

## **EUROPA CINEMAS ANNOUNCES WINNER OF INAUGURAL INNOVATION PRIZE AWARD GOES TO THE SWEDISH CINEMA FYRISBIOGRAFEN**

Venice/September, 1<sup>st</sup> 2018: Europa Cinemas announced today in Venice that the cinema Fyrisbiografen (Uppsala, Sweden) has won their inaugural Innovation Prize. Initiated with the support of Creative Europe/MEDIA, the Prize celebrates standout innovative projects and approaches by network cinemas.

The Prize was handed over to **Olle Agebro**, Exhibitor of Fyrisbiografen, by **Abderrahmane Sissako** (Film Director and President of the Innovation Prize Jury, Mauritania/France) and **Evelyne Gebhardt** (MEP, Vice President, European Parliament) during the European Film Forum at the Venice Film Festival. The Prize consists of an award of €10,000, and a commitment from the winner to use the money to invest further in the cinema's innovation policy.

The winner was chosen by a Jury of four film experts: **Stephan De Potter** (Co-CEO, Distributor, Cineart, Belgium); **Boglarka Nagy** (Executive Director CICA, Romania/Europe); **Laura Houlgatte** (CEO of UNIC, Belgium/Europe) and **Jean-Marc Lalo** (Architect, Atelier Architecture Lalo, France).

### **Declaration of the jury:**

"The Jury unanimously decided to give the Prize to the Swedish cinema "Fyrisbiografen" in Uppsala. Open for more than a hundred years, this cinema has managed by taking an innovative approach to reinvent itself and completely restructure its activities to the huge benefit of both the public and European arthouse cinema. Inspired by the approach taken by start-ups, this two screen cinema put data analysis at the heart of its modernisation process, revising completely its programming, its communication with the public and the work of the cinema staff. Involving the entire "Fyrisbiografen" team and with the support of a specialist digital agency, the project may become an example of best practice for numerous cinemas around Europe. Maintaining a rich and diverse European programme of films, the cinema increased its attendance by 50% in one year - at a time (2017) when Swedish box office takings were on the slide. This project, supported by the Swedish Film Institute is the subject of many features in Swedish publications and presentations at professional symposia. In awarding the Prize to this medium sized cinema, we want to celebrate the daily efforts of all the exhibitors across the Europa Cinemas network in adapting their work to the digital age, while ensuring a better circulation of European films outside their country of origin."

**Claude-Eric Poiroux**, General Director, Europa Cinemas:

"Europa Cinemas exhibitors have responded favourably to the Innovation Prize. We have received 43 applications from 18 countries. This Prize is a great opportunity to highlight the variety, vitality and creativity of Network's cinemas, in particular those projects and approaches that have the potential to inspire other Network exhibitors, such as developing and engaging audiences, using digital technology, building environmentally sustainable projects, as well as projects with a long-term socio-economic impact. The winning cinema will be able to use this amount in order to continue building on its innovative and creative policy."

The Innovation Prize is awarded in the context of Europa Cinemas' overarching objectives to:

- Support the circulation of European films, especially beyond their national borders
  - Develop a network of cinemas that can set up joint activities at a national and European level
  - Support initiatives aimed at attracting Young Audiences
  - Encourage innovation in the promotion of films and communication with the audiences
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### **Europa Cinemas in Venice:**

The 28 Times Cinema project returns to Venice this year for its ninth edition. Set up by Europa Cinemas in partnership with the European Parliament and Giornate degli Autori/Venice Days, 28 young film-lovers, representing each of the 28 EU member states and selected through the Europa Cinemas Network, will be in Venice for the duration of the Mostra. The 28 filmgoers will attend screenings and participate in debates about the films, along with directors, film professionals and Members of the European Parliament. They will then publish their thoughts online, write articles and contribute to the Europa Cinemas Facebook page. Since 2014, the members of the 28 Times Cinema team have been assigning the Giornate degli Autori Award, forming one of the largest and most unusual juries on the international film festival scene.

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2018 marks the fifteenth year that Europa Cinemas will be in Venice to award its Label to the best European film shown at Giornate degli Autori/Venice Days, chosen by a jury comprising four network exhibitors. The Label-winning film will benefit from promotional support from Europa Cinemas and better exhibition thanks to a financial incentive for network cinemas to include it in their programme schedule. The Label is also awarded in Berlin, Cannes, Locarno and Karlovy Vary.

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### **Europa Cinemas in 2018:**

44 countries, 677 cities, 1,121 cinemas, 2,808 screens

Europa Cinemas is supported by Creative Europe/**MEDIA**, Programme of the European Union (Brussels), **CNC** (France), **Eurimages** (Council of Europe, Strasbourg), **FFA** (Germany), **Institut Français** (Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, France)

### **Press Enquiries: Charles McDonald**

[charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk](mailto:charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk) +44 7785 246 377

### **Olle Agebro**

[ordforande@fyrisbiografen.com](mailto:ordforande@fyrisbiografen.com)

### **Europa Cinemas – Contact**

Fatima Djoumer, Head of International Relations, [fatim@djoumer.de](mailto:fatim@djoumer.de)

+ 33 (0) 1 42 71 53 70 [www.europa-cinemas.org](http://www.europa-cinemas.org)

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