



CREATIVE EUROPE - CREATING EUROPE

Statement from the General Assembly of FERA, Copenhagen, June 2012

A vibrant film and television industry creates both economic and cultural strength. Film is a real product, creating employment and growth, but it can also have a greater and longer lasting value, enabling us to reflect and renew our societies. It is a universal medium, literally crossing borders described by retiring FERA President István Szabó (*Mephisto*, *Sunshine*) as 'the language of the human face', offering a meaningful narrative of our past and our future.

As Europe seeks to rebuild its economies, European directors from 29 countries meeting in Copenhagen heard of a sector under attack. Members in some countries reported that within two years they expected to have no national film production at all, following the withdrawal of government support. FERA believes that failure by national governments to support their creative sectors is wrong, and also short sighted, as many countries are now seeing *increasing* public demand for films made in the national language for the local audience. Cultural diversity is not just a crucial European principle: it works.

New digital media also offer exciting opportunities for growth and access to new audiences, especially the young, many of whom also aspire to work as professionals in our sector. FERA welcomes the passion of a new generation to engage with our films, in the cinema and online, and is determined that together we will defend both the art and the practice of European film. At a time when Europe turns to creativity to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, it is important that its citizens gain a better understanding of the value of author's rights, as the basis of a viable cultural and creative industry.

European Film Directors call on:

- Every European country to reinforce support for film with legislation and financial incentives that allow film makers to contribute to the cultural and economic wealth of Europe:
- The European Commission to remember its duty to "take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the Treaties, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures" (Article 167 Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union) in the current process of revising the 'Cinema Communication' on state aid. Any damage to the sector at such crucial juncture in its transition to the digital environment would be very difficult to repair.
- The European cultural community to mobilise across all disciplines to fight for the creative sector.
- FERA itself to defend author's rights, and to campaign to protect national archives, grow production and to encourage the Europe-wide distribution of European films in cinemas and online.

NO CREATIVITY, NO ECONOMY!

Signed by

Members of the FERA Creative Council:

Marco Bellocchio, Agnieszka Holland, Alan Parker, István Szabó

The Members of FERA