



Federation of European
Screen Directors

Fédération Européenne des
Réalisateurs de l'Audiovisuel

PRESS RELEASE

May 16, 2022

FERA General Assembly 2022 Statement

Filmmaking, War & Politics: Standing United for Filmmakers' Artistic Freedom

No Compromise: European filmmakers gathered in Frankfurt from May 11 to 13 for FERA's General Assembly came together in the sober acknowledgment that artistic freedom is never a given and that the filmmaking community must stand united to protect its own.

At a time where Ukraine fights for its right to self-determination, we are reminded that culture is an essential part of any well-functioning democracy, and that filmmakers with singular voices must continue their fight to hold a much-needed mirror up to society. Such freedom of artistic expression requires artists and the cultural and creative sectors at large to be independent and free of any governmental censorship, political interference, or pressure from non-state actors.

During a powerful exchange, directors Saeed Al Batalj (Syria), Abdullah Al-Khateeb (Palestine- Syria), Maryna Er Gorbach (Ukraine), Agnieszka Holland (Poland) and Jasmila Žbanić (Bosnia) talked about their experiences of filmmaking during and about military conflict. *"Our duty is to be citizens of the world, and artists at the same time"* stated outgoing Honorary President Agnieszka Holland.

The discussion laid bare the urgent need for the filmmaking community to come closer together to support filmmakers at war and their singular vision which looks far beyond recording images or propaganda – seeking truth, human connection, and memory.

The growing mismatch between filmmaking & politics was discussed by filmmakers Costa Gavras and David Bernet, as well as Tomas Eskilson, Head of Film i Väst Analysis, Mathieu Fournet, French CNC Director of European and International Affairs, Maria Silvia Gatta, European Commission Policy Officer and Susan Newman-Baudais, Eurimages Executive Director. They affirmed that artistic freedom and cultural diversity, understood as the ability for singular creative voices to emerge across Europe and beyond, must remain

cornerstones of meaningful European filmmaking politics – from regulation to public support at local, national and European level.

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Newly Elected Honorary President

Jasmila Žbanić

Newly Elected Executive Committee 2022-2024

Chair: **Bill Anderson** (*United Kingdom*)

Honorary Treasurer: **Elisabet Gustafsson** (*Sweden*)

Lou Jeunet (*France*)

Martijn Winkler (*The Netherlands*)

Eugenia Arsenis (*Greece*)

Ida Grøn (*Denmark*)

Salvador Simó Busom (*Spain*)

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Members of the Federation of European Screen Directors from 23 countries met in Frankfurt, Germany from May 11 to 13 for its General Assembly annual conference – and first in-person gathering since the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic, kindly hosted by [AG DOK](#) in partnership with [BVR](#), [LICHTER Filmfest Frankfurt International](#) with the support of [VG Bild-Kunst](#).

About Us

Founded in 1980, FERA represents the independent voice of European film and TV directors in Brussels. With 49 organizations as members from 35 countries, it speaks for more than 20,000 European film and TV directors, representing their cultural, creative and economic interests at national and EU level.

Honorary President: Jasmila ŽBANIĆ (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Ambassadors: Marco BELLOCCHIO (Italy), Isabel COIXET (Spain), Heddy HONIGMANN (Netherlands), Michaël R. ROSKAM (Belgium), Charles STURRIDGE (UK), István SZABÓ (Hungary)

Executive Committee: Bill ANDERSON (United Kingdom), Chair; Elisabet GUSTAFSSON (Sweden), Honorary Treasurer; Ida GRØN (Denmark), Eugenia ARSENIS (Greece), Lou JEUNET (France), Martijn WINKLER (Netherlands), Salvador Simó BUSOM (Spain)

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