

**FERA**

Fédération Européenne des Réalisateur·s de l'Audiovisuel  
Federation of European Film Directors

**Press Release**  
**Opening Session of “Directors Looking Forward”**  
**Tallinn Black Night Film Festival**

Tallinn, November 18th

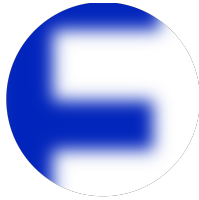
The opening session of new FERA strand *Directors Looking Forward* held at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival heard about the importance of directors taking greater responsibility for the fate of their films in the new, emerging distribution landscape.

Under the banner *‘Directors and Distribution: Time to Take Charge?’*, the session discussed how, as traditional distribution pipelines fragment, directors are stepping up to take responsibility for their films being seen from the very start of a project. These directors are forging new relationships with audiences, as they engage them in a conversation about their films before they even call ‘Cut’ for the very first time.

Danish director Christina Rosendahl, and president of Danish Film Directors told the panel *‘Directing and marketing are not two different things. They are both about someone: the director. The directors who wants to reach his or her audience. The director is the most important person communicating the film to the audience. You cannot leave it solely to marketing people or distributors’*. She revealed how on her recent feature *THE IDEALIST* she had used social media to source historical research for the film, and that when it came to release in Denmark, had been compelled to create her own press and social media parallel marketing campaign for the film alongside the distributor’s traditional Print and Advertising campaign. The strategy was vindicated by exit polling that revealed that most of the audience had found the film thanks to that social media and press strategy.

FERA Chair Dan Clifton commented: *‘As film directors, we want our works to be seen by the broadest possible audience. With the traditional distribution chain fragmenting, it’s clear that new thinking is needed and as the creators of our films, directors are well placed to develop those audience hooks that ensure their films get seen and talked about.’*

The session also heard from Latvian director Laila Pakalnina (*DAWN*), and German director Franz Müller (*HAPPY HOUR*), Germany who both had their features premiering in the Black Nights Film Festival Official Competition, as well as US Talent Agent Jeff Barry of ICM. Laila Pakalnina said: *‘My*



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*experience with distribution for my first feature film did not go well. Since then, I decided to distribute my new films in Latvia myself.'* Followed by director Franz Müller who stated that *'In Germany, producers have an entrepreneur mentality, they only make sure you stay within the production's budget, once the film is done, you're on your own in terms of distribution.'*

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**Note to editors :**

The **Federation of European Film Directors (FERA)**, founded in 1980, is the only organisation representing film directors at the European level. With 35 directors associations as members from 29 countries, we speak for more than 20,000 European screen directors, representing their cultural, creative and economic interests at the national and European level. FERA works to promote policies that maximize the creative, social and commercial potential of the audiovisual industry.

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