

KVIFF Industry Office shoots for the stars

Laura McGinnis

Andrea Szczuková, head of KVIFF's Film Industry Office, has one goal for the festival: to be the best.

For Szczuková and her colleagues in the industry office, that means accommodating filmmakers and industry members, facilitating meetings and – most importantly – connecting the various agents involved in film production and distribution. If the goal of the festival is to promote the development and production of quality films, the goal of the industry office is to help those films find a wider audience.

"We want it to be the first in Central and Eastern Europe, with the press and with the distributors," Szczuková says. When filmmakers are deciding where to hold their premieres, Szczuková wants them to choose KVIFF because they know the festival will have distributors from every country in Europe.

To that end, the industry office has concentrated on inviting European distributors this year. Representatives from 50 countries are in attendance, and distributors from 20 European nations.

KVIFF's industry office is in only its seventh year of operation, but it has already helped promote the festival's reputation as "the most significant film event in Central and Eastern Europe."

One of their main objectives is



Photo: Lukáš Taborský

Head of the KVIFF Film Industry Office Andrea Szczuková.

to ensure that distributors and filmmakers can contact one another easily. Two weeks before the festival, Szczuková and her colleagues send contact information and schedules to industry attendants. In Karlovy Vary, this information is updated with the official film industry guide – a 293-page collection of industry contacts and festival events.

Throughout the festival, the office hosts a variety of panels and events. "East of the West – Works in Progress" will give producers from Central and Eastern Europe an opportunity to showcase recently completed and post-production projects to prospective distributors, buyers and festival

programmers. Additional panels will focus on promoting documentaries, interacting with Hollywood and developing internationally competitive films.

In past years, the office has also been particularly successful in promoting European films. *Jar City* and *The Art of Negative Thinking*, two films from the 2007 KVIFF Official Selection, are excellent examples. *Jar City*, produced in Iceland and Germany, took home the Crystal Globe last year, and Norwegian Bård Breien received the Best Director Award for *Negative Thinking*.

"Both films premiered in the main competition last year, and

both [enjoyed] many distributions in Europe," Szczuková says.

This year the industry office is stepping up its efforts. For one thing, Szczuková says, there will be more press and industry screenings, over 100 in total. Distributors and other press and industry representatives can attend such screenings without obtaining tickets beforehand, giving them greater flexibility and more opportunities to see the films. Press and industry screenings will be held for every competitive film in the Official Selection, as well as the East of the West and Forum of Independents sidebars.

Every year, the industry office adds more successes to its record, but the staff are not resting on their laurels. Szczuková and her colleagues in the industry office have big plans for the future, she says. That plan includes seeing "festival films bought and distributed in as many countries as possible, and having all the important distribution and sales companies come to Karlovy Vary and really enjoy the festival – its film selection, its atmosphere and services."

With over 700 industry representatives pouring into the city over the next week, it seems that they're well on their way. ■

Some upcoming industry events

Interfacing with Hollywood

July 5, 2pm-4pm

Chopin lounge, Grandhotel Pupp

Four Hollywood insiders discuss the ins and outs of business in Tinseltown. Open to the general public.

East of the West – Works in Progress

July 6, 1pm-6pm

Chopin lounge, Grandhotel Pupp

International distributors, sales agents and festival programmers are invited to view presentations on recently completed and post-production films from Central and Eastern Europe.

DocuTalents from the East 2008

July 7, 10.30am-12pm

Cinema A, Thermal Hotel

Directors and producers from Central and Eastern Europe will present brief pitches for their documentaries to festival organizers, distributors, buyers and journalists.

* More information and a complete list of industry events can be found online at <http://www.kviff.com/en/film-industry-events/>

FACES

Today you may run into director **Daniel Wallentin**, producer **Fredrik Wikström**, actor **Shebly Niavarani** or director of photography **Ari Willey**, who are here to present Sweden's *One Eye Red*.

Directors **Stefan Komandarev** (*The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner*) and **Olga Špátová** (*Well-Paid Stroll 2007*) are also in town. New Official Selection arrivals include director **Zrinko Ogresta**, and actresses **Jadranka Djokić** and **Daria Lorenci** (*Behind the Glass*), director **Francesco Patierno** and actor **Elio Germano** (*The Early Bird Catches the Worm*), director **Sam Karmann** and actress **Catherine Olson** (*True Enough*). You can expect to meet director/producer **Mustafa Zaveri**, producer **Muzaffar Zaveri** and DP **Prashant Rai**, who are here with their film *R(evolution)*, and director **Stian Kristiansen**, producer **Yngve Saether** and actors **Ole Christoffer Ertvaag** and **Arthur Berning** (*The Man Who Loved Yngve*).

Screenwriter **Lorenzo Semple Jr.** (*Pretty Poison*) is here, as is producer **Thomas Gammeltoft**, actors **Kim Bodnia** and **Jakob Cedergren** and editor **Kasper Leick** (*Terribly Happy*). ■



Daniel Wallentin



Stian Kristiansen



Gymp



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