

**REPORT OF ACTIVITIES**  
**October 2006 – October 2014**

Strategy and Results  
GEECT Conferences  
GEECT Executive Meetings  
CILECT Executive Meetings  
Initial Training in Europe  
Seminars at La Fémis

## **FROM MADRID 2006 TO LOS ANGELES 2014**

### **STRATEGY AND RESULTS**

We will meet soon at the CILECT Congress in Los Angeles, where elections will renew the Executive members of GEECT and you will vote for a new President. I believe the end of a mandate is a good opportunity to think about all that has been achieved over those eight years, what was planned but could not succeed.

I joined the association in 2004, as a member of the GEECT Executive, where I immediately became convinced of the necessity to guide my work based on my previous experience in the film culture and industry, where the international, and in particular Europe, had always been a key factor. In 2006, at the CILECT Congress in Madrid, I was elected President when Lauri Törhönen resigned from his position before the end of his term, for a remaining term of two years, followed by two consecutive terms, one of four years in Beijing and a last one of two years in Cape Town. As President of GEECT, I also became an Executive member of the CILECT Executive.

With the same priorities in mind, as your representative, and with the members of the Executive, we developed over the years strong co-operation activities among film schools, met on a regular basis, twice or three times a year to discuss the status of our programme, introduced a number of improvements within the structure of CILECT and its statutes, pursued our lobbying activities with the European Commission for creating a support scheme for initial training in film schools.

In 2011, for a better follow up of the activities and the finances of the association, we decided to move its head office out of Amsterdam and registered it officially in Paris, care of La Fémis. Two bank accounts were set up with the BNP bank: one current account to cover all expenses related to funding GEECT conferences and other activities, and one savings account to receive the monies from the GEECT membership.

Last but not least, all these actions were supported over those eight years with enthusiasm and full engagement by the members of the Executive who worked with me during their mandate: Marieke Schoenmakers of the National Film and Television Academy in Amsterdam, Zuzana Tatarova of VSMU in Bratislava, Malte Wadman of the Norwegian Film School in Lillehammer, Nik Powell of the NFTS in Beaconsfield, Bert Beyens of RITS in Brussels, Donald Taylor Black of IADT in Dublin, Pavel Jech of FAMU in Prague. I would like to thank them for their work and their support.

### **GEECT CONFERENCES 2007-2014**

According to the programme proposed in Madrid, conferences have been organised, on the basis of one to two per year, with a view to increase this strong co-operation among film schools, and share secrets, knowledge and experience.

#### **Best-Kept Secrets technical conference in Amsterdam, 5-6 September 2007**

Hosted by Marieke Schoenmakers at the NFTA, moderated by Nik Powell of the NFTS, and conducted by Tore Maritvold of the Norwegian Film School, this Best-Kept Secrets technical conference successfully gathered over two days participants coming from all over Europe, including Georgia, Israel, Lebanon, but also from Australia, and India, and looked at how film schools in Europe and the rest of the world tackled the new challenges brought about by the changes in technology, hence the changes in the industry regarding their models of production and post-production that the film schools themselves wanted to introduce.

#### **Best-Kept Secrets animation conference in Lisbon, 27-29 May 2009**

Hosted by Manuel José Damasio at Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Film, Video and Multimedia Department, in partnership with Zuzana Tatarova of VSMU – The Academy of Music and Performing Arts, this Best-Kept Secrets conference on the topic of animation gathered major European film and media schools that include animation courses in their programmes to reflect and discuss the major transformations animation training is going through, not only in the context of a profoundly changing media environment, but also in the context of the radical reforms European higher education is facing.

#### **Film Education: traditions and innovation in Moscow, in the framework of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VGIK, 2-4 November 2009**

Organised by Tatiana Storchak, Vice Rector of the VGIK, the conference was successful in debating on important topics related to film schools such as the selection of new comers, the relationship between theoretical subjects and practical exercises, the methodology and criteria of assessment, the new horizons of film education, and the pros and cons of the Bologna System. Participants were invited to attend the conference and share their views and opinions on the topics debated in the different discussions, to join the gala celebration dedicated to the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VGIK at the Kremlin Palace, and visit the State Film Archives on the last day of their stay.

#### **Creative post-production in Beaconsfield, 8-11 April 2010**

Hosted by Nik Powell at the NFTS and organised by Roger Crittenden, in cooperation with Annabelle Pangborn and Larry Sider, the event brought together European and World experts in the practice of and education for film editing, sound design and music composition. The purpose was to share and debate current and future trends to enhance shared knowledge and ideas for improving and developing this area of practical film education. It was agreed that a DVD of the symposium should be edited and provided to the member schools for informational and educational purposes.

#### **Distribution, co-production and rights management in Ludwigsburg, 1-2 March 2011**

Hosted and organised by Thomas Schadt and Guido Lukoschek at the Filmakademie of Baden-Württemberg in Ludwigsburg, the conference discussed over two days the specificities of co-productions, distribution and rights management of student films. Among the numerous speakers who shared their practice of the various subjects of the conference, a guest speaker from North America was invited to join the event, in accordance with the policy of GEECT, which ensures that members from the other continents are always welcome to attend.

#### **Producing creative producers in Edinburgh, 1-2 March 2012**

Hosted by Robin MacPherson at the Napier University in Edinburgh and co-organised by Donald Taylor-Black of IADT Dublin, the conference discussed over two days the specificities of training creative producers in film schools. Numerous speakers from the production department of their respective schools from all over Europe shared their experience and showed films produced by their students at the different stages of their curriculum.

### **Assessment and evaluation in film schools in Sofia, 22-26 October 2012**

The second GEECT conference of the year was hosted and organised by Lubomir Halachev and Valeriya Jivkova at the National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts in Sofia, Bulgaria. It discussed over three days all the aspects of assessment and evaluation in film schools, from student admission to diploma work.

Participants appreciated the atmosphere of the conference that stimulated vivid exchange of experience, ideas and discussions of the topics provoked by the properly structured panel exposés.

### **Teaching cinematography – From film to digital in Paris, 23-26 February 2013**

The conference on Teaching Cinematography took place at La Fémis during the exhibition organised by the Association of French Cinematographers (AFC). The first two days were dedicated to the visit of the exhibition, where recent cameras and other photo material were displayed. The conference opened officially on the 24th and focused over two days on the transition from film to digital, with four panels on the different aspects of teaching cinematography.

### **Writing TV series in Copenhagen, 28-29 November 2013**

The conference on Writing TV Series, hosted and organised Poul Nesgaard and Janne Juul, took place at the Danish Film School in Copenhagen. Over two days, under the moderation of Rumle Hammerich, one of the writers of the BORGES series, the participants discussed the topic “From education to business” focusing on the connection between national film schools and broadcasters. Representatives from film schools in Europe and America presented their concepts of TV series and their ways of teaching, including their views and goals for the education, their ideas and visions for the process.

### **Future conferences confirmed for 2014-2015**

Teaching Documentary will take place at Newport in Cardiff in November 2014, followed by one on Production Design at IADT in Dublin in April 2015 and a second one on Films Schools and their Alumni at Sam Spiegel in Jerusalem in July 2015.

### **GEECT EXECUTIVE MEETINGS 2007-2014**

The programme adopted in Madrid could only be achieved with a strong Executive, who could meet and discuss the important issues of interest to its members, propose activities and report to them on a regular basis. It was agreed that there should be two meetings a year, generally one in Berlin during the Berlinale as most Executive members attended the festival and that would allow to save money for GEECT, and a second one during the GEECT/CILECT conferences or Fémis seminars in Paris.

DFFB, Berlin, 12 February 2007

La Fémis, Paris, 16 November 2007

La Fémis, Paris, 20 October 2008

DFFB, Berlin, 9 February 2009

VGIK, Moscow, 1 November 2009

DFFB, Berlin, 14 February 2010

NFTS, Beaconsfield, 10 April 2010

La Fémis, Paris, 15 September 2010

DFFB, Berlin, 15 February 2011

FAMU, Prague, 29 November 2011  
DFFB, Berlin, 14 February 2012  
AFDA, Cape Town, 29 April 2012  
NATFA, Sofia, 25 October 2012  
DFFB, Berlin, 12 February 2013  
ENERC, Buenos Aires, 18 September 2013  
La Fémis, Paris, 4 July 2014

During these meetings in a very friendly working atmosphere, I systematically reported on the debates I took part in at the CILECT executive meetings on behalf of GEECT. I also exchanged with the members of the executive on the GEECT programme, decided with them the future conferences, and more generally discussed all other issues related to the activities of our member schools. These meetings have also been an opportunity to address the status of the initial training scheme supported by the MEDIA programme, and I have reported on the results of my numerous discussions with the officials of the European Commission in Brussels.

#### **CILECT EXECUTIVE MEETINGS 2007-2014**

As President of GEECT, I attended most of the CILECT Executive meetings where CILECT matters were discussed and where I could express in your name the expectations of the European member schools for a stronger CILECT for a wider diversity of activities.

In order to achieve this objective, I thought CILECT should introduce a number of improvements to the organisation, and at the very beginning of my mandate I insisted to change the way CILECT was operating. Two key points were for me important : to make it more active and to increase the confidence of the members in the executive which was too much perceived as a private and isolated “club”. Then I made propositions in four primary directions:

- change the very structure of the governing body for a smaller and more efficient board
- modernise the very structure of the association with a full-time general secretary – adopt every two years a programme of activities , some of them being conducted by the director, the others offered to the membership through calls for proposals
- set up a yearly conference in order to meet more often and increase the number of our cooperation activities.

This is where started all the discussions for the changes. It was not so easy at the beginning because of the weight of tradition but it finally lead in 2010 to the amendments of the CILECT statutes, the suppression of the CILECT Vice Presidents, the implementation of shorter terms of mandates, and the creation of the position of the Executive Director. These are the meetings that took place during my mandate, most of which I attended, because I believed that a stronger CILECT would be for all the members’ interest and benefit in the long run.

Art Academy BK, Belgrade, 31 May-4 June 2007 (not attending)  
ENERC, Buenos Aires, 30 November-2 December 2007  
UFF, Niteroi, 2-6 June 2006 (not attending)  
Rome, 5-9 April 2008 (with all the GEECT Executive)  
Universidade de San Paulo, 3-7 April 2009

RITS, Brussels, 24-26 September 2009  
ESCAC, Barcelona, 18-20 January 2010  
FIA, Alicante, 1-5 May 2010  
CUEC, Mexico, 2-6 September 2010  
AFDA, Cape Town, 20-26 January 2011  
La Fémis, Paris, 2-6 July 2011  
VGIK, Moscow, 2-5 February 2012  
EICTV, Havana, 2-6 December 2012 (not attending)  
CSC, Milano, 10-12 May 2013  
ZUMC, Hangzhou, 21-23 January 2014  
TAU, Tel Aviv, 30-31 May 2014

### **INITIAL TRAINING IN EUROPE 2007-2014**

In 2005 I made directly to the Culture commissioner a proposal for a new scheme to support initial training cooperation initiatives within the frame of the MEDIA programme. At the board meeting that took place after the Madrid Congress in 2006, the Executive decided to continue its lobbying activities to promote initial training in Europe. After these negotiations with the European Commission, MEDIA officially announced in Berlin 2007 its support to film schools to encourage the mobility of their students and trainers, to build common curricula and create a network of European professionals.

After Berlin, in the name of the Executive, I contacted the members of the association to inform them of this major phase of development for film schools in Europe. I initiated meetings and seminars, in Brussels and at the Cannes Film Festival, to gather film schools, provide them with the guidelines of this new scheme, and encourage them to submit projects.

On a very short notice, many film schools joined forces to construct common programmes for their students and apply for support. In 2007 nine out of ten selected projects involved one or more GEECT film schools. In 2008, seven out of ten selected projects involved one or more GEECT film schools. These projects played a huge role in structuring our cooperation activities and, further, in developing the attitudes of all of us to think more “international”.

And these programmes continued to do so until the recent changes within the European Commission where it was decided to merge Culture and MEDIA under one entity Creative Europe and transfer Initial Training to Erasmus+ like any activity related to schools and universities, keeping MEDIA funding for continuous training only. Despite my numerous letters to the European Commission and to the Parliament, my visits to Brussels and to Berlin to meet all the officials in charge of these changes, the reactions were invariably the same, i.e. Erasmus+.

### **EUROPEAN SEMINARS AT LA FEMIS**

After my appointment as Director General of La Fémis in 2002, I immediately started to open the school to Europe and to the international, through a number of exchange programmes with film schools abroad, and the organisation of a yearly seminar for a better cooperation between film schools in Europe.

Once appointed President of GEECT, I made sure that both the European activities of La Fémis and the ones of the GEECT could relate so they could address important educational and political issues both in conferences initiated by GEECT members and supported by GEECT as well as in La Fémis seminars supported by MEDIA.

### **The European Film School Network seminar in Paris, 3-4 April 2008**

The meeting of the European Film School Network provided an overview of the projects submitted and selected under the new MEDIA scheme for initial training launched in 2007, with a view to encourage the mobility of students and/or trainers and the collaboration of film schools in Europe, and to create links between film schools in order to facilitate the entry of graduates into the film industry.

### **The European Film School Network seminar in Paris, 16-17 April 2009**

The 2009 meeting was devoted to the Bologna process, which will have over the years a significant impact on higher education institutions throughout Europe. Since the 1999 Declaration signed by Ministers from 29 European countries, some governments have decided that all their higher education institutions should come under the Bologna umbrella; other countries have made this a voluntary process. It is however very likely that all film schools will eventually have to be organised in this way. This meeting has therefore enabled schools – including non-film schools, to share information and experience as to their position on and experience in implementing the process.

### **European Film School Network seminar in Paris, 6-7 April 2011**

This year's meeting was devoted to the question of research in film schools, and included presentations and case studies. Participants were asked to present their institutions and their approaches to research. What does research mean within their system? Can any activities currently carried out in their institutions be qualified as research? As for La Fémis, two potential directions for research have been identified: - experimental activities between the film school and private companies such as camera or film manufacturers, - courses/workshops on the history, aesthetics or economics of the film industry such as a recent seminar on the impact of the internet on cinema.

### **European Film School Network seminar in Paris, 25-26 February 2013**

This meeting funded by MEDIA was turned into a GEECT conference on Teaching Cinematography (see above).

## **A FEW MISHAPS**

No report can be complete if it does not cover the projects that were proposed but could not fully succeed. This involves two schemes that were introduced in the GEECT programme of activities, one for student meetings on a basis of two per year, and one for research papers on the basis of one a year or every second year depending on the time needed to collect information and data among the member schools.

Three student meetings were successfully supported over these eight years

- one proposed by the NFTS, UK, in 2011, related to their yearly School of Sound symposium in London
- one proposed by MARUBI, Albania, in 2012 related to their Human Rights Film Festival
- one proposed by VSMU, Slovakia, in 2012 related to co-productions with film schools from SZFE Budapest, FAMU Prague, UNATC Bucharest, PWSFTViT Lodz, and AGRFT Ljubljana.

Although calls were regularly made for more proposals, this particular scheme in the GEECT programme did not seem to satisfy the needs of the members. The monies dedicated to this scheme could then be invested in another activity.

One research paper on the financing of film schools was initiated in 2012. However it soon became clear that the main difficulty of the paper was to obtain information and data because most member schools did not know how to tackle the survey and did not have the time, or the staff to complete it. In the end seventeen member schools responded to the survey, but the panel was too small to allow a proper analysis of the figures in order to finalise the paper. But this failure was also useful to push CILECT to launch its own survey and this will exist soon through the “CILECT portrait” on the new CILECT website.

As for the cooperation and exchange activities, it was intended right from the beginning that this should also apply to teachers and staff. However for obvious practical reasons, including structure, schedule, language, curriculum, this activity could not be developed, but should continue to be encouraged.

One last point which was not a “mishap”: all my work as president of GEECT has been made possible by the strong support in La Fémis of Christine Ghazarian whom you all know well. I want to thank her on your behalf. And also to mention here a weakness of GEECT which lacks a permanent support on the side of the president – and that my school offered all these years.

To conclude, I want to thank you all. During all these years, I strongly felt that I could go ahead with all these plans and make them happen because you were supporting me and asking me to carry them out on your behalf.

A lot remains to be done in the same direction of sharing intelligence and ideas and keeping GEECT as a key factor of CILECT vitality. I am sure the new President and the new Executive will invent new ideas, projects and will make GEECT even better. As a simple member now – thanks to the limitation of mandates that we introduced in the statutes – I will strongly support them as you did with me.

Marc Nicolas  
Paris, 10 October 2014