecting and looking for film programs.

Try to avoid cinemas that are too big (400 seats and bigger). Most probably in the first few years you will not manage to fill such a big cinema. One hundred people sitting in a smaller cinema gives an impression of a well-attended event; the same one hundred people in a place with 400 or 500 seats creates a feeling amongst those 100 people that they are attending something that is on the margins of anybody's interest. Smaller places are also far better for debates, and debates after films are a crucial aspect of a good human rights film festival.

Another important piece of advice is: **Do not pay the full rental price.** The cinema owner should have an interest in selling tickets to a bigger audience. It will make him much more motivated to contribute to the success of your event if he does not have his money in advance and regardless of his cinema being full or empty. You can share the ticket sale revenues with the cinema half and half, and guarantee to the cinema the minimum income you pay even if nobody shows up. Cinemas are not constantly full anyway. Before starting to negotiate with the cinema owner, it is good to try to estimate how many visitors he has regularly.

Never ever forget that a film event, even a human rights one, requires good quality projection – both the picture and sound. And places that function as cinemas anyway, with experienced staff, are the best places to guarantee you a professional level of screenings.

If it is up to you to bring projection equipment to a venue where films are not screened on a regular basis, then expect technical problems and do whatever you can to avoid them (since they are one of the most frustrating moments for any festival organizer).

## TIMELINE

To get you started, allow me to offer a very basic draft of the steps you should follow as a festival organizer, in Year No. 1 and then in the first five years of your existence. Some of the below-mentioned topics will be elaborated more closely in the chapters which follow.

### FIRST STEP

- Define the concept and identity
- Choose the name
- Fix the dates of the festival (*at least 8–10 months after preparation Day No. 1*)
- Written project description and draft budget
- Develop cooperation with other HR festival(s)
- Outline of program (*main topics*)

### SECOND STEP

- Arrange venues
- Decide about translation/subtitling
- Develop an image/visual
- Strategic media partnership
- Strategic partnership with NGOs
- FUNDRAISING, FUNDRAISING AND FUNDRAISING

### THIRD STEP

- Finalize the program
- Clear screening rights
- Transport, translation, subtitling
- Develop advertising and PR strategy
- Web and catalogue
- Schedule debates and invite guests
- Approach schools



# DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OVER THE YEARS

## FIRST EVENT

- Establish yourself
- Survive
- Get references

## NEXT THREE YEARS

- Define your identity
- Develop own programming
- Secure core funding
- Establish a strategic media partnership
- Attract audience
- Develop organizational and technical skills
- Develop outreach programs

## FIVE YEARS

- Expand funding
- Spread reputation
- Stabilize team
- Assist others



PROGRAMMING  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
FILM  
FESTIVALS

# PROGRAMMING HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVALS

By **HELENA ZAJÍCOVÁ**, Programme Director

One World Human Rights Film Festival

Programming a human-rights festival is the same as any other act of curatorial interpretation – we interpret human-rights content through selecting suitable films and by virtue of the manner in which we put them together. The content of the films and their interpretation have ramifications for film aesthetic and film language as well as ethics. Despite the fact that there is a very wide range of subject matter in these films and every human-rights festival conceives it a little differently, their contents are most frequently associated with testimonies or with themes of reconciliation as well as dealing with conflicts or coming to terms with the past. The screening of these films is therefore seen in a positive light – it draws attention to human rights abuses, it provides information on concealed or little-known subjects or it shows people's efforts to understand each other and to deal with injustice both collectively and personally.

Nevertheless, the visual presentation of human rights content may actually have the opposite effect, e.g. it could intensify existing disputes in the given country or community where a film is screened. "Our" type of festival is not an event intended for film professionals, but is distinguished by its broad audience coming from a variety of backgrounds. An important question that programmers ask themselves is to what extent is the vox populi important as a force that we don't just want to influence but to

which we also ascribe some of the characteristics of an arbiter. Should programmers speculate about what kind of impact the screening of a film will specifically have on their audience? Should they include a film whose quality in both filmmaking and ethical terms is not in dispute, but which may be wrongly interpreted by the audience and support stereotypes or cause conflict in the given country or community? Responses to the risk may vary and they carry the inherent moral and formal importance that we ascribe and attach to film as a work of art.

I believe that good human rights festival programmers should attentively perceive these risks. These programmers are working with films that have sensitive, social, politically engaged, human rights themes. They should look more closely at how a film was made and why it came into being. Curatorship carries the same power that a film crew has when it is shooting a film. Consequently, it is an important motivation for programmers and organisers of film festivals to know the reasons why they initially set out to perform this role.

## **PROGRAMMING STEP BY STEP – GENERAL OVERVIEW**

In 1999 when we started with the One World film festival we had a pretty good impression of what we wanted to achieve with films. We also had a good understanding of what the international human rights film festival world which One World was about to enter looked like. But we didn't feel confident enough to program the first year completely on our own. So we approached the two biggest human rights film festivals in the world – Amnesty International in Amsterdam and Human Rights Watch in New York. We asked them to prepare a selection of films screened at their festivals in previous years which they would consider suitable and attractive for our first edition. In the second year of the festival we started our own research but did not open up a call for entries yet. Open submissions demand that the festival staff feels confident enough to judge somebody else's work and on the other hand that

the filmmakers recognize the festival and are keen to “entrust” their films to the festival staff. So my advice is to wait with the open call for entries until the third festival year. Parallel to that, you can send addressed invitations inviting filmmakers to submit their films.

## SHORT FILMS

I strongly recommend including short films as well. Especially if your event will introduce human rights documentaries to your audience for the first time; it might be very difficult for them to digest at the beginning. Short films are able to catch peoples’ attention and attract various groups of viewers. Also, lots of animated films on human rights issues are being produced every year; animated films have the ability to transmit “simple” stories and ideas without being too superficial or descriptive. But be aware that programming both short and animated films is not an easy task. I suggest including several short films and some animated ones in your program even for the first edition. Once selected, you will need to group the short films into screening blocks or combine them with feature length films, which can be a challenging task.

## LOCAL FILMS

When defining your profile it is also useful to think about whether to include only international productions or whether to have national productions as well. If there are documentary films being made in your home country, it is good to include them, but not necessarily in the first year. Including national productions will help you attract an audience both of the public and of professionals. But it might also create problems with those filmmakers whose films you don’t take for the festival. It also depends on the topics you want to tackle. When we were selecting films for the South Caucasian travelling film festival Ya-chelovek, which focuses on reconciliation and peaceful solution of conflicts we were trying to use “parallels” and screen films from other conflict areas rather than selecting films from local countries. The films were understood as a basis for

discussion, which started around the topics featured in the films but was later directed by the facilitator to local problems in the Caucasian countries.

## CALL FOR ENTRIES

As I mentioned above, during the first two years we did not make a call for entries, which means that we identified the films that were relevant to us by ourselves or got recommendations from our colleagues for specific titles. After careful consideration we sent an invitation letter asking for a screener only to a limited number of films. Later we started with the **call for entries**, which means that we introduced the so-called open submissions policy. **Open submission** means that you invite filmmakers, producers and distributors from around the world to send you their new films, which you will then consider for selection. You select some of the films, the rest you reject and send the submitters a rejection letter.

One World usually opens the call for entries **two months after the previous festival edition has finished**. This is a general message informing everybody that the festival has set its dates for the next edition and is from now on accepting films for it. We send a short email message to all international contacts in our database (people we have been in touch with throughout the selection process, people whose films we screened in the past, etc.) mentioning the data for the next festival edition, the submission deadline and the specifications and regulations – what kind of films we accept (documentaries, fiction films, shorts, etc.), what we need in order to complete the submission (usually you ask them to fill in the entry form and send a DVD screener), etc.

Parallel to that **we continue researching websites of filmmakers, production and sales companies and other festivals and send invitation letters to specific films**. Sending invitation letters puts us in direct contact with those responsible for the film so we check carefully beforehand what type of film it is, whether it is really suitable for our festival and who the rights holder is. The invitation

letter contains the same kind of information as the general call for entries but it is personal and at the beginning it invites the people responsible for the film to send it to our festival. When we get the screener and the entry form, we send a submission confirmation to the submitter also stating when the selection will be completed.

## WHERE TO FIND FILMS

When looking for films you need to identify good sources. They will vary according to the focus of your event and your goals. For example in the first years of One World we were screening a lot of films from crisis areas and from regions where our organization People in Need was active (Balkans, Chechnya, Burma, East Timor, etc.). So we approached offices of the Open Society Institute asking them for help with identifying films from their countries (and about their countries). We also asked our colleagues from other human rights film festivals for recommendations. We researched websites of other documentary festivals, distribution and sales agent companies, etc. We tried to obtain catalogues from the biggest and most relevant festivals for our event. Since the third festival year, we have been regularly visiting IDFA, the biggest documentary film festival in Europe. Later, we also started visiting other documentary festivals, depending on our budget. Slowly we managed to build up a group of advisors whom we ask for recommendations.

## ATTRACTIVE THEMES

It is good to work with themes and topics. Screenings of human rights documentaries should not be the label you are using for promotion. **Rather select attractive topics that are easier to communicate and that will help you promote your event. Try to be topical and fresh.**

Successful programming is also about showing the richness and variety of styles and trends in grasping certain topics. There are a lot of equally relevant reasons why to select a film, not just the



filmmaking quality. Even if the film is not a masterpiece or doesn't embrace all aspects of the given problem, don't be afraid to program it. You just need to be able to defend your decision. If your festival is comprised of non-confrontational glossy films, it will definitely be more boring and less thought-provoking than a varied selection which surprises and disturbs the audience with unexpected types of films. Also, do not underestimate communicating this to journalists. The films you're inviting will most probably mean next to nothing to them. So it is worth programming a "hit" which will help you attract the attention and subsequently will win interest in other films you might consider more compelling.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

It is good to set up a system of evaluation at the very beginning with respect to the specifics of your event. We very quickly set up a pre-selection committee which comprises 5-8 people who have been involved in the festival organization for some time, have the necessary background and above all understand what we are trying to achieve with our festival. The pre-selection committee is paid for viewing films and is supposed to deliver a written evaluation report of the film. It is also good to set up a wider pre-selection group which will not take part in the systematic viewing but will act as a testing group and take into account the problems of your region and local specifics. It is good to have some students in this group as well who provide you with the necessary feedback for films for students. I strongly recommend selecting a couple of films in the first year that will be suitable for high-school students as well. The selection committee which in our case consists of the core festival team is then responsible for the final program outline.

## **SCREENING RIGHTS**

Once you have selected films you clear the screening rights. I strongly recommend allocating enough money in your festival budget from the very first year to pay for the screening rights. There are new festivals emerging every year and many of them

will try to screen the same films over and over again. We feel it is necessary and respectful to the filmmakers and producers to pay the screening fees. As a newcomer festival you will enter a world of film business and you need to get acquainted with its ambiance and gain its respect so that they will see you as a reliable partner. Do not play your “human rights” card; present your project as a serious film event and show them that you know whom you are approaching. Many filmmakers will not ask for a screening fee from you, but in case they do, the fees usually vary from 100 euro up to 1000 euro. I suggest allocating approx. 300 euro of your budget for one film. **Please bear in mind that these fees are applicable for the European context.** It is of course possible to negotiate; the best option **is to offer to invite the director to your festival** – many distribution and sales companies respect this solution. It is also good to build a long-lasting relationship with certain distribution and/or sales agencies, get some films from them every year and know their policy and usual screening fees.

## LANGUAGE ISSUE

Before starting with the organization you also have to decide about translation of the films. Unless you want to screen the films in original versions with English subtitles, there are basically three ways of doing it: simultaneous translation, subtitling and dubbing. We provided translation and Czech subtitles from the very first year of the festival since we couldn't rely on the Czech audience to follow the films in English. When starting with the festival, I recommend providing translation for all foreign films, otherwise you will narrow the scope of your viewers. Follow the usual practice in your country; sometimes people are more used to dubbing (even voiceovers), sometimes they will prefer subtitling.

## SCREENING SCHEDULE

The screening schedule always depends on the local specifics, but there are a few general rules which will most probably apply everywhere. We usually screen the films twice; the second

screening can be in another (smaller) venue, depending on how popular the film is with the audience. If you invite filmmakers, make sure that the screening they are going to attend will be in a nice venue (which does not necessarily mean the biggest) and at a good time. Before doing the programming schedule, **identify the audience hits**. These are films with an intriguing topic, well shot with a clear and straight forward dramaturgy that is easy to follow for a wide audience. Program these films in the main venue too and give them the best slots, such as Friday and Saturday evening.

**If you program local films, give them nice evening slots** and combine the first screening with a proper introduction, Q & A and a small reception, if you want. The local filmmaking community will attend the event for sure.

It is recommended to organize short films in blocks and to show each block twice, in a smaller hall because with them you usually don't reach a wider audience. You can also program some of the short films separately with a feature-length documentary if it fits well with the topics of the films.

## SYNOPSIS AND CATALOGUE ISSUES

**Creating a website and a catalogue is essential**, but do not have plans that are too ambitious right from the start. In the first year it is enough to have a booklet with all the films and their synopses. If you decide to make a bilingual version, then pay **special attention to the English part** because it will become your promo material, which you will send to the filmmakers presented at the festival and which you will use when travelling to other festivals. Filmmakers are usually sensitive to the film data so unless you have the capacity to collect and verify all the information, don't display them in the catalogue. As far as synopses are concerned, you can either use the official synopsis from the filmmaker/distributor or you may create your own. We create our own synopses because we want to transmit to the audience why we selected a certain film and what we regard as especially important in the film.



## PARTNERSHIPS

During the first years one of your primary goals will be to let others know about your festival and to attract viewers. You will do an advertising campaign but you will also need to “put the word out” so that people start talking about your event. One good way to do it is to seek strategic partnerships. Get in touch with NGOs in your country, choose a film which relates to their work and let them facilitate the debates. In return, they will spread the information about your event and invite people for the screenings they “adopted”. **It is important for your festival to**



*Photo by L. Kotek*

**start building relationships with the local film community.** If you can, just send the whole film community an invitation to the opening/closing ceremony and/or offer them a guest pass for free screenings. Also monitor universities and high schools; prepare leaflets and distribute them, form a team of several students who will systematically “PR” your festival. If you have the capacity, prepare a special newsletter with a set of films (either national or topical) and send them to the respective university and high school departments. You can do the same for foreign cultural institutes which will put your event into their newsletters and spread

information about it. You can also organize a hospitality evening in collaboration with a foreign embassy, choose a good film, invite a guest and have a small reception afterwards.

## Q & A

Most of you will use film as a basis for discussion. Paying attention to the organization of debates and invitations of guest speakers is therefore crucial; otherwise the screenings might miss the point. So when scheduling the films, allow enough time for debates and Q & As. Find good facilitators who are trained in leading debates. Sometimes it might be necessary to prepare the audience for the film in advance, especially if you are screening a film with a sensitive subject or if you are approaching an audience that has very limited or no experience with (human rights) documentaries. It is not that important to look for the best experts on the given topics, rather search for people who are communicative and prepared for a dialogue. Whether a guest speaker is present or not, it is the facilitator who should be able to direct the debate and help the audience to digest their impressions from the films.

# TIMELINE

## 8–7 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Send out a call for entries
- Start requesting catalogues from other festival
- Start sending film invitations
- Make a plan of visits to other festivals if you have a budget for it

## 7 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Intensify the research for films and for specific topics for your current edition

## 6 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Start with the previewing of films (*if you have open submissions*)
- Get in touch with cultural institutes and embassies and present your plans
- Invite jury members (*if you are a competitive festival*)
- Send out another call for entries
- Continue viewing films
- Ask festivals in your region about the possibility of advertising in their catalogue or exchanging advertising

## 5 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Send out the last call for entries
- Intensify viewing of films
- Visit other festivals (*depends of course on the other festivals' dates*)
- Take your festival flyers and spread them around whenever you visit festivals or other cultural events

## 4 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- View films

## 3 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Select the first titles and start organizing translation and subtitling issues (*if you decided to do so*)

## 2 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Finish selection of films
- Get in touch with all selected filmmakers
- Clear the screening rights
- Start transporting the films *(Try to reach an agreement with one shipping company for lower prices in exchange for festival partnership. Shipping is easier if you have one person to handle it.)*
- Organize translation and subtitling
- Prepare the programming schedule
- Invite filmmakers to the festival
- Notify the embassies and cultural institutes about the selection of your films
- Get in touch with selected NGOs and involve them in the debates
- Advertise your event at universities and high schools

## 1 MONTH BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Prepare the schedule of debates
- Communicate with the filmmakers
- Make sure you have all the copies available and check their quality and language versions *(If you're screening from DVD, make sure you have back-up copies and that the copies are supported by the DVD player in the cinemas.)*
- Communicate news about the program to your colleagues; make sure they are being updated regularly and that they know of all changes

## DURING THE FESTIVAL

- Meet with guests
- Introduce films, especially if the filmmaker is present
- Meet with the technical production team every evening to double check the schedule of the films and the film copies for the next day
- Walk around the cinemas during the screenings to check how things are going
- Be aware of all the Q & As and debates after the screenings, double-check every morning if everything is set
- Put news about guests arriving, successful screenings and upcoming events on your website



## **AFTER THE FESTIVAL**

- Send back the films
- Create a final report of the festival to be used later for promotional purposes
- Send thank-you letters to filmmakers and producers



RAISING  
FUNDS  
TO SUPPORT  
A HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
FILM  
FESTIVAL

# RAISING FUNDS TO SUPPORT A HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

By **IGOR BLAŽEVIĆ**, Founder of the One World Human Rights Film Festival

Obviously there is no universal way to fundraise for a human rights film festival. A great deal depends on the concrete circumstances in each country and on the character, experience and capacity of the organization undertaking the task of organizing a human right (HR) film festival.

There are huge differences if you organize a festival in a relatively rich democratic country, where there is access to various domestic and international foundations and endowments, as well as public funds distributed by the various ministries, regional governments and local city councils, and where you do not have any moral and political problem in taking public and state funds, and you will not be harassed by authorities or bashed by pro-regime media for taking funding from foreign donors. It is a very different story if you have non-democratic or corrupt or otherwise problematic government from which you cannot take any funding without seriously compromising your mission and message.

I want to share some of One World Prague's experiences by explaining what we have done to raise funds for the festival over the last ten years. Some of our approaches may not be applicable, but hopefully some of them will spark ideas that you can modify and apply.

I will speculate throughout this text about which approaches I consider to be the most applicable by putting them in **bold and italics**, but I kindly ask you to remember to take any recommendation and conclusions with a grain of salt. I have never been in your shoes. I don't know what social, economic or political climate you are operating within or what options you have for donors. Furthermore, I have never been able to test the advice that I am offering under the conditions that you are in. How could I?

At the end, I will elaborate a bit on what sort of the costs will be incurred when you organize a festival, and how these costs will most likely change over time.

## STARTING ONE WORLD

When we started preparing the first One World (OW) festival in Prague in 1998, we were fortunate enough to not be starting completely from scratch. OW is organized by People in Need (PIN), a Prague-based NGO that had already existed ten years by this time. PIN already had a well established reputation among a wide range of donors, was well known by the general public for their humanitarian campaigns and operations, and had good access to numerous media outlets. In addition, even though PIN did not have any special funds to invest in the kick-off of the OW festival, it was able to provide office space and, even more importantly, its reputation and network of contacts. These proved to be enormously helpful for a successful start.

We also approached the organizers of the Human Rights Watch festival in New York ([www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)) and the Amnesty International festival in Amsterdam (which today is known as Movies that Matter, <http://www.moviesthatmatter.nl>), both of which helped us a great deal in the area of programming. By studying what they have done and how they have operated, we were able to refine our ideas and generate more enthusiasm for starting OW. Later on some other festivals also served as a major inspirations for us, but

I would like to mention just one – Amsterdam's IDFA ([www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)) that has been particularly impressive.

Our funding portfolio has changed considerably over the years. The originally very low percentage of domestic funds increased to 70 % of the whole budget. Foreign foundations and donors form 10 % of the budget, private sponsors 17 %, and the last 3 % is made up of ticket revenues and other sources. Since the first edition in 1999 the overall festival budget grew about ten times (by a total of 13 %).

You can compare the growth of our budget with the development of the OW festival in terms of number of films screened, the size of the audience and the number of guests. (Tab. No. 1)

## **I. INTERNATIONAL FUNDING SOURCES**

During the first three years, the majority of our funds came from international donors, in particular the Open Society Fund and PHARE program of the European Union, and a mix of foreign embassies and cultural institutes (the Goethe Institute, the British Council and the British Embassy, the French Institute, the US Embassy, the Canadian Embassy, and lastly the Dutch Embassy's MATRA program).

In later years, several other foundations have been important and indispensable supporters of the One World Prague, such as the Czech German Future Fund, the International Visegrad Fund, and more recently, the CEE Trust. Although the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) has not provided funds for OW in Prague, it has been willing to take in consideration requests from NGOs working with PIN in more challenging environments than the Czech Republic, such as post-conflict Kosovo and Belarus.

EDITION	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Films Screened	48	69	89	129	165	155	120	118	123	138
Films Submitted	–	160	460	720	840	900	950	1000	1400	1500
Projections	71	98	127	200	245	300	250	245	266	228
Audience	3,000	8,900	11,800	18,200	29,334	37,625	41,000	60,800	71,700	100,000
Invited Guests	15	24	70	87	96	110	125	125	125	135
Media Quotations	34	121	159	227	389	400	450	500	500	590
Registered Journalists	22	40	120	193	214	220	250	258	370	425

(Tab. No. 1)

## A) INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATIONS SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

*If you are starting your HR festival in a country that is: in transition; a new or weak democracy; a post-conflict country, or has a non-democratic government, or is in the developing world, then my strongest advice will be follow a path similar to ours. **You should shop your idea around to various embassies, foreign delegations and cultural institutes**, as well as international foundations that operate in your country or assist domestic civil sector organizations from abroad.*

***Study carefully** what sort of granting programs they have, visit them in person so that you can talk to them directly about your ideas and, if there are positive signals, make a concrete request according to their funding guidelines. You have to have good content. The screening of human rights films, along with running public debates inspired by such films, has proven to be a very successful project in many places around the world and there is no specific reason why it should not work in your country as well. However, you always need to present that content in the **proper language and framework of each concrete donor's guidelines and mandate**. This does not mean that you will have to compromise on content, but more that you should not neglect the details and specifics involved in fundraising and procedures.*

*A small fundraising advantage of HR film festivals is that they can tap into **different types of resources**. Your best chances are with donors who have **programs designed to support the development of the civil sector; support human rights awareness building; and/or foster public dialogue and active citizenship**. Your chances will also be pretty good among donors that fund projects that promote the use of HR films in educational settings. However, you can also draw on resources which support cultural events and cultural exchange.*

You also need to be careful when presenting your project to foundations and international donors. Remember that the individual films and the idea of a festival will most likely be less persuasive, than the impact of this work in regards to defending



human rights, public awareness, civic engagement, public debates, work with youth, cooperation with schools, educational impact, regional touring and year-long follow up activities.

## **B) THE CHALLENGE: ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW**

One serious challenge is that after two, three, or maybe even four years of having a group of donors supporting you – when you have finally reached encouraging audience numbers and garnered more media attention, when you have been able to become truly passionate about the level of quality of the filmmaking – they will start to ask you for something new. One problem with film festivals is that there are a limited number of new elements you can invent. Of course, there are always a lot of side activities and follow-up events you could do, but at the end of the day, the core activity is always the same and cannot be changed much. There is always room for improvement in various areas, such as the technical quality of projections, sound, and translation; the facilitation of debates; the stature of invited guests; the size of your audience; and the number of contacts that you establish with the filmmaking and distributing community, etc..., but you will be expected to make these improvements with each new edition of your festival.

Far too often I have heard the question, both from the media and from donors, what will OW do this year that is new. If we answered that we will be screening – what a surprise – over 120 new, high-quality, challenging, inspiring, eye opening films, which were selected from more than a thousand submissions, this proved to be insufficient after the first few years. The usual response was: Yes, films, we know that, but we mean what else, something that has not been a part of OW before. Do not try to explain that films you will screen this year are different than last year's films or that the process used to find and select them was even more rigorous and labor intensive. These arguments will not work over time. You will be asked to bring something "really new" otherwise, run the risk that your project's funding will either go down or evaporate completely. Do not become angry and frustrated when this

happens, rather expect this scenario and be prepared to handle it. Be inventive as long as you can, repackage the same old content (films, debates, etc...) in a new way. Choose your words and slogans carefully to reflect current events, since sometimes it is all about naming things differently.

*However, sooner or later your initial donors will go away. They also want to be thrilled, inspired and challenged by your new ideas and new projects. **So at the beginning focus your main fundraising energy on certain types of donors, i.e. foundations, endowments and donor programs supporting civil society or culture.** Also remember that once you achieve an initial level of success with a donor, do not rely exclusively on longevity of that relation, but instead start to work on the **diversification of your funding resources.** You will need at least a few years to draw the backing of new supporters, which I will describe then below. **So start early and do not be disappointed with initial failures.***

### **C) EMBASSIES AND CULTURAL INSTITUTES**

*When it comes to embassies and foreign cultural institutes, some also have specific programs and grants intended to support civil sector development, which usually function in a similar way to the previously mentioned foundations. Although most embassies and cultural institutes do not have such programs, but they can help you with transporting films, covering the costs of translation and bringing guests from their countries. All this might be helpful in reducing some of your costs, particularly if you have eight, ten or even twelve embassies supporting you. **But there are certain dangers as well.***

Embassies and cultural institutes will generally only support films and guests from their countries. Your festival program may only have 40 or so slots in which to screen all of the films that you believe will draw your audience's attention, you feel are important, and that you are enthusiastic about as an organization. So you will not have slots for films which are there mainly because this or that embassy was ready to cover the bill. Even if some embassy or cultural institute was very enthusiastic and willing to support

your project, accept their support only if you have found good films from their countries. Films which embassy people might find extraordinary, because they won major prizes at festivals in their countries and/or have received good media coverage, are not necessarily the films you and/or your audience will appreciate. Different places, different perceptions. Never forget that you are the only selector of your festival and do not let financial considerations (even when you are very, very short on funds) make a selection for you. If you do not have good films from the country whose embassy is ready to support you, maintain friendly relations with them, but rather wait for another year when a good film from that particular country appears. Luckily, some of the most supportive embassies and cultural institutes, such as the British, French, German, Canadian, Dutch, Nordic, in certain instances American are representing countries that have extraordinary good and numerous film productions.

Naturally, there will also be several extraordinary films under consideration from countries whose embassies will not be willing to offer their support. Some embassies aren't worth approaching due to the character of their governments. So you need to look for additional financial support somewhere else. Once more I cannot stress this advice enough – never ever compromise film selection, even if you are in most dire financial situation.

*Embassies and cultural institutes might also offer **accommodation for a festival guest from their country, or cover his/her travel costs, or in the best case scenario do both by covering travel, accommodation and per diem expenses** for a filmmaker from their country. Let me just make one small warning. If embassies are offering to cover costs only partially related to the visit of the guest (for example, they offer accommodation and you are expected to cover travel, or vice versa), do not rush to accept such offers before carefully checking the exact details of your budget. You might finish up your meager funds by paying for a plane ticket or hotel room, only to realize later that you don't have enough money left to cover far more important core costs.*

Embassies can also help you in other ways if you are working in an environment that is not fully free and democratic. An embassy's participation could provide you with certain level of protection on many levels. If films from their countries are screened, embassies have an excuse to be involved without being blamed by unfriendly local authorities that they are meddling in internal domestic affairs or violating the country's sovereignty. And if several embassies are participating in your festival (it is always more probable that embassies will be more confident to support you if they are not alone, but if there are more of them involved), then ambassadors might show up at the screening of films from his/her country or might even host a small reception after the screening. If that is the case, unfriendly local authorities will think twice before trying to stop your event from happening.

Another complicated scenario that might occur when you cooperate with foreign embassies has to do with them helping with the transport of films for free through their diplomatic post. Perhaps your organization has had positive experiences with such assistance. But OW has found out the hard way that embassies are not always good at shipping films, it can be slow and you will need to organize it way ahead of your festival due to the bureaucratic necessities. I would advise using all of your rhetoric talents to persuade embassy people that – instead of serving as shipping agent – it will be far, far better for you and them if they give you some cash to pay for a professional courier company to pick up tapes, DVDs or film reels at the filmmakers doorstep and deliver it to you at the exact time two or three days later.

*In conclusion, although minor problems might occur, embassies and cultural institutes **can be with a great deal of understanding for what you are trying to achieve, while also providing a certain amount of diplomatic cover.***

## II. DOMESTIC PUBLIC FUNDS

### A) EXPERIENCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

There has traditionally been a very rich festival scene in Prague and the Czech Republic for film, theatre, music, dance, art, literature and other forms of artistic expression. In recent years, a bevy of smaller festivals dedicated to cultural expression of various minority groups, based on social, ethnic, or lifestyle differences, has been added to the traditional mix. Many of these events are supported by public funds distributed through the various levels of state government (through the individual ministries' granting programs or through publicly funded agencies); regional government and/or municipal government. In spite of the relative variety of resources available, it took three years for OW to secure any significant funding from these public sources. Even though we started applying for public funds as early as the second year of our festival (in the first year we have missed all deadlines), domestic public funding did not become important to our budget until the third and fourth year of OW. It took this amount of time, because we needed to persuade the cultural granting commissions that OW was not a marginal event with a marginal impact.

Over time, the Czech Ministry of Culture and the City of Prague have become substantial supporters of the OW festival. **During the initial three years foreign funds were the most crucial for our start and development, but domestic public funds have become the core of our funding portfolio since the festival's fourth year right through to today.** We have always had a range of major and minor financial backers (mainly because we have constantly been in search for new ones to replace ones that have left us), but without Czech domestic public funding, we would not be able to continue and sustain the One World festival's existence.

## B) WHERE TO LOOK FOR DOMESTIC PUBLIC FUNDS IN A DEMOCRATIC ENVIRONMENT

*If you take seriously this abbreviated history of OW's funding, then the conclusion seems obvious – without domestic public resources it will be extremely hard if not impossible to sustain funding for a human rights film festival for more than three years. At the same time, I **am well aware that it is impossible to recommend universally for all festivals to focus their fundraising effort – immediately after approaching (and partly securing) all international funds available – on domestic public funds.***

Most democratically elected governments and city councils have developed specific funding mechanisms, which provide support to cultural events and civic initiatives. Your task is to study carefully all the opportunities that are available, and to ask for funding from obvious options, such as the **Ministry of Culture**, the **City Council**, and/or **Educational Ministry** (for projects that are planning to work with schools and in educational settings).

It is also important to be creative and to look for opportunities in places that might seem less obvious. For example, if your country has an **environment ministry**, but there is no major environmental festival in your country, then you might dedicate part of your festival's program to environmental issues and ask that ministry to help cover some of the costs. In addition, there are topics, such as **minorities, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers**, etc..., that are sure to fall under the purview of some ministry (or ministries). Since you will have a lot of films and discussions dealing with these issues, you might find some level of support in these governmental offices as well. It is highly likely that your country is providing some type of international humanitarian and development support to developing and poor countries through the **ministry for development cooperation**, the **ministry for foreign affairs**, or some agency which is affiliated with them. Well, then perhaps these are potentially doors worth knocking on, if part of your program will deal with topics, such as global poverty, development, debt, conflict and post-conflict societies, transitional societies, etc...

In essence, there are more than one-two options to look at when you are searching for domestic sources of funding. With some persistence, some persuasive talent and some creativity, you might find yourself capable of finding public funding options that were less than obvious at the first sight.

### C) WHAT TO DO IN A NON-DEMOCRATIC ENVIRONMENT

However, if your government sees human rights, civil sector and active citizenship not as asset but as a threat or if your government's way of gaining political power and ruling is opposing basic values of human rights and good governance, meaning you will never think about asking such government for support, than you are faced with a major challenge.

*International foundations and agencies are not enough for sustainability in the long run. As I described above, after several years, those initial core supporters will most probably start to leave you. In that case, **my only advice would be: do not let yourself become too ambitious and be careful not to make your festival too big.** Film festivals are not a cheap endeavor and they have an almost inevitable tendency to become more expensive each year, even if you do not add more films and guests to your program. Your partners, audience and staff will expect you to deliver higher quality with each new edition, so costs almost always increase.*

*Yet another piece of advice to consider – **is it necessary (or at times even a wise decision) to develop a festival** with its own name and brand? There are definitely instances where it would be much more efficient for you to ally with an already established human rights festival abroad, which could help you with programming and many other aspects of your festival, and by doing so, could help you significantly keep your costs relatively low. For example, One World Prague and Movies that Matter have both assisted many festivals in other countries in this way and have helped them to develop and grow.*

### III. COMMERCIAL SPONSORS

Commercial sponsors have played an important role in the development of the One World Prague. During the third and fourth year of the festival, we managed for the first time to get support from the main telecommunication and energy company in the Czech Republic. However, this support was developed more based on an extraordinary set of circumstances, rather than an individual commitment by some of the top people in these companies, and as a result this collaboration did not last long. Both sponsors abandoned us after two years and we never managed to develop any sort of closer relation with those companies afterwards.

Since the fifth edition of the OW festival, we have been supported by the beer company Pilsner Urquell (2003–2008) and the construction company Metrostav (2004–2007) and their support has been significant, in that it covered approximately one fourth of our total operating budget. The commercial sponsors' support has been especially valuable, because we could use these funds a bit more "freely" for what we actually needed and not for what had been specifically outlined and budgeted in other calls for proposals. On the most basic level, corporate sponsors have expected us to deliver on certain pre-agreed upon levels of marketing and media visibility, but such exposure has been in our core interest as well.

It is important to note that it took us two years of approaching companies before – in the third year – we have benefited from such efforts. In the meantime, we had many failures and studied carefully various indexes of the 100 top companies operating in the Czech Republic, i.e. top in profit, top in income, top in investment in marketing, top at the sponsorship, top in philanthropy, and who is who in the business sector. We created professional presentation materials specifically for potential sponsors, which meant that we had to invest the time and money involved to have them made well. As director of the festival, I personally spent quite a bit of time during these three years soliciting, emailing, calling and meeting (if I was lucky) a number of people in various companies. In **the first year** alone, I approached no less than 80 companies



(selected on the basis of above mentioned research and analyses) and left well designed brochures with them (after having consulted with friends from PR and marketing agencies) **and the result was exactly zero**. I am sure that you can easily imagine my frustration. The story was almost exactly identical the following year with one major difference.

Even though companies rejected us that first year, people in their marketing and sponsorship departments began to follow what we are doing. The next time that I approached them, they were far more familiar with One Word and – at least with some of them – in the second year we were much closer to making agreements than in the first year. Remarkably, during the second year of our fund-raising efforts focused on companies, we managed to establish a sponsorship agreement with Plzensky Prazdroj (Pilsner Urquell) (general sponsor). A year later, Metrostav joined as second corporate sponsor (main partner).

We maintained very good relations with both corporate sponsors for many years. However, both companies left us (Pilsner Urquell after six years, the Metrostav after four years), but this was probably inevitable. Nothing stays the same forever, but in the meantime, their support has been crucial to develop many good aspects of the One World.

## **A) APPROACHING COMPANIES – AUDIENCE AND VISIBILITY**

Successful film festivals usually have some support from big companies. I have already described the importance of commercial sponsors to the One World festival. So it might come as a surprise, that I feel that you will have an extremely hard time if you need to attract sponsorship from companies. Failure is far more likely than success in this area.

*In order to be attractive for big companies, you need to have certain **audience numbers**, which most human rights festivals never achieve. Furthermore, you need to be able to secure a significant amount of*

**marketing and media visibility** for your event, which is also no small task. Media visibility might not be terribly expensive, since it largely depends on good PR work with journalists and media, but marketing materials, such as advertisements in media, outdoor promotion, broadcasting festival trailer on TV, etc...) is always relatively expensive even when you get reduced, "non-commercial" prices from the agencies that operate these marketing outlets. OW already had a significant audience number (over 25,000 viewers by the fifth year in 2003) and substantial marketing and media visibility (TV spots, advertisements in the major newspapers and radio stations, city-light posters, etc...) before we managed to persuade sponsors to support us (and we made them an offer that their logo will be presented at all our marketing outputs). Once they started to support us, we needed to deliver even more visibility in order to "please" them, which meant that a significant part of the sponsor's funds was used to produce more marketing materials. In the end, all of this resulted in a significant jump in our audience numbers.

In short, if you do not have impressive audience numbers and some level of marketing/media visibility, you will have a lot of problems to persuade any company to support you.

## **B) IT IS HARD TO "SELL" HUMAN RIGHTS**

Even when you have laid all the foundation work necessary to attract corporate sponsors – and with that sponsor's support you have proven that you can generate even bigger audience numbers and greater media attention and more marketing visibility and good opening ceremony – **human rights are still quite hard** to sell to big companies. The basic truth is that companies in principle do not like to deal and to associate their names with issues which are political, controversial, and/or critical (particularly toward governments and I mean any government because in today's globalized world most big companies do not care only about what their own government thinks, but also what for example Chinese government might think about a film you are screening about Tibet, or what Russian government might think about the recent film about the killing of Anna Politkovskaya). Furthermore, companies do not want to be connected with human

suffering, “unpleasant ugly things” in the jargon of the company marketing people too often, if at all.

It is true that there is a growing number of companies which – under criticism and pressure from civil society and concerned consumers, or by following the trends set up by others, mainly image building by multinational companies – put in their marketing policy also social responsibility and philanthropy. My experience is that you have **more chances to succeed with companies in which marketing people and top managers have heard about “company social responsibility”, but at the same time, human rights are not exactly what companies mean by social responsibility.** For companies (at least those I have dealt with) social responsibility meant either focus on the social environment of the communities where they are placed in (classical example, a big company located in a smaller city sponsors a lot of sport, cultural, youth and civic sector activities in that city) or more old traditional forms of corporate philanthropy targeting children, handicapped, poor and vulnerable groups. When you consider that film festivals tend to be rather broad and international in the variety of topics you cover, and pretty controversial in many domestic topics you pick up, they do not exactly fit to any of the typical goals of the socially responsible corporate sponsorship policies.

My experience with big well known multinational companies is such that I don't think that it is worth dedicating much time approaching them. The local management of those companies generally neither has a budget, nor a mandate to decide on its own about things that might influence the image and the brand of the company. And local management will never (or very, very rarely) risk its own position in the company to try to “sell” your human rights festival to its headquarters somewhere back in US, UK, Germany or wherever.

### **C) WHAT TO OFFER**

As I have said above, you need audience and visibility to attract support of sponsors, but at the same time it is **not advertisement space you “sell” them.** When companies need advertisements,

they simply buy them and they usually do it better than you could. Audience and advertisement is *conditio sine qua non* of your “offer” to the companies, but not the selling point. **Values are your only serious selling point.** That is the only exceptional “thing” you have which companies might want to have in their image portfolio, and which they cannot obtain just by buying advertisement space or to pay some agency to organize entertainment events for them. So when you approach and talk with companies prepare yourself not only to talk about ads and places where their logo will be exposed, but more about the **values that you represent and how that could improve their brand in the society.**

**Celebrities** are helpful when you want to attract sponsors. Lessons can be learned from UNICEF and its cooperation with international celebrities. But you need to be very careful with which celebrities you want to ally yourself. You cannot cheat the audience. **You should only have those celebrities as patrons, who really share and represent your set of values.**

## D) KNOW WHO IS WHO

**Personal contacts matter.** If you do not know the people personally (in the marketing departments, but even more important are top managerial echelons), then make an effort to get to know at least some of them. It is hard and takes time and it is very probable that, when you finally socialize with them (for example at some reception or at the opening of some other event) you will find that those people are “from the other planet” than you are. Probably, they will find you even more out there.

Following this line of consideration, and based on the concrete and recent social habits in the Czech Republic I could also add that these days golf matters. Five to ten years ago I would probably have said tennis matters. If it is any consolation, I do not play either one. If you do not intend to change the way in which you spend your free time, at least try not to forget to make an effort of building some sort of personal relation even with those from whom you have unsuccessfully asked support. Do not approach them only when you are trying to

fundraise. **Invite them to the opening of the festival** and offer them several free passes to the screenings. Study the list of whom they support in their philanthropic activities and if possible, offer some special benefit to those whom they support (for example a free screening to clients of their support program).

## E) KNOW YOUR PRODUCT INTIMATELY

Another piece of advice – we have tried two separate times to delegate corporate fundraising responsibilities to people outside the core festival team and that did not work. We have learned that **only those who are intimately close with and committed to the festival have any chances to sell it to corporate people**. Your “product” is so hard to sell that only you have the passion and the knowledge which might work.

Last but not the least, most of the companies will ultimately judge your request by the simple question – how many new customers will we get thanks to the “investment” in this event? And an honest response would most likely be – not more than few. Due to that, your chances to be successful with companies are not great. That does not mean that you should not make an effort, but rather that you should not give up after several failures.

# IV. EUROPEAN UNION

## A) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FESTIVALS IN EU MEMBER STATES

The European Union has a special funding program called MEDIA ([http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/media](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media)), which supports film festivals, as well as the production, promotion and distribution of films. If your festival is based in an EU member state, you can submit requests directly to the European Commission in Brussels, but you can also get information, advice and assistance from the “MEDIA desk” in your own country. OW has been getting support from the MEDIA program since 2003 (10,000, 15,000, 25,000 and finally 35,000 EURO). Several other festivals associated with the

Human Rights Film Network have submitted requests, but none have been successful. It is a very competitive program. MEDIA tends to support **already established festivals with a proven track record of being capable of attracting bigger audience and media attention, as well as ones which can prove that they have helped European films to be sold to TVs or to film distribution agents that will help get them distributed to cinemas.** The core mission of MEDIA is to help European film production survive and thrive in the market competition with the Hollywood film production. MEDIA also usually turns down so called "topical festivals," those who do not program films as art or selling goods to TV and cinema distributors, but as human right films, or films focused on gay and lesbian, environmental or gender issues, extreme sports, music, etc... Either way it could still be worth it for you to consult with the MEDIA desk officer in your country. The rules and modus operandi of various EU programs change from time to time and new opportunities show up.

*There are other EU programs, some of which are offered several years in a row and other are announced for just a particular year, which might be interesting for you and meet your organization's criteria. For example, Youth program of the European Commission (<http://europa.eu/youth>) with program "desk offices" in EU countries might be an opportunity. The EU announces special themes on the annual basis that it wants to highlight, for example European Year of the equal opportunities, multiculturalism, etc.... So it makes sense to **be in touch with the EU delegation** in your country and to follow web sites in your country regularly that specialize in announcing EU calls for proposals.*

## **B) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FESTIVALS IN NON-EU MEMBER STATES**

*If you are not based in an EU member state, but in a transition society, post-conflict society, developing country or a country where human rights are at risk, my guess is that you have a good chance with various EU programs. Decentralized cooperation, neighborhood instruments and other acronyms and phrases are something you will*

need to become familiar with, another example is **Europe Aid** (<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/>) or **EIDHR – the European Institute for Democracy and Human Rights** ([http://www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/eidhr/index\\_en.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/eidhr/index_en.htm)). **The best start is to study the web site of the EU delegation in your country and then go visit the Delegation in person**, talk with them and let them give you advice. The EU delegation is not only important because they can give you proper information and advice, but also because someone from the Delegation will probably evaluate your request (he or she will not be the only evaluator, but will be an important one) and usually it is helpful if they know who you are. In this case, you should not present your festival as something taking place once a year for several days. You need to develop and present your festival just as a starting point of half a year or year long activities with youth, vulnerable groups, public or however you define your target group.

One more good advice: **almost all EU grant application forms are hard to fill**. It takes time and a certain amount of experience and knowledge to do it correctly. I know many people who have been so discouraged by the log-frames, methodology and other specifics of EU forms that they started to fill the grant requests, but have given up before they reached the end and have started to complain about EU granting procedures as being too bureaucratic, too complicated, too slow and too inflexible. All of which might be true. But the truth is also that the EU is one of the most generous donors in support for civil society and human rights, which are important themes of its foreign assistance programs. Once you learn how to submit the requests to EU and how to fill the forms, then it is not such a monumental task as it looks at the beginning. I suggest you attend some of the training courses provided by the EU that offer instruction on how to fill out EU forms. Or find someone who has already successfully applied and ask him/her to assist you. Do not wait until the next call for proposal will be announced again, but if you know that it will be announced again, start to fill it in advance in order to practice and finish in time. Most likely, all of you will share the experience of failing once or twice before you actually learn how to fill the form properly and how to put your ideas into the language and structure of typical of EU forms.

*In conclusion, you could easily spend three years approaching various companies and you may or may not be successful, but if you spent far less time researching opportunities within the EU program lines and applying to calls for proposals, I am almost certain you will be successful.*

## V. TICKETS

One World sells tickets and we share the income from box office with cinemas, instead of paying a price for renting the space. Once you start to have a significant number of visitors, your share of income at the box office will start to matter in your overall budget. It most likely will never be a significant amount of money, but it is important because it is "free," you can use it for whatever you want. There will be always costs you can not account for to any donor, which will make the money you get from tickets indispensable to cover exactly such costs. You will also have some unplanned costs and emergencies. So my strongest advice is: sell tickets for a reasonable price. Keep in mind that your audience will most probably like to see more than one film during the festival, but **never** offer entrance for free. You will end up having fewer people, rather than more if it is free. In short, having a free entrance shows a lack of confidence in the attractiveness of your program.

## VI. HOW I WOULD FUNDRAISE FOR A NEW FESTIVAL

If I was asked to develop a new human rights festival in a country which falls under one of the following categories: transition society, post-conflict society or failed state, development country or where human rights are at risk, I will probably do it in a following way.

First of all, I would align myself with one or maybe even two of the existing human rights film festivals in Europe.



As far as funding for this first edition, I would try to find resources from the international foundations already operating in the country and with the foreign embassies.

And I would focus most of my energy on getting as many people to the cinemas and to secure as much media and marketing visibility as you can achieve with a very modest budget.

After the first year, I would have several reference points, such as the festival catalogue, poster, website, certain number of audience and media attention, which can be very helpful with any future fundraising.

Immediately after the completion of the first edition of the festival, I would visit everyone who helped me during the first year, show them results structured in a series of well laid out reports with pictures and charts. I would also express my gratitude and try to secure their continuous support for the future. At the same time, I would approach **all of the other donors operating in my country** and try to get their support. In addition to that, together with the festivals in Europe that I partnered with, I would try to approach the development cooperation programs in countries where my European partners are based. Almost all EU countries have relatively rich and generous **development assistance programs** and you just need to find the right angle on how to approach them and how to make your effort fit into their priorities, their program lines and funding cycles. It might take you a year or two, but you have a pretty good chance of garnering the support that would be significant enough for your overall needs.

Parallel to that, I would take a look at the following potential opportunities:

- Open Society Institute, [www.osi.org](http://www.osi.org)
- National Endowment for Democracy, [www.ned.org](http://www.ned.org)
- Other US foundations: Ford Foundation [www.fordfound.org](http://www.fordfound.org)
- Charles S. Mott Foundation, [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org)

- The European delegation programs in my country or European Commission programs which aim to support the strengthening of civil society in my country or region
- Various European political foundations like Heinrich Boll Foundation [www.boell.org](http://www.boell.org), The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, [www.kas.de](http://www.kas.de) *(if they support programs in my country)*
- UN agencies programs in your country UNHCR [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org), UNICEF [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org); *(UNHCR will probably not be able to give you significant support because their core mandate is different, but they might have some funds which can be used to cover films on specific topics, such as refugees and internally displaced persons, children etc...)*
- Have a look also at the international NGO scene in your country; some international NGOs might have funds that could help you if you offer them films, debates and public awareness actions about topics they are dealing with. Just to mention one example, if the Dutch NGO HIVOS ([www.hivos.nl](http://www.hivos.nl)) is active in your country, they might be quite interested to take your project in consideration.
- Check also what possibilities you have in regionally operating foundations *(for example for OW support of Czech-Germany Future Fund, International Visegrad Fund [www.visegradfund.org](http://www.visegradfund.org), CEE Trust [www.ceetrust.org](http://www.ceetrust.org) has been important)*

If I was asked to start the festival in a **democratic country**, then my fundraising targets would be different. Again, I would start with aligning myself with one or two already established festivals in order to get their assistance with programming. **Foundations and endowments operating in my country and embassies and cultural institutes would be the basis on which I build upon**, but in this case, their support will be far more limited in amounts. However, I would aim for **public funding** to be my long term goal. Since I believe that it is the only realistic solid foothold for sustainable development over time. If you fail to secure that, your funding portfolio will end up being far more fragile. Only after securing various foundations' and public sources of funding, and after reaching certain level of marketing and media visibility and

certain number of audience, I would start to approach commercial sponsors (but as said earlier don't start preparing for a marathon before you have even taken your first deep breath).

## VII: STRUCTURE OF COSTS AND HOW IT CHANGES OVER TIME

### FILMS

In order to screen films, you must somehow **find, preview and select** them. You can see films by visiting other festivals, which is expensive, or by watching preview DVD copies.

After selecting films you need to **transport** them to and from your country (regular post is not reliable, so in the end you will probably have to use couriers like TNT, DHL, FedEx, etc...), **translate and subtitle** them (or use simultaneous translation).

You will probably need to **rent projectors**, Beta and digital players, since many cinemas are only equipped with 35 mm film projectors.

You should also include in your budget the payments necessary for **screening rights**.

### INDISPENSABLE INFORMATION MATERIAL

Having a **Website, catalogue, informational flyer and poster** are a must. You need that to inform your audience, but also to have some documents that you can reference about your event once it is finishes. When the festival is over, several photos and those print documents will be the only proof that you exist and who you are. Make all these documents in your local language and in English. The English version will help you with filmmakers and potential foreign donors.

### PROMOTION AND ADVERTISEMENT

I have always been a strong advocate of the investment in promotion and advertisement. You need to bring an **audience** to

the cinema and **advertisements simply help**. I have a habit of saying, if one stops and considers that advertisement and only advertisement has persuaded many of us to drink and pay for water wrapped in plastic bottles although we have tapped water of the same quality for free, than why not use similar marketing tricks to persuade people to watch human rights films. One World would never have drawn such a big audience, if we have had not invested a lot of effort, time and funds in marketing.

Since advertisement will always cost you precious funds, **my advice will be to allocate one fourth of your overall budget** for such expenses. It can be better to have fewer films, fewer filmmakers and fewer venues, smaller side events, but spend more on advertisement, because it will mean that you will have bigger audience, will have to fill fewer screenings in fewer venues and everyone will be inspired and happy.

## ACCOMPANYING EVENTS

I have seen many occasions in which festival organizers have spent quite a bit of time, energy and funds in side events such as ceremonial openings, photo exhibitions, concerts, parties, seminars, etc.... My advice is: **do not spend too much time and money on such activities** during the initial years of your festival. You can do all that when you have bigger audiences, more media coverage, and a larger budget for such things. In the beginning, concentrate on the quality of the film program, fundraising, media relations and PR, advertisement and outreach activities (such as visiting schools in your neighborhood and persuading teachers to bring their classes to screening and debate). You can spend a lot of money organizing a concert by a popular band, only to find out that the people attending the concert won't necessarily come back tomorrow to see a documentary film. They have shown up just to hear and dance to tunes of the band, and have not been drawn towards your festival.

## HOW WILL YOUR BUDGET CHANGE OVER TIME?

With each additional year of the festival, there will be constant pressure on certain budget items that you will be most likely to be forced to spend more money on:

- People working for the festival. You will want to keep people on staff, who have learned how to organize festivals and that have proven their valuable qualities. However, in order to keep good people, you will have to pay them.
- Screening rights.
- Obligation to invite guests.
- The technical quality of projection and sound.
- More sophisticated selection of films, which means visiting other festivals, doing your own research for new films, opening submissions which means previewing more and more films each year.



PRODUCTION  
**AND**  
TECHNICAL  
SUPPORT

# PRODUCTION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

By **TEREZA PORYBNÁ**, One World Human Rights Film Festival  
(with special thanks to Marek Vozka and Hana Kulhánková for their comments)

No matter how good your ideas are you won't be able to turn them into reality without a practical production team and no matter how good your program is you always need some technical support to convey it to your audience. From our experience, in the early years we spent so much energy on raising money and putting together an original and creative program that at times we were too tired to pay enough attention to "details" such as checking screening formats or the quality of sponsor logos on PR material.

This chapter should offer some points that can serve as guidelines or checklists for you.

Everything of course depends on the size of your team and how complicated your festival structure is. Advice in this chapter is focused mainly on festivals located in one place; travelling festivals that screen from mobile cinemas have, naturally, quite different strategies and needs. Please also take the timeline as a subjective example.

The person in charge of production should be practical and have a good overall view of the festival. You should always have someone who is responsible for the production aspects.

Depending on the size, you can also have a production assistant, technical production person, print and graphic production, and



accompanying events production. There are individuals who are capable of being in control of all these tasks at once. And sometimes even very successfully. Despite our admiration for these super-humans, we think it is essential to divide the tasks and not overload the production staff.

## **SOME GENERAL RULES**

- Write down your priorities – good planning is half the work.
- Look at the list of things you want to do, create an approximate budget and realistically decide what you can manage.
- Always have plenty of your business cards, always take a card from the people you are meeting and try not to lose it the minute you put it in your pocket. Seriously, maintaining a good database of contacts is extremely important.
- Try to be systematic – avoid having too many excel files – update regularly.
- Back-up your important documents – e.g. by using an external hard disk or the Google documents application.
- Meet with your festival colleagues on a regular basis and be aware of what is new in the film program and other parts of the festival.



## TIMELINE

### 10–8 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL (OR EVEN SOONER)

- **Key programming and financial decisions** (*festival concept, budget, fixing dates*)
- During this phase try to talk to various people in the field about their experience, get advice and recommendations. **Also always watch strategies of events similar to yours** (*who are their partners, what PR campaign do they have, does it work, etc*).



Photo by L. Kotek

- **Selecting and pre-arranging venues** – have your accompanying events in mind.
- When preparing your first festival our advice is not to book too big and too many cinema halls. Think in terms of **creating a festival center** – a place where people can hang out after the screening, where you can place information for guests, decorate it with film posters, etc. It adds a lot to the festival atmosphere if you manage to create a space like this. A cinema with a large café is ideal.

- **Developing a promotion strategy** – outdoor and media-based (*this includes for example thinking about the number of posters, catalogues, invitations, banners, advertisements, TV commercials, internet campaigns, etc.*). Think of places in your festival location where you can place posters. For this purpose it is useful to make a **media plan** (*see attached to this chapter*) a table including all the places where you can promote your festival (*print, internet, outdoor*). This will also be a useful item for meeting with sponsors and partners – you can show them where they can promote themselves during the festival. You will of course be revising this plan several times.
- If you don't have one already, start **creating your logo** (*or approach someone to do it*). Also start looking for a graphic designer who could help you later with **the over-all visual presentation of your festival**. The visual presentation is important, but unless you have really good connections or circumstances don't get too obnoxious about it during your first year. Our advice is to **try to avoid the stereotypical human rights representations**. In any case, start gathering contacts for good graphic designers who can help you develop an attractive image – you will need this for sponsor material too.
- Fundraising – preparing information for sponsors etc.
- Monitor available grants from the European Union, Open Society Institute, various other foundations or the government – if you can, start doing this even earlier – it is never too early.
- **In kind partnership** (*advantageous exchange of services*) – e.g. hotels, projectors, recorders, catering, shipping agent, printing houses – at this stage you don't need to confirm anything, just find out what the best options are for you.
- **Looking for media partnerships**
- **Try to meet all the potential partners in person**. In the beginning, just to introduce yourself. Often, people in professional marketing or the film production business can be tough to get to, so it is good to know from the beginning who you are dealing with.

## 8-4 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- **Arranging festival venues** – final agreements, confirmation.
- **Hotels:** pre-booking; don't feel you have to specify everything in detail, just keep track of the options.
- Once confirmed, don't forget to have **written agreements** with cinemas, media partners, technical partners, etc., including all details of your cooperation.
- **Advertising, printed media and TV** – start to prepare concrete agreements regarding media partnership. Approach the "big" media first. Keep a table of the pre-arranged advertisements, so you can track when each ad is planned to appear in the media. Avoid having several ads showing the same day.
- **Other forms of marketing and PR** (*such as marketing in educational institutions, partnership with certain websites, community centers, etc.*): gather possibilities and specify the agreements.
- Start to **collect logos** of confirmed sponsors and partners, which you should mention in the festival PR material. You may find it useful to put them on a list according to their importance.
- **Pre-book technical equipment** for screenings or accompanying events (*projectors, microphones, DVD or beta players, etc.*).
- Keep your eyes open for **good editors**, technical production managers, gifted film students who may be willing to help you with the fest.
- **Together with the programming department, decide about whether to subtitle films, or translate simultaneously.** Both require certain technical support – headphones and an "interpreter's booth" for the simultaneous interpretation are usually provided by specialized companies, or the cinema may have its own. For subtitling nowadays you usually just need a simple subtitling program, a laptop, projector and a small table to put all this on with a little lamp that the person subtitling in the dark can use in case of a problem. With this method you subtitle the films under the screen. You can also re-subtitle the whole film on a computer – this way you have a new DVD copy

with the required language. This can be advantageous for travelling festivals, because you don't have to carry all of the subtitling equipment with you. If you are not sure how to arrange this, you can always get in touch with some art cinema or other festival in your area for advice. Subtitling is usually more pleasant for the audience, but in some cases simultaneous translation can be the easiest option.

- **Take a walk** around the city and look at places to distribute your material (*pubs, clubs, schools, cultural institutions, info centers...*) and also what type works best for your location. You can start making a list of these places.

#### 4-3 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- By this time you should have most things arranged and you move into the implementation phase. The program should be at some reasonably defined state, you should have decided about the festival image, logo, and motto, you should have finalized your advertising possibilities.
- If you are planning to do a festival trailer, make sure you have funds and people to do it.
- Start thinking about the **festival center** – ways to decorate it, or if you should arrange extra services for festival guests – for example free internet access. It is also important for the journalists to have some sort of a press center and an info stand for the festival guests.
- If your festival is a competition one then you should start thinking **about awards to give** – or if you want any special prize for an audience competition, etc. Local art-work is always a good option; sometimes local art and design schools can be a source. Again, you can try to barter the prize – offer to give it the name of some cultural institution or other type of donor in exchange for a financial award. For documentary filmmakers, even smaller financial awards are probably the best thing you can offer them.
- If you need space for accompanying events, double-check availability of pre-confirmed spaces.

- Figure out a **ticketing system** with your partner cinemas. Also, think about **festival passes for guests**, members of the public and organizers. If you are screening only a few films it is not worth making special passes, but once it's more than 15 it makes sense to offer the audience a pass with which they can get e.g. 15 screenings for the price of 10. You will also need all-access passes for the festival team, and some type of passes for the invited guests who you want to have free access to screenings.
- If you are expecting more international guests, try to arrange some **barter with a taxi company** or car rental firm. Make sure you have a car (*or several*) and drivers available full time for the festival period.
- **Insurance!** – make sure you have some system of insuring all the technical and other equipment; accidents happen and it will save you a lot of stress if you have all this figured out. Also, clearly set a system of responsibility of the festival team in case they cause some damage.

## 2 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- **Start gathering volunteers** for the festival.
- **Prepare for printing** – revise how many posters, catalogues, flyers or materials you will need and can afford to pay. There are also endless possibilities for other marketing objects – t-shirts, bags, balloons, pens, bookmarks, yo-yos... etc.; you can invest in them depending on your budget or barter possibilities. Always check logos and dates – ideally crosscheck with someone.
- Develop a **system of inviting guests** to your opening and closing ceremony.
- **Update your contact database** and the list of people you want to invite.
- Invite your donors to give a speech at the opening/closing ceremony.
- If you have to create some **film trailers**, or a **festival trailer for television**, start preparing these. You need a place or program to prepare the film trailers. If you don't have your

own editing program (*Adobe Premiere, Final Cut Pro, Avid, STORM, etc.*) you can arrange it with some editing company or film school.

## 1 MONTH BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- **Subtitles and translations** – check if everything is ready on the technical side.
- All the **PR material should be in print** by this time – before it goes double check all logos and ads you agreed to place.
- Finalize and update the list of people you want for the opening/closing.
- Prepare invitations for the opening event and send them out on time – **10 days before the event** – ask for confirmation of attendance. For the main partners you can also attach the festival catalogue and pass.
- Together with the program department develop a **sheet with all projections** and film copies. Clearly label the screening copies – with the date, time, venue, language version and format details.
- Regularly help the program department to **check all the film copies and masters**. Especially if you are showing films from DVDs, it is recommended to verify if they work in the players you will use in the cinema. Make back up copies (*you can also put films on your hard disk. For 35mm prints, be sure you know what speed they have (it can be either 24 fps or 25 fps)*, clearly mark it on the print cover, and inform the projectionists about it (*the same for formats and systems of Beta tapes*).
- A couple of days before the festival, when you have most of the film copies in your office, the technical production team **should finalize the labeling and develop a strategy of distributing copies in the cinemas**. Ideally, one person should be in charge of this the whole time.
- **Train your volunteers**, divide tasks, and choose the most responsible ones to help you with the cinemas and technical matters. A useful model is when you have one experienced or capable volunteer monitoring each cinema. He or she should just be there from the first screening to the last and check that all screening copies are prepared. If not he or she should



call the production manager or program department. If there is a Q&A after the screening, the volunteer should announce it and check if the guests have arrived, and notify the guest services if that didn't happen.

- Arrange some volunteers to **distribute posters and flyers**, send catalogues to your partners. It is usually not enough to just tell the volunteers to do something; make sure at least in the beginning they really did it and how. If possible, make two distribution rounds (*two weeks and a week before the festival*). Don't forget to put posters/flyers and a couple of catalogues in your festival venues.

## DURING THE FESTIVAL

- During the festival the **technical production is crucial**. Check every afternoon/evening that you have everything ready for the next day – screening copy, microphones, projectors, chairs for debates, catering for reception.
- **The opening/closing ceremony** – if you are doing a bigger event – book time for the rehearsal the day of the ceremony, check the sound and projection, translation equipment if you need to use it, prepare award certificates or awards if necessary, double-check with speakers that they know when and where to appear. Reserve seats for partners, sponsors and other VIP guests.
- It is good to have **regular morning meetings** with the whole team where you analyze the previous day, prepare for the upcoming one and solve urgent problems.
- **Always keep your cell phone charged** – make sure you have an extra charger or two in the festival center.
- **Have all important numbers in your phone** – when something goes wrong you won't have time to look for a piece of paper. You can also make little contact cards with phone numbers of all the festival team and other important people.
- **Walk around all the venues every day**; check for yourself how things are going.

## AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- Clean up all cinemas.
- **Return all rented material as soon as possible** – before something gets lost.
- **Do not delay with financial things** – checking invoices, accounting – you will not want to think about it three weeks after the festival.
- A nice touch is to write a **thank-you letter or email** to people who helped you – volunteers, friends, etc. Ask for feedback or even send them a questionnaire.
- Start preparing **the final report**. Once it is ready make sure to send it to all important donors, sponsors, media partners. For the most crucial partners you can also add a small gift – for example at One World we gave a DVD with the awarded film. Beware of clearing the copyright if you want to do so.
- Conduct an analysis for yourself of what went wrong and what went well. Write down all your contacts and important experiences, so you can pass them on.





# HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY PROMOTE YOUR FESTIVAL

# HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY PROMOTE YOUR FESTIVAL

By **KARLA ŠTĚPÁNKOVÁ**, former Head of the Media Department of People in Need and **FILIP ŠEBEK**, PR, One World Festival

There is a “golden rule” that everybody who would like to work closely with media should be aware of: **If you want to be successful in communication with mainstream media you have to try to understand them as much as possible.**

## TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE MEDIA

- Do not think that the article on which you worked with the journalist for hours will be perfect and there will not be any mistakes.
- If you come up with a really good phrase or description of what you are doing, repeat it again and again with the same words.
- Try to understand the journalist’s behaviour; try to understand his duties, his audience, his ideas...
- Try to be easy going, relaxed and do not look like you must save the world!
- Read the newspapers, magazines, listen to the radio and watch TV!

## COMMUNICATING WITH JOURNALISTS (CODE OF COMMUNICATION USED IN PEOPLE IN NEED)

- We need journalists for our work and so we communicate with them.
- We do not use the answer “no comment”.

- We do not respond to articles printed in tabloids or extremist magazines.
- We answer truthfully, we do not exaggerate the issues we highlight or the experience of guests (*activists, filmmakers, witnesses*) we invite, and we do not promise wonders!

Some journalists are terribly lazy or they have a lot of other work. Consequently, it is advisable to send them information that has been **customised for their media outlet**. You can offer to send them an article about the festival in the scope and form they would like, which they can then simply reprint with their own by-line added.

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Don't forget to **inundate them with photographs** (using pictures of women for women's magazines, etc.). A text with photos always has a better chance of being noticed by readers.

It is necessary to find out the **printing deadlines** of monthlies, weeklies, etc. and to send them the information in good time!!!

## PR TEAM

Bring together a **PR team**. In the case of the One World Film Festival the team consists of a Press Person of the festival, the editor of the catalogue, and the director of the festival responsible for preparation of the **communication strategy and media plan**. The communication strategy consists of:

**Products:** press releases, press conferences, advertisements, interviews, press clippings, mailing

**Timing:** some magazines are prepared several weeks before printing, so at least four months before the festival, the PR strategy must be ready

**Explanation:** at every step try to answer the question: Why should my festival or this issue be of interest to this newspaper/magazine?

## CONTACTS

Start working on a **contact database**. You should have a good-quality mailing list for all editorial offices and journalists who could be informed of the event. **Read the newspapers and magazines as much as possible during the year** and, if you like an article, write down the name of the author and try to find his or her contact details. Try to establish a broad **network of partners** (PR and media agencies, other festivals, sponsors, donors, VIPs). Do not contact them only when you need them but try to invite them to informal activities (opening ceremony, your festival anniversaries, Christmas parties).

When sending out a mass e-mail with the press release and photos attached, you can write the following in the main body of the message: *Dear Sir/Madam, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you about an upcoming event...* and provide the relevant information in a few sentences. It is a good idea to add a short press release to the main body of the message (under the signature). **Many journalists don't open attachments** if they don't have to...

It is then necessary to write personalised messages to specific journalists. These should be polite but as personal as possible, e.g. *Dear XY, I would like to let you know about...* If someone you write to doesn't reply, then it is necessary to call them. Try their land line first. If that fails, then ring their mobile number and say that you just wanted to make sure they received your e-mail message...

Ideally, you should have mobile numbers for all journalists!!!

## PRESS RELEASE

It is necessary to write a high-quality press release about the festival. It should also contain an interesting quote from the festival director with specific information concerning the festival program (as a kind of enticement). Furthermore, it should contain a quote on the importance of the festival from someone who is a



patron of the event. **Journalists like quotes**, which they can then simply reuse in their articles and reports.

The press release must contain basic information about the event, organizers, dates, ticket costs, venues etc. right at the beginning (the journalistic rule of **who, what, when, where, why and how**). It is then a good idea to highlight the most attractive and essential films from the program, but one should not forget to **emphasise accompanying events** as well.

The **first** press release can be sent out **two months before** the event together with a visual image of the festival or with one attractive photograph from a film (which should not be bigger than 1 MB). Additional information can be added to the press release as the event draws near. Ideally, you should have one brief press release and one longer one, with tips about more films.

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## VISUAL PRESENTATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS

It is necessary to have **high-quality photographs from selected films**. If possible, they should be attractive pictures, which say something clear and definite about the film in question. You should offer to send these to journalists. You should also place them on the Internet, where they can be downloaded in as big a size as possible.

As regards the visual image (poster) of the festival, it is good to have one without logos and one with them. The logos should be about half a megabyte in size, ideally in vectors.

## HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE PUBLIC

Try to put up as many **advertisements** as possible. Prepare a visual image of your festival and be ready to prepare it in the size and style the newspapers ask for. You can use traditional ways of advertising (billboards, newspapers, magazines, TV,

radio spot). Start to communicate with your partners as early as possible. Use not only the traditional means of public relations (communication through media and journalists, press releases, press conferences, write commentaries, features, arrange interviews, use a website for direct communication), **but also use alternative means of PR.**

**For example** – promote your festival on the Internet using content related websites, network systems like myspace or facebook (it is cheap, effective and flexible), or in the special supplements of newspapers. You can also use advertisements placed on shopping baskets, free postcards distributed in cafés, stickers, etc... **A proper festival website is a must!** Even with a very simple design, invest your time in updating information on-line.

## PRESS CONFERENCE

It is a good idea to **hold a press conference about two weeks to 6 days before the event.** You should make sure to check beforehand that there is nothing else happening for journalists on the same day. The exact time when to start a press conference varies regionally – if you are not sure, just check with other festivals or NGOs. In Central Europe the best time to start is usually between 9 am and 11 am. It is said that Mondays and Fridays are not good days for press conferences (too close to the weekend).

**You also need to book a location** – do this in good time (six weeks to four months in advance). Don't wait until the last minute. In the case of festivals, the easiest option is one of your festival venues. If that is not possible for some reason, hire a place where journalists are used to going.

**Send out invitations to your press conference five or four days before it takes place.** You can coordinate this with your

local news agency, which should be sending out a list of upcoming events to journalists on a regular basis.

**The invitation should be short, and contain all important facts** (the place, time, topic, who is talking, etc.). Be sure to include all your contact details. A day before the press conference you can remind the journalists individually by email or with a phone call. You can explain why it would be interesting for them to come, but never be pushy.

You should always check that everything is working at the venue before the press conference starts (microphones, projectors, etc.).

### **THE FOLLOWING SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED:**

- Several copies of the latest press release
- Name tags for speakers
- A CD with PR material or film stills (*if you manage to prepare it*)
- Festival catalogues or other materials about your organization
- Festival passes (*if you want to distribute them to journalists*)
- A 10-15 minute trailer of the best movies you are presenting. This should be screened before the press conference starts
- Catering – snacks, fruit, coffee, tea. (*It's OK to keep it simple*).

Try to have a moderator introducing the individual speakers. Be concise and keep it short (approx. 30 minutes for the whole presentation, followed by a 15-minute Q & A session). When you are talking about the festival program, bear in mind that not many people in the room have ever heard of these films. Mention the films that received prestigious awards or which have an unusually compelling topic.

At the end of the press conference, thank everybody for coming, and use the spare moments afterwards to speak to journalists directly. Ask them for contact details, etc.



## INTERVIEWS WITH THE FILMMAKERS

Interviews with guests and filmmakers are an ideal opportunity to get your event in the media. In this respect, it is a good idea to find out **which journalists specialise in specific subjects** and to offer them the chance of an interview. Naturally, the more important media outlets should be given priority. Coordinate with the festival guest service regarding the availability of guests for interviews or press conferences.



*Photo by L. Kotek*

## CONCLUSION

Archive everything that is printed about the event. Then, when it is over, compile the longest possible **Summary of Media Responses**. You can subsequently use this to show sponsors how successful the event was and what a high profile it had. If something is not covered in the media, it is as though it didn't exist... :-)

## TIMELINE

### UP TO 10 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL:

- Build a communication team and communication strategy
- Develop a contacts database
- Start building the festival website

### 8–3 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Advertising, printed media and TV – first arrangements, pre-booking
- Alternative strategies: research, preparation (*e.g. creating a facebook profile*)
- Put basic info on the festival website (*and other internet profiles*)

### 3–1 MONTH(S) BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Gathering images
- Sending out the first press release (*ca. 2 months prior to the event*)
- Update info on website, add film photos

### 1 MONTH BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Offering journalists specific film titles and names of guests
- Preparing the press conference (*should take place ca. 1 week before festival*)
- Complete program available on website
- Send updated press release

### DURING THE FESTIVAL

- Arrange and check on interviews with filmmakers
- Monitor media
- Update information constantly
- Make sure you have a photographer take pics of the festival

### AFTER THE FESTIVAL:

- Archive all material
- Save database of contacts
- Submit a summary of press responses
- If somebody wrote a good article thank him/her







GUEST  
SERVICES

# GUEST SERVICES

By **TEREZA PORYBNÁ**, One World Human Rights Film Festival

This section deals primarily with taking care of the international guests you invite to your festival: filmmakers, producers, activists etc. All the advice excluding the transport and accommodation applies naturally to local guests as well. First, we will offer you some general remarks on having guests at the festival, followed by an outline of tasks for the guest-service coordinator.

Most human rights film festivals will during their first or second edition have a very limited budget for international guests. But in my opinion this is not really a problem. Especially if you have a small team and are not sure about the audience attendance, it is better to invite fewer people and give them extra care than to overestimate your capacities and run into trouble. An unhappy filmmaker can cause as much damage to the festival image, as a happy one can unrealistically laud it.

A common consideration is that the presence of international filmmakers will bring higher media attention. But this is not always the case as most journalists have never heard of the filmmakers with films in your festival. So, unless you have some extremely well known names like Werner Herzog or Michael Moore, you should be realistic in your expectations of the media and public interest.

However, filmmakers do obviously add a nice touch to the festival feeling and they are especially valuable for the audience after screenings. Always make sure you give the guest filmmaker a good screening time. Or if he or she is participating in a round table or other type of discussion, make sure it has good timing and that

you have at least five people attending, even if they are festival volunteers. Try to be there yourself; if you are able to moderate the discussion, do it. If not, arrange a Q-and-A coordinator, who will monitor the debates on your behalf. Always prepare at least one question in case no-one asks anything.

If you program local films, which we encourage you to do, always try to get the filmmaker to the screening.

Make your guests feel welcome. Spend time with them. Even if there are problems – which always occur – such as low technical quality of screening, crappy hotel, small audience turnout, you can always make it better by acknowledging it, and explaining the festival situation to the guest.

Maintain relationships with your guests, ask them for feedback. For One World it was extremely helpful, in many ways even essential, to have good long-lasting relationships with filmmakers, festival organizers and distributors who came to the Prague festival. Some of them really developed a close understanding of our goals as a festival and later became sort of “good will ambassadors” for us. For example, when you start travelling to big international festivals, having someone to introduce you and tell people about your work makes things much easier.

## THE GUEST SERVICE COORDINATOR

Even though you will probably not have a proper “guest-service department” it is essential to have one person who holds all the relevant information and communicates with guests prior to and during the festival. Ideally, this person should also have a volunteer helping during the actual festival period. This is a list of the basic tasks the coordinator should be responsible for.



## **1. ACCOMMODATION:**

a) Find out about reasonable hotels preferably near the festival center. Pre-book rooms in advance. It is nice to have the international guests in one hotel, but not essential.

b) Find out about accommodation possibilities from cultural institutes who can support your festival in this way. Many embassies or institutes have flats or some facilities where they can place your guests. However, you need to ask in advance, as often these facilities are booked a long time ahead.



*Photo by L. Kotek*

## 2. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

You will probably be using a lot of low cost air-tickets; just bear in mind that people sometimes change their arrangements at the last minute, so it is better to wait with the booking until the guest is completely sure. But on the other hand, the sooner you book the ticket, the cheaper the price usually is. Definitely book the ticket well in advance for guests from countries far away, where you cannot get a low-cost ticket. **Do not forget about VISA arrangements!** Find out which countries need visas to enter your country and find out what the procedure for each country is

– what documents you or the guest have to fill in, how long the entire procedure takes, etc. Also, make sure you have **CELL PHONE numbers of all the guests that are coming** and they should have yours or the guest coordinator's.

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You can find out about cheap flights at [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com), [www.cheapflights.com](http://www.cheapflights.com) [www.compareairlineprices.net](http://www.compareairlineprices.net), [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) etc. In Europe, low cost flights are offered by airlines SkyEurope, SmartWings or easyJet. You can check [www.low-cost-airline-guide.com](http://www.low-cost-airline-guide.com) for other companies.

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### 3. COORDINATE WITH THE PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT

Once you have the screening dates settled, try to bring the guest so he/she attends all their screenings. Or, if it is someone you really want at the festival, ask him/her beforehand what the best time is and program the film/event accordingly. Also the programming department should inform if the guest might be a bit problematic (or a special VIP) and you should take extra care of him/her, explain what other events he/she should attend – meaning those not related to their screenings, such as guest meetings, seminars, etc.

### 4. ARRIVAL

Make sure you have a volunteer or some staff member waiting for your guests at the airport/train station and a car to drive him/her to the hotel. If you have several guests arriving on the same day, then ideally you will have one or two drivers who go back and forth and one volunteer staying put at the airport the whole time. With drivers it is good to have people from the festival staff who are able to drive, for example, a hired car, but it always depends on the budget and rates you pay. You can also try to arrange a special price with a taxi company or car rental company if you lack drivers and cars.

**Try to meet your guests as soon as they arrive.** Also it is good to have a **guest service point/room** where the guests know they can find any kind of info or help. Upon the guest's arrival all

financial obligations should be resolved, if a festival has to pay the guest something (eg. per diem). The amount of money needs to be planned in advance, so when the guest arrives, you have the money and also a document/receipt which he/she should sign.

## 5. STAY

Make sure your guests receive all relevant information. You can prepare a **guest pack** for them, ideally including: a **festival catalogue**, itinerary with a **list of all events** the guest is requested or recommended to attend, a **map of the city**, a **smaller map with only clearly identifiable festival venues**, a list of restaurants, clubs, bars, a card with important phone numbers and the festival pass. It is also good to organize TOURS around TOWN as a free-time activity for the guests; it can be done by volunteers who know the town or by a tourist guide. The guest service should **also cooperate with the PR coordinator** or journalists, providing info about the guests and their availability for interviews

## 6. SCREENING OR SPECIAL EVENT

Make sure the guest receives info about screenings or other events they should be attending before his/her arrival and once more after. **Double check on the day of the screening that they know when and where they are expected to be.**

## 7. GUESTS MEET GUESTS

It is very useful to **create a space where your guests can meet every day**. It can involve lunches if you manage to find a feasible way to organize it, or afternoon drinks. The festival team should also make time to come to these events, chat with the guests, introduce them to each other, bring local people who are interested in meeting them etc. The frequency of the meetings differs with the size of the festival. At One World we try to have "Guests Meet Guests" events organized every other day. You can try to partner with embassies or cultural institutes who could pay for catering of such events; for example "Guests Meet Guests with the Goethe Institute".

## 8. DEPARTURE

If you have a small team then the easiest way is to offer taxi vouchers. Don't forget to arrange these in advance and include them in your total festival budget. Otherwise, make arrangements with drivers, but also clearly explain to your guests how they should get to the airport.

## 9. FEEDBACK

Approximately a week after the festival, send the guests a thank-you letter and ask them for feedback. You can use a questionnaire for this purpose. If you have photos or some nice press clipping, add it to your message. If you developed an especially good relationship with some of the guests, you can later ask them for a few words of recommendation, which you can use in your PR material.

## TIMELINE

### 6–3 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Start looking for hotels, barbers, various accommodation options
- Ask cultural institutes about their lodging possibilities
- Based on your research possibilities, include the accommodation costs in your budget (*the same time frame applies for airlines*)

### 3 MONTHS BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Define guests, arrange booking – it is always better to have too many rooms booked than to look for something at the last minute
- If you are interested in any catering barter etc., you should do this before you print your PR material – i.e. soon!
- If possible book flights – the sooner the cheaper, although sometimes it is not possible to do things in advance



## 1 MONTH BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

- Prepare guest itineraries; look for good restaurants in the vicinity of festival cinemas
- Send info about the program to guests, communicate with them regularly
- Prepare a table of volunteers who should take care of guests, pick them up etc.
- It is good to have some guest service assistant, who is more informed about the guests and has more responsibility
- Prepare a list of screenings and special events your guests can attend
- Set the Guests Meet Guests date, if you are planning to have a large number of guests, otherwise it is not necessary
- Don't forget about the local guests – filmmakers, distributors, cultural centers, festival partners, media – they should be informed about the festival program in advance and they should also have info about possible festival passes for them
- Financial matters (*per diem, giving other money to guests*) should be dealt with by one person, who is responsible for everything

## DURING THE FESTIVAL

- Monitor arrivals and departures
- Distribute guest packs, make sure everybody knows their way around
- Coordinate interviews with journalists and debates after screenings
- Be present at “Guests Meet Guests” and introduce people to each other

## AFTER THE FESTIVAL

- Send thank you letters (*you can attach some nice photos from the festival*)
- Ask for feedback



EDUCATIONAL  
OUTREACH  
ACTIVITIES:  
**ONE**  
WORLD  
IN SCHOOLS

# EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES: ONE WORLD IN SCHOOLS

By **LUDMILA SOUČKOVÁ**, Coordinator of the One World in Schools Program

After some years of organizing a human rights festival for the general public and NGOs the idea of working on a year-round basis with high schools seemed to be not only reasonable but also doable. One World had at that point a fine database of human rights content films and some experience of working with them.

However, there are several other aspects that made this project get so much attention. First of all – recent history (both Czech and International) wasn't at that time really looked at in the general high-school curriculum. The documentaries filled this gap at least a bit. Although we have to say that currently the situation looks much better, largely due to the educational reform launched by the Czech government. Secondly, training for teachers in alternative teaching methods was still very limited at the time One World in Schools started in 2003. The interest from the teachers was therefore usually very authentic and long lasting.

And thirdly – talking with people around you about current topics within a structured debate, nurtured by some valid information, is how many of us learn the most. In environments where open discussion in classrooms isn't such a common thing (and this

used to be the case in many post-communist countries) it pays to prepare good additional material and to train teachers to lead debates.

This chapter offers some examples of using film in schools and inviting schools to come to your festival.

## HOW ONE WORLD IN SCHOOLS WORKS

The main aim of the project is to educate young people on the protection of human rights through screening documentary films and videos, along with subsequent discussions, facilitated by accompanying publications and interactive methods.

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Today One World in Schools works with over **2,600 primary and secondary schools** in the Czech Republic and documentary films that it uses have been proven to be an attractive and effective tool in reaching out to young people, initiating debates and assisting them in their opinion- and attitude-forming.

The project facilitates this by offering schools **sets of teaching materials**, which are intended for lessons on topical themes concerning the contemporary world. The basis for each set comprises **documentary films or other audiovisual resources** (e.g. PSAs), which in most cases are complemented by either a handbook for teachers or work sheets for pupils and students.

## TOPICS AND FILM SELECTION

The One World in Schools educational program deals with a lot of different topics grouped in larger thematic circles; for example: poverty, child labor, conflicts, undemocratic regimes, global interdependence, development, social and environmental issues.

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The films are chosen from the One World festival program, although occasionally other sources are included. The Amsterdam International Film Festival ([www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl))

has a Doc for Kids section, which was one of our crucial sources when seeking films for primary schools. There are also a number of other sources, where one can find docs tailored for younger viewers; e.g.: [www.buster.dk](http://www.buster.dk), [www.shortfilm.com](http://www.shortfilm.com), [www.kiddocs.info](http://www.kiddocs.info), [www.oxfam.com](http://www.oxfam.com).

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The principal selection criteria are: **relevant topic, didactic aspects, film length, film quality, specific approach to the given topic and attractiveness for young people.**



*Photo by L. Kotek*

Film length is especially important for the schools – it should respect the average class time including space for discussion. This limits the selection quite significantly.

We have a special license agreement clearing the rights with the film producers for one to several years. We always offer a fee for using the film, even though it may be lower than standard (usually somewhere around 200–300 Euros). There are many filmmakers who will be happy to let you use the films for free, but since we

became a fairly established project, we always try to include this in our budget when we fundraise.

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

### A) TOOLKITS

To facilitate a meaningful discussion it is necessary to have a prepared teacher/moderator and/or guest. Methodological guides and toolkits make it easier for the teachers to prepare themselves and to be at ease with the topics.

The guide consists of: film synopses and stills, interactive activities (role-playing games, quizzes, etc.), examples of questions and answers, information on the issue that the film deals with, activities and work sheets, advice and recommendations for the use of documentary films in lessons).

### EXAMPLES OF TOOLKITS

Here are some specific examples of toolkits and film collections we offer to schools:

- **Human rights** (*primary schools, secondary schools*)
  - crisis areas, racism, Roma, people in a trap, development cooperation, reconciling with the past
  - 34 films on VHS/DVD, handbook for teachers
- **Be in the picture** (*secondary schools*)
  - media, propaganda, manipulation, the structure of media communication, news reporting, advertising, the entertainment industry
  - 15 lessons on DVD, handbook for teachers

You can find an electronic version of some of these toolkits (but only in Czech) at: <http://www.jedensvetnaskolach.cz/index2.php?id=24>. There is a list of toolkits (without the complete activities) in English at: <http://www.oneworldinschools.cz/index2en.php?id=269>.



## B) EXPERT GROUP

There is a team of experts working on every toolkit, coordinated by a member of the One World in Schools staff. Among other things, this group ensures the practical applicability of the project materials in lessons and it also provides assistance to other schools that have just begun to work with our materials.

The expert team consists of:

- teachers – preparing activities that students can work on after the screening and advice on how to use the documentary film. Teachers in this group are people with practical experience, so they can judge whether the project is doable and attractive for students. We choose these teachers mainly at the seminars, where through personal contact we can see who is active and experienced. However, very good teachers are also quite busy with various other projects, so it's good to work with several people. It's important to keep in touch and be "kind" to them.
- experts on the specific film topics (*university professors, political analysts, historians, activists etc., who prepare an information package for the teachers, so they know the necessary facts and can discuss the topic.*)

## C) DVDs

Along with the toolkit, we prepare a DVD. So it is required to clear the screening rights, get the film copies, translate the films. For primary school children we dub the films, as the kids usually don't manage to read the quick subtitles and follow the story at the same time. Films for high-school students are subtitled.

## D) TRAINING

Since the beginning of the One World in Schools project we have been organizing training for teachers who use the project materials.

It is good to realize who you are preparing the seminar for – elementary school teachers or high school teachers usually

without knowledge of how to use films in class... Our experience is that high-school teachers are more focused on the film content and information about the topic. While elementary school teachers want methodology; they work on a more experiential level trying to develop the whole personality of the pupil. The seminars are led by our long-time collaborators, also teachers, so what they say is respected, because they don't fall for impractical theory.

Training consists of:

- Model screening of documentary films accompanied by debate about first impressions and film topic
- Modern methods of integrating given topics into teaching programs as well as into national curricula
- Discussion with a specialist on given topic
- Exchange of experience between teachers
- Information about project activities

## ONE WORLD FILM CLUBS

One World Film Clubs are organized by students themselves and therefore have considerable peer-learning qualities. These clubs are run as an extracurricular activity. One World offers the students a pre-selection of films and they organize screenings of documentary films for their fellow pupils, teachers, parents and friends as well as for their peers from disadvantaged groups. Besides selecting the films, students also arrange a talk with a guest for each screening, which they moderate, as well as other possible accompanying events (tastings of traditional dishes, exhibitions, etc.). At present, One World Film Clubs are operating in 55 Czech schools and their network has also expanded abroad to Slovakia, Poland, Estonia and Romania.

Regular meetings of both Czech and foreign organizers are an important part of the clubs' activities and usually take part during the One World festival in Prague.

# SCREENINGS FOR SCHOOLS DURING THE FILM FESTIVAL

In the course of the film festival, we organize **school screenings** of documentary films devoted to human rights issues, usually in the morning hours in the regular festival venues. Part of each screening comprises a talk with a guest, who is either an expert on the given topic or has personal experience of it. In the case of younger students, an experienced moderator is in attendance at the theatre instead of a guest.

**One World in Schools is an on-going project, so we stay in touch with schools constantly.** But we also do a special campaign to invite them to the actual festival screenings – we usually start **three months** before the event. We use flyers with information about the screenings and dates, which we distribute in schools. We also have good experience with a trained group of volunteers contacting teachers personally, explaining the idea of the festival to them, etc.

## PRACTICAL ADVICE

- Inviting schools to the festival generates you a far bigger audience, but in general you should start inviting them well in advance. We suggest you should do so at least **3–2.5 months before the festival**.
- Always try to get in touch with a **specific teacher**, usually someone teaching humanities or social science, who will be interested in the subject and won't let the information slip by. **Keep all your contacts** and build your database of teachers year after a year.
- When you start to approach schools, you should already **be able to offer them some specific titles**. For high schools try to recommend at least 5 films from your program – of course this depends on the size of the festival, but it is always better to offer schools something they can actively choose from. On the other hand, you don't want to offer too many films, because you need to be sure you will have enough space for the screening, enough moderators and enough guest speakers.

- Selection criteria for schools are obviously subjective. Try to **avoid films that are too long**. In our experience students react better to investigative reportage style films, but they are critical of an oversimplifying explanatory style.
- For primary schools students we offer approx. 6 films divided into 2 or 3 blocks, no longer than 70 min. (*45 min. screening + 15 minutes debate*). A moderator talks to kids after each film; ideally this is someone used to dealing with children who can prepare him/herself about the specific topic.
- For screenings in cinemas try to **avoid very large cinema halls**. We usually try to place younger children in groups of max. 70 (*less is better*) to assure a personal approach of the moderator and create a more intimate atmosphere so kids feel relaxed and are thus more responsive. For high-school students, the maximum is around 150 students in order to have a decent discussion after the film. Make sure you have this in mind when booking cinemas, also ask in advance if you can use the morning hours for educational screenings.
- Each screening should have a **moderator-discussion leader** and a guest who knows about the topic.

## CONTACT

One World in Schools Program

People in Need

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# CASE STUDIES





ON  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
FILM  
FESTIVALS

# ON HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVALS

By **DAAN BRONKHORST**, Amnesty International / Movies that Matter

If human rights are the only universal value we have, then human rights documentaries and the festivals that present them had better be of supreme quality.

*Burma VJ*, the winner of the Movies that Matter Human Rights Award 2008 at the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), is a timely documentary. Even at the height of the protests in August and September 2007, very little moving imagery was available. The footage of this film is largely drawn from material shot by the participants in the protests, often at high personal risk. What we see is civilians challenging the police after 19 years of repression of all freedom of speech; monks protecting independent camera monitors; people being arrested and monks thrown into trucks; police shooting with live ammunition that kills a Japanese reporter on-screen; and the rare picture of Aung San Suu Kyo coming to the gate of her house-arrest residence and greeting the courageous demonstrators with tears in her eyes.

The film is moving and touching, most of all for its outright appeal of civil courage. That the film also leaves one somehow unsatisfied is due to that same appeal. There are no interviews, and at virtually no point is the opposition movement portrayed from the "inside". There is nothing to suggest an international context to the protests. There is no debate about tactics or means among the demonstrators, or any clue of diverging opinions within the ruling class. The resulting overall picture is black and white: military

versus civilians, dictator versus democrats, police cameras versus independent journalism, bad versus good.

For that reason, there may be some doubt as to whether *Burma VJ* should be considered an exemplar of human rights documentary film making. Human rights are black and white in their distinction between what is rightful and not. But they are not partisan, and from a documentary we might expect a little more than easy dichotomy. What choices are human rights defenders forced to make? What kind of sacrifice is acceptable? What kind of appeal may have a chance of reaching the oppressing forces? Who, actually, is who? Those are the kind of issues that engage an audience into identifying with the real-life protagonists of human rights activism.

I have elaborated somewhat on *Burma VJ* because I think the documentary offers a good example of how a human rights festival should honor courageous filmmaking, but should simultaneously remain critical about a portrayal of human rights that may be lacking in imagination. It is this debate that has spurred the Netherlands Amnesty International Film Festival, now Movies that Matter Festival The Hague, from the outset.

It is often assumed that the Dutch section of Amnesty International hosted the world's first human rights film festival. Well, not really. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty's eternal brother-in-arms cum competitor, organized local film festivals in the early 1990s, while Amnesty started in 1995. But in another sense, there is truth in the claim of primacy, for a number of reasons. First, Amnesty intended this 1995 festival to be the beginning of a series, with a national and international outreach. Second, the Amnesty International Film Festival (AIFF) was never just a presentation of films new and old, but had the explicit ambition of being an event to support human rights activism and human rights filmmaking. And third, Amnesty's festival organizers were actively making contacts in the broader international arena of committed audio-visual human rights activity – journalism, arts and media development.



In the beginning, much of this aspiration was understandably modest. In 1998, at festival number 3, the program listed over 70 films, including a range of short video productions and educational films. The catalogue listed 13 sponsors, including a bank and a car manufacturer. Of the films screened, some titles still ring a bell in 2008. *How the War Started on My Island*, a feature film about the early stage of the Bosnian war. *Welcome to Sarajevo*, with a similar subject. *Buenos Aires Vice Versa*, about the scars of the “disappearances” during the military regime. *The Tokyo Trial*, a six-hour documentary based on reels from the 1948 international tribunal.



*Photo from Burma VJ – Reporting from a Closed Country*

One thing learnt over the years was that less is sometimes better. So in 2004, at edition number 6, the festival screened just under 50 films, including a retrospective of seven films by Costa Gavras. There were 23 sponsors, most of these non-profit organizations. Screenings included a larger number of films that later gained access to film theatres or TV broadcasting, some of them with an international award. They include *The Agronomist*, *Disbelief*, *Fuse*, *The House of Sand and Fog*, *Osama*, *Personal Velocity*, *S21*, *Silent Waters* and more.

The 2008 Amnesty International Film Festival, the 10<sup>th</sup> edition (the name will change to Movies that Matter Festival from 2009), had 40 films. The 18 sponsors were all either non-profit or “soft-sector” companies, such as TV networks and a development bank. It’s too early to judge which films will still be recognized in a decade or so, but judging from prizes and broadcasting so far there are good prospects for such films as *Anna: Seven Years on the Front Line*, *The Dictator Hunter*, *Jerusalem is Proud to Present*, *Lost in Beijing*, *Redacted* and *XXY*.

So much for the festival facts. What about the underlying rationale? Three dimensions can be detected in the thinking and debate that shaped the Dutch festival.

The first dimension that asked for a reflection on principles within the staff that organized the Amnesty International Film Festival was: What should be considered the scope of human rights? At the time, Amnesty’s “mandate” was still quite narrow – mainly prisoners of conscience, torture, executions and refugees. Only in the early 2000’s did Amnesty expand its “mission” to include access to social and economic rights without discrimination. Yet from the start in 1995, AIFF operated from that broader perspective, advertising its domain as that of “human rights and human dignity”. The reasoning was that good films that strictly document Amnesty’s “classic” concern are relatively rare, but that many other films shed light on the background and context of human rights violations. No one within Amnesty ever seriously protested that decision. The public clearly did not consider it a breach of Amnesty’s image to be offered films that dealt with such abuses as house eviction, land rights infringement, the plight of civilians in war, or discrimination against handicapped persons.

The second dimension was that of support for human rights defenders. Whilst an ordinary film festival does not need to have an activist hue, a human rights festival should. The very concept of human rights has always been twofold: the establishing of a series of universal rights, and the efforts to make those rights a

reality. In every episode of the festival there was a petition, an urgent action, an appeal to be supported. Recently, the Movies that Matter Festival set up a special program for documentaries about human rights defenders, *A Matter of ACT*. Among the other initiatives has been that of sponsoring the participation of human rights activists in festivals and film training.

Finally, AIFF and its successor Movies that Matter have managed a modest international program, with the aim of promoting human rights films and their festivals. AIFF was one of the founding members of the Human Rights Film Network, whose charter was actually the product of Dutch-Italian cooperation in a heat-stricken bar at the 2003 Locarno Film Festival. This Network grew to include over 25 members in 2008, having proven its usefulness in the exchange of films, festival guests and promotion. Moreover, Movies that Matter now maintains a Support Program for the promotion of human rights film screenings worldwide, and an international centre of expertise to help answer queries through an international film database. Movies that Matter also hosts the Cinema without Borders outreach program, which is a platform for human rights film activists and film events organizers to meet with film and festival professionals.

The 13 years of Amnesty's festival developing into the Movies that Matter Festival organization have been more hazardous than will be reflected in this brief history. The sponsoring organizations, Amnesty International in particular, have had worries about the budget, the number of festival visitors, the selection of the opening film, the public debates that accompany many of the screenings, the festival location (Amsterdam or The Hague), and what not. But generally, Amnesty Netherlands and other sponsors have been greatly supportive.

Are there lessons to be drawn from the Dutch festival that might benefit other festivals? Many aspects and obstacles are peculiar to the national situation, and not easily transposed. But maybe there is a message.

When organizing a human rights film festival and in the process of inviting sponsors, you will probably be confronted with many objections. That human rights films are not the ultimate answer in the quest for justice. That films are costly to make, and film festivals aren't cheap compared with the average conference or educational event. That human rights film festivals, by their very subject matter, are unlikely to draw a huge audience. That they do not normally have the kind of appeal that prompts world-famous actors and directors to be around. You cannot but accept this. But what you can add is this: The world's population, at least the part with access to a TV set, is much more geared towards consuming moving images than the written word. In a theatre audience, or with an individual watching television, films spark feelings of involvement that may last a long time, sometimes a lifetime. Films give human rights, and their defenders, a face to be remembered. There is an attractiveness in film unlike in any other medium, and that is why film grosses billions of dollars annually. A minute proportion of that spent on human rights films can never be wasted. But most importantly, films are at the root of what human rights philosopher Richard Rorty has called the "sentimental", which is more important than the rational or evidence-driven motivation for human rights activism. Fully in line with the origins of Amnesty International and the human rights movement in general, films revert to the primary act of telling true stories.

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OF COURSE  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
ARE NOT  
SEXY

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# "OF COURSE HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT SEXY..." Interview with Heidi Lobato

By **TEREZA PORYBNÁ**, One World Human Rights Film Festival

Heidi Lobato founded the Dutch Amnesty International Film Festival in 1995 and remained its director till 2000. Currently she is the director of the Africa in the Picture Film Festival in Amsterdam. She has helped to initiate numerous festivals around the world.

## **HOW DID THE IDEA OF STARTING THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL COME ABOUT?**

Amnesty International, the Netherlands, realized at one point that to attract younger members and interest younger audiences for human rights issues they had to restyle their communication tools. I was hired as an all-round producer for their audiovisual department to look at ideas that would attract younger people. Till then, Amnesty relied on the written word, but amnesty reports, for example, can be hard to read, and for many people impossible to digest from beginning to end. Film, on the other hand, has the power to give you an exact idea what the topic is, and who the victimized people are. Together with debates it is a great combination. And also we can't ignore the fact that people today are more visually oriented.

## **HOW DID YOU DO YOUR FIRST PROGRAM?**

The first festival was held in 1995, within the framework of the Women's Conference in Beijing, China, and we screened about 30 films on women's rights.

About the programming – at first decision-makers at Amnesty wanted to put together a program of old movies with a human rights theme, but as a real pioneer I insisted on providing a platform for new film productions, films made by established as well as new filmmakers. Films made with courage; documentaries and not necessarily Hollywood goodies.

It was the time of the establishment of the War Tribunal in The Hague and the horrific war in former Yugoslavia. And brave women – rape and torture victims of that war – were

lobbying for acknowledgement of rape as a war crime. Now this acknowledgement had been sought since the Second World War tribunals and back then it didn't succeed. So I selected documentaries like *The Murmuring* – about Korean girls abducted to serve Japanese soldiers in Japanese brothels in the late 1940s – next to the documentary *Calling the Ghosts*, about the brave Yugoslavian lawyer who tries to get evidence from mainly Muslim women about their torture and rape during the war, in order to convince the tribunal about rape as a war crime.

Anyway, after this first festival I noticed that if you manage to get a good combination of today's headlines and important issues that need public awareness you sure attract your audience, even if it hurts. Life is not only fun for many people in the world and it doesn't hurt to spend a moment with them.

## **CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR SELECTION CRITERIA AS A FESTIVAL PROGRAMMER?**

When programming I first think of what topic is important – what is going on around us – and whom I want to attract. It's different in every country; you have a totally different audience in Prague or in the Netherlands. I also combine the international topics with local things – it builds a bridge in people's minds with other topics you want to raise. You need to connect with what they already know and at the same time not be afraid to raise a completely new topic that your audience has never heard of. I once programmed a film about the lowest caste in India for instance. The whole village raised the money to get the film made. Even though the caste system in India is forbidden, most areas still live by it and the lowest caste tried to improve their situation of poverty, lack of education and so on and went on strike. When the film was made it was forbidden to show the film in their own country. Well for the Dutch audience it was a totally new human rights violation and for the purpose itself it was good that the film got shown across the borders, to raise awareness even in their own country afterwards. I think that is your main goal with human rights festivals!

I also believe the film has to have some hope in it because you don't want to leave the audience with a feeling that there is nothing they can do, that it is just pure catastrophe. I also love films with humor, because humor helps people survive in situations of misery, war and so on.

## **DID YOU EVER HAVE TO FACE A DILEMMA BETWEEN IMPORTANT POLITICAL CONTENT AND BAD ARTISTIC QUALITY AND VICE VERSA?**

I think human rights festivals should maintain their role as a platform for different voices and independent films – I mean they really need a platform anyway. Don't be afraid to select a film even if it lacks artistic quality; first ask yourself whether you think it was for reasons mentioned in the film for instance important that the film was made. Then always try to place yourself in your audiences, try to sense upfront what they would think or feel when they see this film and whether it needs something extra, like a small debate with it. Or maybe the film is forbidden in its country of origin. Films made for a good reason should be in the program.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVALS HAVE A COMPLICATED IDENTITY BECAUSE THEY ARE OFTEN CONSIDERED TO BE HEAVY AND TOO BURDENING...**

Of course human rights are not sexy... so marketing-wise you need to add something to it to attract your audience. Although today you have many human rights festivals worldwide so audiences are more used to it. In the beginning at the press conferences journalists also asked me who wants to see films about all these terrible violations. I made them a handkerchief back then and gave it to them at the end of the press conference of one of the first festivals and told them if they had dried their tears then to write a good article because we needed them! I got great reviews and they sure appreciated my own sense of humor.

For the rest you can come up with a name that addresses the topic very well, something catchy.

## **WHAT IS A GOOD HUMAN RIGHTS FILM? CAN YOU NAME THREE FILMS THAT STILL STICK WITH YOU?**

That's a complicated question. Obviously, it should have a story, but you can say that about any film. When I select films I ask myself – was this interesting, was the filmmaker able to keep my attention? Sometimes you can see after 10 minutes that it's not going to be a successful film.

And the three films... Well for sure the aforementioned *Calling the Ghosts* (d. Mandy Jacobson and Karmen Jelincic) and *The Murmuring* (Byun Young-Joo). Then of course the unforgettable *Gerrie & Louise* (d. Sturla Gunnarsson) – a rare story of truth and reconciliation in South Africa.

From the recent ones I can mention *Bling: A Planet Rock* from Sierra Leone (d. Raquel Cepeda) about American hip-hoppers like members of the Wu-Tang Clan and Kanye West going to Sierra Leone together with Ishmael Beah, a former child soldier, to see where their beloved bling is coming from and the blood that's been shed for it. Oh there are so many...

## **CAN HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVALS ACTUALLY HELP PEOPLE WHOSE RIGHTS ARE BEING ABUSED?**

Festivals cannot change reality directly. But they raise public awareness, which can influence politicians, who can eventually change conditions in the specific country. Publicity on Human Rights violations is the strongest weapon against it, because no government likes to be shown in a bad light!

I honestly believe that art and culture can do a lot in the battle for human rights and we cannot do enough.



## **WHAT THREE STEPS WOULD YOU ADVISE A NEW FESTIVAL ORGANIZER TO FOLLOW?**

Let me think...

The first step would be to figure out for yourself why you want to do it. Don't believe in a mass audience; you'll never get it. Make sure your integrity is honest – people feel this. And last but not least: find out about funding possibilities: how to finance your festival.

## **ORGANIZING FESTIVALS CAN BE A TEDIOUS, EXHAUSTING JOB. HOW CAN YOU PREVENT BURNING OUT?**

I don't know... You have to like what you're doing... I guess one should always make sure to have enough rest. Take a sabbatical if you can. If possible combine it with a slightly different job and make sure you have enough fun, otherwise you cannot deal with it.

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PERSPEKTIVE—  
HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVAL  
**BACKED**  
BY ART-HOUSE  
**CINEMA**

# PERSPEKTIVE – HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVAL BACKED BY ART-HOUSE CINEMA

By **ANDREA KUHN**, Festival Director, Nürnberger Filmfestival der  
Menschenrechte Perspektive

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*Perspektive* was Germany's first and still is the country's biggest human rights film festival. It was established in 1999 in Nuremberg, the "City of Peace and Human Rights" – a title the city was awarded by UNESCO in 2000. From the start, *Perspektive* has been a biannual event, so the festival will see its sixth edition in 2009. Since 2008 *Perspektive* organizes a "Long Weekend of Human Rights Films" in the intermittent years, a smaller scale reminder of the next festival that presents 4–5 award-winning films to local audiences.

The festival features an international competition for documentary and fiction films of 50 minutes and longer, an international forum, several short film programs, a thematic series of films to honor the winner of the International Human Rights Award of the City of Nuremberg, and our highly successful *Open Eyes* school screenings.

*Perspektive* presents three film awards: The International Human Rights Film Award Nuremberg (EUR 2,500) selected by an international jury of film professionals, the Audience Award (EUR 1,000), and the Open Eyes Youth Jury Award (EUR 500).

The program is made up of about 100 screenings plus art exhibitions, panel discussions, lectures, theater performances

and concerts. Many screenings are followed by post-screening discussions with the director(s), protagonist(s), or expert(s) on the topic of specific films. In 2007 approx. 11,000 people and over 50 international guests attended the festival.

The film selection is carefully curated by a selection committee following an international call for entries. All genres are accepted (documentaries, fiction films, shorts, animation, experimental films). Of the 450–600 entries received for each festival, ca. 80 films are eventually selected.

## FESTIVAL BACKGROUND

In contrast to most other human rights film festivals, *Perspektive* is a film festival that is not backed by an NGO but works closely with a film institution. While the festival is organized by the non-profit organization *Internationale Filmtage der Menschenrechte e.V.* (which exists solely for the purpose of organizing and financing the festival), it relies heavily on and profits very much from its association with *Filmhaus Nuernberg*, a non-commercial art-house cinema funded by the city of Nuremberg. The idea for the festival was born within the Filmhaus staff, who then created an institutional framework to organize it and to hire a director.

For one thing, this independence (from a specific NGO or other institutions) allows for great thematic freedom in selecting films (and generally for a rather open interpretation of what human rights films might entail). On the other hand it prioritizes filmic quality over specific contents. On a practical level this means that *Perspektive* does not operate with changing agendas/thematic series for each festival. We do not set agendas but rather try to explore what thematic fields emerge out of the final selection of films and then promote those.

## PROGRAMMING GOALS

**It is our goal to redefine what Human Rights Cinema is or can be:** In its highest forms Human Rights Cinema is not only



deeply humane but also highly skillful and thoroughly intelligent. There is indeed a huge number of films to be explored beyond stereotypical and emotionally manipulating special interest films that tap into our preconceived notions and leave audiences with a comfortable feeling of sadness and regret without changing the way they think and act. There's more than amateur material out of regions of crises. In our experience this is the kind of film Human Rights Cinema is all too often identified with. To bring a different dimension of politically and socially committed filmmaking to the screen, to literally make it visible, is one of our major goals.



We see our biggest responsibility in presenting high quality films to our audiences and to giving great filmmakers a chance to present their work. We firmly believe that only strong films will draw a diverse audience, an audience that otherwise cannot be reached through a pre-existing interest in human rights issues. **We want to reach out to a much broader public than “just” the human rights crowd.** Presenting cutting-edge cinema and promoting it as such is our attempt to achieve that goal. We also believe that this is the only way to justify regular cinema ticket prices and have people come back for more. In our experience, our audience

consists to a large extent of art-house film fans (many of them regular customers of Filmhaus cinema) who have high expectations – bad or lukewarm films reflect badly on the festival.

## SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

After a careful review of all submissions (in the first step of the programming process), the selection committee nominates the 10 films that have created the strongest artistic impression on the committee. These films go directly into the International Competition. The International Competition's aim is to present the greatest range of filmic expression in the area of politically and socially committed filmmaking. This automatically includes avant-garde/experimental filmmaking. Our biannual model leaves us with a large pool of excellent films – we consider it a big advantage to choose from such a big sample of two years of film production (even though we recognize the disadvantages of the biannual model when it comes to continuity in public awareness, etc.)

As dedicated cinema people we believe that film as a medium always interprets and reconstructs reality. This goes for documentaries as well as for fiction films and it explains why documentaries and fiction films are treated as equals in the festival and it is our impression that our audience shares this point of view. And even though we have a policy of not paying for films, in the rare cases where we have to pay to get an excellent feature, we find documentaries and fiction films about equally difficult or easy to negotiate.

**We define filmic quality among other things by the level of reflection filmmakers show of this reconstruction work, by their exploration of the wide variety of filmic means available to them, how creatively they engage their material, etc.** Intrinsically tied to these aesthetic qualities are the ethic and moral implications of filmmaking itself: the level of respect demonstrated towards filmic subjects (be they living people



or fictional characters), the refusal to exploit protagonists, the responsible employment of graphic material, etc.

A major criterion is the cinematic quality of a film as opposed to TV aesthetics. *Perspektive* is trying to present big screen fare. Typical TV documentary features like voice-of-God off-commentary will usually not make it into the final selection.

These are just a few criteria in a long list that help us select our films. In our 2007 festival this meant that the competition would feature films as diverse as James Longley's virtuosic triptych of "post"-war Iraq *Iraq in Fragments* with its elaborate and intimate sound and image montages, Kim Longinotto's intimate and hilarious direct cinema portrait of a group of female law professionals in Cameroon *Sisters in Law*, to Rithy Panh's complex semi-documentary masterpiece on Cambodian prostitutes *Paper Cannot Wrap Up Members*. It encompassed Anja Salomonowitz' highly stylized reflection on the international trade in women *It Happened Just Before* in which actual testimonies by women are put into the mouths of people who – in their actual jobs as customs officer, bar tender, etc. might be connected to or witness this form of slave trade. On a lighter note it featured Arash T. Riahi's tragicomic home video style *Exile Family Movie* about his own family's Austrian exile and their highly original attempt to reconnect to their Iranian relatives in Mecca.

One particular area of concern is the filmic depiction of historic events (and of historic film material). *Perspektive* is particularly interested in the informed and creative use of historic material (films, photos, sound recordings) and how filmmakers deal with the ethical dilemma of how to use material that was created by the oppressors without replicating their intended effect of either glorifying the oppressors or victimizing the victims. This interest can be seen in the selection of Philipp Scheffner's *The Halfmoon Files* and Susana de Sousa Dias' *Still Life* for the international competition. *The Halfmoon Files* explores the beginnings of German Ethnological Linguistics, which started in a German POW camp

during WWI “using” Indian soldiers as their first objects of study. All that is left of these POWs are voice recordings in their native languages. Scheffner artistically weaves a “ghost story” out of the material. In the absence of images (and of the actual people whose voices we’re hearing) he resorts to barren images of the camp and to daringly long periods of black screen to signify this absence. Susana de Sousa Dias, on the other hand, uses official filmic material from the Portuguese Salazar regime to discover stories behind the official story. Dias explores the filmic material, she zooms in, pans, slows down the material and reassembles it to reveal the faces at the edges of frames, the subaltern colonial subjects, political prisoners, that form the underbelly and the silent opposition to the Salazar regime.

While many of these films blur the line between documentary and fiction, the winner of the 2007 International Human Rights Film Award was a classic fiction film: Francisco Vargas’ beautifully shot black and white feature *El Violin* about an old man’s improbable role in the Mexican guerrilla wars in the 70s. It’s a stunning feature film with breathtaking camerawork, opulent sound design and a memorable cast of non-actors.

This line-up demonstrates the diversity of filmic styles and approaches *Perspektive* likes to see represented in the festival.

While the International Competition is selected purely on the basis of artistic accomplishment, the International Forum section gives the selection committee more leeway to include films for thematic reasons as well. The Forum expands on the exploration of interesting contemporary filmmaking, yet it is also designed to react to recent important political and social crises. The 2007 Forum saw Jos de Putter’s TV interview *In Memoriam: Aleksander Litvinenko* alongside Avi Mograbí’s polemic *Avenge But One of my Two Eyes*, Richard Pakleppa’s lyrical *Angola Saudades From the One Who Loves You*, and Rajnesh Domalpalli’s lavish fiction film *Vanaja*.

## EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

In a third programming step, our *Open Eyes* line-up, films are chosen for their appeal to younger audiences and for their ability to interest or directly engage high school students in human rights issues. Through the entire duration of the festival, school classes are invited for special morning screenings of *Open Eyes* films. Each screening is accompanied by an introduction to human rights in general and the topic of the film in particular and is followed by an in-depth discussion between students and filmmakers, protagonists, or experts.

To qualify teachers to discuss not only the contents of these films in class, but to lead an informed discussion of the filmic means employed by specific films, *Perspektive* uses the interim year between festivals to offer not only an independent edition of the Open Eyes school film program **but also training classes for German teachers** in which film aesthetics (both in documentaries and in fiction films) are taught by film scholars. In 2008 the seminar was titled “**Documentary Films: Staging Reality**” and explored documentary film’s complicated relation to “reality”, the history, filmic means, dramaturgy and the ethics of documentary film(making). We might offer seminars on human rights in general in the future, but we find that there is a broad choice of human rights seminars in Nuremberg already and teachers seem much better trained in human rights or specific human rights issues than in film. Since film is the specific medium used in our school screenings we feel a need to address the specific issues that come with presenting a clearly mediated reality that presents life precisely not “as it happens”, but as it happens before a movie camera. To us that is an important difference.

## AUDIENCE

We therefore not only try to redefine what Human Rights Cinema is or can be but also to make young and mature audiences see the beauty and the value of this approach. The regular 30–50% rise of attendance numbers from one festival to the next seems

to confirm this. We've learned over time that "just" presenting great political and socially committed movies is not enough, but that we have to stress the fact that we're dealing with excellent filmmaking. This is obviously not taken for granted when people hear the term Human Rights Film Festival. This has taught us to address at least two audiences: the human rights crowd, where issues are more important than content **and** regular cinema audiences who expect high quality films, an authentic festival atmosphere and interesting filmmakers. That's one of the reasons why we changed our former rather abstract festival/poster design to a more visual style – film stills that tell a story and make people curious about the festival. We will continue to expand on that idea in the future.

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6th Perspektive: 30 September – 11 October 2009 submission

deadline: 1 April 2009





# CINÉ DROIT LIBRE

IN WEST AFRICA:  
AN INITIATIVE  
TAKEN BY COMMITTED  
FILMMAKERS

# CINÉ DROIT LIBRE IN WEST AFRICA: AN INITIATIVE TAKEN BY COMMITTED FILMMAKERS

By **LUC DAMIBA**, Festival Director, Ciné Droit Libre

The Ciné Droit Libre festival was established in 2005 by three young African filmmakers. They began in Ougadougou, the capital city of Burkina Faso, which is also a focal point for African cinema. Over the years, Ciné Droit Libre has developed into a regional festival, which takes place on a parallel basis in **Burkina Faso**, **Ivory Coast** and **Senegal**. Our ambition is to operate in all eight countries belonging to the West African Economic and Monetary Union by 2012. Ciné Droit Libre is also supported by the Semfilms Burkina association, which is involved in education as well as in producing and directing films about human rights in Africa.

## FESTIVAL BACKGROUND

It is still true that few African filmmakers dare to tackle issues connected with human rights abuses. Ciné Droit Libre is a festival that presents films appealing for the observance of human rights and freedom of expression. It takes place every year in three parts: the main part is held in Ougadougou with important guests (directors, human rights activists, and defenders of free speech). This is followed by the touring section of the festival, which travels around cities and villages in Burkina Faso. The final part of the



festival is its international section, which is accompanied by the African version of the World Social Forum. In particular, this has included film showcases in Bamako (2006), Nairobi (2007) and currently an independent program in Abidjan. Ciné Droit Libre aims to create a platform for filmmakers and journalists throughout the world whose work (films about human rights and free speech) is censored or who have difficulty in getting their films distributed. We select a collection of films from all over the world for this purpose while devoting special attention to Africa. A number of special guests host debates after screenings. Ciné Droit Libre is interested in cinema that gets to the root of issues surrounding human rights and free speech. At the same time, it strives to be a place for free expression and access to information. It considers the following three principles to be its credo:

- Film, topic, debate
- The independent selection and programming of films
- The freedom to screen and distribute censored films that are polemical and committed.

Ciné Droit Libre comprises a series of activities, which take place in the same way as the screenings and debates, e.g. film workshops for making artistic and reportage-style documentaries, a competition for the best documentary film, a forum, exhibitions, etc.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF THE FESTIVAL: FEW RESOURCES, LOTS OF ENTHUSIASM

In short, Ciné Droit Libre (CDL) arose from the frustration of young Dutch and Burkinabe directors, who realised that certain politically incorrect films had no chance of being seen by the African public. They themselves had experienced this cinematographic apartheid when their film *"Borry Bana: the Fatal Destiny of Norbert Zonga"* was rejected by the Fespaco festival because it dealt with the issue of free speech in Burkina Faso. At the time, this gave rise to the idea of organising an alternative festival to Fespaco. CDL's mission is resolutely cultural, political and civic-minded.

The CDL festival started with a very small budget and a lack of any material resources. When someone wants to do an activist festival, the right conditions are needed for it to happen. In its early years, CDL suffered from power shortages, an inability to hire screening venues, films being held up in customs inspections, etc. **The festival was supported by foreign agencies**, which illustrates the lack of interest among local public institutions in supporting human rights. Our association wants to involve citizens in the organisation of this festival through voluntary contributions from the Club of Friends of CDL. Today, the festival has its own proper film-projection equipment and a travelling cinema.

The first festival had a budget of 10,000 euro. At present, with Semfilms it has managed to put together more than 30,000 euro for the festival in Ougadougou and its touring part. We believe that with few resources we can continue implementing activities that have a big impact. Semfilms is planning several projects in the coming years. In particular, this concerns:

- an educational facility for young people
- productions and co-productions of films
- the creation of an African cinema focusing on human rights and freedom of speech issues.

We shouldn't forget to add that we intend to expand the festival to other West African countries.

## **IN VILLAGES: DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS WITH A TRAVELLING CINEMA**

Up to now, citizens of Burkina Faso (including even the most remote communities) have been informed of human rights abuses in Iraq, Palestine and in the neighbouring Ivory Coast. CDL brings discussions of human rights to places where they are most lacking. With the aid of a travelling cinema, moderators go to villages to screen films and talk about them.

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NATIONALITY:  
HUMAN  
TRAVELLING  
FESTIVAL IN THE  
CAUCASUS

# NATIONALITY: HUMAN TRAVELLING FESTIVAL IN THE CAUCASUS

By **MARTINA TICHOV**, Festival Coordinator, South Caucasus Documentary Film Festival of Peace and Human Rights

In 2007, the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Open Society Foundation in Georgia first had the idea of putting on a festival of documentary films in the South Caucasus. With the help of the programme director of Prague's One World festival Helena Zajíčová, the **"South Caucasus Documentary Film Festival of Peace and Human Rights – Nationality: Human"** was established. It was held for the second time in 2008.

## UNIFYING DISPUTED REGIONS

This is the first film festival that unites all the countries of the South Caucasus region that have difficult mutual relations (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) as well as the disputed regions of Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which are striving for independence.

As a result of the difficult conflicts and dreadful wars between neighbouring nations, peace solutions in the South Caucasus are a long way off. Recently, we witnessed the appalling fight for South Ossetia, which really shocked and disappointed us. Nonetheless, despite similar difficult situations, some very promising beginnings of understanding and *rapprochement* also exist in other parts of the country. These can be seen in the films of the "South Caucasus Documentary Film Festival". Convinced that the language of film

has no boundaries, we would like to provide people in the South Caucasus with an opportunity to talk about **subjects such as human rights abuses, war and reconciliation, which they know from their own recent experiences.** At the same time, we **consciously don't select films with themes concerning the region.** In doing this, we first of all want to prevent any prejudices being aired and secondly we wish to inform our audiences of foreign countries and conflicts so that they themselves can find parallels and ideas for their own situation. This year, for example, our programme contained films from places such as Afghanistan (*Enemies of Happiness*, Eva Mulvad), Israel and Palestine (*Encounter Point*, Ronit Avni and Julia Bacha), Chechnya (*Three Comrades*, Masha Novikova) and elsewhere.

In the first instance, **our festival wants to address audiences that usually have no access to cultural and human rights discussions,** i.e. people living in conflict zones, refugees, and the inhabitants of small towns and villages. The festival travels to where these people live. No journey is too far for us. Armed with a microbus and screening equipment (a beamer, a DVD player, a public-address system, audio equipment, etc.), a screen and a generator we are able to organise a festival in the most remote villages throughout the South Caucasus.

## FESTIVAL STRUCTURE

Where the festival is actually held depends on the inhabitants of the South Caucasus themselves. We publicise selection procedures in which anyone can participate. **Anyone who is interested can invite the festival to their home.** We invite local NGOs, civic initiatives, schools and even committed individuals to write out a plan as to how they would like to organise the festival where they live and to also propose an accompanying programme relating to the relevant themes that will be covered. In doing this we want to ensure that the inhabitants themselves will be involved in organising their own festival and it won't be imported from outside to the region for just a few days.

An **international festival jury** decides which of the submitted projects is selected. This panel consists of film experts and human rights activists from all six regions, a representative from the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the Open Society Foundation as well as Helena Zajícová from our partner festival One World.

Besides selecting films and planning the structure of the festival, the jury also chooses local co-organisers with whom it jointly arranges the events. No regional quotas exist and there is no strategic preference for any region. The only decisive factor is the motivation of the applicants as well as the originality and feasibility of their projects.

In comparison with last year, there was greater interest in our festival this time around. From almost 100 submitted projects, the jury chose **27 co-organisers**: 5 festivals in Georgia, 3 in Abkhazia, 4 in Azerbaijan, 6 in South Ossetia, 5 in Armenia and 4 in Nagorno-Karabakh. It was a big surprise for everyone that the smallest of all the regions, South Ossetia, held the most festivals this year.

Our festival team consists of a coordinator and assistant, who work full time on the project. For the festival touring period, the Open Society Foundation has released two drivers, who alternately drive to festival locations with us and help with the equipment.

## SEMINARS AND PREPARATION

In order for our co-organisers to become acquainted with each other and to better understand the cross-border nature of our festival, we organised a joint seminar for the first time this year in Istanbul. Besides practical preparations for festivals, they can get to know each other and share their ideas and plans for their own film showcase. Such an event was the first of its kind for many. Up to now, many had never met someone from an adjacent “enemy” country. Friendships actually developed at this meeting. Some co-organisers even invited their new acquaintances to come to their festival.



We also organised *in situ* seminars in each region. We watched films together and considered how the given audience would react. **One aspect that is more important than the film itself is the fact that many discussions arise, not only about the situation in the film but also about the relevant people's own situation and conflict.** Many of our audiences are not used to documentaries. Consequently, they take the fate of the people in our films very much to heart, particularly if they remind them of their own tragic experiences. **The moderator has to be prepared for emotional, sometimes even angry reactions.** He has to learn how to put himself in his audience's shoes. Consequently, the ideal moderator is a person who knows his audience well and understands the specific situation.

In preparing a festival it is also necessary to take account of the given political situation. It is not always easy to convince people about why we are also organising an event "with the enemy". We behave openly with all sides and we try to explain that we are not pursuing any ulterior motives with the festival. We inform the relevant authorities of the festival well ahead of time and, if necessary, we ask them for a permit to come and fulfil all customs requirements. If interest is expressed in such details, we provide information on the venues where the festival will be held as well as on the films that are to be shown. In most cases, we have met with positive responses. We have more or less managed to get to every region quite easily. For the most part, the local authorities have supported us. We travelled to Abkhazia with the help of the UN, because the border between Georgia and Abkhazia is closed to regular traffic. We even managed to go to South Ossetia in our own microbus (six weeks before the war). We encountered a rather more difficult situation in Azerbaijan, mainly because we also organise festivals in Nagorno-Karabakh. Although, according to international law, this region belongs to Azerbaijan, it is pushing for independence and is predominantly inhabited by Armenians. As it is not possible to get to Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan but only from Armenia, the Azeri government is not enthusiastic about our organising festivals there as well.

We strongly hope that in the future the authorities will understand what we are trying to do and that we will once again succeed in organising festivals throughout the entire South Caucasus, even in the disputed regions. **After this year's events, more diplomacy will certainly be needed, because our festival is both political and non-political at the same time. It is political because we travel to every region, even the ones that are disputed, and this gives rise to controversy. It is non-political because we don't take any stance in regard to conflict regions, and we neither recognise nor refute them. The only objective is to give all the people of the South Caucasus an opportunity to attend our festival, to see interesting films, and to take part in public discussions.**

## PROGRAM

Our mobile festival was on its travels from 14 April to 15 October. Each of our co-organisers receives the same small sum, which is given to them by one of the foundations sponsoring the project.

**The festival programme consists of 10 films**, of which our co-organisers choose 6 and compile a three-day programme according to the kind of target group they are expecting to reach. **We get all the films translated and dubbed into the local languages** (Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian and Russian). Because there are often children among the audience as well as other people who cannot read very well, **dubbing is the best solution**. We bring equipment to the venue, and we produce the catalogue, posters and invitations. If they need us to, we help the co-organisers to select guests or moderators, and we can also assist them with PR etc. Essentially, however, they organise the festival completely independently.

The size and composition of the audience was different at each festival. In the capital cities of Baku, Yerevan and Tbilisi, audiences mostly consisted of students as well as employees of non-governmental and international organisations. Up to

150 people would show up every day. At other times, we had smaller groups of children who came with their teachers (some festivals were organised directly in schools). In smaller villages, inhabitants of different ages came to the screenings, which was very interesting for the subsequent discussions. The number of attendees is not a decisive factor for us. Smaller groups are often more advantageous, because each audience member can express his opinion and a real dialogue can then develop. It is also easier and more effective for the moderator to work with a smaller group. Among audiences there are often people who have been deeply traumatised by their experiences of recent wars. For example, we had one festival at a camp in Georgia where refugees from Chechnya live. Viewers reacted very emotionally to our films. For instance, after the screening of the film *Bridge over the Wadi* about the first mixed school for both Israelis and Palestinians, one viewer said this to me: "The war was not directly visible in the film. But it is omnipresent even among those children. When I see how they debate with passionate faces about the war and about how they might have to fight against each other in the future, it makes me sad. That is not a normal childhood. I am afraid that our children will turn out the same way. This film also has something to teach us: it shows us how we should raise our own children so that it is not just our bad memories and our hatred that are passed on to them."

Overall, our festivals had a great response. Many of our co-organisers invited the festival a second time and they also want to participate next year. Some of them had interesting ideas in terms of the venue or the implementation of the event or the invited guest. At a rehab centre in Stepanakert in Nagorno-Karabakh we enjoyed a very successful festival with patients, employees and normal visitors. There was also a very impressive festival in a Georgian village on the territory of South Ossetia, which was organised by a 70-year-old Ossetian woman. The theatre was full for three days and there were Georgians and Ossetians in the audience. They wept and embraced each other. They tasted the national cuisine of their neighbours, who



themselves had brought this food to the festival. There was not even a hint of hatred. In the future, we would like to concentrate more on ensuring that guests from another region really come to the festivals, without their necessarily having to be from the other side of the given conflict. Many people still haven't seen a person from a neighbouring country even though the nations of the South Caucasus are really close to each other. Our attendees really gain a lot from similar encounters, which are unforgettable experiences for them – and naturally they are unforgettable experiences for us as well.



## DIFFERENT “READINGS” OF FILMS

People from the South Caucasus region frequently react differently to our films than audiences from places such as Europe, who are used to the documentary format. We have to be careful that we don't overburden audiences with films that are too long or difficult, or which have footage of war, abuse, etc., that is inappropriate and shocking for the target group because it reminds them of their own experiences. We try to offer a balanced selection of short and long films with diverse themes, from which it is possible to compile a programme for various target groups (children, students, refugees, etc.)

As regards subject matter, themes such as migration and xenophobia are very topical for audiences from the South Caucasus. The short film *Punjabi Cab* (Liam Dalzell) about members of the Sikh faith from India who fled to the USA provoked a very lively response. Many people from the South Caucasus have already spent some time living or working abroad, in places like Russia, for example. They know what it's like to leave their homeland and family. Many of them encountered discrimination because of their origin or the colour of their skin. Films about war, its consequences and its senselessness were also offered as the main theme for certain target groups. Very long discussions were often held after the extremely powerful film *Three Comrades*. The talks centred on how pain always outweighs victory in a war and how it is always only ordinary people who suffer.

## FUTURE OF THE FESTIVAL

The war in South Ossetia and Georgia, which occurred in August 2008, affected us very strongly. This will undoubtedly be reflected in our subsequent work on the festival. We would like to continue in any event, but we must come up with a new strategy. It is still not clear if we can reach South Ossetia and Abkhazia from the Georgian side. We don't know precisely how the influence of Russia will make itself felt and what role will be played by international organisations. It will also be hard to find sponsors, as many will not dare to invest in disputed regions. One of the ideas that has been mooted is greater regional coordination for the project. **We are planning to buy a complete set of equipment for each region so that they can organise festivals even if we are not present**, whereby we would still keep providing support, visiting, supplying films, etc. It is definitely essential to organise our festival throughout the entire South Caucasus, as this is the entire purpose of the project. It is not just recognised states, but also the isolated communities of disputed regions who need our support. We will do all in our power to implement the idea of a common South Caucasus festival without frontiers together with our excellent partners. As the name of our festival indicates

("Nationality: Human" or "Ya-chelovek" in Russian), there is a value system that is more important than issues of blood, respect, nationality or patriotism, and it is based on the belief that we are all people. This applies to every person in the South Caucasus and every person in our films.

## CONTACT

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of Peace and Human Rights "Nationality: Human"

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CINEMA  
AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
IN ARGENTINA

# CINEMA AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA

By **JULIO SANTUCHO**<sup>1</sup>, Director the DerHumALC International Festival

The DerHumALC International Film Festival on Human Rights was started in 1997 by a group of militant leftists, who had returned to Argentina after living in involuntarily exile during the *Dirty War* from 1976 to 1983.

The original idea was to connect **cinema and human rights**, both firmly rooted in Argentinean society. The festival does not shy away from its political nature, acting as a means of supporting certain changes the country was in the process of undergoing. We believed then, as we do now, that human rights films have the potential to extend the viewing of such material beyond the usual leftist crowd.

Argentina, having the unfortunate privilege of having been through a genocide, requires a space for reconstructing the memory of these events. In his recent work, Daniel Feierstein<sup>2</sup> explained why this term applied in the case of Argentina, defined in colloquial terms as “a surgery that attempts to change the nature of a patient” (whereas the military simply preferred to call it a “process of national reorganization”). By the mid 1970s, tens of thousands of Argentines had become involved in the popular movements against transforming the economy along the lines of what would today be considered the neoliberal model, a process that was demonstrating a certain success. In the eyes of the armed forces, this opposition had to be destroyed in order to save capitalism in Argentina. Their chosen method was the disappearance and assassination of over 30,000 people.

Argentina's *transition to modernization* was henceforth driven through a combination of state-sponsored terrorism and the new productive forces that have emerged during the last few decades. After a long, slow period of economic decline and social decay in the country, Carlos Menem remodeled the political party of Peron into one that embraced neo-liberalism and the sanctity of free markets. During his presidency (1989–1999), Menem ended the involvement of the military in Argentinean politics by forming an alliance with the global financial elites which led to widespread governmental corruption and to brutal struggles between mafias and wealthy oligarchs over territory and business within the country.

The DerHumALC Film Festival was born out of the resistance movement to these neoliberal changes in Argentina, which climaxed with the outbreak of a popular rebellion in December 2001. These massive protests grew out of five years of public mobilization that began in 1996 around the 20th anniversary of the 1976 military coup and the first road blockades by the unemployed in 1997 in Cutralcó and Tartagal, two cities which became haunted after the disappearance of their oil refineries due to privatization.

Argentina's process of reckoning with the abuses conducted under past dictatorships was different than in Spain or other Latin American countries. In Argentina, the military dictatorship's fall was triggered by the loss of the Falklands War and the main architects of the Dirty War were put on trial, whereas in Spain, civilian rule only returned after Franco's death and even then justice was not served. The Moncloa Pact, which guaranteed impunity for Franco's right wing supporters, helped set a precedent used by almost every country that made a transition to democracy during this time, including Chile, Uruguay and Brazil. However, the strength of the human rights movement resistance stopped this course of action from happening in Argentina and led to the formation of the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons, the publishing of *Nunca Mas*, and the Trial of the Juntas.

After the government of Raúl Alfonsín (1983–1989) struggled with its inability to have justice prevail and was forced to enact the laws of “Due Obedience” and “Final Stop”. President Menem simply tried to get rid of the issue once and for all. Menem pardoned the Juntas, appointing ex-soldiers in the Peronist party to government posts and indemnified the relatives of the disappeared involved with the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, who were keeping the flame of resistance alive. The Mothers were joined by the Grandmothers, the Relatives of Political Prisoners, the ex-Detained/Disappeared and finally the Children of the Disappeared. However, at the time it seemed that it would be impossible to keep this pale flame burning, since the world appeared to be going in a different direction. At least in Argentina, something else happened. The immense manifestations of March 24, 1996 proved that this pale flame ended up igniting the whole country. This event was proof that the great majority of Argentineans now condemned the dictatorship, pleading for justice and calling for the end of impunity.

In order to avoid any false optimism, it is important to note that this did not entail elimination of the consequences of the genocide suffered by the society. However, the changes made in the state institutions with regard to human rights helped to create excellent conditions for the recovery of the historical memory. In fact, Argentina has witnessed a renaissance of films on human rights in the last twenty years.

## FILM AND GENOCIDE

Osvaldo Bayer<sup>3</sup> has explained that Argentina’s national cinematography has displayed considerably backward tendencies in the past. Before 1996, films had managed only to make – despite great efforts – allusions to the tragedy of the genocide. Argentinean films conveyed an overarching message that “there must have been a reason,” which has been referred to as the “theory of the two demons,” rather than clearly condemning what happened during the Dirty War, there was no real story. It appeared as if the country hadn’t been forced to live under a succession of

military dictatorships (with some democratic breaks) between 1930 and 1983. It seemed as if the Armed Forces needed some kind of provocation to specify its strong determination to control the absolute power at that time.

The theory of the two demons has two versions. The first version attributes the same amount of responsibility for the tragedies of the Dirty War period to the revolutionary movements of the 60s and 70s and to armed forces that carried out the genocide. The second version is a simplification of the first one: all form of political militancy of the victims must be covered up so that accusations against those responsible for the tragedy can be carried forth, thus undermining the idea that any form of political militancy should be viewed as brave resistance against oppression. In fact, with the exception of a small group of guerrilla leaders, all of the victims were innocent citizens dragged from their houses without any reason

This theory fails to recognize international and national common law,<sup>4</sup> which clearly stipulates the necessary involvement of the state when the subject of "crimes against humanity" is involved. Furthermore, an immense amount of existing information highlights the world of difference between the errors and potential crimes committed by the guerrillas and the systematic plan of the genocide carried out by the Military Juntas. Lastly, it is impossible to dismiss the fact that the militant revolutionaries paid for their political rebellion with their lives, imprisonment or exile, while the vast majority of those responsible for the genocide were allowed to maintain their normal lives right up through the present.

The program for the first year of the festival was created under these circumstances. Our team realized that the country was experiencing a new era of independent production, in the areas of short fiction film, documentaries and even cartoons, which were strongly motivated by the desire to bring to the screen the trauma of the Argentinean society. A notable production was "Telephone Lines" ("Líneas de Teléfono") by Marcelo Brigante, which won the award for best short film during the first festival.

In 1997, Marcelo Brigante was 28 years old, which led me to ask him: "Since you were a child during the period of the dictatorship, what made you want to shoot this short film? Did you have a brother or a sister or another close relative who was a victim of the repression?" "No," he answered, "The repression did not directly affect my family or my friends. But as soon as I was able to think for myself, it became obvious to me that the disappeared are like an open wound on the body of this society."

The first edition of the festival's success in drawing attention to "Telephone Lines" and other premiered pictures would have been more than enough to justify the tremendous efforts expended to organize the festival. However, the experience also taught the festival's organizers valuable lessons and made them realize that there was an underground movement in Argentinean cinema that was no longer being corrupted by the society. After the excessive deference of the 70s and the early 80s and after the self-censorship and resignation of the later 80s and 90s, a new type of film making was starting to emerge with a desire to break the silence and to show what was really happening in society. This proved to be true over time, not only in the field of human rights, but also with the success of the New Argentinean Cinema internationally, which definitively confirmed the DerHumALC festival's reason for existing.

## **ORIGINS OF THE FESTIVAL AND FILMS ON SOCIAL ISSUES**

Little by little the festival started to receive feature films and documentaries about the social crisis. In the catalogue of the first festival we already stated that the "human rights movement was faced with the task of redefining its objectives and its links with social organizations in the continent." There were at least three reasons for this:

First, human rights violations were no longer being committed by a military government but by a government exercising a selective

and preventative repression within the framework of a democracy permanently struggling with great concentrations of capital. Second, the epicenter of the extensive and widespread human rights violations had shifted from the field of civil and political rights to the area of economic and social rights and simultaneously the consciousness of society was increasing in regards to the new rights of the citizenry. Thirdly, a new political culture was emerging by the end of the century that required a new approach to be taken which could only be developed through collaboration and interaction between civil society organizations and human rights organizations, so that social inclusion could stop being perceived as a simple problem of economic policy and could start being seen as violation of fundamental rights of human beings.”<sup>5</sup>

The DerHumALC Festival took its first steps upon two legs: films on historical memory and the fight against impunity and films on social issues. Cinema on social issues already had a rich history in our country and, therefore, naturally blended well with human rights cinema. Over the last decade, important critical works were published on Raymundo Gleyzer and the “Cinema of the Base” (“Cine de la Base”)<sup>6</sup> and on Jorge Giannoni and the “Third World Cinema Committee” (“Comité de Cine del Tercer Mundo”)<sup>7</sup>, two forgotten figures of the militant cinematography that occupy honorary positions in the gallery of national cinematography, next to the world-famous names of Fernando Birri, Octavio Getino and Pino Solanas. The documentary “Raymundo” shot by Ernesto Ardito and Virna Molina premiered at the 2002 DerHumALC Festival, after which it travelled the world, participating in over one hundred festivals and spreading the fame of the well-liked man, founder of the “Cinema of the Base.”

**The figure of Raymundo Gleyzer became the inspiration for the foundation of our festival.** The disappeared militant film maker was a true film professional and a bold documentarian, who managed to get interviews with the powerful using his press credentials, a militant politician who did not hide his allegiance to the Workers’ Revolutionary Party, a concentrated expression of the

Marxist guerrilla, for which he was discriminated against (as Dolly Pussi claims in the documentary "Raymundo").

The founders of the DerHumALC Film Festival wanted to create a cinematic space that would allow for the presentation of films that a) condemn the government's state sponsored terrorism; b) don't adhere to the theory of the two demons; c) whose goal is to participate in the current social movement fights; and d) that are creative and have aesthetic quality.

The artistic director of the first film festival was Alvaro Melián, who used to co-operate with Raymundo Gleyzer in the "Cinema of the Base". The new festival wasn't organized by any state or municipal administration, but by a foundation of an opposition party: the Sergio Karakachoff Foundation<sup>8</sup>. The Sergio Karakachoff Foundation and particularly its president, Federico Storani, contributed to the festival with the prestige they enjoyed at that time as opponents of the Menem model and among human rights organizations. Civil society, student and human rights organizations were summoned and coordinated, which led to the organizing of 18 round tables held in the premises of the Recoleta Cultural Centre that included more than 90 people of whom 25 were foreigners.

A long and thorough preparation preceded the first edition of the festival. When I returned to Argentina in 1992, after a 17-year exile in Europe, I brought with me a wealth of contacts. The organizations of the UN system in Geneva and important Dutch partner agencies found the proposal to organize a film festival on human rights in a country that has endured such a mind-blowing amount of state sponsored terrorism against its own people viable. **The Dutch agencies ICCO, Hivos and Bilance and also the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself provided us with political and financial support.** We also received extensive support from our country, not only from human rights organizations, but also from the National Institute of Cinematography and Visual Arts (INCAA) and other governmental organizations.



## DERHUMALC MULTIMEDIA INSTITUTE

After the second edition of the festival, which was also organized thanks to the support of the Sergio Karakachoff Foundation, there was a need to create a new legal structure that would boost particular activities associated with the distribution of the audiovisual materials and with the continuity of the festival itself.

The festival garnered a tremendous amount of international responses following the first edition. We received numerous invitations and made contacts with colleagues from other countries. The London-based Television Trust for the Environment<sup>9</sup> invited us to take part in the Second Regional Workshop of Latin American Audiovisual Resource Centres, which took place in Antigua in Guatemala in 1998. We returned home with an offer to become a partner and a representative of TVE, the collective name for Television Trust for the Environment, in Argentina. At the same time, Federico Storani became closely acquainted with the new government and was later appointed Home Secretary.

DerHumALC decided that the Festival should remain independent from the state and opted to separate from the Karakachoff Foundation and to establish a new civil association. This association was officially registered as the **Multimedia Institute DerHumALC – Human Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean (IMD)** on March 8, 1999.

## INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

The first experience that DerHUMALC had with an international network was our participation in the Latin American network of Audiovisual Resource Centres. **Television Trust for the Environment** is a founding member of this network, whose most important result so far has been the creation of the **MicroMACRO**<sup>10</sup> series.

Our second experience came in April 2004 when IMD worked with the One World Film Festival in Prague as one of the founding members of the international **Human Rights Film Network**.<sup>11</sup> The

most important aspect of this new network was that it made it possible to program festivals on an international level. Thanks to the personal contacts and online debates, every member of the network has been able to learn about a broader range of human rights films that have been met with a positive response in other parts of the world. Furthermore, many directors that participated in the festivals held within the network on different continents were able to learn about the existence of our festival, look at our website, and as a result sent us their films. On the other hand, festivals held in other countries may learn about Argentinean and Latin American films presented at our festival through our website and may later invite them to participate. DerHumALC is convinced that there is still a vast potential for further development within this network in this regard.

In addition to these film based networks, DerHumALC has participated as a registered member in the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre and in the Social Forum of the Americas (Quito, Ecuador, July 2004). In addition, the festival is a partner of the Latin American based network HIVOS<sup>12</sup>.

The creation of a **continental network**, which was always the biggest dream that motivated us from the start, has only begun to take shape in recent years. During the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the festival, which was held in Buenos Aires in 2006, the original ambition of the festival founders to establish a social issues and **human rights film network in Latin America and the Caribbean**<sup>13</sup> finally came true. We have been closely cooperating with our network partners in order to exchange information and to launch training exchange programs for the technical staff of different festivals. We aspire to create a **team responsible for making subtitles within the network**, which will allow the festivals to present more subtitled films at a lower cost. In addition, we believe that an inter-university network may be established in the not too distant future, which would provide undergraduate and masters degrees in film and human rights valid throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

## ARTISTIC TRACK RECORD

A brief glance through the festival catalogues would reveal that the festival has gone through two significantly different periods.

- I. The Latin American Gaze: cinema on social issues and human rights (1997–2004)
- II. Opening-up Internationally and Thematic Diversification (2005–2008)

Generally speaking, in the catalogues which have been prepared over the ten years of the festival's existence, there have been three broad thematic groups that can be distinguished: **historical memory and dictatorship, socially or politically engaged films,** and **reflections on identity and the environment.** In the legal jargon of human rights, these classifications match quite well with the descriptions of the first, second and third generation of human rights. In tune with the tragedies that have happened in the country, the first editions of the DerHumALC Festival focused on **films reflecting the genocide perpetrated in the 1970s and on social dramas dealing with marginalization of majorities.** Although these two themes have remained a focal point, over time the festival has been gradually opening up to new topics and to new countries. At this point, the festival explores a great number of issues that pertain to circumstances around the world.

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The festival has developed a mature relationship with civil society, as we can see from the work of the festival's commissions which were created by more than forty social organizations and which focus on the traditional thematic sections: migration, reflections on gender issues, childhood and youth, environment and indigenous peoples. In **this way, society organizations are not invited as mere spectators** – they are engaged in the preparation of the festival, making up section juries and suggesting side activities.

The Latin America and Caribbean Social Issues and Human Rights Film Network has been broadening its scope by establishing a film workshop on indigenous peoples and by introducing a section devoted to the **African Diaspora**. The presence of Ivan Sanjines, who represents the La Paz-based CEFREC, and Guido Araujo, the director of the Bahia International Film Festival in Brazil, has helped the festival to explore the profound relationship between film and human rights in new ways, since it would be impossible for any Latin American country to come to terms with its identity without taking into consideration the culture of indigenous peoples and Afro-Americans.

We believe that our participation in the Human Rights Film Network should be enhanced on the basis of our close links with the most representative films on human rights shot in Latin America and the Caribbean.

1 Julio Santucho graduated from the Argentinean Catholic University with a degree in Theology. He is the current Director of the Multimedia Institute of Human Rights for Latin America and the Caribbean (DerHumALC), which organizes the DerHumALC International Festival – Films on Human Rights – and is the President of the Network of Films on Social Issues and Human Rights for the Latin America and the Caribbean

2 Feierstein Daniel, "El carácter genocida del Proceso de Reorganización Nacional", en S. Sel (comp), "Cine y Derechos Humanos", Buenos Aires, Ed. Instituto Multimedia DerHumALC, 2008

3 Bayer Osvaldo, "De Roca a Videla. El genocidio y el cine", en S. Sel (comp), "Cine y Derechos Humanos", Buenos Aires, Ed. Instituto Multimedia DerHumALC, 2008

4 See page 12, edition issued on August 4, 2007. Lesa humanidad. Available at [www.pagina12.com.ar](http://www.pagina12.com.ar)

5 First DerHumALC festival catalogue, Buenos Aires, March 1997.

6 Peña, Fernando Martín y Vallina, Carlos. "El Cine Quema: Raymundo Gleyzer", Buenos Aires, Ediciones de la Flor. 2000

7 Mestman, Mariano, "Entre Argel y Buenos Aires: el Comité de Cine del Tercer Mundo (1973–1974)", en S. Sel (comp), "Cine y fotografía como intervención política", Buenos Aires, Ed. Prometeo, 2007

8 The Karakachoff foundation was created by Federico Storani. See <http://www.futena.com/>

9 See [www.tve.org](http://www.tve.org)

10 See [www.micromacro.tv](http://www.micromacro.tv)

11 See [www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org](http://www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org)

12 See [www.hivos.nl](http://www.hivos.nl)

13 See [www.redcineyderechos.org](http://www.redcineyderechos.org)





BUILDING  
UP HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
AWARENESS  
IN POST-WAR SERBIA:  
FREE ZONE  
BELGRADE

HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

# BUILDING UP HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS IN POST-WAR SERBIA: FREE ZONE BELGRADE HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

By **MARKO POPOVIC**, Co-founder of Free Zone Festival, film and TV director

**Free Zone Belgrade Human Rights Film Festival** was established in 2005. It was the initiative of Katarina Zivanovic, general manager of the independent cultural center in Belgrade called Rex, and Marko Popovic, a film and TV director. Rex organized the festival, although the festival team was gathered and worked completely independently from the cultural center's other activities. It took place in an art cinema in Belgrade city center. The number of films screened varied from the beginning. The first edition lasted 5 days and screened 15 films, all feature length, both documentaries and fiction. The second edition lasted 6 days and screened 17 films; all feature lengths, documentaries as well as fiction. The third edition lasted 6 days and screened 17 feature length films and 17 short fiction films. The fourth edition screened 17 feature length films in 6 days. The audience numbers rose steadily. **The first edition attracted 3,500, the second 5,200, the third 7,500 and the fourth 8,800 audiences.** From the very beginning the **outreach activities** were an equally important part of the Free Zone project. Even after the first festival, regular monthly screenings were organized once a month in the Rex Cultural Center, and the Tour



of the Festival was organized in 12 cities across Serbia (from those days the number of cities rose up to 20 Serbian cities). Those two activities continued during all festival editions. We also organized selection, translation, subtitling and distribution of educational human rights documentaries for Serbian secondary schools, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and high school professors. In summer 2008 Free Zone organized the **first workshop for secondary school students** on making socially engaged documentaries. The workshop lasted 3 weeks and 15 students from all over Serbia were taught basic principles of documentary filmmaking and human rights by film and NGO professionals in the field.

## IDEAS BEHIND THE PROJECT

We had several principal ideas about what we wanted to achieve with the festival. We wanted to promote not only human rights films, but engaged and socially aware movies as well. We thought that in Serbia and in the Serbian cinema industry these type of movies were considered only as pure political propaganda and/or boring movies. We thought it was important to present completely different perspectives on this film genre to the Serbian audience. Also, we wanted to **bring issues of world importance back to Serbia and back to the attention of the Belgrade audience**. During the 1990s Serbia and its society were isolated, not only under UN sanctions, but also intellectually and spiritually. News programs of all the main Serbian broadcasting companies continued this practice after the collapse of the dictatorial regime in 2000. And Serbian people were literally cut off from recent and important international political, social and cultural issues. We wanted to break down this type of isolation and to bring burning topics that are important for the whole planet to Serbia. Then, of course, we wanted to promote human rights issues from a different perspective and in a more interesting way. By screening films with individualized characters, it is far easier to present particular human rights issues than by organizing an NGO conference on the same issue, for example. And, finally, we wanted to bring good

A black and white photograph of a snowy mountain landscape. In the foreground, a lamp with a pleated shade sits on a small table. The background features a calm lake reflecting the surrounding forest and a large, snow-covered mountain peak under a clear sky.

# SLOBODNA ZONA FREE ZONE FILM FESTIVAL

od 7. do 12. novembra 2008.  
Dvorana Kulturnog centra Beograda

and quality films that otherwise would remain unknown to the Belgrade and Serbian audience.

## DEVELOPING THE FESTIVAL – GETTING MEDIA AND AUDIENCE ATTENTION

The main achievement and success of the festival, apart from the constantly rising audience numbers, is that it has become one of the **most important film events in Belgrade and Serbia**. It has become important to the media, who at first were very reluctant



to cover festival events and screenings; it has become important to a considerable number of celebrity figures in Belgrade who now regularly attend the event; it has become important to a number of NGO organizations and activists, as well as to official institutions, like ministries and local municipalities. This big and important breakthrough actually happened in the **last two** editions of the festival although, of course, this was possible thanks to the well-organized and conceived previous editions.

At the very beginning media publishers and broadcasters were reluctant to report about our activities. They considered us to be either too small or as an event with uninteresting activities, or as both. That's why we organized a very young and energetic PR team, who worked on a daily basis with all major newspapers, radio, TV and internet companies in order to promote all relevant information about us and our programs. We insisted on personal contacts with journalists, on one hand, and on using all media, including so-called new media (internet platforms and networking websites) on the other. Also, a peer PR campaign was of great importance and our team worked very hard on spreading the word about the festival's program and accompanying events among friends, colleagues and potentially interested social groups. This form of campaigning we found to be very important for the festival attendance.

Promotional campaigns like radio and TV commercials and billboard campaigns were important and we always hired PR agencies to do this for us, but since we had a limited budget for this, and radio and TV stations as well as billboard rental companies were reluctant to sponsor us in a way that would make our media presence bigger, this was the less important part for the festival's visibility. **However, it is important to have a visual identity** and our experience is that you always have to work hard with the PR agency on this, because professional and experienced PR and marketing agencies tend to propose the usual solutions for your visual identity and promo campaign, but we think those solutions that could probably work for other film festivals usually don't work for human rights film festivals, since the audience is generally more skeptical, at least in Serbia. So our supervision and active participation in the creation of those campaigns were crucial.

## SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

**The biggest challenge in Serbia was how to beat the general doubt of the Serbian public towards a project with the human rights tag in its name.** After the NATO bombing of Serbia in

1999 in the name of human rights, the Serbian public became extremely suspicious towards anything that has something to do with human rights. Human rights were and even now still are seen as somebody's (and very often foreign) pure political agenda or only a name behind which are hidden imperial or at least dishonest intentions and political plans. **We had to avoid direct mentioning of human rights in our promo materials and media appearances.** We didn't lie about it, but we just didn't mention it, because, otherwise, only the NGO audience would come. From the very beginning it was important to us to have a broader social and age base of our potential audience. We wanted regular cinema goers as our audience, we wanted all political leanings to be represented among our viewers, so we focused, from the first edition, our campaign on promoting a film festival that screens good and provocative movies that have won prizes at international film festivals and that deal with burning social and political issues in the world today, and we put the human rights aspect in the background, and sometimes didn't even mention it. It was important for us that people come – and then we hoped that once in the darkness of the theater, confronted with the human rights issues from a totally different perspective, they would change their prejudices about human rights. This was a huge challenge, but the steady rise in the audience numbers and media and social interest in our festival shows we succeeded.

The other, more organizational, big challenge **was finding a commercial sponsor for the event.** Here we have failed, because, after four editions the festival still doesn't have a commercial sponsor. Its funding is totally based on donations, mainly international, and we are getting very much a symbolic amount from our Ministry of Culture and City Assembly. **We think it is important for the festival to have a commercial sponsor, because our experience is that donors can easily change their agendas for the upcoming year** and your project, although funded up till then, can easily be off the table, while with a commercial sponsor, once they are in, it is highly unlikely they will stop giving you even a small amount of financial help.

## PRACTICAL ISSUES: VENUE, TRANSLATIONS, SHIPPING

It was important for us to have a venue in the city center, since Belgrade audiences like posh and fancy events and are not in the habit of going to alternative festivals or even musical events. So, from the outset, we had to make the festival look like an event you must attend if you are “somebody” in the town. That’s why we chose a fancy art-house cinema in the downtown area. Another important issue for us was the capacity of the cinema. We think it has to be medium-sized, in the beginning. Not so small that it is sold out too quickly, but, on the other hand, not so big that, although your attendance numbers are impressive, it still looks like half of the cinema is empty. That will create a feeling among the audience that they are at an event nobody else actually cares about.

For film translations we use a professional translating company and they also subtitle the films for us. It is important, if you want to have a really broad audience, to have all films translated and subtitled. Shipping is done for us by DHL and they regularly give us some kind of discount, although not too big. We want the best possible quality of the film copies we screen, so we insist on 35mm copies or high quality video (Betas) and not DVDs, so that is why we have to use an internationally acclaimed and responsible carrier for the shipping of films.

## THREE THINGS I WOULD ADVISE A NEW FESTIVAL ORGANIZER

- Select only really good and touching films, screened at acclaimed film festivals or produced by young, fresh and upcoming filmmakers. Film as a whole should be the priority, not the issue or subject it is treating (*how it is done, not only what it is about*).
- Promotion is extremely important. Conceive and organize an attractive, visible, strong promo campaign using not only traditional media (*radio, TV, newspapers*), but new media (*Internet*) as well as peer campaigning. Try to reach every

journalist, all important media (*don't waste your time on small or unimportant media just for the sake of numbers*), every potentially interested social group and always try to broaden your audience social and cultural base. It's not enough to have NGO activists or students in your audience, don't just "preach to the converted".

- Find a commercial sponsor as soon as possible.

And, don't forget, for all these points, you have to have, from the very beginning, a fresh and highly motivated festival team. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to have a good and relevant film festival with only a few people working on it.

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THE ONE  
WORLD  
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FESTIVALS



ONE  
WORLD  
ROMANIA  
FESTIVAL 2008

# ONE WORLD ROMANIA FESTIVAL 2008

By **MONIKA ŠTĚPÁNOVÁ**, Director of the Czech Centre in Bucharest

The Czech Centre in Bucharest is based in the embassy building on Universitate Square right in the middle of the city. Its location means it has become a much frequented cultural venue for young citizens of Bucharest and students. As far back as 2006, besides various once-off programmes, we began regularly holding events on Thursdays devoted to Czech audiovisual productions (animation, short films, advertisements, music videos). In 2007, we decided to become involved with documentary films, which at the time were neglected here in Bucharest by both cinemas and cultural centres as well as in part by public television stations. Several years ago, I had been at the launch of "Documentary Mondays" in Prague's Kino Světozor cinema. I decided to try this concept, which had been successful in Prague, in Bucharest as well.

## STARTING ONE WORLD ROMANIA

In cooperation with other cultural institutes here in Bucharest, a regular series of Czech, Romanian and international documentaries was launched. Whenever possible, we also invited the directors to these events or local guests depending on the theme. Even back then, we tried to select topical social, political and ecological themes for these weekly documentary evenings. After a year and half of "Documentary Thursdays" in Bucharest, we had a decent audience base, a good overview of films produced in Romania as well as of organisations and initiatives involved in documentary film and media devoted to cinema.

In 2008, the One World Human Rights Film Festival in Prague was organizing an international tour to celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I knew the One World festival, both as a spectator and a cooperating institution, and this tour presented an opportunity to combine these experiences and contacts to create our own human rights film festival. This would be specifically focused on problem issues and areas of interest for Romanian society, and would thus have a chance of continuing as a local initiative.

## FESTIVAL TEAM

The team at the Czech Centre in Bucharest is very small (comprising four fulltime employees and one half-time worker), and is barely enough for our regular programme. For understandable reasons, which are mostly financial, we cannot employ more people for the sake of one large project. Consequently, we decided to cooperate with student volunteers, who could gain practical experience of programme management during the course of the festival. The first large group were philosophy students comprising around **20 enthusiastic young people**, who excelled in theoretical discussions about human rights and were all novices in terms of organising festivals. Some of them soon took over individual tasks and worked before and during the festival. Around eight students stayed until the festival so we quickly held another recruiting drive for volunteers about two weeks before the start of the event via the Czech Centre's blog. This time a very diverse group of young people responded. They had already worked previously with some other festivals and were of invaluable help in screening films and ensuring the technical facilities for screenings.

The team from the Prague One World Festival made a considerable contribution to the programme. After compiling thematic series for the first Romanian festival, we selected films from those that had been shown by the Prague event or films which it was preparing to screen.



## FIRST HUMAN RIGHTS FESTIVAL IN ROMANIA

One World Romania, which was the biggest film event of the Czech Centre in Bucharest in 2008 and the first human rights festival in Romania ever, was held between 27 May and 1 June. **Over the course of six days, we presented 46 films from 20 countries in 5 different venues.** Furthermore, five photographic exhibitions were launched and each festival evening had a discussion with our guests from 10 countries.



The festival opened with a concert by the group KUMM at the Arcub theatre in the centre of Bucharest. Before the event, an audience of 600 people also watched the festival trailer, which included excerpts from the films and circus numbers by homeless children. Launching a film festival with a rock concert might seem a tad unorthodox, but it definitely proved to be a success during the event's first year in Bucharest. All those who attended the concert left with a festival catalogue and programme.

Every evening there was a free screening held in the Czech Centre in Bucharest, followed by an extensive discussion with international guests of the festival. These talks were devoted to the following subjects: The Situation in Cuba, Homeless Children, Freedom of the Press, Contemporary China, and White Slavery. All of the discussions had a big response from the public. There were 3–4 screenings per evening in the other three cinemas. We tried to keep the price of admission to these other venues as low as possible. There was also a one-day event focusing solely on children and teenagers in the Romanian Peasant Museum.

**The festival programme was divided up thematically** into the following individual categories: Globalisation in Action, (No) Way Out? Dictatorships of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Quest for Identity, Children in Our World, Being a Woman, My Everyday Religion, and Justice – With or Without. Besides international productions, part of the festival programme also comprised **eight films made in Romania or which had Romania as their principal subject.**

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisational structure of the first year of the One World Romania festival was as follows:

- **Organiser:** The Czech Centre in Bucharest together with volunteers
- **Main partner:** One World Prague (*logistical support and assistance in programming, partial design of the catalogue*)
- **Partners:** the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Pilsner Urquell, Arhiva Nationala de Filme si Cinemateca Romana, ARCUB, the Dutch embassy – these entities provided financial support or offered support in-kind.
- **Other bodies and institutions who supported the festival:** the Hungarian Cultural Centre, the Romanian Peasant Museum (*Muzeul Taranului Roman*), SIGNIS Romania, the German embassy, the Finnish embassy, the Israeli embassy, the Irish embassy, the Canadian embassy, Freedom House, Institut Francais, Instituto Cervantes, the Polish Institute,



Sony, Banc Post, CEE trust, the UN Information Centre in Romania, Estenest, Carturesti, Museo Cafe, FDSC, SCI, Reea – these entities provided lower levels of financial support, invited guests or offered subtitling services.

## MEDIA AND PR

For the festival, we printed **4,500 catalogues, 3,500 posters/ programmes, 500 invitations** to the opening of the festival and **2,000 stickers**.

A **festival advertisement** was published in **three editions of the 24FUN weekly** (one half-page ad, and two full-page ads). This publication has a weekly print run of **60,000 copies**. The festival was also promoted in **two issues of the Cotidianul daily**, which has a print run of **25,000** copies.

A **television advertisement** (which comprised the **One World Prague spot adapted to include Romanian dates and venues**) was broadcast **60 times** over the course of 10 days on two national TV stations – **TVR Cultural and TVR International**.

A **radio advertisement** was broadcast **50 times** over the course of 10 days on a national radio station.

We gave **4 live interviews** (2 for TV and 2 for radio) during the festival as well as **37 recorded interviews** (6 for TV, 7 for radio and 24 for various print and online media).

Altogether the festival was presented in around 300 media reports, articles and blogs.

## ATTENDANCE

During the 6 days of the festival, **2,300 visitors** attended a wide range of events (not including the opening exhibition). The most

well attended events included the opening concert and the discussions at the Czech Centre.

## FESTIVAL FUNDING

Funding was partly provided by sponsors and partners and partly by bartering services.

The main partners were **Pilsner Urquell and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation**, who provided the sum of 5,000 EUR. Other sums were provided by the Dutch embassy, ArCuB and Freedom House. Part of the budget was covered by the Czech Centre in Bucharest and One World Prague. The total cost of the festival, including financial support as well as support from volunteers, bartering services, sponsor's services, and assistance from embassies amounted to around **60,000 EUR**.

## MOTIVATIONS

Our aim in organising the first year of the festival was to provide more comprehensive and balanced information on a wide range of human rights issues from regions that are not sufficiently covered in the Romanian media or not mentioned at all. **We also wanted to draw attention to the lack of public discussions and interest in many topical Romanian issues.**

For example, despite the fact that homeless children are a common sight on Romanian streets, few people, apart from those working for some active NGOs and some small state agencies, have any idea where these children come from, how they survive, and what problems they encounter.

Generally speaking, it could be said that the films and discussions pertaining to Romania and local issues met with a substantially greater response than international topics. This illustrates the lack of public debate on local problems as well as the need for such discussions. As an example, I would mention the talk that was

held on the subject of the “Freedom of the Press in Romania” and the screening of the film *Cold Waves* by director Alexandru Solomon, who took part in the debate along with some well known independent journalists. It was not only this discussion, but all the others that underlined the need for the subject of Romania’s past to be dealt with more frequently and in a more active and comprehensive manner.

Even during the first year of the festival in Bucharest, we succeeded in making many people aware of the event. **Two factors that contributed to the success of the festival were the aforementioned media coverage and the visual presentation of the event.** The festival had a clearly recognisable graphic design concept and a memorable logo.

## PROBLEMATIC MOMENTS

The quality and strength of the event was ensured thanks to a thematically good and visually appealing programme complemented by a selection of specific Romanian themes. In spite of this, however, **no cinema was ever completely full**, and we have set this as our objective for next year’s festival, which we are working on right now.

Problematic moments included the late confirmation of financial support from partners and the fact that our main sponsor pulled out of the project at the last minute. **Next year, we would definitely like to have a clearer idea of the budget we have to work with a good deal sooner.** Another lesson that was learnt and which will bring about a change next year concerns **the dates of the festival.** The first year of the event took place at one of the busiest times of the year in terms of movie showcases. There were other film festivals taking place in Bucharest before and after One World. Next year we will be moving the event to dates. Naturally, organising the festival with volunteers, who were given greater responsibility than they had experienced previously, did not work out in some cases. Consequently, we had to confront a couple of

rather big problems shortly before the start of the festival. Luckily, everything was successfully resolved, partly thanks to the help of One World Prague and partly because of the permanent team at the Czech Centre in Bucharest.

In part, as regards looking for funding and sponsors for the event, the issue of human rights as a modern topic seemingly has an open door, and all the representatives of corporations and their marketing departments whom I presented the festival to identified with it in theory. Ultimately, however, **only a few multinational companies can stomach political themes**, regardless of whether they are particular about their “human rights image” or not.

## THE SECOND EDITION

For me personally, the festival was a great experience. Right now, we are in the preparation phase for the next festival. We are seeking sponsors and putting together a team, partly consisting of previous volunteers and partners. We take it as a good sign that practically everyone wants to get involved in the festival again and they are even more enthusiastic than when we started last year.

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HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVALS

AND

SUSTAINABILITY:

ONE WORLD

BERLIN

# HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVALS AND SUSTAINABILITY: ONE WORLD BERLIN

By **NATALIE GRAVENOR**, Festival Manager, One World Berlin

Since 2004 the One World Berlin Film Festival for Human Rights and Media has offered a platform for human rights documentaries that in many cases are otherwise not screened in Berlin or even Germany. The festival screens 40 to 50 films annually. The NGOs and other human rights organizations who present these films during the festival to facilitate discussion about the issues depicted on screen frequently find a use for these films after and beyond the festival – in seminars and other educational formats. Furthermore, through the festival exposure, other organizations and initiatives become aware of the films and through One World Berlin's mediation are put into contact with the rights holders. Thus over the years the consecutive festival programs have accumulated into a pool of films of considerable human rights education potential. **To promote this sustainable use of films as facilitating tools for human rights education is an important goal of the festival** and in addition to serving as a mediator between film users and rights holders we are developing ways to make these resources accessible:

- availability of films and film metadata via online video demand platform **realeyz.tv**
- service of touring film festival packages



## FILM FESTIVALS AS AN ENGINE FOR INDEPENDENT FILM DISTRIBUTION

Thematically focused film festivals – local festival One World Berlin and touring festivals like the mental health-focused Ausnahme|Zustand (“state of emergency”) and the film tours for the German welfare organization Aktion Mensch for their online society debate portal dieGesellschafter.de (“societists”) are not only platforms for human rights education using audiovisual media. They can also create distribution opportunities for documentaries:

- through the media exposure generated by the festival
- through networking with NGOs who present the film during the festival, organize the accompanying discussions and decide to use the film in their work beyond the festival
- through exposure on the **realeyz.tv** video on demand pay per view streaming platform, which generates revenue for the rights holder by expanding the film’s reach to internet-savvy audiences who respond to the platform’s community functions, editorial content and catalog (*as components of an image of curatorial competence bringing quality independent audiovisual content otherwise usually not available to the target audience*)
- through cooperation forged that may lead to other films of the rights holder being included in nationwide touring festivals that function like a theatrical release and usually generate many follow-up bookings of titles as well, thanks to cooperation with social and political initiatives. The inclusion of the film in a tour entails making a German language version (*subtitles or voiceover*) and encoding in digital 2k standard (*the films are available as digital cinema master, DVD or Beta SP; the necessity for costly and transport-intensive 35mm prints has been eliminated*)

# CASE STUDIES

## 1. BLACK GOLD

*GB 2006, dirs: Marc and Nick Francis*

This powerful, visually stunning documentary forcefully makes a case for Western consumers to switch to fair trade products, in this case coffee, as a direct contribution to improving the lives of farmers and workers in the developing world. The film received its German theatrical release as part of the **ueber arbeiten** touring film festival on labor, economics and globalization in 2006/2007. The film was screened in over 80 cities within the festival and was booked on many occasions afterwards, usually by social and/or political groups such as fair trade outlets using the film for educational work. During the festival Oxfam Germany was the film's nationwide film partner. They organized discussions and often also fair trade product samplings after the screenings as well as accompanying the film's protagonist, Tadesse Maskela, on a tour of selected screenings in Germany.

## 2. MANUFACTURING DISSENT: MICHAEL MOORE AND THE MEDIA

*CDN 2006, dirs: Deborah Melnyk, Rick Cain*

One month after the German release of Michael Moore's latest documentary **Sicko**, Deborah Melnyk and Rick Cain's critical examination of Moore's career and methods had its Berlin premiere at One World Berlin 2007. The film's distributor had planned a DVD only release but was happy to cooperate with festivals such as OWB as a platform for raising awareness about the film. During the festival the film screened twice and was shown again at a "best of" festival reprise the following January, to considerable press coverage. The film will also be featured on the **realeyz.tv** pay per view video on demand online streaming platform.

## 3. ROOM 4070

*Germany 2006, dirs: Jana Kalms, Torsten Striegnitz*

*Room 4070* is a bare-bones documentary about a psychosis seminar at the University of Potsdam. Under the guidance of

renowned psychologist Dr. Peter Stolz, psychosis patients and their loved ones meet regularly in a form of group therapy session. Dr. Stolz facilitates the creation of a safe space where people feel comfortable sharing their experiences, fears, psychotic visions and hopes. The film's German theatrical release in 2006 was within the **Ausnahme|Zustand** ("state of emergency") touring film festival on depression and emotional disorders. As with *ueber arbeiten*, **Ausnahme|Zustand** was realized in cooperation with numerous public health, self-help and other counseling initiatives who integrated the film into their educational/outreach (and in this case also therapeutic and training) work. The film inspired the foundation of many psychosis seminars in other cities and the DVD is distributed by a specialist psychiatric publishing company. Many referrals to the publishers come from the **Ausnahme|Zustand** website.

#### 4. ONE – THE FILM

USA 2005 dir: Ward M. Powers

An offbeat, low budget and grassroots look at a personal quest for spirituality and the "one" common factor that unites rather than divides humanity, *One* assembles unique interview footage by such spiritual luminaries as Deepak Chopra and Roger Thurman. Three sold out screenings (one of which was organized impromptu due to popular demand) at OWB 2005 generated strong media interest and led to the film being picked up by a German company for theatrical distribution, with almost 10,000 admissions (box office return: 50,000-60,000 euros).

### INTEGRATED APPROACH

One World Berlin as an audience festival serves to help human rights educators build awareness about human rights issues through the low threshold medium of documentary film as well as offering a showcase for independent documentary films. Out of the original local festival a variety of other tools have been developed – video on demand platform, mediation services, touring film packages – that together serve as an interface between committed creative

documentaries, NGO multipliers and interested audiences for the sustainable use of audiovisual media for human rights awareness building and education. The local festival and touring packages provide opportunities for public interpersonal communication and debate; the video on demand platform fosters individual and group interaction in a more private sphere; the mediation services facilitate and open other fora of discussion, both public and more private.

## **MORE INFORMATION:**

[www.oneworld-berlin.de](http://www.oneworld-berlin.de) (festival site, German only)

[www.eyzmedia.de](http://www.eyzmedia.de) (information in German and English)

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FESTIVAL  
IN KENYA

# REFLECTION OF HEALINGS: DUNIA MOJA FESTIVAL IN KENYA

By **ALPHONSE APOTI MAKOVE**, Founder of Dunia Moja

Dunia Film Human Rights Festival is very much inspired by One World. However, the context of the social, economic and political landscape in Kenya requires a different approach. The Dunia Moja concept is, thus, a holistic festival approach that reaches the poor in the low income areas and the gated-community-based middle class, donors and stakeholders at Alliance Française and the Goethe Institute. Dunia Moja wishes to mobilize citizens with the help of grass roots organisations – faith-based organisations and other community-based organisations.

The key agenda is to develop annual educational forums/workshops for presentations and discussions on human rights topics.

After the horrible post election violence that occurred in 2008, Kenyan society is faced with a new wave of ethnicity-related problems. Ethnic distance and intolerance are more and more expressive. Further, the majority of Kenyan people are burdened with unemployment and stark poverty – historical injustices.

Over time, the deliberate use of violence by politicians to obtain power, plus the decision not to punish perpetrators has led to a culture of impunity and a constant escalation of violence. This in turn has caused further diffusion of violence in the country. Thus



violence has become a factor not just of elections but in everyday life. What this means in practice is that violence is widespread and can be tapped for a variety of reasons.

Secondly, there is an increasing problem of a growing population of poor and unemployed and youth, educated and uneducated, who agree to join militias and organized gangs. These gangs have been alleged to intersect with part of the government and the security forces.

These groups have now become “shadow governments” in the slums/low income areas and even in other parts of the country and have been used by politicians to attack their opponents, to secure their own security and to gain power. This underlying endemic situation has created a climate where violence is increasingly unlikely to be checked.

One of the main historical injustices that bedevil Kenya is land and inequality. Kenya consists of 42 ethnic groups. Many of these groups live in the rural area and many of these areas are relatively homogeneous ethnically. Problems of inequality and marginalization thus are often viewed in ethno-geographic terms.

This in turn has created the notion of “insiders” who are native to a place and “outsiders” who have migrated there, a notion that has been tapped by aspiring politicians. This raises the question of the balance between groups’ interests and the rights of individuals as entrenched in the Constitution, a problem that has also crept into the slums such as Kibera and Mathara in Nairobi (most affected during the recent post election violence and where we are screening films), which are now informally divided into ethnically homogeneous zones. Apart from the above, gross corruption, the endemic HIV/Aids problem, gender inequality, human trafficking, etc., are major problems in Kenya.

It is against the backdrop of these central issues that DM launched a project themed *Reflection of Healings: 2008 Human Rights Film Festival on Transitional Justice*, a festival that arranged indoor screening

followed by debates in 7 low-income areas and in Alliance Française. From November 27, 2008, Dunia Moja continued the screenings and debate forums under the banner *Commemorating the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Post-Election Violence*. Dunia Moja in collaboration with its partners holds outdoor screenings in 4 more informal settlements in Nairobi and 26 towns that experienced the worst PEV.

The annual festival aims to:

- Galvanize audiences nationwide around the human rights fundamentals of dignity, freedom and equality
- Offer a chance for citizens, civil society and other non-state actors in Kenya to come together in sustaining dialogue on some of the root issues that we as a nation have developed the propensity to sweep under the carpet over the years – a necessity now more than ever before in the face of the post-electoral crisis
- Provide a unique opportunity for collaboration across the board by actively involving the people of Kenya, the government, academia, civil society, media, the arts, the private sector and the donor community
- Institutionalize one more platform working towards the recognition of human rights as a deeply-ingrained, innate part of our everyday lives rather than the distant concept that is recognized and celebrated only on December 10, International Human Rights Day
- Offer a unique opportunity to de-eliticize and de-intellectualize key political, social and economic discussions in Kenya by taking them away from the usual conference rooms, declarations and forums to the people in powerful visual and spoken language.

We managed to attract about **2000 people in the indoor screening**. However, our audiences recommended that the outdoor screenings would reach more people. **Our festival is geared toward open walk-in screenings in the low income areas.** The chosen areas in Nairobi where we're planning to present the exhibitions are densely populated.

Apart from using the Community Human Rights Network for mobilization, we're also going to use **Film Corporation of Kenya's mobile film unit** to offer free screenings. People who grew up in this country in the 60s to early 90s have a nostalgic attachment to the free screenings in this era. Walk-in mobile film screenings are still a well known feature in Kenya, especially in the low income and rural areas.

Next year, there will be processes of national reconstruction, transitional justice and a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TRJC). Dunia Moja hopes to mobilize the local community to appear and present their own anecdotes in these sittings of the TRJC and constitutional reform. We'll present reports to the national commission in transitional justice but we want to empower people by letting them come to the local sittings of national commissions of transitional justice and voice their personal stories and views.

Having said all this, Dunia Moja intends to transcend beyond the raging debate on the culture of impunity/transitional justice and also to focus on other human rights issues, such as the Millennium Development Goals (health, sanitation, child welfare, HIV/Aids and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, etc.).

From next year, the festival is planning **screenings and seminar/workshop activities throughout the year in schools, prisons and local communities**. Hopefully with more funds, we intend to send one person to the Czech Republic to get a better understanding of One World's School Program.

## CONTACT

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# APPENDIX

# FESTIVAL BUDGET – BASIC VERSION

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS</b>	
Office rent	
Postage	
Communication	
Payments	
<b>FILMS</b>	
Postage ( <i>DVDs, catalogues from other festivals</i> )	
Trips to other festivals	
Translation	
Subtitling/simultaneous translation	
Shipping	
<b>PRODUCTION</b>	
Rent of technical equipment ( <i>Projectors, DVD/BETA/DVcam players</i> )	
Back up tapes, DVDs, external harddisks etc.	
Screening rights	
Rent for venues	
Various software for editing/subtitling etc.	
Graphic design	
<b>PR</b>	
Catalogue	
Website	
Flyers	
Posters	
Advertisements	

Other campaigns	
Print	
Festival trailer	
<b>FESTIVAL GUESTS</b>	
Accommodation	
Travel	
Per Diem or Some Catering During Festival	
Extra costs ( <i>taxis, drivers, cell phones</i> )	
<b>ACCOMPANYING EVENTS</b>	
Opening/Closing Ceremony	
Debates and QandAs (moderators, interpreters, technical equipment...)	
Receptions	
Exhibitions	
Concerts	
<b>STAFF</b> ( <i>mini version</i> )	
Festival Director /or Key organizer	
Program Selector	
Production Person	
Financial Manager	
PR Coordinator	
Catalogue/Web Editors	
Guest Service Coordinator	
Outreach and Educational Activities Coordinator	
Debates Coordinator	

# ONE WORLD PRAGUE

## Media Plan and Promotion for 2008

TV AND VIDEO ADS			
DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	PERIOD	
Czech TV ( <i>two channels</i> ): festival trailer	55 times	25. 2.–12. 3.	
	11 times	4. 3.–14. 3.	
festival trailer in cinemas	210 times	5. 3.–13. 3.	
festival trailer on Metrovision ( <i>LCD screens in subway</i> )	1720 times	27. 2.–8. 3.	
<b>PR ON RADIO</b>			
audio festival trailer on Czech National Radio ( <i>media partner</i> )	40x	25. 3.–12. 3.	
audio festival trailer on Radio 1 ( <i>alternative station, media partner</i> )	30x	2. 3.–12. 3.	
Special reports about festival on Radio 1	11x	4. 3.–14. 3.	
	8x	5. 3.–13. 3.	
	8x	5. 3.–13. 3.	



DESCRIPTION		NUMBER	PERIOD
<b>OUTDOOR (PRAGUE)</b>			
city lights ( <i>Prague subway</i> )		50 pcs	1. 2.–29. 3.
city lights ( <i>Prague, around the city</i> )		80 pcs	26. 2.–10. 3.
		55 pcs	28. 2.–13. 3.
small ads in subway		50 pcs	16. 2.–29. 2.
festival sign near the subway entrance		90 pcs	4. 3.–13. 3.
small ads in trams/buses		1,300 pcs	
festival posters		3,000 pcs	26. 2.–13. 3.
<b>PR IN PRESS</b>			
3 x special two pages about festival in two major dailies and one English language newspaper ( <i>LN, MF Dnes, The Prague Post</i> )			26. 2.–13. 3.
PR in other media			19. 2.–13. 3.
<b>ADVERTISEMENTS IN PRINTED MEDIA</b>			
dailies ( <i>LN, MF Dnes, Metro, 24, hodin, Metropolitan Express</i> )			19. 2.–8. 3.
weeklies ( <i>The Prague Post, Reflex, Houser, Metropolis, A2</i> )			8. 2.–8. 3.
monthlies			February

PR MATERIAL			DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	PERIOD
big festival catalogue ( <i>bilingual, people have to buy it</i> )			A5+, 242 pages	500 pcs	10 days prior fest.
small festival catalogue ( <i>only in Czech</i> )			A5, 96 pages	11,000 pcs	10 days prior fest.
flyers for accompanying events			A4	6,000 pcs	10 days prior fest.
small festival program/flyer				6,000 + 3,000 pcs	10 days prior fest.
invitations: opening, closing, exhibition opening, special events				3 x 1,500 pcs	10 days prior fest.
festival passes					
t-shirts				5,000 pcs	7 days prior fest.
large banners with logos of partners ( <i>placed in each cinema</i> )				500 pcs	7 days prior fest.
festival website			200x110cm	10 cinema halls	10 days prior fest.
special coverage on website of Czech TV ( <i>main media partner</i> )					ca. 2 month prior fest.
coverage on People in Need website ( <i>festival organizer</i> )					1 month prior fest.
					1. 1.–30. 4.

# HUMAN RIGHTS FILM NETWORK (HRFN)

Films and videos are now an integral part, or even a crucial feature, of activism, education, political appeals and the sharing of similar personal experiences from regions that would otherwise be very far away. The success of a number of feature films and documentaries with human rights themes is also evidence of the need among the general public to find out about social and political issues outside of a simple news-reporting context. Consequently, new human rights festivals are being established every year and there are a growing number of thematic categories and special awards devoted to human rights at important international film festivals.

What was initially an exchange of informal opinions between the organizers of these festivals eventually resulted in the idea of establishing a network of human rights festivals called the Human Rights Film Network (HRFN), which aims to assist in the activities of individual festivals and to create new platforms for common projects. HRFN was officially founded in Prague during the One World festival in 2004.

Besides promoting the distribution of films with human rights themes at festivals as well as their distribution to television stations and educational institutions, HRFN strives to help nascent festivals and to create a supportive environment for filmmakers, particularly those who are risking their lives to make their movies or who are stifled by censorship.

HRFN's members have also initiated the establishment of human rights awards at prestigious festivals such as the Berlinale, Venice, IDFA, Rotterdam, CPH:DOX, etc.

<http://www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org>

# LIST OF SELECTED HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVALS

Members of the Human Rights Film Network:

- **Addis International Film Festival**, Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia:  
[www.initiativeafrica.net/film](http://www.initiativeafrica.net/film), March
- **Amnesty International Travelling Film Festival**, Toronto,  
Canada: [www.amnesty.ca](http://www.amnesty.ca), November
- **Ciné Droit Libre; Festival de Film sur les Droits  
Humains de Ouagadougou**, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso:  
[www.semfilms.bf](http://www.semfilms.bf), July
- **DerHumAlc, Festival Internacional de Cine de Derechos  
Humanos**, Buenos Aires, Argentina: [www.derhumalc.org.ar](http://www.derhumalc.org.ar),  
May–June
- **Docudays: Human Rights Documentary Days Film  
Festival**, Kiev, Ukraine: [www.docudays.org.ua](http://www.docudays.org.ua), April
- **Festival de Cine y Video de los Derechos Humanos  
“Bolivia, El Séptimo Ojo es Tuyo”**, Sucre, Bolivia:  
[www.festivalcinebolivia.org](http://www.festivalcinebolivia.org), May
- **Festival International du Film sur les Droits Humains**,  
Geneva, Switzerland: [www.fifdh.org](http://www.fifdh.org), March
- **Festival du film des droits de l’homme (Alliance Ciné)**, Paris,  
France: [www.festival-droitsdelhomme.org](http://www.festival-droitsdelhomme.org), March–April
- **Free Zone - Belgrade Human Rights Film Festival**, Serbia:  
[www.freezonebelgrade.org](http://www.freezonebelgrade.org), November
- **Human Rights Watch**, New York, USA: [www.hrw.org/iff/](http://www.hrw.org/iff/),  
June
- **Human Rights Watch**, London, UK: [www.hrw.org/iff/](http://www.hrw.org/iff/), March
- **Human Rights Nights International Film Festival**, Bologna,  
Italy: [www.humanrightsnights.org](http://www.humanrightsnights.org), March–April
- **Human Rights Film Festival**, New Zealand:  
[www.humanrightsfilmfest.net.nz/](http://www.humanrightsfilmfest.net.nz/), May–June

- **Montreal Human Rights Film Festival**, Montreal, Canada: <http://ffdpn.com>, on every first Thursday of the month from September to December
- **Movies That Matter Film Festival**, Amsterdam, the Netherlands: [www.moviesthatmatter.nl](http://www.moviesthatmatter.nl), April
- **One World International Human Rights Film Festival**, Prague, Czech Republic: [www.oneworld.cz](http://www.oneworld.cz), March
- **Perspektive – International Human Rights Film Festival**, Nuremberg, Germany: [www.humanrightsfilmfestival.org](http://www.humanrightsfilmfestival.org), October
- **Refugee Film Festival**, Tokyo, Japan: [www.refugeefilm.org](http://www.refugeefilm.org), June
- **Seoul Human Rights Film Festival**, Seoul, South Korea: <http://sarangbang.or.kr/hrfilm>, May–June
- **Tri Continental Film Festival**, South Africa: [www.3continentsfestival.co.za](http://www.3continentsfestival.co.za), August–September
- **Vermont International Film Festival**, Burlington, USA: [www.vtiff.org](http://www.vtiff.org), October
- **Verzio**, Budapest, Hungary: [www.verzio.ceu.hu](http://www.verzio.ceu.hu), November
- **Watch Docs International Film Festival**, Warsaw, Poland: [www.watchdocs.pl](http://www.watchdocs.pl), December

## OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVALS:

- **Bahrain Human Rights International Film Festival**, Manama, Bahrain: [www.bhriff.com](http://www.bhriff.com), May
- **Bruxelles Laïque asbl**, Brussels, Belgium: [www.festivaldeslibertes.be](http://www.festivaldeslibertes.be), October
- **Cairo Human Rights Film Festivals**, Cairo, Egypt: [www.cairofilm.org](http://www.cairofilm.org), November
- **CINE VERITAS Human Rights Festival**, Diliman, Philippines: <http://upfilm.institute.multiply.com/tag/cineveritasfilmfest>, December
- **DITSHWANELO Human Rights Film Festival**, <http://www.ditshwanelo.org.bw/festival.html>, Francistown, Botswana, October, Gaborone, April
- **Document – International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival**, Glasgow, UK: [www.docfilmfest.org.uk](http://www.docfilmfest.org.uk), October

- **Dunia Moja**, Nairobi, Kenya, [www.duniamoja.or.ke](http://www.duniamoja.or.ke)
- **Festival International de Films des Droits de l'Homme au Togo**, Kara, Togo, [www.lome-droitsdelhomme.org/](http://www.lome-droitsdelhomme.org/), October
- **Festival International de Films des Droits de l'Homme de Bangui**, Central African Republic, [www.festival-droitsdelhomme.org](http://www.festival-droitsdelhomme.org), May
- **Festival on Human Rights – VIVISECTfest**, Novi Sad, Serbia: [www.vivisectfest.org](http://www.vivisectfest.org), December
- **Freedom Film Fest**, (*travelling festival*) Malaysia: <http://freedomfilmfest.komas.org/>, September
- **Human Rights Arts and Film Festival**, (*travelling festival*) Australia: [www.hrff.org.au/](http://www.hrff.org.au/), November–March
- **Human Rights Film Festival**, Zagreb, Croatia: [www.humanrightsfestival.org](http://www.humanrightsfestival.org), February
- **International Human Rights Film Festival**, Tirana, Albania, <http://www.ihrffa.net/Site/IHRFFA.html>, March
- **Nazareth International Human Rights Festival**, Nazareth, Palestine, [www.elsana.org](http://www.elsana.org), May
- **New Orleans Human Rights Film Festival**, New Orleans, USA: [www.nolahumanrights.org](http://www.nolahumanrights.org), April
- **One World Berlin**, Berlin, Germany: [www.oneworld-berlin.de](http://www.oneworld-berlin.de), November
- **One World Bulgaria**, Sophia, Bulgaria: [www.bgoneworld.org](http://www.bgoneworld.org), October
- **One World Kyrgyzstan**, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, June
- **One World Romania**, Bucharest, Romania: [www.oneworld.ro](http://www.oneworld.ro), March
- **One World Slovakia**, Bratislava, Slovakia: [www.jedensvet.sk](http://www.jedensvet.sk), November
- **Oxford Brookes University Human Rights Film Festival**, Oxford, UK: <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/be/research/cendep/hrff.html>, February–March
- **Seattle Human Rights Film Festival**, Seattle, USA: [www.shrff.org](http://www.shrff.org), February
- **South Asian Human Rights Film Festival**, Syracuse, USA: [http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/Programs/sac/news/film\\_festival.asp](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/Programs/sac/news/film_festival.asp), January

- **This Human World**, Vienna, Austria:  
[www.thishumanworld.com](http://www.thishumanworld.com), December
- The South Caucasus Documentary Film Festival of Peace and Human Rights – **«Nationality: human»**, (*traveling festival*)  
Georgia: [www.ya-chelovek.caucasus.net](http://www.ya-chelovek.caucasus.net), April–October
- **Tri Continental Film Festival**, (*traveling festival*) India:  
[www.triconfilm.com](http://www.triconfilm.com), January–February

# HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS AT SELECTED FESTIVALS

## **HUMAN RIGHTS FILM NETWORK AWARDS**

[www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org](http://www.humanrightsfilmnetwork.org)

- Venice Film Festival, Italy; [www.labiennale.org/en/cinema](http://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema)
- Mar de Plata Film Festival, Argentina;  
[www.mardelplatafilmfest.com](http://www.mardelplatafilmfest.com)
- Berlinale, Berlin, Germany; [www.berlinale.de](http://www.berlinale.de)

## **EIUC HUMAN RIGHTS FILM AWARD**

[www.eiuc.org](http://www.eiuc.org)

- Venice Film Festival, Italy; [www.labiennale.org/en/cinema](http://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema)

## **CINEMA FOR PEACE AWARD**

[www.cinemaforpeace.com](http://www.cinemaforpeace.com)

- Berlinale, Berlin, Germany; [www.berlinale.de](http://www.berlinale.de)

## **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AWARDS**

[www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

- Rotterdam International Film Festival, The Netherlands;  
[www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com](http://www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com)
- Open Doek Film Festival, Turnhout, Belgium; [www.opendoek.be](http://www.opendoek.be)
- CPH:DOX, Copenhagen, Denmark; [www.cphdox.dk](http://www.cphdox.dk)
- Locarno International Film Festival, Switzerland; [pardo.ch](http://pardo.ch)
- Motovun Film Festival, Croatia;  
[www.motovunfilmfestival.com](http://www.motovunfilmfestival.com)
- Indie Lisboa, International Independent Film Festival,  
Portugal – Lisbon; [www.indielisboa.com](http://www.indielisboa.com)
- Ljubljana International Documentary Festival, Ljubljana,  
Slovenia; [en.fdf.si/home](http://en.fdf.si/home)



## **MOVIES THAT MATTER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD**

[www.moviesthatmatterfestival.nl](http://www.moviesthatmatterfestival.nl)

- International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam (*IDFA*),  
The Netherlands; [www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)

## **OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS:**

- RiverRun International Film Festival, Winston-Salem, USA;  
[www.riverrunfilm.com](http://www.riverrunfilm.com)
- Artist Film Festival, Los Angeles, USA; [www.artivists.org](http://www.artivists.org)

# USEFUL LINKS

## FESTIVALS

- Africa in the Picture [www.africainthepicture.nl](http://www.africainthepicture.nl)
- Berlin International Film Festival [www.berlinale.de](http://www.berlinale.de)
- Cinéma du Réel [www.cinereel.org](http://www.cinereel.org)
- CPH:DOX [www.cphdox.dk](http://www.cphdox.dk)
- Cracow Film Festival [www.kff.com.pl](http://www.kff.com.pl)
- Crossing Europe Film Festival Linz [www.crossingeurope.at](http://www.crossingeurope.at)
- Diagonale FF [www.diagonale.at](http://www.diagonale.at)
- Doc point Helsinki [www.docpoint.info](http://www.docpoint.info)
- DocAviv [www.docaviv.co.il](http://www.docaviv.co.il)
- Doclisboa [www.doclisboa.org](http://www.doclisboa.org)
- Docu Days Beirut [www.docudays.com](http://www.docudays.com)
- Ecocinema Greece [www.ecocinema.gr](http://www.ecocinema.gr)
- Edinburgh International Film Festival [www.edfilmfest.org.uk](http://www.edfilmfest.org.uk)
- Ekofilm Český Krumlov [www.ekofilm.cz](http://www.ekofilm.cz)
- Festival dei Popoli Firenze [www.festivaldeipopoli.org](http://www.festivaldeipopoli.org)
- Fictions du Réel [www.fidmarseille.org](http://www.fidmarseille.org)
- Film Festival Cottbus <http://filmfestival.pool-production.de>
- Filmfest Dresden [www.filmfest-dresden.de](http://www.filmfest-dresden.de)
- Gottingen International Ethnographic Film Festival [www.gieff.de](http://www.gieff.de)
- Hot Docs [www.hotdocs.ca](http://www.hotdocs.ca)
- Human Rights Arts and Film Festival [www.hraff.org.au](http://www.hraff.org.au)
- Idfa Amsterdam [www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)
- IDFA [www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)
- It's All True Documentary Festival [www.itsalltrue.com.br](http://www.itsalltrue.com.br)
- Karlovy Vary International Film Festival [www.kviff.com](http://www.kviff.com)
- Leipzig International Documentary and Animation Film Festival  
[www.dok-leipzig.de](http://www.dok-leipzig.de)
- Mediawave [www.mwave.iq.hu](http://www.mwave.iq.hu)
- Message to Man St. Petersburg [www.message-to-man.spb.ru](http://www.message-to-man.spb.ru)
- Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival  
[www.dokument-festival.cz](http://www.dokument-festival.cz)
- Munich Documentary Film Festival [www.dokfestival-muenchen.de](http://www.dokfestival-muenchen.de)
- Pärnu IDAFF [www.chaplin.ee/filmfestival/index.htm](http://www.chaplin.ee/filmfestival/index.htm)

- Pusan International Film Festival [www.piff.org](http://www.piff.org)
- Rotterdam International Film Festival  
[www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com](http://www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com)
- Sheffield International Documentary Festival  
[www.sheffdocfest.com](http://www.sheffdocfest.com)
- Silverdocs International Documentary Festival  
<http://silverdocs.com/>
- Sundance Film Festival <http://festival.sundance.org/2009/>
- Sunny Side – documentary catalogue [www.sunnysideofthedoc.com](http://www.sunnysideofthedoc.com)
- Thessaloniki Documentary Festival [www.filmfestival.gr](http://www.filmfestival.gr)
- Yamagata IDFF [www.yidff.jp](http://www.yidff.jp)
- Zagreb Dox [www.zagrebdox.net/html/en](http://www.zagrebdox.net/html/en)

## SHORT FILM FESTIVALS

- Curtas Vila do Conde [www.curtasmetragens.pt](http://www.curtasmetragens.pt)
- Festival du Court Métrage Clermont-Ferrand  
[www.clermont-filmfest.com](http://www.clermont-filmfest.com)
- Festival International de Films de Fribourg [www.fiff.ch](http://www.fiff.ch)
- Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen [www.kurzfilmtage.de](http://www.kurzfilmtage.de)
- Tampere Film Festival [www.tamperefilmfestival.fi](http://www.tamperefilmfestival.fi)

## SOURCES OF FILMS FOR CHILDREN

- Buster – Copenhagen International Film Festival for Children and Youth [www.buster.dk](http://www.buster.dk)
- Cinekid Film Festival [www.cinekid.nl](http://www.cinekid.nl)
- Icon Film [www.icon-film.de](http://www.icon-film.de)
- Kid Docs Documentary Film Festival for Youth [www.kiddocs.info](http://www.kiddocs.info)
- Kurz Film Agentur Hamburg [www.shortfilm.com](http://www.shortfilm.com)
- Lemming Film [www.lemmingfilm.com](http://www.lemmingfilm.com)
- NCRV/Dokument Junior [www.ncrv.nl](http://www.ncrv.nl)
- OXFAM [www.oxfam.com](http://www.oxfam.com)

## PRODUCTION/DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES

- Andana Films [www.andanafilms.com](http://www.andanafilms.com)
- Deckert Distribution [www.deckert-distribution.com](http://www.deckert-distribution.com)
- Dschoint Ventschr Filmproduktion [www.dschointventschr.ch](http://www.dschointventschr.ch)
- Filmkontakt Nord [www.filmkontakt.com](http://www.filmkontakt.com)

- Films Transit [www.filmstransit.com](http://www.filmstransit.com)
- First Hand Films [www.firsthandfilms.com](http://www.firsthandfilms.com)
- First run/icarus films <http://icarusfilms.com/>
- Fortissimo Films [www.fortissimo.nl](http://www.fortissimo.nl)
- Ideale Audience Int [www.ideale-audience.com](http://www.ideale-audience.com)
- JOURNEYMAN PICTURES [www.journeyman.tv](http://www.journeyman.tv)
- Les Films d'Ici [www.lesfilmsdici.fr](http://www.lesfilmsdici.fr)
- NPB Sales [www.npbsales.com](http://www.npbsales.com)
- Ruth Diskin Films [www.ruthfilms.com](http://www.ruthfilms.com)
- Sixpackfilm [www.sixpackfilm.com/](http://www.sixpackfilm.com/)
- SHEHERAZAD MEDIA INT. [www.smediaint.com](http://www.smediaint.com)
- Spanner Films [www.spannerfilms.net](http://www.spannerfilms.net)
- Steps International [www.steps.co.za](http://www.steps.co.za)
- Telepool [www.telepool.de](http://www.telepool.de)
- Wide Management [www.widemanagement.com](http://www.widemanagement.com)
- Wild Bunch [www.wildbunch.biz](http://www.wildbunch.biz)
- WIP [www.wip.be](http://www.wip.be)
- Women Make Movies [www.wmm.com](http://www.wmm.com)

## FILM INSTITUTES

- Academy of Drama in Film at Budapešť [www.filmacademy.hu](http://www.filmacademy.hu)
- A.g.dok. [www.agdok.de](http://www.agdok.de)
- Austrian Film Commission [www.afc.at](http://www.afc.at)
- British Film Institute [www.bfi.org.uk](http://www.bfi.org.uk)
- Centre Vidéo de Bruxelles [www.cvb-videp.be](http://www.cvb-videp.be)
- Cinema Mexico [www.imcine.gob.mx](http://www.imcine.gob.mx)
- Danish Film Institute [www.dfi.dk](http://www.dfi.dk)
- East Silver [www.eastsilver.net](http://www.eastsilver.net)
- EsoDoc [www.esodoc.eu](http://www.esodoc.eu)
- Finnish Film Foundatiton [www.ses.fi](http://www.ses.fi)
- Film Polski [www.filmpolski.pl](http://www.filmpolski.pl)
- Freunde der Deutschen Kinemathek [www.fdk-berlin.de](http://www.fdk-berlin.de)
- Hungarian National Film Archive [www.filmintezet.hu](http://www.filmintezet.hu)
- International Documentary Film Institute [www.docuinter.net](http://www.docuinter.net)
- Magyar Filmunio [www.filmunio.hu](http://www.filmunio.hu)
- Mediacentar Sarajevo [www.media.ba](http://www.media.ba)
- National Film Board of Canada [www.nfb.ca](http://www.nfb.ca)

- Norwegian Film Institute [www.nfi.no](http://www.nfi.no)
- Nordisk Panorama [www.filmkontakt.com](http://www.filmkontakt.com)
- Sundance Film Institute <http://docsource.sundance.org/>
- Swedish Film Institute [www.sfi.se](http://www.sfi.se)

## TV

- Arte France [www.artefrance.fr](http://www.artefrance.fr)
- Arte France Unité Documentaire [www.artepro.com](http://www.artepro.com)
- BBC TV [www.bbc.co.uk/tv/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/tv/)
- Granada International [www.granadamedia.com](http://www.granadamedia.com)
- HBO Documentary Programming [www.hbo.com](http://www.hbo.com)
- Channel 4 International [www.c4i.tv](http://www.c4i.tv)
- Polish TV [www.tvp.pl](http://www.tvp.pl)
- Telefilm Canada Documentaries [www.canadiantelevisionfund.ca](http://www.canadiantelevisionfund.ca)
- TV 2 World [www.tv2.dk](http://www.tv2.dk)
- VPRO TV [www.vpro.nl](http://www.vpro.nl)
- YLE TV <http://yle.fi>

## OTHER

- Amnesty International [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)
- DOX magazine [www.dox.dk](http://www.dox.dk)
- European Documentary Network [www.edn.dk](http://www.edn.dk)
- Human Rights Media Institute [www.humanrightsmedia.org](http://www.humanrightsmedia.org)
- Human Rights Watch [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)
- Joost [www.joost.com](http://www.joost.com)
- Nomad Films [www.nomadfilms.ca](http://www.nomadfilms.ca)
- Stories on Human Rights by Filmmakers, Artists and Writers  
[www.artfortheworld.net](http://www.artfortheworld.net)
- UN [www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/fyi/](http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/fyi/)
- UNESCO [www.unesco-ci.org/cgi-bin/media/page.cpi](http://www.unesco-ci.org/cgi-bin/media/page.cpi)
- Witness [www.witness.org](http://www.witness.org)



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