

PRESS RELEASE
Brussels, 28 June 2023

Safeguarding artistic freedom and promoting European film amid political and tech changes

FERA and FSE and the SAA congratulate Lukas Dhont, director and writer, and co-writer Angelo Tijssens of CLOSE, winner of the LUX Audience Award 2023, as announced during a festive ceremony yesterday evening in the European Parliament in Brussels.

The European Parliament's President Roberta Metsola, Vice-President Evelyn Regner and Chair of the Culture Committee Sabine Verheyen as well the finalist filmmakers echoed the same message during the award ceremony: democracy and human rights are fragile and freedom of artistic expression cannot be taken for granted, even within the Union's borders.

The upcoming European elections have the potential to significantly reshape the political landscape, which in turn, can impact the creative space for European authors. Moreover, the rapid advancement in technology, particularly by the large streaming platforms and generative AI, are dramatically transforming the audiovisual environment and working conditions for creators.

Considering these developments, it becomes crucial for European leaders and policymakers to assume their role to safeguard European cultural diversity, respect European creators and promote their rights. The LUX Audience Award is one example of such efforts. Additionally, the audience of European films also play a crucial part by continuing going to the cinema and actively choosing European works on their screens. However, the foundation of European creativity lies in the freedom of expression and independence of the authors. Consequently, providing a secure environment for authors to create and ensuring their fair remuneration are essential prerequisites to sustain and advance their profession in Europe.

FERA and FSE and the SAA also congratulate the four other finalists of the European Parliament's LUX Audience Award 2023: Carla Simón, director and writer of ALCARRÀS, Emin Alper, director and writer of BURNING DAYS, Ruben Östlund, director and writer of TRIANGLE OF SADNESS, and João Pedro Rodrigues, director, and co-writer João Rui Guerra da Mata of WILL-O'-THE-WISP.

Quotes

"The LUX Audience Award is a symbol of the European Parliament's commitment to European culture. Film is – and should continue to be – an effective way to engage audiences in debates and reflections about Europe's future. Cinema and culture at large are also an essential source of comfort, inspiration and hope. We must all show our love for European film."

Patrick RAUDE, Vice-Chair of the SAA

"In these changing times, creators face commercial, political and ideological pressure and must be more determined than ever to say what they have to say, find their truth and be able to express it. The European Parliament has a part to play by standing up for an independent and powerful cinema sector in the world that always can convey their stories on the screens to the audience in all their diversity."

Pauline DURAND-VIALLE, CEO of FERA

Background

On the day of the LUX Audience Award Ceremony held on 27 June 2023, the Society of Audiovisual Authors celebrated cinema, cultural diversity, and its creators with a lunch hosted by Evelyn Regner, vice-President of the European Parliament, in partnership with the Federation of European Screen Directors, and the Federation of Screenwriters in Europe, together with filmmakers and MEPs.

The LUX Audience Award is an important initiative to support European cinema, filmmakers and the circulation of their works. It provides visibility and subtitles in the 24 EU official languages to films that go to the heart of the European public debate and gives them a unique opportunity to access audiences across all Member States.

Notes to Editors

FERA - Founded in 1980, the Federation of European Screen Directors gathers 49 organisations 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. FERA EU Transparency Register Id No. 29280842236-21. @Film_directors

Press: Pauline Durand-Vialle, pdv@filmdirectors.eu

FSE - The Federation of Screenwriters in Europe is a network of national and regional associations, guilds and unions of writers for the screen in Europe, created in June 2001. It comprises 26 members from 21 countries, representing more than 7500 writers in Europe. @ScreenwritersEU

Press: David Kavanagh, office@federationscreenwriters.eu

SAA - The Society of Audiovisual Authors is the association of European collective management organisations representing audiovisual authors. Its 33 members in 25 countries manage rights for over 167,000 film, television and multimedia European screenwriters and directors. @saabrussels #WeLoveAuthors

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